

ISLAND CURRENTS

Beaver Island Association Newsletter – Fall Winter 2016

Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability

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BIA Advocates for EMS Ballot Proposal (Bob Anderson)

At the Island Institute community forum held in September, 2015 the attendees identified the priority needs of our island community. One of those identified was maintaining and improving quality healthcare. This past spring a key component of our island healthcare system was in jeopardy, and the BIA stepped up to help.

Since 2000 Beaver Island was fortunate to have Advanced Life Support (ALS) level of Emergency Medical Service staffed by qualified paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) who were island residents serving their community as volunteers for a modest on-call stipend. This ALS service included island-based licensed air ambulance service from Island Airways that was available for quick evacuation of critical patients needing hospital care. Over the past sixteen years the paramedic staff was reduced as they retired or left the island for other work. In the spring of 2016 only one remained, and she ran a busy seasonal business. The Emergency Services Authority (ESA) that has local government responsibility for EMS and Fire Department operations had to recruit off-island paramedics to serve 24/7 in order to maintain our ALS status. This dramatically increased EMS cost, because the volunteer stipend we were paying was insufficient to attract full-time professionals from their current jobs to work on Beaver Island.

Recognizing that historical funding from ambulance and air evacuation billings and the one mill assessment from the townships would not support the cost of off-island paramedics, the ESA requested the townships transfer emergency funds to the ESA to offset costs until fall, and to place a proposal on the November 8 ballot for up to an additional two mills for ongoing EMS support. Both townships agreed. Peaine Township ballot proposal was not received by the County Clerk so it did not appear on the ballot, but the township board approved to assess 1-1/2 mills of the requested 2 mill amount against previously voter approved millage for the general fund with the remaining 1/2 mill available from reserve funds, so Peaine Township will have funds available from the next tax statements, paid by Peaine Twp. residents and property owners. St. James voters would have a ballot proposal on the November 8 ballot to approve the additional 2 mills for EMS that is needed to continue Advanced Life Support on the island.

Unfortunately, public law prohibited the ESA and township boards from using their resources to communicate about the proposal for sixty days before the election. Voters had

questions about what had changed and why more taxes were needed, but public officials could not answer them.

Seeing that frustration, confusion, and even apathy arising from the lack of information could jeopardize the ballot proposal, the BIA board approached the Preservation Association of Beaver Island (PABI) board to co-sponsor a community forum to present the background and facts about EMS and the ballot proposal and give voters an opportunity to get their questions answered. The community forum was well publicized with flyers, announcements at township board and ESA meetings, WVBI radio announcements, forum postings, and word of mouth.

On October 22 the forum was held at the Beaver Island Community Center and was well attended. It was broadcast live on WVBI, and Paul and Angel Welke sponsored Joe Moore's News on the Net to live stream and record the entire event. A panel of three medical experts included paramedic Brian Meade, intensive care physician Dr. Brad Grassmick, and retired emergency room physician Dr. Don Fix. They discussed the medical importance of EMS and the critical difference between ALS service with paramedics and BLS (Basic Life Support) with only EMT's, including the qualifications, training and care each could provide. Audience questions regarding the medical aspects of EMS were answered, then BIA President Bob Anderson discussed the background and what had changed in our EMS staffing and the financial impact of continuing ALS coverage. Audience questions were again solicited and addressed to assure all present (and watching/listening) were fully aware of the importance of maintaining ALS for the island and that its future relied on the passing of the St. James ballot proposal.

In addition to the community forum, your association had developed a trifold brochure earlier in the summer to describe the importance of ALS and created an online funding opportunity for people interested in helping support EMS. An additional brochure was created for handout at the community forum that focused on the importance of the ballot proposal and why it was needed. This brochure, coupled with a cover letter, was mailed to all Beaver Island PO box holders prior to the election. These brochures were posted on News on the Net and the two island internet forums, and a separate Letter to the Editor was published in the Northern Islander edition just prior to the election.

The end result was the successful passing of the proposal with a vote of 181 in favor and 44 opposed. With

adequate funding now assured, the ESA is working on short term and long term plans for providing the proper structure and oversight for ALS on Beaver Island. The BIA will continue to be engaged to push for implementing industry best practices in our island services.

A significant amount of time, effort, and dues money went into the BIA advocacy for the EMS ballot proposal. We will never know if it would have passed without our initiative, but we felt the issue was too important to not do all we could to help it pass. At a minimum, residents are better informed and that alone was worth the effort.

Island Fellow Project: Platform Community Communications (Pam Grassmick and Kevin Boyle)

BIA is coordinating an application with the Office of the Great Lakes to obtain funding for an Island Fellow for 2017 to implement a multi-platform community communications system. The Island Fellow will work to collect and disseminate information about island events using multiple media. The events covered will include entertainment and recreational opportunities of interest to residents and visitors as well as island governance and development activities. This information will be disseminated using both on and off island media (print, broadcast and social) based on the target audience. New to the effort will be a network of digital signage systems at local businesses and transportation hubs that will be used to deliver location-specific messages. The island fellow will use this event information to create longer form print, audio and video content for use by media on and off the island. This integrated approach will facilitate content re-use across multiple platforms and help market the island to a broader audience including virtual employees, retirees, entrepreneurs, artists, musicians, sportsmen, birders, and historians.

As part of his or her longer-form content creation tasks, the Fellow will produce six articles on island living for publication by island and mainland news and cultural outlets. The Fellow will also work with students to expand

their understanding of multimedia communications and update islanders with school-oriented content.

With grant support from the Office of the Great Lakes, it is expected that the costs to local businesses for participating in the program will be limited and eventually funded by increases in visits and business resulting from the program. Hardware and recurring costs for the digital signage system will be supported in part by businesses and organizations that host the signage at their locations. In addition to carrying island-wide messages, they will also be able to create and run site-specific advertisements and announcements on signs at their locations. In addition, a monitor at the school entrance will be a source of information on school activities, community events, and will feature content produced by students with the help of the Island Fellow.

The BIA Board believes this project will help make the island's unique assets more visible both on the island and, critically, on the mainland. It will also strengthen community ties and engage existing and emerging island businesses and organizations as they cooperate with the Island Fellow to develop content and take advantage of the digital signage system to promote their businesses and the island at a level that would not be possible with traditional paid advertisement, either in print or on radio and television.

Great Lakes Islands Coalition (Pam Grassmick and Kevin Boyle)

September marked the one year anniversary of the Great Lakes Islands Project for Beaver Island. The project kick-off at the Community Center discussed opportunities through knowledge exchanges with the Maine Island Institute, Office of Great Lakes (OGL), and our island community. The Beaver Island community identified our Priority Focus Areas: Broadband/cell service, healthcare/EMS, K-12 education, affordable workforce housing, marketing for artists and the island as a great place to raise a family, and Aging in Place. Additional noteworthy topics included a quality preschool program, an Island Manager, Island leadership development, and a Chamber of Tourism. An Island Assets draft was also developed to facilitate a better understanding of the island's resources for those who are unfamiliar with Beaver Island. Progress on the Beaver Island Priority Areas is being actively pursued by multiple Beaver Islanders. The OGL has also provided resources and connections with various specialists from across the state to assist in developing strategic plans. Financial and personnel support from the Office of Great Lakes (OGL), Comer Foundation, Charlevoix County Community Foundation, and the Beaver Island Association has allowed the continuation of monthly meetings to support the capacity building discussions.

To foster broader island-to-island dialogue and help address the needs for information access and capacity, a new collaboration is forming between Great Lakes island communities. It is building off successful models of inter-island communication and coordination already in use elsewhere in the country by the Maine Island Institute. To further the project and gauge the interest of another Great Lakes island, BIA board members, Kevin Boyle and Pam Grassmick were invited to meet with the Madeline Island Chamber, Town Manager and Township Board members from La Pointe, Northland College's Rural Economic Development Department, and others for the purpose of seeking interest and support for the coalition idea. Jon Allan and Matt Preisser from the OGL, and Katie Tiagi from the Island Institute presented their collective interest in furthering the coalition discussions.

While on Madeline Island, the Michigan delegation visited sites that fostered economic development, discussed marketing strategies, the local school system, town sanitation district, historical museum and sites, municipal solar power grid, development of recreation areas, tribal cultural resources, and shared island experiences. We found some of the same challenges related to island living such as county unresponsiveness to issues. We had a chance

to stop in and talk with Beaver Island's own Queen of Quilting: Gwen Marsten who was hosting 42 women from across the country for a week-long odyssey of quilting.

The Great Lakes region has the ability to create its own model of a "Great Lakes Islands Coalition."

To move this process forward, plans are underway for the first convention of Great Lakes island communities will be held in 2017 on Beaver Island. Representatives from all of the populated unbridged Great Lakes islands will be

The Resilient Beaver Island Master Plan (Bob Tidmore, St James Planning Commission)

Beaver Island is in the process of updating it's master plan and many may not understand what it is or why it's being done. The State of Michigan in 2008 established the Planning Enabling Act that requires local governments in Michigan to assess their current master plan every five years in order to decide if the plan needs to be updated. The municipality's planning commission prepares a master plan which is a policy document outlining the community's vision for the future. It should be the basis for influencing the community's future, environmental protection, economic development, zoning and other regulatory ordinances.

Basically it serves as a guide to what items citizens of a community feel are important to consider in the management and development of their local area and requires that certain subjects be included, streets and transportation, zoning and elements of an asset-based strategic economic development plan.

The planning commissions of Peaine and St. James have been working on revising our plan for almost two-years with limited success. Last year the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes, Department of Environmental Quality offered to fund most of the project thru a grant to the Land Information Access Association (LIAA), a Traverse City-based nonprofit organization.

On October 10, 2016 a public meeting to kick off the project was held at the Beaver Island Community Center and the following is an excerpt from the presentation by Harry Burkholder, Executive Director of LIAA.

As part of the Master Planning process, individuals submitted more than 100 different ways to improve Beaver Island. LIAA asked folks to participate in prioritization of these ideas in the Action Plan Survey; http://www.resilientmichigan.org/beaverisle_act.asp

Internet Survey (Alan Vicstein)

High Speed Internet. At an open meeting in the fall of 2015, Beaver Islanders were asked to identify the most pressing needs to improve island economy. The number one need was universal access to high speed Internet in order to allow Island residents to engage in high-value economic activity. As a result, the BIA is looking to improve island Internet service. As part of this project, we asked all residents and visitors to complete a survey on Internet use. The results will be used to guide next steps in the project, grants, partnerships, etc.

invited to attend, as well as key agency, university, and other organizational partners. It is anticipated that not all islands will participate or fully understand the objectives or value of this initiative, at least at first. The goal will be to bring together representatives from several islands (perhaps 5-6) to form the nucleus of a Great Lakes Islands Coalition and help establish its mission, roles, and structure. As this new partnership becomes established and demonstrates success, it can grow and evolve over time.

What is Resilient Beaver Island?

Resilient Beaver Island project purpose is to engage residents of Peaine Township and St. James Township in the development of a new joint master plan for the two island jurisdictions. Much like a blueprint, a master plan serves as the public's guide for the development of a community and the management of its resources. Although portions of the current joint master plan have been updated throughout the years, the last comprehensive update to the master plan was completed several years ago.

What is Resilience?

"Resilience" is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and/or recover from adverse situations. Communities that are resilient are able to learn from adversity and adapt quickly to change, both of which are hallmarks of successful communities today. The Resilient Beaver Island planning process will address a wide range of concerns such as natural resource preservation, efforts to build the local economy, and ways to manage the impacts of climate variability.

Since that time a number of public meetings were held to solicit input from the island's permanent and summer residents on a wide variety of subjects and on what specific subjects should be the most important to the island. In fact the action plan collected the ideas of over 100 residents (online and in-person). Additionally, LIAA established a web page that allows those who could not attend these meeting to also provide input to the process.

LIAA met with the joint planning commissions in November and started the process of reviewing the plan and this process will continue until February. The final approval of the plan will be by the Township Boards.

From July 27 to Oct 13, 2016, 269 individuals participated in the survey. Respondents included:

- 40.9% Live here year-round (108)
- 29.2% Seasonal six months or less (77)
- 15.5% Vacation one week to one month (41)
- 11.7% Seasonal six months or more (31)
- 2.7% Other (7)
- 86.4% Stay in their own home
- 7.5% Stay in a rental
- 3% Stay in a motel / lodge
- 2.1% Other

Responses to, "Where do you use the Internet?", were:

- 87% Where I live or stay on the Island
- 33% At the Community Center
- 39% At the Library
- 32% At Hotspots at restaurants and bars
- 4% At work
- 4% Other

Internet Providers were Identified as follows:

- 71.8% TDS
- 10.4% Not Applicable
- 6.6% AT&T
- 6.2% Verizon
- 1.9 % Satellite
- 19.1% Other

87% of survey respondents have a TDS landline.

Survey results indicate participants are fairly demanding users of the Internet requiring significant bandwidth: Responses to: "When on Beaver Island, how often do you typically need to access the Internet?", were:

- 54.6% Multiple times each day
- 30.9% Pretty much constantly
- 11.5% Once a day
- 3.1% Once a week

Most households reported having multiple computers, smartphones, iPADS or tablets and Internet TV devices connected to the Internet.

Device Count :	0	1	2	3	> 3
Computers	7.3%	37.1%	36.3%	7.8 %	11.4%
Smart Phone	10.5%	23.6%	47.7%	6.4%	11.8%
IPAD / Tablet	11.1%	44.4%	30.1%	4.6%	9.7%
Internet TV	16.0%	51.2%	22.2%	3.7%	6.8%
Internet Radio	42.3%	34.1%	15.4%	3.4%	5.7%
Security Cameras	68.8%	12.9%	8.6%	5.4%	4.3%
Home Monitoring	67.4%	18.6%	5.8%	4.7%	3.5%

When asked, "How do you use the Internet to communicate with family and friends?" the top responses were:

- 96.6% Email
- 71.1% Text message
- 62.4% Sharing photos & videos
- 49.6% Facebook Messenger or video
- 30.5% Facetime
- 30.1% Skype
- 12.4% VOIP
- 9.0% Google Hangouts

When TDS Internet users compared it to their Off-Island Internet, 48% rated it less than adequate. Less than 20% of TDS users rated it as good or excellent:

- 32% Adequate
- 21% Disappointing
- 18% Unreliable and ineffective
- 8.5% Not adequate for my needs
- 16.9% Good
- 2.9% Excellent

72.7% of respondents think it is important for Beaver Island to have Internet access comparable to that available in larger communities.

Continuing Invasive Species Control Efforts (Pam Grassmick and Beth Leuck)

In early June, Beaver Island served as the site for an invasive species conference that brought 25 individuals from various state agencies and organizations together for a two-day summit. Interested islanders also attended to understand the negative impact of invasives on habitats

84.3% of respondents think it is important for the Health Center to have real-time medical image consultation with hospitals and doctors on the mainland.

Survey respondents indicated their priorities for the following ON-Island services as follows:

Priority	5 High	4	3	2	1 Low
Reliable Internet service	87.5%	7.4%	3.1%	.4%	7.4%
Island-wide data and voice coverage for cell phone service	74.4%	11.6%	7.2%	2%	4.8%
Fast speeds for uploads and downloads	61.7%	19.8%	12.9%	3.2%	2.4%
Bundled service (TV, phone, Internet combined)	23.4%	10.8%	26.8%	10.8 %	28.1%
A la carte service (pick each service separately)	32.3%	20.9%	24.1%	6.8%	15.9%
Hourly, daily, weekly, monthly service rates (e.g., Bongo-like service used at airports)	10.5%	7.1%	21.4%	10.5 %	50.5%

Anecdotal evidence would seem to indicate that the Internet backhaul used by TDS (AT&T) does not provide adequate bandwidth to meet the current needs of the Island. During peak periods of time, excessive latency makes it difficult or impossible for users to share large files, upload photos and use video conferencing applications such as Facetime and Google Hangouts.

High quality cell phone service is not readily available on Beaver Island and is not currently a good alternative to the Internet service provided by TDS. When asked, "How well does your cell phone work at the place where you stay on Beaver Island?"

The responses were:

- 46.1% No service
- 7.8 % Phone calls only
- 20.8% 3G slow data service
- 13.5% 4G good data service
- 9.4% 4G LTE high-speed data service

Improvements in Internet reliability and substantial increases in upload and download speeds will not be possible unless TDS is willing to improve the capacity of its microwave link to its network on the mainland (Internet backhaul), as well as the infrastructure used to deliver the Internet over the final mile into the homes and businesses on Beaver Island.

We have been in contact with TDS and they currently do not acknowledge that their current service to the Island is inadequate. We do not believe they are willing to invest in the infrastructure of the Island at this point in time.

BIA has now begun exploring alternative methods to improve the infrastructure on the Island.

and to share lessons learned over the past decade on controlling invasive species on the island. The lead organization for the conference was the Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska, and Emmet Counties' Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area, which was funded

through a grant from the Michigan Dune Alliance and The Nature Conservancy. The visiting professionals toured the island to observe first-hand the status of invasive species control, and the island's challenges and successes. Beaver Island Association board members Beth Leuck and Pam Grassmick were asked to make presentations to the group. While non-native Phragmites is currently under control on the island, other invasive species are spreading and negatively affecting island habitats. The Beaver Island Association continues to work with local property owners to control unwanted species such as garlic mustard, autumn olive, European swamp thistle, and wild parsnip. Garlic mustard was recently discovered at the north end of the town area. It is one of the few invasive herbaceous species able to dominate the understory of forests and has thus reduced the biodiversity of many areas on the mainland. Early detection and rapid response are key to controlling the spread of invasive species like garlic mustard on the island and will reduce the cost of controlling them later. We are currently working with the Department of Natural Resources and Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa staff to expand control of other detrimental invasive species in addition to non-native Phragmites. A spring survey of the shoreline and roadways is planned.

To further assist property owners, state agencies, and tribal representatives in controlling invasive species, an extensive lending closet of tools will be available on the island next spring. Seven staff members from tribal and other agencies spent two days demonstrating the equipment in October to a few property owners. Funding for the equipment was secured through the Michigan Dune Alliance and The Nature Conservancy. Stay tuned for more information in the spring newsletter about accessing the new equipment.

BIA will send a representative to attend the two day-Michigan Invasive Species Coalition meeting being held in Gaylord in December. This meeting brings professionals from around the state to discuss best practices for dealing with invasive species that have the potential of impacting our lakes, forests, fields, and shorelines. Small non-native Phragmites without seed heads have been noted on various beaches on Beaver Island and the outer islands. Since the Beaver Island townships did not hire a Phragmites Administrator this year, we encourage people to contact their township's supervisor about future treatment plans.

Rain Doesn't Dampen Beach Cleanup Enthusiasm (Ken McDonald)

It rained on Saturday, September 10 but 21 folks still braved the elements to participate in the BIA Beach Cleanup. This year's high water made some remote beaches inaccessible but almost 20 miles of beach were patrolled and cleaned. Volunteers brought back enough bags of trash to fill the back of a Suburban.

After their work the volunteers enjoyed the traditional hot dog lunch at the Community Center. Many thanks to all

the volunteers; including those who patrolled and cleaned before and after the official date.

Grateful thanks also to the Community Center for their space, Carol Creasser for donating the hot dogs and McDonough's Market for donating the buns.

Please plan on participating in the 2017 BIA Beach Cleanup and help keep Beaver Island Beautiful.

- Ken MacDonald

Beaver Island Water Trail Project Kick Off (Pam Grassmick and Mark Engelsmen)

On November 29, 2016, Beaver Islanders began to develop a comprehensive master plan for a water trail system to circumnavigate the largest island in Lake Michigan with a formal water trail system.

A water trail is a designated route along a lake, river, canal or bay specifically designed for people using small boats like kayaks, canoes, single sailboats or rowboats. The trails, sometimes called "blueways," are the aquatic equivalent of a hiking trail (or "greenway"). Water trails feature well-developed access and launch points; are near significant historical, environmental or cultural points of interest; and often include nearby amenities such as restaurants, hotels and campgrounds.

At 54 square miles, Beaver Island is the largest island in Lake Michigan, located about 30 miles offshore from the City of Charlevoix in northwest Lower Michigan. Its rich history includes Native American and European settlers and industries such as fishing and logging. Today, it is a popular tourist destination well suited to create and leverage a formal system of water trails.

Among other things, Beaver Island's water trail master plan, expected to be complete by December of 2017, will

provide the framework for the development, enhancement and long-term marketing, management, accessibility and sustainability of this unique water trail system.

The water trail planning effort is largely funded by grants from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP) and Charlevoix County. Additional funding is being provided by Peaine Township, St. James Township and the Beaver Island Association, with in-kind support provided by the Preservation Association of Beaver Island.

The project is being led by the Land Information Access Association (LIAA), a nonprofit community development organization based in Traverse City that is dedicated to helping Michigan communities become even better places to live, work and play. LIAA has extensive experience helping communities leverage their recreational assets for economic development. For more information visit www.liaa.org.

Contact:

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Land Information Access Association (LIAA)
(231) 929-3696 burkholder@liaa.org

WVBI (Kevin Boyle)

The island's community radio station had a busy summer and fall. The most significant development was moving the station's transmitter site from the back of Richie Gillespie's pole barn to the EMS tower on King's Highway. This move puts WVBI's antenna as near as possible to the geographic center of the island (on an existing tower) and allowed a tripling in the height of the antenna. WVBI now reaches radios with outdoor antennas all over the island except on the far south end. [As part of the project, the station installed redundant microwave links between its studio in the BIC Center and the transmitter as well as a microwave link to the BICS to allow live student broadcasts from school. We also installed backup battery power units for the transmitter and all of the network gear at the transmitter site and the BIC Center.]

On the programming front, the station added new programs and made changes to respond to community input. New on the air are Interfaith Voices (a thoughtful look at issues of faith Sunday mornings), The Story Teller's Night Sky (an astronomy show with a twist from the Emmet County Dark Sky Park), the Retro Album Chart Show (a countdown of hits from past album charts for the current date), Tips for Healthy Living (from Deb Plastrik and the BIRHC) and Islander News (produced by students at BICS). We juggled our shows on weekend evenings so that there are no repeats and by adding a second hour of the popular Rockin' the Boat show with Mark Beltaire and the Retro Album Chart show (mentioned above) to the lineup. You'll also hear new episodes of the station's own Top Ten + Five countdown show throughout the winter thanks to the efforts of Cynthia Jaye. She joins Sheri Timsak, Phil Becker and Mark Beltaire in creating weekly music shows for the station. Greg Doig (the daily Community Calendar Report and WVBI's Tech Tip), Cindy Ricksgers (daily Island Reflections) and Deb Plastrik (Tips for Healthy Living) also create local content for the station.

On the news front, the station produced a live broadcast of the community meeting on the EMS Ballot Proposal (sponsored by the BIA and PABI) and provided the first local reporting of election results on election nights. This together with FSN Network news, information programs on weekend mornings (Worldlink, Inside Europe and Living Planet) and student reporting on Islander News provided robust coverage of election issues this fall.

In the coming months, the station encourages you to tune in to be entertained and to keep up to date with community events. The most comprehensive view of island events is on the BIC Center WVBI Community Calendar. Go to www.wvbi.net and click on Calendar or listen weekdays at 9:00, noon, 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.. Also, be on the lookout for new productions from the Beaver Island Radio Players, including a new Christmas episode of the Bickersons. Finally, we are looking at changes to our antenna and the possibility of a power increase to further improve coverage.

The station welcomes your input on its programming at programming@wvbi.net. You can also contact us at the same address about reception issues and for tips on getting the station in your house or cabin. Remember that in addition to 100.1 FM on the island, the station can be heard on the TuneIn radio website and apps as well as at www.wvbi.net using the player bar at the bottom of the page. Fire it up on your smart phone and connect to your car with Bluetooth, and you can hear it on your next trip up north (or the next time you wish you were headed up north).

You can support the station by making a donation at www.wvbi.net as well as by selecting PABI as your preferred charity when shopping at smile.amazon.com. If you run a business, please consider supporting the station by becoming an underwriter.

Saving Birds Thru Habitat (Kay Charter)

The Community of Beaver Island was chosen as Saving Birds Thru Habitat's Special Conservation Partner of the Year for 2016. The island was selected because of its dedication to maintaining healthy ecosystems by removing or controlling invasive species and by protecting island trees from disease and pests, such as the quarantine against bringing wood onto the island in order to prevent introduction of the emerald ash borer. This jewel in Lake Michigan serves as a critical stopover site for birds migrating to and from the Tropics. It also hosts thousands of pairs of many Neotropical - and resident - nesting bird species. Three years ago, a birding trail was launched

under the guidance of Saving Birds Thru Habitat. The trail has drawn hordes of birders to the island. The trail, and subsequent activities and events celebrating birds, has served to significantly raise awareness about the need to continue protecting habitats needed by avifauna. Jim Jones, Island resident and Beaver Island Association Board Member, traveled to Omena to receive the award. He also accepted a plaque that designated Beaver Island the first island in the world to receive a Saving Birds Thru Habitat Certified Bird Habitat award. These awards will hang in the Beaver Island Community Center for all to see and appreciate.

Beaver Island Birding Trail (Pam Grassmick)

Plans are now underway for the 4th annual Warblers on the Water birding event on Memorial Day weekend, May 26-28, 2017. Participants in the 2016 event asked for more field trips and speakers in 2017. Business' also have

noticed an increase in shoulder season visitors related to birders. Inquiries about Beaver Island hosting a 2017 BIBT event began in October this year! However, to produce such an ambitious program, we will need more financial

support. Due to a change in university policy, the Central Michigan University Biological Station will no longer donate the use of their vans to the birding event. Therefore, we will have an added expense of \$2500 for van rental in addition to the expansion of the weekend program for birders.

To defray costs next year, we will implement a modest participant registration fee, but we must also rely on our local business partners' support to help meet our

expenses. Therefore, we mailed 54 sponsorship letters to businesses and will place these sponsors on birding shirts. We appreciate the response of the following sponsors to date: Beaver Island Gulf Coarse, Beaver Island Wildlife Club, Beaver Island Studio and Gallery, Little Traverse Conservancy, Island Airways, Dalwhinnie, McDonough's Market, and Holy Cross Church. Visit www.beaverislandbirdingtrail.org early in February for further birding opportunities over Memorial Weekend.

THE BEAVER ISLAND ASSOCIATION 2016-2017 MEMBERSHIP

Maureen Abele	Engelsman	Ronald & Helen Jakubas	Dick Mulvihill	Larry & Bev Seiford
Keith & Christy Albin	Harris & Ruth Fawell	Clyde & Nadra Johnson	Janet Nank	Thomas & Patricia Sell
Bruce Allen	John & Barbara Fiore	Jim & Judith Jones	Eric & Sanomalynn Naranjo	Bob and Sandy Simpson
Bob & Alana Anderson	Don & Barbara Fix	Audrey Van Dyke & Howard	Robert & Julie Neff	Nancy Smith
Paul & Nancy Armstrong	Jim & Lynne Flanagan	Kadison	Harriet Nelson	Joanna Reinking & Gilbert Starks
Dave & Sue Avery	Jon & Sally Fogg	Katie See & Michael Kamrin	Florence Neumann	John & Leigh Starr
Nathan & Jessica Ayers	Bill & Janice Freeman	Herb & Phyllis Kayne	Paul Niehaus	Andy & Cecile Stebbins
Elwood & Phyllis Baker	Jack & Judy Gallagher	Jack & Ruth Kelly	Seamus Norgaard	Evan & Suzy Steger
Steven Banghart Banghart	Pam Moxham & Garrett Cole	Dale & Terry Keyes	Larry Nygard	Hans & Davi Stein
Family Property	Taffy Raphael & Jim Gavelek	Donna Kieselbach	Scott & Margaret Osborne	Steven & Dianne Steinglass
Jodi Plumert & Tim Barrett	John & Sandra Gerrish	Andy Kohls	Ann Partridge	Matt & Suzi Peterson Steward
Jack & Cathy Bauman	Jan Gerson	Jacque & Mark LaFreniere	Therese & Fred Payne	Jeff & Sara Stone
Raymond & Priscilla Becker	Jim & Mary Gillingham	Lars & Doris Larson	Frank Galati/ Peter Amster	James R. Stout Sr.
Royce & Margie Beers	Ken & Pat Gitersonke	James & Caroline Latta	Pete & Sheila Peterson	Don & Diana Taylor
Narin & Nishta Bhatia	Paul & Ann Glendon	Greg & Mary Jane Lawson	Carey Johnson & Nancy	Kenneth Jay & Judy Taylor
Vince & Audrey Bielman	Timothy & Kathie Gonyeau	Ed & Beth Leuck	Peterson	Tom & Nita Thieme
Jim & Sandy Birdsall	Jeanne Graham	Little Traverse Conservancy	Fran & Marijean Pike	Bob and Kathy Tidmore
Eric & Kathryn Blalock	Brad & Pam Grassmick	David & Barbara Lucas	Pete Plastric	Brian Tidmore
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Sean & Michelle Bradley	Jim & Sarah Haveman	Marty & Jane Maehr	John Martin & Molly Resnick	Robert & Laurel Warski
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Auleen & Gerald Duffy	Paul Welke & Angela LeFevre	Sandra Michelsen	John & Joyce Runberg	Annalda Worsfold
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Kailonnie Dunsmore & Mark	Bruce & Lenor Jacobson	Charles & Sandra Morris	Craig & Sherry Schrottenboer	

TOTAL 2016-2017 MEMBERSHIP – 283

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The Beaver Island Association
Supporting Environmental and Economic Sustainability
P.O Box 390
Beaver Island, Michigan 49782

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

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

Beaver Island Association

Supporting Environmental & Economic Sustainability

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

*******Yes, please renew our Beaver island Association membership for 2016-2017 *******

Name(s)

Mailing Address

email address