

# ISLAND CURRENTS

*Beaver Island Association Newsletter – Spring-Summer 2013*  
*Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability*

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**Information regarding Great Lakes Water level.** Bob Tidmore attended the February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Low Lake Level Seminar in Traverse City. His very interesting notes are summarized below.

The seminar was held at the Grand Traverse Civic Center with more than 200 people attending. Speakers included representatives from:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (2)
- Michigan Sea Grant (2)
- Michigan DNR
- Congressman Dan Denishek and Representatives from Senator Levin's office

**Summary.** The Michigan-Huron lake system of 45,000 square miles is the second largest lake in the world.

### Information presented

- The January water level is the lowest ever recorded during the record-keeping period, which started in 1918.
- Water levels are expected to decline over the next few months with record lows set each month and with record lows forecast for this coming summer.
- All the great lakes are below average.
- Lake Erie is doing the best but its water level is regulated at the Niagara Falls area.
- In 1964 when the previous record was set the lake rebounded to normal levels in three years.

**Rainfall and evaporation.** The major effect on lake levels is evaporation, especially in the fall of the year when the water is warm. Lake temperatures are significantly impacted by the recent lack of winter ice, and the level from reduced snow pack melt from the north shore of Lake Superior.

There are three major man-made water flows (in addition to all the smaller rivers and streams that flow into the lakes) that affect us: the first is the diversion by Chicago, half for drinking water and half to maintain the flow out to the Chicago River. As a result of U.S. Supreme Court rulings, the draw from Chicago is legally limited to 2,900 cubic feet per second. This amounts to approximately one inch of water depth per year. Reversing the flow of the Chicago River is not an option since the majority of other water flowing into the river is from the city's waste water treatment plants. Flowing this into Lake Michigan would be very bad.

The second flow is the inward flow from the electric power dam on Lake Superior which flows at the rate of 3,200 cubic feet per second.

Thus, the net inflow from these two is about 400 cubic feet per second. There are 7.5 gallons in a cubic foot of water, so the net inflow is about 3,000 gallons per second, or approximately 100 billion gallons per year. The third major factor is the dredging of the St. Clair River.

Saint Clair River dredging. According to the Corps of Engineers, the dredging of the St. Clair River lowered the Lake Michigan-Huron levels 13-16 inches [in a report by the National Geographic it was stated that subsequent scouring of the channel bed due to the increase water flow, caused a further one time drop of 5 inches so that the total drop is around 20 inches]. The Corps of Engineers stated that it is considering installing compensation barriers to mitigate this, but the "study" of this possibility will not be considered until 2015. The 13-16 inch drop (or 18-21 inch from subsequent scouring) was stated to be a one-time reduction. It is not a cause of the continuing fall in water level.

Note: one inch of water in Lake Michigan/Huron contains approximately 800 billion gallons of water.

### Permits

- The DNR has a program to expedite permits with a joint permit program with the Corps of Engineers.
- Any activity below the high-water mark requires a Corps permit.
- Temporary structures such as ski boat lifts, pontoon boat lifts require Corps permits
- There were lots of questions on the subject of oil/natural gas fracking and the amount of water it takes for this process. The DNR person had no comment and the Corps representative said it was minor.

**Actions Beaver Island can take now.**

We must strongly request that elected Federal and State officials from the Great Lakes States push for action with an initial objective of accelerating the amelioration barriers on the St. Clair River. The BIA has sent a letter to the Governors and U.S. Senators of the four impacted states, plus all 15 U.S. Representatives from Michigan urging immediate action (see attached example at the end of the newsletter). BIA members who agree are strongly encouraged to send similar letters of support for this action.

We have also had discussion with St. James township regarding:

1. A funding request to dredge the north-south St. James Harbor channel used by the commercial tugs and barges, including the fuel-oil supply barge, and connecting to the Beaver Island Marina. Apparently the State of Michigan has recently passed legislation to fund dredging. (St. James) should consider filing for a permit for dredging the Municipal Marina (there is no permit fee and if granted, future grant funds may become available).
2. As there have been recent changes in the rules as a result of low water levels, request that the DEQ and Corps of Engineers visit Beaver Island to explain to shoreline owners regulations applying to property owners; such as mowing, grading and removal of rocks.

Robert Tidmore, February 5, 2013

**From Wikipedia:** All outflows from the Great Lakes Basin are regulated by the joint U.S.-Canadian Great Lakes Commission, and the outflow through the Chicago River is set under a U.S. Supreme Court decision (1967, modified 1980 and 1997). The city of Chicago is allowed to remove 3200 cubic feet per second (91 m<sup>3</sup>/s) of water from the Great Lakes system; about half of this, 1 billion US gallons a day (44 m<sup>3</sup>/s), is sent down the Chicago River, while the rest is used for drinking water. In late 2005, the Chicago-based Alliance for the Great Lakes proposed re-separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins to address such ecological concerns as the spread of invasive species.

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**What does the Beaver Island Association do in the winter? – Natural Resources Planning!**

The answer is... busy planning and working on projects that support its mission - *Supporting Environmental and Economic Sustainability*. One example occurred on January 11<sup>th</sup> at the DNR's Gaylord Operations Service Center. Twenty three interested professionals met to discuss a variety of natural resources issues affecting the archipelago. Craig Schrottenboer chaired the meeting which also included a webinar component for those unable to attend in person.

This was the second such meeting bringing together scientists, academic researches, wetland and wildlife biologists, Islanders, representatives from tribal and various state agencies (Office of Great Lakes, Michigan Natural Features Inventory, and the Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Fisheries division). Topics discussed were invasive species management planning, bird and fisheries research, how best to coordinate recent grant and associated activities, and a special presentation by The Nature Conservancy on the archipelago's distinctive features, threats along with strategies for protecting the first and minimizing the latter. Copies of the Little Traverse Band of Odawa's *Native Plant Initiative* booklet were circulated and will be given to

the BIC School, Community Center, and the Island's District Library.

Last year this meeting resulted in 6,000 acre of Beaver Island being surveyed for invasive species, collaboration with the Conservation Resource Alliance for 2013 and 2014 grants, and, because of a grant from the Michigan DNR's Private Lands Incentive Program, BIA's assistance to Peaine and St. James townships with funds for this year's Phragmites treatment.

Bob Anderson commented "*the ongoing benefits of this broad based group meeting is to share activities and programs benefiting the island and discovering how we can best leverage each other's activities. Last year's discussion revolved around The Nature Conservancy's surveying and mapping for our Phragmites treatment and various tribal initiatives; this year identified the potential for the Conservation Resource Alliance to use Nancy Seefeld's bird recordings to help with their amphibian survey.*"

A special thanks to Brian Mastenbrook for the use of the DNR's Gaylord facility. Plans are already underway for 2014 meeting. Stay tuned. Copies of the meeting's minutes can be obtained from any BIA board member or on the BIA webpage.

Pam Grassmick & Craig Schrottenboer

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**Beaver Island Taxes** Total taxes assessed to Beaver Island taxpayers increased by \$56 thousand or 1.1% for the 2012-13 tax year. St. James and Peaine Townships reduced their tax assessments by \$32 thousand (3%), the details of which are shown in the next paragraph. Charlevoix County increased the assessment

by \$24 thousand as a result of an increase in the Senior Citizen mil rate, partially offset by the repayment of the Grandview bond. Education taxes increased by \$61 thousand, half of which will go to the BI Community School as a result of increased assessments of Non-Primary resident properties.

**St. James & Peaine Township Taxes for fiscal year 2012/2013**

<b><u>ALL DOLLARS IN THOUSANDS</u></b>	<b>St. James</b>		<b>Peaine</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>This Yr.</b>	<b>H/(L) Last Yr.</b>	<b>This Yr.</b>	<b>H/(L) Last Yr.</b>	<b>This Yr.</b>	<b>H/(L) Last Yr.</b>
<b>Beaver Island Township Operations</b>	<b>\$561</b>	<b>(\$16)</b>	<b>\$562</b>	<b>(\$16)</b>	<b>\$1,123</b>	<b>(\$32)</b>
<b>Charlevoix County</b>						
County Operations	\$227	\$2	\$337	\$11	\$563	\$13
Transit	\$12	\$0	\$18	\$1	\$30	\$1
Grandview (plus bond service)	\$36	(\$8)	\$54	(\$10)	\$90	(\$18)
Senior Citizen	\$29	\$10	\$43	\$15	\$72	\$25
Recycling	\$7	\$0	\$11	\$0	\$18	\$0
Roads	\$48	\$1	\$72	\$2	\$120	\$3
<b>Sub-total Charlevoix County</b>	<b>\$359</b>	<b>\$5</b>	<b>\$534</b>	<b>\$19</b>	<b>\$893</b>	<b>\$24</b>
<b>Education Taxes</b>						
State Education tax	\$289	\$3	\$430	\$14	\$719	\$17
Debt Retirement	\$96	\$1	\$143	\$5	\$240	\$6
Charlevoix Intermediate School District	\$134	\$1	\$199	\$6	\$333	\$8
Local School (Non-Primary Resident)	\$577	\$7	\$894	\$23	\$1,471	\$30
<b>Sub-total Education</b>	<b>\$1,097</b>	<b>\$13</b>	<b>\$1,666</b>	<b>\$49</b>	<b>\$2,763</b>	<b>\$61</b>
<b>BI District Library</b>	<b>\$43</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$64</b>	<b>\$2</b>	<b>\$108</b>	<b>\$3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,063</b>	<b>\$2</b>	<b>\$2,827</b>	<b>\$54</b>	<b>\$4,889</b>	<b>\$56</b>

<b>Taxable Value (\$millions)</b>	<b>\$48.2</b>	<b>\$0.5</b>	<b>\$71.6</b>	<b>\$2.3</b>	<b>\$119.9</b>	<b>\$2.9</b>
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**Total educational related tax assessments** for Beaver Island were \$2.763 million for this year. Of this amount, approximately \$2.0 million is available to the Beaver Island Community School with roughly \$800 thousand supporting other State of Michigan educational uses. In looking at the BICS budget for last year, it appears that BICS has over the years accumulated a reserve fund of over \$600 thousand from unspent revenues. The Beaver Island Association has recently sent a letter to the BI School Board enquiring whether a significant portion of these excess funds should be used to accelerate

repayment of a portion of the remaining BICS construction/modernization bond, saving significant interest charges and allowing for complete repayment several years early (note: BICS debt service this year amounts to \$240 thousand). A copy of the letter is attached at the end of the newsletter.

Enrollment at the BICS has averaged about 70 students over the last several years, indicating that yearly spending per student is in the range of \$30 thousand.

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**Township Taxes and Budgets.** The Township Budgets for 2012-13 are shown in the table below. Overall taxable values increased by \$2,850,000 to almost \$120 million, and both townships reduced the mil rates by slightly less than one-half mill. In total, the townships have budgeted

\$1,123,000 for local operations. This is a decrease of \$32 thousand, about 3%, from the prior year. The largest reduction of \$18 thousand was for support of the Medical Center.

**St. James & Peaine Township Taxes for fiscal year 2012/2013**

All \$ in Thousands	St. James		Peaine		Total	
	This Yr.	H/(L) Last Yr.	This Yr.	H/(L) Last Yr.	This Yr.	H/(L) Last Yr.
Voted-Separate Mileage Limitation	47	1	57	1	105	3
Voted-Operational**(see note)	148	5	93	(9)	241	(4)
Voted Fire Protection	45	(1)	45	(1)	90	(2)
Voted-Transfer Station	65	(4)	65	(4)	130	(8)
Voted-Medical Center	87	(9)	129	(10)	216	(18)
Voted-Roads	68	(8)	72	8	140	(1)
Voted-EMS**(see note)	48	1	48	1	96	1
Voted-Historical Society**(see note)	12	1	12	1	24	2
Voted-Airport	41	(2)	41	(2)	82	(4)
<b>Total Township Taxes</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>(16)</b>	<b>1,123</b>	<b>(32)</b>

**\*\*note, adjusted: Peaine does not have a separate mileage for EMS or the Historical Society but matches St. James dollars from its Operational milage.**

Peter Igoe

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**Phragmites eradication plans for 2013** Report on 2013 Archipelago Phragmites Planning Meeting Synopsis-March 27, 2013 ( On the phone: Shaun Howard (TNC), Bob Anderson (BIA), Jackie Pilette (LTBB), Craig Schrottenboer (BIA), Brain Mastenbrook (MIDNR), Lisa Welke (Phr. Admn), and Pam Grassmick.

Shaun Howard presented 3 Phragmites survey maps of the North, SE, and SW sections of Beaver Island. The maps indicated 69 populations of non-native Phragmites. The north end had sparse patchy sections. SE corner 1/4-1/2 acre, and the SW corner showing sparse patches along shoreline but larger 1 acre patches in the interior on Greene's Lake bog. Other high value areas showing minimal Phragmites plants present were located at Miller's Marsh and the north end of Greene's Lake.

Discussion followed related to management recommendations recognizing the unique character of the island with the shoreline showing good control and documentation of a few areas on the interior. Dr. Blossey's research into seed production and viability of the seeds needs to be taken into account for future archipelago efforts. Treatment options were presented and recognized the social implications of treating every year or every other. The **recommendation for 2013** was to treat the north shoreline infestations, SW corner, and the larger patches on the SE corner (Cable's Bay area). Interior sites identified as a priority based on their location and size. (Additional details of the meeting may be found on the BIA website)

Pam Grassmick and Lisa Welke

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**Good Outlook on Road Commission Initiatives**

Bob Anderson has been following up with the Charlevoix Road Commission and reports the following: The future looks very promising for three different initiatives involving our island roads.

- The first and most anticipated is repaving the 4.04 miles of The King's Highway from Barney's Lake Road to Tom McCauley's Road. It is not in this year's 2013 schedule, but is planned for 2014. The Road Commission would like to coordinate its timing to share logistic costs with other large paving projects, such as the public airport, but it will be done by itself if necessary. If any Beaver Island Association members have been thinking about a paving project (driveway, parking area, tennis court, etc.), please contact one of the Board members and we will make sure it is included in the list compiled by the townships.
- The second initiative, also timed for 2014, is the securing of a full-time road grader on Beaver Island. The Road Commission intends to pursue assigning the use of the Road Commission's Volvo grader to Beaver Island when

its lease expires in 2014. The grader would normally be turned back for credit for a new replacement machine, so this involves a lease buy-off of approximately \$80-90,000 that will have to be funded within the County, Road Commission, and/or Townships. Full-time availability of a grader will be a major improvement to establish and maintain properly crowned gravel roads.

- The third initiative is actually underway as this article is being written. The much-needed replacement of the County Road Commission garage is close to reality. The County Commissioners approved \$1.5 million to provide a multi-use facility to properly house the three county-level functions of the sheriff's office, transit operation, and road commission vehicle and maintenance facility. Several land parcels are under consideration, so hopefully this project will progress quickly through site selection, design & engineering and construction. The BIA will continue to follow these three initiatives and report on status in future newsletters.

Bob Anderson

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## **Why You Should Care About Invasive Species**

Aldo Leopold, the father of conservation biology, wrote an essay called "Cheat Takes Over" in 1949. In the essay, he describes the effect of an invasive species, cheat grass, on the grasslands of the northwestern United States. This one sentence from the essay is especially poignant: "It blockades newly hatched ducklings from making the vital trek from upland nest to lowland water." What Leopold was trying to do in his essay was to convince people to *care* about the effects of invasive plants on the landscape. Although not all invasive plants are as insidious as cheat grass, there are some found on Beaver Island that have the potential to be as damaging. Some could be poised to change our landscape as dramatically as Aldo Leopold's cheat grass did in Oregon, Washington, and California.

The National Invasive Species Council defines an invasive plant or animal species as one that does not occur naturally in an area (such as Beaver Island) and either has the potential to do or does harm to an area's environment, economy, or human health. We are very lucky on Beaver. Not only do we have fewer invasive plants than are found on the mainland, but, for the most part, we are also in the *potential harm* stage rather than in the *doing harm* stage. If you love the forests, fields, beaches, lakes, dunes, swamps, marshes, and bogs of Beaver Island, you should care about the invasives that can do them harm.

Let's look at two invasive plant species already on Beaver Island and one that could potentially show up on the island, and consider how one affects the environment, how one affects the economy, and how one affects human health. Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*) is an invasive species from Eurasia that was accidentally introduced into the United States in the 1880's in hay or alfalfa seed (many invasive plants sneak into areas in imported hay). It took about 110 years for spotted knapweed to reach Beaver Island, but when it appeared it spread all over the island in roughly 20 years. It particularly likes sandy areas along the shores of Lake Michigan and inland lakes, the edges of roads, and open fields. You might ask, "so what?" Spotted knapweed has very pretty flowers—pink-purple thistle-like flowers that cover the plants and persist throughout the summer months. It looks innocuous enough, and one might argue that it adds beauty and color to the beaches and fields. But underground the plant is waging war on native plants with which it grows, such as the protected Pitcher's thistle and Lake Huron tansy, and one of my favorite beach plants, hairy puccoon. Spotted knapweed roots produce a poison, called a phytotoxin, that kills the roots of any plant growing near it. In some fields on Beaver Island, the spotted knapweed has won the war so decisively that it has wiped out almost all the native vegetation, including milkweeds on which monarch butterflies depend and native grasses eaten by deer and turkey. And it has won the war over a short 20-year time span. You should care about controlling spotted knapweed if you care about the island's unique beaches and abundant wildlife.

Many of us are aware of the ongoing battle with the common reed, *Phragmites australis*, on Beaver Island. Thanks to the tireless efforts of many caring island citizens, the relatively small amount of non-native *Phragmites* still found on the island is under control, although it may never be completely eradicated. An ongoing treatment plan allows us to enjoy views of Lake

Michigan that are unencumbered by *Phragmites* stalks. Can you imagine what a solid wall of 15-foot-tall *Phragmites* stems and seed heads would do to beach-front property values on the island? The plant grows so thick in many areas on the mainland that no other plants are able to grow with it. Just like the ducklings in Leopold's essay, animals cannot move through stands of *Phragmites* because they are so dense. Unfortunately, this plant is now appearing on the shores of our inland lakes, and if it continues to spread unchecked, it may have a profound effect on property values on the inland lakes and negatively impact waterfowl. Studies along the shores of the Great Salt Lake in Utah, where *Phragmites* covers an estimated 20,000 acres, indicate that ducks and geese do not like water areas confined by a wall of 15-foot grass stalks. Utah is losing millions of dollars in hunting revenue each year because of the scarcity of waterfowl on the Great Salt Lake. If you care about property values and revenue generated by waterfowl hunting, you need to be involved in the control of non-native *Phragmites*.

Luckily none of the invasive plant species currently found on Beaver Island has a direct impact on human health. However, there is a wickedly noxious invasive plants species called giant hogweed, with the tongue-twisting scientific name of *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, that has the potential to reach Beaver Island. Giant hogweed was introduced into the United States from Eurasia in the early 1900's as an impressive garden plant. It has huge lobed leaves that can be 5 feet in diameter, and the plant itself can grow to 14 feet. It is herbaceous, which means that it does not have a woody stem, and it looks quite tropical planted in a garden among more typical Michigan plants. But woe to the gardener who decides to cut the giant hogweed down. Let's say that it is a hot, sunny summer day, and you decide that your giant hogweed is hogging too much sunlight in your garden. You're sweaty from your work, and the hogweed is growing out in the sun. You cut it down, getting droplets of hogweed sap on your arms and legs. The next day, the skin on your appendages begins to burn, turn red, and blister. You are the unfortunate victim of hogweed-induced phytophotodermatitis, which means your skin is inflamed (dermatitis) due to the sap of a plant (phyto) reacting with sunlight (photo). Your sweat allowed the sap to dissolve onto your skin and acted to spread the sap around. And you thought poison ivy was bad! Some individuals react to giant hogweed sap by developing painless red, purple, or brown blotches that last for several years. And just because giant hogweed is not on Beaver Island now, doesn't mean that it can't get here. It is already established in 11 counties in Michigan, with Manistee County the closest to Beaver Island. The plant spreads easily by seeds, and a naive property owner could bring it to the island to plant in a yard or garden. It is never a good idea to import plants to Beaver Island unless you know exactly what you are getting and what the potential is for the plant to spread throughout its new habitat.

There are other invasive plants already established on Beaver that have their own stories about how they can negatively alter the environment or economy of the island. We should all care about what these invasives might do. The island attracts year-round residents, summer residents, and visitors because of its *natural* beauty. Invasive plants are not natural and should be as unwelcome as fudge shops. Please educate yourself about invasive plants and report the occurrence of any

plant that suddenly begins to spread across the landscape to the Beaver Island Association's Invasive Species Initiative

([http://www.beaverislandassociation.org/invasives/.](http://www.beaverislandassociation.org/invasives/)) In other words, care enough about Beaver Island to care about invasives. Aldo Leopold would be proud of you.

Beth Leuck

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**Food For Thought** Invasive species are such a nuisance largely because they have no natural predators to keep populations in check. Enter "invasavores", people who hunt and harvest invasive species for food. If you spent your weekend shooting wild hogs or plucking dandelion leaves and are looking for recipes, try [eattheinvadors.org](http://eattheinvadors.org). The site features recipes like blackened snakehead with pina coloda salsa and strawberries, pickled purslane and kudzu blossom sorbet.

There are recipes for other edible invasives, including burdock, periwinkle, bullfrogs, lion fish and green iguanas.

Reprinted from World Ark (Heifer International)

**The BIA is offering a \$25 gift certificate to the Shamrock for the best local invasives recipe. Send it to our website!**

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**Beaver Island Electrical Rate Surcharge Changes** On March 22<sup>nd</sup> Great Lakes Energy considered approval of an increase to the monthly base rate from \$18.28 to \$32.31 (in addition to the Beaver Island Surcharge of \$10.25), an increase of \$14.28/month. **Don Seeley** informed the Islanders of this increase via the Beaver Island Forum and suggested that e-mails be sent opposing the higher fee on top of the Island Surcharge. The Island homeowners answered the call with a flood of e-mails. Don attended the meeting and spoke of the inequity of the Beaver Island Surcharge and how that fee was directly affecting the island

economy. The GLE board agreed to drop the \$10.25 surcharge for Beaver Island effective September 1, 2013. The new base rate will be \$ 32.21/month, compared to \$28.53 (including the BI surcharge) vs. the proposed \$ 42.56! Thanks go to Don Seeley for his leadership, and thanks to Island residents for their letters of opposition to the rate increase.

Offsetting the base rate increase will be a reduction in the usage rate of approximately 15%, most beneficial to customers who use higher levels of electricity.

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**Career Day at BICS** The Beaver Island Community School 2nd annual Career Day will occur on Tuesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>. The 2012 Career Day presented an overview of careers within the six career paths defined by the Michigan Department of Education. The 2013 Career Day will go into more detail in two career paths: "Arts & Communication" and "Business, Management, Marketing, & Technology." The day is filled with opportunities for

students and their parents. In the morning, a panel of BICS graduates will share their experiences in a range of post-secondary school settings. During the Career Day events, from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m., college representatives will be available for students and parents. A representative from the Charlevoix Emmett Intermediate School District will present to parents about financial aid, scholarships, and college applications.

Taffy Raphael

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**Beach Clean-up Program - 2013** Beaver Island's beaches are its most treasured natural resource. Please help keep the beaches clean and have fun at the same time by joining the BIA sponsored Beach Cleanup for 2013. The date is **Saturday, September 7**. Meet at the Community Center at 9am to get your bags, gloves,

data sheets and a beach assignment. Then, after you have cleaned your stretch of beach, return to the Community Center at noon for a free hotdog lunch. Please mark your calendars and plan on participating in this year's Beach Cleanup -- and ask your friends and neighbors to join you too.

Ken McDonald

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**The Beaver Island "App"** Eric Hodgson, the Board Chair of The Preservation Association of Beaver Island (PABI) announced the development of a **Beaver Island** App for Apple and Android mobile products such as the iPhone, iPad and Nexus. Over the years the Community Center has become the "go to" place for island visitors and guests with questions about the island. "Where can I take children fishing; what should campers do with trash; how far it is to...; what are the island ORV rules; etc.?" While information about Beaver Island is available on line, it is scattered across numerous web sites most of which are not compatible with mobile devices that now constitute over 60% of web accesses. PABI decided to equip folks' mobile devices with easy and complete access to information about the Island to make their visits simpler, convenient, and relaxing.

The App contains material and maps about things to do, such as hiking, fishing, camping, boating, and swimming, as well as the environment and information on the Community Center and its scheduled activities. Plans are to include more information on boating, birding, cycling, kayaking, scuba diving, shipwreck viewing, geocaching, lighthouse visiting, the outer islands, and the environment. There will be a section on services such as public transportation, church schedules, and history.

It is available on the Google Play Store and has been submitted to the Apple App Store for approval. Search for *Beaver Island* to find the App. The goal is to make it a mobile one-stop resource for all Island information.

Bob Tidmore

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**Emerald Ash Borer Monitoring** - The Purple Triangles Are Returning in 2013. During the winter, BIA has been pursuing assistance from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and the USDA for Emerald Ash Borer detection. Beaver Island is fortunate and unique to have had no Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) detected in the traps that were placed in 2011. As you drive through Charlevoix County traveling to Beaver Island, the visual devastation to the ash trees by this one insect is readily apparent. The federal funding has been severely cut for monitoring in the Midwest and monitoring was not

conducted on Beaver Island in 2012. EAB signage and information is in place at all points of entry in an effort to prevent the introduction through firewood transportation. Very few traps are available and only to the Upper Peninsula; however, 16 traps have been awarded to the Island by Dr. James Buck. Entomology and trapping assistance will be provided through the MDA. BIA will be doing further announcements on how you can assist in the EAB trapping season and the results from these efforts.

Pam Grassmick

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**Beaver Island Association Annual Meeting (Monday, July 22, 2013, 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Beaver Island Community Center)**

- Election of Directors for the next year
- Financial Report (Bob Anderson)
- Review of the newly designed Beaver Island Community School Report Card (Kitty McNamara)
- Introduction of the new BICS Superintendent and Principal, Mr. Riley Justice by Jessica Anderson, President of the School Board.
- Presentation of a summary of the Beaver Island Natural Resources Plan by Pete Plastrik
- Solicitation of ideas from the BIA membership for future BIA initiatives.
- Refreshments in the lobby afterwards

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*Beaver Island Association- Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability*

**If you do not see your name as an active member in the list below, please consider joining 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 us by sending a check for \$20 to Bob Anderson, Treasurer, The Beaver Island Association, PO Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782.**

Yes, please renew our Beaver island Association for the **2013-2014** membership year (it's that time again!).

Name(s)	Mailing Address	email address

**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.

## THE BEAVER ISLAND ASSOCIATION 2012-2013 ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Keith Albin	Auleen Duffy	Peter Igoe	Greg Lucchesi	Maichael Penkevich	Matt Steward
Christy Albin	Gerald Duffy	Ruth Igoe	Linda Lucchesi	Laurie Penkevich	Suzi Steward
Bruce Allen	Don Falik	Jonathan Igoe	James Luteyn	Pete Peterson	James R. Stout Sr.
Bob Anderson	Harris Fawell	Kathleen Igoe	Dan Lynch	Sheila Peterson	Kenneth Jay Taylor
Alana Anderson	Ruth Fawell	Bruce Jacobson	Rosemary Lynch	Jodi Plumert	Don Taylor
Nathan Ayers	John Fiore	Lenore Jacobson	Marty Maehr	Taffy Raphael	Diana Taylor
Elwood Baker	Barbara Fiore	Jim Jones	Jane Maehr	Marilyn Reed	Tom Thieme
Phyliss Baker	Floss Frank	Judith Jones	John Martin	Joe Reed	Nita Thieme
Tim Barrett	Jack Gallagher	Michael Kamrin	Kelly Martin	Keith Reed	Bob Tidmore
Joyce Bartels	Jim Gavelek	Katie See Kamrin	Art McCaskey	Janice Reed	Craig Turnbull
Jack Bauman	John Garrish	Cheryl Kane	Debie McCaskey	Helengrace Ries	Karen Turnbull
Cathy Bauman	Sandra Garish	Martin Kane	Ken McDonald	Richard Ries	Kathy Tidmore
Raymond C Becker	Jan Gerson	Jack Kelly	Deb McDonald	Kris Ries	Alan Vicstein
Narin Bhatia	Paul Gilson	Ruth Kelly	Larry McDonough	Molly Resnick	Bev Vicstein
Nishta Bhatia	Janet Gilson	Donna Kieselbach	Kay McDonough	Randy Roberts	Robert Warski
Vince Bielman	Paul Glendon	Bill Kohne	Charles Morris	Carol Roberts	Laurel Warski
Audry Bielman	Ann Glendon	Marta Kohne	Sandra Morris	Pat Rowley	John Wayne
Jim Birdsall	Timothy Gonyeau	Jacque LaFreniere	Rod Nackerman	John Rowley	Barbara Wayne
Sandy Birdsall	Mrs. Timothy Gonyeau	Mark LaFreniere	Michael Nackerman	Craig Schrotenboer	Frances Weeks
Eric Blalock	Jeanne Graham	Judy Lanier	Eric Naranjo	Sherry Schrotenboer	Andrew Welch
Kathryn Blaylock	Ralph Graham	Lars Larson	Ingrid Nedwick	Beth Scully	Mary Courier Welch
Glen Borre	Brad Grassmick	Doris Larson	Robert Neff	Bob Simpson	Lisa Welke
Betsy Borre	Pam Grassmick	Greg Larson	Julie Neff	Sandy Simpson	Don Welke
Evelyn Bovee	Emory Griffin	Beth Larson	Harriet Nelson	Nancy Smith	Ed Welter
Frederick J. Boyles	Marjorie Hammond	James Latta	Paul Neumann	John Starr	Willy Welter
Barbara Boyles	Nackerman Harborfront LLC	Caroline Latta	Florence Neuman	Leigh Starr	Ronald Wierenga
Jane E. Boyles-Visel	Jim Haveman	Ed Leuck	Paul Niehaus	Evan Steger	Elisabeth Wierenga
Betty Cady	Sarah Haveman	Beth Leuck	Liz Niehaus	Suzy Steger	Verle Wiita
Marg Charbeneau	Henry Hill	Little Traverse Conservancy	Scott Osborne	William Steger	Trish Wiita
Frank D'Andraia	David Howell	David Lucas	Margaret Osborne	Hans Stein	Annalda Worsfold
Dana D'Andraia	Sandy Howell	Barbara Lucas	Ann Partridge	Davi Stein	
Annette Dashiell	Gary Huard	Claude A. Lucchesi	Fred Payne	Steven Steinglass	
Charlie Donaldson	Carol Huard	Ruth Lucchesi	Theresa Payne	Dianne Steinglass	

**TOTAL ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP: 195**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Bob Anderson, Treasurer -juniperdunes@aol.com Pam Grassmick mcgrass@ameritech.net Peter Igoe, President randpigoe@comcast.net Jim Jones jimijones@aol.com Beth Leuck bleuck@centenary.edu
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Ken McDonald, VP., kimcdonald@comcast.net Taffy Raphael, Secretary teraphael@gmail.com Craig Schrotenboer cschrotenboer@kidshopeusa.org Bob Tidmore B Tidmore@hotmail.com Lisa Welke, Welke61@gmail.com
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**Write:** The Beaver Island Association, P.O. Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782.

**Email:** [beaverislandassociation@gmail.com](mailto:beaverislandassociation@gmail.com)



# *The Beaver Island Association*

*Supporting Environmental and  
Economic Sustainability*

beaverislandassociation@gmail.com  
P.O. Box 390, Beaver Island, Michigan 49782

The Honorable Rick Snyder  
Governor, State of Michigan  
PO Box 30013  
Lansing, MI 48909

February 22, 2013

Subject: Crisis - Great lakes Water Levels

Dear: Senator Levin

The declining water levels of Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Georgian Bay are inflicting disastrous consequences on the population and economies of the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin and the Canadian province of Ontario. According to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, lake levels are at an all-time low, and they are going to drop further.

Taken together, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and Georgian Bay represent the largest recreational asset in the Midwest, and perhaps in America. While there is no figure on the dollar amount that Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Georgian Bay tourism brings to the U.S. and Canadian federal governments and to the four states – Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan – that surround the lakes, it is difficult to overestimate the economic importance of the lakes to the region and the nations.

It's impossible to describe the aggregate impact of this building environmental and economic disaster on the 15 million people who live in the cities and communities along the 5,467 miles of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron shoreline. Historically low water and the resulting unprecedented penetration of sunlight have led to a proliferation of invasive weeds. The combination is choking bays and channels and threatening all water-related recreation. Shoreline residents can no longer reach their docks; cruising boats must bypass unreachable marinas; and vast areas of bays and channels can no longer be navigated for any purpose.

If current conditions persist and trends continue, an inexorable logic of economic collapse will accelerate: Property values will plummet; tax bases will evaporate; jobs will disappear; and high percentages of local residents and summer residents alike will leave the area.

The 1962 dredging deepened the channel flowing out of Lake Huron and into the St. Clair River to 27 feet. **Unfortunately, however, it also set off a disastrous process that has essentially pulled the plug on Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. The dredging disturbed the bottom so much that the passage has eroded beyond anyone's expectations.** It is now up to 70 feet deep, and estimates indicate that an extra 10 billion gallons of fresh water leak from Lake Huron every day. Reliable studies have concluded that the dredging and subsequent scouring of the channel bed have permanently lowered the lake levels by twenty (20) inches!

The Corps of Engineers recognized the inherent dangers of its dredging and in the early 1960s designed a series of sills (compensating structures) that could reduce the flow of water from the lakes. Those compensating sills were part of a bi-national agreement and a condition of the 1962 dredging; and that agreement has not been withdrawn – only the funding for the sills.

The citizens of the Great Lakes states and Ontario cannot wait years for the Corps of Engineers to take action. The compensating sill structures need to be installed now! I urge you to make direct contact with Commanding General Thomas Bostick (**Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 441 G Street NW Washington, DC 20314-1000; telephone (202) 767-5241**) to demand action.

Your help is urgently needed!

Sincerely,

Peter Igoe, President

# The Beaver Island Association

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beaverislandassociation@gmail.com  
P.O. Box 390, Beaver Island, Michigan 49782

Mrs. Jessica Anderson  
President, the Beaver Island School Board  
25680 Lake  
Beaver Island, MI 49782

February 24, 2013

Dear Mrs. Anderson:

Summarized below is information reported on the Munetrix website that reports various data on school performance and budgets across the country.

(<http://www.munetrix.com/Michigan/Schools/NLPR/Charlevoix-Emmet-ISD/District/Beaver-Island-Community-School>)

What the data purports to show is that BICS revenues have substantially exceeded expenditures for the last six years and that the accumulated surplus is now over \$600,000.

	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Fund Balance</u>
2012	68	\$2,016,624	\$1,940,927	\$638,723
2011	67	\$2,034,543	\$2,000,766	\$563,025
2010	71	\$2,033,516	\$1,861,216	\$529,243
2009	71	\$2,024,792	\$2,004,824	\$356,945
2008	70	\$1,682,518	\$1,522,119	\$336,979
2007	73	\$1,644,586	\$1,587,568	\$176,581
2006	79	\$1,492,888	\$1,539,237	\$119,567

I believe it is also the case, that because taxable values have increased, BICS can expect an additional \$30,000 in tax revenue from local residents this year.

With enrollment likely to be stable, if not declining, the Beaver Island Association is requesting that the BICS School Board target a substantial portion of the Fund Balance to make a prepayment on the outstanding construction loan, saving interest and allowing for early repayment of the loan (and with it, elimination of the 2 mil debt service tax imposed on all island taxpayers).

As an alternative, and only if the terms of the loan do not allow prepayment, then I suggest that the School Board consider lowering the Non-Primary-Resident mil rate by 2 mils, from 15.9 to 14.0, reducing island taxes by about \$180,000 annually. As you are aware, these are very difficult economic times and the very high tax-rate is a major impediment to the island's economic health and recovery.

Our board had hoped to have an informal meeting with you to review the contents of this letter before sending it. However, I have been told that an informal meeting is not legally allowable. Bob Tidmore will review an advance copy of this letter with Barb Schwartzfisher of School Board Finance Committee so that she can share our thinking with you.

We will publish this request in our April 15<sup>th</sup> newsletter to our membership, but only after you and the School Board have had a chance to consider it and to respond to this suggestion. We will also include your response in the newsletter.

Your prompt consideration of this request would be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Peter Igoe, President

**Beaver Island Community School**  
**37895 King's Highway**  
**Beaver Island MI 49782**  
**231.448.2744 phone 231.448.2919 fax**  
**Info@beaverisland.k12.mi.us**



March 18, 2013

Mr. Peter Igoe, President BIA

Dear Peter and BIA Board Members:

This letter is in response to your inquiry regarding our school district's current fund balance which demonstrates the district is in sound financial standing.

Over the past several years the district's finance committee and board have made prudent fiscal decisions that protect the assets of the school and seek to maintain future operation of an essential K-12 district. The board built the fund balance based on three year projections that reflect known increases in fixed costs and state and federal obligations and changes in school administration. Projections for the next few years show the need to use a significant portion of the saved fund balance, bringing it more in line with the board's target fund balance of 15% - 20%.

The board annually reviews student numbers and student needs relative to staffing and have made reductions in staff when necessary. Changes in expenditures are not all directly related to changes in student population, for example, receipt of a federal 21cclc grant added over \$100,000.00 to the budget for after-school programming.

The board's long-term target fund balance is in the range of 15% - 20% to minimize the need to borrow in anticipation of taxes, to provide for unexpected expenses that may arise, and to allow for continuity of operations in years when revenue is more limited.

State law does not permit the board to use local operational tax dollars to pay down the construction bond debt. Lowering the 15.7908 mills on non-homestead property tax is not illegal, but has some significant consequences for the district. If the district does not levy the full amount of the non-homestead tax, it would not receive the necessary 'Isolated School Districts' funding which amounts to over \$100,000.00 annually. In almost every other Michigan school district the non-homestead millage rate is 18, so we are already levying approximately 2 mills less than other districts.

We respect the right of the Beaver Island Association to give voice to their concerns and hopes and expectations for the school system, now and in the future. We invite Beaver Island Association board members and general membership to attend school board meetings and stay abreast of the ongoing school funding issues. The school board meets at 7:30pm on the second Monday of the month. The school office is open year round and any concerned citizen is welcome to call or stop in.

Sincerely,

Jessica Anderson, Karen Johnson, Kathleen McNamara

**Board of Education Members**

Jessica Anderson, President; Dawn Marsh, Vice President; Karen Johnson, Treasurer;  
Dana Hodgson, Secretary; Trustees: Barbara Schwartzfisher, Nancy Tritsch, Brian Cole

**Superintendent/Principal**

Kathleen McNamara

kittym@beaverisland.k12.mi.us

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