

# Drenth To Assist in Superintendent Search

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\$3,000 to assist the school's personnel committee, which has not conducted a formal search for a superintendent since 1983. Jack Dehring, long-time Mackinac Island school teacher, replaced Gary Urman two years ago and is retiring July 1. Mr. Urman held the position 11 years before accepting the top administrative post at Boyne Falls.

Mr. Drenth, who retired from Les Cheneaux Community Schools in 2000, has been active in community and educational services in the area, assisting several schools in the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District in solving student enrollment and financial issues.

"We felt as a board that hiring Ken Drenth would provide us with a more complete and professional job as far as finding the best applicants to



**Ken Drenth**

choose from to find the future director or our school," said Board President Ben Mosley. "With Mr. Drenth, he has been able to provide us with a larger pool of applicants."

The school board wants to fill the position by July 1. The salary and benefits, said Mr. Drenth, will be determined by the experience of the applicant.

Mr. Drenth has printed a brochure about the position, the school, and the community.

As of Monday, May 8, eight applications have been turned in to him.

Applications for the position are due Tuesday, May 23. Mr. Drenth will screen the applicants and interviews will be scheduled June 1 through June 3.

School board trustee and personnel committee chair Trish Martin said Mr. Drenth will conduct initial interviews and cut the number of applicants to two or three. The personnel committee, which includes Sara Chambers and Mr. Mosley, will then become involved in the interview process with Mr. Drenth.

Members of the committee will also visit the hometown of each finalist and meet with the applicants' supervisors and staff.



**Fort Mackinac overlooks the Straits of Mackinac with a spectacular view. It provides an interactive, hands-on experience with history that draws school groups and families.**

# History Draws School Groups, Families to Fort

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such as Arch Rock and Sugarloaf," and the charm and relaxation the Island offers, are important characteristics of its tourist appeal.

Greg Hokans, who oversees development and marketing at Mackinac State Historic Parks, emphasized the importance of Mackinac Island to the success of the tourism industry.

Unlike the automotive industry, he said, "our industry is a conglomeration of large and small businesses and public and private entities working together." The goal is "to create an image of an unforgettable, enjoyable experience for the people who come here. These are family traditions that people will invest in because they had a good time here."

Fort Mackinac's historical value has been translated into an educational treasure-trove of what Mr. Hokans calls "a living history laboratory." Each year, approximately 60,000 primary and secondary school students visit the museums at Mackinac State Historic Parks, which include Colonial Michilimackinac, Historic Mill Creek, Old Mackinaw Point Lighthouse, and Fort Mackinac.

"First and foremost, we're an educational institution," Mr. Hokans said. He added that the interactive and hands-on aspects of the museums has a positive effect on both teachers and students.

Despite economic difficulties in many schools, Mr. Hokans explained, "teachers who have brought kids to the Fort in the past think so highly of the educational experience that they come back."

"This time of year, the important thing is school groups," Mr. Porter said. "Schools find that the programs in our historical sties really blend nicely with their social studies curriculum."

The agency also maintains a program called Historic Mackinac on Tour, where park interpreters visit schools throughout the state with programs on history and ecology.

By reaching out to students, Mr. Hokans said, Mackinac State Historic Parks instills the idea that a visit to Mackinac Island can make history part of a fun experience.

History, learning, and other activities that make up the Island's most popular tourist draws all work together in combination with the environment. Mr. Hokans stressed the importance of leaving a lasting impression on visitors, especially since around this time other tourist attractions, such as theme parks, are beginning to draw crowds as well.

For those who spend their vacation here, he said, "what they have purchased is memory, experience. They will go back to friends and family and be our best marketing tool."

Mr. Porter also stated that the experience visitors receive is crucial to their perception of the Island.

"What we're ultimately looking for is that the services that we provide meet our customers' needs," he said.

"What holds it together is our quality guest services," Mr. Hokans added. "We can't control the gas prices or the economy, but the one thing we have total control over is how we treat our guests."

# Annex Fence Proposal Raises Questions

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the property line. The proposed fence, however, would encroach on the city-owned right-of-way. They have asked the city for a use permit for the city property.

Committee member Mike Legion Post 299 Invites Members

Former members of the military who served during periods of wartime are eligible to join the Mackinac Island American Legion Post 299. Contact Paul Wandrie, commander, at 847-3516.

# Bike Licenses Available Now

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Hart suggested that the Strauses build the new fence along the property line.

"If they want to build a fence," he said, "they can build it on their property."

Among the concerns of the committee members is that the Strauses would not be paying taxes on the fence if it is on city property and that the fence line could misrepresent the lot boundary in the future when the property is sold. Members also worried about the need to accommodate future heavy traffic flow and the potential for large development in the area which might require full use of the right-of-way and noted that there are no other similar permanent structures erected on city-owned property with a use permit.

City attorney Tom Evashevski cautioned that their decision should ensure that the Strauses cannot argue that they

are being treated differently than others who have been allowed to encroach on the right-of-way.

"The one thing I don't think we've ever done," however, he admitted, "is allow someone to exclude the public with a use permit."

Mr. Hart agreed, saying that allowing the fence to be built would be "a surrendering of public land for private use."

The committee had met to review the plans and the issue was going to be voted on by the city council Wednesday, May 10, but the issue was tabled because revised plans for the fence had not been received.

"Because of the fact that we don't have the (new) proposals, maybe this shouldn't even come to the table tomorrow night," said Mayor Margaret Doud. "I don't see how we can act on this."

The Strauses were not present at Tuesday's meeting.



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