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IGNACE

# Council member charged with fraud

NORTHWEST BUREAU

Chronicle - Feb 2/00

That investigation was launched last spring after a file containing 1998 expense reports from township councillors and staff was submitted for review by Coun. Hugh Broughton.

This is the second time in less than a year that an Ignace council member has been the focus of a police investigation.

Former Ignace reeve Donnie Debransky received a conditional discharge and 12 months probation on a breach of trust conviction in November.

He pleaded guilty to the charge laid in the purchase of a front-end loader in 1997 when he was acting reeve.

Debransky used municipal letterhead to solicit the sale, but bought the equipment at fair market value with his own money, a court official said.

An Ignace councillor has been charged with two counts of fraud under \$5,000.

Police said Coun. Suzanne Smith was charged Tuesday following an investigation into an allegation that township revenue was used for personal purchases during the summers of 1997 and 1998.

Smith said she has no plans to resign from council.

"Nothing has changed," she said.

Smith said she plans to issue a news release today.

She is to appear in Ignace court on March 22.

Ignace Mayor Andre Tardiff said he would discuss the matter with council.

"Personally, I think she should resign or

take a leave of absence" while the matter is before the courts, he said.

If Smith were to step down, Ignace council

would be able to conduct municipal business with a quorum of three councillors and the mayor.

OPP Const. Michelle DeConinck said a police investigation continues into expense claims made by Ignace council and staff in 1997-98.

## CRIME

Ignace Coun. Suzanne Smith to appear in court March 22



# District leaders gather

## KDMA sessions begin in Ear Falls on Friday

BY BRYAN MEADOWS  
NORTHWEST BUREAU

A lack of provincial cabinet ministers at the Kenora District Municipal Association annual meeting in Ear Falls shouldn't dampen delegates' debating spirit.

Ear Falls clerk-treasurer Dennis Kristjansson said Tuesday municipal leaders will have plenty to discuss at the two-day meeting which begins Friday.

About 50 delegates from KDMA's nine-member municipalities plan to attend the meeting at the Ear Falls Legion.

Delegates will consider 25 resolutions dealing with issues covering natural resources, health, transportation, social and environmental concerns. All resolutions have been approved by individual municipal councils.

While Ear Falls council didn't submit any resolutions, Kristjansson said councillors will watch for those that mirror community concerns.

"Our area of concern is with health care funding and the (ongoing) decrease in municipal funding from the province," he said.

Ignace Mayor Andre Tardiff said win-

ter road maintenance deserves discussion.

"Because we have three times the traffic, the highways should be salted and sanded three times as much," said Tardiff.

Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Bob Nault and NDP Leader Howard

### POLITICS

25 resolutions to be considered by delegates to KDMA annual meeting

Hampton are to address delegates on Friday, but no provincial cabinet ministers will be in attendance.

Kristjansson said the organizing committee wanted to set up a video-conferencing link with one or two ministers but scheduling

problems arose.

Friday's agenda includes discussions on the Fire Protection and Prevention Act and an update on the Kenora District Services Board.

The luncheon will be addressed by Derek Templeton, manager of business development for TrusJoist Weyerhaeuser, which is building an engineered

lumber mill in the Kenora area.

Resolutions will be discussed Friday afternoon and Saturday morning.

Dryden Mayor Roger Valley will make a presentation on the amalgamation of the Kenora district.

"I've heard from some (Queen's Park) bureaucrats that there's been some discussion by politicians of amalgamating the whole district... I just want to bring (the issue) to the attention of delegates," he said.

"Those types of discussions should be going on at KDMA," Valley said, adding he's not in favour of a district-wide merger.

While a district merger would look good to the provincial government and mean less administration, Valley said, "The distances are too great to have effective representation for all nine (KDMA) municipalities."



Dryden Mayor  
Roger Valley

# Secretary of state pushes 'Net business

NORTHWEST BUREAU

Secretary of State for Rural Development and FedNor Andy Mitchell encourages regional business leaders to get on the Internet bandwagon.

Vicki Kurz, past president of the Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce, said Tuesday that Mitchell committed his ministry "to taking a leadership role for the region" during a meeting with NOACC officials in Dryden on Monday.

At that meeting, NOACC pitched three e-business concepts to the minister including:

- E-business and e-commerce awareness and implementation.
- E-business conference and ex-

position.

- An e-business procurement portal to allow business-to-business transactions.

## ECONOMY

Chambers of Commerce want work on e-business conferences and business-to-business solutions

"The whole project is geared to champion the economic opportunities that are out there for the region," Kurz said, noting that NOACC officials weren't at the Dryden meeting to solicit funding, but only to get the minister's morale support.

But she added that NOACC may request FedNor funding to establish Internet business concepts in the future.

Kurz said Mitchell encouraged NOACC to continue to build on regional partnerships that will position Northwestern Ontario in the global economy.

Chronicle - Dec 2/00



# User fees on the way up

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Following are highlights of the 2000 City of Thunder Bay operating budget, approved Monday:

## Total revenues of \$142.8 million will consist of:

- \$91.4 million from municipal taxes.
- \$23.5 million from provincial grants.
- \$6.4 million from payments in lieu of taxes.
- \$8.5 million as the Thunder Bay Telephone dividend.
- \$2.15 million in income from investments.
- \$1.5 million from penalties and interest on taxes.
- \$4.1 million transferred from the sewer rate reserve fund.
- \$1.2 million in surplus from previous year's operations.
- \$500,000 from the government-run casino (the city's five-per-cent share of gross slot machine revenues).
- \$460,000 transfer from the land development account (funds operations of the realty services division).
- \$25,000 from sale of surplus equipment.

## Total base expenditures for city departments is \$107.6 million.

- \$437,000 for mayor and 12 members

of council for salaries and benefits.

• \$24.9 million for Ontario Works, including district social services administration board.

- \$3 million for homes for the aged.
- \$14.7 million for fire service.
- \$19.6 million for police.
- \$11 million for roads division work.
- \$6.4 million for transit.

## Outside boards and agencies:

- \$885,000 for HAGI Transit.
- \$717,000 for parking authority.
- \$600,000 for Community Auditorium.
- \$1.9 million for Thunder Bay District Health Unit.
- \$3.6 million for public library.
- \$221,000 for Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society.

## User fee increases will bring in an additional \$436,000:

- Fee increases at indoor pools, \$13,000.
- Five-per-cent increase at Canada Games Complex, \$106,100.
- Five-per-cent increase in golf course rates, \$58,800.
- Three-per-cent increase in general parks user fees, \$700.
- New fees for inspections, permits, fire reports, legal documents, \$20,000.
- Increase in fees for tax registration, tax sale, weigh scale, \$20,000.

Chronicle - Feb 1/2000



# City holds tax rate; reduces services

*Chronicle - Feb 1/2000*

**BY JULIO GOMES**  
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Garbage pickup, recycling depots, snow removal in the downtown cores and water rates.

All these items were sources of lively debate Monday, but Thunder Bay city councillors made no unexpected changes when they set this year's operating budget.

"I'm really happy the budget stayed intact," said Coun. Robert Tuchenhausen, who chaired Monday's special committee meeting.

He admitted there were efforts to delete and add some controversial items to the \$142.7 million in suggested expenditures.

But without exception, councillors went with what administration was recommending.

"For politicians the easiest thing you can do is have more spending programs," Tuchenhausen said.

"The hard thing is to make cuts.

"You don't make any friends by making cuts, let's face it, but at the end of the day it has to be done."

The most controversial deci-

istration had to look for savings in every area.

The move to remove this item from the budget was lost on a 6-6 vote.

Similarly, an effort to keep the popular neighbourhood recycling depots was defeated.

Administration recommended the program be ended since curbside pickup of blue-bagged recyclables essentially means a duplication of service.

Timko's motion to pare the projected \$200,000 savings down to \$100,000 — keeping half the number of depots now in place — lost on a 9-3 vote.

Coun. Betty Kennedy got no support either to reinstate an item that would see \$45,000 spent on snow removal service in the downtown cores.

Timko also found himself lined up against his council colleagues in tabling a resolution that a five-per-cent increase in water rates scheduled for April 1 be deleted.

He argued that incremental increases in the water rate — which are scheduled to at least 2003 — was unnecessary for a profitable





# Pickle Lake

By Graeme Mackechnie

**T**HE FLU virus struck Pickle Lake in a big way; just about everyone is on the mend now but it spared no one.

Well we made it into the year 2000 without too many Y2K glitches. We do have to take our hats off to Jim Smith and Randy Lundmark of Ontario Hydro, who responded to an emergency power outage in Pickle Lake late Christmas Eve and early Christmas morning. It is nice to know that the smaller northern communities are treated with the same dedication and concern by this essential service provider. **WELL DONE!**

Of course we doff our hats to Karl Hopf and his town crew as well - no matter how reluctantly. We did have another total outage on Christmas Day which created panic in our household as Tom Turkey was still in the oven, however it was of very short duration and everything proceeded on schedule.

Scotty Shawinimash had his trailer in Pickle Lake burn down - it seems that hardly a Christmas season goes by without one fire. The fire has been attributed to a malfunctioning coffee maker which was left on. Fortunately no one was hurt and Scotty was able to recover some cherished possessions and his leather jacket which contained his Christmas mad money.

Jim Dalzell, our esteemed mayor and butcher, is back at work in the Northern Store after a long absence due to knee surgery. Jim is on light duty in the office and I'm sure would much prefer to be back on his feet behind the meat counter. Butcher Dan is trying his best to keep Jim's customers happy but he doesn't know our buy-

ing habits as well as Jim which leads me to comment on the Northern Store. What's happening? More and more people are becoming disgruntled and are shopping out of town. When Councillor Chartrand, a community minded person and a strong supporter of the local economy, starts out-shopping it is time for our Northern Area Manager to do some serious investigating. As well, our local Northern Community Council hasn't had a meeting to air our complaints to management for well over a year.

Wolfden Resources and Jon Pol have been active at Pickle Crow. The first mini-bulk sample provided some excellent assay results. Jon Pol stock jumped in value several cents and the potential development remains a breath of hope for our community.

There have been lay-offs at Wasaya Airways, Pickle Lake's largest employer. Lay-offs have been attributed to a reduced workload due to winter road openings combined with a planned recovery rate from losses incurred while running scheduled passenger service.

Pickle Lake bids a fond farewell to the Johnston family and to Marnie and Shawn Brandenburg.

The Pickle Lake Men's Bonspiel is scheduled for Jan. 28, 29 & 30 with a dance on the evening of the 29th. Come on down and socialize at the curling rink, watch some fun curling and grab a snack at Pierre's Canteen.

I will end this column on a sad note. It is with great sorrow that we mark the passing of Father Gilles Gauvreau. Father Gilles will be sadly missed by many communities and especially by his friends in Pickle Lake and Lansdowne House.

Bulletin  
Jan 26/00



*Dryden Observer*  
*Jan 25/00*

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **RE: DOG OWNERS**

City of Dryden dog owners are reminded they must on or before February 1, 2000, license their dog(s), pay the associated licensing fee and affix to the dog a numbered metal tag supplied by the Corporation. The tag must be securely attached to the dog's collar or harness at all times.

Dog owners will receive an invoice for the year 2000 dog license fee based on 1999 records. The new direct billing approach streamlines the former licensing system in attempt to maintain the current license fee and provide the convenient option of forwarding payment by mail or after hours drop box. All new dog owners are reminded that a license is required.

A fine of \$60.00 may be imposed for not licensing your dog and paying the associated fee.

Chief R. Imrie  
Dryden Police Service

# Poor roads considered "fact of life"

By COLIN LOUGHEED  
STAFF WRITER

**A**N OPEN letter to Minister of Transportation David Turnbull written by Kenora-Rainy River MPP Howard

Hampton is viewed with little concern by local MTO officials.

In the letter, Hampton asked Turnbull to review existing conditions of road maintenance to better suit northern communities. Hampton wrote that highway maintenance has gotten progressively worse over the past three years and attributes it to "outsourcing" of the work to contractors.

He wrote that the provincial auditor had raised concerns about privatizing road maintenance, saying, "Outsourcing may ultimately result in a significant increase in the cost of



**Kenora-Rainy River MPP  
Howard Hampton**

highway maintenance in these contracts."

Not so, according to Jim Chabbert, head of MTO. Chabbert admits that while privatization has brought staff cuts to his Ministry, expenses haven't been any higher.

He also said that inconsistencies in road maintenance are more a result of cold weather than inflation or understaffing.

Salting the highways in extremely cold temperatures is ineffective, making the roads snow-packed and slippery, Chabbert said. But,

it's a yearly condition that can't be helped.

"It would be nice to come up with an alternative to salt in the colder weather," said Chabbert. "There are people looking at alternatives."

One of these alternatives is a liquid pulp by-product that's more effective in cooler conditions, but more expensive than salting. The product isn't being widely used yet but could still be an alternative in the future.

Chabbert said that the only main difference continues to be that contractors handle equipment while the MTO handles more administration. MTO now is responsible for ensuring that the contractors do their work properly.

Other than the downgrading and shifting of responsibilities, Chabbert said that there haven't been any significant alterations to the road maintenance system over the past three years. "It hasn't changed," he said. "It's just a fact of life."

*Bulletin Jan 26/00*



Our readers write

*Dryden Observer*  
*Jan 25/00*

## MPP invites Turnbull to ride the highways

*Last week, Kenora-Rainy River MPP Howard Hampton sent an open letter to Transportation Minister David Turnbull addressing highway maintenance in the riding. The letter follows:*

I invite you as the minister in charge of highway maintenance to tour the highways of northwestern Ontario to see for yourself how ice-covered and hazardous they are.

Constituents have been telling me that winter highway maintenance has gotten progressively worse over the last three winters. I have served as the representative from this area for over 13 years and I have never seen such poor winter road maintenance as now. Over the past weeks, I have traveled much of the highways in the riding and my staff have covered the rest of the highway grid within the Kenora-Rainy River riding. I have seen firsthand the treacherous driving conditions that people in northwestern Ontario

now face.

A few years ago, the Ministry of Transportation was in charge of clearing highways throughout Ontario, but your government has decided to outsource work to various contractors. What you now have in this part of the province is a patchwork of roads that are cleared and other stretches that are not cleared, depending on the work of each individual contractor.

The Provincial Auditor has raised concerns about the costs of privatizing highway maintenance. The auditor states, "outsourcing may ultimately result in a significant increase in the cost of highway maintenance in these contracts".

Minister, when will you drive the highways of northwestern Ontario, which you are responsible for maintaining? I look forward to hearing from you soon. I would be more than willing to help make arrangements for such a trip.

*Howard Hampton*