

What is the longest lasting business in town?

The **LONGEST LASTING** was the hardware store at 439 Butler Street, Saugatuck. IN 1865 **JOHN NIES** returned from Civil War service and looked around to see what sort of business Saugatuck lacked. He decided on a hardware store. The first **NIES HARDWARE** was a wooden building near the Village Square. By the time it burned in **1903** and was replaced with a structure of red pressed brick, Nies sold the business to his former apprentice, **JOHN KONING**. In 1920 it was sold it to Heath Crow and Jean Simondson, former employees who maintained the building with the dumbwaiter to haul things up from the basement, and old open nail bins surrounding the counter. **RON AND BONNIE WILKINS** were the last to operate it as a hardware store.



The second oldest business is the weekly newspaper the **COMMERCIAL RECORD** which was established in July of **1868**, and has been continuous since that date (except for two weeks when the editor resigned in a huff in 1886). It was published in Saugatuck and first called the *Saugatuck Commercial*, later the *Lakeshore Commercial*, and then simply *The Commercial* until the spring of 1902 when it merged with the *Douglas Weekly Record* to become the *Commercial Record*.



The flags, or nameplates, of the *Saugatuck Commercial*, the *Weekly Record* and *The Commercial Record*. The flag of the current *Commercial Record* was designed by local artist Fred Stearns in 1957.



Editor publisher Bob Crawford (right) and printer Parker Sands check over lead type from the *Commercial Record*'s linotype about 1947.