



# Town Crier 75¢

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## Mackinac to Manitoulin Caps The Racing Season

By Karen Gould

Sails were hoisted signaling the beginning of the last of three area yacht races when the Mackinac to Manitoulin international island-to-island sailing competition left Mackinac Island Wednesday, July 27.

Special docking logistics and customs both played a part in this second annual fledgling regatta. The St. Ignace City Marina hosted some participants, since the Mackinac Island Marina was still booked with sailing vessels just completing the Bacardi Bayview Mackinac Race that ended Tuesday, July 26.

About half of the racers arrived from Canada and a U.S. Customs officer was on hand in St. Ignace to clear the arriving sailors. Sailors were not allowed to get off their boats until it had cleared customs.

Skippers took a ferry from St. Ignace to Mackinac Island on Tuesday for a pre-race meeting in preparation for Wednesday's 10 a.m. start. Twenty-two boats were expected to race, and last minute entries were also accepted.

This international race began just east of Mackinac Island's



Racers from Port Huron camp out at the Mackinac Island Marina. The 225-foot U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Hollyhock*, based at Port Huron, followed racers to the Island.

harbor and ends at Canada's Manitoulin Island, the world's largest freshwater island. The race, said David Rowe of the Mackinac Island Yacht Club, "is more taxing on skippers, navigators, and crew members than any of the other Great Lakes races."

The 130-mile course requires precision navigation, cutting through water laced with rocks as large as a house, he said. Racers will be sailing the entire length of the North Channel, west to east, in less than 24 hours, and to add to the chal-

lenge, they will be sailing at night, he said.

Sailors need to stay in deep water to avoid the large boulders as only several areas are marked.

In this race," said Mr. Rowe, "sailors have to follow charts  
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## Earth Voyager Sets Record in Bayview Race

By Karen Gould

*Earth Voyager*, a 60-foot trimaran from Rochester, New York, with her crew of six, stole the show last weekend by breaking the Southampton course record, finishing in 21 hours and 30 seconds in what is being called the fastest Bacardi Bayview Mackinac Race from Port Huron.

Finishing a whopping 48 hours after *Earth Voyager*, the last boat to arrive on Mackinac was a Shore Course adventurer, *Jante II*, a 30-foot Alberg owned by John Manza of Selfridge Air National Guard Base. He and his brothers completed the race in 61 hours, crossing the finish line at 1:25 a.m. Tuesday. *Jante II's* corrected time was 47 hours, 54 minutes, 35 seconds.

*Colt 45*, a 70-foot SC-70 out of Alpena, took first place overall in the Division I Southampton course with a corrected  
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## Public To See Master Plan Priorities

By Jessica Delaney

What is the worst thing that could happen to Mackinac Island? A hard question, but one that the Master Planning Committee is asking residents to consider as they continue work on providing a new master plan for

the City of Mackinac Island. A preliminary public meeting has been set for Thursday, August 4, at 6 p.m. The meeting will introduce the community to the purpose of a master plan and ask for input on the greatest priorities to be considered in devising a new

city master plan.

The purpose and focus of a master plan is to provide a strategy to guide the physical growth and development of a community. It establishes policies to guide future development regarding  
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## Be Careful of Cigarettes, Matches During Drought

Drought conditions on Mackinac Island are becoming severe, said Fire Chief Dennis Bradley, and the precipitation last week has not been enough to ease conditions. "This is getting pretty bad for Mackinac Island," he said.

There is still a ban on open burning anywhere on the Island, he added, and he cautions people against smoking while in the woods. He is concerned that lightning could also trigger a fire.

Mr. Bradley suggests that people be watchful for fires and call 9-1-1 to report them.

The small amount of rain over the weekend calmed things down a bit for this week,

said Scott Heather, state wildlife supervisor at the Department of Natural Resources, but things could get worse.

"We are currently in drought conditions," he said.

The drought index report at the Onaway field office was at 410, he said earlier this week. Anything over 300 is cause for concern and anything over 400 indicates a loss of vegetation and an increased risk of fire.

He advised that people should refrain from smoking while in the woods and noted that a match can start a fire easier than a cigarette can. He also said people should not shoot off fireworks during this time.



Dave Schmidt, the blacksmith at the Benjamin Blacksmith Shop on Market Street, is working on flag cleats for flagpoles at Fort Mackinac. He looks forward to hosting the Blacksmith Convention on the Island Saturday, August 6.

## Hammers and Anvils Coming to Island Aug. 6

The sound of forge and anvils will be ringing down Market Street Saturday, August 6, as Mackinac State Historic Parks hosts the 21st Annual Benjamin Blacksmith Convention. More than 25 blacksmiths from throughout Michigan will be participating this year, from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m., at the Benjamin Blacksmith Shop on Market Street. Spectators will have the opportunity to observe and talk to the blacksmiths as they work on fence and railing projects and give

demonstrations on forming hot iron into hinges, hooks, handles, and other items.

The original blacksmith shop belonged to Robert Benjamin and a partner, and was begun in 1885, when it was called the Star Blacksmith Shop. It remained in the Benjamin family and in operation until about 1965. The contents were donated to Mackinac State Historic Parks in 1968 and used in the blacksmith exhibit next to the Biddle House.

## City Approves Ambulance Bid

By Leslie Rott

The Mackinac Island City Council, armed with \$75,000 in pledges for a new ambulance, will purchase a 2005 Ford E-250 super cargo diesel van from Holden & Holden, Ltd of Harrison and expects to take delivery in November or December.

Meeting in special session Tuesday, July 26, Council accepted a price of \$63,962 for the new ambulance and will sign a contract soon. The price, offered by Ken Holden, includes a trade-in on the old ambulance.

"He gave us a very low-ball bid," said Tony Spata, an emergency medical technician for Allied EMS, which operates the city's ambulance service. "He

did it because he wants to supply the ambulance on Mackinac Island."

Ambulance personnel recommended the low bid to Council from several it had solicited. The next lowest bid was \$85,000, Mr. Spata said.

The \$75,000 in pledges had been solicited by cottager Mike Young from other cottagers and business owners following a fundraising dinner at the Iroquois Hotel July 10.

"It just goes to show how the community comes together for a very worthy cause," said Mayor Margaret Doud. "We are much appreciative to the community and grateful for the wonderful  
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