

# Mackinaw City Memorial Day Pageant Celebrates History of Fort

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rest of the garrison captive, but the French citizens at the fort were not harmed.

The capture of Fort Michilimackinac was a popular segment of the pageant Saturday. Some visitors cheered for one or the other Indian team, while others yelled for the attack to begin. Unintentionally interactive, some members of the crowd got to be part of the demonstration as they retrieved balls that escaped the reenactors during the game.

Unknown to many bystanders, the reenactors actually do play the game, and even keep score.

The Annual Michilimackinac Pageant is the longest running free attraction in the State of Michigan. More than 200 volunteers perform in the pageant, and, according to Meghan Michalak, the director of Fort Michilimackinac Pageant, Inc., most of them are either residents, family of residents, or former residents of the area who return annually for the reenactment.

In addition to the regular performances, visits are made to the local school to encourage students to participate in the pageant as well.

Reenactors met at 6 p.m. Friday, May 27, for one rehearsal. Only about one-quarter of those who will later perform are usually present at the rehearsal, which is not mandatory.

Fort Michilimackinac Pageant, Inc. is a non-profit group



**British soldiers entered Fort Michilimackinac following the surrender of the French after the French and Indian War. Historical interpreters at the 43rd Michilimackinac Pageant demonstrated authentic clothing as well as giving historically accurate military commands.**

solely devoted to re-creating and promoting the history of the Mackinac Straits area. Donations are solicited at the Pageant and throughout the year. Other money for the pageant comes from grants, donations from local businesses, and from fundraisers.

The performers make most of the costumes they wear. The pageant provides all of the soldier uniforms to insure historical accuracy.

Everybody is welcome to become involved in the pageant, and limited costumes are available for people who would like to become involved but do not have a costume

made.

The pageant was hosted by Mackinac State Historic Parks. In addition to the parade and pageant, there were knife throwing demonstrations, contests, and fireworks Sunday, May 29.

## Parade Winners

Grand Prize: Benton Harbor High School Tiger Marching Band

Mayor's Award: Saginaw High School Trojan Marching Band

Best Float: Alpenfest

Best High School Band: West Ottawa High School Band

Most Humorous: Scottville Clown Band

President's Choice: Addison High School Band

Legion Choice: Calumet High School Jr. ROTC

Ambassador Award: Newman Navy League, Cadet Corps #30

Queen's Trophy: Bandettes All-Girl Drum & Bugle Corps

Best Local Float: Mackinaw City Ambassadors

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# Bryce Tracy Named New County 911 Coordinator

**By Ryan Schlehuber**

Bryce Tracy of St. Ignace has been named Mackinac County Central Dispatch Board's new 9-1-1 coordinator, replacing Pam Matelski, who resigned to take a position with the Michigan State Police in Lansing.

Mr. Tracy was selected from eight applicants by the board's hiring committee, which narrowed the field to three. The Dispatch Board made its final decision Wednesday, May 25, at a regular meeting. The position is full-time, with health benefits and a 401k program. Mr. Tracy's salary has yet to be determined.

Mr. Tracy, 30, is a captain with the St. Ignace Fire Department and is the department's training officer and fire service instructor. He said he has more than 25 fire, rescue, and emergency certifications. Before he moved to St. Ignace in 1999, he served on the Carp Lake Township Fire Department in Emmet County.

"We chose Bryce because he has more communication experience," said Lawrence Leveille, a county commissioner and member of the Dispatch Board's hiring committee. "It was a hard decision, because we had three good candidates."

Sheriff Scott Strait, who is also on the hiring committee, said Mr. Tracy's familiarity and experience with the county's 9-1-1 communication system and with the Central Dispatch Board itself were the deciding factors in Mr. Tracy's hiring.

"With the experiences he has, he'll make a good 9-1-1 coordinator," said Sheriff Strait.

St. Ignace Fire Chief John "Bucky" Robinson said Mr. Tracy is an excellent grant writer for the fire department and will be an asset to the county's 9-1-1 program. Mr. Tracy has been successful in securing grants for airpicks, emergency response vehicles, and training materials for the department, Mr. Robinson said.

Bryce Tracy is a 1993 graduate of Pellston High School. He and his wife, Carrie, have a 3 1/2-year-old son, Parker. He has been a dock coordinator for Mackinac Island Carriage Tours for the past six summers.

Mr. Tracy said he applied for the 9-1-1 coordinator



**Bryce Tracy**

position because it gives him a chance to apply his knowledge of fire, rescue, and emergency techniques and his training in Homeland Security. He has worked with the Michigan Firefighters Training Council, Michigan State Police's Hazardous Materials Training Center, and the center's Emergency Management Division.

"I moved here when the county's 9-1-1 program was just getting started," he said. "I've been involved with many collective groups involving emergency services since then."

Pam Matelski, who held the 9-1-1 coordinator position for the past five years, will travel from Lansing on weekends to help Mr. Tracy with the transition.

"I have some big shoes to fill," said Mr. Tracy. "Pam did an excellent job setting up the 9-1-1 program. She did such a good job that other counties have used Mackinac County's 9-1-1 program as a model for theirs."

Mr. Tracy said he hopes to maintain the success that Ms. Matelski had as 9-1-1 coordinator.

"My big thing is to not let things go backwards, to maintain what we got going here, and to get more people involved," he said.

Sheriff Strait said Mr. Tracy has a long list of ongoing and one-time projects waiting for him when he takes office in a couple of weeks. Pending issues include constructing a radio tower at the east end of the county for better emergency radio communication, finalizing the county-wide digital mapping with Lange Enterprise of Wisconsin, installing emergency locating identification signs along snowmobile trails within the county, inventory and assign

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