

Audit Shows Mackinac Island School Finances in Good Shape

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said. "Your fund balance is very close to covering an entire year's worth of expenditures. If you did not receive any money next year, you'd still be operating out of the fund balance."

Mackinac Island operates a K-12 school with a budget of about \$1.2 million. It has 81 students.

Ms. Kortz said other districts in the area that Rehmann Robson audits have only between five and 26 percent of a year's operating costs in their fund balances.

The school district also was able to decrease its total debt by \$76,781 during the fiscal year, to \$2,255,000.

The auditor's report noted one reportable condition, but did not consider it a material weakness: "Due to staff size,

there is limited segregation of duties over cash receipts and disbursements and the recording of these transactions. The District recognizes this risk, but no change will be implemented because the costs would exceed the benefits."

Superintendent Jack Dehring provided his state of the school update to board members, sharing with them information about a new video resource the school will be using. The Internet-delivered service allows for easy access to thousands of educational videos that can be previewed by teachers and easily downloaded, eliminating the need to wait weeks for mail delivery.

Teachers are able to show the videos either on computers in the computer laboratory or digitally through a television or projector. Mr. Dehring said the

videos include lesson plans and follow-up lessons, and he said some videos can be used to teach multiple lessons.

The school will give its old computers to students who do not have home computers. Mr. Dehring is preparing them with free software from the Internet.

Several old laptop computers will also be available through the school's good deeds program, where students earn tokens for being on the honor roll, performing good deeds, or earning good grades in class. The tokens are then used at an auction, where students can bid on prizes.

Mr. Dehring told board members that a Michigan Department of Education proposal for a state-wide credit program for graduation probably will be implemented and could require up to 16 specific

class credits for high school graduation. Currently, the state requires one semester of civics for graduation, allowing local school districts to set other requirements.

State Superintendent Mike Flanagan is recommending more credits, including four mathematics, four language arts, three social studies, three science, one health and physical education, and one fine arts and music credit.

Mr. Dehring said the requirement the Island school might have the most difficulty meeting would be the fine arts credit, since the school does not have a fine arts instructor.

"I believe what we have in place right now, as far as numbers of credits, is probably higher than what they are looking at," said Mr. Dehring. He will prepare a report for the board by the next meeting.

Mr. Dehring also reported that new legislation could allow school districts to buy insurance as a group to help lower rates. He said such a practice is currently against the

law. "The more money we can save, the more money we can spend on kids," he said.

The school board next meets Thursday, December 22, at 6 p.m. at the school library.

Blankets Sought in Charity Drive

More than 100 blankets, new and used, were donated in St. Ignace to those in need over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Project Blanket Northern Michigan was started by employees from Lite 96.3 radio in Petoskey and adopted in St. Ignace by Victorian Village owner Linda Davis.

Many of the blankets she received were sent to the St. Ignace Food Pantry, Mackinac County Department of Human Services, and to the Petoskey area.

More blanket donations can be delivered to Victorian Village. Contact Linda Davis at 643-8175 for more information.

Huron Ferry Marks 50 Years

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Mackinac. And the *Huron*, with its heated cabin, is a necessity for those Mackinac Islanders and visitors traveling to or from the Island in December.

At some point in this winter of 2005-06, it is likely that the *Huron* will be tied up to its dock. Ice is the great enemy of boats, and as the waters get colder, it will form once again in the Straits of Mackinac. The winter will pass, and the ice will melt. When spring comes, the welcome sound of the *Huron's* air horn will sound once again over the waters of the lake whose name it bears.

WANT ADS • SERVICES REAL ESTATE

CHARMING NEWER CABIN for sale at Point Nipigon Resort on Lake Huron, 9 miles from Mackinaw City. Includes two additional wooded lots, lake access with a private association beach, tennis courts, new log lodge, and caretaker on site. Low maintenance, natural landscaping, all wood interior/exterior, beautiful screened porch. \$159,500. For sale by owner. Phone 906-847-6202 or after Labor Day, 231-347-5263.

LOVELY LISTENING music inspired from beautiful Mackinac Island. Composed and played by Johnny Mayorov. To order: E-mail: mayorov1@msn.com. Phone 519-432-0669.

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NEW RETAIL SPACE with optional 2-bedroom, 2-bath attached apartment at Mackinaw City's busiest downtown intersection. Very attractive 1,500 square feet. Phone Doug at 906-484-2010.

LAKE VIEW HOTEL Condominium: Mackinac Islands exclusive downtown resort hotel currently has 4 units available. Rooms with spectacular views of the Straits of Mackinac as well as units with balconies overlooking our 4-story atrium-style indoor pool/spa area starting at \$118,000. Rental histories are available. Phone Ira Green, Lake View's broker at 231-301-1133.

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MACKINAC ISLAND WEST BLUFF COTTAGE "WHITE BIRCHES"



Authentic 1891 Queen Anne Victorian. Nine-bedroom home, 6 1/2 baths, original Victorian features including, wainscoting, hardwood floors, paneled ceilings, Arts & Crafts lighting and two fireplaces. Historic barn on extensive property. Singular setting on West Bluff Cliffwalk (Pontiac Trail), very private. Panoramic view of Straits of Mackinac, Round Island and Mackinac Bridge. \$2.2 million

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Thinking of Buying or Selling?

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