

Eagles, Birdies, Elk and Cool

Governor Granholm Discovers Thunder Bay Resort

**By Art McCafferty and
Mike Terrell**

Governor Granholm and her entourage recently rolled into Thunder Bay in their search for Michigan's Hidden Treasures. She was accompanied by travel writers, members of Travel Michigan, her staff and the tremendous energy she brings to these events. Granholm's annual tour is meant to highlight Michigan's great tourism resources. A second message she brings is the call for fitness and a goal to reduce obesity in our state. Therefore, her agenda also includes promoting an active lifestyle. Her family are all runners and they also participate in other sports, golf included.

Jack Matthias his wife Jan, his daughter Melanie and son in law Joe Libby have brought fame and some good fortune to the citizenry of Hillman and other towns and cities on the Sunrise Sde of Michigan. . For three decades they have continued to expand the opportunities for tourists to explore the quieter and more affordable part of our state. Montmorency County is one of the least populated counties in the state, according to Matthias. "Even

though we have four of the top nine golf courses in the state located here in the northeast corner of the Lower Peninsula, we still don't get the recognition we deserve," he said. "This side of the state has always been thought of as the "blue collar" side, and we've had to work to establish our reputation. It's a slower pace of life here, less crowded, fewer people in a hurry. That's what we sell. All the hustle and bustle is on the other side of the state."

Jack, a graduate of the U of M, has been a relentless champion of Michigan tourism and lobbies state government and travel departments for more dollars. Jack received a "Michigan Ambassador" award a number of years ago to reward his focus and energy. They have continued to create reasons for people to visit their resort. They expanded their golf course, began a teaching program, added sleigh and wagon rides to visit elk. When visitors had difficulty-viewing elk, on the rides, they bought and raised their own. They feature wood stove cooked dinners, Murder Mysteries, the selling of antler products, which help, thwart the effects of arthritis. They have worked with three other courses, Elk Ridge, Black Lake and Red

Hawk to develop the Sunrise Challenge, a package where you can stay at Thunder Bay and golf these great golf courses in this area.

Today the resort encompasses over 400 acres with over a mile of Thunder Bay River frontage. In addition to the villas and lodge, which were added in 1991 and 1992, four new chalets were added to the mix three years ago. "We can accommodate 130-150 people comfortably, which is a struggle to keep filled year 'round," he said. "When we first started in this business you could count all the area lodging facilities on one hand, now you would have to take your shoes off."

For more information on Thunder Bay Resort and its various golf packages, call (800) 729-9375 or click on to <http://www.thunderbaygolf.com>.

**Note-You can view the Governor's visit on our Michigan Travel Channel at <http://michigantravel.tv/2004thunderbay/index.html>. Also, see, Mike Terrell's terrific article on Jack Matthias at <http://www.webgolfer.com/aug02/thunderbay.html>*



Thunder Bay's Hole Number 17