

JULY/NEWS

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JULY 20

Taxes unpaid for years

TRAVERSE CITY — The city Housing Commission is awaiting word from the Social Security Administration on what could be almost \$60,000 that's owed to the federal government in unpaid FICA benefits over the past three years for its housing staff.

Housing officials said they discovered the problem last year when researching another payroll issue. FICA concerns date to the mid-1980s when the commission determined its employees were exempt from paying FICA taxes because it's a public housing entity.

Legally, the city is only potentially liable for the past three years of non-payment.

JULY 21

Downtown building planned

TRAVERSE CITY — Christman Co. wants to develop a 3½-story, 42,500-square-foot building that would house offices or condominiums on two lots at the southwest corner of East State Street and Boardman Avenue.

The city's Downtown Development Authority called for proposals that would reflect the fact that the corner is a transition area between downtown and the residential neighborhoods to the east and south.

The Christman plan would have a 32-space parking garage on the bottom level half below grade, then two floors above that, each with about 14,600 square feet, topped by a third floor with about 13,300 square feet.

JULY 22

Suit targets foster home

TRAVERSE CITY — A former live-in employee of Silverview Adult Living in Garfield Township, James T. Lester, 40, is serving a year in jail for sexually assaulting mentally retarded woman in July 2002 while she stayed at



Record-Eagle file photo/Jim Bovin

This junkyard in Antrim County raised the ire of neighbors.

the facility. He admitted last year that he forced the 68-year-old woman to perform oral sex.

The suit names Lester, Silverview, and its owners, Maureen and Lawrence Quinting. The suit, filed by attorney Mark Dancer, claims the woman suffered mental anguish and required psychiatric counseling.

Dancer argues in the suit that the Quintings were negligent to allow Lester to be able to be alone with patients.

JULY 23

Bill aims to alter rules

TRAVERSE CITY — U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak has introduced a House bill that would bring federal beach grooming rules in line with Michigan's new relaxed regulations.

Michael MacColeman, a co-owner of the Cherry Tree Inn on Grand Traverse Bay and a member of the Save Our Shoreline grassroots group that helped change Michigan's beach grooming laws, said he hoped the federal initiative would go beyond the state's "watered down" compromise bill.

A new state law enacted in June did away with state Department of Environmental Quality permit requirements for grooming sand, mowing vegetation and removing a small amount of plants by hand between the high-water mark and the water's edge.

But federal permits are still required on Great Lakes shoreline activities through the Army Corps of Engineers.

JULY 24

Junkyard draws wrath

BELLAIRE — After years of watching Mancelona resident Jim Swain's mass of mangled machinery sprawl toward M-88 and across Lake of the Woods road, some neighbors want the township, the sheriff's department, the state — somebody — to do something about it.

Swain's wife, Crystal Swain, said no neighbors had contacted her or her husband with concerns about the salvage operation. She said the facility's growth is a result of the public's desire to use it.

JULY 25

Manistee may allow hunt

MANISTEE — City Council

member Neil Assante says a burgeoning deer population has led him and other council members to ponder a public hunt.

Assante was quick to say no decision would be made until options are mulled during a series of public hearings, which have not been scheduled.

Rod Clute, a Department of Natural Resources big game specialist, said urban hunts are becoming more common.

But Clute said the success of such programs depends on how much effort a municipality puts into it, such as making sure there are enough skilled hunters involved to complete the task.

JULY 26

'Obscenities' lead to jail

TRAVERSE CITY — David Paul Guillen's contempt for a government form earned the Fife Lake man a scolding from a local judge and a stay in the county jail.

Deputies led Guillen, 31, from a courtroom in handcuffs after he refused Grand Traverse County Circuit Judge Philip Rodgers' orders to "properly" fill out a revised jury questionnaire.

Guillen in May wrote on a form sent to prospective jurors that he thanked the court for "wasting 20 minutes of my time with this crap."

Rodgers wasn't amused, and called the comments "outrageous and contemptuous."

When questioned about the response, Guillen said he should be excused from jury duty. Rodgers disagreed and fined him \$200.

When Guillen said he could not pay, Rodgers said he would sit in jail until he could get the money.

JULY 27

Island deer: An altered life

LELAND — In American Indian lore, North and South Manitou islands symbolize the tragic deaths of two bear cubs who followed their mother across Lake Michigan from Wisconsin.

But to biologists like David Flaspohler, the islands now symbolize how human intervention can jeopardize the ecological history and make-up of American forests.

The problem today, he and National Park Service officials say, isn't people but the deer they brought to North Manitou in 1926.

And the only way to resolve it, they also say, might be to remove the deer.

The U.S. Forest Service will pay \$197,000 for the three-year study, which focuses on how much damage has been caused by the deer introduced for a private hunting preserve.

JULY 28

Hidden graves are found

MAPLE CITY — Earlier this month, two search dogs and their handlers mapped the Maple City cemetery, discovering a total of 211 graves. Members of the Traverse City-based Friends of the Light are restoring the cemetery, where a Quaker meeting house once stood.

Eagle, a search dog owned by Sandra Anderson of Midland, and Dax, a search-dog-in-training owned by Jim

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