

Down Memory Lane

10 YEARS AGO • JUNE 28, 1999

According to local translator maintenance technician Duane Ege, KBJR is back, but not at full power. The NBC affiliate from Duluth was knocked off the air after a plague of problems including a recent fire and the Easter ice storm.

The station has been unable to reach the outer regions of its broadcast area, including Cook County, since that ice storm damaged its broadcast tower.

KBJR recently announced it would be back in Cook County, and it is. The problem is that it is only broadcasting at about 10 percent power, and reception is quite poor.

Estimated market values on properties on Gull Lake and Seagull River will be frozen at 1998 values pending an analysis of the effect on those values of a recent court decision.

The decision to freeze the land values came after two Gull Lake residents complained that their loss of free motor access to Saganaga Lake (a wilderness lake) caused their property to be worth less.

20 YEARS AGO • JUNE 26, 1989

Two nonfatal cases of carbon monoxide poisoning in a Grand Marais residence on June 7 were linked to blasting for the construction project on Eighth Avenue West.

Carbon monoxide is a byproduct of blasting which cannot be smelled. The gases entered a broken sewer line and were emitted into the home through an unusual set of circumstances. The home's sewer lines were not properly vented and a pump was attached to the sanitary sewer system, draining the taps. Water in the taps would have prevented the gas from entering the house.

Both the venting and the sump pump installations were in violation of the state Plumbing Code.

Sixth grade students from the Grand Portage school recently assisted National Park Service employees in planting shrubs within Grand Portage National Monument.

Shoreline stabilization, needed to protect important historic grounds, had left several shoreline areas and creek banks without vegetative cover.

The students pitched in when an order of 350 plants arrived from a Minnesota nursery.

50 YEARS AGO • JUNE 25, 1959

A four-unit motel is being erected at the Ellis Smith place, Schroeder, and that together with their three cabins and the Smith's Eat Shop, make a convenient stopping place for tourists at Schroeder.

The motel units are arriving in two sections, come ready built and already furnished, complete to the smallest detail. Mr. Smith had the area sodded before the first unit arrived.

An interesting sidelight of Smith's Eat Shop is that 62,250 orders were filled at their place last year.

Col. and Mrs. Julian D. Graham of Lincoln, Neb., have been visiting in Grand Marais and vicinity this week renewing old friendships made when Col. Graham was commander of the Poplar Lake Camp on the Gunflint Trail 25 years ago.

A large gangling moose came out second best in a car-moose collision on Highway 61 east of Grand Marais early Monday morning.

The moose died from multiple injuries after it had been carried about 150 feet by the impact of the station wagon owned by a Two Harbors man, who was on his way to work on the Grand Portage-High Falls Road. The moose was dead by the time a game warden arrived; a derrick was necessary to load the moose for removal. The meat, in this case, could not be salvaged.

Usually disposed of at a local store, the meat is sold to customers who like moose steaks. After word went out that a moose had been struck, the store was flooded with calls from moose-hungry housewives, but this time they were disappointed.

90 YEARS AGO • JUNE 25, 1919

Word has been received here that a large number of people from Kansas will be touring into Grand Marais during the months of July and August.

George Taylor, photographer from Bemidji, is in Grand Marais this week taking orders for pictures.

K.E. Luger, fire patrolman, is here from St. Paul on business.

George Brisson came home from Duluth Saturday, bringing a new International truck.

Schroeder supervisors take time to consider bond payoff

Jane Howard

At the June 9, 2009 meeting of the Schroeder board of supervisors, Scott Harrison and Sally Nankivell of the Lutsen-Tofte Tourism Association (LTTA) asked Schroeder town supervisors Ross Willson, Catherine Johnson, and Bill McKeever to approve an amendment to a 2003 settlement agreement with the county regarding the collection and distribution of a 3% lodging tax. Harrison and Nankivell said they would be asking the towns of Tofte and Lutsen for their approval as well.

Under the amendment, the county would pay off—earlier than necessary—bonds that had been used to build the Superior National golf course. Paying off the bonds would release money held in reserve by the county so that it could be used by LTTA to promote tourism and would release the three townships from paying 2% of the 3% tax toward golf course debt.

“This is a good thing for the county, it removes debt.”

The amendment proposed that LTTA provide whatever funds were necessary in addition to the county's reserves to pay off the bonds, which don't have to be repaid until 2013.

In the last 10 years, Scott Harrison said, the lodging industry has only grown 2% a year, not keeping pace with the consumer price index or the cost of doing business. “The one industry that is dominant [tourism] is not in good shape,” he said. Freeing up the 3% tax income would allow businesses to do more marketing.

“This is a good thing for the county,” Harrison said. “It removes debt.”

The resort industry needs other industries around it, said Bill McKeever. He said he would rather see the extra tax income used to bring new jobs and industry that would provide better wages than what most workers make in the tourism industry. Harrison replied by saying that bringing new jobs to the county is what the Cook County Economic Development Authority is supposed to do but hasn't done.

Nankivell added that this tax revenue must be spent on marketing the lodging industry.

The board decided not to act on the resolution and amended agreement Harrison had asked them to sign since they had not had a chance to read it.

Disposing of sewer district

Catherine Johnson said that she had spoken with various members of the community, business owners, and former board members about whether Schroeder should withdraw from the Tofte-Schroeder Sanitary Sewer District (TSSSD). The majority of them supported withdrawal.

“I don't see this as a progressive thing for the Town of Schroeder right now,” she said, adding that people are paying taxes to both the county and the TSSSD.

TSSSD board member Rick Anderson said that in order to withdraw, the township must hold a public meeting. Johnson said they must have a petition as well.

Bill McKeever suggested they notify every property owner individually before holding a public meeting, in addition to putting a legal notice in the paper.

Anderson recommended that they hire an attorney to make sure they follow the right process and to help them find out how much money it might cost the township to withdraw. County Commissioner Bruce Martinson suggested that he and Johnson ask attorney Tom Spence how he might be able to help them.

Convincing the MPCA that the sewer district is financially unfeasible shouldn't be too complicated, Johnson said.

Licenses to rent out cabins

Commissioner Martinson asked the town board what they thought about the possibility of requiring lodging licenses for cabin owners who rent out their properties on an occasional basis. He said the county board had received a letter from a cabin owner unhappy that one set of neighbors was casually renting out their cabin.

They already need a license from the Department of Health, Nankivell said.

They shouldn't need anything more than a water/sewer license, McKeever said. He said he is on the state health board, and they are trying to make money any way they can.

“We're starting to overregulate what people can do on their own property,” said Johnson.

The group discussed the issue of trying to establish a level playing field for all lodging establishments.

New fire truck

Schroeder Fire Chief Phil Bonin said the department would like to use grant dollars to purchase a 2005 fire truck at a cost of \$100,000.

Why does Schroeder need a new truck? asked Floyd Johnson. Bonin said having newer trucks reduces the township's liability for the safety of its firefighters. The department is allowed to use trucks over 30 years old as long as it has at least two new pumpers, he said.

Neither the Schroeder nor the Tofte fire district saw any changes when the county board recently approved expansion of fire districts to cover all private

properties in the county, Bonin reported.

The department had received no calls in the previous month, Bonin said. “It's been pretty calm.”

Road repair frustrations

Town Clerk Carol Tveekrem reported that the Army Corps of Engineers authorized flood repairs to the Sugarloaf Landing Road proposed by the township. The Corps gave Schroeder a permit valid until August 2, 2011.

McKeever took issue with the document's description of the area, saying the map shows a stream where there is none.

Measures were taken immediately to fix the road, but the repair was not acceptable to governing authorities because the road supposedly ran over a designated trout stream, although according to McKeever at a previous meeting, the stream routinely goes dry.

Over the course of time, the township had been given conflicting directives regarding the repair by different branches of government, and this permit took a long time to obtain. “We're learning that you do not fix a road until it goes to heck,” said McKeever. He expressed frustration with the government's slowness and inefficiency in processing requests.

Floyd Johnson mentioned that trees had fallen beside the Sugarloaf Road and wondered how much money the township should spend clearing them so the ditches could be mowed. He suggested the possibility of having the Sentence-to-Serve crew do the work.

Things missing from cemetery

Tveekrem reported that a metal plaque marking Kenneth Parent's grave could not be found when she and Bruce Martinson went to look for it. She had received a call saying the marker was not there. Some corner markers are also missing, she said.

Maintenance issues

Schroeder's mowing costs have gone down from \$50 an hour last summer to about \$40 an hour due to decreased gas costs and the fact that a subcontractor would not be used to complete the work this summer.

Tveekrem reported that Como Oil charged \$789 for labor to fix a propane leak. She said two employees came out after hours and “fiddled” with the valve for about 20 minutes. They brought a replacement tank that was not needed. The township was charged \$90 an hour, including the workers' time traveling from Grand Marais. Catherine Johnson directed Tveekrem to send a letter of complaint and request an itemized statement.

Community involvement

As of April 1, 2009, the town of Schroeder had an estimated 191 residents in 90 households. Eleven people attended the June 9 meeting, representing over 8% of the total population.

Pike Lake Area ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL MEETING
 Saturday July 4th • 9:30am
 Jerry Schliep's Garage • 129 North Pike Lake Road
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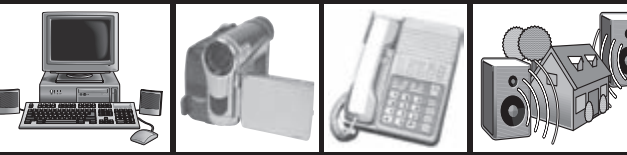
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