

# Handlers Say Respect Is the Key to Safety Around Horses

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ber to take it easy around them," Dr. Sibinic said. "Always respect them for their size and power. Respect is a giant part of keeping these large animals at ease."

Loud noises, including shouting and noise-makers sold in some gift shops, are another trigger.

Because horses would be prey animals in the wild, their main defense is to take off running at the first sign of danger. Sudden noises or movements can trigger that flight reaction, say horse handlers.

It is important to avoid sudden movements, such as violently shaking off an umbrella underneath an awning when it is raining. Look around to see if any horses are approaching before shaking a wet umbrella, said Dr. Chambers.

Some people are curious as to why skateboarding and in-line skating are banned in the downtown area, but the answer, once again, lies with the horses. Mr. Pettit said that no matter how good of a skater someone is, anyone can slip and let a

skateboard go flying underneath a horse, causing mayhem. Even running in the direction of a horse can give them the wrong idea, causing them to jerk and panic. And that concern is with good skaters. Bad ones would be even more trouble.

Paper, plastic bags, and other flying debris can also frighten horses.

"If a carriage or dray driver tells you to please pick up a piece of paper or a bag, help them out and do it, to avoid any trouble with the horses. They can't get down and do it themselves," Mr. Pettit said. "They have to stay with their horses at all times, so do them the favor and clear the streets when it's possible."

While on the mainland, pedestrians often have the right of way, on Mackinac Island, it's the horses who get the preferential treatment. They are large and working and people can move out of the way more easily than a team of carriage horses.

"Especially going up a hill, it's important to clear the way for horses pulling a large load,"

Mr. Pettit said. "When someone refuses to get out of the way, that's not good for anybody. Listen to the driver at all times; they know what they are doing."

Keeping the streets clear of parked bicycles is also important. When parking on Main Street, make sure the bicycle is between the thick white line and the curb so it doesn't get clipped by a carriage.

Keeping children in check is also a courtesy that horses and their drivers will appreciate.

Dr. Chambers wants parents to bear in mind that accidents can happen quickly and unsupervised children can get under a horse easily, or swat one on the snout while parents are preoccupied.

"You can't scare the little kids about them," advises Dr. Chambers, "and you definitely can't say, 'Don't touch the horse.' That scares the little kid, and they shouldn't be scared. Simply caution them a little bit, and hold the child, let them look at the horse from a safe distance. Children shouldn't be too far away from their parents. Of course, they want to have fun,

but just monitor them. Don't let them run halfway down the street without you. Especially when children are riding their bicycles, it is important, in the town area, to keep them up close to you, and don't let them get so far ahead of you. A horse could swing its head or jump sideways at any time, so it's important to give space."

Saddle horses come with their own set of rules.

"The metal shoes on the horses make their feet a little more sensitive to the concrete they are walking on, so always walk the animals at a slower pace when on tougher surfaces," said Dale Gough, who is director of operations at Cindy's Riding Stable and Jack's Livery.

The stables employ guides to go with the riders, to make sure the horses are in good hands and that the horseback riding experience is positive.

Here, too, respect is the key to safety around horses.

"Give the horses a lot of respect," said Mr. Pettit. "You think they are big, gentle puppy dogs, but you never know what's going to happen."

# Families From Many Areas Partake in Blessing of Animals

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so laid back and family oriented," said Tim French, a visitor from Belfast, Maine, who watched his daughter, Paulie, sit on Navajo. "Everyone is just so friendly, and events like this one are worth coming here for."

The Pappas family from Brighton came up to Mackinac Island for the nostalgia. Jerry Pappas has come to the Island

for more than 40 years, ever since he was a child. He doesn't plan on stopping that tradition with his wife, two children, and yellow English Labrador Bob, who Mr. Pappas says goes everywhere with them.

"He's part of the family," he said of Bob. "I can't imagine not bringing him up here with us. He's just always been there with the family. It's great that

we could bring him to an event like this."

Ms. Martin told the crowd before the blessing that everyone who brought an animal or came to the event knows exactly what it's like to "need an animal." She made references to old poems, songs, and stories, with horses that everyone could relate to, such as Alexander the Great's Bucephalus, Paul

Revere's Brown Beauty, and the well-known Seabiscuit.

"It's appropriate to celebrate the horses, because they have shaped our way of life," she said. "The horse is king on this Island, and it is a special place for them."

# Lilac Parade Features Horses

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pulling the Mission Point float. In this case, horses and driver were all veterans, and this was Tom's 17th Lilac Day Parade, he said with a grin.

Last, but not least, in my lineup was one lone wagon driven by one lone Island veteran. As they made their way down Main Street, cheers and applause followed them.

George Wellington and the Doud's Market grocery wagon rolled on by. The wagon, the horse, and the driver spoke more about this place and history than I can put into words. It was wonderful. You guessed it, just like the old days.

*Candice Dunnigan is an active member of the American Equestrian Association, the Waterloo Hunt, and the Mackinac Horsemen's Association. Seasonally she resides at Easterly Cottage.*

# Planners Approve Island Projects

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not allow a vinyl fence?" questioned Commissioner Pettit. "We said no to the post office."

A vinyl fence looks nice at first, he said, and then it breaks and does not look attractive.

"It's in the historic area, and it should be maintained in a certain way," he added.

Approval was given to Grand Hotel for a wooden fence along its shoreline property just south of British

Landing. Approval also was given to R. Daniel Musser III, hotel president, for a wooden gate at his Hubbard's Annex cottage.

Approval was given to Carol Erbel for the addition of a north-facing window to provide cross-ventilation at her Spring Street house.

The Mackinac Island Planning Commission next meets Tuesday, July 10, at 4 p.m. on the second floor of Community Hall.

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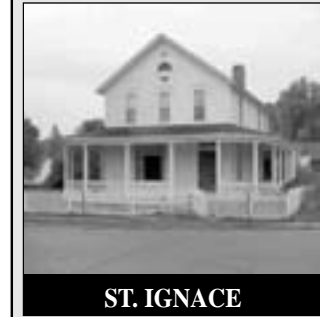


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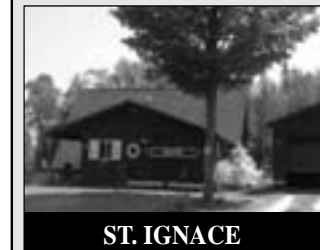
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## Places of Worship

### Ste. Anne's Catholic Church

#### Mass Schedule

Saturday — 5:30 p.m.

Sunday — 9 and 11 a.m.

### Mackinac Island Bible Church

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Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday Mid-week

Service 8 p.m.

all services at

Mission Point Resort Theatre

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& Special Events

Coffee House Friday

9 p.m. to Midnight

### Little Stone Church Union Congregational

Summer Sunday Worship

10:30 a.m.

Thursday Bible Study 1 p.m.

Trinity Episcopal Church Parish Hall

All Are Welcome

### Trinity Episcopal Church

Sunday Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m.

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