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August Calendar of Events:

St. James Township Board Meeting, St. James Twp. Hall, 8 pm Aug. 6
 Annual Rita Gillespie Memorial Blood Drive, School, noon - 6 pm Aug. 7
 Karaoke Competition, Back Yard of the Emerald Isle Hotel, 2 pm Aug. 9
 Homecoming; "Lumbar Yarrd Party", 7 pm, Powers' Lumberyard Aug. 10
 Peaine Township Board Meeting, Peaine Twp. Hall, 8 pm Aug. 13
 Soccer Camp at the BICS Soccer Field: the week beginning Aug. 18
 Historical Society Annual Meeting, Peaine Twp. Hall, 7:30 pm Aug. 21

Beaver Beacon

the Island Monthly since 1955

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Above: Just outside the mouth of the harbor as the *Amistad* sailed away from the dock, dozens of sailboats from the Charlevoix-to-Beaver Island race lined up for a return race to the mainland.

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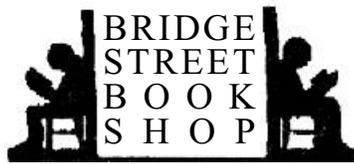
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PABI Launches a Revised Plan

The Board of Directors of the Preservation Association of Beaver Island announced the selection of the architectural firm of Cox, Medendorp & Olson of Grand Rapids, Michigan to design the new Community House.

Cox, Medendorp & Olson have completed a number of historic restoration and civic projects since the firm was founded in 1981. From the restoration of the oldest church in Grand Rapids to the green wonder of the Frederik Meijer Gardens, the firm has a solid history of integrating design and function.

Robert E. Olson, President, stated: "The uniqueness of Beaver Island will need to be reflected in the architecture. We will not be giving you a version of any other project we have completed. This Center will be specific to your Island community, and will reflect its cultural heritage and values. Our goal is a Center that serves and enhances your diverse and

artistic community, while on a purely emotional level providing a new beacon of sorts, welcoming residents and visitors back home."

Community ideas and dreams are an important ingredient in the planning process, along with the financial contribution of generous donors. As of this date twenty-five "Founding Families" have contributed generously to move closer to the dream. "We have faith that the support will continue all the way to our goal and beyond," said Judy Lanier, Board President.

Robert Olson and Bob Pomeroy will be on the Island for three days, July 28, 29, & 30, to hear from community members and develop a schematic design. Additional community interaction and presentations will be scheduled over the next few months.

For more information, contact Judy Lanier, 448-2441.

PABI Sunset Picnic Update

Sunday August 17th the St. James pavilion on Donegal Bay will again be the site of PABI's Sunset Picnic. A full array of delicious foods will be offered, an assortment promising to please everyone's palate. There will be live Beaver Island music and a champagne toast at sunset. Reservations may be made by calling Sue Welke at 448-2787 or thru any board member. Donation requested is \$25.00. You are asked to bring your own

drinks other than coffee or punch, and a lawn chair. The event begins at 6 p.m.

Thanks to all those who made PABI's first Summer Solstice Sunrise picnic on June 21st a success. Although the Almanac gave us the east coast sunrise time, many guests viewed the phenomenon an hour later than printed. The food and weather were grand but the people made it a special time and place. We look forward to next year's Sunrise Breakfast.

Jerry's Daughter Weds

In early July, Becky LaFreniere and Tim Gerace were married in front of the

Whiskey Point Light by Reverend Howard Davis. Congratulations!

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AMVETS sponsor big-time Fishing Tourney

The first annual AmVets Beaver Island Walleye fishing tournament will be held September 6th & 7th on Lake Geneserath.

Prizes will be as follows:

- \$25,000 winning tagged walleye,
- \$800 biggest northern,
- \$500 most northern,
- \$300 second most northern,
- \$200 biggest small-mouth, and
- \$200 biggest large-mouth.

The purpose of the tournament is to reduce the overstocked northern population and increase the walleye – there is no size limit on northern, so bring in as many as you can. Walleye will be catch and release, except for the money fish. Proceeds will be used to continue the walleye program and other worthwhile Island projects.

There will be a pre-contest party at the church hall Friday September 5th. Chicken cooked over an open fire with all the trimmings will be provided by the Ladies Amvets Aux. The party is included in the entry fee. Guests will be expected to make a free will offering.

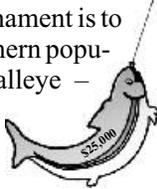
Boats from Charlevoix can be sent on the Emerald Isle prior to the tournament. Vehicles will be provided to launch and retrieve your boat. Space on the Emerald Isle is limited; those sent over early will be stored in the fenced boat company parking lot. Boats left on the lake overnight will be beached in a designated area with security provided. Please power wash your boat prior to transport-

ing it to the island to avoid introducing Zebra mussels or other undesirable organisms into this pristine lake. Alternately facilities are available at the car wash on the Island to wash your boat if it isn't possible beforehand.



There are also a few small boat rentals available on the Island.

All fish must be caught in a conventional sporting manner: rod, reel, pole, hooks, line, etc., and according to the State of Michigan fishing regulations, except no size or bag limit on northern. The tagged walleye will be released no earlier than five days or later than two days prior to commencement of the tournament.



Participants will be limited to 150, so register early to ensure a spot. Register in Charlevoix at Haggard's Plumbing & Heating, 06328 U.S. South, P.O. Box 35, (231) 547-4046. On the Island register with Rich Gillespie at Beaver Island Realty, (231) 448-2577.

Register before August 16th for \$165; before August 27th, \$175; or \$185 before September 3rd. Further information on the rules will be included on the registration forms.

Come and enjoy a fun end-of-the summer weekend and support a good cause. For information, please call Don Bair (231) 448-2185 or Doug Hartle (231) 448-2368.

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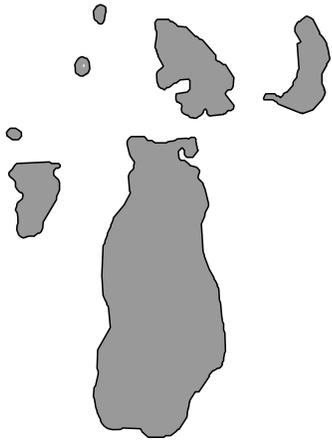


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A Fabulous Flight to Beaver

The morning of July 23 found eighteen Washington Islanders gathered for a terrific trip to our sister island, Beaver Island. Bill Morris had arranged for a flight of two Brittany Norman Islanders. It took just 45 minutes from our island to theirs. Bill had reserved two vans and a Geo Tracker for our Beaver Island ramblings. Each vehicle took its own route to tour the Island. The weather was PERFECT: about 70 degrees with a slight breeze and just a few puffy clouds on the horizon. After coffee and (for some of us) some sticky buns, the group I was with took off for the south end to see the lighthouse, with stops at the Central Michigan University Biological Station and the Protar Cabin. After returning to the downtown we had an excellent leisurely lunch at the Shamrock. Then we each went our own way again. Several visited the Print Shop Museum, the Marine Museum, and the library. Of course gift shops also received some attention.

There was a lot of discussion about similarities and differences between Beaver and Washington Islands. Most of Beaver's roads are not paved, where most of ours are. We have only one airport and our runways are grass. Not all

Beaver's roads are plowed in winter but that's undoubtedly because our winter population is spread out all over the island where most of Beaver's year-round residents live in a rather small portion of the Island around St. James Bay. There are about ten inland lakes to our one. And sand: LOTS of sand on Beaver. I suspect Washington Island would happily exchange some of our rock for some of Beaver's sand. Apparently there is little problem passing perk tests on Beaver. I hope that in the near future the Washington Island city fathers and those from Beaver Island might have an exchange trip. We could learn a lot from each other. Due to the favorable wind the return trip took only 31 minutes. I believe all eighteen participants hope to return.

-Bill Olson

New EMTs on the Scene

The sun must be smiling on Beaver Island, because at least four residents heard that they've passed the test to become EMTs: Ken Bruland, Cindy Gillespie-Cushman, Forrest Powers, and Karen Whitecraft. What's more, there might be another: Joannie Adams, whose complete test results aren't yet available.

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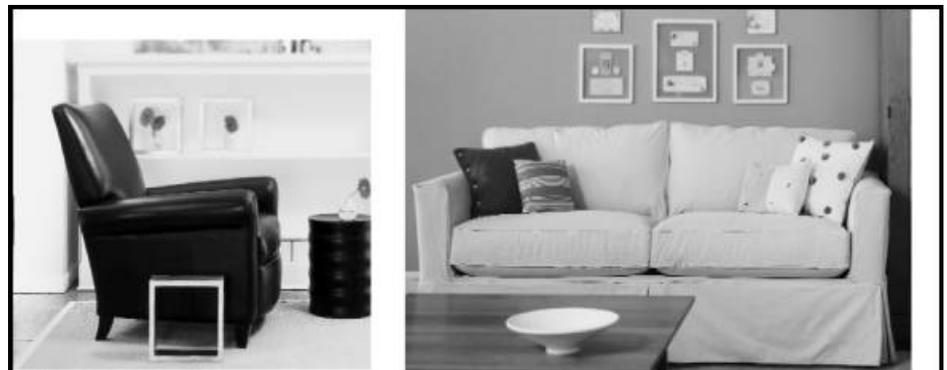
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The Chamber Expands Weather or Not

'Bite of Beaver' Fall Events

The Beaver Island Chamber of Commerce has expanded its "Bite of Beaver" for the 2nd edition, scheduled for October 4th and 5th. The food fest will return for the early evening of that Saturday, with even more delicacies prepared by Island chefs. That evening there'll also be a Barn Dance at McCafferty's Equestrian Center, and a return and expansion of last year's old car show. Mike and Gail Weede are adding a running event, the "Beaver Boogie," a 5K/10K race. For more information keep checking the Chamber of Commerce web site, www.beaverisland.org

In addition, the Chamber intends to revise the 1977 Island map, which it's been selling for a few years, and produce and distribute tens of thousands of rack cards.

Digging up Beaver

Former BIHS teacher Terri Bussey brought 32 of her Sutton's Bay archaeology students here for a week-long dig. Some spent three days on Garden. They also worked behind the Hardware Store, in back of the Print Shop, and at Greenes' Bay. The results are due soon.

The dog days of summer are finally here, that brief flirtation this portion of the globe has with truly warm weather. The "season" is in full swing, and as hectic as it may be, it is indeed all too short. Before we know it, the chill will return to the air, the colors of dying leaves spring-up before us and we'll have to start waving again. So, soak in the summer whilst you can.

The summer has been rather mild. Professor Adams at the University said that this is caused by Lake Superior having nearly froze over this past winter. I blame it on Richie.

Either way the temps have been noticeably cooler than summers past. August should shake this off, slightly, with the mercury climbing into the eighties for the first half of the month. After that, its frost on the pumpkins with a late Indian Summer in the beginning of October.

Once again, slip off your shoes, plunk your toes in the Lake, crack a cold one, and enjoy the heat.

—Liam Racine

The Niña Sails In

On July 24th we had a wonderful visit by a replica of Columbus's *Niña*.

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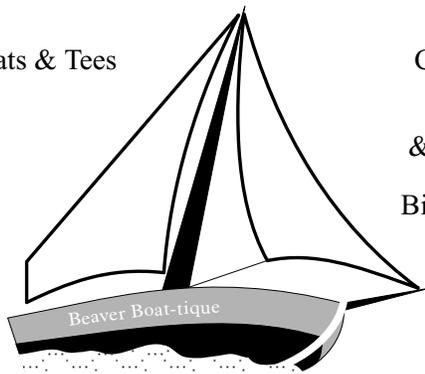
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On This Date

Ten Years Ago The *Beacon* of August, 1993, opened with a story of the procurement of the *Bradley* lifeboat, which has hung in the Marine Museum ever since. The *Carl D. Bradley* went down in 1958 southwest of Gull Island—the largest ship to sink in the Great Lakes until the *Edmund Fitzgerald*—with a loss of all but two of the 35 on board. The lifeboat, known as *Carl D. Bradley No. 1*, was one of the few things salvaged. It wound up as the property of the Great Lakes Historical Society, but they sold it at auction to “buyer unknown.”

At a meeting of the Great Lakes Ferry Boat Association Bill McDonough was chatting with Captain Duggan of the Put-in Bay Ferry Company. He mentioned that he'd picked up the *Bradley* lifeboat. Without hesitating, Bill replied, “Well you'll just have to pick up something else, because that belongs on Beaver Island.” Bill negotiated its acquisition, arranged to have it towed here on Vince Olach's trailer, and donated it to the BIHS. They in turn asked Phil Gregg to restore it, which he finished this past spring.

Pam O'Brien, the Chamber's Office Manager, reported that through August projections were that 810 phone calls had come in, and 843 visitors stopped by.

The Township minutes reported that a new assistant manager was hired at the Transfer Station: Charles Schmidt.

The *Beacon* published the results of a survey about Island attitudes conducted by a

local high school student. To the question of what Beaver Island needs, these answers were given (arranged in order of priority): better road maintenance; better access to state lands; more recreational facilities; tighter environmental standards; a community center; more walking trails; more rental housing; and more cultural activities. Condos and more tourist-oriented business brought up the rear with 14% of the votes being positive; more shopping, a Seniors' Center, and a one-hour ferry were next with 18%. Questions that received a high percentage of affirmative answers were as follows: Is it important to become more economically self sufficient and less dependent on tourism? Is the Beaver Island Energy Project good for the Island? Is alcohol a problem here? Should there be stricter standards for loggers? Should the townships acquire more lakefront property? Should we restrict ATVs? Is litter a problem? and, Should the two townships combine? The percentage of “yes” replies in this list ran from 83% to 70%; receiving only 10% affirmation was: Do we need more law enforcement on the Island? Should we encourage more hunting? received a 20% yes vote. The student who conducted the survey? Jeff Cashman.

Twenty Years Ago The August '83 *Beacon* carried the story of the loss of a long-time landmark: the burning of the O'Donnell home at Barney's Lake. Although it stood empty for years and was in bad shape, with

holes in the roof and floors, many people took a chance by climbing the rickety stairs to the second floor for the splendid view. By the time the Fire Department arrived it was too late to save the house, but at least the wind was such that the adjacent grove of lilacs was preserved. The fire seemed to start on the second floor, leading to suspicions of carelessness or arson. Francis LaFreniere remembered going there when she was young to make horse radish.

The *Beacon* announced that the Island was back on the cable, thanks to difficult work being done by divers, who found the fault and fixed it.

What might have been the first jet to land at the Township Airport arrived on July 9th, a Cessna Citation turbojet. The four men who climbed out stayed the night and did some fishing.

The Game Club said that the DNR, relying on data from its local officer, had agreed to issue 180 doe permits – half to Islanders – according to President Karl Heller. Opposition to a doe hunt was predicted, with a petition drive expected to try to stop it.

A reminiscence of Peter Johnson was printed: during a snowstorm in January of 1962 he came to town in a one horse sleigh, along with a young lady and her dog. The snow was so deep that vehicles could not move, prompting his strategy. Old-timers marveled, and tried to guess how long it had been since they'd seen anyone tying up a



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horse in front of the *Shamrock*.

The Island welcomed its first set of twins in forty years: Tim and Denise McDonough's Bradley and Drew.

Thirty Years Ago The *Beacon* opened with a glowing review of a presentation of the Neil Simon play, *Plaza Suite*, directed by Jack Webster and Diane Hetherington. Among the actors were Trudy Works, Walker Hill, Phyllis Townsend, and Ray Denny. Part of the gate was donated to the Medical Center.

Hugh Cole joined the Coast Guard and Jeff McGlocklin the Air Force.

Grand Rapids' Beaver Island Club announced its 8th annual party would be held in October. Requests for information were directed to Brian Gallagher.

Mary Greene, 76, and Philip O'Brien, 69, passed away. Mary Boyle was born in St. James in 1897, and married Anthony Greene in 1920. She lived almost all of her life on Beaver Island. Philip was the middle child of July 'Big Phil' Gallagher and Edward O'Brien. He was born and lived in Chicago, but never forgot his Island roots.

The *Beacon* contained a reminiscence from Elizabeth Green Gallagher, John Andy's mother, who had just turned 91. The Island's oldest resident has lived her entire life here after having been born on a farm in Peaine. "My parents raised sheep like they did in Donegal," she recalled. "My mother would card the wool, and we'd spin it and

knit mittens and gloves, which we'd trade to the schooner captains who docked. Sometimes we'd barter for a barrel of lard, molasses, or sugar." She would trade knitted things they would then sell in Chicago.

As a girl she worked to help supply the packet freighters with fuel. "My father cut steamer wood and hauled it to the docks. Sometimes he'd get some cash. A lot of people would bury any extra money they'd happen to get. Not all was found and dug up."

In her life she witnessed the transition from steam, sail, and horse-and-buggy to the moon-walk age. "I've seen it all," she said. "Believe me, things are better nowadays."

Forty Years Ago The *Beacon* reported that several of the boats in the Chicago to Mackinac race had come here afterwards and stayed for three or four days. The Yacht Dock had been full to capacity for four weeks, with over 300 boats checking in.

Belying the report above, Emma Belfy delivered twins: Mark and Susie.

The fishing at Garden Island was producing maximum catches. One party was so anxious to get over there that when launching his boat at the DNR dock he backed up too far and had to have Jewell Gillespie winch him out of the lake. And then, in his haste, he dropped an oar on his favorite rod, breaking it. Yet he still caught his limit.

The pike fishing at Lake Geneserath was equally good, but one fisherman made a sad discovery when putting his sixth fish on

the stringer: a pike already caught had chewed through the stringer and the first five had escaped. He was so disgusted that he threw the last one after them.

Because of the clear water, diver Al Doebler had a banner season locating wrecks in French, Iron Ore, and Sand Bay.

The St. James Mission was nearing completion across from the St. James Cemetery, near the site of "the first protestant church on Beaver Island many years ago."

Father Wren announced at Mass that the lowest bid for building the rectory next to the church had come from Walter Wojan.

Seven Island girls who became nuns returned at the same time: Marie Gatliff, Lorraine Gibson, Lenore and Alex Gallagher, and Mary Clare, Brigetta, and Isabel Malloy.

The "sea-going goat" was captured and returned. The notorious animal apparently wandered onto the *Beaver Islander* in Charlevoix, and wasn't noticed until the ferry was underway. It survived the crew's innuendos about fresh kebab and was shipped back to its owner, Albin Dunance, who had been searching all over for it, COD.

The *Beacon* closed by noting the traffic problem around the boat dock when the ferry came in. It editorialized that it would be nice if people parked at some distance and walked to the dock to help relieve the congestion. The more things change, the more they remain the same.

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Studying Art in an Artist's Paradise

Beaver Island and its unique landscape has always captured my imagination and spirit. Somehow it just gets my creative juices flowing. My background in the arts has included dance, graphic arts, painting, pottery, sculpture, creative writing, sewing, and also teaching art (full-time during the school year.) So when I had the time and chance to take an art class here last summer, I was overjoyed. Two weeks to completely immerse myself in the arts! I signed up for the Sculptural Papermaking class CMU offered, taught by Sally Rose. Let me tell you how the Island influenced, and continues to influence, my work.

The class was intense and energizing. We learned what natural fibers make up paper, and mixed up dyes, fiber and mordant to put into the vats we would pull our paper from. Sally Rose inspired us in many ways, challenging us to do our best. Her own work was awe-inspiring as well; primal and vibrant. We were encouraged to experiment and pull ideas from around us in the environment.

As I wandered, I beachcombed, starting to form ideas. I found items on various shores, sometimes after storms had blown through and whipped grasses into small fibers and threads. The mate-

rials gave me ideas for embellishments for my paper sculptures. Creating stick cradles from gray, silvery sticks of driftwood, I would then form the wet paper over forms created from window screen or other materials turned into organic shapes.

I collected what would be considered worthless debris and turned it into something of value. As the class went on, I became more and more influenced by the Island, and gave myself up to its wonders. I fabricated a beach book by casting a collection of objects laid on the sand (as I found them.) From this plaster casting, I pressed layers of wet paper together to create a sculptured piece that became the book cover. Onto this I attached rusty nails a friend found for me while out painting. The cover included three-dimensional pieces like shells, beach glass, feathers, stones, small pieces of driftwood and other found objects. Inside I bound a sample of each paper I had pulled, including some with pieces of embedded birch bark.

One day on a field trip Dr. Gillingham showed us a vireo nest built in a tree on the CMU grounds. Woven into it were small pieces and strands of birch bark. It was the most exquisitely



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built nest I had ever seen. I patterned my own nest after this model, weaving in fibers and birch bark, leaving the original nest for the bird (it's against the law to collect bird nests.)

And still the ideas came. I walked the woods, fields, and beaches for inspiration. I dredged up old memories of the Island and places I'd been. The ancient oak forest, the apple trees of Barney's Lake, the big birch, the music of the Island, making rock sculptures on my grandmother's porch as a child, swimming at the back beach, the tree-house we built, the rope swing – on and on, like a living tapestry.

The leaves on the forest floor inspired cocoon-like constructions of paper. The water and waves brought about a boat-like craft in a stick cradle. The nest piece belonged to the air and the sky. The class was absolutely incredible. All of us seemed to bond and help each other out a lot with ideas as we shared our stories. I only wish I could take another class this year.

Since the class last summer, I have continued to work on pieces influenced by the Island. I just finished a painting of the big birch that I started here in early June. I've done several watercolors of

the shoreline on my side, at Wilderness State Forest and up by the Mackinaw Straits. I am working on a quilt idea that will have the big birch done in fabric, and other subjects from nature (leaves, bird nests.) My clay sculptures and writing reflect on Beaver Island as well as the woods I live in and the shores I'm near. I plan to do several more paintings on the Island over the late summer and fall.

The clay classes I'm teaching this summer are all nature-related. Bowls shaped like leaves, or pressed from the shapes of rocks. Tiles with leaves pressed into them, or animal and plant designs in relief, animals and their habitat, etc. All these interests were nurtured from seeds planted on Beaver Island as a child. Now I'm harvesting what has grown.

Not too long ago I received a call for entries for a Beaver Island Retrospective show to be held this fall at CMU. They are looking for work inspired by Beaver Island that was done here or afterwards. I will have a hard time picking which pieces to send on slides. And I just got some more great ideas when riding on the beautiful new bike path out Donegal Bay Road!
–Julie Runberg

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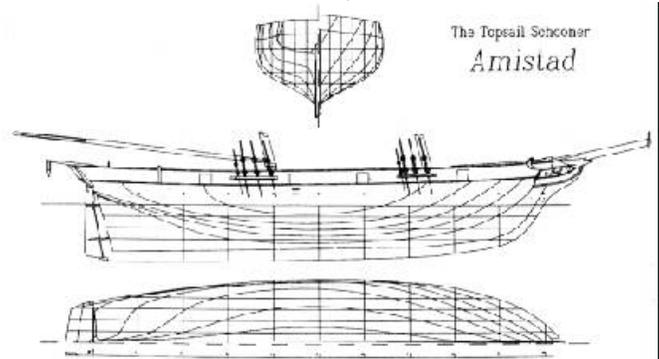
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their freedom in the U. S. Supreme Court and returned home when their charismatic leader Joseph Cinque convinced the Court to classify them as "kidnapped Africans" instead of property.) The ship left the East Coast in early May. On July 5th she headed out of Toledo, and is due at Chicago on July 26th, where she'll spend two weeks at the Navy Pier.



Having a draft of over 10', she tied up at the ferry dock, promising to leave



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before the *Emerald Isle* arrived Sunday morning. Skip Duhamel donated a meal's worth of smoked fish, and dozens of people milled around, awed and impressed with her workmanship. A couple who lived in Mystic happened to be visiting Beaver Island and were surprised to find the boat they had watched being built.

No advance notice had been given because up to the last minute they did not know if they'd stop—despite Jack Kelly's diligent lobbying all spring. Barry Pischner and Bill McDonough spoke to the captain and crew about stopping on her return trip this fall, letting the school kids have a tour, and giving a presentation about the significance and meaning of the events the ship commemorates. The response was that as much as they'd like to do this, it would all depend on how the home office reacted to our request.



Length over the rail: 85'
Length on the deck: 81'
Length at waterline: 78'
Length over spars: 129'
Extreme beam: 23'
Beam at the waterline: 22'
Design draft: 10'

Rig: Topsail schooner
Sail area: 5,200 square feet
Homeport: New Haven, Connecticut
Construction complete: 2000
Built: 1998-2000
Builder: Mystic Seaport

Types of wood:
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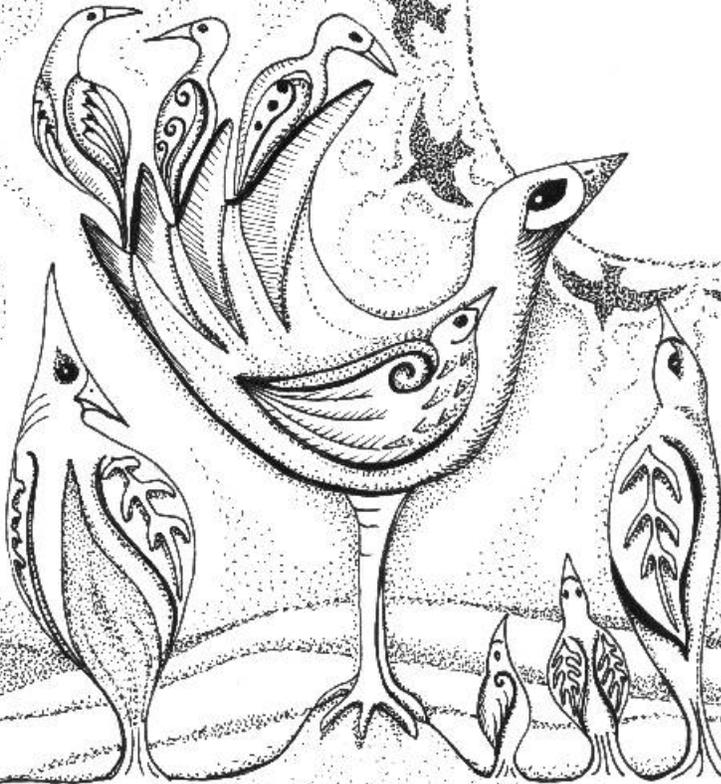
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Nels Peter Sorensen, Jr.

Dr. Nels Peter Sorensen Jr., age 65, of Greenville, died peacefully at home surrounded by his family.

He was born in Greenville on April 4, 1938, the son of Nels Peter and Kathryn A. Baylis Sorensen. He was a graduate of Greenville High School in 1956, the University of Michigan and the U of M Dental School in 1964. He practiced dentistry in Greenville for 39 years. He was on the Greenville Board of Education for 20 years serving as Treasurer, and was an original member of the Danish Festival Band.

An accomplished musician, he was a member of the American Guild of Organists, served on the 1976 Bicentennial Committee, Greenville Rotary Club and Park Congregational Church. He received the Marian Kemp Outstanding Citizen Award this year, and for many years was a volunteer official at the High School track meets and served on the Band Boosters for the High School. His professional affiliations include the West Michigan Dental Society, the Michigan Dental Society, the Chicago Dental Society, and the American Dental Association.

He was married on July 30, 1960 to Carol Ann Mount. His father Dr. Nels preceded him in death in 1992, as did his mother, Kay, in 1987 and his sister, Jean Stout in 1984. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Carol, and their children and families; Chris and Michelle Sorensen of Southgate, Eric and Tammy Sorensen of Greenville and Lisle and Todd Merrifield of Comstock Park, his grandchildren; Kayleen, Hannah, Baker, Veronica and Audrey. Also his sister, Rae (George) Dewberry of Greenville and brothers-in-law, Gene (MaryJo) Mount of Greenville and James R. Stout of Chicago, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins. A Memorial service was held on Thursday, July 17th.

Pete Sorensen was a longtime summer resident of Beaver Island, where his stone-fenced home east of McDonough's Market still holds a dental chair used by both him and his father when the Island had no dentist. He was truly loved, and will be missed by all who knew him.

Aleta Doris Kenwabikise: 1955-2003

Doris has peacefully passed away on Saturday, July 12, 2003 in Houston, TX. She was born and raised on Beaver Island and is survived by her children, Rebecca (Mike) Trester of Chelsea, MI, Roland Hachey of Charlevoix, MI, Rachel Davis of Muskegon, MI, Randi Davis of Boyne City, MI, and Regina Davis of Boyne City. She also has four surviving grandchildren, Devyn, Mackenzie, and Zachary Trester of Chelsea, MI, and Justin Hachey of Charlevoix, MI. There are many surviving nieces and nephews as well. Doris was the sister of John, Caroline, Nancy, Pauline, Sarah, Robert, Leonard, Joey, Diane, Mary, and James. She is preceded in death by her parents, Isabelle (Wabinimkee) and Paul Kenwabikise, by her sister Margret and brother Steven, and by several nieces and nephews.

She has numerous friends and family members across the country who love her and will miss her. A memorial service was held at Holy Cross Church on July 22nd, 2003.

*May the angels take her on their wings to Heaven's gate
At the water's edge, should she step in?
Not sure if the choice is the beginning or end.
Water laps at her toes, gentle and warm,
Reminding her of the place she was born.
The island's her home, where she was born and raised.
A place where her life has been happy and crazed;
A place she'll call home forever, and after;
No matter that it brought her sadness and laughter.
Her life took many turns, bad and good;
And when it came down, her ground she'd stood.
Small, proud, and feisty she never did lack
To find true friends to watch her back.
She left home many times, but always came back,
But eventually she found something it lacked.
To be a face in the crowd, she wanted to be;
She moved to the South, to great company.
Down in the South, far, far away,
No one could convince her to come back and stay.
Her family she'd visit, here or there;
Tears they would shed, laughter they would share.
In her weakest of moments, when she needed us most,
She let her family love her, and be her host.
We comforted and cared, and stepped up to the plate,
While Heaven prepared to open it's gate.
She went back to Texas one last time,
But God knocked on her door, and gave her a sign.
He called her to Heaven, ready or not;
How much we loved her, He hasn't forgot.
We bring her back home, where it all began.
Back to the island, we all ran.
Not ready to bid our final goodbye,
We comfort and love, and yes, we cry.
She's at the water's edge, should she step in?
Not sure if it's the beginning or end.
Water laps at her toes, gentle and warm,
She's back to the place in which she was born.*

—Rebecca Trester

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Proposed Downtown / Public Beach Parking Lot

On July 10th a St. James Planning Commission meeting at which the extension of Main Street was discussed drew considerable attention. After extended negotiation the township proposed to trade three lots below the old Medical Center for a ~140' parcel of the beach, a 10' strip along the south side of the Medical Center (needed for the EMS to build a second enclosed bay in which to park its E-car), and \$130,000. The money would then be used to create a 34-place parking lot.

Supervisor Don Vyse spoke about the increasing downtown parking problem and the frustrations he'd experienced in trying to alleviate it over the past six years. One plan was to create a lot behind the Shamrock and Beachcomber, but that was rebuffed by the property owners. The township also tried to work out an arrangement with Holy Cross, but that too was unsuccessful. So, he said, this seemed like the best solution.

This location, the supervisor stated, would have three positive impacts. It would provide parking for downtown, albeit a block away. It would provide parking for the school, the church, and particularly the Parish Hall – and 85% of the Hall's activities involved the community at large. And it would reduce the danger of the present Playground situation; far too often kids come running out between parked cars into the street, and the current parking creates a bottleneck that has impeded, according to Gerald LaFreniere, the ability of the ambulance to reach its destination. The land swap would increase the Playground and allow it to spread out.

Township Engineer Gary Vogt talked about the design of the lot. It would be cut into its western bank by 3', he said, reducing the visibility of parked cars. On the east side the mat of trees would be thinned by removing the "weed trees," the willows and poplars, but leaving the "specimen trees," the pines, hardwoods, and two apple trees. This land is currently a road easement, so the green lawn below the Convent, on which outdoor events are occasionally held, would be relatively unaffected. An 18" perforated pipe would

act as a catch basin for run-off. Two streetlights, matching those placed downtown, would be installed on timers to turn off at the appropriate moment. Dr. Leuk and Dr. Gillingham had examined the site closely, as well as Robyn Schmidt from the DEQ, and there were no endangered species or wetland concerns.

Upon entering the meeting, the chairman announced that anyone wishing to speak would have to register in advance, and would then be given three minutes (using an egg timer.) First the Clerk was asked to report any correspondence; she said one resident would vote against it, but the BICS Principal was in favor. Then the people on the registration list, over 15 names, were called and given a chance to comment on the proposal.

It quickly became apparent that there was a widespread aversion to installing 13,000 ft² of asphalt on the heels of so much other asphalt on roads and driveways. Questions were asked about how bad the parking problem really was, to which the supervisor stated that he heard well over a hundred complaints a year about it. Others asked if there had been a formal study of the parking problem or a land use study about creating the parking lot.

A green parking lot (grass instead of asphalt) was suggested as a compromise. This would create difficulties for winter use, it was said, and would allow vehicle seepage to trickle into the lake. Appropriating some of the school's land as an alternate site was also suggested. Rick Speck, the school's business manager, said this would infringe on the playground, and the school already felt it was short of land.

Some comments favored the proposal, and other speakers reluctantly gave their approval, as if the parking lot would be the lesser of two evils. But several speakers said things like "I don't like the blacktopping of Beaver Island," and received a degree of applause. "This was a nice community the way it was," one said. "We can hardly stand any more beautification," another added. "This is a little pot of gold for a very few people."

“Surely we're not doing this simply because it won't cost us anything,” someone said. “After all, our supervisor succeeded on 14 of the 16 grant proposals he's written, so funding at an alternative site should not be a problem at all.”

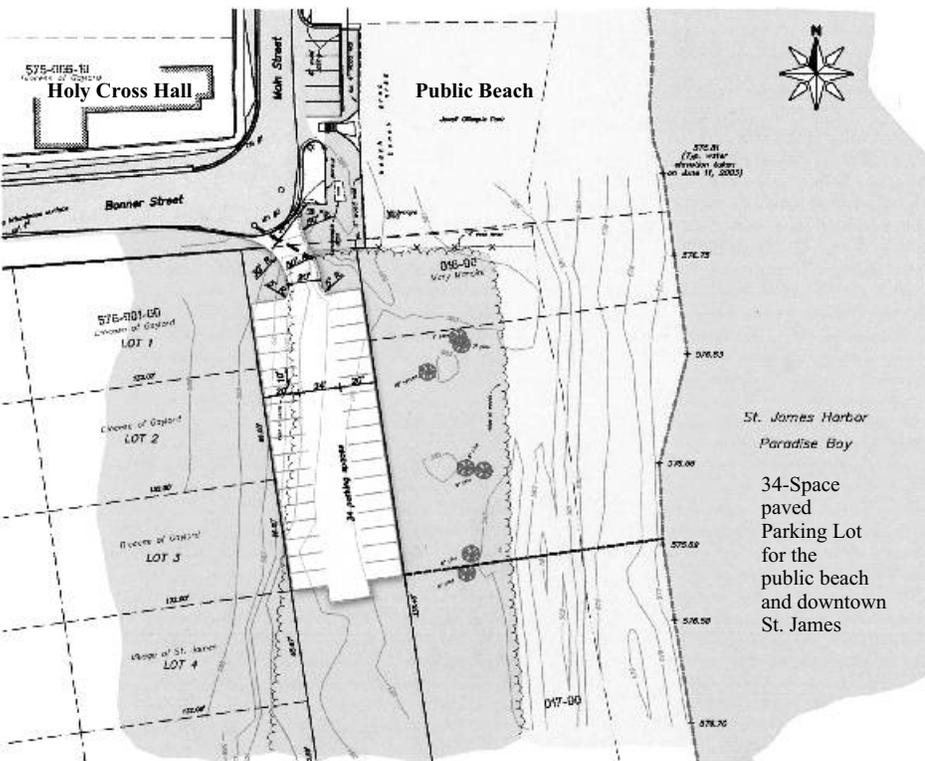
The comments went back and forth. It was said that the present Hall Corner was “an accident waiting to happen.” “You can talk about how nice things were back then,” someone else remarked, “but are you willing to accept that degree of reduction in your standard of living? To me, this amount of asphalt is justified by the good it will achieve, which outweighs the bad.”

After the last registered speaker had been offered a chance to speak, the floor was opened to anyone else who wanted to state their opinion. It was pointed out that 9 of the first 13 speakers were against the plan, to which someone else said that many supporters had not felt a need to speak.

The Planning Commission members were then asked to comment. Bill McDonough said that this plan was the evolution of many years of trying to solve the growing parking problem, and represented, in his mind, a win-win

situation. He pointed out that increasing the public beach would add value to inland lots; the view corridor established would be an enhancement; the E-car garage would solve another thorny problem; and the overall safety of the public Playground would be improved. Don Tritsch added that the economics of the proposal were a definite positive factor. John Feigen said that time was also a reason that precluded them from searching indefinitely for a better location.

At that point a vote on the proposal was requested. It passed unanimously, to the disappointment of many in the audience—although some people who had been silent congratulated the Commissioners for a difficult job well done. The opponents of this issue, whose efforts had been marshaled through some concerted organizing efforts, could take some solace in at least not having let their reservations go unexpressed, and having learned how many others share their view of Beaver Island as a green paradise. They expressed themselves well enough, extensively and somewhat eloquently, so their views will no doubt receive greater consideration in the future.



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Klarissa & Mariah with their sleeping frogs



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Museum Week 2003

Once again the Historical Society filled up the 3rd week of July with a variety of presentations: 3 special Nature Walks, both a Pet Show and a 3-day Art Show, and music, talks, demonstrations, and tapes. Two Native Americans, bead-maker Dan Chingwa and story-teller/author Simon Otto, drew good crowds at the onset. Robert Cole demonstrated why the Oral History program is so important, and GLLKA members Madeleine Jones and MaryAnn Moore, dressed in period costumes, created a magical ambiance as they described life in a lighthouse. Some of the slides they showed depicted volunteers helping to restore the St. Helena Light, a scene we might witness at Whiskey Point if the partnership between GLLKA, the Historical Society, CMU, and St. James Township progresses along its present course.



Anna with Riley & Sug



The surprise of the festivities turned out to be the Art Show, at which several stunning works of art were shown and sold. Staffed by volunteers Lois Sowa and Laura Pratt, it was one of the week’s most popular events, vying with the thankfully dry opening night’s *Music on the Porch*, whose 16 acts were highlighted by the Community Choir.

Antje Price answered everyone’s questions in the Protar Home on two afternoons. At Pinky’s bonkers Bingo game one person won four times! But the high point had to be the celebration of the Arranmore trip during the first intermission in Saturday night’s splendid concert. Orchestrated by old friends Cindy Gillespie, Tara Palmer, and Paul Cole, the footage demonstrated why this once-in-a-lifetime event affected all our lives for the better—not just those who went.

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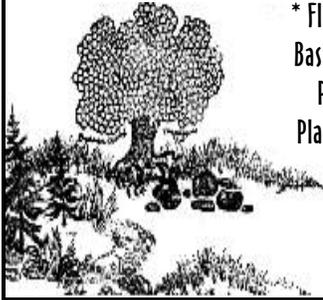
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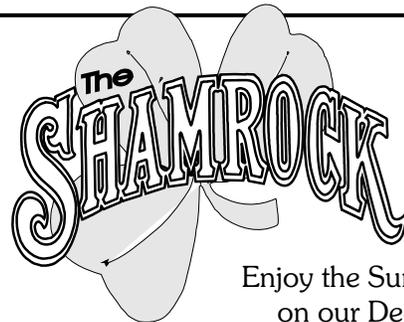
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Wildlife Club News

(Editor's note: with high hopes and much good spirit the Wildlife Club members met the DNR truck in late June and escorted it to the walleye pond. Nets were set in the center, with the leads running out like spokes. Buckets of fingerlings were expected, but the unfortunate yield was 1 salamander, 2 mud minnows, 8 turtles, and a few fish. Later draggings with a seine net produced no better result.)

The regular monthly meeting of the Beaver Island Wildlife Club was well attended. The hot topic was the walleye pond. A DNR officer arrived on June 27 and with the help of member volunteers set eight seining nets in the pond. The following morning the nets were pulled. Needless to say, the harvest of 67 fingerlings was a shock. We had hoped for thousands. The fingerlings were an average length of two inches and were transferred to Lake Geneserath. The success of the pond is a disappointment, not a failure, Alvin LaFreniere was quick to point out. The hard work has been done with the help of many volunteers, members, and non-members. First-year pond failures are not new to the DNR and even to researchers at MSU. When I spoke with Don Garling, fishery biologist with the MSU Cooperative Extension Service, he pointed out that walleye rearing depends on many variables. We hope to utilize the Extension manual as we plan for 2004. As we discussed this we were made aware that successful ponds are aerated to keep up the proper level of oxygen. We also had only a couple days to fill the pond and establish a food source before the fry were delivered. We also had some unseasonable cold weather during much of the rearing time. Now that we know some of our mis-



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takes we plan to move ahead. Our first step will probably be to drain the pond and plant rye to stabilize the bottom. Thank you all for your support and help.

Walleyes as large as 28½ inches have been caught on Lake Geneserath this summer, and many in the 18-20" category. Remember to consult your fishing guide for regulations.

We have begun a deer population survey. Working with Brian Mastenbrook, our DNR biologist, we have established routes for observation. Each route will be driven every evening at the same time by a member and records kept of numbers of does, fawns, and bucks. The survey runs until September. After three years we should get a better picture of what our census is and what the buck to doe ratio is. These surveys in addition to our successful hunter contest should help us determine the status of our herd. Look for signs about the Successful Hunter Contest. Sites for registering your deer will be announced along with the rules. The grand prize by drawing will be a 12 gauge Mossberg shotgun. Second and third prizes are hunting knives. You only have to be a licensed successful hunter to register. The contest will run from Oct 1 through Dec. 31, 2003.

We are getting reports of hen wild turkeys with poults. I have seen many in varying stages of maturity. I also saw a loose dog flush a hen that flew into a tree leaving her young unattended. Her frantic clucks could still be heard as we drove away, hoping she would return to her brood quickly. Please control your pets. After two poor nesting seasons we are hoping that this year will boost our turkey census.

—Lois Williams, secretary

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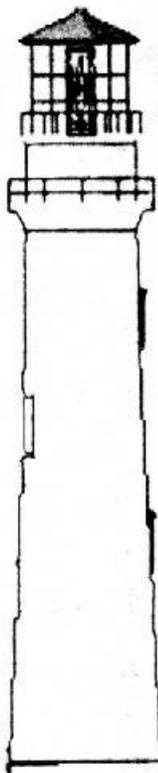
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Charlevoix County Commissioners

The Charlevoix County Board of Commissioners met at 3:00 p.m. on June 11, 2003 at Whiting Park. Commissioners Patrick and Snyder were absent.

Motion approved the minutes of the June 11, 2003 meeting.

Motion approved Resolution #03-045, P.A. 511 Community Corrections. Northwest Michigan Regional Community Corrections Grant Application for FY 2004.

Motion approved Resolution #03-046, Software Purchase. The purchase of software for the Equalization Department to utilize the plat book development software being purchased for the County's use this summer/fall.

Motion approved Resolution #03-047, Fiber Optic Cables. A faster Internet connection to send reports from the Courts to the State.

Motion approved Resolution #03-048, 2003 Subsidiary Fund Budgets.

Motion approved Resolution #03-049, 2003 September Subsidiary Fund Budgets.

Motion approved Resolution #03-050, Amendment to PZC Agreement.

Commissioner Jason was selected as the delegate to the MERS Convention. Chairman Frykberg will be the alternate.

Motion adjourned the meeting.

–Jane E. Brannon, County Clerk



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News From the Townships

St. James Township, 7-2-03

Compared to June's rather volatile meeting, this one was rather calm. After the minutes were accepted and the list of bills to be paid expanded and approved, Supervisor Don Vyse delivered a few reports. He sent letters to the downtown merchants asking them to ask their employees not to park on the street, but had not received any response. He was reluctant to suggest a parking ordinance. Ed Wojan informed the Board that BIBCO had obtained permission from Evan Karnes to park on the north side of the Resale Shop lot, which could accommodate 8 or 9 cars.

The supervisor reported that the permit for improving the Yacht Dock had finally been received from the Army Corps of Engineers. The work, which includes dock repair and expansion, some dredging, an upgrade of the electrical system, and some work on the building, is expected to be ready to start in the spring. Funds from a \$1.1 m grant are in hand. (As a sign of how urgent this matter has become, the next night a handful of people fell into the lake when a outside finger pier on which they were standing collapsed. Other boaters were quick to call the EMS and help pull the victims from the water. Luckily, there were only scrapes and bruises, no serious injuries.)

The supervisor said that after considering how much good was done for the Township's projects at the Lansing Reception, he was not sure he would rec-

ommend that St. James donate \$1,000 to these efforts again next year.

The dust control is complete for the year. Almost 10,000 gallons were applied, including a second coating of the Donegal Bay Road.

The Nuisance Ordinance was published on July 1st, so that if it isn't challenged it will go into effect on July 31st.

The State Preservation Office tweaked and then accepted the architect's plan for his report about the condition and requirements for the Whiskey Point Light, so now he can begin to prepare it.

Township Engineer Gary Vogt is sponsoring a Writing Contest and offering prizes for the best essays about how enjoyable the new bike path is. The full-mile path was officially opened at 11:30 a.m. on July 4th, with dozens of bikers, first, and then walkers setting off from Heritage Park.

The Township investigated the requirements of running the new paid EMS employees' (6 in number, taking two slots) payrolls through its books, and decided it would be best to simply take over the EMS account – similarly to how it handles the Fire Department account.

A Bike Path ordinance was suggested, to determine rules for its use. Because of the MDOT funds, no motorized vehicle of any kind can be allowed. Graffiti Art will be prohibited as well.

The Airport Hanger agreement is nearing completion. The two townships

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will buy out the present owner's (Ed Welter) interest for the appraised value of \$91,000, with 90% of this coming from federal funds and possibly another 5% from the state.

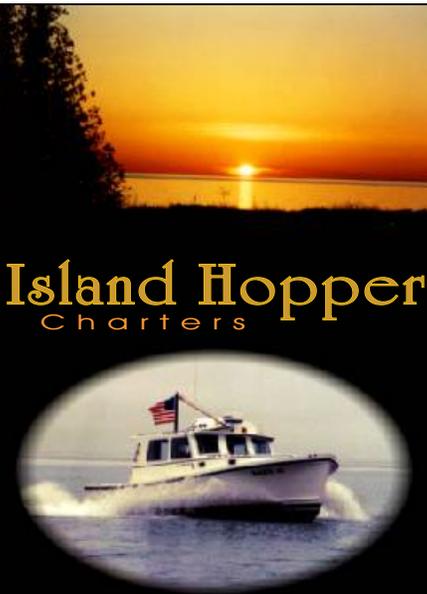
A Sanitary Sewer resolution was passed compelling everyone contiguous to the sewer line to hook up to it. Sally Pryce, in the audience, said she had been trying to hook up for about a year but had constantly been put off even though she'd obtained all the permits. (The next day her connection was made.)

There was a discussion of the deteriorating condition of the seal coat surface of King's Highway; it was said to be good for 7 years at the time, and now we're approaching 10. Gary Vogt stated it's a County Primary road, so the Charlevoix County Road Commission has a responsibility to maintain it, and the \$500,000 estimated cost for a 20-year "hot mix" paving (for the portion in St. James Township) could not be born without the County's participation. (It was noted that the road is 26' wide to Four Corners and then narrows to 20'. This was done in order to mark with white paint two lines to create 3' walking and bike paths on both sides, but no one ever came up with the paint.) If the CCRC would pay 2/3rds, the balance could possibly be financed over 3 to 5 years.

There was some criticism of Peaine Township for not paving 100' of Sloptown Road where it meets the Highway (which would cost \$8,400)

because this corner is sometimes taken at a certain speed, and the loose gravel has sent cars sliding.

Dick Moehl, the President of the Great Lakes Lighthouse Keepers' Association, addressed the Township regarding his interest in working with it to restore and maintain the Whiskey Point Light. He recounted how he had facilitated the possible purchase of the Boathouse and donation of it to CMU. (Ed Wojan refreshed the Board's memory of how this had come to pass: the Township had been offered the property (including 400' of frontage), but had decided not to spend the \$17,000 it would have cost. Consequently Tom Child purchased it at auction for \$60,000. He listed it for sale at \$400,000, but by the time a buyer was located decided to raise the price to \$700,000; and by the time a new buyer was found at that price, he declared that it was now worth \$1,000,000.) Dick Moehl sketched in some of his accomplishments with the St. Helena Light and the Round Island Light, and talked about his vision for the Whiskey Point Maritime Complex. All aspects of his plan seemed satisfactory, in part because the Township alone does not know how it could fund the needed improvements. The supervisor felt that a partnership with GLLKA would be a win-win situation. The Board voted to pursue this partnership, and to refer to it in its application to receive title to the Light, which is due on August 1st.



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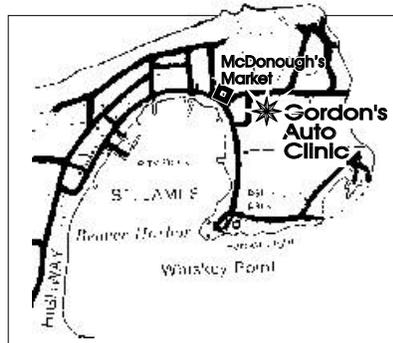


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News from the Townships

Peaine Township Regular meeting: 7-9-03 all present
MOTION Nelson, Second Morgan, to approve the
6-11-03 minutes; approved. MOTION Lanier, Second Works,
to approve the payment of current bills; approved.

Judy asked the Board for suggestions on the type and price
range for the new tables and chairs.

MOTION Works, Second Nelson, to authorize Supervisor
John Works to sign the hangar lease agreement with the Beaver
Island Airport; approved.

Correspondence: Don Vyse, St. James Supervisor,
requested Peaine work with St. James on the goal of improving
the King's Highway. John and Paul volunteered to work with
Don.

A letter was sent to Sandy LoDico commending her on her
excellent cleaning of the Township Hall.

Reports: Planning Commission hopes to have surveys out
by end of month. Two special use permit applications for gravel
extraction were reviewed; one was approved, one denied.

Public comments were voiced on nuisance ordinance, civil
infraction ordinance, and the gravel pit special use applica-
tions.

Jim Campbell is the full-time deputy, and Justin Good the
seasonal deputy. Adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

An Unfounded Rumor

Thankfully the story that our new Deputy had resigned,
which was making the rounds up and down Main Street last
week with more speed than the morning walkers, was com-
pletely untrue. If you don't believe he's here—just ask him.

A Thank You

Our heartfelt thanks for the prayers, cards, e-mails, and
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—Lenard & Alex Siudara

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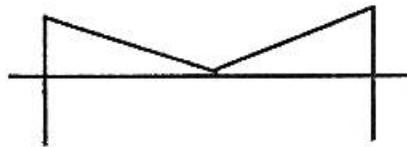


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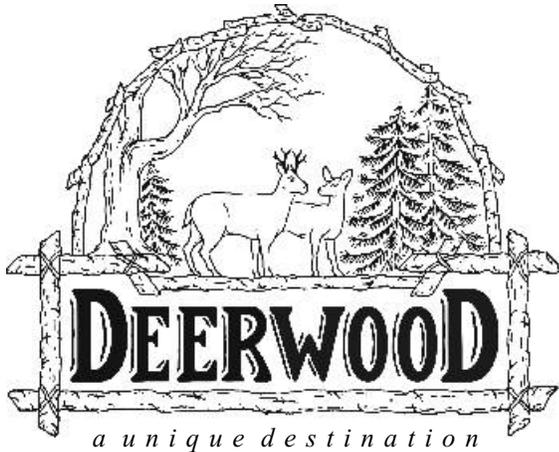
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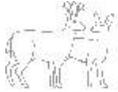
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A Challenge to the BIRHC Board

On July 15th the Beaver Island Rural Health Center Board met at the St. James Township Hall to conduct its regularly-scheduled meeting. It was apparent from the 90 people in attendance that there was much interest in one matter in particular: the non-renewal of Susan Meis's contract.

The non-renewal was on the agenda as item 6Ai, but the audience did not want to sit through two hours of normal business before expressing its concern. As the financial report was unfurled voices were heard asking that 6Ai be moved up. The Board resisted until the fire code was brought up. Moving the meeting was considered, but no other place was available. In the pithy repartee that followed, one Board member spoke without thinking: "We didn't ask you to come; you invited yourselves." The response was an instantaneous blend of anger and refutation, with more than one person reminding the speaker that when questions about policy were brought up at a special meeting called for another purpose, the public had been specifically invited to attend regular meetings.

Following the uproar over this gaffe the Board consented to turn to the non-renewal. A sheet of paper was circulated: those who wanted to speak had to sign to get two minutes of remarks. It quickly became apparent that the people in the audience felt a great and grave injustice had been done as person after person testified that Susan Meis's availability as a health care provider was an important part of their ability to enjoy their time on Beaver Island, each accolade producing a round of spontaneous applause.

Most of the comments cited examples of Susan's excellent diagnostic and treatment skills. She was said to be hard-working, friendly, and caring. "Susan was always very professional." "Susan corrected the doctor's incorrect diagnosis."

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sis.” “Susan is the only person who helped me.”

She was also said to have a feisty attitude at times: “She is a rose. She has thorns. Most of us are weeds.” “She gives as well as she gets—which is why I like her.” It was hoped that her independence and lack of political savvy was not the root cause of her non-renewal.

Other comments revealed a dissatisfaction with the Board's attitude and behavior, which was perceived to be unconcerned about their feelings. Speakers wanted to know if the Board had violated the Open Meetings Act in deciding Susan's future. Lingering disapproval of the Transition Manager's salary and the Board's tabling of an application for Board membership were also factors in the level of antagonism.

Although the Board cited confidentiality requirements, there were repeated questions of what she had done to deserve non-renewal. The Board stated that it had to make decisions for the good of the BIRHC. President Connie Wojan said that she had been very impressed with how Susan had cared for her mother in the last year of her life, but could not convince the audience to trust the Board's decision without knowing why. So reluctantly she said that Susan was not a team player, and cited an example. Apparently pressed by the staff, Susan, the senior employee, demanded a meeting with Connie to air grievances about the Transition Manager. This threatened to undue the efforts the Board had been making to distance itself from the daily operation of the BIRHC, and was the culmination to “a pattern of unprofessional behavior.”

Some of the mechanics of the non-renewal were revealed. It seemed the Transition Manager campaigned for this, talking to small groups of Board members until the necessary mandate was achieved.

EMS representative to the Board (and Board member) Gerald LaFreniere returned from an emergency and asked whether Susan had a *just cause* clause in her contract, or should have. Gauging the public sentiment, he moved that the Board reconsider. Paul Nelson said that he wished they had taken more time to resolve the conflict, and yet no member of the Board was willing to second Gerald's motion. Don Spencer defended the hiring of Arlene, stating that both Township supervisors had grown frustrated with the Medical Center not having a manager. Further, he said, when State inspectors looked over the operation of the Med Center they questioned whether such haphazard methods would be able to cope with the expanded operation that was anticipated in the new facility. While all the problems had not yet been corrected, he added, great progress had been made. To someone who cited a bill that was still in error, he explained that some accounts required up to 40 hours to straighten out.

The audience was far from satisfied. Its grumbling became angrier and more vocal. Connie Wojan had done a good job of keeping control, but she began to wilt under the continuing vituperation. She cited the constant workload she has maintained, doing such things as scrubbing the urinals in the Hall so the BIRHC could raise another \$1,200 and sitting in the sweltering sun in McDonough's parking lot to sell chances on the truck. She was so harried by the audience's aggressive attitude that she wanted to quit, she said, but she knew better than to make such an important decision in the heat of the moment. But she was too upset and exhausted to continue—she had also chaired an early meeting with Bob Tambolini on developing a capital campaign to support the new facility. The Board decided no progress was likely to be made, and the meeting, after 2 ½ hours, was adjourned.

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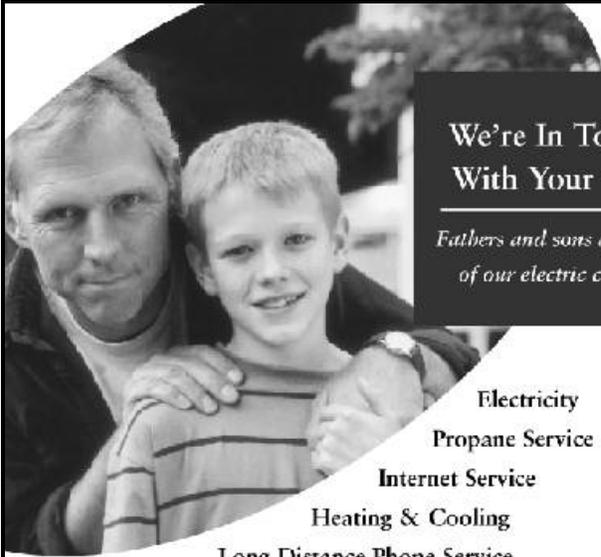
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The Opposition Organizes

On July 18th almost a hundred people gathered in the Peaine Township Hall to consider what might be done to bring about the reinstatement of Susan Meis. Kirk McBride accepted the position of Moderator, but only after twice informing Connie Wojan and asking her to invite the BIRHC Board to attend.

At the onset Kirk stated that we should all acknowledge the primacy of the BIRHC Board, and that this was to be a resolution, not retribution. He encouraged those who spoke to focus on actionable steps rather than simply vent their frustration. The meeting would be recorded, and written notes would also be taken by Lois Williams. Jeff Powers had agreed to transcribe the suggested steps and goals on a flip chart at the front of the room.

Susan Meis followed by reading from a prepared statement. She urged people not to focus on personalities or her situation, but to try to keep in mind the larger issue of insuring quality health care now and in the future through BIRHC. It was apparent that she was surprised and honored by the degree of support that had been expressed in the previous few days.

Some of the comments that followed were similar to those made at the BIRHC meeting, but some new questions were raised as well. Was the manager's position

properly posted? Did she really have this degree of power? Was there a conflict of interest in those who recommended her? Is she a Townships employee? Should the Township Boards have more responsibility for monitoring this situation? Were Susan's EEOC rights violated? Should she seek legal redress if they were?

On this topic it was asked if the BIRHC would have to pay, directly or through insurance rate increases, if Susan sought legal redress for certain comments that were felt to border on character assassination. One attendee said we should temper the attacks and not let this matter pit neighbor against neighbor, which brought a round of applause.

Someone wondered what it would cost to find a replacement for Susan. Someone else thought it was fishy that a possible replacement is already looking for property.

Someone wanted to know how the BIRHC Board was tracking the Transition Manager's success at accomplishing the stated goals.

And so it went for over two hours. Upon adjournment those who had signed a passed sheet saying they were willing to work to accomplish the actionable steps were asked to stay to put together a concrete plan it was hoped would lead to the correcting of the perceived wrongs.

Letters to the Editor:

I do believe in discussion with the other board members and having discussions with the public on the street or at board meetings, that my initial comments at the last BIRHC board meeting were spontaneously unfortunate and surely set the tone for the difficult meeting that followed. Please accept my apologies for those comments.

– Sincerely, Don Spencer

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Letters to the Editor:

From Joe Reed: July 17, 2003:

I made two statements the other night at the meeting which became controversial. The first was that Susan Meis had sued her former employer. I repeated a rumor rather than having a factual base for the statement. I spoke with Jayne Bailey who confirmed that it was discussed at the time but apparently Susan did not in fact file a lawsuit. Therefore I spoke based on a rumor and never should have done it.

The other dispute was over a statement attributed to me with respect to Eula Thomas. I was alleged to have said she would never be on the board as long as I was a member, or words to that effect. I must emphatically deny having said that and indeed I was preparing to be a part of a board committee who would interview prospective board members when a slate was assembled from those who responded to our announcement soliciting board applications.

In short, I regret speaking out based on a rumor but vigorously deny ever having said that I would attempt to prevent any individual who wished to serve and met the stated criteria for membership from joining the BIRHC board.

—Sincerely, Joe Reed

From Kirk McBride:

It is my sincere desire for the entire Island community that our BIRHC Board and Transition Manager act immediately and forthrightly to resolve issues brought forward by concerned citizens. If this does not happen, I sadly foresee the possibility of the entire Medical Center project failing.

I also hope that when the emotional dust settles, the board realizes and acknowledges the fact that issues run deeper and wider than the non-renewal of our PA's contract. This action taken by the board was only impetus for a call to action relative to other critical issues with the Medical Center. I've seen few other causes generate as much public interest and support, a good thing to have happen for greater public involvement with the BIRHC Board and Medical Center moving forward from here.

I also recognize that the BIRHC Board is not publicly elected but still responsible to the public. I therefore fear that if the public can not vote with a ballot, their recourse becomes voting with their dollars. The withholding of contributions or the turndown of possible millage funding is not an acceptable alternative. Neither act will serve the greater need of the Island and its medical care.

All involved individuals should realize there is no WE and THEY in this matter but

only US. The world grows smaller daily and the Island even smaller. Now is the time for US to come together quickly.

Based on the public display of inappropriate professional conduct and behavior by two board members at last Tuesdays' BIRHC Board meeting, the two members should immediately resign in the best interest of the community and Medical Center. There exists a pool of talented and qualified candidates who stand ready, willing, and able to accept Tuesday nights' challenge and sit on the board's side of the table in order to fill current and/or future board vacancies.

In the board's Proposed Guidelines for Recruiting, Selecting, and Orientating Members of the BIRHC Board of Directors they have recommended the following: Mission of the Beaver Island Rural Health Center (BIRHC) is: *To provide high quality, cost-effective health care that is accessible to the entire Beaver Island community.* Purpose of the BIRHC Board: *To ensure that the organization's mission is fulfilled within the legal, governance, and fiduciary responsibilities entrusted to it by the public.*

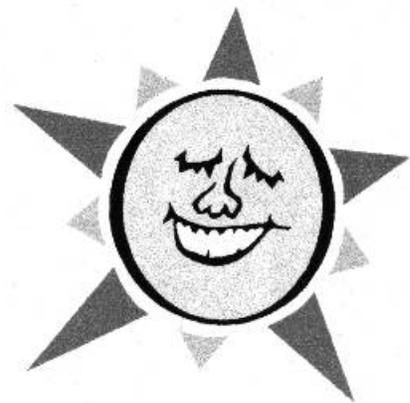
Let's all walk the talk and demonstrate that these are more than just words on paper. Much has been accomplished but much more lies before us. Let all of US come together for that purpose.

—Kirk D. McBride

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Letters to the Editor:

About the Current Controversy

The board and management of the Health Center have had to make some very difficult staffing and financial decisions during the last year. In all cases, decisions were made carefully, with what we believed were the best interests of the Health Center and the community in mind.

One of the hardest decisions was not to renew the contract of Susan Meis, PA-C upon its expiration on September 30, 2003. The letter informing her of that decision gave her the option of working through the duration of the contract on the condition that she maintain professional behavior. Instead, Susan elected to resign immediately.

Despite her resignation, the Health Center continues to provide the coverage and high quality of health care services that the Beaver Island community expects and deserves. Chris VanLooy, PA-C, continues as our full-time primary care provider. We have the cooperation and staffing assistance of BIEMS personnel. Two other experienced health care professionals well known to the Beaver Island Community, Nurse Practitioner Jo Hendrix and Holly Nielson, PA-C, also will provide services to patients.

We understand the personal relationships many in the community have with Susan because of the capable care she has given. We know it can be difficult to contemplate establishing such a bond with another care provider, and we are sorry that some Health Center patients will have to go through this. But the Board of Directors has the duty to take actions necessary to protect and preserve the long-term best interests of the Health Center as an organization one of the most important on this island and a solid majority of the Board concluded that extending Susan Meis's employment for another two years would be incompatible with those interests.

In addition to assuring continued delivery of high quality health care services, the Health Center has faced major management challenges. The State Department of Community Health (which licenses the Center), the townships and the community at large have all demanded improvement in its overall operations, especially billing procedures.

To meet those demands the Health Center Board retained the services of Arlene Brennan, an experienced health care professional highly recommended by the State and by regional hospitals with which the Health Center is affiliated. Her assignment was to diagnose the problems and, with the Board's approval and support, devise and implement solutions. She was retained as an independ-

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**Dave Cole,
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ent contractor, so the Health Center would not have the expense of benefits for a permanent employee, and all costs for her service were covered by grant funds. Under her leadership a tremendous amount of work has been done.

Arlene and the staff report many accomplishments, some of which are:

- Assisting with the layout of the new facility the staff will use;
- Creating accurate and timely invoices that patients can understand;
- Drafting and implementing fair and comprehensible patient financial policies, which patients are beginning to understand and appreciate;
- Collecting co-pays at the time of service;
- Assuring compliance with Federal privacy accountability requirements;
- Improving collection and management of patient information;
- Dramatically increasing and accelerating collection of third-party reimbursements and cash payments for patient services;
- Clarifying job descriptions, roles and responsibilities;
- Training staff to properly interpret and apply treatment and diagnostic codes for reimbursement;
- Improved relationships with BIEMS, Peaine and St. James Townships, area hospitals, and the State.

Much remains to be done, but the staff and Board are encouraged by positive feedback about our progress in these areas, and we remain committed to our mission of providing *high quality, cost effective patient treatment and wellness services to the whole Beaver Island community.*

We are all giving our best efforts and devoting substantial volunteer hours to ensure that the Health Center not only survives, but thrives, and we appreciate the support and understanding the community has provided. We realize that people will disagree with some of our decisions and we care about their concerns. But we hope that personal disagreements with Board actions will not be turned against the Health Center as an organization because without broad and strong community support this vital Beaver Island institution *cannot* survive. With the loss of state funding, your support is more important than ever.

—Connie Wojan, Don Spencer, Anne Glendon, Pete LoDico, Joe Reed, Rick Speck, Barbara Murphy, and Gerald LaFreniere

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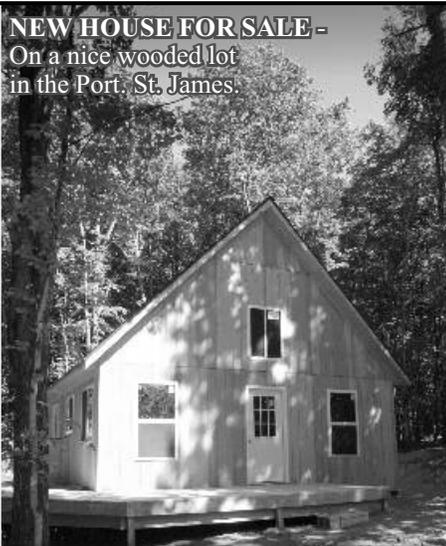
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Classified Ads

Real Estate, For Sale:

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GULL HARBOR - 3 BR split level on two acres. Waterfront. Call (441) 242-9492 or (231) 448-2433 or email suestampworld@northrock.bm

PORT ST. JAMES - 3 Wooded Lots #727,728,729 A few blocks to Font Lake, 1/2 mile to Lake Mich. \$29,000 for all 3. \$5000 down, will finance bal. Call owner in FL (352) 326-8979

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WEEKLY RENTAL - Lake front "The Last Resort" 2 BR house on Sand Bay, great view, beautiful sunrise, laundry pair, 1 ½ bath. Phone Bill McDonough at (231) 448-2733 (days).

GUEST HOUSE ON DONEGAL BAY - Will rent weekly Sat. - Sat. Includes full kitchen, all linens, a queen bed in bedroom, palette couch in L.R. Very private and peaceful. \$450.00 weekly. Please call (231) 448-2345

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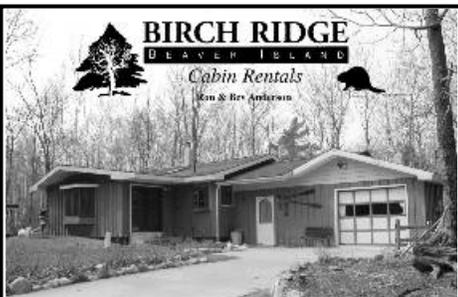
Three BRs, two and one half bath house for lease. Located right on the south side of the harbor with a great view. 5 minutes to town but a private location too. For more information call Robert at (231) 448-2235



HOUSE FOR SALE: 38745 Squaw Island Ct. in the Port St. James. Interior not yet finished so you can finish it exactly how you like. Electrical and plumbing have been run and it is connected to GLE. \$59,000 Call Ed Wojan Realty (231) 448-2711



FOR RENT: Beautiful secluded new chalet near Donegal Bay's beach and gorgeous sunsets. 3 BR, 2 Bath. MBR has garden tub. W/DR/TV/VCR/Grill. Upon availability, bikes & auto for your use. Sleeps 6-8. No Pets. \$700/week. Ask about our 3-day package. Call (708) 389-0621 (evenings)

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A young fawn stares down a milkweed.