



Town Crier

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Bucking the Old Trend: Area Tourism Needs 'Action'

By Karen Gould

Traditional tourism is changing, and successful attractions that now lure travelers offer more than just looking at artifacts through glass cases. Whether it is called heritage tourism, cultural tourism, or geotourism, visitors want to experience a story, said Dr. William Anderson, director of the Michigan Department of History Arts and Libraries, speaking at the 27th Annual Historic Preservation Conference at Grand Hotel Friday, May 4.

"It's not just seeing those things, but it is giving visitors the opportunity to experience a story," he said, "and the potential is huge."

This was the first time the group of historians, travel experts, and preservationists has met on the Island, and approximately 250 people attended the conference, which was also offered free to Island residents. Chairing the program committee was Island summer resident Frank Pompa.

The influence of Disney has been powerful on tourism and we need to add fun and entertainment, said Dr. Anderson.

"Michigan needs to enhance the visitor's experience," he said, and some areas have begun the process, including communities around the country that are taping into their unique features to draw visitors to their areas.

The old way of tourism was walking around a museum and staring at the artifacts, he said. The new way is to add action. At a museum in Indianapolis, visitors can make a pie and feed livestock, he said. While watching a Revolutionary War movie in a Virginia museum, visitors feel the rumble of cannons in the theater.

In Michigan, visitors touring the Henry Ford River Rouge factory experience a blast of heat while viewing molten iron, and feel a mist of water on their face while watching auto parts being painted. They travel along a walkway 18 feet above the factory floor to watch trucks being assembled.

Communities, he said, can make a memorable and lasting experience for the visitor by telling compelling stories that make the visitor feel part of the attraction, both physically and emotionally.

In Branson, Missouri, one can visit the Titanic Museum, a two-story replica of the ship. Standing on deck, visitors feel the cold air and feel the temperature of the water by putting a hand in a container of water. As visitors board the vessel, they are given a boarding pass with a picture of someone who was on the ship, and at the end of the voyage, the visitor finds out if their character survived the sinking. Visitors also sit in a life raft and hear stories

* Please turn to page 6

Rollin' Into the Busy Summer



Arrowhead Carriage employee Justin Davenport of Cedarville refurbishes a wheel Wednesday, April 25, in preparation for the summer season. The sanding and varnishing preserves the wood and enhances the carriage appearance by bringing out details in the wood, he said. In its 27th year of business, Arrowhead Carriages has 18 horses, eight private tour buggies, and three wedding carriages. Over the winter, owner Joe Plaza said, the company has replaced horse harnesses, pads, and several horse stalls. "Horses are eating machines and high maintenance," said Mr. Plaza.



At 9 a.m. Monday, May 7, the year's first cannon boom echoed through Mackinac Island city streets, signaling the opening of Fort Mackinac. The cannon was fired by Lilac Queen Melissa Bunker. The life-long Island resident is scheduled to crown her successor Friday, June 8, the first day of the festival. This year will mark the 58th Lilac Festival, which runs until June 17. Soldier interpreters Craig Wilson (left) and Joe Frost stand at attention.

Andress Wins Board of Education Seat

Wightman, Horn Retain City Council Seats After Election

By Karen Gould

In a 47 percent turnout of voters, incumbents were the preferred choice on Mackinac Island, with Aldermen Armand "Smi" Horn and Dan Wightman retaining their city council seats in the Tuesday, May 8, election. School board president Ben Mosley also was elected to another term on the board. He will be joined by newcomer Terry Andress. She replaces Paul Wandrie, who chose not to run for reelection. The council and school board seats are three-year terms.

City council challenger Sam Barnwell lost the race, as did school board contender Marsha Kleber.

The two contested races for two city council seats and two school board seats brought out 47 percent of the voters, said Mackinac Island City Clerk Karen Lennard. By 3 p.m. one-third of the Island voters had cast ballots. By the time the polls closed at 8 p.m. 305 votes were cast, including 97 absentee ballots.

Mackinac Island has 646 registered voters.

Also running unopposed and winning reelection for a one-year term were Mayor Margaret Doud, Clerk Karen Lennard, Treasurer Rick Linn, Assessor Robert Benser, and Supervisor Ron Dufina.

Island residents voted against an Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District (EUPISD) ballot proposal that would have increase

property taxes through a 0.75 mill levy over the next three years to support special education. The proposal also failed district-wide.

If it had passed, Island taxpayers would have contributed an estimated \$130,697 in 2008, but the Island school would receive only \$28,000 from the special education disbursement.

The EUPISD would have collected 75 cent for every \$1,000 from property owners on the taxable value of their property. The funds would be used for special education services to students.

Voting was steady all day and no problems were encountered, said Mrs. Lennard. Following the November 2006

* Please turn to page 2

School Looks To Resurrect Girls Basketball Program

Changes to MHSAA Sports Seasons Give Girls Tough Decisions

By Ryan Schlehuber

Girls basketball may be resurrected on Mackinac Island, now that Michigan high school athletic seasons will be rearranged, starting next school year. Girls volleyball is scheduled to be moved from winter to the fall, creating a vacancy for girls sports in the winter. Co-ed soccer is also played in the fall.

If Mackinac Island and the rest of the Northern Lights League can muster enough girls to field teams, the league may have its first girls basketball season since the early 1990s.

The U.S. Supreme Court's refusal to hear the latest appeal from Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) was announced Monday, April 2, ending a nine-year battle against a gender-equity suit filed by Communities for Equity. The group argued that MHSAA dis-

criminated against female athletes and violated the 14th Amendment and Title IX, which protects equal rights within any education program or activity receiving federal funds.

Michigan has been the only state in which high school girls play basketball in the fall and volleyball in the winter.

Superintendent Roger Schrock told the school board Thursday, April 19, he has verbal commitments from eight girls in grades eight through 12, which would provide five starters and at least three reserve players.

"It's been awhile since we've had a girls team," he said, "but talking with the girls, they seemed pretty excited about it."

A schedule could be worked out by the time school lets out in June.

Jimmy Fisher, the boys basketball coach, may also coach the girls team, since both teams will be scheduled to play consecutive games on the same days.

* Please turn to page 6