

Letters to the Editor

Former Attorney General Appreciates *Town Crier* Journalistic Coverage

To the Editor:
I just read the May 21 edition of the *Mackinac Island Town Crier* cover to cover. I am compelled to write you a note because I believe that that issue of the paper was one of the best examples of great coverage of a local community I have ever read. You covered every subject of even remote interest to everyone who's an Island resident, friend, or visitor to the Island. It seems to me that an absent resident of the Island would have to sub-

scribe to the *Town Crier* because it so beautifully expresses the activity, vitality, and culture of the Island, as well as any news connected thereto so well written in such an erudite manner.

However, your great journalism can never make me want to move into my property on Mackinac Island because, as you know, the only property that I own is my gravesite.

Frank Kelley
Lansing

Boat Tours Offered at Coast Guard Station Saturday, June 4

Tours, Helicopter Rescue Demonstration Planned

U.S. Coast Guard Station St. Ignace will host an open house to promote boating safety Saturday, June 4, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tours of the station and Coast Guard vessels will be offered, and a rescue helicopter from Traverse City will demonstrate rescue techniques.

In addition to Coast Guard crews, the Coast Guard

Auxiliary, Mackinac County Sheriff's Department, and Mackinac County Water Safety Review Team will participate in the event.

Demonstrations will be given on proper use of flares. Those who have old or expired flares can bring them to the open house for use in demonstrations.

Celebration For Friends of Late Jack Chambers Planned for June 5

A celebration for friends of the late Jack Chambers will be held at the State Street Village Inn in St. Ignace Sunday, June 5, from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres.

A special Shepler boat will depart St. Ignace for Mackinac Island at 9:30 p.m.

Mr. Chambers, of Mackinac Island and St. Ignace, died April 1 at the age of 79.

Laurie Stupak To Focus on Mackinac State Historic Parks' Heritage, Traditions, Culture

New Park Commissioner Promotes Northern Michigan's Beauty

When Laurie Stupak was appointed to a six-year term of the Mackinac State Historic Park Commission by Governor Jennifer Granholm last week, she did not know she was helping to make commission history by changing the composition of the board to a majority of women.

Her focus is not on making history, rather she holds a vision of working to maintain what already is a part of Michigan history.

"I'll be a strong advocate for preserving the parks' heritage, traditions, and beauty," she said while attending her first commission meeting last Friday, May 27.

Mrs. Stupak was born and reared in the Upper Peninsula and is the former mayor of Menominee. She said she and her husband, U.S. Congressman Bart Stupak (D-Menominee), always look for an opportunity to advertise the stunning natural landscape found in Michigan, and particularly Northern Michigan.

She often says, "We are fortunate because Bart has the most beautiful district in the United States."

Those remarks didn't go unnoticed last year when the couple was able to introduce

several members of the British Parliament to Mackinac Island.

"They were awestruck by the beauty here and several said they would come back with their families," Mrs. Stupak said.

Right now, maintaining the historic sites comprising Mackinac State Historic Parks and addressing the \$1.5 million state funding cut from the 2006 budget heads Mrs.

Stupak's agenda, and that of the rest of the commission.

"The parks are important to the state's tourism, education, and history," she said. "I would hate to see them go into a state of disrepair. This is not a partisan issue, and I encourage the legislature to work with the governor in a bipartisan manner to either restore the appropriations to the budget or reach agreement on an alternative funding method."

Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



Governor Tackles Bottled Water Issue

Every year since 1954, Michigan Week has been held in May to celebrate the heritage and attractions of the Water Wonderland. Last week, by coincidence, the state moved to correct a huge gap in regulating one use of this precious resource.

On Friday, Gov. Jennifer Granholm issued an executive directive moratorium on permits and approvals for new or increased bottled water operations in Michigan "until such time as the Legislature passes comprehensive water withdrawal legislation."

She also said the Department of Environmental Quality Friday issued a permit to Nestle's Ice Mountain bottling operation requiring it "to certify - every three months - that spring water from the Evart plant be distributed only within the Great Lakes Basin."

On May 25, Democrat Granholm and Department of Environmental Quality Director Steven Chester announced "the state will begin the process of regulating any groundwater withdrawal that would change the size of a lake, stream or river" - reversing "the policy of the previous administration" that the Ice Mountain bottling plant in Mecosta County did not need to apply for a permit for water withdrawal.

In fact, first word on that came when Republican Attorney General Mike Cox, on behalf of the DEQ, urged the Michigan Court of Appeals to uphold Mecosta County Circuit

Judge Lawrence Root's ruling that DEQ's previous position that a permit was not required "was inconsistent with the plain language" of the law.

Traverse City attorney Jim Olson, representing Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation, said that aspect and others of Cox's filing were "welcome and timely," especially in view of the recent deal Nestle cut with Evart to tap its water.

But Olson, officials of the Michigan Environmental Council and other environmentalists are not sanguine about how all of this is coming down. They're glad the DEQ admits it blew it when it said in 2001 that the Mecosta operation did not need a permit.

They're concerned, however, about Granholm's tendency to split the difference on controversies; other aspects of the state's balancing act, including how they will play out when the Court of Appeals hears oral arguments June 14 on Nestle's appeal of the circuit court ruling; and what Nestle challenge might come in the federal courts on disallowing export of bottled water out of the Great Lakes basin.

But look at the positive side. I liked the Cox/DEQ assertions that:

- "The State possesses broad authority to regulate activities

that affect the waters of the State, which includes the groundwater and surface water within its borders."

- "The Circuit Court correctly applied rules of statutory construction that DEQ's administrative rule definition of 'enlarge or diminish an island lake or stream' was not consistent" with some of the 48 court rulings and 27 statutes that Cox cited in his well-documented brief.

Granholm is correct to spotlight need for legislative action on her proposed Water Legacy Act to provide "a comprehensive framework for managing the withdrawal of our Great Lakes water."

A Cox Challenger?

M. Scott Bowen, former president of the Grand Rapids City Commission and a Granholm appointee as Wyoming District Judge, submitted his resignation from the bench to her "to continue my service to the public in another area."

Chris DeWitt, a Granholm political spokesman who in this case speaks only as a friend of Bowen, 41, says, "one of the options he's looking at is running for AG."

George Weeks is the political columnist for The Detroit News and is syndicated by Superior Features.



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