

# ISLAND CURRENTS

*Beaver Island Association Newsletter - Fall-Winter 2014*

*Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability*

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**Beaver Island Birding Trail is a Huge Success.** (Beth Leuck, Pam Grassmick). The Beaver Island Birding Trail's dedication on May 23-24 of this year ushered in a flurry of bird-related activities on the island and outstanding press coverage. The BIBT web site has received almost 302,000 "hits" since its inception in February 2014 with the majority of those coming during the months of May and August. A grant from the Charlevoix County Community Foundation provided funds to publish 6000 rack cards, 2000 birding checklists (checklists allow birders to know what birds might be found in an area), and 4000 island maps with 35 hot spots for viewing birds shown and described on the map. These birding aids, distributed through the Beaver Island Community Center, proved very popular with both residents and visitors, so much so that more are being printed to keep the BICC supplied to meet the demand. Several adjustments have been made to the rack cards, checklist, and map before the second printing in hopes that the new editions will last well into the future. We hope you visit the updated website and check out the photos of the dedication on: [beaverislandbirdingtrail.org](http://beaverislandbirdingtrail.org)

The BIBT was used in July by a group of visually impaired teenagers from various states who came to the island courtesy of Running Blind Adventure Camps. The teens were introduced to bird songs and taught about bird habitats as part of their four-day stay on the island. Kay Charters and Jacque LaFreniere assisted with event. It gave us ideas about how we may be able to adapt some of the information for those who have visual impairments.

Due to the popularity of the field trips during the May dedication, another field trip was planned for September by a couple of field guides. Birders visited the island while traveling on the ferry, observing birds as they cross Lake Michigan. Because these birds are found on open water, this field trip was described as the Beaver Island Pelagic Birding Tour (pelagic means "open water"). The tour was offered to 37 participants, and it filled by August 25.

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**Phragmites Control Update** (Cindy Ricksgers). This year, three of the outer islands in our archipelago were slated for herbicidal treatment of invasive Phragmites: Garden, High and Whiskey. Weather had prevented treatment of some sections of Garden and High Island in 2013, so they were a priority this year.

A \$5 thousand contribution from the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa brought our objectives within reach. It was also suggested that the LTBB could provide transportation from Beaver Island to the outer islands. The Wild Life Division of the Michigan DNR also

Despite the challenges with rainy weather and high seas, the group left in high spirits and would like to attend a 2 day field trip next year. The Beaver Island Association provided the funding for transit buses to shuttle birders and guides back and forth from town to Gull Harbor prior to the boat departure. Several business and organizations assisted by extending their hours and services for the birders visit. In addition, BIBT representatives will attend the Midwest Birding Symposium at Tawas Point in spring 2015 to promote the BIBT and Beaver Island. Meetings are taking place this fall and winter at a regional level with the State of Michigan and NW interested parties all poised to promote birding events around the state this spring. Beaver Island will serve as the anchor with other NW Michigan birding trails providing the chain. Coordination of events and birding activities is anticipated to bring more focus on this area of the state as a quality birding site.

More birding activities will occur on the island in 2015. "Warblers on the Water," a series of field trips and talks by experts, is being planned for May 2015-Memorial Weekend. Check the Event tab on the BIBT home page after January for updates and more information.

The popularity of the BIBT and the events surrounding it and the enthusiastic support of the birding trail's corporate and conservation partners (see the Partners link on the BIBT home page) has been an unexpected pleasure. Residents and visitors alike are gaining a heightened awareness of the high quality birding available on Beaver Island, and this interest should translate into more island visitors in the future. Donations are greatly appreciated to continue bringing high quality birding guides and programs to the island. They can be directed to the Beaver Island Association-BIBT donations.

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generously contributed funds this year.

The bid was awarded to Pam's Invasive Plant Management LLC. Their team: Pam Hilton, Marc Seeley and Christine Miller, each hold State of Michigan certification for herbicide application. They handled the herbicidal treatment on Beaver Island and the outer islands in 2013, and had proven to be very knowledgeable, hard-working, and respectful of the land. A DEQ permit was obtained for Garden, High and Whiskey Islands.

Because we were not sure of the capacity of the boat, and because rising lake levels made the terrain difficult to traverse, it was decided that volunteer assistance would be minimal this year.

The DEQ permit was late in arriving, and the boat from the Little Traverse Bay Band did not arrive until September 16th. The rainy month of August had slowed the growing season, so - though later than what is considered optimal - the targeted plants were still in a stage of growth where treatment was possible. As long as the weather held, we were in business!

On the week of planned treatment, winds came up over Lake Michigan, making it impossible for the Little Traverse Bay Band to send their boat. The forecast looked dire for most of the week. They were nervous about transporting us to the outer islands if the winds and waves came as predicted, and they were fairly sure that even if they got here, they wouldn't make it back...and they needed to be back on the Leelanau peninsula on Friday.

Our contractors were here, and ready to go to work. We procured alternate transportation to the outer islands, and proceeded with the planned treatment.

The plan was to walk the perimeter of Garden, High and Whiskey Islands to treat invasive Phragmites along the entire shoreline, and inland on High Island to Lake Marie, paying particular attention to areas that were not treated last year, noting new growth and re-growth in treated areas. GPS units would be used to document the coordinates of Phragmites.

Saturday, September 13th was calm and partly cloudy with temperatures in the 40s. The three contractors and three helpers (Pam Grassmick, Dave Blanchard and Cindy Ricksgers) met at the dock at 8AM and were transported by Jeff Powers to Garden Island. We rowed in to Northcutt Bay, split into two groups of three and set off in opposite directions, with plans to meet back at that location by 4:30, for transportation back to Beaver Island. The going was rough due to high water levels. We were often walking in the water. Several small stands of Phragmites were treated. Locations were documented, as were starting and stopping points. We were unable to make it all the way around the island in the allotted time, but covered quite a bit of the perimeter, and left hoping for another good day to get back here to finish. We left Beaver Island shortly after 8AM, returned after 6PM.

Although Dr. Powers was willing to transport the crew on Sunday the 14th, high winds prevented going out that day.

Monday was fair, with west winds that made the ride to High Island a little rough; temperatures were in the fifties. Again, the three contractors were accompanied by three helpers, Pam Grassmick, Cindy Ricksgers and Stan Eagle. We split into three groups of two. One group headed inland to Lake Marie; the others split up to walk the perimeter. Here, Phragmites was evident in all stages. There were obvious stands of dead plants that had been sheared off by the ice. Other stands showed the bare beginnings of new growth. There were stands of dead plants that were flanked by plants of substantial size, and a couple areas that looked like new stands. There were many with large seed heads. One stand was forty feet deep and covered 160' of shoreline. Another was thirty feet wide but started out in the water and extended inland almost two hundred feet! One team was unable to cover the area planned as the "muck" - knee-deep in some areas - made it unreachable. One group treated such extensive areas in the first part of their route that they could only take coordinates for the rest, while rushing to be at the meeting place on time. Any untreated stands were well documented. We had left Beaver Island at 8:30AM that day, and returned about 6PM.

High Winds and lack of transportation conspired to keep work from being done on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Thursday, September 18th, was cool, with winds from the northeast. It was 45 degrees in the morning, with a dense cloud cover for most of the day. On this day, Cindy Ricksgers joined the contractors, in hopes that being able to split into two teams would allow more ground to be covered. The forecast for Friday did not look good. We left Beaver Island at 8:30AM, and went to Whiskey Island. We split into two groups and set off in opposite directions to walk to perimeter. Because the shoreline is steep and gravelly, with sand cherries growing right along the shore, the only way to walk it was in knee-deep, cold water. It was necessary to zigzag, from the water up the high bank to the dune behind the shrubs, to assure that Phragmites were not growing there. The teams met, having circled the small island, each having encountered and treated a couple small stands of invasive Phragmites. The boat was waiting, and we headed for High Island.

On High Island, we started where we had been picked up on Monday. Two of us retraced our steps in the opposite direction, treating the stands that had not been treated the first of the week. The other two headed inland, to pick up the areas that had been missed. We managed to get to every area, and were back on the boat by shortly after 2PM. With hope that time and the weather were on our side, we headed for Garden Island.

On Garden Island, we started at Indian Harbor, where one team had stopped on Saturday. We checked the map at the DNR cabin, then - all four of us together - walked the shoreline toward the stopping point of the other team. We expected - and found - two small stands of invasive Phragmites that had been noted on the survey maps. We also found one large stand we didn't expect. Right in the center of a very large (perhaps an acre or more) stand of cattails, the dark seed heads of invasive Phragmites were towering over the surrounding growth, and swaying in the wind. These were mature plants, many twenty feet tall, possibly not visible in previous years because of the cattails. Marc and Christine marched in to treat the stand, which they estimated to be about 50' by 50'. Pam Hilton and Cindy - each barely 5' tall - waited on the sidelines. We were apprised of their location by the sounds of water splashing and the occasional cuss word. They were in water to their waists. Marc stepped in a hole, bringing the water to his chest. When they finally came out of there, Christine stopped to dump a minnow out of her boot. It was a great finale! We returned that day to Beaver Island harbor just after 6PM, having completed all of the intended treatment on the outer islands for 2014.

While we were concentrating on the outer islands, the Wildlife and Wetlands contractors arrived on Beaver Island for treatment of Phragmites and several other invasives. Two inland areas were targeted for Phragmites treatment, as well as the entire shoreline. The crew was young, enthusiastic and very impressed with Beaver Island.

There were a couple glitches. First, a bit of confusion and lack of paperwork prohibited the treatment of any invasive species except Phragmites on state land. Second, the Charlevoix Road Commission refused permission to treat the road shoulders. Thirty-three feet from the center of the road in either direction is under their control. This is a prime area for many invasive species that like gravelly waste land and disturbed soil, so it was a big disappointment to have to leave it untreated. Both of these problems were caused mainly from miscommunication or lack of understanding, and we are already in the process of working them out.

Great Lakes Energy gave permission for treatment, and the

landscape around the generating plant will be showing much improvement as a result. We were able to gain permission for treating a large stand of Phragmites that was growing in a gravel pit at the south end of Beaver Island. A burgeoning stand of Reed Canary Grass in the middle of Miller's Marsh was successfully treated. The team borrowed a canoe in order to treat Egg Lake. Jerusalem Artichoke was treated in several locations.

We were able to gain permission to treat a large stand of invasive Phragmites that was growing in a gravel pit at the south end of Beaver Island, and another that was inland, in the Port of St. James subdivision. The Beaver Island shoreline was treated, of course.

Weather played a crucial role in our treatment this year, especially

**Beach Cleanup 2014.** (Ken McDonald). While there were fewer participants in this year's Beach Cleanup--sponsored by the Beaver Island Association--the weather was perfect. Twenty four volunteers cleaned about 17 miles of Beaver Island beaches. The most unique items found were a coast guard life ring and locator beacon, a weird plastic adjustable step and a bright red golf ball.

Long term participants have noticed a definite decrease in the amount of trash on the Island's beaches. Also it appears that at

**Hog Island Phragmites Survey Summary** (July 30, 2014-August 7, 2014). (Pam Grassmick) Hog Island's coastal wetlands are important to migratory birds; in addition, the island provides essential breeding areas for waterfowl, other shore birds, and serves as an important fish spawning and nursery area.

In order to obtain funding for future treatment, a shoreline survey of Hog Island was undertaken to identify the extent of invasive Phragmites infestation. The survey was conducted by volunteers from the Beaver Island Association, Dr. Ed Leuck, Dr. Beth Leuck, and Pam Grassmick with transportation assistance from the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and private watercraft. Travel time to and from the island was one hour each way. The entire 14-mile Hog Island shoreline was traversed by foot over a 3 day period. Shoreline areas were inundated because water levels were at their highest early August levels since 1998 (15 inches above 2013 levels). Data to pinpoint future control locations were collected using a Trimble Juno 3B handheld GPS unit, and waypoints and notes were additionally recorded by hand on a data sheet. Scattered patches of non-native Phragmites were documented along with native Phragmites. Several areas were clearly visible as old treatment sites. No seed heads were noted on non-native Phragmites but runners were present. Native Phragmites had seed heads. Specimens believed to be native Phragmites with long runners were collected and sent to Dr. Berdt

**Michigan Endangered Species Act – Anniversary!** (Pam Grassmick) The Department of Natural Resources will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of Michigan's endangered species act on December 9, 2014 at the MSU Kellogg Center in East Lansing, MI. The featured speakers for the event are Dr. Carol Bocetti and Sylvia Taylor. As the current Kirtland's warbler Recovery Team leader, Dr. Bocetti will share her unique understanding on why Michigan's Kirtland's warbler program has been successful over the past 40 years. Additionally, Sylvia has

with transportation. We were lucky that a wet August kept the Phragmites viable for treatment, and that a killing frost did not derail all of our plans. In the future, we will plan to have contractors and permits in place much sooner, so that we have more leeway where weather is concerned. Lake levels also made treatment difficult in many areas, and will have to be a consideration in the future, if the levels continue to rise. There were areas where it would have been easier to access the Phragmites growth from a flat-bottomed boat than from the shore. High Island surprised all of us, with the size and density of Phragmites stands, and we'll have to monitor it closely. On Beaver Island, we intend to clear up any confusion, so that we can take full advantage of the grant funding.

All in all, a very successful treatment this year.

least a third of the items found were washed or were tossed off of boats.

Everyone returned to the Community Center around noon to enjoy a Nathan's hot dog lunch. The Beaver Island Association would like to thank all the volunteers for their time, the Community Center for the space, Carol Creasser for donating the hot dogs and McDonough's Market for donating the buns.

Blossey at Cornell University for correct identification. The most challenging elements of the survey were inaccessible landing sites due to rocky near-shore areas, the need for mosquito repellent clothing and chemicals, and traversing 10-20 acres of dense narrow-leaf cattails along the southeast shoreline.

In addition to documentation of non-native Phragmites, two purple loosestrife plants were noted and removed. A single 8 ft. scattered area of spotted knapweed was observed. The most prevalent invasive species along the Hog Island shoreline were narrow-leaf cattail and reed canary grass. One large mature Scots Pine was observed, as well as a few European swamp thistle and bull thistle.

Hog Island was treated in 2010 for invasive Phragmites at the cost of \$28,000. The estimated cost to control Phragmites in 2014-2015 is \$10,000, including \$1000/day for boat charter, commercial survey crew and equipment. Having the survey data will be key to obtaining necessary funding to complete the eradication. Great thanks are owed to Pam, Beth and Ed for their extraordinary efforts, and to the Odawa for providing the boat!

graciously accepted to regale participants with a few stories about the history of Michigan's endangered species programs. There will be a \$100 registration fee and a silent auction to generate funds for the Nongame Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund. Beaver Island businesses have contributed to a 2 day island adventure which will be offered during a silent auction. Those business' participating included Dalwhinnie, Island Airways, the Beaver Lodge, and the Beaver Island Boat Company.

**Beaver Island Taxes.** (Peter Igoe) The chart below describes the changes in the Taxable Values of Beaver Island properties over the last year and over the last 5 years. In 2014 the State Equalized Value [SEV] (equal to 50% of the appraised market value) on Beaver Island declined 6% from 2013, compared to the 14% drop the prior year. From 2009, the decline was 26%. Because there has been some new construction to add to the tax rolls, the decline in the appraised value of individual properties was somewhat greater than the above figures.

However, the 5 year decline in Taxable Values (and therefore property taxes) has been only 4%. This is because Taxable Value increases in years prior to 2009 were capped at a maximum equal to the increase in the CPI or 5%, whichever was less. Taxable Values may never exceed SEV, so only in the case where the SEV declines below the Taxable Value, will taxable assessments decline.

<u>State Equalized Values (\$millions)</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>.....</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2014 versus</u>	
						<u>2009</u>	<u>2013</u>
Peaine Township	125		111	94	87	(29%)	(7%)
St. James Township	76		71	63	60	(21%)	(5%)
Sub-total Beaver Island	198		182	157	147	(26%)	(6%)
All Other Townships	2869		2330	2169	2180	(24%)	1%
Total Charlevoix County	3067		2513	2326	2327	(24%)	0%

<u>Taxable Values (\$millions)</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>.....</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2009</u>	
						<u>2009</u>	<u>2013</u>
Peaine Township	72		72	69	68	(5%)	(2%)
St. James Township	47		48	47	46	(3%)	(2%)
Sub-total Beaver Island	119		120	116	114	(4%)	(2%)
All Other Townships	2023		1899	1855	1870	(8%)	1%
Total Charlevoix County	2142		2019	1971	1984	(7%)	1%

Source: Charlevoix County Equalization Dept.

**Response to BIA Question regarding funding reserves.**

Last Spring The BIA wrote the township supervisors on behalf of our membership asking to understand the logic of large unspent tax balances (see BIA Spring 2014 Newsletter); and more importantly, asking that any spending of these accrued funds be for necessary and high priority purposes. Below is Bill Kohl's response for Peaine Township. St. James chose not to respond.

**WILLIAM KOHLS**  
**PEAINE TOWNSHIP - P.O. Box 26**  
**BEAVER ISLAND MI 49782**

June 12, 2014

Peter Igoe, Beaver Island Association  
P.O. Box 390  
Beaver Island MI 49782

Thank you for the opportunity to address the membership of the Beaver Island Association. I have been supervisor of Peaine Township for a relatively short period, but I can attest that the township is run efficiently and that the board is responsive to concerns of its voters, taxpayers and other constituents. As your membership is probably aware, property taxes comprise the largest source of revenue and the majority of these taxes are collected in January, February and March of each year. As a result, each of the fund balances are at their highest point as

April 1<sup>st</sup> and each fund experiences substantial operating deficits during the nine-month period from May through December.

The board further believes that it is important that each fund maintain a prudent reserve which may be used for contingencies. A recent example is the road fund. In conjunction with paving Kings Highway, the township had an opportunity to purchase road gravel at \$9.25 per ton, which is substantially less than the amount we have paid in recent years. Accordingly, the township board has agreed to buy a three and one-half year supply (10,000 tons) of gravel. These savings would not be possible if the road fund had not accumulated additional funds.

Compared to many of the services provided by the townships, the waste transfer station is a capital intensive operation. Some of the equipment, most notably the fork trucks and the roll-off truck, is no longer serviceable. The waste management committee recently voted to purchase a new fork truck for \$40,000 and is looking for a serviceable, used roll-off truck which could cost \$70,000 or more. The committee is further evaluating the repair and maintenance needs and intends to establish a three- to five-year plan for capital expenditures.

The oversight provided by the Beaver Island Association as well as the township's other constituents is an important element of governance. The Peaine Township board will look forward to future inquiries from the BIA and its members.

Sincerely, William R. Kohls, Supervisor

**BICS Budget** (Peter Igoe). Summarized below is the budget for the 2014/2015 school year. The budget anticipates substantial decreases in local property tax and Federal funding. Overall expenditures are budgeted to increase by \$19 thousand (1%). With revenues down and expenses

up, the fund balance is projected to decline by \$77 thousand, to \$662 thousand. Enrollment is projected to decline from 69 to 62.

**Beaver Island Community School 2014/2015 Budget**

	(\$ thousands)		
	2013/2014 Actual	2014/2015 Budget	Budget H/(L) than Actual
<b>Revenues</b>			
Local Property Taxes	1501	1454	(47)
State Sources	251	252	1
Federal Sources	172	75	(97)
Charlevoix Intermediate School District	<u>161</u>	<u>214</u>	<u>53</u>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b><u>2085</u></b>	<b><u>1995</u></b>	<b><u>(90)</u></b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Instruction - Basic Programs	962	929	(33)
School Administration	316	333	17
Operations & Maintenance	245	225	(20)
Instruction - Added Needs, Career & Technical	186	198	12
Pupil Support Services	144	156	12
Central Support Services	45	70	24
Athletics	53	63	10
Business Services	55	46	(9)
Board of Education & All other	<u>46</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>6</u>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b><u>2053</u></b>	<b><u>2072</u></b>	<b><u>19</u></b>
<b>Beginning of Year Fund Balance (July 1)</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>740</b>	
<b>Revenues Over/(Under) Expenses</b>	<b><u>32</u></b>	<b><u>(77)</u></b>	
<b>End of Year Fund Balance (June 30)</b>	<b><u>740</u></b>	<b><u>662</u></b>	
<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>62</b>	

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**Thoughts on Operating a Business on Beaver Island.**

(Mark Engelsman) I've been asked to write a column on "Business on Beaver Island". My perspective is that of a business that is both new and seasonal. Similar to many of the businesses on Beaver Island, *Happy Paddle* is highly dependent upon seasonal revenue and is what economists call a "microbusiness" in that it capitalizes on a niche in local commerce, employs few and/or part-time employees, and is totally focused on providing local services rather than building a large conglomerate. I'd like to specifically respond to the issue that seems rather time worn – extending the tourist season – from my perspective as a 6 month old business owner here on the island.

There appears to be a rather long history of concerns, suggestions, and complaints about the desire or need to extend the tourism season so that it starts earlier in the spring and extends into the fall. To many it is clear that for Beaver Island to be a vibrant and viable place, we need to take advantage of every possible sunny day...or find ways to make gray ones fun and appealing. Certainly our autumn season is amazing. And the birds, flowers, and mushrooms that are here in the spring have special appeal to people who have resources to take a weekend excursion. But what might it take to sell them to visitors? Here are some thoughts:

**Need for Comprehensive Services:** We need coordinated services that address the unique challenges of being a tourist on Beaver Island to create a comprehensive and appealing set of

experiences. There is a great appreciation for – and clear need of - commercial services oriented around the full range of needs of visitors. Because there is no taxi service on the island, limited hours for the country transport, and the Ferry is often booked weeks in advance during the summer months, a vast swathe of the island is either inaccessible to tourists or requires significant coordination. We found that the simple fact of offering to deliver kayaks, paddle boards, and bikes anywhere on the island that people wanted them provided a significant increase in business for us. We also began arranging to pick people up at airports or come reclaim bikes that were left there. This wasn't just about "good customer service" but about creating a set of support services for tourists that are a unique challenge to the island economy. The motels and inns have had to provide both taxi and lodgings services.

Yet, in the fall when hotels are closed or if you wish to camp or stay in a rental home, those services aren't available. To make our business work, we've also begun to think about providing a comprehensive set of services to make a day bike trip around the island or a day of kayaking on Lake G. feasible (e.g. arranging for a boxed lunch, airport transport, or bikes/kayaks to be taken to local sites). It's clear that to be a tourist here for a weekend, especially outside of the busy summer season when lots of resources are available, it isn't necessarily easy nor is there clear access to services. An effort to provide comprehensive and coordinate services is needed to make a weekend in the fall or spring appealing and feasible.

**Need 3 year goals for success not one season:** We need to collaborate across business and non-profit organizations around a clear set of defined goals that are based upon 3 and 5 year markers of success. When one business is closed because revenue generation is low for a few weeks then there is a domino effect. Few hotels, few restaurants, few services make coming to the island not only less appealing but also frankly challenging. When businesses are operating separately and focused on their own short term bottom line, there is little rationale for others in staying open longer or turning on the heat. If we can work in a more coordinated fashion around goals that are longer than one season, we can build a culture and set of interconnected services that makes tourism in the spring or fall more viable. This means that during the first year of effort, there will be weekends when one business has low profits but others do well (e.g. our business won't do well when it rains but restaurants and hotels will thrive). On pleasant weather days, there may be more campers and less in hotels. However, by working around shared goals with the needs of tourists in mind, we can engage in good, steady marketing and an assurance to visitors that there are services available beyond July and August. We need to coordinate goals and indicate success markers beyond an initial year.

**Planning:** We need collectively designed and intentionally planned activities during the shoulder season of Spring and Fall that provide an incentive to the outside world to come visit our island home. Charlevoix was packed last weekend during their Apple Festival. Grand Rapids intentionally schedules their art festival in the fall to draw people in to businesses and the community. Traverse City has activities every fall weekend. Mackinaw Island schedules a fall music festival, a spring sea food event, and a range of other activities that make travel outside the summer sound appealing. Having an extended tourism season doesn't just happen; it involves coordination and planning. There must be a reason for people to be here.

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**BIA Member Survey – BICS Student Support** (Peter Igoe). Riley Justis received 7 positive responses to the BIA survey regarding BIA members' willingness to volunteer to work with teachers and parents to assist student achievement. The responses include four from year-round residents and three from those only on the island in the summer. Positive responses covered a variety of academic subjects including all levels of math,

**Road Commission Initiatives: One Down, Two to go** (Bob Anderson). First, the long-awaited repaving of The King's Highway from Barney's Lake Road to Tom McCauley's Road was completed this summer with minimal disruption and outstanding results. In addition, the townships contracted for a substantial amount of road gravel to be prepared and stockpiled for future use.

For the future, securing of a full-time road grader on Beaver Island is getting closer. The Road Commission still intends to pursue assigning the use of the Volvo grader to Beaver Island after its lease expires in February. The grader would normally be turned back for credit for a new replacement machine, so this involves a lease buy-off of approximately \$84,000 that will have to be funded within the Road Commission, County, and/or Townships. Full-time availability of a grader will be a major improvement to establish and maintain properly crowned gravel roads. The Road Commission staff wants to be able to store this piece of equipment indoors, so its availability on the island is somewhat tied to the next initiative that is not likely to happen any time soon. Consequently, anyone who has or knows of someone who has availability of a storage facility that could house a 35' long by 10' wide by 13'-4" high grader should contact a BIA Board member or

What might this look like if all of these were addressed? Fall is a great time to camp here (not so in the spring – think Bugs!). Perhaps we have two weekends at the end of September and early October when we target people who like outdoor, wilderness experiences and invite them to come camping and hiking. Perhaps we offer a "free ferry ride" on one weekend; the Ferry runs in October, why not also pack it with visitors by offering free tickets? People would come; stay a night or two; go camping; maybe take an island tours, basically spend money. But we need hotel services and restaurants; transport to campgrounds (even if it's just delivery of tents and they rent a bike to get there); well-planned trail markers. It's about targeted marketing but also coordinated activities and services so that regardless of whether the weather is sunny or grey, visitors go back having had a positive experience and with their needs addressed.

Or....the birding trail is amazing. Could we extend and grow these events? Find more professional guides or train local high school students to serve as guides? What about an Irish dance and music weekend that invites people to share our island culture (Outside of the bar) and bring in families. Or....There are many artists on the island and some who come to offer clinics. This tends to be done within small groups of friends, however. What might it look like to offer retreats or "schools" that focus on art / craft / writers? There are many retired people who are interested in pursuing and building skills that they lacked time for in their younger years and who have both resources and interests in meeting new people and visiting new places.

My thoughts about the ongoing conversation about "extended tourist seasons" are that at the end of the day, the island community needs to join together, on a single focused idea, event or project and work at it with a 2 or 3 year set of goals in mind.

*Note: Mark Engelsman has recently joined the board of the Beaver Island Chamber of Commerce.*

literacy, the sciences, environmental studies, and computer skills. We will work with Riley to determine the level of interest from the administration, teachers, parents and students in acting upon the willingness of volunteers to assist. In order for this initiative to be successful, all four constituencies would have to actively support it.

your township supervisor. Two BIA members came forward after our appeal at the annual meeting to offer their facilities, but neither would work because of either size or accessibility issues. The Road Commission plan is to bring the grader to the island in the spring after using it for snow plowing on the mainland this winter.

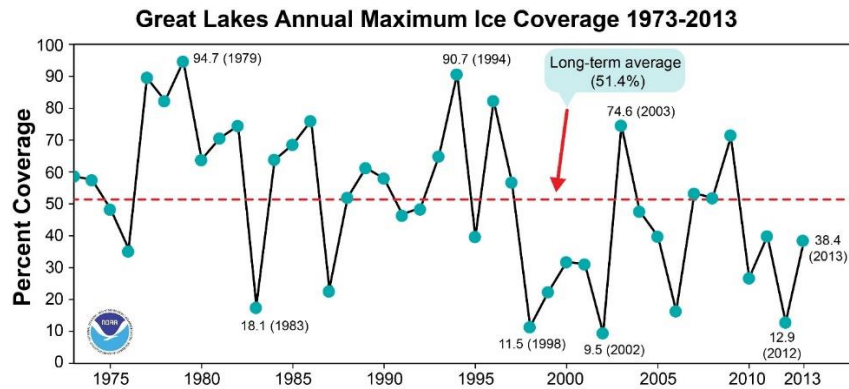
The third initiative started in October, 2012 with the announcement of a much-needed replacement of the County Road Commission garage. In January, 2013 the County Commissioners agreed "in principle" to \$1.5 million to provide a multi-use facility to properly house the three county-level functions of the sheriff's office, transit operation, and road commission vehicle and maintenance facility. It hoped to get \$750,000 of this from various grants, but the third attempt for a federal grant was rejected last month. A working committee consisting of the three users and a county administrator are back to square one evaluating options and costs. After two years, we are faced with lots of options but no firm proposals, so as the new Board of County Commissioners organizes in 2015 we need to keep this issue in front of them. A comparison of the facilities for the three county departments on our island compared to those on the mainland make it clear this needs to be a priority.

**What's happening with Lake Levels and Temperature?**

(Bob Tidmore). This last winter when Lake Michigan water level was the lowest ever recorded (based on records kept since 1860) there were a number of public forums to help understand the issue. One of the historical facts discussed was that after the previous record low the lake level returned to its Long Term Average (LTA) in 4-years. On Beaver Island we have witnessed a remarkable rise in the water levels this summer and into the fall and we are already approaching our LTA. According to a newsletter published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in March of this year this was predicted because of a "near record ice cover (topping 90 percent) reduced evaporation and contributed to higher lake levels. NOAA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers this week forecast that Great Lake water levels will be closer to average over the next six months and higher than last year on most of the lakes. A similar pattern occurred in 1996 when the Great Lakes experienced ice cover of

more than 80 percent. Water levels were higher in 1997 on all but Lake Superior where they were largely unchanged." Another major contribution was the extensive snow pack on the north shores of Lake Superior, something lacking for a number of years. For those interested the US Corps of Engineers publishes a monthly report on the levels of all the Great Lakes. Additionally they publish an annual summary and report and I recommend it highly. The *Monthly Bulletin of the Lake Levels for the Great Lakes* may be obtained free of charge by sending an e-mail to [hhpm@usace.army.mil](mailto:hhpm@usace.army.mil) including your name and address or by calling (313) 226-644. You can also see the report on-line at <http://goo.gl/S4nrti>.

What does the future hold? Who knows, but it seems likely that the current low water temperatures indicate the possibility of an early lake freeze that will contribute to an additional rise in lake levels.



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**Emerald Ash Borer Monitoring** (Pam Grassmick). BIA just received a notice that Beaver Island has been approved by the USDA APHIS Division for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) traps to be placed on Beaver Island in 2015. We have been doing this program every two years for the past six years. Thus far, no EABs have been found. The purple triangular traps will reappear in June, 2015 at 16 sites to check for the presence of EAB. **Please maintain the quarantine on importing firewood.**

**Veterans Memorial Park** (Bob Tidmore, Commander Post 46). AMVETS Post 46 has received a grant from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians to enhance the park on Beaver Island. The grant will fund additional landscaping and most importantly to purchase Veterans bricks to recognize the Native Americans from the Archipelago who served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Currently we have 22 names including one who saw service in WWI. This winter we will finalize the names and service information with installation scheduled for next summer.

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**The New and Improved BIA Website** (Jim Jones). The Beaver Island Association has had over 11,000 hits on its new website ([www.beaverislandassociation.org](http://www.beaverislandassociation.org)). It is easy to navigate and informs the viewer of BIA's projects, events, activities, and sponsors. Sponsors and partners are under the "Links" drop down menu. Please suggest other website links that would be appropriate. A complete archive of BIA activities back to 1999 is under the 'Newsletters' tab. The topics along with a link to each

newsletter are listed so that a user can do a key word search to find articles containing that keyword. To date there has been no interest from members in advertising their vacation homes for rent with a one line summary on the website. The advertisement is a benefit of membership.

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**History Museum Update** (Sandy Birdsall). The Beaver Island Historical Society has launched its Capital Campaign for the Museum of Island Life, an expansion of the Print Shop Museum which includes professionally constructed exhibits and some rehab work on the existing Print Shop and the Marine Museum. The entire plan is available on our website [www.beaverislandhistory.org](http://www.beaverislandhistory.org)

- temperature controlled storage to protect our artifacts
- a genealogy lab with public access to genealogical records and searches
- an oral history lab, including 250 existing histories and the opportunity to record ones
- professional museum exhibits telling the unique stories of Island life in a captivating manner for both children and adults, drawing more tourism
- preservation of our cultural heritage and enhancement of community pride
- rotating gallery of display boards and cases to be used for travelling exhibits and by individuals and organizations who wish to create their own exhibits

We are excited about the goals and plans for the museum which will benefit the community in many ways and provide:

- heat and opening in the shoulder seasons to offer school field trips, university museum study trips, and senior tours, expanding the tourist season

- a small theater with continuous loop of short films about the Island

The total estimated cost of the project is \$1.3 million. Our goal is to raise all of the needed funds by August, 2017 and complete construction by August 2018. We have set milestones for each year and will begin construction on the building and exhibits when total funding has been raised. We believe our funding goals are realistic, but we certainly will need your assistance and contributions. Here is how you can help:

Celebrate your heritage or interests, form a group or have your organization help fund any of the following five major exhibits:

1. The Natural Resources
2. Early inhabitants—Native Americans fur traders, Jesuits.
3. Irish and other immigrants
4. King Strang--the Mormons
5. Modern Times on the Island: mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to the present

**The Beaver Island Artist Guild - Concept Statement (very preliminary).** (Peter Igoe) A possible joint project of the Beaver Island Association and the Beaver Island Cultural Arts Association. The Beaver Island Association is exploring the potential benefits of formally organizing A Beaver Island Artists Guild.

**Objectives:**

1. Increase sales by island artisans to customers who do not spend much time on Beaver Island
2. Enhance the perception/aura of Beaver Island as a vibrant artistic community, drawing visitors to the island, and creating an artistic cache'. **Members artistic set (preliminary)**
  - Photographers
  - Painters
  - Potters
  - Weavers
  - Quilters
  - Jewelry, beads, crafts
  - Clothing accessories (fur hats, mittens, etc.)
  - Music CDs
  - Wood turners
  - Woodworkers
  - Wood carvers
  - Flower arrangers
  - Landscape designers

Or, help fund one of the other important components of the New Museum: Theater, Genealogy Lab, Oral History Lab, Gift Shop, or Upstairs Rotating Gallery. Naming opportunities for major exhibits are available for donations of \$135,000 and other areas for \$10,000 to \$25,000. For naming contact: Sandra Birdsall, [sbirdonbi@yahoo.com](mailto:sbirdonbi@yahoo.com) or 231-448-2982 or Kitty McNamara, [kittym@tds.net](mailto:kittym@tds.net) 231-448-2353

**ALL DONATIONS WILL BE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED**

- Send your check to BIHS Capital Campaign, PO Box 392, Beaver Island, MI 49782. To remain anonymous: Send a check with a note for the BIHS Capital Campaign to the Charlevoix Community Foundation PO Box 718, East Jordan, MI 49727. For credit cards, Donate on-line at [www.beaverislandhistory.org](http://www.beaverislandhistory.org). Or, Go to the BIHS link on Go Fund Me, <http://www.gofundme.com/elv6ro>

**Specifics:**

- Create the Beaver Island Artistic Guild website.
- Establish an advisory board
- Include website links to all Beaver Island Artists who wish to participate
- BIA to fund website development, updates, and on-going web hosting costs.
- Once established, undertake a publicity program in off island newspapers, radio stations
- Seek funding grants to assist in financing website, marketing
- No cost to participants
- Links from Beaver Island Chamber of Commerce, BIA, other websites
- Establish an annual summer arts program?
- Promote art sales through island galleries and shops
- A regular spot broadcast on BI Radio

We hope to have a demonstration web-site up and running soon.

**Please give us feedback on this idea. Write the Beaver Island Association, PO Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782; or email us: [beaverislandassociation@gmail.com](mailto:beaverislandassociation@gmail.com)**

***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 membership for 2014-2015 \*\*\*\*\***

\_\_\_\_\_  
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 2014-2015 ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Maureen Abele	Mike Charbeneau	Emory Griffin	Doris Larson	Eric Naranjo	Bob Simpson
Keith Albin	Carolyn Charbeneau	Marjorie Hammond	James Latta	Sanomalynn Naranjo	Sandy Simpson
Christy Albin	Marg Charbeneau	Nackerman Harborfront LLC	Caroline Latta	Harriet Nelson	Nancy Smith
Bruce Allen	Garret Cole	Jim Haveman	Greg Lawson	Florence Neuman	John Starr
Bob Anderson	Carol Creasser	Sarah Haveman	Mary Jane Lawson	Paul Niehaus	Leigh Starr
Alana Anderson	Charles Creaser	Tom Herbert	Ed Leuck	Liz Niehaus	Evan Steger
Paul Armstrong	Annette Dashiel	Kirsten Roberts	Beth Leuck	Larry Nygard	Suzy Steger
Nancy Armstrong	Frank D'Andraia	David Howell	Little Traverse Conservancy	Scott Osborne	Hans Stein
Dave Avery	Dana D'Andraia	Sandy Howell	David Lucas	Margaret Osborne	Davi Stein
Sue Avery	Auleen Duffy	Gary Huard	Jim Luteyn	Jeff Powers	Steven Steinglass
Elwood Baker	Gerald Duffy	Carol Huard	Barbara Lucas	Ann Partridge	Dianne Steinglass
Phyllis Baker	Mark Engelsman	Carolyn Hricko	Claude A. Lucchesi	Fred Payne	Matt Stewart
The Banghart Family	Kailonnie Dunsmore	Mike Igoe	Ruth Lucchesi	Thersa Payne	Suzi Peterson
Joyce Bartels	Tony Eliason	Peter Igoe	Greg Lucchesi	Pete Peterson	James R. Stout Sr.
Jack Bauman	Martha Ratliff	Ruth Igoe	Linda Lucchesi	Sheila Peterson	Kenneth Jay Taylor
Cathy Bauman	Harris Fawell	Jonathan Igoe	Dan Lynch	Jeff Powers	Don Taylor
Royce Beers	Ruth Fawell	Kathleen Igoe	Rosemary Lynch	Taffy Raphael	Judy Taylor
Margie Beers	John Fiore	Bruce Jacobson	Marty Maehr	Marilyn Reed	Diana Taylor
Raymond C Becker	Barbara Fiore	Lenor Jacobson	Jane Maehr	Joe Reed	Tom Thieme
Narin Bhatia	Jack Gallagher	Ronald Jakubus	John Martin	Richard Ries	Nita Thieme
Nishta Bhatia	Judy Gallagher	Helen Jakubus	Art McCaskey	Kris Ries	Bob Tidmore
Vince Bielman	Jim Gavelek	Jim Jones	Debie McCaskey	Molly Resnick	Kathy Tidmore
Audrey Bielman	John Gerrish	Judith Jones	Ken McDonald	Kathy Richards	Alan Vicstein
Jim Birdsall	Sandra Gerrish	Michael Kamrin	Deb McDonald	Cindy Ricksgers	Bev Vicstein
Sandy Birdsall	Jan Gerson	Katie See Kamrin	Bill McDonough	Randy Roberts	Robert Warski
Eric Blalock	Jim Gillingham	Cheryl Kane	Tammy McDonough	Carol Roberts	Laurel Warski
Kathryn Blalock	Mary Gillingham	Martin Kane	Larry McDonough	John Runberg	Jack Wayne
Glen Borre	Ken Gitersonke	Herb Kayne	Kay McDonough	Joyce Runberg	Barbara Wayne
Betsy Borre	Pat Gitersonke	Phyllis Kayne	Sandra Michelson	Pat Rowley	Ed Welter
Kevin Boyle	Paul Glendon	Jack Kelly	Joe Moore	John Rowley	Willy Welter
Judy Boyle	Ann Glendon	Ruth Kelly	Phyllis Moore	Larry Seiford	Karen Whitecraft
Frederick J. Boyles	Tim Gonyeau	Donna Kieselbach	Charles Morris	Bev Seiford	Ronald Wierenga
Barbara Boyles	Kathie Gonyeau	Andy Kohls	Sandra Morris	Craig Schrottenboer	Elisabeth Wierenga
Janee Boyles-Visel	Jeanne Graham	Jacque LaFreniere	Pam Moxham	Sherry Schrottenboer	Verle Wiita
Keith Brothers	Brad Grassmick	Mark LaFreniere	Rick Nank	Thomas Sell	Trish Wiita
Janet Brothers	Pam Grassmick	Lars Larson	Janet Nank	Patricia Sell	Annalda Worsfold

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TOTAL 2014-2015 MEMBERSHIP – 216

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**Write:** The Beaver Island Association, P.O. Box 390, Beaver Island, MI 49782.

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