

The state of tourism

By Meredith Skrzypczak
THE STATE NEWS

Michigan is heading into the national spotlight this summer as millions of dollars are poured into advertising campaigns and promotions to spark tourism in the state. It may not be Florida or California, but Michigan is taking strides to compete with leading tourism industries across the country and, according to officials in the state, its standing on its own.

"We have the ability to reach a broader market this year, creating an interest for markets that we have not seen before," said Brad Van Dommelen, president of the Traverse City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

As these markets expand, Michigan is not only expecting an influx of tourists from within the state, but from outside as well. Visitors from states such as Wisconsin, Iowa, Mississippi, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Virginia are coming to Michigan, while border states continue to provide strong tourist flows, Van Dommelen said.

Pure Michigan

On the heels of the Pure Michigan advertising campaign, officials in tourist hot spots such as Traverse City and Mackinac Island are feeling optimistic about what lies ahead.

"We are certainly looking to get tourists from all over the coun-

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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN COOK AND KEN HANSEN

State	Population	Area (sq. mi.)	Capital	Largest City
Alabama	4,585,269	52,420	Montgomery	Birmingham
Alaska	626,932	587,811	Juneau	Anchorage
Arizona	5,131,632	113,990	Tucson	Phoenix
Arkansas	2,915,918	53,177	Little Rock	Fayetteville
California	34,850,000	163,696	Sacramento	Los Angeles
Colorado	4,287,389	104,037	Denver	Denver
Connecticut	3,587,591	5,543	Hartford	Hartford
Delaware	823,419	2,488	Dover	Wilmington
Florida	18,801,317	57,920	Tallahassee	Jacksonville
Georgia	9,899,283	59,725	Atlanta	Atlanta
Hawaii	1,108,228	10,931	Honolulu	Honolulu
Idaho	1,293,998	83,772	Boise	Boise
Illinois	12,812,508	149,995	Springfield	Chicago
Indiana	6,225,674	36,423	Indianapolis	Indianapolis
Iowa	3,145,300	71,424	Des Moines	Des Moines
Kansas	3,655,354	82,278	Topeka	Wichita
Kentucky	4,046,368	40,327	Frankfort	Lexington
Louisiana	4,488,924	52,433	Baton Rouge	New Orleans
Maine	1,319,292	33,094	Oxford	Portland
Maryland	5,773,562	12,164	Annapolis	Baltimore
Massachusetts	6,349,094	8,007	Jamaica Plain	Boston
Michigan	10,123,462	96,714	Lansing	Lansing
Minnesota	5,424,390	225,183	St. Paul	Minneapolis
Mississippi	2,967,287	48,633	Jackson	Jackson
Missouri	5,937,426	69,703	Jefferson City	St. Louis
Montana	989,931	147,040	Helena	Billings
Nebraska	1,926,726	77,116	Lincoln	Omaha
Nevada	2,700,957	110,641	Carson City	Las Vegas
New Hampshire	1,276,000	9,349	Concord	Manchester
New Jersey	8,791,208	14,329	Trenton	Newark
New Mexico	2,059,179	121,412	Santa Fe	Albuquerque
New York	19,378,281	54,554	Albany	New York City
North Carolina	9,535,483	53,819	Raleigh	Raleigh
North Dakota	688,273	70,698	Bismarck	Grand Forks
Ohio	11,353,751	44,826	Columbus	Columbus
Oklahoma	3,751,351	69,562	Oklahoma City	Tulsa
Oregon	3,765,151	98,381	Salem	Portland
Pennsylvania	12,464,364	46,054	Harrisburg	Philadelphia
Rhode Island	1,058,714	1,545	Providence	Providence
South Carolina	4,192,789	32,020	Columbia	Columbia
South Dakota	814,180	77,116	Pierre	Sioux Falls
Tennessee	6,010,693	42,328	Nashville	Memphis
Texas	24,751,151	268,597	Austin	Houston
Utah	2,763,885	84,899	Salt Lake City	Salt Lake City
Vermont	623,989	9,616	Winochee	Montpelier
Virginia	7,620,564	40,775	Richmond	Norfolk
Washington	6,595,260	71,302	Olympia	Seattle
West Virginia	1,853,454	62,756	Charleston	Charleston
Wisconsin	5,689,383	65,498	Madison	Madison
Wyoming	511,914	97,813	Cheyenne	Cheyenne

CRIME

Jury to continue deliberation following Brake trial closing arguments

By Brittany Shammus
THE STATE NEWS

Grand Haven — Jurors adjourned for the day after deliberating for about two hours Wednesday in the murder trial of Troy Brake, who is charged with killing MSU student Katherine A. Brown and three others.

Brake's attorney, Paul McDonagh, was given the opportunity to make his case that the evidence connecting Brake to the Zimmer and Brown slayings is "unusually scant" at Wednesday's trial.

Brake is on trial in Ottawa County's 20th Circuit Court in

connection with the slayings of Brown, 18; her boyfriend Jeremy Zimmer, 20; his mother Sharmaine Zimmer, 53; and his brother Tyler Zimmer, 17. All were found dead in the Zimmer home Sept. 29, 2008. Brake was charged with four counts of open murder and three felony firearm charges.

McDonagh called three witnesses through the duration of the trial before presenting a closing statement in which he asked jurors to consider whether they were convinced beyond reasonable doubt that Brake had committed the murders.

"You cannot take a man away

from his family and children unless you have concrete proof," McDonagh said. "You've got to have concrete proof, have got to be convinced beyond reasonable doubt."

McDonagh made a bullet-point list of areas of reasonable doubt for jurors on an easel in the courtroom, telling them that just one example would be enough to not convict Brake. Among reasons he offered on the list were pressure on detectives to provide a suspect, unreliable evidence and an investigation cut short.

Brake, he said, was a "convenient" suspect for detectives, who were going to find someone

and link them up "come hell or high water." He suggested that no motive could be found for Brake to harm the Zimmers, alluding to an interview taped Oct. 17, 2008 in which Brake said he got along well with the Zimmer family.

"Bob and Sharm were almost better parents than my real parents," Brake said in the recording, which was played for jurors at Wednesday's trial.

Although the tape showed Brake was the first to bring up the Zimmer murders, asking detectives, "Is this about the Zimmer house?" he denied knowledge of who was responsible.

"I don't know anyone that

would be capable of doing that," Brake said on the tape.

McDonagh reminded jurors of the countless tips received by detectives, none of which led to Brake. He mentioned a death threat against Jeremy Zimmer, who was at a drug raid but not arrested.

Earlier in the day, a potential motive for Brake to commit the crimes was offered by Fradel Pugh, a former inmate at the Kent County Jail with Brake. People sitting on the prosecution's side of the courtroom wept as Pugh said during his testimony that Brake had told him he beat Brown because she "didn't

deserve" to be shot.

"I just kept asking him, 'Why?' Pugh said, reaching for a tissue. "He said because shooting her would've been too good."

Prosecutor Ronald Frantz linked this statement to a theory that Brake harbors a hatred for women because they have let him down in the past, a theory backed by testimony from Pugh and by an earlier case in which Brake was convicted of attempted murder of admitted prostitute Mary Parker.

"You know, it's just like what happened to Mary Parker, in

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