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some stories in this issue:

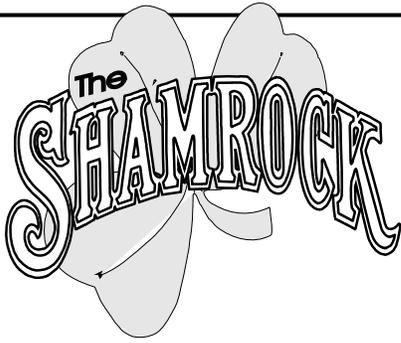
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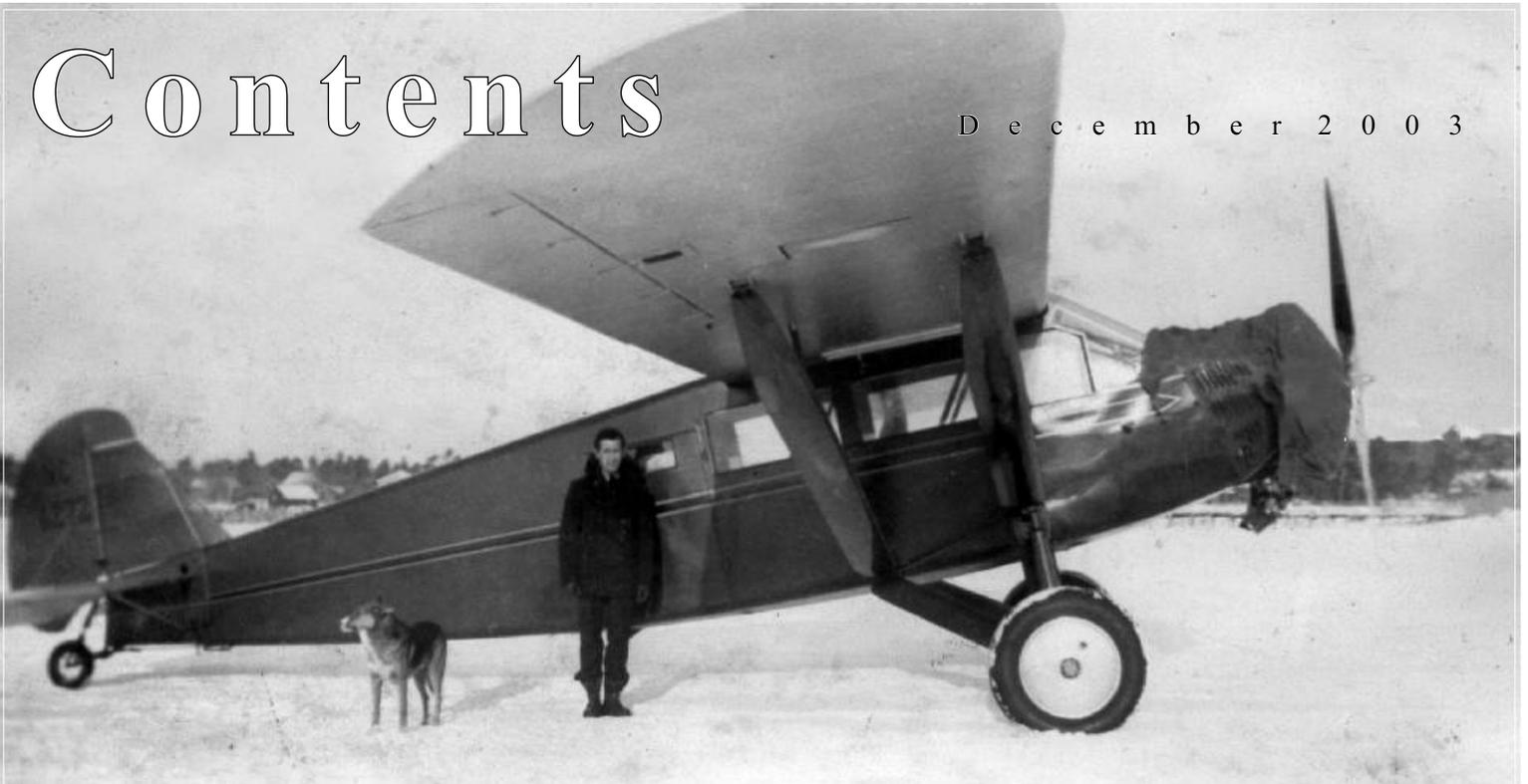
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the Island Monthly since 1955

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P.O. Box 254

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phone: (231) 448-2476

email: beacon@beaverisland.net

web: www.beaverbeacon.com

Editors / Owners

Jeff Cashman

jcashman@beaverisland.net

William Cashman

wcashman@beaverisland.net

Contributing Writers

Joyce Bartels

Kirk McBride

Robert Cole

Kitty McNamara

Judy Lanier

Diane McDonough

The *Beacon* wishes everyone a
very happy Holiday Season!

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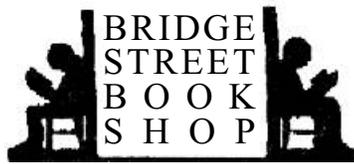
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Next Year's Fishing Tournament

The Amvets have voted to bury the hatchet and change our plans for a fishing tournament. We have decided to have it in the harbor, and to use some of the proceeds to try to enhance the walleye population there rather than at Lake Geneserath. We regret the possibility that the tournament may attract some off-Island participants, some of whom may stay for the entire weekend and spend their money for food, lodging, adult beverages, groceries, clothing, bait, boat slips, transportation, etc. And, heaven forbid, they may enjoy themselves and come back next year! I don't know how we can prevent this attack of "community spirit;" we'll just have to grin and bear it.

If you detect a note of sarcasm, quite frankly, it was intended. Our intent was certainly **not** to destroy the existing stocking program, community spirit, or a pristine lake.

From the outset, most of the Islanders were either misinformed and/or uninformed about our intentions and the potential for positive results on the Lake Geneserath walleye fishery. It is an unfortunate and lamentable fact that occasionally in a democracy a small vocal minority can and often does influence the majority. We hope this decision

to move the tournament to the harbor will silence the minority and benefit the majority.
—Don Bair

Points in response to the Wildlife Club's objections, which were written prior to the decision to change the tournament's location to the Harbor, included: (In response to the overall impact on the walleye and pike in the lake) An estimate is that the catch-and-release style of fishing might inadvertently kill 36 fish - but 1,000 9" walleyes will be introduced, a fair trade. Thousands of fish are likely taken and over a thousand likely killed in the course of normal yearly recreation on the lake; this one-day event would take only a tiny fraction of the existing yearly total. And there would still be the existing size limits in place. This tournament's impact would not be that different from our long-term efforts to encourage deer, duck, and rabbit hunting. (In response to Lake G. only supporting a few boats) If we attracted 40 boats, each would have nearly 15 acres of lake to fish. (In response to the limitations of the Launch Ramp) There would be no parking on the ramp, and it could even lead to a project to improve the ramp. (In response to community spirit) This contest is not diametrically opposed to "the spirit of rearing walleye to create a fishery for the people of Beaver Island." We contend the entire community would benefit, and thought the tournament and fishery project had identical goals - we are not trying to hinder the community effort in any way.

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December 6, 13, and 20 we will be 5 pm to 7 pm for pizza

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On December 20, in partnership with the Youth Consortium, we will sponsor a "Coffee House" after Christmas carolling for hot cocoa, pizza, etc. until 10 pm for grades 7 - 12.

Don't miss the Cantata!

The musicians, director Kathy Speck, and the 35 members of the choir have been practicing for months for this event, the 3rd annual Christmas Cantata, which will be performed on December 6th and 7th at 2:00 p.m. at the Beaver Island Christian Church. Those who attended last year's stirring performances saw that this is one event at which Beaver Island truly excels!

BMX at Peaine Park?

Four BICS students appeared at the November meeting of the Peaine Town Board to discuss their project: creating a track for BMX biking. Christine Runberg, Dylan Butler, Matt Kuligoski, and Keith Szczepanski said they were concerned that there weren't enough things for kids to do, and after considering several alternates had decided that creating a BMX track was a feasible solution to this problem.

They showed a drawing of a typical track. With obstacles and jumps, its three to six cutbacks could fit within an area about 125' x 150'. The track could be built from dirt. They admitted that they did not yet know how its construction and maintenance would be funded, but they wanted to tackle these issues, as well as those of

Santa Comes Calling

Santa will journey from the North Pole to Beaver Island on Saturday, December 13th. He's scheduled to be at the Emerald Isle Hotel at 1:00 p.m. with gifts for all the Island children who've either been good or have a fantastic excuse for being not so good. The Amvets' Auxiliary will have lunch for the kids from noon until 3:00 p.m. in the conference room.

liability, extra safety gear, and clean-up. They said the track would be limited to non-motorized use, although there might be a period for radio-controlled cars. It might also be fenced to reduce vandalism.

None of the students had done much BMX racing, but they thought this was a rising fad on the mainland and could serve a purpose here. One possible location was behind the Peaine Town Hall. They weren't here to ask that this be approved, but simply to inform the Board of their thoughts. They asked permission to continue developing their ideas, which was granted. They agreed to return with pictures of BMX tracks in use elsewhere, and such other documents as waiver forms.

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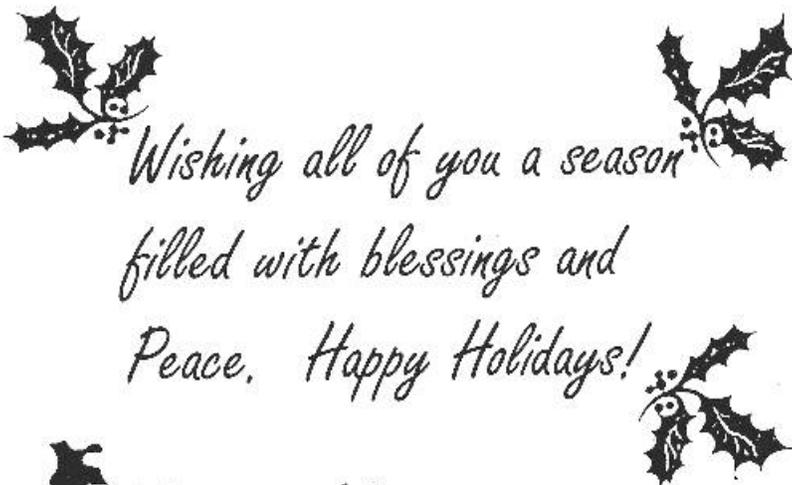
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On This Date

Ten Years Ago: The *Beacon* opened with a story about the Post Office's name change from "St. James" to "Beaver Island." New Postmaster Pam Brazda was sworn in, and Lil Gregg was commended for her many years of service. Ed Wojan spoke about the history of Beaver Island mail, and congratulated the Chamber of Commerce for having gotten the change made. A new sign, created by Sue Thompson, was installed. A special cancellation was developed and approved, and covers that went out on November 10, 1993 bore this testimonial to the dedication ceremony.

Dave Gladish's *Beacon Lite* included a poem titled *90% Inspiration*:

*Life's like sports: the pros all say
they practice four hours, every day,
which sounds a lot like work, I'm sure,
but life's no game for an amateur.*

Nine local men completed 56 hours of additional training to become certified as Medical First Responders: Dave Adams, Phil Becker, Steve Crandall, Bruce Cull, Gordy Hayes, Tim McDonough, Jim Stambaugh, Joe Timsak, and John Works Jr. [All nine are still here.]

The *Beaver Island Community Players* announced that it had cast all 24 parts and would put on Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* in early December.

Gail Weede, organizer of the

recent *Island Boodle*, prepared for the Columbus marathon by running comparable distances on the Island.

Mary Bert McDonough thanked all those who had helped her celebrate her 90th birthday on October 23rd, primarily Rich Gillespie, who had served as MC.

In Township news, a truck route through St. James was discussed; the EMS was guaranteed at least \$2,500; fuel oil was bought for \$0.92/gallon; a meeting was mentioned to discuss the possibility of building a co-generation power facility here; and the Frey Foundation gave St. James a \$10,000 grant to develop an Island Master Plan with the help of MSU's Landscape Architecture Program (which would receive these funds.)

The passing of Ione VanAntwerp, the Beaver Island Christian Church's organist, was noted.

Twenty Years Ago: The *Beacon* reported that the deer hunt was less successful than in previous years – because of poaching. The Game Club, the DNR, and the Charlevoix Prosecutor promised to crack down.

Alex Siudara reported that nine Sweet Adelines represented Beaver Island at the 37th annual competition at the Renaissance Center in Detroit.

The St. James Town Board moved to name the street running past the Christian Church "Haynes Street" to honor the late Dr. Harley Haynes, who had helped found the church.

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The school board held a special meeting to consider hiring a Special Ed teacher. Four applications had been received, and two candidates arrived for an interview. Karla Karbowski was given the job.

The Civic Association reported that its annual brochure had become more expensive, so this year the business ads, which had been free for members, would have to carry a charge that would vary with their size. Funds from memberships would be used for stamps for mailing brochures and for the activities supported by the Civic Association: the Winter Games, the Halloween Party, and the Fourth of July. The Civic Association intended to make benches for downtown with the proceeds from the raffle of a lot in the Port of St. James.

The Medical Center offered free diabetes testing.

The passing was noted of Meg Works McDonough, who was hit broadside by a car in San Antonio as she pulled out of a parking lot.

There was a surprise party at the *Circle M* to honor Vivian Visscher. Speakers included Phil Gregg, Len Siudara, Frank Nackerman, and Ed Wojan. She was presented with a Tree of Life by Martha Miller and Mary Scholl.

Beaver Island's Loch Ness searcher, Phyllis Syer, returned from another trip to Scotland, where she dissected fish, labeled specimens, and helped pull a sonar and photographic rig through the deep, cold water from a raft. "She's convinced that something is down there – maybe as many as thirteen mysterious creatures."

Thirty Years Ago: This was declared to be a "holiday issue," containing a Christmas story by Jim Bishop and wishes for good luck and health by the Island merchants.

Forty Years Ago: The *Beacon* began by reporting that ice was making in the harbor, and the *Beaver Islander* had finished its season. Snow began falling on November 23rd, and the temperature dipped to 23 on the last day of the month.

The deer season was deemed a success: 65 bucks, 41 does, 23 buck fawns, and 20 doe fawns were taken by 345 hunters – a 43% acquisition rate. The biggest, taken by Ron Scott of Ada, weighed in at 202 pounds.

A week after the season closed, Frank Neer and Frank O'Donnell spotted two bucks who'd broken through the Barney's Lake ice. The conservation officer rounded up some volunteers and equipped them with ropes, but just as they approached, the deer drowned. They hauled out and butchered the bodies, noticing, from the tracks, that actually four deer had gone in and two had somehow gotten out on their own.

Another unusual deer event was mentioned. Glen LaFreniere, Robert Gillespie, and John DeVogel and their dogs were out rabbit hunting in early November (rabbit hunting was very good, with one group coming back with 34) when a large buck bounded out of a thicket and dashed straight at Glen, whom it hadn't seen. At the last minute it noticed him and swerved sideways, but wound up jumping into a tree and breaking its neck. Glen was pretty shaken up because he'd felt its breath before it swerved. The conservation officer put it out of its misery.

Perry Gatliff won a prize for the largest trout, one from Fox Lake weighing 20 ounces.

Father Louis Wren presided over the wedding of Patricia Martin and A. J. Gallagher.

Passings noted included Ella Somerville and Mrs. L. J. Malloy, the former Ethel McDonough who was born in Chicago but lived here for 45 years. Also word was received of the passing of the wife of Roy Haverstock, who had helped start the *Beaver Beacon*. Births took place for Vickie Connaghan, Topper McDonough, and Bob and Sue Welke.

On the 1st day of December the Coast Guard closed its station and left the Island for the winter, after having partaken in 14 rescues this year.

The *Beacon* concluded with the story of the first auto trip from Beaver Island.

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A Marvelous Week with Moondance: Irish Film Company's Week on Beaver Island



The story of the trans-Atlantic Twinning of the islands of Beaver and Arranmore continues to unfold, some three years after a group of native Arranmore Islanders visited Beaver to initiate the joining, and eight months after a Beaver Island contingent visited Arranmore to complete the process. Yet the formal bonding of these sister islands was but the beginning of a larger phenomenon that now finds itself branching into new expressions, in the form of recovered blood ties, new friendships, and a recognition of the Twinning saga as a story worth sharing with a wider audience. The capturing of this story is a tale in itself.

Last February found Moondance Productions Managing Director Shane Brennan in the classroom of his flight instructor, who during the course of a lecture listed some of the places he had flown. One of these places was Beaver Island, which, the instructor mentioned in passing, was inhabited by descendants of Irish immigrants. His curiosity piqued, Shane looked up Beaver on the internet the following day, and found

that a group of islanders was planning a return to the home of their ancestors in County Donegal. Shane's professional instincts for a good story kicked in, and with less than two weeks remaining before the arrival of the group in Dublin, arranged to have his film crew meet and accompany the Beaver Islanders on the historic and emotional reunion with their kin on Arranmore. The young Dublin-based outfit was thus able to secure what no other potentially interested film company might later have wished to: footage of the dramatic moment when the Beaver Islanders first stepped off the ferry ramp to be met by the people of Arranmore; interviews with members of both communities; and a chance to cement personal and working relationships with those who would eventually become part of the documentary revealing the remarkable history between these isles.

This initial footage was culled to generate a seven-minute pilot film meant to attract the interest of broadcast outlets willing to support the documen-

tary. Eventually TG4, a branch of Ireland's national broadcast network RTE, opted to pick up the project. The pilot itself was screened locally during the intermission of a dance sponsored as part of the Beaver Island Historical Society's Museum Week last summer, and was met with great appreciation by the audience. Both those featured in the segment and those introduced to the documentary effort for the first time were impressed by the skill and sensitivity with which Moondance imbued the piece.

Meanwhile, back in Dublin, the crew was mapping out the production schedule for the months ahead. Though initial plans to arrive in the States by early October had to be postponed for logistical reasons, Moondance pledged to be on Beaver Island by the first week of November. The dedicated stateside cadre that had helped to make the Twinning itself a reality shifted into gear. A house party at the home of Jerry LaFreniere was planned in order to give the film crew an opportunity to capture the sights and sounds of Beaver's most enduring tradition. A large and lively crowd gathered there on the Saturday night of November 8th to enjoy musical performances by Ed Palmer, Cindy and Danny Gillespie, and Barry Pischner, along with Rich Scripps, Danny Johnson, and others. The revelers joined their voices in many a ballad celebrating both Irish and American cultures, and danced into the wee hours of the night. So began a busy week of filming that would involve many Islanders.

On Monday morning the crew sat down with Paul Cole, Cindy Gillespie-Cushman, and this writer to flesh out the shooting schedule for the rest of the week. Interviews with elder islanders were arranged, location shots were pondered, and the details of arranging several re-enactment scenes were discussed. Crew members Aaron Gallagher, Tom Burke, and Shane Brennan threw their vision and suggestions into the mix, and a basic picture of the week's tasks was laid out. Later that day interviews were filmed with Paul, Cindy, and Tara Palmer, along with a few location shots.

Tuesday and Wednesday brought the gang to the homes of Lawrence and

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Winnie McDonough and Helen Pike, as well as a return to Jerry's pole barn, where Ed Palmer was interviewed at the old upright piano, harmonica included. In between these segments were locale shots both planned and unplanned, such as the fortuitous arrival of the Coast Guard Cutter setting in the winter buoys.

As the week progressed, the men of Moondance became a familiar sight around the village, jumping in and out of the white truck Rich Gillespie had lent them, quickly setting up the camera and monitor here and there, with Tom Burke coveting his interviewer's clip board: "I'll ask the questions around here!" Shane manning the large camera, and a head-phoned Aaron standing by for sound. When time and energy permitted, a pint was lifted in the evening over talk of the project and other topics. This was the lads' first trip to the U.S., and there were questions and observations to be shared about life on both sides of the ocean. Some of those conversations centered around ideas raised by the thought-provoking questions the crew asked of their interview subjects, questions which prodded the consideration of deeper matters of identity, history, and the meaning of the ties that bind.

Thursday was the day set aside for the recreations of the past: the landing of an Irish immigrant family on the shores of Beaver, family scenes staged at the Protar house, a funeral at Holy Cross cemetery, and footage of a lighthouse keeper at both the Beaver Head and Whiskey Point lights. It was this day that resonated most strongly with all those assembled to play their roles. Carl Felix looked every bit the classic lighthouse keeper, and impressed us all

with his determined climb up the tower light at the south end, and his smiling face in the midst of some very bitter weather. We rushed madly to gather and place all the necessary props, dress the players, and bustle from location to location. Somehow by the end of the day everything that needed to be filmed was filmed, thanks in no small part to the enthusiasm and dedication of those who pitched in to play their roles: Carl Felix, Glen Felixson, Rory Connaghan, Bridget Wearn, Bridget Gillespie-Cushman, Daniel Runberg, and even infant Grainne Gillespie-Cushman.

The defining moment of the whole week for this writer came with an unexpected emotional force at Whiskey Point, in the midst of an early snow. We had found an old hand-crafted wooden skiff to use for the landing scene, and driven it by truck to the lighthouse. There we pulled it to the ground, and the men of the crew, along with some of the actors, lined up on either side to lift its weight and carry it together down to the lake. At that moment I realized that this was a scene played out countless times in Ireland and early Beaver Island by countless people stretching back into history; by fisherman who joined arms and will to ply the waters of ocean and lake, and by families braving both the first and last steps of a painful journey of exile. Somehow that simple act connected me to all those who had gone before me in a way that surpasses the ability of words to express. I had never felt so humbled and grateful for the great sacrifices my ancestors had made long ago, sacrifices that may once have



seemed abstract, but were now, suddenly, so clearly real. And this was a truth lived by many immigrants to this nation, not only the Irish. Surely the ancestors were with us that day, watching, guiding, celebrating our lives, and beckoning us to remember...

Later that night, as a tired but happy group of crew and friends gathered in the Shamrock, Shane quietly reviewed the events of the past week. "There's something different about this project. Something special." Indeed there is, and that something was large enough to beckon the involvement of a fine group of professional film makers who saw fit to bring this important story to a larger audience. The Twinning has become a circle that grows wider with each soul drawn into it, with each friendship forged and connection made. And as the crew made a final stop at Holy Cross Cemetery Friday and flew from the Island over the heads of Islanders hoisting the Irish and American flags, we knew the circle would flourish in ways yet to be imagined.

—Robert Cole



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Thank you to the people of Beaver Island

The crew of Moondance Productions wants take this opportunity to write this letter of gratitude for the support we all received whilst filming on Beaver Island.

The relationship between the crew of Moondance and Beaver Island started with the twinning in Arranmore last March. We had the pleasure to meet some remarkable and kind people during our stay there. It indeed changed our view of American people in a very positive way. Could you guys party!!! A relationship developed on Aranmore Island, not only with Islanders on both sides but with ourselves. For the period of eight months before our arrival on Beaver we had contact with various people nearly every week, some documentary related, and some just funny jokes. Then when we finally announced a definite date of arrival, a master plan of logistics was put in place with the help of the Beaver people. For this we are forever grateful.

Our stay on the Island was indeed memorial. From the moment we arrived you made us feel at home. It

was truly incredible that our accommodation, flights, means of transport, home cooked meals, phone calls, tours, film arrangements etc were catered for. We found the Islanders the most accommodating group of people we have had the pleasure to meet. I can't imagine a repeat of this anywhere else in the world. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the people in Chicago for their valuable assistance.

Apart from the work aspect, there have been many friendships forged for future generations to come. We found the Island of utmost beauty, and close community was very much observed. We hope that this documentary when broadcast will bring an even further positive spirit to your Island. I hope that our unique experience has been as life-touching to you as it has been to us.

We would like to return, hopefully for the US TV 'premier', but we would return, not as a TV crew, but as friends to the Islanders.

Thank you all, so much.
—The Crew of Moondance,
Shane, Tom & Aaron
shane@moondance.tv

Letters to the Editor: Medical Center Conflict

I've been so concerned and saddened over the past few months for the people of Beaver Island in regards to the Medical Center. Change is a fearful happening for some, and trust can be even scarier.

This letter is intended to offer my sincere concern and empathy for what you must be going through. I also would like to impart my first-hand knowledge as to the integrity and sincerity of Arlene Brennan.

I've known Arlene for over 20 years in a professional work arena. She and I worked at the same hospital together. She has evolved into an extremely intelligent, conscientious, well-organized, disciplined businesswoman. She is bright, fun, energetic, honest, sincere, and genuine. It appears that she has become the catalyst to many changes on Beaver Island, and that can be intimidating and scary at times.

Patrick Noland and myself tried to hire Arlene to run Boardman Lake

Glens, our 3-unit, 60-bed assisted living facility in Traverse City, and we felt unfortunate to not have secured her at that time. We feel you are fortunate to have her services because she's trustworthy and reliable.

Transformation can certainly seem overwhelming. I urge you to look at your own self-awareness and self-knowledge related to making these changes. I also urge you to acknowledge that many of your fears are of a personal arena to coping with change, and not those of fearing Arlene or the Board, for I believe their intentions are for the good of the Island and for its people.

Simply stated, knowledge can be understood as the **awareness** of the aspects of reality, whereas **wisdom** is the application of that knowledge. Change is inevitable. I wish you much, much wisdom.

—Nancy Larson
(BI property owner)

Welcome home, Sue and Frank

Many of Sue and Frank Solle's old friends attended the reception for them held at the Beachcomber on November 13, and many who hadn't yet met them stopped in to say hello. It was the perfect spot to be welcomed back because their romance was kindled at a Beachcomber closing—back in 1976.

They had both spent much time on the Island, Sue during summers starting in 1961 (her father, Dr. Matthew Hohn, ran CMU's Biological Station) and Frank beginning in 1968 when his step-father Dr. Christie moved here to become our doctor. On that magical Thanksgiving 27 years ago Sue had just returned from California



and Frank from two years in East Lansing after two years at North Central Michigan College in Petoskey. Once they found each other, they decided to go to Northern Michigan University.

Upon Sue's graduation in 1980, they moved to Montana, where they went to work in Polson, Montana, she as a nurse and he in a variety of jobs (his NMU BS was in conservation—he later added a BA in education from the University of Montana): sportswriter, mill worker, janitor at the hospital, stove shop worker, teacher of martial arts, and, mainly, helping to revitalize a dormant Tribal educational program.

After their son Scott finished high school and started college, Sue was ready for a change. Accepted into the Nurse Practitioner program at the University of Utah, she and Frank moved to Salt Lake City, where Sue earned her Masters degree in nursing. The catch

Eleanor Felix 1921-2003

Eleanor Felix, 82, died Saturday, November 1, 2003, at her home on Beaver Island. She was born August 17, 1921, in Smagerbachen, Sweden, the daughter of Albert and Clara (Alexanderson) Johnson. She grew up in Chicago, and married Carl Felix there in 1941. They moved to Beaver Island in 1950, then to Wisconsin, Chicago,

was Sue had been chosen as a National Health Service Corps scholar, agreeing to go wherever the government decreed, as in Northern Exposure, once her education had been completed. Luckily, one of their options was Ewen, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, which allowed them to move closer to family.

They arrived in Ewen in 1996. Sue went to work at the local community health center, working with a doctor her first year, but then became the primary care giver, seeing an average of 3,000 patients a year. Frank kept busy writing for three newspapers.

They began thinking of buying a home on Beaver Island for their retirement. When they heard about the new Health Center, they wondered if Sue might find a job here. Sue wrote to the Board President in April, but was informed there were no openings at that time. In mid-July, the situation changed and in August Sue came for an interview. She explained that the vaunted Beaver Island winters would not be a problem because in Ewen they were stuck 50 miles from anything during winters that included 300" of snow. Sue's broad experience qualified her, and a strong desire by both to return to Beaver cinched the deal. At the end of August Sue was offered the job. She began seeing patients here on October 6.

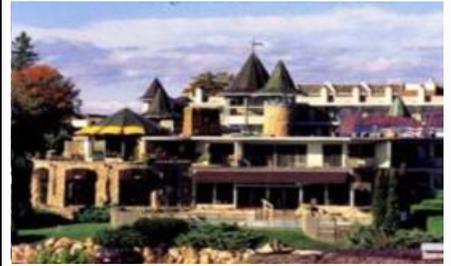
At the reception, one of the many toasters correctly summed up the prevailing attitude: "A perfect fit!"

and Maine before returning in 1986.

Eleanor was an avid gardener and a true Viking at heart. She is survived by her husband Carl; sons Glen of Beaver Island, Kurt of Portland; and Leif (Debbie) of Milbridge, Maine; 7 grandchildren; and 15 great-grandchildren.

In the spring Eleanor's ashes will be interred on Beaver Island.

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Mediation comes to Beaver Island

Traditionally, disputes have been settled here rather directly, mano-a-mano out behind the bar. The trouble with this approach has been that the losing party has sometimes borne a grudge – into the third and fourth generation. But on November 10th the CCG and BIRHC attempted to settle their differences in a new way: through the facilitation of a professional mediator, Kathy Lane of Northern Community Mediation. This agency operates under the auspices of the State Court Administrative Office. It is a non profit corporation supported by local and state funding that provides mediation services and conflict resolution resources to the citizens of Charlevoix and Emmet counties at little or no cost. Kathy Lane, an RN married to a physician, has been involved with mediation for ten years and has 700 hours of personal experience dealing with conflict.

At the onset (9:40 a.m.) she reiterated the ground rules: four members from each group; an open meeting; no interruptions from the audience; and no decisions would be made. Either group could break to caucus. A list of grievances submitted by each group would serve as the agenda. Discussions would

remain respectful. Attribution could be limited.

Before either side got into its issues, Pete LoDico read a letter from Charlevoix Prosecutor Mary Beth Kur, which had just arrived. The spirit of this letter (summarized on *page 14*) was to exonerate the BIRHC from most charges raised by the CCG.

Kirk McBride (CCG) then asked for equal time to respond to the letter. He accepted it as advisory, agreed that the Freedom of Information Act was not relevant, challenged its approval of requiring people to sign up in advance in order to speak, and vigorously contested its statement that the CCG had a responsibility to inform the BIRHC that it would have over 100 members at the July 15th meeting – because the CCG didn't exist until three days later. Kirk recounted a conversation he'd had with Connie Wojan after that meeting in which she had challenged him to name one person who had wanted to attend but was unable because the building (St. James Town Hall) was not large enough. He read an affidavit from one such person, Harry Wanty, who also said, under oath, that others had been in the same boat.

At this point Kathy Lane tried to focus both groups on the present instead of the past. Accordingly, the CCG stated its first issue: that the BIRHC acknowledge its duty to abide by the Open Meetings Act (OMA.) This became a moot point when Kathy Lane pointed out that after the 8-1-02 contract between the BIRHC and both Townships, which mandated following the OMA guidelines, the BIRHC By-laws were amended to include it as well. Pete added that part of the orientation for new Board members would be to familiarize them with the OMA. Kirk suggested that other organizations might want to study this as well.

It fell to the BIRHC to state a grievance, which was that the lack of respect and the outright heckling were counter-productive and made communication difficult. Sharon Nix (CCG) countered that the CCG members were being unduly blamed because “heckling” had also been manifest by two members of the BIRHC Board. It was said that the meeting's monitor should keep better order; Connie Wojan replied that she isn't always aware of grumblings in the audience that she later learns have been distracting. Kirk agreed that eliminating heckling was everyone's responsibility, not just the chair's.

After a lunch break the CCG proposed that the BIRHC Board become an elected board. There was a lengthy discussion of how this could be done (at an annual meeting or in a general election), of possible negative consequences, of the cost, and of whether or not it would be legal. The BIRHC committee pointed out that each township board (an elected body) appoints a member to the BIRHC board, so there already is some indirect electability. Paul Nelson (BIRHC) said that an election might require the creation of a Med Center Authority – another expense. Barb Murphy (BIRHC) mentioned that the CCG had approved of the three new members. Nevertheless the CCG thought since public money (not just millage, but grants as well) is involved, more accountability, through elections, would be good. Kirk then made this into a formal proposal, asking the

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BIRHC to move towards being an elected board.

The BIRHC complained about the flurry of negative (and at times factually incorrect) information coming from the CCG. Kirk said that this had resulted from the BIRHC's failure to be more responsive. One example Pete provided of "incorrect information" was that Kirk had said the new building was "ten times larger than it had to be." Kirk defended this by citing his research into other small-town medical centers. Some of them with a comparable number of patients were operating fine in a quarter of the new building's 8,000 ft², and one facility using 8,200 ft² saw 27,000 patients a year, more than ten times the 2,600 who were cared for here last year.

As the meeting progressed, both parties seemed to try harder to resolve their differences. There was quite a discussion of how to organize public comments. Requiring written comments to be submitted at the onset of a meeting was not practical because then somebody would have to review them and decide which to include. Besides, some comments were "germane to the moment," in Krys Lyle's phrase. Mike Hurkmans (CCG) pointed out that the agenda might be posted in advance, but it might not contain enough information to allow someone to formulate a response before the meeting. Sharon Nix said that the propane discussion at the last BIRHC might serve as a model: the public was allowed to comment at that moment instead of having to wait until after matters had been voted on, and this was quite productive. Kirk agreed that "each meeting of the BIRHC has been getting better." Eula Thomas (BIRHC) pointed out that a procedure was passed at the last meeting that answered many of the CCG's points about public comment.

After a break, Kirk asked for some assurance that the BIRHC felt the Medical Center operation would continue to be financially solvent. The BIRHC group turned this around, saying that such assurances would be more forthcoming if the CCG would pitch in and help. Barb Murphy (BIRHC) pointed out that this transition period would be

particularly difficult because budget projections were being made in areas for which no one had any experience – such as the cost of utilities. (Despite the architect's assurances last winter that better technology and materials would allow the new large building to function at the same cost as the old one, the BIRHC apparently feels this is not likely to be the case.) The BIRHC was confident it would get through the next year, but said that if it couldn't, it might have to scale back its *always open* policy. And it reminded the CCG that throughout its operation in the old building, there were always financial problems.

Kirk asked the BIRHC to issue a proactive statement that it was trying to resolve the differences between the two groups. Gerald LaFreniere (the EMS delegate to the BIRHC) said he'd like to see the CCG state that it felt these differences were being resolved. The general attitude was one of cooperation.

At 3:15 p.m. the CCG introduced the idea of measurable criteria for determining the success or failure of the Transition Manager's tenure. Pete produced a list of her "operational objectives." Kirk wondered if what has been fre-

quently cited as her primary accomplishment, the reducing of accounts receivables from \$62,000 to \$50,000 (along with the creation of a billing system that will keep such large amounts from developing in the future) was worth it, considering that she was paid around \$45,000 during this time – especially considering others were working on this (and were paid.) An accompanying CCG concern was the scope of her authority, which led to the question of whether or not the non-renewal of Susan Meis had been done properly. The CCG pressed this, wanting the BIRHC "to admit its mistake – so it doesn't happen again." Connie Wojan, speaking from the audience, agreed that although she did not feel they had made a mistake, she could see how this could be regarded as a "grey area."

As time was running out, the CCG said it had only two more issues: making sure Dr. White's contract is resolved to her satisfaction, and discovering the exact nature of the financial aspects of Pine River Medical's involvement. All in all, after a long and frequently charged day, both parties felt that a significant step towards resolving their differences had been taken.



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Excerpts from the Letter from the Prosecuting Attorney

I have been asked about the applicability of the Open Meetings Act by representatives of the Board and the CCG. I represent neither entity and, unlike the Michigan Attorney General, my opinions do not carry precedential value. I have no attorney-client relationship with the Board nor with the CCG.

However, as the Chief Law Enforcement officer of Charlevoix County I do handle any criminal complaints concerning alleged violations of OMA. Questions have also been raised concerning the Michigan Freedom of Information Act. FOIA carries no criminal penalties, thus no review of alleged FOIA violations would ever occur by my office. With that having been said, I believe it is my duty to respond to your questions. To this end, I have done a thorough review of the all of the documentation presented to me and also the applicable law. I will attempt to answer the questions that have been submitted to me. This opinion is advisory only.

The Board governing the Beaver Island Rural Health Center has always been an incorporated nonprofit organization. In the mid 90's the Board amended and re-wrote their articles of incorporation. This enabled the BIRHC to be designated as a "rural health cen-

ter" and also allowed the center to be qualified for the receipt of federal and state dollars that would otherwise have not been available. The BIRHC receives less than one third of its funding from a millage levied by the two townships on Beaver Island.

Applicability of OMA: The Board is not a public body as defined under Michigan law. However, the Board by an Agreement dated August 1, 2002 has agreed contractually to comply with OMA so it must do so. All representatives from the Board that I have spoken with have recognized this and have also indicated a willingness to comply. But for this contractual provision, the Board would not be required to comply with OMA. No one on this Board is subject to removal from the Board by recall. The Board is free to adopt rules, policies, and operating procedures to the extent that they do not conflict with OMA.

Applicability of FOIA: Since the Board has not agreed by contract to comply with FOIA it is not required to do so as it is not a public body and FOIA only applies to public bodies. Hence there is no obligation imposed on the Board to appoint a FOIA coordinator or to respond to FOIA requests. Again, FOIA carries no criminal penalties.

Under OMA, can a Board prohibit video or audio taping of meetings? No. Members of the public may video or audio tape board meetings.

Under OMA can a Board require those desiring to address it to identify themselves? Yes. The Board may not require people who are simply attending it's meetings to identify themselves but they may require those who wish to speak to identify themselves and give advance notice that they wish to speak.

What are the Board's responsibilities in the event of an overcrowded meeting? If a large organized group such as the CCG knows in advance it will attend a public meeting and regular meeting place will not accommodate such a group, *the group is required to give advance notice to the public body.* The Board is then required to exercise sincere efforts to accommodate the number of people who may reasonable expected to attend.

May an individual or group request notice of posted meetings?

Yes. Upon the written request of an individual, organization, firm, or corporation and upon the requesting party's payment of a yearly fee of not more than the reasonable estimated cost for printing and postage of such notices, a public

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body shall send to the requesting party a copy of any notice required to be posted under the OMA.

What are the Board's responsibilities regarding discussion of materials exempt from public disclosure? The Board may meet in closed session for the purposes stated in MCLA 15.268 (a-j). Subsection (h) allows for closed session to discuss material exempt from discussion by state or federal statute.

May Board members participate in meetings and vote via speaker phone? The Board is free to make rules regarding meeting procedures so long as the rules do not conflict with the OMA which is silent on this subject. If the Board establishes rules allowing such a procedure, it is my opinion that it would not be in violation of the OMA.

Will there be criminal prosecution? While I have not been presented with a police report about alleged violations of law, several allegations have been made by the CCG. Many of those are unrelated to the OMA but rather, if true, may constitute violations of other provisions of the Michigan Penal Code. I have advised citizens of the proper procedure to follow in the event of an alleged criminal law violation. The first step is to make a complaint with the

police. After a complaint is made, the police then determine whether or not they have enough evidence of a crime to submit a warrant request to my office. If they do, an attorney in my office then reviews the request and makes a determination as to whether or not criminal charges should be issued.

With regard to possible prosecution of BIRHC Board members for alleged violations of the OMA, it is my opinion based only upon the evidence I have before me that criminal prosecution should not commence. Among the elements that must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt in a prosecution is that the person being prosecuted "specifically intended to violate to OMA." Thus it must be shown that each member had the specific intent to violate the OMA, not just a reckless disregard of the law or even deliberate ignorance of the act.

I do not see any evidence of an intentional violation of the law here. On the contrary, what I see are two groups of people, both well intended, who are equally concerned with compliance by the BIRHC with the intent and spirit of the OMA law. Additionally, I cannot say that either side is not concerned with having a well-run, quality health care facility on Beaver Island. In my opinion

the Board has demonstrated not only a willingness but also a desire to be compliant with and responsible in the execution of their duties. For that they should be congratulated. Additionally, they receive no compensation for their service. It is my understanding that the Board has recently added three new members, all of whom were supported by the CCG in writing.

It is unlikely that the makeup of the BIRHC Board is going to change. The Board makes its own bylaws and procedures with regard to membership and operations. They are not elected by the people. As such, I believe it would be in the best interest of the entire Beaver Island community to have selected members from the Board and the CCG participate in facilitated mediation.

As a former Board member for the Northern Community Mediation Center and a participant in several mediations through the juvenile court, I cannot overstate the effectiveness of this process. Our center in Charlevoix County has received state wide acclaim for its successes. Kathy Lame is an outstanding mediator with education and training in both mediation and the medical field. As such she is an excellent choice for all involved here.

—Mary Beth Kur

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The CCG Responds to the Prosecutor's Letter

The CCG recognizes the motive for the BIRHC Board to go public with the letter from Mary Beth Kur. We also appreciate the advisory opinions that County Prosecutor rendered at the request of the BIRHC and the CCG. Of the eight opinions, the CCG agrees with four of them. It is important to understand that the remaining four are subject to appeal with the Prosecutor. The opinions subject to appeal are as follows:

Under OMA can a Board require those desiring to address it to identify themselves? OPINION: Yes, the Board

may not require people simply *attending* its meeting to identify themselves but may require those who wish to speak to identify themselves and give notice that they wish to speak [See MCLA 15.263 (4)(5) and OAG 5183 and 5332]

APPEAL: The CCG agrees with the opinion as stated. Our appeal is based on MCLA 15.263 (5) which reads: A person shall be permitted to address a meeting of a public body under rules established and recorded by the public body. The CCG contends that when the BIRHC Board imposed its two-minute limit on public

comment, it did so without having the "rules established and recorded by the public body." When the board was questioned at the time, the president stated that "other Island board meetings use that rule so we are going to." The BIRHC Board imposed the restriction without having it as an "established and recorded" rule. The CCG does not object to the BIRHC establishing and recording rules in accordance with the above opinion.

What are the Board's responsibilities in the event of an over crowded meeting? OPINION: If a large organized group such as the CCG knows in advance it will attend a public meeting and a regular meeting place will not accommodate such a group, *the group is required to give advance notice to the public body.* The Board is then required to exercise sincere efforts to accommodate the number of people who may reasonable expected to attend [See OAG 5183, p. 33]

APPEAL: The CCG contends that this is an incorrect Attorney General Opinion to cite. The July 15th BIRHC Board meeting to discuss the Susan Meis non-renewal of contract was the overcrowded meeting of the public. The CCG was organized on July 18th, three days after that meeting. Therefore, there was no organized group to give advance notice to the board. The Attorney General Opinion that should have been cited is No. 5614, which reads: Where a larger than anticipated group wishes to attend a public meeting, the Open Meetings Act does not require the public body to adjourn the meeting to a larger meeting room, but the public body should exercise reasonable efforts to accommodate interested members of the public, including reconvening the meeting in a larger room where practicable. At the July 15th meeting, the public repeatedly asked the president to move the meeting to another location in order to accommodate all interested individuals waiting outside the township hall. The request was refused and people were excluded from attending this important meeting and expressing their views. As a result the CCG contends that the Open Meetings Act was violated and the public disenfranchised.

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What are the Board's responsibilities regarding discussion of materials exempt from public disclosure?

OPINION: The Board may meet in closed session for the purpose stated in MCLA 15.268 (a-j). Subsection (h) allows for closed session to discuss material exempt from discussion by state or federal statute.

APPEAL: The CCG fully agrees with the Prosecutor's opinion. However, the board made the decision to not renew Susan Meis' contract outside of an open meeting or a closed session that is required under MCLA 15.268 (a-j). Nor did the board go from the required open meeting into a closed session or take a vote by the members to call a closed session. By process of elimination, the meeting on Meis's contract must have been made in a secret forum of the board members which constitutes a clear violation of the Open Meetings Act, regardless of the board's stated intentions.

May Board members participate in meetings and vote via speaker telephone? OPINION: The Board is free to make rules regarding meeting procedures so long as the rules do not conflict with the OMA which is silent on this subject. If the Board establishes rules allowing such a procedure, it is my opinion that it would not violate the OMA.

APPEAL: The CCG agrees that the OMA is silent on this subject but not the Attorney General as cited in **2410.02 Open Meetings Act** where the Attorney General's opinion was: *In general, all meetings of a public body are to be open to the public and held in a place available to the public. Decisions of the public body are to be made in open meetings and with rare exceptions, all deliberations are to be made in open meetings. Under the Act, phone call conference meetings generally are not allowed.* The CCG encourages individuals who accept the responsibility of serving on the BIRHC Board, to make every attempt to be present at its regular meetings. Contrary to the Attorney General Opinion above, we are not opposed to the use of teleconferencing on a rare exception basis.

The CCG fully agrees with the Prosecuting Attorney's opinion that even if violations of the Open Meetings Act by

the BIRHC are determined to have happened, there should be no punitive action taken. The only purpose the CCG has in bringing these issues to the attention of the BIRHC Board is for the board to:

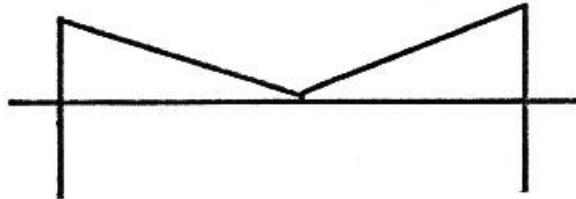
1. Recognize that they may have unintentionally violated certain sections of the Open Meetings Act;
2. To obtain professional in-service training in application of the Open Meetings Act;
3. To learn from experience so as not to repeat mistakes relative to the Open Meetings Act; and,

4. To be open to consideration and discussion should future questions relative to operating under the Open Meetings Act come to the board's attention.

The CCG does not wish to pursue punitive action. Our only intent is to have the BIRHC Board appropriately conduct business under the Open Meetings Act. We are ready to move on with the healing process and resolve our differences. It's time to get behind OUR Health Center in the best interest of ALL.

–Kirk McBride, CCG

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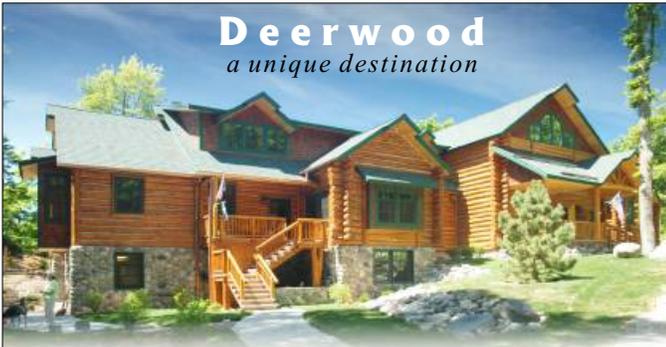
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How Bazaar... How Bazaar...

Once again the Christmas season was initiated in fine fashion with a Bazaar at the Holy Cross Hall on a cold and rainy Sunday before Thanksgiving. Fifteen tables were assigned to various stores and civic groups, and shoppers had quite a selection to choose from: books, baked goods, and craft items—such as Ray Matela’s fine wood sculptures and Mary Scholl and Jo Hooker’s ceramics. Since shopping makes some people hungry, there were also many delectables, both in the kitchen and at the tables.



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In the middle of the month, a few days after the cover shot was taken, the winds kicked up, reaching sixty miles an hour, the rain turned into a tumult, the temperature plummeted, and fifteen-foot waves kept the ferry at the dock. That evening the power went out for much of the Island – at nine for some, at midnight for others. It was back on the following morning, with the blown-down trees cut up and hauled off the lines. No one was hurt, and some pleasure was taken in learning that power had all been restored on the Island faster than in many other parts of the State where the winds had blown even more fiercely.



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Thanks from the Sports Boosters

The Beaver Island Sports Boosters say **Thank You** in a big way for all the support everyone has given to make this sports year possible despite the budget cuts. The community really pulled together. During homecoming, an active group of parents under the direction of Laura Gillespie and John and Carol Runberg raised \$1,000 selling food at the softball tournament. The Island Boodle organized by Gail and Mike Weede generated close to \$2,000 to offset travel costs associated with the sports program. And a group from Charlevoix hosted a golf outing sponsored by John Fiedorek of the Flight Deck which raised \$3,400. Thank you! – Diane McDonough



The Very Newest Islanders

Dawn and Bob Marsh added a beautiful seven-pound baby girl to their family on 11-21: Skylar Faith, joining brothers Ron and Jordan. Grandparents Ladonis and Eleanor Mooney were tremendously delighted.

Heather (Gillespie) and Scott Barile had let the Island know about their perfect new son McKinley Daniel the week before, and were pleased his record (for Island babies born in November) of 8.15 pounds (with a length of 21”) was not broken. Grandparents John and Jean Gillespie concurred.






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News from the Townships

St. James Township, 11-5-2003

Twelve people attended this meeting of the full board, which began with the announcement that a hurdle in the acquisition of the Whiskey Point Light had been overcome: it had to be eligible for the National Registry, and the State Historic Office had just accepted the fact that it was.

Facilitated by the Nature Conservancy, whose Beaver Island Natural Areas Committee made it its top priority, the acquisition of the Petritz property is also on track. This 15-acre beach parcel might become a "silent park" (walking on its trails, but not camping.)

A draft of a Gas Franchise Ordinance was presented by Great Lakes Energy for the Township's consideration. This document is necessary to allow for the installation of a gas line from the propane storage facility at Four Corners to the new Health Center. It would not be for the exclusive benefit of GLE, and if the Health Center changes vendors, it's conceivable that the new supplier could strike a deal to use GLE's pipe. As long as GLE uses it, they will maintain insurance coverage and the indemnification of the Township.

The overwhelming success of the Bike Trail led to consideration of its extension to the Font Lake boat launch. Unfortunately a preliminary estimate

set the cost at \$150,000. Easements would have to be obtained, and the semi-wetland stretch near the Parker home negotiated. Obtaining the money will be difficult, Supervisor Don Vyse stated. One somewhat feasible scenario depicted contributions from the State, the Little Traverse Bay Band, the Port of St. James Property Owners' Association, and the Township.

The inadequacy of the Road Commission garage was discussed: more County equipment would be used on the Island if there was a place to store it. One possibility involved the Townships giving the CCRC 5 acres behind the Transfer Station, where it could build a new garage and relocate its operation. Perhaps the Township could acquire the existing site as part of a swap, and put it to other uses.

The question of the Community House well took a different form. If it puts down a well on its site, or even up to 300' away, it will have to be monitored. An earlier request to use a Township well had to be amended because the Community House will have to have a Class Two well, which neither existing well is (the restrooms or the yacht dock.) Now PABI would like permission to install a Class Two well on Township property – assuming it can obtain the intervening easements. PABI would be willing to consider let-

ting the Township tap some of the water this new well would provide to supplement its currently strained use. The board decided to ask its attorney to look into the legal ramifications of such an agreement.

A lengthy discussion took place between the Board and CCG representative Kirk McBride, who had requested being put on the agenda. He announced that mediation would begin on November 11th, and wanted the Board to know that the CCG felt the BIRHC was in violation of at least two sections of its agreement with the Townships: the Open Meetings Act requirement, and the mandate to provide dental services.

He said he had reason to believe that Sue Meis's non-renewal was decided outside of an open meeting. Connie Wojan, BIRHC Board President, said that Charlevoix County Prosecutor Mary Beth Kur had promised to deliver an opinion, and had said her preliminary view was that the BIRHC Board was not in violation. Kirk McBride replied that perhaps no merit had been found in previous charges relayed to Kur, but this matter had not been on that list. He also said that the BIRHC Committee that had recently met with Dr. Wendy White to devise a contract seemed to be at an impasse, and asked the Town Board to make a commitment that she could continue to use her current office for her practice until the new contract was resolved.

The Board expressed some dismay that it had reached this point. Don Vyse asked what he could do to resolve the situation, and said he did not think the CCG's dual path of mediation and litigation was helping. If Kur found a violation of the Open Meetings Act had occurred, no one would be jailed or fined; instead, the BIRHC Board would be warned not to do it again.

In other news, the CCRC meeting on our possible Main Street parking lot had been cancelled, and suit to abandon the unbuilt road would be brought instead – which will take four months. Harborscapers will assist Master Gardener Pam O'Brien in the development of the park across from the



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Shamrock. Martin's bid of \$1.44 for fuel oil was accepted, as was Gordy Heika's plowing bid.

Peaine Township, 11-12-2003

At the Peaine Town Board meeting of 11-12, the GLE request for a franchise for running propane lines was granted; a bid of \$1.45/gallon for fuel oil was accepted; and snowplowing bids from Gordy Heika of \$45 for the Town Hall and \$52 for the Transfer Station were approved.

A letter was read proposing a road sign for Hanger Road (south of the west end of the East/West strip at the Welke Airport) to facilitate emergencies. The Board felt this would have to be done by the owners of the ten hangers since this is a private road on private land.

Two letters from the CCG were read into the minutes. In response to one that asked how Peaine would deal with allegations of OMA violations, Supervisor John Works' written response was also read into the minutes. He said that he had discussed possible violations with Peaine's appointed member, Dr. Paul Nelson, and at this time he felt there was insufficient evidence to support such an allegation.

Judy Lanier mentioned having received a copy of Mary Beth Kur's letter – which was not read into the minutes because of its length.

Judy also reported on the status of the Planning Commission's Master Plan Committee's survey, which has not been mailed. Eight people (four year-rounders, four seasonal dwellers) have been honing the questions on the survey, and have taken it through eight drafts. They were going to distribute it, but one member thought the Town Board should first approve it. But the Board was not so inclined, saying it felt several questions (perhaps one third) were not appropriate for a land use study – questions about politics or finances. The principle behind the survey was to determine what character is desired for Peaine, what has to be done to achieve this character, and how those things can be achieved, Judy said. She explained that the results would be handled by a computer program that would let the planners then fine-tune the

answers, asking, for example, how frequently those favoring one side of an issue came to the Island versus those favoring the other side.

Apparently a "pirated draft" had been circulated, and some members of the audience agreed that some questions should not be asked in their present wording – such as about preferences for government spending for services. Consequently it was agreed that the committee would consider written and verbal remarks from Town Board members and present a revised survey to the Board before mailing – hoped for in January.

Judy also wanted the Board to determine if its mission was to create a Peaine Master Plan that would be incorporated in a Beaver Island Master Plan, or if it was to work on a Master Plan for the entire Island. After some discussion of exactly what difference this would make, the decision was that this committee should give priority to Peaine.

Treasurer Tina Morgan said that one of the 51 personal property tax delinquencies had been resolved, and that the period of grace (no interest) would run to December 1st.

Paul Nelson reported on a meeting of the Charlevoix chapter of the MTA. Melrose Township has been hearing the same song from the CCRC: "we don't have any money for your roads." So

they've formed a task force to create a 10- or 20-year plan. If the gas tax revenue was distributed the way it was supposed to be at the onset, it was said, there would not be a problem.

Supervisor Works brought up the possibility of a land swap with the CCRC so it could build a larger barn (behind the Transfer Station), so there could be more and larger road equipment left on the Island.

Speaking of the roads, Terry Saxton reported that he has noticed an additive being applied to sections of the East Side Drive. At first he didn't think anything of it, but when he had to change a tire he discovered it was cat box residue. John Works asked the Deputy to look into this. Someone else suggested the new Ordinance Enforcement Officer.

Saxton also said the trail meetings were canceled due to a lack of funds.

Island Grandson on Dean's List

Garrett Hirschey, the son of Karen Hirschey and the grandson of Bill and the late Ruth Hirschey, pulled a 3.68 gpa last semester at DeVry University in Addison, Illinois, putting him on the Dean's List. His accomplishment was even more noteworthy, because he aced calculus – which most of us have had to struggle to just get through.



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PABI Ends the Year Actively – and with Appreciation

The Preservation Association moved closer to its final plans for Beaver Island's Community Center, with an architectural sketch meeting the township's parking requirements. But Don Tritsch, chair of PABI's Building & Property Committee and member of the Planning Commission, thinks the sketch still needs work. "We want a plan that satisfies the Planning Commission, enhances the downtown streetscape, and creates an attractive and useful Community Center," says Tritsch. "More off-site parking and fewer on-site spaces could give us a more unique design and less blacktop – so we should still consider the possibilities" he says. So Tritsch is still looking for a nearby parking alternative to meet the township target – though he has not yet found one.

The issues and possibilities now being considered by the PABI Board members are key to the future of the building. This summer the architects held a design charrette with the Board and interested Islanders, and recommended putting the facade from the old general store inside the Community Center instead of out. The architects felt the original facade would be better

preserved and displayed by putting it inside the building as an entrance to the Events Center. Though controversial, the possibility received enough support that the architects created an initial drawing that put the old exterior inside.

The McCann Building's original facade became the entrance to the Center for Island Events and Performing Arts, and it was graced by a two-story atrium with a close-up view of the preserved edifice. The building was to be 1 ½ stories, with the events center having a high ceiling for the most beneficial acoustics – and accommodating 150 people. The catch was that these design possibilities couldn't work with two one-way drives, the existing on-site parking requirements, and a building footprint of the size needed. With the old exterior inside the building, the shape also became more broad than narrow.

After much discussion, the Board faced the likely possibility that the facade would have to be on the outside as originally planned – though the costs might be somewhat higher. But either inside or out, the facade will be preserved – as will the look of the old general store. So our current sketch will go

to the Planning Commission on December 4th. It is less dramatic than some of the other possibilities, but it will reflect the Board's commitment to a Welcoming Center for Island visitors, a Youth Center for our teens (and our seniors during school hours) and an Events Center for a variety of performances, meetings, and family / community occasions.

Although Don Tritsch and other Building & Property Committee members might still find parking alternatives that could again change the site plan, the PABI Board is committed to staying on schedule with their construction targets – beginning construction in the spring of 2004, and completing construction no later than spring of 2005.

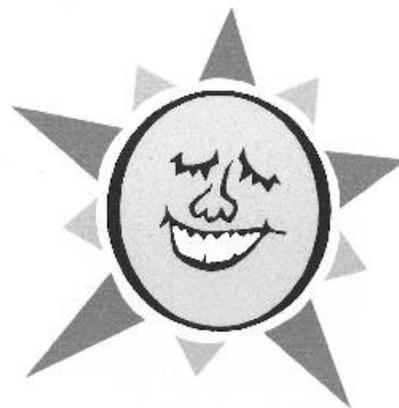
As the year ends, PABI continues to fund raise and address the current construction issues. Speaking on behalf of the Board, Judy Lanier said, "we are both proud and grateful to a community that has contributed over \$925,000 for its Community Center." During this giving holiday season she suggests that we again thank all who have given to the environmental clean-up and preservation of the Dockside site over the years. And she asked that we publicly

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recognize the many five- and six-figure donors who gave on behalf of their families to *recreating* the old market as a Community Center.

So thanks to the Founding Families of the Beaver Island Community Center. We are indeed all grateful for the generosity you have shown by pledging your support to efforts that will help keep our community together in the years to come. We hope this list of Founding Families will continue to grow throughout 2004 as we approach completion of the Center. Thank-you one and all – but especially the following families:

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Peter Amster and Frank Galati | Perry E. Lanier |
| Elwood and Phyllis Baker | Dennis and Jackie Madigan |
| Eugene and Josephine Bonadeo | Don and Kay Masini |
| Glen and Elizabeth Borre | Bud and Skip McDonough |
| Jack Boyle and Beatrice O'Donnell Boyle | Tom and Laurie McDonough |
| Jon and Sally Fogg | Loren and Ann Meengs |
| Jack Gallagher and Judith Lanier | H. Gary and Renee' B. Morse |
| Paul and Ann Glendon | Robert Neff and Julie Ebers |
| Ann H. Goodrich and Janice G. Gerson | Edwin and Sheila Peterson |
| Ralph and Jeanne Graham | Russell, Thelma, and Sally Pryce |
| Grand Traverse Band of Chippewa & Ottawa Indians | Joe and Marilyn Reed |
| Karl and Pinky Harmon | Ric Roane and Peter Doele |
| Ronald and Suzie Jakubas | Bill and Eula Thomas |
| George Kress | Bob and Sharon Toms |
| Archie and Frances LaFreniere | Edward and Linda Troutman |
| Phillip and E.B.Lange | Bill and Jerrie Turner |
| | Alden and Judith Walters |
| | Bob and Sue Welke |
| | Ed and Willie Welter |
| | John and Katherine Wilson |
| | Ed and Connie Wojan |



AmVets hold Veterans' Day Ceremony

This year's annual AmVets Veteran's Day Ceremony was, as usual, a moving event. Young and old—including the school kids from across the street—gathered in front of the Holy Cross Catholic Church, and the Moondance crew also filmed the event because it symbolized Beaver Island's traditionally strong sense of patriotism. Veterans who were not part of AmVets were also acknowledged by gathering at the front after the names of those no longer with us were read.

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To the Governor

Honorable Jennifer M. Granholm—

As you continue the very difficult task of piecing together a State budget for the legislature, I feel it is necessary to make you aware of budget issues that directly affect the Beaver Island Community School District's ability to maintain a K-12 educational program on the most remote inhabited island in the Great Lakes. This school year, our public school district will receive less than \$30,000 in State Funding and no Federal Title 1 money. Specifically, I am interested in meeting with you to discuss the possibility of a Small Schools Payment that would allow us to rebuild a system that has been shattered by financial constraints and thus threatens to shatter a whole community.

Beaver Island is home to approximately 500 year-round residents, 185 of whom are school children or parents of school children. If a vital K-12 district is not guaranteed for our district, about 40% of the Island's population would be forced to abandon a way of life which for the majority is a continuation of six generations of Island culture, traditions, and ownership.

Financing the quality educational program that generations of Island families have valued and invested in has become an ongoing battle. Island residents have fought to save a school where its students receive a basic education which stresses academic excellence, personal achievement, and accountability and which is taught by roughly one teacher per two grades.

In the years since passage of Proposal A, district residents have taken the following steps to make sure that quality programs could be maintained:

- Overwhelmingly supported a local district enhancement millage (when this was allowed) to implement a local area network and provide all students and staff access to a solid technology base;
- Overwhelmingly supported an Intermediate School District-wide enhancement millage for vocational-technical needs;
- Formed and supported a Booster Club that offsets costs of travel for athletic teams;
- Spent two years studying, discussing, and making plans for education on Beaver Island in the 21st Century, through funding by the Frey Foundation. A copy of our plan for 21st Century Learning on Beaver Island is enclosed. **We have the plan; we need adequate continuous funding;**
- Overwhelmingly supported a sinking fund millage to provide for needed improvements to an aging facility;
- Taken advantage of online coursework through Michigan Virtual University; and
- Wrote for and received grants to pursue strategic planning, provide 7-12 grade students with Palm Handheld computers, and offset unique travel expenses for professional development and sports.

Without these proactive and supportive steps by the community, the school district would likely have shut its doors or been forced to provide only an elementary school program for its community. An evolving K-12 school program is essential to this community; families cannot send their children to a neighboring district. In fact, the closest neighboring district is 32 miles away by boat or plane. I urge you to help protect this culturally and geographically unique community by providing adequate funding for its school. I hope you will take the opportunity to provide our school with the ability to locally use a portion of its School Education Tax dollars so it can continue to operate as one of Michigan's most successful public schools – a school that sets high standards and works with parents and community to make sure students engage in learning.

Despite the above mentioned aggressive efforts on the part of the school board, staff, and community over the past 10 years, the staff in this tiny school has been cut by over 20%. The district is understaffed!! Examples of cuts include, but are not limited to:

- Eliminated the one full-time teacher aide
- Eliminated the one part-time library aide
- Reduced hours of the only custodian by 25%
- Eliminated a part-time school-to-work coordinator
- Reduced secretarial hours by 50%

It is a credit to this community that so much has been accomplished with so little, but we are at a point where we cannot continue to operate on good will and promises of plans to come. We need to have stable and adequate funding to implement the identified and needed changes. Without passage of legislation that allows us to locally use a small portion of our State Education Tax Dollars, our district will continue to be reduced in its mission.

Even though I am speaking on behalf of one very tiny district, I recognize that the needs of all Michigan students must be met. I do believe Michigan can have the best educational system in the world, but only if the needs of all students are taken into consideration – including the needs of those in the very tiniest districts. As you have said yourself, “In Michigan, we know that learning doesn't just happen in the classroom. It's a team effort at home, at school, and at the capitol.” Right now on Beaver Island, home and school and community are definitely focused on learning – with almost no financial support from the capitol and unending requests for compliance with state mandates.

I would like to invite you to visit Beaver Island for yourself, to see just what a huge impact a very small portion of the district-generated School Education Tax dollars could have on our small district. I will be contacting your office soon to follow up on this request.

Sincerely,
–Kathleen K McNamara
Principal/Superintendent

Note: a copy of the legislative proposal attached to the original letter can be viewed at www.beaverbeacon.com

School plans for 21st Century Learning Scholarship

Scholarship to support educational goals of graduates of Beaver Island Community School who meet the community-generated graduate profile.

Last June, the Beaver Island Board of Education and the Charlevoix County Community Foundation formalized plans to establish a college scholarship fund to benefit graduates of the Island's high school. According to Linda McDonough, school board secretary and driving force behind the establishment of the scholarship fund, this scholarship fund is essential as college costs rise and more and more Island graduates head off to school. The idea builds on the success of the Gullhorn Family Foundation scholarship that currently provides some graduates with financial support.

All graduates will be eligible to apply for the 21st Century Learning Scholarship(s), and selection will be based upon the degree to which the student can show that they meet the school's graduate profile.

The graduate profile was adopted by the Board of Education as a culmination of the district's strategic planning process. Forty members of the commu-

nity spent nearly two years learning about education and defining a plan for education on Beaver Island. The final document, *21st Century Learning on Beaver Island*, has become very much a part of school decision-making since its publication in the summer of 2000. Applicants for the scholarship(s) will be expected to demonstrate competence in all five of the areas listed below, showing the ability to:

- 1) Have strong personal qualities and values;
- 2) Use their minds well;
- 3) Have positive work habits;
- 4) Make positive contributions to society; and,
- 5) Use technology fluently.

A three-person selection committee made up of off-Island educators and professionals will interview the applicants.

The new 21st Century Learning Scholarship fund joins 49 other scholarship funds held by the Charlevoix County Community Foundation. Organizers of the effort to build the scholarship fund indicate a desire to generate an initial amount of \$10,000, which would allow a scholarship to be

granted as early as the fall 2004 semester. Likely donors to the fund would be persons who have a connection to Beaver Island, visitors, summer and year-round residents, and of course alumni of the school who realize the importance of post-high school education.

To find out more about this fund and how you can help build the perpetual endowment, you can attend the "afternoon tea" at 2:00 on December 10, 2003 at Kevin and Linda McDonough's house, 26140 Pine Street, Beaver Island. Charlevoix County Community Foundation President Bob Tambellini will be at the tea to present information about scholarship funds in general and about tax benefits for donations to the newly established scholarship fund. Donations to the fund can be in any amount.

More information about the fund is available by calling or writing the Beaver Island Community School (231-448-2744), 37895 King's Highway, Beaver Island, Michigan, 49782 or the Charlevoix County Community Foundation (231-536-2440), PO Box 718, East Jordan, Michigan, 49727.



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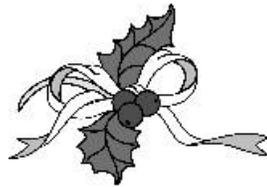
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Back to the Drawing Board

On November 22 the BIRHC Board held three meetings that started at 8:45 a.m. and lasted until 4:00 p.m. with only a few short breaks. The middle one, called to order at 10:15, was to resume the strategic planning process that, in its previous incarnation in 1996, had led, through the survey of 2000, to the formulation of objectives that could only be satisfied by the construction of a new Medical Center.

This session began with a recounting of accomplishments, such as the publishing, three years ago, of a Strategic Planning document that outlined the direction the BIRHC hoped to take. After reviewing the Health Center's Mission Statement, and the Board's, the impetus became to prioritize the issues and goals now being faced. With TM Arlene Brennan serving as flip-chart annotating facilitator, the Board made various suggestions: creating a performance improvement committee; finding a way to accurately assess the quality of care; developing mechanisms to allow the elderly to stay on Beaver Island (here Pete interjected that he was working on this); involving more community members in Board committees; helping providers maintain their licensing; stabilizing funding; increasing the variety of services; creating more partnerships; updating the disaster relief plan; developing a succession plan for staff and board members; and putting together a list of Standard Operating Procedures.

Each idea was followed by a brief exploration of its details and consequences. At the conclusion of the meeting it was felt that the central goal had to be the providing of quality health care. This notion was put in the center of a box on a flip chart, with the four corners labeled human resources, good community relations, governance (managerial and administrative), and finances (fund raising, donations, grants, and a capital campaign.) These corners represent the core values that are required to implement and maintain constantly improving health care.

At the next strategic planning meeting the focus will be on refining these important but general ideas.

The BIRHC Regular Meeting

The November Health Center meeting, attended by 32, brought the dispiriting news that despite the billing improvement, money was in short supply – plus two unemployment claims created the possibility of another \$20k bill. Plans were made for a stuffing bee for the Annual Letter of appeal. Of the 147 positive responses it generated last year, only 8 were from year-arounders.

A second practitioner was being recruited through ads in newspapers and on websites. Of the 6 initial responses, 3 seemed serious.

Construction has passed 80% completion, and the new Health Center could open on February 1st – but perhaps it'll be put off to save on heating costs. The Board is in the process of creating a moving plan; the X-ray equipment will require professionals, which will cost between \$3 and \$5k.

Pete LoDico's committee reported on the mediation. Eula Thomas listed 4 points for which there was agreement: 1) maintaining a viable Health Center was the objective; 2) everyone should behave respectfully at meetings; 3) the Health Center is subject to the OMA; and 4) funds will have to be raised.

Committee members discussed the 8 remaining points of difference. They did not object to using a microphone at meetings, but there was no money for one. Holding an election for Board members would require time and money, but perhaps the Nominating Committee could add members from the general public (later, Kirk McBride offered to help.) No one knew if an elec-

tion would hurt the BIRHC's non-profit status. Allowing public comment on issues before a vote seemed like a good idea, but rules must be created to keep the meetings from running too long. The way in which to acquire and append written comments had not been determined. The Board would try to quantify the progress made by Arlene. And the question of whether or not she was allowed to make the decision to non-renew Susan Meis seemed to be yes – although not specifically stated.

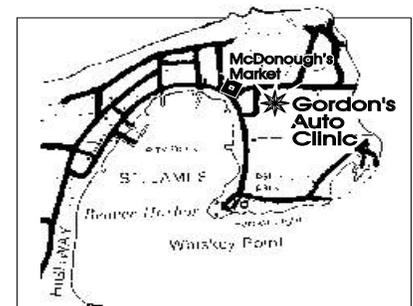
The most heated subject involved finding the means to retain Dr. White. The Board sincerely wanted her to continue her practice (as is required by the BIRHC contract with the Townships), but queries about whether or not this would violate the requirements of maintaining our 501(c)3 status had not produced positive results. ACPA was skeptical, as was a lawyer whose letter was only received the day before.

The problem was, if Dr. White does not pay "market value" for her space, the shortfall could be seen as improper. The IRS might at any time assess penalties, both to her and to the Board, including, personally, to its President and Treasurer – and the Board can't afford indemnification. Hearing this, the Treasurer's wife said he already donates so much time to the BIRHC that if he's going to be in jeopardy, she'll try to convince him to resign.

Despite this difficulty, both Dr. White and the Board seem committed to making it possible for her to continue to serve the Beaver Island Community.

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Closing the Biological Station for 2003

Once again CMU outdid itself with the party it threw to commemorate the end of yet another season. Over a hundred Islanders showed up for dinner, many bringing a plate. When they finally called out "Stop, stop; we can eat no more," the Island band (Mike and Joe Moore, Randy Osborne, and Cindy Gillespie-Cushman) tuned up their instruments and began delivering a string of favorites in their own unique, harmonious style.

Three dozen students gradually finished disguising themselves as characters from some Mother Goose



fantasy and trickled onto the dance floor to trade steps with happy Islanders, some of whom were also in costume.

The wild festivities went on past

midnight, with the celebrants putting their heads together to come up with a united Halloween Wish: "Look, if you are able to pull the strings needed to begin holding classes here year around, and consequently never close, we still want you to have this fantastic party!"

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Draft Joint CCG & BIRHC Board Statement

The members of the CCG and BIRHC Board who participated in the November 11, 2003 mediation facilitated by Kathy Lame both came away from the all day session feeling that it had been very beneficial. Both organizations are very hopeful that the meet-

ing will lead to a resolution of their differences and a shared determination to work together for the long-term best interests of the Beaver Island Rural Health Center

—Kirk McBride, Chair, CCG
—Connie Wojan, President, BIRHC



CCG Mission Statement

The Concerned Citizens Group of Beaver Island (CCG) constitutes a registered Political Action Group that advocates for accountability and responsibility in the actions of officials and official bodies pledged to serve the public interests of the Beaver Island community.



Pumpkins' Whazoo

Once again the Laurain Lodge sponsored a pumpkin contest at Halloween, but this time the contest entered the big leagues. A hundred and fifteen highly designed pumpkins were entered, each placed along the walkways and kept lit by a mysterious man racing around with a small torch. Some pumpkins were traditional, with interesting but familiar eyes, noses,

and toothy grins. But several depicted scenes and images of gothic intensity that could have come from the latest witch's video game. The craftsmanship was outstanding, and the only complaint was that there should have been at least a dozen more prizes to reward the diligent artisans who must have spent days hunkered over their work.

A New Town Clock

Thanks to the generosity of Larry Malloy, St. James now has a new town clock across from the Ferry Dock. On the day it was installed, an observer noticed that one side was seven minutes off (this picture was taken at 12:23), leading to the natural conclusion that this was custom built to read both Mainland Time and Island Time.

Due to Popular Demand

The Beaver Island Fire Department Auxillary has reordered our cookbook:

"FROM THE FIRE INTO THE FRYING PAN"

to be delivered after Christmas.

To pre-order, please call:
Dawn Marsh @ **448-2910**
Sheri Timsak @ **448-2510**



**Beaver Island Rural Health Center
Job Posting**

Beaver Island Rural Health Center has an opening for a certified nurse practitioner or physician assistant to work in a practice shared with other FNP. Duties include routine primary care and urgent care for patients of all ages. Clinic and on call hours. Experience required. Brand new facility. Flexible start date. Send letter, resume, request for information to Beaver Island Rural Health Center, PO Box 146, Beaver Island, MI, 49782 or donna.birhc@biip.net.



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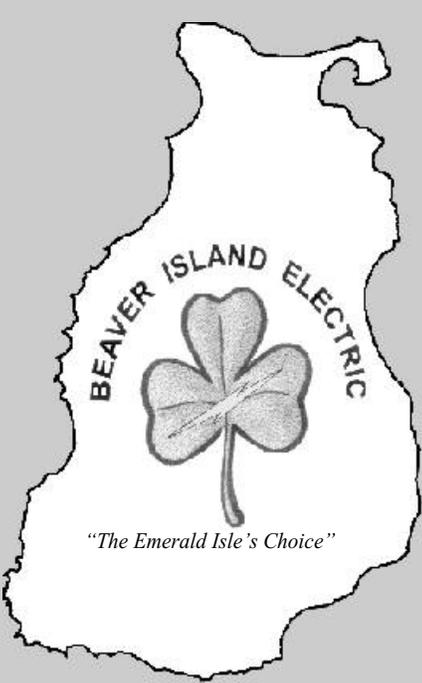


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Beaver Island
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P. O. Box 390
Beaver Island, MI 49782

One Hundred Years Ago

Charlevoix Sentinel December 3, 1903 Local News: "Rev. Fr. Zulgelder, of St. James, was a Thanksgiving guest at the Hotel Elston."

Marine News: "The steamer *Beaver* will continue her Beaver Island trip, as weather permits, all this month probably."

"Capt. Sam Rose brought over the little tug *Lillie Chambers* from Beaver Harbor in tow of a fish tug Saturday. She sustained very little injury by her stranding, and was hauled out Monday."

"The tug *G. R. Green* came in Sunday with 75 barrels of flour in bags which was floating in the lake near Beaver Island. It is supposed to have been thrown over by the steamer *Commodore*, which recently went ashore on Simmon's Reef."

"Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Gill, of Harbor Springs, were here Tuesday night, and took the boat for St. James Wednesday for a few days visit there."

"Closed fishing season ends December 14 at 12:00 midnight." December 17, 1903 Local News: "Michael McCann, of St. James was here last trip of the *Beaver*."

"Fishing opened up yesterday with every fish tug in these waters, and will

continue as long as ice condition will permit."

Marine News: "The steamer *Beaver* was safely moored at St. James dock during the Sunday blizzard. She went over Saturday and did not return until Monday evening. Capt. Campbell reports some ice forming at Beaver Harbor, but predicts that navigation will not close for his run this month." December 24, 1903 Local News: "Dr. Thielen is home again from Chicago, and is again as busy as a Beaver Island crow."

December 30, 1903 Beaver Island News: "Goodsleighting for the past two or three weeks."

"The schools closed December 18, for the regular holiday vacation."

"The tugs *Elliot* and *Badger* are not doing winter fishing this season."

"B. I. L. Co. Sawmill will start up this week for the winter run."

"John P. Maloney arrived on the boat today on a visit to his mother and sisters."

"A large number of new cutters have been brought to the Island this fall."

"W. J. Gallagher returned from a business trip to the mainland last Friday."



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"There is a fine opening on Beaver Island for a charcoal and wood alcohol plant."

"Alex Kennedy of Grand Rapids made a business trip to the Island on the last trip of the boat."

"Sam Rose had men gathering spawn. The tug *McCann* came over Tuesday to look after spawn."

"Thousands of acres of timber land is being cut over and nothing but good sized logs saved. Facilities are prime."

"The tug *Badger* went to Garden Island Sunday with Miss Minnie Gallagher who is teaching school on the Island."

"Mrs. W. W. Boyle and children who have been visiting friends in Harbor Springs the past fortnight, returned this week."

"John Hazel of Bloomingdale, Mich., brother-in-law of Charlie Cross, arrived Friday to buy land and locate on Beaver Island."

"The Union Sunday School exercises will occur Thursday evening at their chapel. There will be songs, recitations and a Christmas tree."

"Owen C. McAulay of the Squaw Island Light is home for the winter. The assistants returning to their respective homes."

"At Holy Cross Church Christmas Day will open with High Mass at 6 o'clock in the morning. Low mass at 7 o'clock, and High mass again at 10 o'clock."

"Very few Indians on Garden and High Islands this winter, as they are all working in the woods cutting cord wood and saw logs for the Company."

"The Company's railroad has at last been laid to the first skid ways in the woods so the engine is bringing in the logs now for the mill which starts this week."

"The Christmas entertainment given by the Holy Cross Church is to be held in Gallagher's Hall on Wednesday night. A fine program is nearly completed at this writing Monday."

"W. F. Gill and wife of Harbor Springs made a week's visit with friends of the Island. They were entertained while here by Mrs. W. B. Johnston, Mrs. Jas. Donlevy and Mrs. M. J. Bonner."

"W. J. Gallagher and Jas. Donlevy were the happy recipients of handsome Irish Blackthorn canes sent here by their old friend James Connor of Rock Island who has been touring Europe this past year."

—Joyce Bartels



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Another Emerald Isle

Before dawn on a cold gusty morning Jack Rozdilsky and his wife pulled out of Lansing before dawn to catch the ferry, but discovered the weather was so rough the trip had been postponed and was in danger of being cancelled. Most people with a meeting to make would find this quite disconcerting, but Jack was used to "Montserrat time," even more in flux than "Island time." On that comparably-sized Caribbean island, for example, when the single gas station serving the current 4,500 people runs out of gas, the boy at the pump will answer the question of when there'll be more with, "Whenever the gas boat from Antigua happens to arrive."

The *Emerald Isle* did run—three hours late. So Jack was able to present his well-organized material to the dozen people who braved the stormy night. His pictures showed that island before, during, and after the eruption of a dormant and thought-to-be-extinct volcano, whose spewing of rock, ash, and fire leveled and then buried its only large town eight years ago.

Part of their appeal was in being transported away from the teeth of winter, but there was also the possibility of learning something that would have application here. Indeed, the hour-long Q & A session following his presentation let the audience draw some conclusions. The first was appropriate in these post-9-11 times: it might be prudent to consider how we'd react to an unforeseen disaster.

Montserrat is pointing itself to capitalize on its history by using it as a focal point for expanded tourism (which is now primarily geared towards experiencing the still-active volcano.) They are also encouraging local arts. For example, interest in this

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other Emerald Isle's music has led to a gospel group that specializes in folk songs going on tour. At the height of the upheaval, Motserrations can see in retrospect, they found solace and support in their tradition of self-reliance. Their attempt to reconstitute their society (which Jack agreed may not succeed) is based on their recognition of and attempt to capitalize on the small niche their development could fill.

After the presentation, the audience thanked the Rozdilsksys for having come so far and braved such obstacles to deliver a relevant and entertaining message.

December Calendar of Events

- Dec. 3 St. James Township, 7:00 p.m., St. James Twp. Hall
- Dec. 5-6 Mackinac Island at Beaver Island, BICS
- Dec. 6-7 3rd Annual Christmas Cantata, 2:00 p.m. Christian Church
- Dec. 10 Scholarship Tea, 2:00 p.m., Linda McDonough's
- Dec. 10 Peaine Township, 7:00 pm, Peaine Twp. Hall
- Dec. 11 Cookie Carnival, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m., Christian Church
- Dec. 13 Santa at the Emerald Isle Hotel 1:00 p.m.; Amvets will have treats in the Conference room at 12:00 noon.
- Dec. 18 BICS Christmas Program 7:00 p.m., Holy Cross Hall
- Dec. 19-20 Hannahville at Beaver Island, BICS
- Dec. 31 BIFDA New Years Eve Dance, 7:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. ** School Age Kids invited with Adult 7:00 - 9:00 for dancing. 9:00 - 2:00 a.m. 18 and older. Free-will donation. Cash Bar. DJ - Mike's Island Karaoke Service. Hors d' oeuvres. Benefit - Beaver Island Fire Department Auxiliary.

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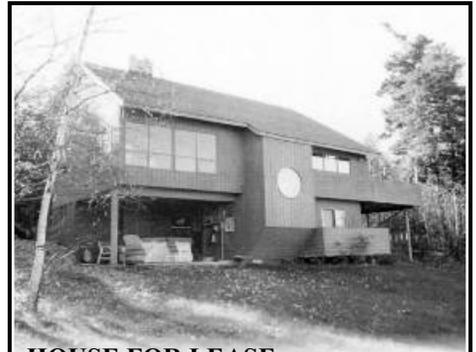
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Nice wooded location. Newly built. Two bedrooms. New kitchen. Summer: \$675. Off-season \$425. (734) 449-8711 or nprawat@yahoo.com



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COTTAGE SITE: Vacant wooded lot in Port St. James. Power, perked, ready for building. Call owner (269) 857-6084



FOR RENT: Beachfront Home for rent with 3BR and loft—total 5 beds, hot tub, gorgeous views, solitude, wood stove, May-Sept. \$950 / Off-season \$795. Call Perry at (313) 530-9776 or e-mail pgatliff@hotmail.com.

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BEACHFRONT HOUSE FOR RENT

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