



# *The Insider*

[www.senate.michigan.gov/switalski](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/switalski)

## Inside State Politics with State Senator Mickey Switalski Senate District 10

December 5, 2008

Welcome to the electronic version of *The Insider*. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and giving me an opportunity to represent you in the Michigan Senate. It is my sincere hope that this bi-weekly e-newsletter will keep you informed of the happenings in Lansing while staying true to the traditional style of *The Insider*. If you would like to contact me, please feel free to e-mail me at [senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov) or call me at my Roseville or Lansing office. You can also meet me in person during my constituent hours, coming to a location near you. Call my office and make an appointment or just walk in. See schedule for details.

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### Mickey's Blog: Alien Mouse Resurrection The Rebecca Agostino Chronicles

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*Be afraid.*

*Be very, very afraid.*

I thought I was secure in *Fortress Switalski*, my Roseville estate made impregnable to the frequent onslaughts of mice, squirrel, and other alien varmint.

I was wrong.

I forgot about my allies. Alliances normally *increase* security. But a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. As usual, that link is my younger brother Matt.

He failed to acknowledge the warning signs. There were the droppings, the nibbled corners of the Little Caesar's boxes in the garage. Most telling had been the firefight with mice at his *Pintail Grill* a year ago. Matt ignored these signs. He felt secure under the shade of my security umbrella.

*Fool!*

*The Mouse is on the move again.*

Seeking to disrupt the *Thanksgiving Holiday*, a way station on his *Plot to Destroy Christmas*, the Mouse began with a sneak attack on an isolated outpost along the frontier in Clinton Township. Amid the barren empty moorlands of *Partridge Creek Subdivision*, there sits a lonely pioneer settlement, surrounded by vast varmint breeding grounds.

The distress signal came late on T-Day minus 2, the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Matt needed a bailout.

He and his wife Rebecca Agostino were preparing their vehicle, a Ford Edge, for takeoff. Destination: My sister Jeannie's house in the Thumb, site of the *Switalski Family Thanksgiving Dinner*. Rebecca was in the Captain's chair.

Suddenly an *Intruder* leapt out of the dashboard vent straight at her jugular.

Their eyes met for an instant, but all Rebecca could recall later, under hypnosis, were two beady eyes and yellow, razor sharp incisors. Interpol matched this description to an *Alien Mouse*, ignoring a 2nd positive ID for Matt.

With the Mouse in mid-air, Rebecca instinctively recoiled to the left. She took a glancing blow to the shoulder from the 2-inch *Alien*. Before the mouse could wrap his long tail around her neck and leap down her throat, she executed a deft *ju jitsu* move and slammed him to the car floor.

The *Alien* scurried up and over Matt, who was curled up in a fetal position on the passenger seat, and disappeared in the aft section of the craft.

Reconstructing the crime scene, Lab technicians proved that a 2-inch mouse would need the hind legs of a kangaroo to leap the 2 feet to Rebecca's shoulder. Clinton Township Police were put on alert for this half-mouse, half-kangaroo, or *kangarouse*. As such, we warned them the *alien hybrid* might also have been carrying a tiny, 2 centimeter baby *kangarouse* in its pouch.

Back at ground zero, Matt and Rebecca took quick action.

Armed with brooms and bludgeons, they emptied the car, but the *Alien* was nowhere to be found. Matt suspected he was hiding in the ductwork of the air handling system. He donned a nuclear suit, complete with visor, and drove the vehicle to a service station specializing in *Alien* extraction.

Matt's weapon of choice against varmints is Fire. When mice invaded his outdoor grill last Spring, he BBQ'd them on the spot. This time, Technicians assisted him in supercharging the heating system, achieving core temperatures of nearly 2000 degrees.

"I think we got him," Matt told me. "He couldn't take that heat. Either he evacuated, or we've got Mouse Jerky somewhere in the ducts."

Matt was confident, but without the corpse, there was no way to be sure the car was *Alien-Free*. And given Rebecca's encounter with the *Alien*, some feared she might have become an unwitting "host" and that a *kangarouse* might burst forth from her stomach during the turkey and gravy portion of the evening.

This posed a dilemma. Many in the family have been secretly hoping for a 3<sup>rd</sup> child, a boy, to join Matt and Rebecca's lovely daughters Gigi and Sophia. But we were unwilling to have this addition be a half-man, half-mouse *Alien* bent on the destruction of the earth.

We held an emergency session of the SSC, the *Switalski Security Council* up in Harbor Beach, where Jeannie was stuffing the turkey. No minutes were kept, but the SSC subsequently issued an unsigned order for a quarantine of Matt's family. Neither they nor the Ford Edge was to enter the 1000 yard perimeter surrounding Jeannie's Farmhouse unless the severed head of the mouse was sent ahead by

courier. Alternatively, the entire dead mouse carcass could be secured to the roof of the vehicle, like a deer, to demonstrate *bona fides*.

This was cruel, but having commandeered the Edge, who is to say the *kangarouse* might not penetrate the Saturn Vue, or the Dodge Caravan? Once aboard, the concealed alien could hitch a ride to our home base, disembark under cover of night, and lay siege to our living quarters and destroy our economy.

We needn't have worried. Matt, Rebecca and the girls were too paralyzed by fear to reenter the car. They spent Thanksgiving isolated at home under Mouse Arrest.

Thus did Fear ruin our holiday.

*Be afraid.*

*Be very, very afraid.*

Of fear itself.

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## **Mickey's Notes and Updates**

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### **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MAY VOTE ON SMOKEFREE WORKPLACE LEGISLATION**

The Michigan Legislature was back in session this week, undertaking its last leg of activity before the two-year cycle finishes out. One item on the agenda is the smoke-free workplace legislation that would help protect workers and families from harmful second-hand smoke and reduce long-term health care costs to the state and to businesses. The Michigan House recently tackled House Bill 4163, the bill to make all workplaces, including bars, restaurants, and casinos, smoke-free. The House has moved the legislation to a conference committee where members of both the House and Senate will try to reach a compromise between competing versions of the legislation before the end of the year.

I believe this may be the most important public health issue we address this year, as the legislation will help protect our Michigan citizens from the dangers of second-hand smoke. The Senate earlier this year passed a comprehensive smoking ban. Research has also shown that in other places that have gone smoke-free the economy does not suffer as some have argued.

### **SENATE DEMOCRATS URGE IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE FOR NATION'S AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY**

Earlier this week, the Senate Democrats introduced a resolution imploring the President and United States Congress to adopt an assistance package for the American automobile industry. As the automotive industry has pursued advanced technologies to ensure its competitiveness in the new economy, it has been faced with daunting challenges. Drastic swings in energy prices, devastating drops in home values, and reduced consumer confidence have made the capital-intensive research and development process extremely difficult.

Wisely investing federal dollars in this vital industry with solid agreements from automakers will help to bolster our country's economic and national security. Upon the resolution's passage it will be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

## **SAFETY TIPS FOR WINTER DRIVING**

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has been working to promote safe driving as one of the key components to safer roadways. While winter maintenance will occur as usual during storm events on all state routes, road crews will be cutting back on overtime operations on less-traveled roadways. MDOT also points out that salt works effectively for treating roads and bridges, as long as the temperature stays above 20 degrees.

Below are some tips from MDOT that will help you stay safe on the roads this season:

- Always wear your safety belt and be sure children are properly buckled up
- Slow down when visibility is low or when road conditions are snowy or icy
- Keep at least a car length of distance between your vehicle and others
- Accelerate and brake slowly and avoid abrupt steering maneuvers, especially when merging or changing lanes
- If you begin to slide, ease off the accelerator and steer in the direction you are sliding to regain control of your car
- Don't pump anti-lock brakes.

Up-to-date road conditions can be found online at <http://www.michigan.gov/roadconditions>.

## **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE KICKS OFF FRESH CHRISTMAS TREE SEASON**

The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) recently celebrated the start of the fresh Christmas tree season in Michigan. Michigan produces and sells more than a dozen tree varieties on a wholesale level—more varieties than any other state. Our state has approximately 42,000 acres in commercial Christmas tree production, with an annual farm gate value of over \$41 million. The industry also generates an additional \$1.3 million in sales of wreaths, cut boughs, garland, and other cut greens. I encourage residents to select a real Michigan Christmas tree—a fresh, high quality tree benefits the environment, supports local farmers, and boosts Michigan's economy.

After the holidays, there are many uses for recycled real Christmas trees. Many communities chip the trees and use the chippings for mulch, hiking trails, playground areas, animal stalls, or landscaping. Whole trees are recycled for an even greater variety of uses: river shoreline stabilization, sand dune erosion prevention, marshland sedimentation, fish habitat, winter garden decorations, wild bird feeders, even hazardous chemical clean-ups.

For more information on Michigan's Christmas tree industry or to find a Christmas tree farm in your area, visit MDA's Web site at [www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda) or contact the Michigan Christmas Tree Association at 800-589-TREE or at [www.mcta.org](http://www.mcta.org).

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## **Coffee Hours**

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\*Coffee Hours for the upcoming year are still being determined at this time. Stay tuned for updates in future editions of the Insider E-newsletter.

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## Mickey's TV Insider Show

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Check out my TV Insider Show coming to a television station near you. Watch me interview local guests about politics, life, issues and concerns to our district.

### **Sterling Heights**

Every Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m.  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Utica**

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m.  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Clinton Township**

Last week of every month- Sat thru Thurs  
(Comcast Channel 5/WOW Channel 10)

### **Roseville**

Various Times-check local listings  
(Comcast Channel 18/WOW Channel 10)

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## Contact My Office

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