

## Library board, village, and township to discuss district library operations

by Mary Weimer

The Muskegon Area District Library (MADL) will be asking for a millage renewal in 2016. The Fruitport Branch Library is part of the district library system.

Fruitport currently has a library committee made up of three appointed representatives from the Village and three from Fruitport Township. This committee is responsible for the maintenance of the library building and grounds and reports to both governmental units regarding library matters.

Since its inception, the MADL has been responsible for staffing, ordering and processing library materials, library programs, etc.

Recently, however, some of MADL's policies have come under discussion by Fruitport committee members and officials from both the Village and the Township.

The Fruitport Branch Library has operated for ten years without a certified librarian. Other branches (Egelston, North Muskegon and Montague) each have one certified librarian on staff. Norton Shores has two.

Of the ten-year MADL levy of .75 mills, Fruitport Township pays the second largest amount of money. Norton Shores pays more.

In April 2010, a consultant was called in to assess the libraries in the district and to ask for direction from members of the community to see where the library district needed to direct its resources. I served on that Strategic Planning Committee.

One of the goals of that committee was to provide programs for young readers ages birth to five. During the summer of 2011, MADL staff began examining a program in Baltimore, Maryland called "Storyville." In 2012, the MADL board moved to accept the concept of Storyville, and plans were made to build the project at the Norton Shores Library.

A feasibility study has been conducted, donors have been recruited, architects have been hired, and the MADL board plans to move ahead to the construction of Storyville.

At an MADL board meeting on September 24, 2013, at the Montague City Hall, a roomful of adamant taxpayers from a number of MADL branches and governmental units voiced dissatisfaction with the program. Despite their comments, the board moved forward with the project. The chairperson and several other board members were rude (even to fellow board members) and ignored the objections voiced.

The primary concerns are the location of the project at the most southern library in the county, and, of course, the costs. The cost of Storyville is expected to exceed \$2 million which will largely be raised by donations. MADL will be responsible for salaries and other costs. The projected annual expense is \$125,000, which could result in decrease in services to other district libraries.

Once Storyville is completed, Norton Shores residents will have a wonderful resource for their young children. Although it will be open to anyone in the district, Fruitport's concern is that parents will have to drive to Norton Shores from all areas of the county to take advantage of this resource.

These issues and other concerns have initiated a closer examination of the relationship between MADL and Fruitport.

## Service Employees Union to pay second highest fine in Michigan

(Submitted by Michigan Secretary of State)

In what is the second-largest fine of its kind, the Service Employees International Union will pay \$199,000 in penalties after the Michigan Department of State found there may have been campaign finance violations, Secretary of State Ruth Johnson announced.

The penalties are part of a conciliation agreement reached by the department with Citizens for Affordable Quality Home Care and Home Care First, Inc., related to a 2012 ballot question to amend the state constitution. Violations included co-mingling of funds; late filings; not identifying all accounts used; and not providing complete or accurate campaign statements. When combined with late filing fees already paid, they will have paid more than \$205,000 in fines.

"Michigan law requires all organizations, including 501(c) 4 nonprofit corporations, to file complete campaign finance reports when spending directly in support of a ballot question," Johnson said. "These organizations cannot be used as a means to conceal the identity of the true contributors. This agreement reflects our commitment to transparency and accountability in the campaign finance process, especially in an election year."

A complaint was originally filed in August, 2013, alleging that Home Care First filed its committee's statement of organization late to delay publicly reporting that SEIU contributions were the main source of support for the home health care ballot question.

Additional information, including the original complaint, is available on the MDOS website.

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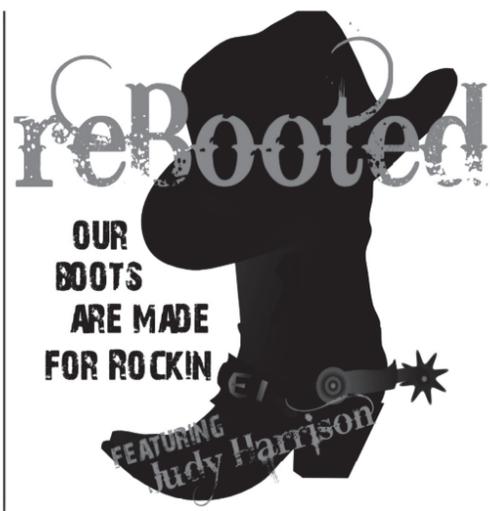
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### Sample Song List:

- ⊙ Chain Of Fools - Aretha Franklin
- ⊙ Cowboy Cassanova - Carrie Underwood
- ⊙ Free Ride - Edgar Winter Group
- ⊙ Need You Now - Lady Antebellum
- ⊙ Crazy - Patsy Cline
- ⊙ Pour Me - Trick Pony
- ⊙ Shambala - Three Dog Night
- ⊙ Rolling in the Deep - Adele
- ⊙ Rocky Top - Traditional

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