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Supporters Rally for Solutions on Mackinac State Historic Parks

Likened to Engine Driving Michigan's Tourism Industry, Parks Can Help Rebuild State's Economy

By Karen Gould

Phil Porter argues that Mackinac State Historic Parks can help rebuild Michigan's economic momentum, but not if the governor and legislature in Lansing cut its \$1.5 million state appropriation from its fiscal year 2006 budget, which begins October 1.

Mr. Porter, who is director of the parks, addressed those attending a town hall meeting hosted by State Representative

Fran Amos (R-Waterford) Friday, May 27, at the Island House Hotel on Mackinac Island. Mrs. Amos is the chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on History, Arts and Libraries and held the hearing as part of the appropriations budget process in the Senate. Earlier this year, Governor Jennifer Granholm, in an effort to shave the state's budget deficit, recommended the parks' appropriation be elimi-

nated.

Mr. Porter said Mackinac State Historic Parks are a part of the solution in the state's economically challenged times. The state should continue to invest in the parks' general fund not only because of the "unique historic integrity and awesome natural beauty of Mackinac," but because the parks draw tourism dollars to the state, he said. He cited the Michigan State University's Michigan

Tourism Economic Impact Model that calculated the state's return on investment with the Mackinac State Historic Parks is nearly 10 to 1, creating 5,000 jobs and generating \$12,000,000 in sales tax revenue.

"Mackinac State Historic Parks," he said, "is a powerful economic engine supporting Michigan's tourism industry."

Tourism is a \$16 billion industry in Michigan, with visi-

tors spending money throughout the state on their way north, said Representative Amos. "I like to tell people Mackinac Island is the lighthouse at the top of the state."

Over the last three years, Mackinac State Historic Parks' general fund has been reduced by \$500,000, which already has impacted the agency's operations, said Mr. Porter.

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4 Graduated in Island Class of '05

By Leslie Rott

With "Pomp and Circumstance," seniors Jamie Andress, Blisse Beardsley, Richard Chaffee, and Emma Chambers took their final steps as Mackinac Island Public School students at 7 p.m. Friday, May 27, in the gymnasium of the school.

Before the ceremony, the seniors presented their mothers with roses, thanking them for all of their love and support over the years. Then they walked through a fern arch, ushered to commencement by their siblings.

Commencement speaker Father Jim Williams, pastor at Ste. Anne's Church, told the graduates: "You are going to be competing for the first time with individuals. You are going

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Mackinac Island graduates are (from left) Jamie Andress, Emma Chambers, Blisse Beardsley, and Richard Chaffee.



During a Memorial Day service, interpreters leave Fort Makinac for the Post Cemetery, where they placed a wreath at the grave of soldier Edwin Gaskills.

Veterans' Observance Notes 'Cost of Freedom'

Island Vets Honored on Memorial Day

By Jessica Delaney

Memorial Day has always served as a day honoring those men and women who have fought in the armed services. This past holiday weekend, World War II veteran William Porter asked citizens to add another meaning to the patriotic day, saying that the day should serve as a reminder of the cost of freedom in everybody's life, regardless of military service.

"I hold that the very strength of our lives as free men and women is based on our everyday institutions," said Mr. Porter in the Memorial Day Service held at 11:30 a.m. in Veteran's Park. "We are all here to pay a price for freedom."

Mr. Porter spoke about the cost of freedom in everyday lives. He reminded those gathered that even though many of the young people of the country were not alive during some of the world's greatest conflicts,

past wars still have a significant effect on lives today. He stressed the importance of civilian institutions in maintaining a free country, and put special emphasis on strong, loving homes and family support.

"The cause of freedom is always with us," he said. "The cost is small, and the return immeasurable."

Former Michigan Senator Walter North, who served as master of ceremonies for the Mackinac Island service, asked the gathered crowd to honor veterans not only on Memorial Day, but on every day of the year, and extolled soldiers for the service they have rendered America.

"This is what America is all about," said Mayor Margaret Doud of the service, and she offered a prayer for all those who in the past, present, and future, have supported

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