

Home and Garden Television Films Christmas on Island

Billy Bentgen Wins New Snowmobile

By Karen Gould

Mackinac Island Christmas Bazaar visitors were focused on the raffles, auctions, food, and gift sales as a producer and cameraman moved about Community Hall filming and interviewing crafters for a network show to air next year on Home and Garden Television (HGTV), as part of a series tentatively entitled, "Christmas Across America."

The live and silent auctions and raffle ticket sales raised \$46,000 to benefit the Mackinac Island Medical Center, Little Stone Church, St. Anne's Church, Trinity Church, and Mackinac Island Bible Church. It was held Saturday, December 1, to Monday, December 3, at Community Hall.

Billy Bentgen of St. Ignace won the grand prize of a new 2007 Ski-Doo snowmobile, Mike Lockwood of Mackinac Island won \$500 for second place in the drawing, and Ryan Bertrand of Onsted took home \$100 for third place. Joan Nephew of Mackinac Island was the 50/50 raffle winner of \$1,054.

Betty BeDour of Mackinac Island won \$1,000 in the Christmas raffle that sold tickets for \$25 each. Four \$500

cash prizes were won by Ann Taylor of Delta, Ohio, Loretta Spata of Mackinac Island, Bud Chambers of St. Ignace, and Frank Bloswick, Jr. Mackinac Island.

Kathy Wightman of St. Ignace won 50 gallons of gas.

Unique to the auction this year was bidding for part of the bar from the Mustang Lounge. The establishment, under new ownership of Jason Klonowski and Larry Myers, is being remodeled. The first drink at the bar when it reopens also was also auctioned off. Island resident Tony Brodeur had top bid for the bar and John Hulett was top bidder for the first drink in the new bar, scheduled to open in May.

Many Island residents volunteered their time to make the bazaar possible, including those who sold raffle tickets, offered auction paddles, organized auction items, staffed the kitchen, and brought food to serve at the luncheon. During the live auction each day, the Mackinac Island Recreation Department kept children busy with crafts, snacks, games, and a movie.

HGTV producer Tammy Sortor and cameraman Reid Riddell, both from Michigan,



Trish Martin (right) prepares for her on-camera interview for Home and Garden Television (HGTV). Producer Tammy Sortor (left) of High Noon Entertainment interviewed Ms. Martin on techniques she uses to create her handpainted ornaments. Reed Riddell filmed the Christmas on Mackinac Island segment, scheduled to air next year.

work for the production company High Noon Entertainment of Colorado.

"We are documenting how Mackinac Island celebrates Christmas," said Ms. Sortor. "The unique traditions of Mackinac and the uniqueness of the community as an Island family."

They captured Island scenes, including the lighting of the Christmas tree and the



Jeannette Doud (left) takes a moment to catch up with friend Melanie Cook-Porcario at the Christmas Bazaar. The two women live at opposite ends of Market Street and were sharing their favorite dog stories.

arrival of Santa. They were especially happy at having snow on the ground.

They visited Weber's Floral, owned by Melanie and Jay Porcario, interviewed crafters Trish Martin and Caroline LaPine and her

daughter, Gwen Bagbey, checked out the 4-H Christmas tree sale, and talked with Mayor Margaret Doud about the Island's traditions.

Ms. Martin's painted animals,

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Santa Makes Island Visit



Three-year-old Ethan Cotton gets a lift from dad Steve as Santa (Ray Card) arrives at the Mackinac Island Fire Hall Saturday, December 1. Fire Chief Dennis Bradley assists Santa, who carries a bag full of toys. An Island tradition of delivering Santa for more than 40 years, the fire truck is one of seven emergency vehicles that serve the Island. Fireman Jason St. Onge drove the vehicle to Market Street and was accompanied by fireman Travis Vartanian.



Alex Graham shows his nine-month-old daughter Penelope one of the stuffed animals available to Christmas Bazaar shoppers. The soft toys were made by Caroline LaPine and her daughter, Gwen Bagbey.