

# Mackinac Island Community Foundation Meets New National Standards

The Mackinac Island Community Foundation has met new national standards that rank it among the top nonprofits in the country, having complied with a tough set of new organizational and financial practices. Acceptance by a national team of reviewers, working under the Council on Foundations, allows the Foundation to promote itself as a competent and professional community foundation and to display the national seal of compliance on its stationery and literature.

"This is a tough, new program developed nationally to protect community foundations and their donors from unscrupulous or mismanaged operations," said the foundation's chairman, Wesley Maurer, Jr. "We are one of the first groups in the state to have passed this rigid test, and that says a lot for our group, especially Jennifer Bloswick, who had to compile all the docu-

mentation for our review."

Ms. Bloswick is the executive director of the Mackinac Island Community Foundation.

"Our application for this was about six inches thick," Mr. Maurer continued, "but it is important that we get this certification, because we have more than \$4 million endowed already, and these standards will help satisfy the community that our funds are going to be well managed for a long time to come."

The endowments are contributions that are invested, and the income from the investments is used to enhance the quality of life on Mackinac Island. The original contributions remain in the endowment, so they generate income year after year.

"As our endowments get bigger," said Mrs. Bloswick, "we are able to make more of an impact on community life here, and in addition to funding some worthwhile projects of

other groups on the Island, we will be able to help the community address important issues facing us today and unknown issues that will arise in the future."

The Foundation board has been working this winter on a new slate of projects to be undertaken over the next five years or so, she said. They include increasing the scholarships for Island students, protecting the Island's natural resources, and planning for the future.

"Clearing this national standards hurdle is a big step for us," said Mr. Maurer, "and because these practices we are using are accepted by national leaders as sound, it gives us the confidence to move to the next level. We're hoping it will give our donors that confidence, too."

The Council on Foundations and leaders of the community foundation field created the National Standards in 2000 to aid community foundations in establishing legal, ethical, and effective operational practices that would show the foundations' transparency and financial responsibility in light of the increased public scrutiny of foundation practices.

"Adopting high standards is the best way we can demonstrate our ongoing commitment to maintaining the trust of our donors and the entire community," said Mrs. Bloswick.

Intended both as a blueprint for internal organizational development and as a tangible

set of benchmarks for external assessment of performance, the 43 National Standards address six key areas of community foundation operations:

•*Mission, Structure and Governance*, including standards defining board accountability, compensation, independence, fiduciary responsibility and representation of the community.

•*Resource Development*, including parameters for administration of funds, disclosures to donors and commitment to building long-term resources for varied community issues and causes.

•*Stewardship and Accountability*, covering prudent investment and management of funds, transparent record-keeping, use of funds for their intended purpose, annual audits, and public availability of financial information, including standards related to due diligence and community responsiveness.

•*Grantmaking and Community Leadership*, including standards related to broad and open grantmaking programs, due diligence, and responsiveness to changing community needs.

•*Donor Relations*, encompassing guidelines for informing, educating and involving donors in responding to community needs.

•*Communications*, including openness to public scrutiny and frequent communications about activities and finances.

To achieve Confirmation of Compliance with the National Standards, Mrs. Bloswick said, the Mackinac Island Community Foundation underwent an extensive review of their organizational and financial policies and procedures, performed by a national team of foundation experts.

The Council on Foundations notified the Foundation that it complies with the National Standards on November 29.

## Workers Find New Home

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"Another good thing that I like is the church," Mr. Quinones said. "I feel that what they do is very good. We do not finish mass and just go home. We have more time to spend together. Because I eat my food and it is Mexican, and I can dance and sing. . . it is familiar."

Mr. Olgin said that the situation is vastly different for workers at Carriage Tours. He said that he has not felt much of a sense of community from the other Mexican workers and that it is difficult to find a niche to fit into on the Island.

"There are four of us here at Carriage Tours. There are more at Grand Hotel, but we don't speak with them," said Mr. Olgin. "There is a little community with us, but we are only four, no more."

## Island Breakwall Project Moving Ahead

*\*Continued from page 1*

undertaking that began approximately three years ago.

U.S. Congressman Bart Stupak (D-Menominee) worked with the conference committee, composed of members of both the House and Senate, to recommend the funding. Congressman Stupak urged committee members to include the feasible study funding because the Island is dependent on water transportation. He told the committee the Island is accessible from the mainland of northern Michigan by boat across the often rough waters of Lake Huron and people, supplies, and freight for businesses are transported by ferry.

"We've been fighting for this for years," said Bob

Brown, general manager for Arnold Transit Company, who said the company is promoting the project. "The southeast storms cause havoc in the harbor."

"It would be a huge help," said Tom Pfeiffelmann, general manager at Star Line Mackinac Island Ferry of St. Ignace. He said the wind and waves have ripped up the Star Line dock in the past and speculated that if the breakwall is constructed, Mackinac Island probably will become a no-wake harbor. Right now, the harbor is considered an open harbor, said Mr. Pfeiffelmann. As an open harbor, no liability exists with wakes, but if it becomes a no-wake area, that would all change. Boats entering the harbor would have to slow down or face fines.

"No community has the funding to build a breakwall and infrastructures securing the safety of vessels both private

and commercial," said Chris Shepler, vice-president of Shepler's Mackinac Island Ferry of Mackinaw City, who said the company was pleased the project is moving forward. "Within the confines of the Mackinac Island harbor, it would put a peace of mind in the maritime community toward docking at Mackinac Island, thus, hopefully, more visitors will take advantage of our beautiful harbor."

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will perform the study for the breakwall that would help protect passenger and freight docks, and marina boats from storm surges that hamper boat traffic and cause shoreline damage during heavy weather conditions.

In September, Mackinac Island City Council sent a letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requesting they continue with the project.

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**THANK YOU!**

The Mackinac Island Public School Class of 2006 would like to send out a thank you to everyone who helped with our senior class fundraiser. The Poor Man's Ball was a huge success and we would like to thank the businesses that donated prizes, the people that helped set up, serve food, and clean up. We couldn't have done it without your help.

**THANKS AGAIN!**

The Mackinac Island Public School Class of 2006  
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