



November 30, 2009

Dear Three Mile Community,

At the fall meeting of the Three Mile Island Committee this year, we had a discussion that touched on the importance of Three Mile in our lives and the committee's mandate to maintain and preserve the Island and the way we experience it. One committee member expressed his connection to Three Mile in a way that I found both touching and profound. He said that when he is at Three Mile, he feels like the luckiest person in the world, not just because he's there, but because he feels, for one week out of every year, that he is the owner of this precious corner of the world. What a great way to describe the connection to Three Mile that exists for hundreds and hundreds of us who have called it home for a brief time over so many summers! With your sense of ownership of Three Mile Island in mind, I would like to share with you in this letter some of the major topics the Committee has been considering and some of the decisions we've made.

First, though, I would like to thank Will and Joy and their hardworking staff for the excellent job they all did this past summer. Will and Joy are both completely dedicated to providing every Three Mile guest with the best possible experience, and they show the same concern for the welfare of the island as for the welfare of the campers. They and their staff and crew are the best, and we are very lucky to have them!

The topics at the top of our current priority list are: the Sustainability Plan, our financial stability, plans for the Rec Hall, and rates for next summer.

- *The Sustainability Plan:* As most of you know, in 2008 we hired a student from Plymouth State, Jamie McMillan, to help us begin the process of establishing a sustainability plan for TMI. Jamie's report to the committee was extremely helpful in defining issues and suggesting approaches we might take. Now, the committee is considering the questions surrounding the implementation of a plan. Some of these questions are: What is most important to Three Mile over the next 10, 20 or even 100 years (a healthy lake, affordability, good relationships with the community)? What should a sustainability plan for TMI encompass? How do we decide what is most important for our plan to include? How do we encourage the TMI community to embrace new traditions around sustainability policies? Heather Pembroke, chair of the Outreach and Education Subcommittee, is leading us through the process of answering these questions with the help of an ad hoc committee of staff, committee, and campers. This process will be ongoing and open-ended, and we welcome ideas from everyone in the TMI Community.
- *Financial Sustainability:* The TMI Committee and staff have been working hard to ensure the long-term economic viability of the Camp. This has always been the case at Three Mile. However, we've noticed that life around us has gotten more and more complicated (you just might have noticed this in your own life, too...), so we are concentrating on creating new record-keeping, financial reporting, and budget decision-making processes that will help us to secure TMI's financial well-being in the complex context of the 21st century. Our Committee Treasurer, Mark Giglietti, has spent countless hours compiling and organizing financial data for the Committee so that we all develop a deep understanding of TMI's financial position and options for the future. Steve Barker, our Maintenance Subcommittee chair, is working with his subcommittee and with Will Holmes, Dinty Child and Paul Robertson (as well as many others) to update our long-term plan for the upkeep of Three Mile's buildings and land. This plan is helping us answer one of our most important questions: Is Three Mile Island Camp financially prepared to maintain and preserve the island and its buildings far into the foreseeable future?

- *Rec Hall Plans:* During the summer of 2008, the Committee solicited camper input about the future of the Rec Hall. The Rec Hall is in need of major repairs to its doors, floors and windows, so the question was: Should we renovate the current building, or should we tear it down and start all over again? Camper opinion on this question didn't lean heavily in one direction or the other; of the folks who responded, there was a slight preference for a new building, but there was a significant minority who felt we should hold on to the current building, too. In keeping with our traditional values of simplicity, conservation and thrift, we decided we should start by exploring the option of renovating the building. We consulted with an engineer to assess the state of the building's foundation; we asked a couple of architects to give us some idea of what a renovated building might look like; and we considered the NH laws regarding shoreline development. Dinty Child even crawled under the building to get a good look at the state of the sub-floor and the foundation. He found, somewhat to everyone's surprise, that the foundation is in very good shape. (He also found, to his great surprise, about 100 (!) "noodles," which have found their way under the dock over the years.) Given the positive information we received about the state of the building, the conviction of the architects who looked at the building's design that we could upgrade the building in an appealing way, and our desire to conserve both natural and financial resources, the Committee voted at the fall meeting to proceed to develop a plan to renovate our current Rec Hall. It is our hope that we will be able to significantly enhance the usefulness, appearance, and durability of the building at a cost far lower than the cost of a new building.
- *2010 Rates:* As you can see on the information sheet accompanying this letter, we have increased the rates for the 2010 season. We did so after extensive analysis of our current and long-term needs, and with the desire to keep our rates as low as possible very much in mind. Our analysis found that we do not have sufficient funds set aside to cover the cost of replacing worn-out equipment (e.g. boats, motors, refrigerators, life jackets); maintaining our beautiful (but old!) buildings; and completing the capital projects necessary for our future (e.g. the Rec Hall, a mainland parking area, and improved handicapped access and facilities, to name only the largest). The rate increase we have implemented will not be enough to cover all our needs. However, we believe we can reach our financial goals through a combination of a modest rate increase, a vigilant approach to keeping expenses down, efforts to increase camper enrollment during the early weeks of the season, and the creation of a "Wish List," which will give campers the opportunity to donate items to TMI which we wish we had, but do not have the funds for. The Committee and Managers have put together our first wish list, which you will soon be able to find on the TMI website. It will also be posted at the Main House next summer. In addition, we are exploring with AMC headquarters the possibility of launching a capital campaign to raise most of the funds necessary to upgrade the Rec Hall. We expect these combined strategies to relieve the upward pressure on the rates.

That completes my report to you about our shared island home. Please feel free to join the conversation by contacting me or anyone else on the Committee. You can find our contact information on the Three Mile website (www.3mile.org). Speaking of the website, please remember that it is a resource for you to post or view photos, check on volunteer opportunities, download forms, apply for membership on the committee, submit a poem or a story, check for announcements, or view the calendar for 2010. I often visit our website just to gaze at all the beautiful pictures of the island displayed there.

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season. Don't forget to mail your reservation form during the month of January: all reservations postmarked between January 1 and February 1 will receive equal consideration.

Best wishes,

Nancy Grant
TMI Committee Chair