

Les Cheneaux Ensign Sailors To Host Regatta for Competitors From 13 Fleets

Sailing Fans Expected at Hessel July 10 - 12

By Amy Polk

The breezy spectacle of bobbing sailboats will soon float into Hessel, as Ensign Class 31 of Les Cheneaux hosts the 2008 Ensign Class Region V Championship Regatta Thursday, July 10, through Saturday, July 12. The regular local racing season will begin June 28, with races near Cedarville and Hessel.

This is the second time in a decade the race between Ensign sailboats from the Midwest and New York will compete in the Les Cheneaux Islands. The last championship here was in 2003, and before that it was here in 1993. This is the championship race for the entire Region V, which includes 13 fleets from upstate New York and the Great Lakes states of Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Races will be in Wilderness Bay on the west side of Marquette Island, and are open to spectators, who can watch the race from boats around the bay. Spectator boats will be at Hessel Marina, and can transport a limited number of people to the racing area. Spectators using their own boats should steer clear of the sailing vessels and race course marker buoys, and keep their boat wake to a minimum during races.

Ensigns are the 22.5-foot, full keel sailboats used in the Les Cheneaux Yacht Club-sponsored sailing races throughout the Les Cheneaux Islands during the summer.

Cedarville cottagers Dave Parlin

and Tom LaBelle are co-chairing the event, and said they expect more than 100 sailing fans in the area for the weekend, in addition to the teams and spectators of at least 16 local boats. Ensign racing boats are typically sailed by four-man teams. Coordinators anticipate about 35

boats in competition, with out-of-town sailors hailing primarily from Pentwater and Marquette, Mr. Parlin said. National Ensign Class Commodore Joel Verplank will travel from Alabama.

"A 35-boat regatta is unheard of," Mr. Parlin said of the strong numbers expected in this year's

race. "Early returns have been superb."

Participants registered so far include local skippers Jonas Carpenter and Bruce Cochran of Cedarville, and Andy Bohn of Hessel.

Visiting boats will begin launching Thursday, July 10, and the pub-

lic can watch launching from Hessel Marina. Races will begin both Friday and Saturday at 10:30 a.m. in Wilderness Bay, which is the second bay south of Hessel Marina. All boats will be in the Hessel Marina, and the Islander Bar will act as the registration center for all arrivals.

Other local residents and cottagers helping with the event include Stephanie LaBelle, who is coordinating a banquet; Linda Parlin, who is coordinating lunch; Kip Horsburgh, who is registering sailors and ordering shirts; Jason Dunn, who is working on communications; Tom Richards, who is maintaining the race Web site and taking photographs during the races; Katie Carpenter, who is helping with registration and accounting; Jonas Altmaier, who is working on prizes and giveaways, and Bruce Cochran, who is acting as the launch coordinator. Any of these volunteers can be contacted for more information. Race helpers are welcome, and can volunteer by speaking with any of the coordinators.

A number of sponsors and donors are also helping with the

event, Mr. Parlin said, including The Islander Bar of Hessel, Fleet 35 of Marquette, and sail-makers Quantum, Haarstick, North Sails, Ensign Spars, and Annapolis Sailing Group, which are donating prizes and sailboat equipment.

Registration for the weekend race will begin at noon July 10 at the Islander Bar, followed by a skippers' welcome reception on the patio.

Race days July 11 and July 12 will each begin with a 9:30 a.m. skippers' meeting at the Hessel Marina gazebo, and a 10:30 a.m. warning signal will be sounded, announce the first race. An awards banquet for racers will be at Les Cheneaux Yacht Club on Marquette Island July 12.

Information about the race is at the Web site www.lescheneauxensignclass.com, where registration forms and a schedule of events are posted. For complete race schedules and other information about the races or Les Cheneaux Yacht Club and Ensign Fleet 31, call the Yacht

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Twin Foals Born on Moran Farm



This Tennessee Walking Horse, Angel, gave birth to twins, a black filly and a bay colt, Wednesday, May 28. (Top photo): Basking in the sun, with their mother watching over them, are the foals Champ (left) and Winny. At right, they enjoy the pasture. The owners of the horses are Betty and Mike Springsteen of Moran. (Photographs by Betty Springsteen)



Saturday at St. Ignace

'Summer Bash' Will Highlight Toddler Care

Mackinac County toddlers and their families are invited to "Totally Toddlers Summer Bash - St. Ignace," Saturday, June 21, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in front of LaSalle High School in St. Ignace. The event is free of charge. Horses and baby deer will be on hand, and a firetruck tour and other activities are planned for the children.

Lunch will be provided by area businesses and a drawing will take place for door prizes.

The event is organized by the Great Start Parent Coalition, a program through the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District designed to prepare children for kindergarten and school.

For more information, call Heather Bird at 643-0096.

Island Marina Dedication To Be Thursday

A dedication ceremony for the reopening of the Mackinac Island State Harbor, renovated over this past winter and spring, will be Thursday, June 19. A tour of the Mackinac Island marina will begin at 4 p.m. Visitors are welcome to join the tour or walk through the harbor separately.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will begin at 5 p.m. on the west end of the harbor.

The marina closed last fall for renovations including electrical and water upgrades, replacement of the boat slip decking and supports, as well as new landscaping and building upgrades.

Renovations totaled \$5.6 million and were funded by the Michigan State Waterways Fund, a restricted fund comprised of marine fuel taxes and boater registration fees, and a Coast Guard Marine Safety grant.

The marina reopened to boaters May 23.

Blessing of the Fleet Is Saturday

The Blessing of the Fleet will be Saturday, June 21, at 6:30 p.m. at Wawatam Lighthouse in St. Ignace. The event is open to the public.

Father Norbert Landreville will offer a blessing of safety to vessels as they parade past the lighthouse.

The event is organized by the St. Ignace Yacht Club, which will host a reception at its Marina Pub following the ceremony.

Eagle Population Strong in Eastern U.P.

No Harm Reported From Last Year's Botulism Outbreak

By Paul Gingras

Type E botulism, a disease spread from microorganisms to fish and birds, has not caused any known deaths of bald eagles in Michigan this year, and spring surveys indicate that eagle populations are strong throughout the state, biologists report.

One eagle was confirmed dead from botulism last year, said Tom Cooley of the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Disease Laboratory in Lansing, responding to public concern about the potential for botulism to kill eagles.

Not any of a handful of dead eagles reported in 2008 were killed by botulism.

"This is early, but it has been quiet so far," he told *The St. Ignace News*.

Approximately 7,500 birds of several species were killed statewide last year from an outbreak of botulism in Lake Michigan, Common Coast Research and Conservation reported.

The outbreak affected birds and fish in northern Lower Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. It hit in two waves. The first was in mid-June. The second began in late August and continued into November.

If botulism were prevalent in the area this year, eagles would likely be affected, he explained, because their adaptable feeding patterns include eating live birds and fish that can contract botulism, as well as feeding on carcasses that incubate the disease.

By law, all dead eagles collected in the state are sent to Mr. Cooley. He confirms the cause of death and sends them to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife facility in Colorado, where whole birds and portions of eagles are distributed to Native Americans who apply for them.

Mr. Cooley has confirmed the death of 32 eagles this year. About half were killed by cars while feeding on road kill. The rest died from an assortment of non-chronic illnesses, such as fungal infections

and man-made causes, including electrocution by hitting power lines, shootings, and lead poisoning.

The mortality rate of eagles in Michigan could be cut in half simply by dragging road kill away from roadsides, Mr. Cooley said.

It is unlikely that there are fewer eagles in the Eastern Upper Peninsula this year.

Three people contribute to the annual eagle survey by searching for eagle nests by plane. Things are

looking positive for eagles in both the Upper and Lower peninsulas, Mr. Cooley said.

The eagle survey includes participants from several state and national governmental agencies, private organizations, and volunteers, said wildlife biologist Dave Best, who coordinates Michigan data summaries on eagles for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Scott Marshall of St. Ignace Hired To Fill Recreation Post

By Ryan Schlehuder

Scott Marshall has been hired as the recreation programs coordinator and facilities manager at the St. Ignace City Recreation Department. He was selected from among 26 other applicants by City Manager Eric Dodson, who announced the appointment at a Recreation Advisory Committee gathering Wednesday, June 11, after a scheduled meeting was canceled for lack of a quorum.

The St. Ignace native started his new job Monday, June 16.

There were 27 applicants for the job, and 12 were interviewed by Mr. Dodson.

"We had candidates with many varying qualifications," Mr. Dodson told the committee. He said he chose Mr. Marshall "for his local experience in recreation and his enthusiasm for the job. He's fired up for the challenge."

Mr. Marshall, a heavy equipment operator for the St. Ignace Department of Public Works, assisted the recreation department as a volunteer in the early 1990s and has coached summer youth teams. He recently started a youth wrestling club.

He has a two-year contract with an annual salary of \$29,000 and benefits that include health and dental coverage. He retains the vacation and sick days he accrued with the public works department.

Mr. Marshall's job is to operate the city's seasonal recreation programs, such as youth soccer and baseball leagues. He will assist Mr. Dodson in overseeing some staff,

including cleaning and maintenance employees at Little Bear East.

Facilities maintained by the department are the Little Bear East Arena and Conference Center, and fitness center, the swimming pool at LaSalle High School, baseball and soccer fields at LaSalle High School, and the city tennis court on Truckey Street.

He will be programs coordinator and facilities manager for a six-month probationary period, and then be eligible for promotion to recreation director. In the meantime, Mr. Dodson will oversee the department and the budgets for the recreation programs and facilities.

Helen Thibault will continue to assist in the office part-time.

Jake Tamlyn will continue to oversee the recreation programs at Doc Holle's Silver Mountain ski and tubing hill.

Mr. Marshall's position became available when City Recreation Director Erica Mattson resigned May 16.

Youth Baseball Begins; Community Pool Now Open

Youth baseball leagues have begun. T-ball and boys and girls coach-pitch leagues began Tuesday, June 3, and junior youth and senior youth fast-pitch travel leagues began Monday, June 9. Girls fast-pitch softball started Tuesday, June 17.

There are 185 players and 14 teams this year.

The community swimming pool at LaSalle High School opened

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'Ice Bridge' Movie Documents Mackinac Island Winter Culture

Local Filmmakers Offer Views Not Seen by Tourists

By Diane Ivey

Mackinac Island Town Crier

In February, when snow and wind have caught Mackinac Island in the depths of winter, residents wait for one event that will grant them freedom: When Lake Huron freezes between Mackinac Island and St. Ignace, it creates an ice bridge.

Snowmobile riders, skiers, and pedestrians are free to move across the ice

bridge, the "highway" marked by Christmas trees that are saved just for this recycled use. No longer dependent on the ferry and plane schedules, it is the one time of the year when Islanders are free to travel whenever they like.

"Ice Bridge," a new film by Mark Rensel and Jenifer Silvernale of Mackinac Island, captures the Island's winter season, from the gales of November to the first spring thaw.

The documentary, narrated and produced by Ms. Silvernale and filmed and edited by Mr. Rensel, premiered at Mission Point Resort Theater on the Island Friday, June 6, at 9 p.m.

A winter resident for 10 years, Mr. Rensel said he continues to be inspired by Island winters.

Mr. Rensel is from Olympia, Washington, and first came to Mackinac 15 years ago with his

wife, Ms. Silvernale, originally from East Lansing, who has been a sign painter for 20 years.

"I'm from the Pacific Northwest, and as a kid, I used to live for snow," he said. "We rarely got any snow, but I always wanted to play in it if we did. I was amazed at how every day could be different in the winter. That was my favorite discovery."

Because they didn't have a snowmobile their first few years here, Mr. Rensel said it allowed him to look at nature up-close, and to see things he normally would have missed.

"Snowmobiling is like flying, and you miss a lot of stuff because you're going so fast," he said. "I would walk or ride my bike, so I was able to study things and stop to film a hole in the ice or to get a shot of snow-covered tree branches."

The filmmakers' goal was to accurately portray life on the Island in the winter. They started filming more than 10 years ago, but put together the most surprising and exciting moments from five of those winters, Mr. Rensel said.

"We portray it chronologically, like it's one winter," he said. "We're trying to portray quieter moments, with almost a sense of aloneness."

The solitude, he said, gives more focus on the Island itself.

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Flower Sale Aids Beautification Work



Stacey Honnila of Cedarville (far right) fills a geranium order for Jim and Susan Cheever of Coryell Island in Cedarville at the Les Cheneaux Advisory Committee's fundraiser Saturday, May 24. The committee sold approximately 1,500 geranium plants to raise funds for the group's beautification efforts in Cedarville and Hessel. The group recently completed landscaping of highway corners in Cedarville, moved a gazebo to the boat launch ramp in Cedarville, and landscaped around the gazebo there.