

Island Summer Resident Strengthens Ties Abroad

By Leslie Rott

One year ago, Heather Kalmbach, a political officer for the U.S. State Department, was sent to Saudi Arabia to work at the Consulate in Jeddah.

"Sometimes I feel like a journalist," she said of her job, which includes meeting with people and building relationships. She calls herself a traditional diplomat, monitoring what is going on in Saudi Arabia and maintaining friendly relations between that country and the United States.

Always interested in travel and politics, working for the State Department was the "natural course" for Ms. Kalmbach. To get the job, she took written and oral exams, the hardest she has ever taken, she said, then waited a year for the Federal Bureau of Investigation to per-

Heather Kalmbach (left) at her swearing-in ceremony at the State Department on the Mall in Washington, D.C., with her mother, Melissa Croghan. (Photograph courtesy of Melissa Croghan)

form a security check, including interviews with several Island residents she had listed as references.

A member of the Croghan family, long-time cottagers on the West Bluff, Ms. Kalmbach has spent many summers on the Island, working at the Leather Corral and as a historical interpreter at Fort Mackinac.

Once accepted into the Foreign Service, she was enrolled in a class of 100 and ultimately was asked to select 25 assignments from a list of



possibilities. Syria and Egypt were her preferred choices, but Saudi Arabia became her new home and she was one of the first in her class to leave for an assignment.

In the year she has worked for the consulate in Jeddah, she has been surrounded by activity, from the Crawford Summit to the death of King Fahd, the country's first elections, and the visit of several high ranking Americans, including Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Vice President Dick

Cheney.

On December 6, just five weeks after arriving at her new job, the consulate was attacked by five heavily armed terrorists. They did not penetrate the main building, but five employees were killed and 10 were injured in the attack.

"It was by far the scariest day of my entire life," she said of the experience. "We lost our colleagues and friends."

She notes differences between American and Saudi Arabian culture: The weekend

there is Thursday and Friday, society is gender segregated, women are not allowed to drive, stores close five times a day for prayer, and she has become accustomed to wearing an abaya, a black robe that is to be worn in public by women.

Similarities also exist. She is surrounded by familiar name brands like Starbucks, Chili's, and TGI Friday.

Ms. Kalmbach's tour in Saudi Arabia ends September 1 and she will return to Washington, D.C. Already well versed in Arabic, French, and Spanish, she will spend seven months studying Hebrew to prepare for her tour in Jerusalem, which will begin in June 2006.

"It's been a great experience for my first tour," she said. "It's a really fascinating place, given the time."

She completed her undergraduate work in international relations at the University of Arizona and graduate courses in Middle East studies at the University of Michigan. She also studied as a Fulbright Scholar in Morocco and as a CASA Fellow in Egypt.

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Hickory Stick Maintains Tradition

Tournament Uses Only Hickory Clubs

Remembering history is a valuable thing, but sometimes creating history is just as important. Old and new traditions comigled during the 4th annual Hickory Stick Tournament August 19 and 20.

The tournament is played using clubs made of hickory, historic shafts which would have been used to play the game in the 19th century.

"Everyone loves it because this is where they played hickory," said Fred "Fritz" George, golf pro at Wawashkamo Golf Club. "That's all there was when this course was made."

The tradition for the Hickory Stick Classic began

four years ago when a hickory player, Ralph Livingston, and a dozen other players were invited up to the course. The tournament has been kept going owing to its popularity among players. In fact, the majority of members who played in the weekend tournament brought their own hickory sticks.

A new tradition was started Friday, August 19, with the Hickory Stick Classic's first annual shoot out, held along with a barbecue.

"It was fun," said Mr. George. "We're trying to do things different and new. Everybody watched the shoot out and enjoyed the barbecue."

Twenty-one players competed in the shoot out, which was won by Mark Fleischer.

The actual Hickory Stick Classic followed on Saturday, but owing to a 1.5-hour rain delay, the tournament had to be held to nine holes. The winners of the best two ball of the fivesome were Ron

Steenasma, Randy Stuck, Doug Rearick, Larry Leaman, and Sonny Chappie with a score of 65. Second place went to Greg Kolkman, Phillip Navarre, Tom Irving, David Nordstrom, and Tamara Nordstrom with a score of 66. Third place, with a score of 67, were Todd Jensen, Marty Gillespie, Matt Gillespie, Mark Fleischer, and Steve Fleischer.

Men's low gross first place winner was Lou Bunker with a score of 38, followed by Greg Kolkman with a score of 39. Ladies' low gross was Kathy Chappie with a score of 55, followed by Tamara Nordstrom at 63. Men's low net was Tom Irving with 33 and Marty Gillespie. Ladies' Low net was Maryanke Alexander with a score of 46 and closest to the pin on hole four were Greg Kolkman and Tamara Nordstrom. Closest to the pin on hole eight were Tom Irving and Kathy Chappie. The longest putt was made on hole nine by Mike Robbins for the men, and Judy Robinson and Cindy Leaman for the women.

Rasmussens Are Top Skippers

Father and son, Richard and Michael Rasmussen of Walworth, Ohio, took top honors at the stone skipping contest during the Fudge Festival Saturday, August 27, at Windermere Point. Richard skipped 16 stones and Michael skipped 13. Participants came from as far away as San Antonio, Texas.

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