

# Proposals for Equestrian Center, Driving Range on State Land Will Be Reconsidered

By Karen Gould

Proposals for an equestrian center and a golf driving range on state land north of the old burn pile off British Landing Road will be considered by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission in March. The new site was proposed at the commission's January 9 meeting after it was learned that two spots suggested last fall would not work.

Last summer, the Mackinac Horsemen's Association (MHA) had asked to lease the old city incinerator site for a community stable and turn-out area, and Wawashkamo Golf Club had requested land east of British Landing Road near the solid waste facility for a driving range. Both parcels are on state park land, but both have been deemed unsatisfactory, the stable site for environmental reasons and the driving range because of safety issues.

The new, combined site, on the old Early homestead near British Landing on Mackinac Island, will be reviewed after plans are submitted over the next several months.

The proposals were discussed at the Mackinac Island State Park Commission meeting Wednesday, January 9, in Lansing.

Scrap metal, glass, and other debris made the planned community stable site environmentally unsuitable, according to an environmental study conducted by Mackinac Environmental of St. Ignace. MHA had sought to use about three acres of state land west of Harrisonville for a stable and corral. The land was used 40 years ago by the City of Mackinac Island to incinerate garbage.

The equestrian organization knew the potential hazards, but had hoped the property might be eligible for industrial clean-up funds.

Mackinac Environmental, said park director Phil Porter, "determined the site was unsuitable for the proposed development as an equestrian center" because there was so much debris that could be

damaging to horses.

Mackinac Environmental was hired by the horsemen's association to conduct the testing.

Steve Rilenge, an MHA board member, asked the Mackinac Island State Park Commission to now consider allowing use of a new site, which once was farm land, just off British Landing road and south of Burn Pile Road. The land is flat, he said, and has very few trees.

"We don't have many more options on Mackinac Island to put an equestrian center," he said.

Also attending the meeting was Leanne Brodeur, executive director of MHA.

The search for a new home for horse stalls and a place for the 4-H program began last summer, when property used by MHA became slated for housing development.

"Our space is limited," said Mr. Rilenge, "and we're running out of time."

The new plans call for a 200-foot by 100-foot arena for riding lessons and, eventually, a community barn to stable horses. The area would be used by the 4-H horse club and for equestrian training and education offered by MHA.

The group would like to construct the arena this spring and then begin fundraising for the barn.

More concrete space requirements, the number of structures, and timelines will be presented to the commission at its March meeting. The commission would then consider a land lease, although Mr. Porter had reservations about building another riding arena, noting that one already exists on state park land at Great Turtle Park. He suggested that the lease require structures be built within a certain amount of time.

"I don't think the commission is interested in just creating another ring," said Mr. Porter. "I think the idea is to build an equestrian center to preserve the horse culture on Mackinac Island."

"We are going to build a barn," Mr. Rilenge said. "We have to have a barn. Without a barn, we won't have an equestrian program on Mackinac Island for the kids."

Funding to run the stables and programs, say MHA board members, would come from an endowment, sponsors, paid memberships, and fundraising.

The same area being eyed for the equestrian facility could also accommodate a driving range, commissioners decided, after both the park staff and Wawashkamo

Golf Club members decided a site originally proposed, just east of the golf links across British Landing Road, would pose safety and aesthetic problems.

Commissioners agreed to have Mr. Porter work with club members to develop a new plan, which would include a 12-foot-high net enclosure to contain golf balls on the southern section of the land proposed for the community stable. Commissioners also asked Mr. Porter to follow the same guidelines he used when considering the

club's first proposal.

When suggested in September, the commission asked Mr. Porter to consider safety, visual impact, preservation of archeological resources, public recreational benefit, and compatibility with the surroundings.

The golf club tested the site and found it easy to hit golf balls into a road side park on British Landing road.

"That is a major safety consideration," said Mr. Porter, "and in and of itself, would invalidate

this request."

Erecting a 65-foot-tall fence could contain about 85% of the golf balls, one golf expert advised, but such a fence would tower 20 feet over treetops in the area.

"We don't want that," said Mr. Rilenge, who is president of Wawashkamo. "We all love Mackinac Island and want it to stay the way it is."

The commission's next meeting is scheduled for March 19 in Lansing.

## Jeff Davis Will Chair Clark Township Planning Commission

### Lincoln Boathouse Approved by Planners

By Amy Polk

Jeff Davis was elected to chair the Clark Township Planning Commission Tuesday, January 8, replacing Steve Honnila, who is now vice-chairman. John Grenier remains secretary and Joe Eger is liaison to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Eger and Mike Miller were re-appointed to three-year terms on the planning commission December 20 by Clark Township Supervisor Linda Hudson. She did not re-appoint Dave Dunning to the Planning Commission, although he asked to remain on the commission until the master plan and zoning ordinance revisions are done. The seat remains vacant, and Mrs. Hudson is seeking a replacement.

New members of the planning commission and zoning board of appeals are being asked to take the Citizen Planner course offered by Michigan State University Extension under a policy adopted by Clark Township in December. The township will pay for the training and has budgeted \$2,000.

Citizen Planner trains public policy makers in their roles and responsibilities and the local government process. Modules include such subjects as what to know before the first planning commission or zoning board of appeals meetings, zoning tools for developers and real estate agents, rural and urban development, community planning and how to create a master plan, and zoning essentials.

Appointees will be asked to take at least one module a year, with each requiring between 2.5 and 10 hours to complete.

Township trustee and planning commissioner Dana Leach has become a Master Citizen Planner under the program.

At the January 8 planning commission meeting, commissioners unanimously approved Connie

Lincoln's non-conforming boathouse on South Fox Lane, off Lakeside Road in Cedarville.

Mrs. Lincoln must also obtain size and height variances from the Clark Township Zoning Board of Appeals because the proposed boathouse exceeds the maximum size and heights allowed by special land use permit. The lot has 125 feet of frontage on Lake Huron.

Township zoning allows boathouses as large as 600 square feet and 15 feet tall by special land use permit on lots with less than 201 feet of frontage. The Lincoln 24-foot by 38-foot boathouse would be 912 feet, and 16 feet tall as measured from the high water mark.

Commissioner Mike Patrick made a motion to approve the special land use permit, noting the boathouse agrees with the township's stipulations for granting a

special land use permit for a non-conforming boat house, including not having living quarters, not interfering with navigation, not hindering or impeding views, and that commissioners considered the unique nature of the shoreline and its impact on neighboring properties among the rationale for approving the permit. Commissioners also complimented the appearance and design of the boathouse.

## Students Complete DARE Classes at Les Cheneaux



Les Cheneaux Elementary School's fifth grade students participated in Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) culmination exercises in December. The 23 students were taught by State Police Trooper Fred Strich (standing behind students at far left); participants include (back row, from left) Teddy Bowlby, Isabel Brumleve, Marcus Malkowski, Kaylee Risher, Cynthia Barowski, Brett Masuga, Tanner Reppenhagen, DARE teddy bear donors Harold and Sally Kriesche of St. Ignace, teacher Kathy Tassier; (front row, kneeling) Dylan Mathews, Joey Duncan, Paige Kanitz, Morgan St. Andrew, Sarah Harrison-Briggs, Maddie Kohlmann, River Brown, Molly Fagan, Shannon Sayles, and Monica Krackowski. Fifth grade students who were not available for the photograph include Hannah Betzoldt, Alexandra Cabello, Serena Currie, Joshua Lee, Cordell Schalk, and Ashley Sherlund. Students who won the essay contest are Isabel Brumleve, Paige Kanitz, Monica Krackowski, and Dylan Mathews. The 2007 Spirit Award went to Joey Duncan. Maddison Kohlmann and Marcus Malkowski were chosen to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Ice Fishing Contest, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. - Paradise Lake

Warming House 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. - Pancake Chef, FREE Hot Cocoa & Coffee with Winterfest Pin

Poker Walk 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. - Candy Corner/Windjammer Gifts

Sleigh/Wagon Rides 12 p.m.-2:30 p.m. - Boarding at Marshall's Fudge

Outdoor Games For All Ages 1-1:50 p.m. - Marina Slide Area  
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Chili Cook-Off 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. - American Legion

Outhouse Races 2-3:30 p.m. - Shepler's lot

Mancino's Euchre Tournament 1-3 p.m.

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Birth

**Faith Law**

Glenn "Trey" and Jennifer Law of Torrance, California, are the parents of a newborn daughter, Faith Elizabeth, born November 19, 2007, at Little Company of Mary Hospital in Torrance. She weighed 7 pounds, 5 ounces at birth and measured 19-3/4 inches in length. She joins a sister, Mia, 20 months, at home. Grandparents are Elaine and Joseph Monteparo of Schenectady, New York, and Joan and Glenn Law of St. Ignace.

**McPhee Hired by Flint Generals**

Steve McPhee, formerly of St. Ignace, has been hired as the general manager of business development for the Flint Generals of the International Hockey League. Mr. McPhee has joined the Generals organization with 20 years of marketing and sales experience from Boyne USA Resorts. Mr. McPhee will be responsible for ticket sales growth and developing sponsorship partnerships with community businesses. Part of the six-member league, the Flint hockey team is in second place in the standings, five points back from the first-place Fort Wayne Komets. A 1981 graduate of LaSalle High School, Mr. McPhee is the son of St. Ignace residents Calvin "Bucky" and Roberta McPhee.