



Two minute NEWS

NOT JUST A GAME

Table tennis teaches lessons in life. Read what columnist Greg Mancina has to say about the game. **A3**



UNDER FIRE

Birch Run village officials warn Police Chief Robert J. Mowatt Jr. that his job is in jeopardy. **A3**

SECOND FRONT PAGE

CHILD SUPPORT

For parents who have had problems getting child support checks, state Supreme Court Justice Maura Corrigan says to prepare for more trouble. **B1**

COLLEGE COSTS

Worried about the high price of college? Researchers say a degree is a better investment than ever. **B1**



SPORTS

SPEAKING UP

Detroit Lions quarterback Jeff Garcia has some strong words for his teammates after yet another loss. **C1**

PLAYING THE GARDEN

Michigan State's men's basketball team prepares to face sixth-ranked Boston College tonight at Madison Square Garden in the Jimmy V Classic. **C1**



RURAL Life

MEET THE 'CHAIRMAN'

A Tuscola County man has collected more than 400 farm implement seats. **C8**



LIVING



RIDING OUT THE STORM

A raging sea exacts an icy toll in the Tuesday's Tales feature, "Bella Bella." **D1**

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Great Lakes toxins persist

SARAH KELLOGG
SAGINAW NEWS WASHINGTON BUREAU

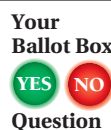
WASHINGTON — Toxic chemical concentrations in the Great Lakes remain a threat to humans, animals and fish, and not enough people know of the hazards, indicates a report due out next month.

The draft report was completed by the Scientific Advisory Board to the

International Joint Commission, a U.S.-Canada agency that oversees boundary water issues. Every two years, the panel of scientists reviews the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between the two countries, analyzing the state of the Great Lakes and recommending changes.

"The concentration of PCBs and total DDT and its metabolites in fish and wildlife tissues showed almost no

■ Is \$20 billion too much to clean up and protect the Great Lakes? **A3 Metro Rail.**



decline between 1990 and 2000," the report states. "The concentration of PCBs in Great Lakes fish today is 40 times above EPA's acceptable level."

DDT is a pesticide, and PCBs are manufactured chemical compounds that don't burn easily and often are used as coolants and lubricants. Both chemicals can have toxic health effects in humans and animals.

The report also concludes that fish advisories do not warn certain populations effectively about the dangers of

PLEASE SEE LAKES, A2 ▶

City tax bills contain goofs

THE SAGINAW NEWS

Most Saginaw homeowners are aware that winter property tax bills have a February payment deadline.

Still, City Hall is facing an overload of inquiries because notices mailed last week omitted the exact due date, which is Tuesday, Feb. 14.

A switch to new computer software led to the omission, said Daniel J. Vela, assistant finance director.

Residents have reported other troubles, Vela said Monday, such as some bills listing the administrative fee on the line for special assessments.

Staffers are compiling a list

- Housing project may rise near Wickes Park. **A6**
- Improvements planned at Wastewater Treatment Plant. **A6**
- Council dodges budget bullet, for now. **A6**
- Legal protection for manager, but no car. **A6**

of concerns to prepare for a full informational announcement later this week, he said. The city also will run clarifications on Saginaw Government Television, Charter Communications Channel 15, and on its Web site, www.saginaw-mi.com.

Bills list the phone number for questions, 759-1471. ♦

Blighted land gets new face

MIKE THOMPSON
THE SAGINAW NEWS

Motorists who follow North Washington to and from downtown will witness economic development in what may seem a most unlikely location.

City Council members Monday approved a project plan for Rifkin Steel & Aluminum Co. to move to the former Ferro-Met Corp. site at 1011 N. Washington near North Third, departing the existing scrapyard on prime riverfront property at 1443 N. Niagara.

"You look back in there and it looks horrible," said JoAnn T. Cray, president of Saginaw Future Inc., referring to the Ferro-Met property between North Washington and the Saginaw River.

"Now it's going to be cleaned up," she said.

The starting point was the Saginaw County Brownfield Authority's possession of \$850,000 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Federal officials soon were ready to take back the cash if local leaders didn't put it to use, Cray said.

Brownfield Authority leaders will loan the money to the County Economic Development Corp. for cleanup, which will strive to meet a 90 percent



■ Rifkin Steel & Aluminum Co. relocation site

DAN JACALONE / THE SAGINAW NEWS

repayment requirement by landing money from the state Department of Environmental Quality.

County development leaders then will have the option of using the repayment sum, \$765,000, for future projects.

CSX Transportation, which owns the 14-acre Ferro-Met property, will deed the land to Rifkin for \$1. Cray is negotiating with the railroad company also to help pay for the cleanup, estimated at \$1.4 million.

Ferro-Met, incorporated in 1967, processed scrap metal at its North Washington facility for two decades.

By 1973, the company was

PLEASE SEE RIFKIN, A2 ▶



JEFF SCHRIER/THE SAGINAW NEWS

Saginaw resident Tracy D. Albert, 43, displays his PRI 111B scintillator, a 1950s instrument used to survey land for uranium ore. The scintillator, a collectible, is more sensitive than a Geiger counter at detecting radiation.

Hunter's prey is invisible

The Saginaw man looks for radiation. He never has to look far.

JEREMIAH STETTLER
THE SAGINAW NEWS

Tracy Albert can sense the unseen. He envelops himself in the invisible, listening for clicks and looking for movements that might confirm the presence of something that the five senses cannot.

He senses it outside the Old Town Tattoo parlor in Old Saginaw City, along the Titabawassee River on property the Saginaw Plate Glass Co. once occupied, and in a Fiesta



JEFF SCHRIER/THE SAGINAW NEWS

Albert uses a Geiger counter to show that a Fiesta Ware cup from the 1920s is radioactive. He said having radioactive dishes is harmless unless they chip and a piece is swallowed.

Ware pitcher made in the 1920s.

Albert works as a lineman for Delta Star Power Service of Saginaw, but he is a radiation

PLEASE SEE RADIATION, A2 ▶

April 29, 2004
Back in the News

"Y" executive heading south"

David I. Parsons left his Saginaw YMCA job last year to take charge of a similar facility in New Orleans. Then Hurricane Katrina struck and Parsons found himself running an operation that served as a shelter for homeless people and a cleanup place for recovery workers. He sees much work ahead for the beleaguered city.

In New Orleans, it's 'time to roll up our sleeves'

It rained before it poured for a one-time Saginaw YMCA recreation leader who took a director's role in the New Orleans area.

MIKE THOMPSON
THE SAGINAW NEWS

Back in April 2004, former Saginaw YMCA employee David I. Parsons had a chance to visit the branch near New Orleans where he soon would take over as director.

Spring rain was falling in buckets.

"I had a chance to see that the place I picked did not flood. That was good to know," Parsons told The Saginaw News at the time, with a chuckle.

Within 16 months, history-making Hurricane Katrina struck.

The East Jefferson Family YMCA, west of the city and named for Jefferson Parish, survived the Aug. 28 storm and reopened Sept. 26 on a limited basis.

"It didn't flood up here, but the rain blew in hard enough to ruin our carpet," says Parsons, 45, whose duties since then have



David I. Parsons

gone far beyond running a recreation center.

His 'Y' has served as a shelter for people who toted their air mattresses and sleeping bags. He set up a day camp in October, before schools reopened, so that children's parents would have time for cleanup

chores and other tasks. Recovery workers with roles such as repairing roofs and trimming trees still stream in daily for a bathroom break or a hot shower.

"When we reopened," says Parsons, "one of the first things we had to do was

PLEASE SEE PARSONS, A2 ▶