



ISLAND CURRENTS

Beaver Island Association Newsletter - Winter 2018

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President's Corner (Bob Anderson, President)

In response to many requests and in the interest of cost-effectiveness for our organization, this winter edition of our bi-annual newsletter is being electronically distributed for the first time. Members who expressed preference for paper versions will continue to receive their copy via mail. As always, it is available on our website. Please send us feedback, positive or negative, for future editions as we committed to sharing BIA information in your preferred format.

Of the many initiatives we contributed to during summer/fall 2017, the broadest was the Great Lakes Island Summit held on Beaver Island in October. On a range of measures, it was a tremendous success, as participants with a common desire to help their home island improve shared their successes and challenges. Networking is underway on several fronts and a second summit is planned for fall 2018, hosted by Madeline Island. A second initiative we describe is the new trails organization including an update on the waterways trail initiative. Third, efforts to obtain high speed internet continue, with some setbacks as well as new developments. Birding trail activities, beach cleanup, a

Cabin Fever Notes (Bob Tidmore)

Recreational Plans: St James Township is in the final process of updating its Recreational Plan, while Peaine Township began this process for their Plan. These plans are fundamental to the township's ability to apply for grants in support of their objectives. St James Township held a public meeting in January 2018 at the Beaver Island Community School to review its plan's objectives and obtain public comments. Its objectives are to:

- (1) Construct showers and improve restrooms at the Township Campground,
- (2) Build a new public boat ramp/launch in the harbor,
- (3) Designate a parking area for boat trailers,
- (4) Build a fishing pier on the harbor,
- (5) Assist with creating the Beaver Island Water Trail (see related article in the newsletter),
- (6) Extend the bike trail to Donegal Bay, and
- (7) Extend the recreation season into winter months. St James Township's Recreation Plan is available at, http://www.stjamestown.org/government_departments/planning_commission/recreation_plans.php. Its completion means the Township will be able to apply for DNR grants during this year's grant cycle.

recent alarming invasives discovery, and clarification of ORV use on private and public beach property are all current topics in line with our association's mission of "Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability."

We invited Angel Welke to contribute an article on the ballot proposal for the May election to consolidate our two townships. This presents another significant event for Beaver Island and deserves the close study and consideration of all voters. The Community Center will be hosting a public information forum in April and as the election draws closer, the BIA plans to publish a special edition newsletter with a summary of pros and cons of the proposal.

A final comment: the Beaver Island Association is led by a volunteer Board of Directors who serve staggered limited terms and are elected by the membership at our annual meeting. The current board members and officers are shown on the last page of the newsletter and three of them "term limit" off the board this summer. If you are interested in lending your experience and effort to our initiatives, please contact one of the board members.

Gasoline Update: Unexpected consequences resulted from the December fuel barge run to Manistique. Facing bitter cold weather with winds and storms, and lacking the means to break out of the river's ice has delayed its return. Consequently, gasoline is being shipped to the island by Island Airways in 55-gallon drums and special FAA approved smaller storage containers.

Ice Shanties: As of January 16th, two permanent ice shanties are located on the harbor plus, with a third "pop-up" appearing on a regular basis. Those fishing have caught some big Northern Pike.

Deer Season: "A great deer season with over 150 deer taken with bow, rifle and muzzleloader" was reported at the January 2018 Wildlife Club meeting. The count included one 9-point, forty-two 8-point, sixteen 7-point and fourteen 6-point deer.

Turkeys: During the fall season one turkey per day can be taken if a tag is purchased. Turkeys are plentiful on the island and the Wildlife Club purchased ten tons of corn to provide them with food.

Island Fellow Departure (Pam Grassmick and Kevin Boyle)

For medical reasons, Stefanie Burchill, our island fellow, has unexpectedly had to reduce her time on Beaver Island. Both Stefanie and our community are disappointed, but Stefanie had no choice; we wish her well. The Island Institute refunded the entire amount to those individuals and organizations that contributed to her fellowship and began a search for someone to step into the role, but has not yet filled the position. Stefanie spoke very highly of her time on Beaver Island and of the residents and organizations that she met and with whom she worked: "Thank you for your great mission to encourage the growth of this beautiful community. I cannot thank you enough for all of the immense hospitality and kindness you have showed me in this short time. I apologize for all of the work that I have left undone."

The Communication Project involved a lengthy application to the Island Institute and Office of Great Lakes. The

application outlined how Beaver Island could enhance communication within the island, promoting events off island, and improving visitor appreciation of recreational offerings and happenings. It included quarterly benchmarks. Those needs have not gone away. Kevin and Pam completed an exit interview with Stefanie, which provided additional insights into her departure. We were notified mid-January that the Office of Great Lakes and Northland College are restructuring the Great Lakes Islands Fellow Program and will offer it once again in 2019. We will not be applying for a fellow in 2018. Personally, we remain committed to pursuing the communication project. Thank you all for your generous support of the communication project and of Stefanie during her stay here. Should you have any questions please contact either Pam (2314) or Kevin (3189)

Great Lakes Islands Coalition (Pam Grassmick, Kevin Boyle, and Patrick McGinnity)

Many of you have read about the first Great Lakes Islands Summit in articles in the Northern Islander and Beaver Beacon. The Summit -- held in September at the CMU facility on Beaver Island where we hosted participants from 12 other islands -- was a success by all standards. The Office of Great Lakes funded the two-day event with support from the Beaver Island Association, Hodgeson's Enterprises, McDonough's Market, and Island Airways. Other island businesses donated items with the Beaver Island logo. The Toy Museum opened for an evening especially for our island visitors. Bob Anderson's opening remarks set a collaborative atmosphere for the two-day conference. Opportunities for interaction among visiting islanders and members of our community occurred throughout, including a celebratory evening pig roast complete with music.

Participants' were enthused about continuing the dialogue. Since the Summit, the Great Lakes Islands Coalition (GLIC) has been participating in monthly conference calls with representatives from approximately 16 islands, the Office of Great Lakes (OGL), the Island Institute, and Northland College. The islands represented come from communities across 5 Great Lakes, multiple states, and

multiple islands in Canada. The group has developed into an international Great Lakes effort. During these calls, facilitated by Matt Preisser from the OGL, islands share strengths and challenges, issues of common interest, suggestions for the 2018 Islands Summit, elevating GL islands presence across the Midwest and Canada and developing an Island Resource Directory. Manitoulin Island has offered to collect a list of books written related to GL islands. The Beaver Island Historical Society is compiling our island's list for submission.

The next Great Lakes Islands Summit will take place on Madeline Island on October 1-2, 2018. Currently, Beaver Island's representatives include Kevin Boyle, Pam Grassmick, and Patrick McGinnity. Northland College, as part of their Center for Rural Communities, has agreed to continue to develop economic indicators for the islands, given our differences from mainland communities, and to support the GLIC's website. Beaver Island and Madeline are currently showcased on Northland's website with all other GL islands developing similar community spotlights. Minutes, press releases, and other GLIC information will soon be available from:

<https://www.northland.edu/sustain/crc/great-lakes-islands>

Island Summit (Stefanie Burchill)

Island communities are often thought to welcome isolation, grit, and destitute peoples; put them in a room together, and watch opinions change. On September 25th and 26th 12 island communities of the Great Lakes and 5 related organizations came together to discuss collective ideas of unity at the first International Great Lakes Island Summit. The group, facilitated by Karen Burns and Kate Tagai of Maine Island Institute, focused on the possibility of congealing the event into The Great Lakes Island Coalition.

This meeting had been in the works for over two years before the event came together at the Central Michigan University research campus on Beaver Island—which can

be found in Charlevoix county, at the tip of Lake Michigan. The idea for the coalition originally arisen when a small group of dedicated Beaver Islander's flew out to the coast of Maine to exchange problems, solutions, and newfound friendship with fellow islanders. These Michiganders found themselves on Vinalhaven Island, fraternizing with the Island Institute.

Vinalhaven is one of 15 Maine islands that plays host to fulltime residents and welcomes guidance from the Island Institute. The freshwater visitors decided to take many ideas home, one of them being the aid of the Institute. The focal point they brought back with them was fellowship. After organizing several community meetings and

collaborating with the Office of the Great Lakes and Northland College, Beaver Island hired its first Island Fellow position through the Island Institute's Fellows program. The 2017 Communications Fellow was also a big win for the Institute—where they had yet to have fellows in another state. Karen explained how expansion fit in smoothly into the Institute's mission during her presentation of the mission statement "The Island Institute works to sustain Maine's island and coastal communities, and exchanges ideas and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere."

Though the event was only two days, the impact on these 12 communities will not go unnoticed. The connections that visited new friends networked throughout the six presentations and nine group activities (which included a beer-less Island Boodle to important infrastructure points, natural resources and, cultural heritage) promoted dewy-eyed islanders to find the connections between their community's strengths and weaknesses. Spotting a small box of tissues in the front row, Kate Tagai of the Island Institute said, "it's really something special to see so many islanders in one room." The World Café style discussion appeared to bring out the best discussion from the group. Topics such as housing, elder care, and education were laid out on tables with 3 large pieces of paper each saying something to the matter of "questions" "victories" and "issues". Participants had 4 rounds of 20 minutes to jumble around topics, and discuss how each situation

INTERNET UPDATE (Kevin Boyle & Alan Vicstein)

The island's struggle for adequate Internet service continues, and your BIA is in the thick of it. As you may recall, we suffered a setback late last spring when NMU's proposed wireless broadband service was waylaid by AT&T taking up much of the remaining space on the St. James tower. Efforts are underway to secure alternate tower space to bring that service online, but there is now no clear timeline to do so. Also last spring we helped organize a meeting with elected island leaders, Charlevoix county representative and state congressman Tristan Cole to discuss the difficulties we continue to encounter. We explained our efforts to work with the island's current wire line Internet service provider to address the service issues and the company's insistence that there are no known "systemic" Internet service issues on the island. TDS's announced plan to increase stated speeds for its service in some areas were noted, but there was concern about existing congestion problems continuing, a delivery commitment that was almost 10 years out and their microwave link remaining as a single point of failure for the island. A take away from the meeting was that the island needs to do a technical assessment to determine how

works or struggles on their home island. When it was time to move on, the facilitators posted each topic's pages around the room and allowed time for the group to gallery—walk the ideas and frustrations in hopes to even further broaden the spectrum of ideas to bring home.

The main take away message that arose was that these communities are not so different from each other. This colorful group of individuals was no longer a group of isolated communities, but one big community with a plethora of supporting neighbors (mind you some of these neighbors live a couple hundred miles away). The conclusion of the Island Summit ended with Madeline Island taking the initiative to host the 2018 Island Summit. During the final group discussion, the islanders split up to be with their home islands and briefly describe their take-aways' from the event. Around a sterile set of college lab tables, the Beaver Islanders concluded that they believed "coming out of this, anything is feasible." All Islanders then rejoined together in a circle to share one word that they felt described the summit, and formally parted ways until they would later meet up for a lovely white-fish dinner and a traditional Beaver Island pub crawl leaving islanders rosy cheeked and hopeful for a future of collaboration and fellowship.

More information on the event can be found at: <https://www.northland.edu/sustain/crc/great-lakes-islands/>

truly high-speed service (with room to grow) could be deployed and what it would cost.

As discussions began about undertaking such a study, Great Lakes Energy began to investigate its plan (announced in their newsletter) to bring a fiber-optic based internet service to parts of its service area—and Charlevoix county and the island were in the survey area. Over the summer crews appeared on the island to measure distances in connection with planning the service, and this fall a number of island residents received survey calls about their interest in such a service and how much they would be willing to pay. GLE has recently announced that they will proceed with a project (which is exciting news), but stated "service to Beaver Island will be a form of high-speed internet yet to be determined." We have reached out to GLE to learn more about their plans, but have nothing additional to report at this point. Because of the uncertainty, we are resuming our efforts to pursue a study about what options might be available to develop a community project for high-speed service, as has been done on other remote islands. If you are interested in pursuing such a study, please contact BIA members Alan Vicstein, Dick Mulvihill or Kevin Boyle.

Radio Station WVBI Update (Kevin Boyle & Maureen Abele)

The island's radio station topped off last summer with its first live remote broadcast. Phil Becker and a technical crew set up at the swimming beach to play music for an

End of Season Dance Party and Old Car show. The show was not only heard live at the beach, it was also beamed back to the studio by microwave for broadcast on the air

and the Internet. The station added to its program sources by becoming affiliated with Great Lakes Today. GLT provides short- and feature-length news stories about the Great Lakes region, including coverage of the Great Lakes Islands Summit (read more about the Summit elsewhere in this newsletter). WVBI includes GLT's stories in our weekday Current Events reports hosted by Greg Doig. Plus, WVBI added Michigan Back Roads hosted by Ron Rademacher, which takes you on adventures off the beaten path around our state. Ron has written a series of Michigan Back Roads books and frequently appears on radio stations around the state.

On the music front, the station has added more shows hosted by Beaver Islanders. Adult Swim is new on Wednesday evenings at 8. Hosted by Mark Pearson, Adult Swim is an eclectic mix of rare tracks, old tunes, new tunes and pop culture. New on Saturday evenings at 10 is The Blues Cruise. Hosted by Mark Beltaire, the "Cruise" is an every-which-way mix of all styles of the blues, with lots of rare tracks. And, on Sunday mornings from 9 until 1:00 p.m., you can listen to the new Sunday Morning Cottage Mix. It features a blend of soft jazz, jazzy pop and some soul—a sort of Sunday jazz brunch. It's different from what you've heard before, but perfect for a Sunday morning on the island. This programming joins the popular Country Classics program hosted by Sheri Timsak, Phil Becker's Sunday Night Oldies, Mark Beltaire's Rockin' the Boat, and the Top Ten + Five weekly countdown show hosted by Cynthia Jaye and occasional guest hosts.

The station added new underwriters at the PABI Summer GALA. The WVBI weather station is now sponsored by Power's Hardware. Hogarth Pest Control has

Beaver Island Archipelago Trails Association Report (Mark Engelsman)

The mission of the Beaver Island Archipelago Trails Association is to facilitate the appropriate clearing, care, development, and improvement of public use trails; including, to sustain and protect the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the islands, educate the public about the trail system, encourage proper trail care and use, and cooperate with other organizations to support initiatives that promote trail use and preservation.

Following an initial general interest meeting on June 6, 2017 convened by Ken Zick, attended by 28 people, the group reassembled on June 13 after completing an email survey regarding organizational purposes and projects. The survey was used to name the organization and to fashion a mission statement for incorporation. Central to its purpose is communication and cooperation with other island organizations including the Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative, BIA, the Little Traverse Band, Townships, on initiatives such as birding, hiking, biking, waterways, control of invasive plants, and "dark skies." While acknowledging the value of cooperation with such organizations and initiatives, the new association will focus on trail access and improvement to avoid overreach.

The organization's elected officers are: Mark Engelsman, President; Phil Becker, Vice-President; Ken Zick,

underwritten the main studio at the BIC Center, and Hodgson Enterprises supports the WVBI Paradise Bay webcam. Their support is critical and much appreciated.

Before the cold weather set in, Ron Wojan helped improve WVBI's microwave relay station at the Circle M, installing conduit to protect the cabling there. In the spring, a tower crew will be working to improve the station's antenna system. Also this spring, WVBI plans to launch a membership campaign to help raise money to support additional programming, including a possible affiliation with NPR. Be assured that WVBI won't be moving away from its music-intensive programming format. Rather, the interest is in gaining access to some of NPR's music and entertainment programming, along with top-of-the-hour news reports to add to the news received from FSN.

You can listen to the station worldwide by going to wvbi.net, using the TuneIn app or asking your Amazon Echo or other smart speaker to "play WVBI." At wvbi.net, you can also see the programming schedule, listen to podcasts and read the latest Current Events Reports. WVBI's status as an LP (low power) and island terrain can make reception difficult in some places. If you have trouble receiving the station over the air, you might try adding a simple indoor antenna to your radio. A short length of wire is all you need. If that doesn't work, a small antenna mounted outside that is properly grounded and connected to your radio will usually do the trick. If you have comments, ideas for programs (or would like to start one yourself), or need help getting your reception set up, send an email to programming@wvbi.net, or contact any member of the board of The Preservation Association of Beaver Island (PABI), which operates the station.

Secretary; Mike Finn, Treasurer; and, Doug Tilly, Chairman of the Board.

Articles of Incorporation as a non-profit organization were filed with the State and approved on August 31, 2017. An application for non-profit status as a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization was filed with the IRS in November and is pending approval. Approval is expected in the next few months. Annual membership dues are \$10.

This summer the BIATA received project approval from the DNR to work on Seven Bridges and Buffalo Camp Trails. On July 13 sixteen members worked to clear overgrowth and fallen trees from Seven Bridges Trail. On August 26, eleven members similarly cleared Buffalo Camp Trail. Over 150 hours of service was rendered.

The Board has met four times to discuss future projects and initiatives including publicity, trail maps, web site, and cooperation on grant opportunities. A calendar of summer season activities and membership assignments are being planned along with budget proposals for submission to the townships and Charlevoix Foundation. The Board has tentatively agreed on responsibilities in connection with the Beaver Island Water Trail including erection of signage and fire rings, pending final approval of the Water Trail Master Plan and Partnership Agreement.

Recently, the BIATA was asked by St. James Township and agreed to groom designated trails for use by the community with a cross country grooming machine gifted by the Little Traverse Conservancy and.

The formation of BIATA has been received with enthusiasm by members and other island organizations as

Invasive Species Control Efforts (Beth Leuck)

Emerald Ash Borer: Many Beaver Island Association members have probably noticed the purple insect traps hanging from ash trees every other summer from June to August. These traps contain lures that attract emerald ash borers (EABs) so the presence of the insects on the island can be monitored. Until this past summer no EABs were detected at any of the traps, and Beaver Island’s ash trees have remained safe from the invasive pest that has decimated ash species on the mainland. However, inspection of the 2017 summer traps by Jane Winkler of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) indicated a single female EAB on one of the Beaver Island traps. It has not been determined if this individual was an isolated hitchhiker from the mainland or the first sign of a larger problem. EAB traps with lures will again be placed in strategic locations on the island in early summer 2018 and will remain in place for most of the season. Data from these traps will give islanders and the MDARD further information about the extent of the EAB problem on Beaver Island. In the meantime, the firewood quarantine to the island remains in place. We wish to thank the Beaver Island Boat Company, Island Airways, and Fresh Air Aviation for their continued vigilance to prevent the introduction of infected ash wood from the mainland.

Invasive Plant Species: In June 2017 a private firm, GEI Consultants, was hired by the Antrim Conservation District and The Nature Conservancy to survey Beaver Island Lake Michigan shorelines and dune systems for invasive plant species. Sixteen nonnative species were found over 996 acres surveyed. Five of the species were targeted for immediate treatment with 2% glyphosate because their populations were small enough to treat, and they have the potential to spread rapidly on shoreline and dune habitats. All invasive plant species found at McCauley and McFadden Points were treated because of the high

a useful vehicle for promoting enjoyment and preservation of an important natural asset of the island - its hiking, biking, skiing, and waterway trails. The Association looks forward to building upon this initial enthusiasm to engage others in maintaining and improving island trails.

intrinsic value of the two dune systems. In August 2017, the Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska and Emmet Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CAKE CISMA) surveyed Little Sand Bay and the Barney’s Lake Preserves. Sixteen species of invasive plants were identified at the preserves. Two of them, Japanese knotweed and oriental bittersweet, probably originated from private property on the island where they were planted as ornamentals many years ago. Both are highly aggressive invasives with bird-dispersed seeds, meaning they may be now be growing as single plants or small populations all over the island. CAKE CISMA treated Japanese knotweed with a specialty herbicide on the private property where it was originally planted, but no other treatment was undertaken.

Invasive plant species treated by BIA members over the summer included two populations of garlic mustard, both which are under control at this time, and a population of glossy buckthorn on Garden Island. The buckthorn will need more attention in summer 2018. There has been no targeted treatment of invasive Phragmites along the Beaver Island shorelines in two years, and no Phragmites coordinator has been identified after the position was vacated in 2016. The island’s shorelines should undergo a comprehensive survey for outbreaks of non-native Phragmites, and the Beaver Island Association is seeking alternative solutions to assure that invasive Phragmites never becomes a dominant shoreline plant on the island, given the damage the species can do to wetland ecosystems, viewsapes and home values. The Northern Lake Michigan Collaborative, a stakeholder group sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), will hold an invasive species planning session at its February meeting, and Beaver Island’s Phragmites situation will probably be discussed at that time.

ORV Use (Beth Leuck)

This past summer there appeared to be more off-road vehicle (ORV) use on the east side beaches of the island than noticed in previous years. Residents and visitors of Sand Bay, Wicklow Beach, and the areas south of Wicklow Beach reported multiple individuals on ORVs treating the Lake Michigan shoreline as if it were a legal trail for their vehicles. It is not legal to operate an ORV on shorelines for multiple reasons: 1.) Most state forest roads are open to ORV use, but Lake Michigan shorelines are not considered forest roads. There is a map of Beaver Island Department of Natural Resources (DNR) roads open to ORV use at

http://www.midnr.com/Publications/pdfs/ForestsLandWater/DNRRoads/PA288_Charlevoix.pdf.

No Lake Michigan shorelines on the island are open to ORVs according to the map. 2.) DNR lands on Beaver Island are designated as a Wildlife Research Area but are managed by the DNR as a State Game Area. State Game Areas are off-limits to ORVs: “A person shall not operate an ORV ...in a state game area or state park or recreation area, except on roads, trails, or areas designated for this purpose” (https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/pdfs/blk_pdf_MichiganLaw.pdf). None of Beaver

Island's beaches is considered a designated ORV area. 3.) The Michigan State Supreme Court ruled in 2005 that it is legal to walk on private beaches between the water's edge and the ordinary high water mark, but it did not rule on the legality of ORV use on private beaches. Therefore, ORV use on privately owned beaches is entirely at the discretion of the landowner: "Private land is closed to ORV operation, except for use by the landowner and the landowner's invited guests" (https://www.offroad-ed.com/assets/pdf/handbook/mi_handbook_entire.pdf). These laws and regulations give any property owner on Beaver Island the right to ban the operation of uninvited ORVs from his/her property, including the beach if the property includes Lake Michigan shoreline.

The enforcement of these regulations by public officials on Beaver Island is a challenge. First, some officials may not know or understand the regulations. Second, even if an officer is familiar with Michigan ORV laws and is willing to enforce them, the offending ORV operator is usually gone before the officer can arrive. Third, ORV owners must license their ORVs unless the ORVs are used exclusively on their own property, but it appears that many ORVs operated in an illegal manner on Beaver Island are not

Beaver Island Birding Trail (Beth Leuck)

Approximately 55 birders gathered on Beaver Island on Memorial Day Weekend 2017 for the fourth annual Beaver Island Birding Trail's Warblers on the Water (WoW). Participants enjoyed talks by experts on eagles, birding in Peru, and visiting Antarctica. Saturday field trips were well attended, and the weather was outstanding for observing birds at different locations around the island. Sunday's stormy weather put a damper on the field trips, but other scheduled events occurred as planned.

The program and schedule for WoW 2018 is almost

*The BIA invited Angel Welke to submit the following article on township consolidation. She helped initiate the petitions to place the consolidation question in front of voters. The BIA has **not** taken a position on this issue and will present additional points of view and information in a special edition of Island Currents. Please let us know your views.*

Township Consolidation (Angel Welke)

We've heard many members of the Beaver Island community express interest in and support for consolidating our two townships into one. Two systems of government don't make sense for an island community with only about 600 residents. They say it's inefficient—a waste of everyone's time and energy—to have to have each township adopt the exact same policies, using their own separate processes and meetings. The island doesn't need to have two planning commissions when there could be just one for the whole island. They note that there are just not enough of us to fill vacancies on these duplicated bodies. Important issues, like economic development of the island or protection of natural resources, are not a Peaine or St. James Township issue, but a whole island issue, so why not address them as a whole community with just one government?

The petitions we circulated for signature by registered voters in either township asks the County Board to

license, making the operator difficult to apprehend. The most useful act by a shoreline owner to help law enforcement is to photograph the vehicle and operator. This isn't always an easy task, but it might be the best method toward reducing the problem of ORVs on the island's beaches.

The BIA welcomes ideas and suggestions to help protect sensitive shoreline and other areas by letting visitors know where it is unlawful to operate ORVs as well as where ORV use is allowed. There are several useful publications online, some which were referenced in this article. The Handbook of Michigan Off-Road Vehicle Laws is available at https://www.offroad-ed.com/assets/pdf/handbook/mi_handbook_entire.pdf. There is an article in the June 2015 edition of the Save Our Shoreline newsletter on the use of ORVs on Great Lakes beaches, including a list of DNR regulations pertinent to the issue. This article can be found at

http://saveourshoreline.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SOSq_Spring15web.pdf (p. 4).

completed, and events for the upcoming Memorial Day weekend will be published on the website, <http://www.beaverislandbirdingtrail.org/index.html>, sometime in February. Registration will be required to attend the field trips, but talks are free and open to the public. In addition, the Emmy Award-winning movie Green Fire about the life of the great conservationist Aldo Leopold will be shown, and it also is free and open to the public. Everyone interested in nature is encouraged to attend all events; you do not need to be a serious birder to enjoy the field trips and presentations.

schedule an election in Peaine and St. James Townships so voters can decide if they want to consolidate the two townships into one. Sufficient signatures were collected and submitted to the Charlevoix County Clerk and ballot language was approved by the Charlevoix County Board for the May 8 election. Under state law, an election about consolidation must address several related topics, so the petition language:

1. Identifies the two townships that would be consolidated (Peaine and St. James)
2. Provides a name for the consolidated township – Beaver Island Township. We considered some options, but this name seemed to be one everyone would be comfortable with even if it wasn't their first choice.
3. Establishes the voted extra millages that the consolidated township would be authorized to levy in 2018 and 2019.

If a majority of voters in both townships approves consolidation, Beaver Island Township would take effect

November 20, 2018. The consolidated township would have five elected officials, including a supervisor, clerk, and treasurer, who would have been elected previously in the August 2018 and November 2018 elections. The assets and liabilities of the two townships would belong to Beaver Island Township. The consolidated township would

adopt a set of resolutions to consolidate existing commissions, boards, authorities, and all other arrangements of Peaine and St. James Townships. See: lefevream.wixsite.com/beaverislandtownship

Changing Rental Market (Sheri Richards)

Many of the homes today are being sold by the original builders or owners. We are seeing a generational shift, which has definitely influenced the real estate market on Beaver Island. The older generation, looking to pass on the torch to their children and children’s children, are finding that perhaps “The Family Cottage” may be too much for their children to take on with their given time, energy and finances. This is leading many to sell their island vacation home.

Those buying now are often looking to offset the cost of ownership by renting the home while it is not in use by the family. This is markedly different since these new homeowners do not have island ties. They have either been vacationers for many years or have discovered the island in the past few years.

What factors have influenced rentals on Beaver Island?
Media: The Internet has brought incredible change to our world – opening everyone’s eyes to a global landscape, and inspiring them to travel, seeking new cultures, communities, beauty, and entertainment. The Internet has played a role in the rise of tourism across the board. Conversation does not begin with, “What do you have?”, it begins with, “Where have you been?” Many renters have discovered the island through their exposure to media. This creates an interesting position for those who own rental properties, and a tremendous opportunity to meet these renter’s interest, which include quality accommodations and high-speed Internet.

Rental management companies: Another way that rentals have changed is in the quality of rentals offered. These new vacationers have acquired a taste for five-star hotels and expect no less from the homes in which they vacation. Quality marketing and management is key for a good rental management company. Rental management enables the property owner to maintain their home as well as to earn a passive income, leaning on the rental

2017 Beach Cleanup (Ken McDonald)

The annual Beach Cleanup sponsored by BIA—in partnership with the Alliance for the Great Lakes—was held on Saturday, September 16.

The weather was not especially cooperative but there was still a respectable turnout of Islanders dedicated to keeping Beaver Island’s beaches clean and pristine.

Everyone stopped by the Community Center in the morning to pick up their supplies and choose their beach. They all returned at Noon with the trash they collected for a complimentary Nathan’s hot dog lunch. Many thanks to

management company to oversee all of the day-to-day workings of the rental.

What advances could the island make to improve the tourism experience?

Transportation: BIBCO faces a large undertaking in transporting hundreds of vehicles through the peak season. Richards Rental Management Services turns over 8-10 homes on Saturday and another 8-10 on Sunday. Many renters book their reservations on the boat. Last year the boat acted as a funnel, with everyone trying to squeeze through to the island with their vehicles. Several were unable to find space on the boat and had to rent cars here. Then there were those who could neither get their vehicle on the boat nor find an available car to rent here! The challenge is to accommodate tourists by providing transportation to all who would like to come. Perhaps this would eventually mean some kind of island transport service, using the Charlevoix Transit, but on a more scheduled route or even a train where folks can hop on and off as they please.

What does our future hold?

The island may grow significantly in the next decade and growing pains can be difficult. Perhaps the greatest challenge that the community faces is preserving the features that people love about B.I.: a serene, slow paced lifestyle, and an un-commercialized community. For example, the blight caused by more vehicles transported to the island than vehicles leaving the island needs to be resolved. With a growing population, vehicle numbers will rise along with the traffic. What is an optimal goal for the island transport of our vacationers in ten years?

There are many invested community members discussing these issues and working energetically for the good of Beaver Island. It is an incredible time of change and discovery, in which BIA continues to participate.

Carol Creasser for donating the hot dogs and McDonough’s Market for donating the buns.

The total haul of trash was less than in previous years. This may have been due to high water levels masking debris but there was still a Suburban load of stuff to haul to the Transfer Station.

This was Ken McDonald’s last year to manage the B.I.A. Beach Cleanup. Starting in 2018 Sheri Richards will run the Beach Cleanup and Ken will assist her.



**P.O Box 390
Beaver Island, Michigan 49782**

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LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS. The Beaver Island Association is an organization of dedicated volunteers who seek to represent the interests of all residents and visitors on Beaver Island. From Phragmites and other invasive species control, to township governance, to support of the Community School, and everything in between, the BIA is working to support environmental and economic sustainability. If you have friends or neighbors who are not members, send the BIA their names and addresses and we will send them a copy of this newsletter.

Write: The Beaver Island Association, P.O. Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782. **Email:** beaverislandassociation@gmail.com

Beaver Island Association

Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability

Please pay your dues to support our efforts and to continue to receive the BIA newsletter. Our membership year runs from July 1 to the following June 30. Please join or rejoin us by sending a check for \$25 to Alan Vicstein, Treasurer, The Beaver Island Association, PO Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782.

*******Yes, please renew our Beaver Island Association membership for 2017-2018 *******

Name(s)

Mailing Address

email address