

For Immediate Release  
April 10, 2009

For Information Contact:  
Ken Hayward, Vice President  
Sales and Marketing  
(517) 349-4600

Bob Berg  
Berg Muirhead and Associates  
(313) 872-2202

## **Grand Hotel Recognized for “Green” Initiatives**

Grand Hotel was recently awarded Green Lodging Michigan (GLM) “Partner” certification from the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth (DELEG) for its comprehensive efforts to protect the environment. It is eligible for Leader certification (the highest possible level) pending a site visit which will be conducted once the hotel opens for the season.

The award recognizes the fact that behind the scenes of Grand Hotel and Mackinac Island’s ageless “Somewhere in Time” ambiance, are aggressive programs to seek out and implement the latest technology to protect the island’s pristine environment.

"This accreditation is the mark of environmental responsibility of hoteliers who are committed to ‘green’ business practices that make environmental and economic goals their top priority,” said DELEG Director Stanley “Skip” Pruss. “Green Lodging Michigan is also helping to ensure the viability of our lodging facilities and the thousands of jobs related to Michigan’s hospitality industry.”

These efforts at Grand Hotel include:

- The water-based air conditioning system Grand Hotel designed and installed in its most classic rooms,
- An island program that composts all biodegradable waste on the island,
- State of the art water and wastewater treatment systems used on the island,
- Changing over to energy-efficient light bulbs throughout the hotel,
- Offering guests an option with regards to the frequency of linen exchange,
- Limiting the amount of paper waste by centralizing some information instead of delivering to all guest rooms,
- A specially designed composting system that produces all the compost Grand Hotel uses for its signature flowerbeds.

“Anything you see on the grounds is dirt that we made ourselves,” said Grand Hotel’s Superintendent of Grounds Mary Stancik. “None of it is from anywhere else. Every single grass clipping, every weed, every flower that is taken from the ground when the growing season is over goes into the compost pile.”

The only other ingredient added to the pile, she said, is coffee grounds collected from the hotel. “It adds a lot of acid to the soil that we otherwise would lack,” she said.

Stancik said it takes about a year and a half to use a compost pile and the hotel has three piles going at any one time. Work on the piles and on the hotel’s gardens starts in the middle of April each year and goes through the middle of November. Each fall the hotel plants a ton of bulbs, including 25,000 tulips and 15,000 daffodils.

The hotel’s composting program is but one example of the attention to detail that goes into protecting the environment on Mackinac Island.

“Being on an island that attracts more than a million visitors a year presents unique challenges when it comes to handling the refuse those visitors produce while maintaining the ambiance that brings people here in the first place,” says Grand Hotel Chairman R. D. Musser II. “Fortunately, the community here has been committed to taking the steps that need to be taken to achieve that.”

As a result, half of the waste material generated at the hotel and on the island is processed through very aggressive programs to compost the biodegradable waste – including the horse manure produced by the island’s main form of transportation – and to recycle paper, plastics, glass and other recyclable materials. The attention to detail is such that all unpainted scrap wood from the hotel’s maintenance department is ground up and used as part of the island’s composting operation, rather than going to a landfill.

“We compost anything that will break down organically and use every bit of it on the island,” said Mackinac Island Public Works Director Bruce Zimmerman. The island closed and capped its landfill in 1991 and all non-recyclable waste is hauled to a state-approved landfill on the mainland.

Musser has been a long-time advocate of protecting the island’s unique environment, including serving more than 30 years as chair of the island’s Public Works Commission. Under his guidance, the island has built a state of the art water supply system that uses a cutting edge microfiltration process and an equally modern wastewater treatment plant that meets or exceeds all federal guidelines.

For Grand Hotel and Mackinac Island, all of these initiatives are part of a continuing effort to provide modern conveniences to visitors while protecting the environment and maintaining the 19<sup>th</sup> Century charm for which both are known around the world.

###