

## MICHIGAN BRIEFS

### St. Lawrence Seaway reports slow start to shipping season

St. Lawrence Seaway officials say the shipping season has started slowly, thanks in part to declines in shipments of iron ore and coal, *Crain's Cleveland Business* reported. Cargo shipments for the period March 22 to May 31 totaled 8.1 million metric tons, down 12 percent over the same period in 2012.

Seaway officials said coal shipments in the Great Lakes have been dropping because electric utility plants have been converting to natural gas. However, U.S. ports have seen an increase of exports of low-sulfur coal to Europe.

### To stay out of the red, vineyards in N. Mich. turn to technology

A shrinking labor pool and rising packaging costs are squeezing northern Michigan winemakers, and some are turning to more technology, the *Traverse City Record-Eagle* reports. **Chateau Chantel**, **Good Harbor Vineyards**, **L. Mawby Vineyards** and others are using machines to do work that humans used to.

Migrant workers are still a main source of labor, but that pool has shrunk, said Mark Johnson, a winemaker at Chateau Chantel on Old Mission Peninsula. One reason is the uncertainty surrounding immigration legislation in Congress.

## Grand Rapids' pedal plan: Build bike routes, they'll ride

The **U.S. Census Bureau's** 2011 American Community Survey estimated that 0.4 percent of the 81,823 people working in Grand Rapids rode a bicycle to work. That's only 334 people.

But when **Atomic Object** put a single bike rack outside its Grand Rapids office, "all of a sudden, there were more bikes than could be secured, so we added another," said Mary O'Neill, business manager of the Grand Rapids-based software development company, which also has an office in Detroit.

Despite humble census numbers, more employers in Grand Rapids may be pushed by their workers to follow Atomic Object's lead. City officials — believing that if they build it, people will pedal — are putting together a 100-mile urban bike network.

City officials would like to see 2 percent of the

workforce riding bikes to work and dream of being a bicycling mecca like Ann Arbor. In that city, nearly 5 percent of the workforce — or 2,782 of the 56,646 working adults, according to the 2011 census report — get to work on bikes, the highest percentage of bicycle commuters in Michigan.

Piotr Lewak, a traffic safety engineer for the city of Grand Rapids, said 50 miles of the network have been completed at a cost of \$10,000 per mile. Suzanne Schulz, Grand Rapids' planning director, admitted that the last half of the project won't be easy because the city doesn't have any five-lane streets where one lane easily could be set aside for bicyclists. She also expects more debates over the importance that Grand Rapids be bicycle friendly.

— Rod Kackley

Another is more vineyards, which means more demand for workers, said Sam Simpson, who co-owns Good Harbor Vineyards in Leelanau County with brother Taylor.

The wine industry is also more innovative, with products such as filters, pumps, presses and kegged wines. Good Harbor and L. Mawby use Key Kegs — made of aluminum, plastic and cardboard and 100 percent recyclable.

### MICH-CELLANEOUS

■ Eric Gilbertson, president of **Saginaw Valley State University**, plans to retire after nearly 25 years in the job — making him the

longest-serving president of any Michigan public university, the Associated Press reported. Saginaw Valley has 10,500 students, 85 percent more than when Gilbertson was hired in 1989.

■ Bryan Crough, longtime director of the **Traverse City Downtown Development Authority**, died June 16 at age 59. Filmmaker Michael Moore said that without Crough's efforts, there would be no **State Theatre**, site of the Traverse City Film Festival.

■ With the purchase last month of the **Beach Club Motel** along Grand Traverse Bay, demolition has begun on several bayfront buildings to make way for a mile-long waterfront park. The *Traverse City Record-Eagle* reported that demolition of the Beach Club, **Sun and Sand Motel** and the former **Mountain Jack's** restaurant will take about 2½ months.

■ New Orleans-based **Entergy Corp.** last week restarted the **Palisades Nuclear Power Plant** in southwestern Michigan after finishing repairs to a tank that leaked radioactive water into Lake Michigan faster than regulations allow. Entergy idled the plant May 5 after operators found a tank leaking faster than regulations allow.

■ Gov. Rick Snyder last week declined to approve a plan by the **Keeweenaw Bay Indian Community** to close a casino near Marquette and

open a larger one at the former **Marquette County Airport**, the *Mining Journal* in Marquette reported. Snyder's office said he was open to the plan but said the tribe declined to discuss a broader deal under which it would continue sharing some revenue with the state even if gambling is expanded in Michigan.

■ Allegan-based **Perrigo Co.** has acquired the rights to produce ophthalmic products from New York-based **Fera Pharmaceuticals** for an upfront cash payment of about \$93 million, the *Grand Rapids Business Journal* reported.

■ In December, *Crain's Michigan Business* reported on the success of the **Grand Rapids Griffins** at the ticket counter while the **National Hockey League** was trying to take the chill out of its labor relations. Last week, the **Detroit Red Wings** affiliate in West Michigan won the Calder Cup — the **American Hockey League's** version of the Stanley Cup. The championship is the first in the Griffins' 12 seasons in the AHL and their 17-year history. It also is the first of perhaps many times where being featured in *Crain's Michigan Business* has talismanic impact.

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