

Frank Rogala's 2/16/2009 Written Responses to Folded Homes' Interview Questions about the [Mackinaw Mill Creek Campground IcoPod](#).

1. What is your relationship to Mackinaw Mill Creek Campground?

My mother and father established the campground in 1963 and my family has owned and operated it ever since. It's quite a saga, as you know if you've seen the YouTube episodes.

2. How long has Mackinaw Mill Creek Campground existed?

46 years

3. What sorts of structures can be found at Mackinaw Mill Creek Campground?

There are a lot of pole barns that are used to service buildings and garages and maintenance sheds, a number of stick built, wooden restroom and shower buildings, as well as cabins that range from basic "camping cabins," where the guest use the communal campground bathrooms up to beautiful knotty wood pine lakefront cabin rentals with full bathrooms and kitchens.

4. Why did you choose an IcoPod for your campground?

At the time I became aware of the IcoPod it was featured on what used to be known as "TechTV." They weren't available yet to the general public and available on a beta testing basis. This was right about the time that it was named one of the inventions or innovations of the year by Time magazine. It was through my contact with you, Markus, that I found out that you didn't have any pods situated in our climate zone yet. It just seemed like a natural synergetic type of thing. We could set up an IcoPod and rent it to our campers to recoup our cost. They could give us feedback other than our general observations.

As you know, the initial IcoPod was a type of cardboard. Unfortunately, we had an extremely humid, wet summer and our first pod only lasted the season. We had erected a concrete foundation so that when we found out that there was a new design that made use of an impermeable plastic, we decided to replace our original one with that new updated design.

5. When did you set it up?

We ordered our IcoPod February 22nd, 2004 and set it that spring.

6. How successful has it been for you as a campground structure?



It has been growing in popularity until last summer when it was booked nearly every night.

It wasn't until last summer that we started renting it to people with small children. We were afraid that kids might damage it, but from the beginning children have been very attracted to it and so far there hasn't been any damage.

One of my brothers that acts as general manager, I think, keeps thinking it will just blow away or fall down. It is fastened to a concrete base, it's not going anywhere. I don't think he can get past the fact that it is built out of a material that looks like a FedEx box. I say this because last fall he asked me to look at the Pod and see if it was holding up (to see if we should be booking in it for 2009). We have an excellent housekeeping staff, and I have every confidence in their abilities, but I did have a look and I must say it looked like the day we finished putting it up on the inside.

7. What do campers/users say about the IcoPod?

The campers, in general, are fascinated by the IcoPod. There are many times I see groups of people gathered reading the sign and looking at it or taking pictures. In general, the office staff hasn't had any comments, which we take to be a good thing. Our campers will let us know when there is a problem right away. We have its situated near our park store, the heated pool, the toilet and shower building and a WiFi access point so it is in an ideal location. You get a lot of questions about it on the reservation line, especially from families with 10-year-old boys -- they seem especially interested.

What has been best about having the IcoPod at Mackinaw Mill Creek Campground?

We actually received a lot of press regarding the IcoPod in our Local newspapers. Also, at various times the information regarding it made the Icopod page one of the top 10 most accessed pages in our web site, which is quite a feat since our webpage gets literally hundreds of thousands of unique visitors in the spring and fall. Also we have received calls asking for information on the IcoPod from staffers from FEMA and CNN.

8. What has been worst about having the IcoPod at Mackinaw Mill Creek Campground?

It does arouse a lot of curiosity. We have had to put up signs telling people to leave the guests staying in the pod alone. They tend to think of it as a museum exhibit for something and think nothing of going up and knocking on the door and asking to look inside.

9. Based upon your experience, how could the IcoPod be improved?

You have already become aware of and corrected the issues regarding the narrow sealing tape. And painting the structure has made it impervious to UV damage. Our



grounds staff has been unwilling to let the pod handle the punishment of a freezing, melting, freezing, melting Michigan winter. They have been concerned that the ice might push or pry between the windows and the structure and cause leaks. Each fall they put posts in the ground and erected plastic tarp over the pod to keep a majority of the snow and ice off of it. We have the kind of temperature changes and freezing and melting that crack rocks open. However, since we have never given the structure of a chance to test it I cannot say for a fact that it would not withstand it.

10. Would you recommend the IcoPod as a semi-permanent shelter for other commercial campgrounds?

I know that it works well for us. The campground owner would have to assess their clientele. Our campers are almost like "family" and we have very few problems with vandalism, littering, etc. I know other campgrounds are not as lucky. One reason we put the Pod where we did was because we were concerned that it might be damaged, so we put it in an area where it would be highly visible. However, in all these years no one has ever done a thing to harm it.

11. If you had to do it over, would you do anything different?

I would have painted the original "cardboard" IcoPod (as we did this one with the white reflective roofing paint), and maybe have looked for thicker tape for it. As far as our current "plastic" Pod I think we made all the right decisions by building a wooden door and putting it on a raised concrete foundation. In its current state it may last indefinitely.

12. Is there anything else I should know to accurately capture your experience with the IcoPod? If so, what?

I think it's too bad that things were shut down there for a while for the IcoPod. It was during that period that I was contacted by FEMA and CNN. However, I also believe that everything happens for a reason and that things are as they should be. It seems that you, Markus, are the one with a real passion for the Pod and Folding Homes (as a product and as a concept) and so it is only right that it is now in your hands.

