

Lenore V Symbolizes Les Cheneaux Memories for McMillan Family

To Be Featured at Hessel Boat Show

By Paul Gingras

"From the time I was able to breathe, basically, I was in a boat," said Andy McMillan, 39, a fifth-generation Marquette Island cottager.

Throughout his youth in the Les Cheneaux Islands, Mr. McMillan heard stories about a beautiful, 1948 Chris Craft double-cabin flybridge cruiser once owned by his grandparents, Arla and Ben McMillan. He kept the image of their vessel in the back of his mind, like a dream, until 1998 when, perusing antique wooden boats in Port Huron, he discovered a boat just like theirs and bought it on the spot.

"When I saw it, I jumped at the chance to bring one back, back to the family and to the Les Cheneaux Islands in general," said Mr. McMillan, who lives part of the year in Tiburon, California.

There are just a few vessels like his *Lenore V* in the Great Lakes; only 207 were produced.

Now, after 10 years of restoration, the *Lenore V* will be a polished feature boat, displayed by Mr.



This 1948, Chris Craft, double-cabin flybridge cruiser, the *Lenore V*, will be featured this summer at the Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show. (Photograph courtesy of Andy McMillan)

McMillan and his wife, Fiona, at the this year's Les Cheneaux Antique Wooden Boat Show.

The *Lenore V* is 46 feet long, 12 feet wide.

Eventually, cruisers like her were replaced by the Chris Craft double-cabin-cruiser called the Catalina.

The *Lenore V* has a special feeling, something different from the models that succeeded her, Mr. McMillan contends. The wood has a certain kind of smell that adds to the elegant purity of antique wooden boats.

"I love the old wood, all

mahogany, and the way Chris Crafts drive – beautifully," he said. The *Lenore V* is easy to pilot. She glides through the water smoothly and comfortably.

Getting the *Lenore V* to

Marquette Island was "quite an adventure," Mr. McMillan said. She was in poor condition, but shortly after her purchase, he chose to make the trip north from lower Michigan along the coast of Lake Huron. The journey took four days, during which one of the engines fell off and the other ran out of gas. The *Lenore V* was equipped with its original engines, two Chrysler Marine straight-eights.

It was important to get the *Lenore V* to home port, where she was placed among several boats owned by his family.

"Growing up in the Les Cheneaux Islands, boating is a way of life," he said.

"The fly bridge is really the best feature of the *Lenore V*," Mr. McMillan said. She has two helms, one on the upper and one on the lower deck.

Mr. McMillan spends about 90% of his time on the *Lenore V* upstairs, in the open air, steering from a satisfying vantage, about 12 feet above the water.

He drives it as much as possible, limited only by his nine-month-old

twins, Arla and Brooks, who enjoy the vessel "absolutely," he said. For the most part, he keeps to the Les Cheneaux Islands and frequents Mackinac Island, taking a few cruises downstate each season, including the occasional jaunt to Port Austin, at the tip of Lower Michigan's thumb. Eventually, he hopes to take the *Lenore V* on a cruise up the north channel of Lake Huron in Canada.

The vessel is mainly designed for day cruises – originally lacking a shower, for example – although she can sleep six people comfortably. The main salon has a sleeping room, a galley, and there are two bunks in the front. Mr. McMillan added a shower. The most recent renovations, helping to make it a worthy show boat, are a new counter in the galley and new upholstery.

The *Lenore V* was built by Chris Craft in Algonac, where the company began its assembly-line productions.

It has basically been rebuilt. Almost everything on the *Lenore V* has been replaced, except the hull.

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Upgrades to Courthouse Estimated at \$500,000

By Karen Gould

Repairs and enhancements to the alarm system and elevator at the Mackinac County Courthouse could top \$500,000, say county commissioners, who held a joint meeting July 2 with the Mackinac County Planning Commission to formulate a plan before making

any decisions to move forward with the project.

Commissioners are concerned that if they proceed with the upgrades, state laws may require further building code compliance to the 1937 building, which would further increase project costs.

The new Michigan Planning

Enabling Act requires counties to obtain a recommendation from planning boards before any capital improvements are made to public buildings. The law, signed by Governor Jennifer Granholm in March, takes effect September 1.

Planning Commission Chair

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Biscayne Bay Heading to Coast Guard Festival

By Karen Gould

The Coast Guard's ice-breaking tug *Biscayne Bay* left St. Ignace Sunday, July 27, for Grand Haven and the 84th Annual Coast Guard Festival, which is being held from Saturday, July 26, to Sunday, August 3. The festival celebrates the 218th birthday of the Coast Guard. Cheboygan-based cutter *Mackinaw* and two other vessels are also attending.

For the first time in five years, the *Biscayne Bay* and her 17-person crew has been invited to attend the festival as part of the Coast Guard's public affairs program. The ship's commanding officer, Lieutenant Cary Godwin, attended the festival several years ago while he was assigned to the *Acacia* in Charlevoix.

Festival organizers estimate 250,000 people will attend.

The 140-foot *Biscayne Bay* also participated in the National Cherry Festival at Traverse City and served as escort ship for the Bayview Yacht Club's Port Huron-to-Mackinac Island sailing race. Since then, said Lieutenant Junior Grade Joshua Zike, preparations have been underway to ready the vessel for her Grand Haven appearance.

Work has included repainting the hull and superstructure of the boat, refurbishing the deck, and installing ladders to an upper deck. With painting completed Thursday, July 24, crew members cleared off a hatching of mayflies from the bow of the vessel to prepare a clean area for a new Coast Guard shield. Balancing on a work raft, the men positioned the new two-piece decal on each side of the bow.

"It's not as easy as it looks," said Boatswains' Mate First Class William Newberry, as another set of waves rolled in.

"The cutter looks great due to the crew's hard work," said Lieutenant Junior Grade Joshua Zike, "and we are excited to get to Grand Haven to show off the best 140 in the fleet."

Next Week: Michele Chenard, Boogie 2 Shooz Concerts Offered at St. Ignace Marina

Michele Chenard will be featured in a Locals on the Bay concert Wednesday, August 6, at 7 p.m. at the St. Ignace Marina. Ms. Chenard features alternative folk and rock music.

Also at the marina, Boogie 2 Shooz will perform for Bayside Live! Thursday, August 7, at 7 p.m. The duo of Patti-Jean Cousens and Pamela Jenkins features soulful renditions of the blues, funk-flavored rhythm and blues, and jazz.

The outdoor concerts are free of charge. Audience members may bring lawn chairs, and bleacher seating is also available.



Lining up the two-piece decal that makes up the Coast Guard shield is not an easy task. Crew of the St. Ignace-based *Biscayne Bay* dealt with several obstacles Thursday, July 24, including a late-season hatching of mayflies. Working from a raft tied to the ship left little room to check the exact placement, which ultimately required assistance from dock-side crew members. The work raft periodically rolled with waves from passing Mackinac Island ferry boats, causing the men to pause until the raft steadied. At times (from left), Seaman Stephen Ballinger, Seaman Brandon Prout, and Boatswains' Mate First Class Cliff Newberry held onto the side of the ship as larger waves rolled by. Assisting in the operation from the deck of the *Biscayne Bay* are (from left) Seaman Jason Fisher, Seaman Jason Manor, and Seaman Apprentice Brandon Sand. The shield, which was placed on each side of the bow of the newly painted vessel, marks the year 1790, when the Coast Guard's predecessor, the Revenue Cutter Service, was established.

The crew, he said, is looking forward to participating in a softball tournament and other activities planned at the festival.

"I'm looking forward to the Coast Guard Fest," said Seaman Jason Fisher. "I've never been, but

I've heard nothing but good things."

The crew will attend a national memorial service Friday, August 1, that recognizes the bravery and commitment of Coast Guard members and honors those who have died in the last year.

During the trip to Grand Haven the crew will hold some training sessions, including a towing exercise with the *Mackinaw*.

Both cutters will make their entrance into the Grand River at Grand Haven Monday, as part of the Parade of Ships at 1 p.m. The boats, said Lt. JG Zike, will sail a short distance up the Grand River, where the *Biscayne Bay* and the 240-foot *Mackinaw* will be moored bow-to-bow along Escanaba Park, adjacent to the Grand Haven Coast Guard Station.

Each ship will host public tours during the festival. On the *Biscayne Bay*, visitors will tour the all-weather decks, the engineering control

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Relay for Life Raises \$41,000 at St. Ignace

By Karen Gould

More than \$41,000 was raised during the Mackinac County Relay for Life, surpassing the goal of \$37,500 set for the county and setting a new donation record during the event's 13th year.

The old record, set in 2006, was \$37,000.

The money was raised during the 24-hour relay Friday, July 25, and Saturday, July 26, at the St. Ignace Middle School. The local funds will be given to the American Cancer Society to help find a cure for cancer.

The event was successful, said chair Sherrill Soblaskey and her daughter-in-law, vice-chair Jackie Soblaskey. Contributing to the local accomplishment were the efforts of more than 25 volunteers, 10 fundraising teams of walkers, 113 sponsors, and all those who contributed to the cause.

Participants raised \$9,000 more than last year.

"Isn't that something, for what the economy is?" asked Sherrill Soblaskey. "All the people came forth to help us. We have a very caring community here. We could never reach our goal if we didn't have the support from them."

The two women continued with event work early Saturday with the same enthusiasm they held nearly 24 hours earlier – only now, with no sleep.

"By the end of the day, you're tired," said Sherrill Soblaskey, "but it's worth every minute of it because you might be helping somebody. If I can help somebody, I'm always in favor of it."

About 80 new cases of cancer are estimated to be diagnosed in Mackinac County annually.

Mackinac County has the most sponsors in Michigan, in comparison to counties of a similar size across the state, said Mark Johnson of Kingsford, area repre-



Journeying around the temporary track raising funds for cancer research as part of the Relay for Life, these children dodged walkers, bicycle riders, and St. Ignace Fire Department clowns before a thunderstorm sent participants running into the St. Ignace Elementary school gymnasium Friday evening, July 25. Representing Mackinac Straits Hospital and Auxiliary are (from left) Aryianna Dickensheets, 11, Matthew Dickensheets, 7, Jared Fenlon, 11, and Jacob Fenlon, 7.

sentative for the Upper Peninsula American Cancer Society.

Among nine other similar relays in the Upper Peninsula, he said, Mackinac County's is one of only two that will reach their fundraising goal set for it this year.

"This community is fabulous," he said. "The support we see year in and year out is outstanding."

The other successful relay was at Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

In the parking lot at St. Ignace Middle School, a track was set up

using the bus turnaround lane, with candles in bags to outline the walking area. During the night, the candles were lit to guide walkers. The candles and luminary bags were sold as a fundraiser, with many donors adding their own designs to the white bags, recognizing friends and family who were lost to cancer, are fighting cancer, and who had beat cancer. The luminaria walk began at 9:30 p.m. Friday.

Events ran smoothly, said Mrs.

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Early Saturday, July 26, Team of Hope members celebrate raising more than \$2,000 to help support the American Cancer Society during Relay for Life at St. Ignace. Track-side, the 20-member team posted an oversized bulletin board listing the names of Kewadin Casino employees who are battling cancer or have died from the disease. From St. Ignace, team members pictured are (from left) Preston Spencer, Theresa France, Cheryl St. Louis, Brianna Luhetier, Kelsey Will, Michaela Miller, Kyra Spencer, and Tracey McClouskey. The team was sponsored by Kewadin Casinos, Superior Floor Covering, and Gustafson's Fish Market.