

# Economic Club hands speaker series to LMC

By HP STAFF

**BENTON TOWNSHIP** — Talk isn't cheap, and the rising cost of booking noted leaders and personalities, along with other factors, has led the Economic Club of Southwest Michigan to turn over its long-standing speaker series to Lake Michigan College.

“National demand for speakers has grown in the past decade. This has caused booking costs to

escalate dramatically. The amount we paid in 2008 for six top-tier personalities now pays for two,” Economic Club President Mike Cook said in a news release. “Additionally, the Club had to pay for facility rentals, marketing support, and other services, all while depending on volunteer help to run the organization.”

The Economic Club has sponsored the speaker series for 73 years, hosting more than 430 world

leaders, politicians and other newsmakers, with the Mendel Center as its venue since 1983.

The changing financial landscape, coupled with Cook's plan to retire after 34 years of volunteer service as president, led Econ Club leaders to seek a long-term solution. As a result, the club and LMC agreed to integrate the speaker series into The Mendel Center's annual programming and to transfer its assets

to the Lake Michigan College Foundation, which will hold the assets and donor pledges for exclusive support of speaker series operations.

Mendel Center Executive Director Mike Nadolski is the newly appointed director of The Economic Club of Southwestern Michigan Speakers series. Nadolski, who presents The Mendel Center Mainstage annual

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