



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

December 2024

Welcome,

The following report details the activities of Mackinac Marine Rescue (MMR) over the last year. The MMR crew continues to train hard to meet the needs of the Straits community. The passion for community service among this crew is humbling.

The MMR season started with the rescue of two gentlemen who had been kayaking off the northern shores of St. Ignace. The call came in with only a vague location. Daylight was just beginning to fade. The water temperatures were in the low 50s. We, and they, got lucky. We found one swamped, but empty, kayak and worked our way toward shore following the wind and waves quickly locating the two. Once onboard, they were treated for serious hypothermia. The crew jumped into action to get them as dry as possible and warming up. The boaters had spent nearly an hour in the cold water. I don't think they would have lasted much longer. Both kayaks fully sank and were never recovered.

On a rough and windy day, we received a call for an overturned boat near Devil's Kitchen. With emergency crews on shore giving us a precise location, the U.S. Coast Guard 29' boat, Shepler's ferry, and MMR all arrived on scene at the same time. Working together, all three boats retrieved the 5 victims and their dog safely and coordinated their return to shore in St. Ignace. All were in good shape. USCG, emergency response on the Island, and MMR coordinated to collect and return as much of the boater's personal property as possible.

Of all the runs we had last summer, none hit the crew, and the community, harder than the drowning of Mari Dyer. Many of the crew knew her personally. I have gone over that run many, many times in my mind and I do not see anything we could have done differently to have reached a good outcome. Everyone did everything they were trained to do to the best of their ability. It was truly a tragedy. I never want to look in another family member's eyes again and apologize for not being able to answer the question "Why?"

The 68 runs and the long hours of training performed by MMR last season are a testament to the community service commitment of this crew. The crew continues to work to learn new skills and sharpen the old training.

As always, we are thankful for the support of the Council, local community, and that of the larger Straits region.

With best regards,

Commander Allen Burt

## **Crew 2024**

Allen Burt	Commander	Megan Czarnecki	Deckhand
Anthony Arabie	Coxswain	Brian Gist	Deckhand
Sam Barnwell	Coxswain	Trista Horn	Deckhand
Kevin Leach	Coxswain	Corey Kaminen	Deckhand

Taylor Bulla	Engineer	Nathan Ohse	Deckhand
Ellen Davey	Engineer	Mary Patay	Deckhand
Jimmy Hagenbaugh	Engineer	Chuck Pereny	Deckhand
Jack Stack	Engineer	Justin Wright	Deckhand
Stephanie McGreevy	Engineer/admin		



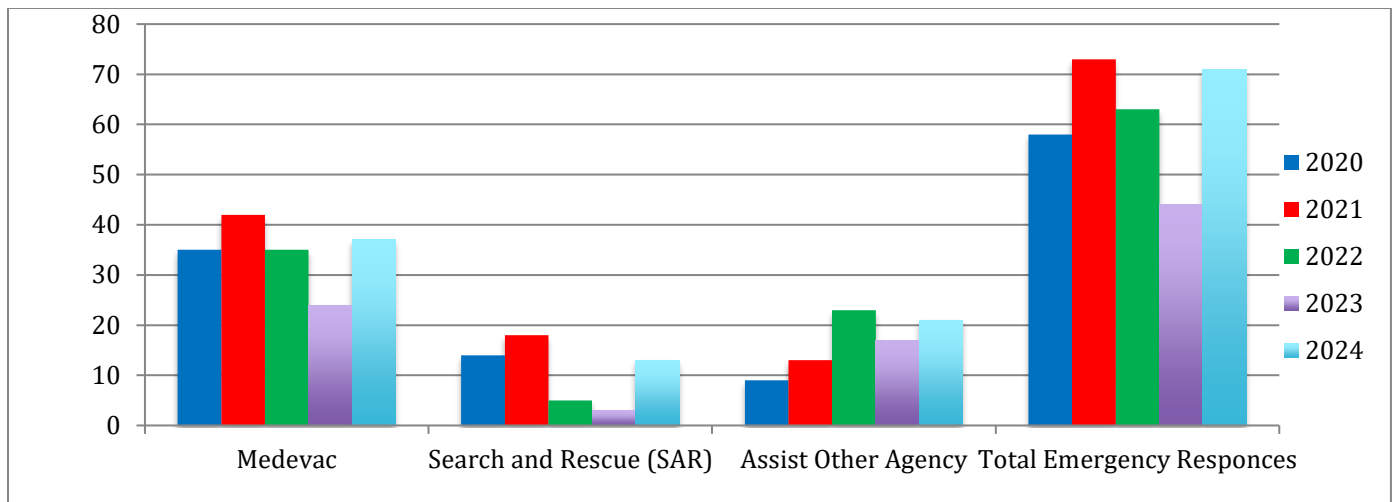
## Year in Review

### Medical Evacuations (MEDEVAC):

MEDEVAC responses continue to be an important part of MMR's mission. During the summer of 2024, MMR conducted 37 MEDEVAC missions up 54% from the past year. Working with the Mackinac Island Medical Center we assisted in the transfer of medical and trauma patients to a higher level of care on the mainland. An integrated system of patients, physicians, nurses, EMS, and MMR staff all worked together for the most efficient and best transport for the patient. MMR received critical calls from Bois Blanc Island Fire/EMS again this summer requesting transportation to the mainland for 911 calls when flights were unavailable.

### Search and Rescue (SAR):

MMR responded to 13 search and rescue missions that were called into 911. This is a 333% increase over the past year. The SAR missions MMR responded to this season were related to boats aground, drowning victims, adrift vessels and missing swimmers.



### **Assists Other Agencies:**

On 21 separate occasions Mackinac Marine Rescue was called to assist other agencies during 2024. Events MMR supported: Mackinac Island's Fourth of July fireworks and Labor Day Bridge Walk.

MMR continued to be an asset to the community as we regularly returning EMS and police personnel to the island after they had escorted patients to the mainland on the last boat. Thanks to this assistance, EMTs and officers serve Mackinac Island for the remainder of the night. MMR has also assisted Mackinac County's 911 and Emergency Management.



**Vessel Aground**



**MMR before patrolling  
Mackinac Bridge's Labor  
Day Walk**



**Adrift Vessel**

### **Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosives Detection (CBRNE):**

Mackinac Marine Rescue was initially funded by a FEMA port security grant. Part of the grant required the boat be equipped with hazardous materials screening equipment and the crew be trained in its use. MMR met these expectations with random, passive screening of vessels and docks while underway this summer. MMR acted as a PRND (Preventive Radiological Nuclear Detection) screening vessel during the Mackinac Bridge Labor Day walk in 2024. Being able to use the PRND equipment while underway for other missions kept our staff current on its use even with a limited number of events. On July 27<sup>th</sup>, MMR was asked by Mackinac Island Fire Department to stand by to use the RAD detection equipment for a bomb threat called into the City of Mackinac Island's Community Hall. Fortunately, the threat was false.

## **Training:**

MMR had 23 training sessions with over 45 hours. MMR took advantage of every available opportunity to train and work with our new members including time with our partner, USCG Station St. Ignace. We train to the standards of our United States Coast Guard (USCG) counterparts, and this is a high bar to reach. Training can include docking, cross towing with USCG29, driver training, and search pattern drills among other duties.



**Training Future Coxswain**



**Dry Suit and Stokes Basket Training**



**Tactical Emergency Casualty Care Training**

With the assistance of Mackinac Island EMS, MMR personnel have renewed their CPR skills and obtained certification in the Stop The Bleed program every other year. In 2024, the team worked with EMS for TECC, Tactical Emergency Casualty Care designed to present a strong foundation of topics, concepts, principles, and skills specific to delivering emergency medical care for patients in a civilian tactical environment. This training was provided by a grant from Mackinac Island Community Foundation.

## **Partnerships:**

Working together and building relationships with our area partners has been a cornerstone of the MMR mission since our inception. We are proud of the relationships we have fostered and how these relationships have improved our team and joint responses. The Mackinac Marine Rescue Team could not be successful without the help and support of our partners.

In addition to the City of Mackinac Island, there are many agencies that assisted in making MMR a successful program. We would especially like to thank the following:

- All-Star Marine (Motor installation and on-going maintenance)
- Mackinac State Historic Parks (Indoor equipment storage)
- Village of Mackinaw City (Fuel access 24/7)
- United States Coast Guard (Training and operational support)
- Chad and Larry Belonga (Official Trailered Transport Driver)
- Arnold Transit (Off-season vessel storage)
- Mackinac Island DNR Marina Crew (Dockage)

Working with the Mackinac Island Community Foundation (MICF) in 2020, the MMR team members began a fund within the MICF. Thanks to generous support from donors, this endowment continues to grow, and our crew has high hopes this fund will support MMR for generations to come.

		
Arnold Transit: Winter Storage	Early morning run	Boat pull day with the Belonga family.