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the pulse

SAULT STE. MARIE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

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Market recovery on the horizon: economist

The economic climate is cause for concern, however, signs of recovery should begin later this year, says Robert Hogue, a Senior Economist with Royal Bank of Canada.

“Canada will not be able to avoid the recession, but we should see signs of recovery in the second half of 2009 – more noticeably in 2010,” he said during a presentation at the February meeting of the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation’s Board of Directors.

The crisis is the worst since the 1930s, said Hogue. “But that doesn’t mean we’re headed for a Great Depression-type meltdown. Policy-makers have learned from the 1930s. They’re much more forceful and smarter in addressing (the issue today).”

Government stimulus packages will help, he added. “We should see positive results by the second half of this year.”

Also present at the SSMEDC Board meeting were Jim Mclean, RBC’s Re-

gional Vice-President for the Algoma District, and Michael Kornell, a Business Development Manager with the bank.

“It’s essential that we have an understanding of the financial climate we are facing,” said SSMEDC President and Board Chairman Greg Punch.

“Supporting our business community through these difficult times is a priority, and our strategic direction will rely on our community’s advantages and assets in forging our destiny.”

Essar here to stay; company has long-term plans for Algoma



Essar Steel Holdings is committed to Sault Ste. Marie, says CEO Jatinder Mehra. The India-based company, which purchased then Algoma Steel over a year-and-a-half ago, has long-term plans for its local operation.

Prior to the recent economic downturn, which sent

the global demand for steel plummeting, Essar Steel Algoma started up its dormant No. 6 blast furnace, part of its plan to nearly double output to four-million tones annually.

Although the pace of this growth strategy has declined, the slowdown is temporary. Based on Mehra’s comments, which were made to local media during a January visit to the city, Essar is here to stay.

“We remain committed to making Algoma the hub of our North American operations,” Mehra told the Sault Star during his visit.

These comments were echoed by Brenda Stenta, Essar Steel Algoma’s Manager of Corporate Communications. “We will be favourably poised to take advantage of increased demand when the markets recover,” she said.

This is good news for the community.

“Essar is committed to significant long-term expansion in Sault Ste. Marie, and we look forward to supporting them,” said Mike Wozny, Executive Director of Development Sault Ste. Marie, a division of SSMEDC.

ECSSM builds bridges to small business community

Small business is the backbone of the Canadian economy. Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie works to expand this vital sector in the city and region.

With this goal in mind, the division of the Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation hosted Bridges to Better Business earlier this month. The annual event teaches regional small businesses skills to help them operate and better serve their clients.

Michael Ennamorato, a Director with TNS Canadian Facts, one of Canada's largest marketing and social research organizations, was this year's keynote speaker. His presen-

tation dealt with tourism trends and how they are likely to impact the Algoma District.

"We're giving the small business community the tools to help them survive in the current economic climate," said Andrew Ross, General Manager of Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie.

Michael Ennamorato addresses the regional small business community at the 2009 Bridges to Better Business, an annual event hosted by Enterprise Centre Sault Ste. Marie.

Along with the local Enterprise Centre, this year's Bridges to Better Business event was held in partnership with Tourism Sault Ste. Marie.

It was also made possible with support from the Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre and the Ontario provincial government.



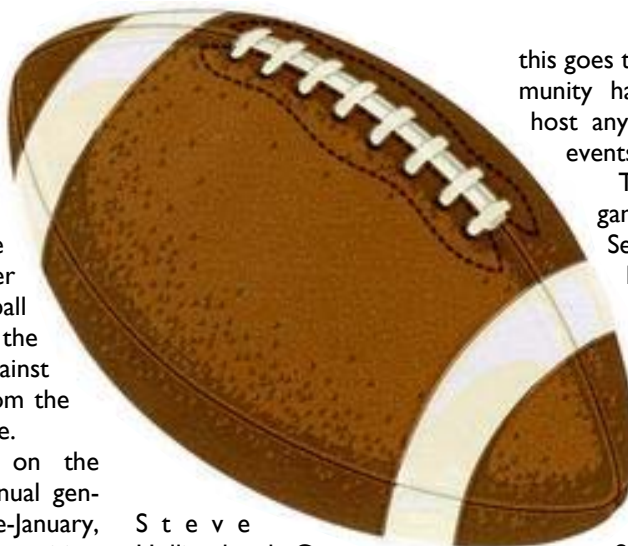
Football fever in SSM; city to host national title

Are you ready for some football?

Sault Ste. Marie will host this year's Canadian Major League Football Championship. The game will pit the winner of the Northern Football Conference – where the Sault Steelers play – against the crowning team from the Alberta Football League.

The Steelers bid on the event at the NFC annual general meeting in late-January, beating out two other cities. Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, a division of SSMEDC, provided support for the successful bid.

"We want to bring football in the city to a new level," said



Steve Hollingshead, Coordinator of Special Projects and Sport Tourism for Tourism SSM.

"Sault Ste. Marie is a hockey town, and it always will be, but

this goes to show that the community has what it takes to host any number of sporting events."

The championship game will take place in September at Rocky DiPietro Field, named in honour of the Sault Ste. Marie hall-of-fame receiver who played 14 seasons in the Canadian Football League.

The Sault Steelers won the national championship in 1972 and, more recently, in 2007. If the team makes it to the finals this year, they will play in front of their hometown fans.

Tourism SSM investment pays off . . . again



The Tourism Sault Ste. Marie basketball floor set up at the Essar Centre prior to the Harlem Globetrotters' game January 28.

The all-but-impossible-to-beat Harlem Globetrotters played to a packed Essar Centre last month. The travelling basketball team drew quite a crowd with their outlandish style and trick shots.

The event was made possible with an investment from Tourism Sault Ste. Marie. The divi-

sion of the SSMEDC purchased a portable basketball floor a few years ago. The idea was to attract high-profile events to the city.

The move has paid off. Since buying the floor, Sault Ste. Marie has hosted two Ontario Basketball Association provincial championships and an un-

der-15 midget tournament.

"It's great to be able to have these types of events in our city," said Ian McMillan, Executive Director of Tourism Sault Ste. Marie. "We hope our investment allows us to host many more basketball events in the future."

When not being used for tournaments and other major events, the Tourism SSM floor is stationed at Algoma University's George Leech Centre, where the school's varsity teams play.

In February, the city also hosted Skate Canada's Festival of Stars, which saw 182 figure skaters from around the country compete. Tourism Sault Ste. Marie provided support for this event as well.

"This is yet another opportunity for our community to be globally recognized as a

leader in alternative energy"

-Randy Tallon, Development Sault Ste. Marie

International buzz surrounds Elementa Group



Investors from around the world are showing great interest in Elementa Group, a company that's converting Sault Ste. Marie's garbage into clean energy. Delegations from Mexico, Australia, the U.S., St. Lucia, Spain, Panama, Austria and, most recently, Slovakia have toured its operations facility at the city landfill site.

The Elementa process is inspired by nature itself. The technology breaks down carbon material, such as municipal solid waste, using a steam-based reformation process. This creates clean energy: a synthetic gas similar to natural gas, which can be used for power generation.

Simply put, waste is transformed into a useful product.

The global waste problem continues to get worse. Elementa offers an environmentally-sound solution to this predicament. The company is helping to create a sustainable lifestyle for future generations.

As a result, people from 27 Slovakian communities have come together to form a partnership to find solutions to their landfill waste and garbage.

On Jan. 22, a delegation from the European country met with Elementa representatives at a summit hosted by Development Sault Ste. Marie. The day included presentations by the Slovakian mission, a warm welcoming by City CAO Joe Fratesi and Ward I Councillor Steve Butland, and a site tour of

Elementa's molecular steam-based reformation process.

Important global relationships were formed at the meeting.

"This is yet another opportunity for our community to get globally recognized as a leader in alternative energy," said Randy Tallon, Director of International Relations & Global Logistics for Development Sault Ste. Marie.

Elementa Group – formerly EnQuest Power – has been working closely with Development Sault Ste. Marie for a number of years. The company will be taking part in outbound trade missions to Austria and Slovakia this month and Maia, Portugal in May.

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The **SSMEDC** recognizes the financial support it receives from the City of Sault Ste. Marie. As well, it recognizes the strong backing it receives from the Mayor, Council and City staff. The **SSMEDC** also thanks the federal and provincial governments, and its many other partners, for their continued support.

The Sault Ste. Marie Economic Development Corporation is a non-profit organization, funded by public and private partners, whose goal is to be the community's leader in supporting and promoting an environment that generates sustainable employment in a healthy, growing and diversified economy.

TSSM promotes N. Ont. with outdoor adventure contest

In all four seasons, Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma District have plenty to offer for outdoor enthusiasts of nearly every age.

The natural beauty of the region was enough to attract the 2009 Great Ontario Outdoor Adventure of a Lifetime Contest.

The contest, organized by the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation, is sponsored this year by Tourism Sault Ste. Marie, the Algoma Kinniwabi Travel Association and other industry partners.

It was officially launched last month at the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre.

Anyone from Canada and the U.S. can register, and the winner is treated to a seven-day wilder-

ness extravaganza in August with renowned area guides Gary and Joanie McGuffin. The week-long excursion includes hiking, kayaking, great eating and other activities in Superior North.

"This contest will help position Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma region as a world-class outdoor destination and help us reach a large consumer audience in key market areas that would not have been possible without this collaboration with the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation," said Ian McMillan, Executive Director of Tourism Sault Ste. Marie.

Submissions can be made until May 28, 2009. To enter, visit www.ontariooutdoor.com.



Renowned adventure guides and photojournalists Gary and Joanie McGuffin unveil the 2009 Great Ontario Outdoor Adventure of a Lifetime Contest Jan. 19 at the Bushplane Heritage Centre.