

Sturgis Hospital Commons Starts up with a Snip

Sturgis Hospital started off 2009 on cold winter morning with a snip, celebrating the completion of a major 2.3 million dollar project. On January 6, Sturgis Hospital held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of their new Medical Commons building.

The new Commons is located on the corner of US-12 and Franks Ave. in the old Harding's Supermarket. The ceremony was attended by community leaders, Hospital Trustees, and Foundation Board members. The ribbon was cut by John Mayer, President of the Board of Trustees. The snips he used to cut the blue ribbon were made especially for the occasion by Midwest Tool and Cutlery, Inc. of Sturgis.

Many local doctors, nurses, and physicians, have moved their offices into the new commons. Those include, Sturgis Pediatrics, Sturgis Hospital Physical Therapy, The Doctors Office, and Chicago Road Medical. An open house was held to the public on February 7, and refreshments and tours were provided. The Commons is now up and running, and open to the public.



Ribbon Cutting at the new Sturgis Medical Commons

Enjoy March through May with the DDA

The Open Door Art Gallery will be having their annual Bowls for Hunger event Saturday, March 28 at the Gallery on the corner of Chicago Road and North Nottawa. The cost will be \$15 for a hand made bowl and soup. Proceeds go to the Salvation Army and the Open Door Art Gallery.

The next Art BOUNCE, with downtown business featuring artists, will be Friday, April 17 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Also, don't forget Michigan Week, which will feature a festival in downtown Sturgis on May 16th along with the parade; come for the fun and visit downtown businesses while you do!

Sturgis Recreation Spring Programs

Adult Softball Leagues: Mens Upper & Lower Divisions and Church Upper & Lower Divisions; information packets will be available at the Doyle beginning April 1st.

T-Ball: Boys & Girls Ages 4-7. Sign up will begin in May. Volunteer Coaches and team sponsorships needed; please call the Doyle Center for more information.

Youth Summer Tennis Camp: Ages 5 yrs. - 12th grade. All classes will be held outdoors at Augspurger Tennis Courts. Call for specific dates and times for each age group.

For these and more exciting programs this spring and summer, pick up the most recent program booklet available in April at the Doyle Center.



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MISSION STATEMENT

The City's Mission is to deliver high-quality services in a professional, efficient and nondiscriminatory manner to its residents and businesses; to continue to strengthen the economy and quality of life; and to ensure that the expression of views by citizens are recognized and responded to by the City.

A Newsletter Produced
By The



For Its Citizens

130 N. Nottawa St.
Sturgis, MI 49091
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www.ci.sturgis.mi.us

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Casino Proposal Comes to Commission

On February 11th the Sturgis City Commission meeting hosted over 650 residents and visitors interested in learning about and commenting on a proposed mixed-use casino development in the Fawn River Crossing Development area on the south end of town.

Commission Resolution Regarding Proposed Development

Endorsed the proposed development in concept, subject to negotiation of appropriate development agreements.

Directed City staff to negotiate the appropriate development agreements and submit an appropriate recommendation for action to the City Commission as soon as practical.

Requested that State Senator Cameron Brown and Representative Matt Lori take whatever action is necessary to support, authorize and implement this proposal.

Under the proposed plan, the development would initially be located on land in the Dresser Industrial park at the corner of South Centerville and Bogen Road, near the Michigan – Indiana border. The proposed mixed-use development would include commercial/retail businesses, a truck facility, and casino gaming. The project would be developed by the Burt Lake Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, in conjunction with Vanguard Entertainment, LLC, a Michigan development company.

Curtis Chambers, Tribal Chair of the Burt Lake Band, along with representatives of Vanguard Entertainment were at the meeting to get a better sense of the community's interest regarding the proposal and provided a brief presentation on their plans.

Following the presentation and Commission questions, several citizens came forward to address the Commission with thoughts, opinions, and questions about the project. Citizen comment was structured so that individuals in support of the project, opposed to the project, and those with general comments or questions each had opportunity to speak.

Following these comments members of the Commission provided positive opinions of the proposal, respecting opposition opinions and reasoning, but focusing on the economic benefits of the project for the community, particularly as it related to job creation. The Commission unanimously approved a resolution of support for the development project (see the sidebar for more information).

Currently City staff are completing due diligence on the project in order to provide the Commission with a recommendation for future action and the Burt Lake Band and their developers are addressing issues related to moving the development forward. In order to continue to gain public feedback on the project, the City has set up a special comment form on its website for the project. You can find a link to the form on the City's homepage at www.ci.sturgis.mi.us. For more information on the development, stay tuned to the eWire e-mail newsletter.



Fawn River Crossing Development Proposal

Comment at: www.ci.sturgis.mi.us

Neighbor 2 Neighbor Home Improvement Grant Funding Available

Starting March 1st, the City of Sturgis will be issuing applications for the Neighbor 2 Neighbor program's Home Improvement Grant. The grant's purpose is to allow residents to complete projects for exterior improvements to their homes.

To be eligible for grant funding, applicants must own and occupy the home they plan to work on and the property must be located in the City of Sturgis. At this time, there are no income eligibility or matching fund requirements.

Projects will be selected by a committee composed of citizens and representatives of the City Commission and Planning Board and selections will be based on predetermined criteria. The maximum award for Home Improvement grants is set at \$2,500.

Applications will be available at City Hall in the Community Development Department or on the City Web Site at www.ci.sturgis.mi.us starting on March 2nd, 2009. Applications for the Grant Program will be accepted until March 31st.

Eligible Home Improvement Grant Projects

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Roof replacement and/or repairs
- Exterior painting
- Structural improvements
- Siding
- Porch remodeling
- Window replacements
- Driveway improvements
- Fencing
- Landscaping
- Storage sheds



Great Lakes, Great Traditions: Michigan Week 2009

2009 marks the 50th year Sturgis has kicked off the Michigan Week celebration, so be ready for another excellent celebration. Events will start on Friday May 15th and follow on through the weekend and following week.



Currently scheduled events (as of press time) start with the kick-off dinner at the Sturges-Young Auditorium on May 15th; doors open at 5:00 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.

Festivities on Saturday, May 16th include the Michigan Pride Parade down East Chicago Road at noon; Michigan Week Festival in downtown Sturgis; and the Ms. Sturgis Pageant at Sturges-Young Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

The following week also features several events including Education Day sponsored by the Sturgis Rotary on Monday May 18th; Commerce Day sponsored by Sturgis Kiwanis on Wednesday, May 20th; and a Salute to Volunteerism sponsored by the Exchange Club on Thursday, May 21st.

Please join us in the celebration; if you have any questions, please contact the Sturgis Area Chamber of Commerce at (269) 651-5758.

The Department of Public Services Prepares you for Spring

Spring Hydrant Flushing

The City of Sturgis Department of Public Services will be flushing hydrants in April in the following areas. This schedule is tentative and subject to weather conditions:

TUESDAY, APRIL 20th
South of East Chicago Road and east of South Nottawa Street.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21st
South of West Chicago Road and west of South Nottawa Street.

THURSDAY, APRIL 22nd
North of East Chicago Road and east of North Nottawa Street.

FRIDAY, APRIL 23rd
North of West Chicago Road and west of North Nottawa Street to North Centerville Road.

Should any water discoloration occur at your faucet, let the water flow for several minutes until it becomes clear. If the discoloration persists, or if you have questions, contact the Department of Public Services at 651-2879.

Spring Leaf and Brush Pickup

The Public Services Department is also preparing for this year's Spring leaf and brush pick-up which will begin the first full week of April, starting April 6th. Leaves and brush will be picked up at the same time; see notes in the sidebar for more information on pickup.

MONDAY, APRIL 6th: ALL RESIDENTS NORTH OF CHICAGO ROAD SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR PICKUP.

THURSDAY APRIL 9th: ALL RESIDENTS SOUTH OF CHICAGO ROAD SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR PICKUP.

Leaf and Brush Pickup Notes

- Leaves and brush should be piled on the terrace or in the yard next to the roadway.
- Please, for safety reasons DO NOT put leaves or brush in the roadway.
- DO NOT pile leaves or brush near the roadway more than 48 hours in advance of pick-up.
- All brush must be cut to lengths of 8 feet or less.
- Brush should be neatly stacked and separated from leaves.

DPS crews will begin the pickup on the north side of the City and work their way south. Weather conditions and varying amounts of leaves and brush make it difficult to adhere to a strict schedule. Therefore, it is necessary to have your materials ready for pickup; crews will get to them as quickly as possible.

CREWS WILL BE BACK THE FIRST FULL WEEK OF EACH MONTH THROUGH OCTOBER.

If you should have any questions please contact the Public Services Department at 651-2879.



City Compost Site

City residents may take yard waste materials to the compost site beginning April 6th.

April, October and November
Monday's and Thursday's: Noon to 6:00 p.m.
Saturday's: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

May through September
Monday's and Thursday's: Noon to 7:30 p.m.
Saturday's: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

City residents have access to the Compost Site free of charge; they only need to present proof of City residency at the site. Residents of area townships are required to obtain a pass for the compost site at City Hall. Cost is free for residents of Sturgis Township, \$35.00 for other township residents. Pass cards are available now at Sturgis City Hall.

Guidelines for Good Recycling

Thanks to City residents, the curbside recycling program has been a big success. In order to keep the process running smoothly, it is important to keep a few guidelines in mind:

- Only fill your cart to the point where the lid can close, and never tape the lid down. Overfilling can cause recycling to scatter and taping down lids impedes collection. Containers with taped lids may not be collected.
- If you have more recyclable material than your cart can hold, please wait until your next collection day and put it in your cart. Excess recycling left outside a cart may not be collected.
- Only use your supplied containers for recycling; non-supplied containers will not be collected.
- Be sure to only put recyclable items and not trash in your cart. Trash includes wood, leaves, scrap metal, and other non-recyclable materials. Cans noticeably full of trash will not be collected.
- Be sure to have your recycling out early on collection days, and preferably the night before. Once your cart has been collected, please remove it from the terrace area.
- Please place your cart facing forward (wheels away from the street) and away from obstructions like parked cars or poles. Obstructed carts may not be collected.
- Remember: collection is on the 1st and 3rd Thursday for homes NORTH of US-12, and the 2nd and 4th Thursday for homes SOUTH of US-12; **there is NO collection on a fifth Thursday of a month.**

If you have any questions about the program, or need to obtain a recycling cart, you may contact Borden at 1-800-386-3313.

Fire Department to Celebrate 150 years

On June 20, 1859, the Sturgis Town Council purchased its first fire engine and hose car starting the service that has become the City of Sturgis Fire Department.

On June 20, 2009, the Department will celebrate this 150th anniversary with an open house and other activities that are currently in the planning stages.

We welcome the community to join us for this sesquicentennial celebration. Information will be forthcoming in the June Sturgis Wire, the Sturgis eWire, the Sturgis Journal and WMSH Radio closer to the celebration date.

If any member of the community has any fire related pictures, videos, equipment or memorabilia, and would be willing to share them for this event, we would appreciate your assistance. Please call the station at 659-7257 if you have any questions or comments.



150 Years



Local Business Spotlight



The Downtown Development Authority, Sturgis Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Sturgis are partnering to help promote local businesses. The purpose of the "Local Business Spotlight" is to promote newsworthy items about new and existing businesses. Our hope is that the "Local Business Spotlight" will be another valuable tool in promoting and creating awareness of our businesses, keeping them strong and healthy. Submittals for the "Local Business Spotlight" should be sent to Andrew Kuk at akuk@ci.sturgis.mi.us he can also be contacted at (269) 659-7234.



From left: Nicole Dudek, Kara Saltzman, Sarah Owsley, and Thomas McLaughlin

McLaughlin & Company, LLC – 305 E. Chicago Road

In business since 1985, McLaughlin & Company provides accounting and consulting services to clients in the Sturgis area. In 2002 McLaughlin & Company moved their business to 305 E. Chicago Road, and completed a major renovation at that location.

McLaughlin and Company features a small, professional, and dedicated staff that is a major part of the success of the business. A business alliance with large accounting firm Plante Moran provides research resources and other benefits to the company, offering, according to business owner Thomas McLaughlin, "the benefits of a large firm without being one." Primarily serving long term, Sturgis-based clients, Mr. McLaughlin emphasizes the success and dedication of these businesses to Sturgis as part of what allows McLaughlin & Company to succeed in the community.

COMMISSION APPROVES INTERIM ELECTRIC SHUTOFF POLICY

The City Commission approved an interim electric shutoff policy on Wednesday, February 25th to address how the City handles shutoffs for non-payment during the winter months. The policy was developed by the City's Electric Department as a bridge until more formal rules are drafted by the Michigan Municipal Electric Association (MMEA), of which the City is a member, later this year.

The new policy took effect following its passage on February 25th and will remain in effect until April 30th. After April 30th, the existing shutoff policy will resume until the MMEA rules are adopted. The interim policy will suspend shutoffs for non-payment on households that meet one or more of the conditions (see sidebar); in all cases the customer must advise the City's customer service department of their circumstances.

For all customers that fall under this policy, the City will calculate and inform them of the monthly amounts that the customer must pay to avoid shutoff under this rule. The City may request verification of eligibility from any customers claiming to meet any conditions of the Policy.

Information regarding the new policy will be included with all past due, disconnect, and yellow card notices. When City employees go to complete a shutoff, they will contact the customer immediately before disconnecting the electric service, announce the purpose of their presence and verify that the customer or any member of the customer's household does not meet any of the conditions specified in the policy. If the customer claims to meet one (1) or more conditions, the electric service will not be disconnected and the customer will be directed to contact Customer Service at (269) 659-7232.

The City of Sturgis may require payment of all past due amounts after May 1, 2009. Failure to pay may result in an electric service disconnect.

Conditions for Suspended Shutoff In effect February 25th to April 30th

1. A customer is 65 years of age or older or has a physical or mental disability.
2. A customer's household income does not exceed 200% of the federal poverty guidelines as published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the customer pays the lesser of either of the following:
 - a. An amount equal to seven percent (7%) of the customer's estimated annual bill.
 - b. An amount equal to seven percent (7%) of the customer's current monthly income.
3. The City shall not shut off electric service to a customer if one (1) or more adults in the customer's household is unemployed and one (1) of the following conditions also applies:
 - a. The conditions of #2 (above) are met.
 - b. The customer enters into the City's equal monthly payment plan.
 - c. The customer and the City agree to the payment of a specific amount.

SRF 2008 Construction Starts Up for Season

The City's sewer construction project, SRF 2008, will be beginning construction for the spring and summer starting in March. The project, started last fall, will continue for most of the summer and be focused on sections of Broadus Street, Progress Street, and North Centerville. Additional construction will take place on Surprise Street, Prairie Street, Stockdale Road, and portions of South Street, West Congress, South Nottawa, and Fawn River Road.

In order to provide residents and business owners with information, the City has a website centered around the project which includes an interactive progress map that will be updated regularly. In addition, the City will again provide weekly updates with the SRF 2008 e-mail newsletter. Citizens interested in viewing the site or signing up of the newsletter are encouraged to go to the City's homepage (www.ci.sturgis.mi.us) and follow the link on the SRF 2008 banner.

Sturges-Young is the Place to be this Spring

As the season changes and the weather gets warm it's the perfect time to get out of the house, and head on over to the Auditorium. This spring we will be taking you on breathtaking trips with the Travel Adventure Series heading to the "Great Parks of the West" on March 24, and the "Grand Canyon" on April 28. Come and enjoy these exciting vacation destinations without having to leave the comfort of your hometown.

The Sturgis Council of the Arts will host a variety of events at SYA in the coming months, including the London Trio on Friday, March 27th, featuring classical music and contemporary as well as music from cultures around the world. Other upcoming events include country music group Restless Heart on Saturday, April 18th and the Galliard Brass Ensemble on Saturday, April 28th. Call the Council of the Arts at (269) 659-7211 for pricing and availability.

For more information or tickets to any of our events, contact the Auditorium at (269) 651-8541.



Restless Heart April 18