



Town Crier 75¢

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Sunday Parade To End Lilac Festival in Grand Style

Dog and Pony Parade To Be Saturday

By Jessica Delaney
As the 56th Lilac Festival draws near its end, the events just keep getting bigger. Saturday will bring a brand new event to the Island with the first Epona & Barkus Parade. The

parade will follow along the boardwalk to Windermere Point and is organized by the Mackinac Island Dog & Pony Club.

The Parade is filled with exciting breeds. Included will

be Vinnie, a Husky sled dog that has raced in the Iditarod, more than 45 greyhounds, and many scout dogs to show a humanitarian side of dog rescue teams. Island dogs and tourist dogs have also been entered into the parade. More than 68 dogs have already registered,

and a table will be open at noon to take any last-minute registrations as well.

What would a dog and pony parade be without the ponies? Ponies from Country Road Haflingers will be marching in the parade alongside the canines.

The theme of this year's Parade will be "Tails of Mackinac." Dog owners are encouraged to dress their pets in costumes to help tell some of the legends and stories surrounding the Island. Prizes will be awarded for dog and owner

**Please turn to page 2*

Queen's Tradition: Coronation Kicks Off 56th Annual Festival

Blisse Beardsley To Wear Crown Through 2005 Events

The 56th Annual Lilac Festival officially began Friday, June 10, with the coronation of the 2005 Lilac Queen. Weekend rain and clouds held back long enough for the coronation ceremony, when 2004 Lilac Queen Jennifer Wightman officially relinquished her crown to the recently graduated Blisse Beardsley, who will assume all of the duties of the Lilac Queen until next year.

Present for the crowning of the new Queen were Mayor Margaret Doud, Father Rey Garcia of Ste. Anne's Catholic Church, Tourism Bureau Director Mary Slevin, and School Board member Jason St. Onge.

Also present at this year's coronation was 2005 Miss Teen Michigan Catherine Laurion of West Branch. Miss Laurion was invited to the coronation by Ms. Slevin and also attended the Queen's Rave in the evening.

Accompanying her to the Island as a combined vacation and appearance were her mother, the pageant coordina-

tor, and her best friend. She will be competing in the national Miss Teen USA contest in August.

The duties of the Lilac Queen, while not excessive, do entail some effort, according to coordinator Candace Smith. They begin with appearances during Lilac Festival at A Taste of Mackinac and at the Grand Parade and do not conclude until the following year with the opening of Fort Mackinac and the coronation of a new queen to open Lilac festivities.

In addition to the duties of the previous queen, each successive queen usually has one more event to attend, as Ms.

**Please turn to page 2*

2005 Lilac Court

2005 Lilac Queen
Blisse Beardsley
Lilac Princess
Shelbie Mosley

Emily St. Onge
Kristi Kamphuis
Christina McLean
Karlena Mosley

tor, and her best friend.

"I like doing fun things like this," said Miss Laurion. "A lot of girls don't do much with the crown."

Miss Laurion came up Friday to attend the two events and returned home Saturday, June 11. While on the Island, she stayed at Lilac Tree Hotel and enjoyed walking around

At right: Mayor Margaret Doud assists 2004 Lilac Queen Jennifer Wightman in passing the crown to the newly coronated Blisse Beardsley.



Historic Sites Funding Caught in Political Crossfire

Island Sites in Limbo as House, Senate Hagle \$1 Billion in State Budget Cuts

By Karen Gould

Mackinac State Historic Parks has become a pawn in an unprecedented three-way 2006 budget battle between the Michigan Senate and the House, and even between House Democrats and Republicans. The drama of losing its \$1.5 million state appropriation escalated last week following a House of Representatives funding bill that omitted the parks' money and Senate legislation that reinstated it.

Governor Jennifer Granholm, in February, recommended the state appropriation for the Mackinac Island agency be removed as part of a state effort to trim \$1 billion from next year's state budget.

Mackinac State Historic Parks includes Fort Mackinac on Mackinac Island and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, and Historic Mill Creek in Mackinaw City.

The Senate overwhelmingly

approved restoring the \$1.5 million in a roll call vote of 23 to 14 Tuesday, June 14. The vote came just five days after the House failed to return the funding when it passed its state budget bill in a vote down party lines, 58 Republicans voting for the bill and 52 Democrats voting against it.

In a political system filled with intrigue and now complicated by inexperienced, term-limited legislators, park officials are worried the \$1.5 million appropriation may get lost in the chaos that is sure to come as the two chambers try to work out vast differences in their budget bills.

"The House Leadership tells me they had some strategic reasons for not inserting the money at this time, reasons that largely elude me, despite my nearly 40 years experience in the legislative process," said Dennis Cawthorne, chairman of

**Please turn to page 9*



Historical interpreters at Fort Mackinac give presentations on military music and perform army drills and bugle calls. The fort is one of the responsibilities of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, whose mission is one of public education and historical research. The Commission also is entrusted with the care of the state's oldest structures, dating to the American Revolution.