



STUMP REMOVAL – This blast removed more than 40 stumps from the bay at Holiday Shores Campground to improve safety for boating and skiing on the Wisconsin River. The task was undertaken by Aqua Sports, Inc., which has a boat rental and ski school operation at Holiday Shores.

(Events Photo by Jay Walch)

Aqua Sports, Inc. Opens Up Waterways in Wisconsin Dells

Three young men who tried to make a commercial boat rental operation and ski instruction school go in Madison, have found the waters in Wisconsin Dells area a bit smoother for their venture.

The three – Michael Peterson, 23; Bruce Rueding, 24; and Curt Post, 25 – are partners in Aqua Sports, Inc., which will operate the waterfront activities at the Holiday Shores

Campground and Resort on the Upper Dells of the Wisconsin River.

The three operated a similar business in Madison last year, but met with negative attitudes on the part of city officials and opposition from a neighborhood association in their campaign to rent and renovate the old Hoover Boathouse for their rental and instructional operation. The Hoover Boathouse is a downtown Madison landmark, located in James Madison Park.

The three partners made their decision to move their operation here earlier this year, after Madison park officials decided that a committee should be set up to study their proposal, with the possibility of that the lease would be put out on bids should it be found that there was a need for such an operation on Madison lakes.

By this time, the group had already invested a considerable amount of time and money on the Madison proposal, including \$3,000 for a market analysis and feasibility study. The group had obtained endorsements from more than two dozen Madison organizations and business, mostly tourist related.

“We got in 18 days from Wisconsin Dells what we couldn’t

get from The City of Madison in seven months,” Peterson said. “All the permits, licenses, and the final lease – everything was approved here.”

The project in Wisconsin Dells was not without its obstacles, however. In order to provide a large, safe area for boating, skiing and instruction, Aqua Sports was forced into the stump removal business. They pulled and blasted more than 40 stumps – some of them as long as 18 feet – from the bay in front of Holiday Shores. This also opened up the bay for other private boating.

They also hauled in and spread sand in the beach areas, constructed dock facilities and a pro shop. Most of the work was done by the partners, themselves, including the stump blasting, which was done by partner Michael Peterson and local explosive expert Rick Herriot.

Aqua Sports’ rental equipment, all of which is new, includes ski boats, fishing boats, paddle boats, wind surfers, sailboats, canoes, jet skis and a pontoon boat.

Their waterfront instruction school will include Red Cross training, as well as specialized instruction for beginning, intermediate, and advanced skiers, and will include slalom, tricks, jumping, barefoot and show skiing, as well as para-sailing.

Instruction at the ski school will be handled by professional skiers from the Tommy Bartlett Water Ski Show. Aqua Sports is open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and offers rental rates by the hour, half day, day and week. Holiday Shores is located five miles north of the Dells, just off Hwy. 13, adjacent to the Winnebago Public Indian Museum.



SETTING THE CHARGE – Michael Peterson of Aqua Sports, Inc., gets ready to put explosives in place to remove to huge stump from the bay at Holiday Shores Campground. More than 40 stumps were removed to open the bay for boating and skiing.

(Events Photo by Jay Walch)