

Security Cameras May Be Added at Island School, Superintendent Reports

By Sean Ely

Before school board meetings, it is customary to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, but Thursday, May 24, the meeting included a bit of a kick . . . or a tap, tap, twirl, and a twist, to be exact.

Preschoolers entered the meeting room at Mackinac Island Public School with an

American flag, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and then went right into their "Tap, Tap, Twirl, and Twist" song with noisemakers and dance moves. Three of the children were celebrating their preschool graduation that night, in the classroom across the hall with teacher Jody Barna.

Turning to business, the

school board addressed the formation of a Parent Teacher Organization, playground repairs and new signage, door replacements, the need for a volleyball coach and girls basketball coach for next season, tourists entering the school, and parental visits to classrooms during school hours.

Superintendent Roger Schrock said parents and teachers want to have a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) organized and running by the time school starts in the fall, and he will be working with the group over the summer.

Board members discussed purchasing a new track ride in the playground, then referred the matter to the Building and Grounds Committee. The ride has been broken, leaving some poles sticking up, and Game Time, the company that installed the equipment more than six years ago, has told the school it will cost \$3,800 for a new one, plus installation costs. The board considered filing an insurance claim under its vandalism insurance rider, but that has a \$1,000 deductible clause.

Dr. Schrock suggested that children may prefer a different piece of equipment, such as a climbing wall or arch climber.

As a deterrent to future breakage of the playground equipment, the school will erect signs stating that the equipment is meant for children no younger than five and no older than 12.

Tourists peering into the school and, in some cases, entering the building to use the toilets during school hours, may lead to the installation of security cameras and locked doors. Dr. Schrock noted that a public school on Mackinac Island seems to attract the attention of visitors. The school, he said, is not a public restroom facility.

The Building and Grounds Committee will discuss the idea of locking doors and installing security cameras so visitors will have to ring a doorbell to gain access. School secretary Barb Fisher could monitor the cameras and unlock the doors remotely.

Dr. Schrock said a Homeland Security grant might cover such a system.

Other building concerns include a leak when snow gets packed into the vents near the gymnasium, allowing water to occasionally run down on the

inside wall to the hardwood floor, which Dr. Schrock said could eventually ruin it.

The school will be advertising for a new volleyball and girls basketball coach, because next school year, there will be a Lakers basketball team for the girls.

The board will ask all parents to check in at the school office when visiting the building, so that the school's privacy policy can be upheld.

Policy 9410, entitled "Parental Visitations to Classrooms," states, "The board and the superintendent have the obligation to protect the privacy rights of all students and their families by ensuring the frequency of the visitations by one parent does not allow the parent to develop inappropriate knowledge of the behavior or academic progress of other students."

While all parents are welcome at the school at any time, Dr. Schrock explained to the board, unnecessary visits or frequent long visits can be disruptive to the classroom.

The new check-in procedure, he said, is not designed to keep parents from visiting, but he needs to make sure he

knows who is in the building and for what reason.

In observance of Teacher Appreciation month, the board presented each teacher with gift certificates.

A slide presentation on the Close Up government studies trip to Washington, D.C. was presented by Woody Beardsley. He went there with Karlena Mosley, Caleb Straight, Kyle Sweet, and teacher Seth Baker and joined students from across the country to learn about the federal government.

Another presentation by teachers Liz Staats Burt and Susan Bennett explained the recent science and mathematics fair. They highlighted the winners in each category, with the overall winner of the mathematics fair being sophomore Fuller Cowell with his Go Big or Go Home presentation on launching a snowmobile off a ramp, determining what the best and safest angle and speed to take off at would be.

The next meeting will be at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 21, followed by a public presentation on the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Grand Hotel To Offer Tennis Clinics

Grand Hotel tennis professional Jerry Murray will be hosting tennis clinics for juniors and adults beginning Monday, June 11. The clinics will focus on drilling, match play, and points.

Junior clinics will be held

Monday through Thursday mornings and adult clinics are slated to be held Monday evenings. In addition, an adult doubles league will be held on Wednesday evenings.

Mr. Murray can be reached through the hotel at 847-3331.

Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



Casperson Conquered One Stupak, May Take on Another

There are stirrings in the northland about another Stupak-Casperson election face-off, a match touted by Republican State Chairman Saul Anuzis and discounted by Democratic State Chairman Mark Brewer.

In 2002, Republican Tom Casperson, owner of a log trucking business in the Upper Peninsula, defeated Menominee Mayor Laurie Stupak, wife of U.S. Representative Bart Stupak (D-Menominee), for the three-county open 108th District state House seat long held by Democrats.

On Friday, the now-term-limited state representative said he is "headed toward making the run" for Stupak's congressional seat next year.

I called Casperson after reading a blog by Republican State Chairman Saul Anuzis declaring: "I'm hearing good things from Washington and their excitement about Tom." When I asked Anuzis for sources of those glad tidings, he cited the National Republican Congressional Committee and White House political guru Karl Rove.

Anuzis also said, "Right now [Casperson] is the only one that has expressed interest and is out talking to people. If he runs, he makes it a race. It will be the logger against a lawyer."

As Anuzis, who calls it "probably one of the most swing districts in the state," seeks to fire up GOP troops about the race, he suggests Stupak might not seek a ninth term and may be tiring of traveling his sprawling district that covers all 15 counties in the Upper Peninsula and 15 of the 68 counties below the bridge.

Stupak, who had about a dozen district appearances scheduled over the Memorial Day holiday, discounts any fatigue factor, and said:

"Do I plan on running? Yes. But we're not ready to make any formal announcement."

Said Casperson: "Is it an uphill race? Sure." He and Anuzis contend much of Stupak's past success was that he ran somewhat independent of party leadership. But, they insist, now that he has a subcommittee leadership position in the Democratic-ruled House, he veers to the left and kowtows to wishes of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Stupak bristled: "I do my own thing. I always have."

In response to the above

GOP spins on Stupak, here are spins of longtime Democratic state boss Mark Brewer:

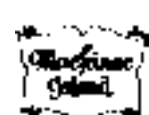
"I have never known Bart Stupak to kowtow to anybody - the real congressional swing seats in 2008 will be for those now held by Republican Representatives Joe Knollenberg of Bloomfield Hills, who had a surprisingly tough battle to win his eighth term, and freshman Tim Walberg of Tipton. The real objective of the Michigan GOP is to build up Casperson for a 2010 run for the seat of term-limited Senator Michael Prusi (D-Ishpeming)."

My spin: Stupak will seek, and most likely again win, reelection - and then be in the speculative mix for a spot on the 2010 statewide ticket - governor, lieutenant governor, or attorney general.

Meanwhile, Stupak, an ex-state cop who relishes conducting investigations, has a high visibility role in chairing an oversight subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. He was author of a bill passed last week overwhelmingly (284-141) by the House to authorize the Federal Trade Commission to investigate and penalize those found to be gouging at the gas pump.

The reality is that Stupak is not likely to succeed in getting relief at the pump any more than other politicians, including Senator Carl Levin in an oversight role years ago.

George Weeks retired last year after 22 years as political columnist for The Detroit News. His weekly Michigan Politics column is syndicated by Superior Features.



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