Welcome Spring!

This Sandscribes catches everyone up on the off-season news for those who do not read the Web site.

For those that do read the Web site, this is all old news—but also a good review!

Two very important topics are covered here; changes to the compost pile management and an update on our infrastructure problems and issues. Please read carefully.

Dates to put on your Calendar:

**Monday, May 1st**: Start of 2x/week trash pickups

**Friday & Saturday, May 12th & 13th**: Free Dump Days for Large Items at Vermilion’s Recycling Center. (See related article below.)

**Sunday, May 28th**: First Board Meeting of the year

**Saturday, July 15th**: Annual Membership Meeting

Jane & John

Our Beautiful Beach

These pictures were just taken Saturday, April 15th:

Can you believe it?

This is all due to the incredible work of Dean Smith, Carol Dunkle, and Harvey Foote. They all have been puttering away on the beach throughout this winter.

As you know we had a mild year—and not too much washed ashore. So, they have been down several times raking, gathering, and clearing. Barring a terrible spring storm (and we know this is a possibility!), we were ready for summer by Easter Sunday!
Dean has been on a mission to get rid of the invasive shrubs, and clear out and smooth out the flatter areas of the beach bank for easier maintenance. Dean and Harvey have created more areas that will be able to be maintained with just mowing. The beach grasses are filling in and holding our dunes. Our beach bank has always been a Herculean job to maintain, and they’ve moved us a huge step forward in making this easier. It is just stunning and we can’t thank them enough.

As you can see in the pictures too, the water is high this year, and the beach is fairly narrow. Because of the high waves and water, we temporarily lost the northern volleyball net post! The waves were so strong and high that it became dislodged. Luckily, Carol Dunkle noticed at the right moment, and found it on Ben Norton’s beach! It is now laying on the ground just to the left of the south post. I don’t remember that ever happening in my lifetime!

In the bottom picture, you can see—just east over the east pier—is a pile of ash. We’ve re-instituted the beach burn pile—more on that in the article below!

The Burn Pile Returns!

As you read and heard last year, we no longer have access to the help of Mr. Brown’s crew to haul our debris away.

After careful thought and preparation, we’ve chosen this location, just east of the east pier, and just north of the pathway to the east beach, for our new burn pile:

Dean Smith and Harvey Foote have used their collection of machinery to prepare this area—and of course, start collecting our stick and limb debris.

The New Plan for Usage:

1. We ask that everyone now use this burn pile as the location to put your sticks, limbs, and pulled out plants or shrubs.

2. We are working on cleaning up the old compost pile on the east end of the promenade and would like to make the promenade area only for leaves.

Throwing plants, shrubs, sticks, and limbs here has made a terrible eyesore, and put things in a place that we can’t maintain well. Cleaning this area is still a work in progress, but we’d appreciate that nothing further be added here from this point forward (except leaves, of course).
3. There is still an area in the woods behind the forsythia on the south side of the creek (near the entrance to the beach) that can be used for all debris. However, if you can bring the sticks and limbs to the burn pile anyway, we’d really appreciate it. At some point, we’ll have to manage that area better too—and the sticks and limbs just don’t decompose.

4. Please, please, please, do not use the area around the dumpster for limbs or any other debris. We need to have that clear for the dumpster, and for putting wood chips down. Harvey and John just got that cleaned out again.

5. Finally, please do not light the burn pile. **Please leave this to Dean and Harvey only.** They will monitor the conditions, and monitor the fire appropriately.

**To Reiterate in Brief Summary:**

1. Use the burn pile on the east beach for all limbs, sticks, plants, shrubs.
2. Use either the east end of the promenade or the south side of the creek compost areas for leaves only.
3. Do not put any yard waste or debris down by (or in!) the dumpster.

*Thank you so much for your cooperation as we try to make these improvements to keep our beach beautiful!*

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**New Fire Pit Ring for the Beach**

The old fire pit ring was lost to the lake over the winter. We think someone took it down from its storage location on the beach bank for a fire in the late fall, and did not put it back up by the wood pile. John and Jane purchased a new one. ☺

We will take it down to the beach in a few weeks once we get a picnic table and the chairs back in position. We also plan to have a galvanized pail tethered to the picnic table so people can easily extinguish the fires with lake water (not sand). When the ring becomes too full of ash or unburnt wood, people can use the pail to scoop it out and take it over the east pier to the burn pile. This way we will not have a terrible mess of coals in the sand as previously when people shifted the ring around when it got full of sand. Again, please use the pail for water, or taking the old ash to the burn pile. We’ll try to get some signage posted down there too.

**One final note:** We have a decent sized wood pile right now—the logs need to be split first. Harvey Foote and/or Jeff Belmont will be getting that taken care of for us. Please don’t start making fires until we can get this in order. The logs in the pile now would overwhelm the new fire pit ring. (And please don’t just start a fire on the sand without the ring in place.)

Also, we always appreciate anyone who is willing to take a chainsaw and cut up and split wood for this pile throughout the season. There is quite a bit of driftwood on the east beach that could be used for this purpose. There are also places in the woods areas that have large logs on the ground—just ask Jane and she’ll direct you.
General Help Wanted

Though amazing work has already been done around the beach, there are still some miscellaneous tasks that we’d appreciate help with.

1. Picking up sticks and limbs. Harvey, Dean, Carol, John, and I have already taken the first pass around the property to get things cleaned up for the start of mowing season. As winds or storms happen, we always get a new batch down on the ground. Please help to pick them up off the grassy areas and take them down to the burn pile. (Or, if you need help transporting to the beach, call Carol or Harvey to pick up the pile you’ve gathered.)

2. Our tree service did a “Vista Prune” on the promenade this year. They raised the limbs on many trees to let a little more sunlight in and provide a spectacular view for all. There are several areas around the promenade (including a place where a tree was removed) that could use some re-seeding work.

3. As you saw, the beach itself is in good shape at this moment. Help us keep it that way and rake up or saw up any new things that wash ashore—the burn pile is just past the east pier! If something is appropriate for the fire pit wood pile (make sure it is cut to length)—you can put it there.

4. At some point, Harvey and Dean will take some loads of wood chips to put around the bases of the promenade trees (that aren’t already maintained by others). They’ll need help raking and shaping those rings. Remember—make donuts, not volcanoes! ☺ Getting all the trees on the promenade ringed is still the goal. If any are left undone, your help in doing them would be appreciated.

Thank You!

Thank you as well to everyone who has volunteered to do a task on our Community List—we all appreciate the gift of having those things taken care of!

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Winter Infrastructure Update

Dear Community,

The deadline to apply (again) for a low interest EPA loan was March 1st. As promised last fall, the Board checked in with our Erie County contacts to see if anything had changed in their ability to help us this year.

The short answer is “no.” The short reason remains that we are a private community.

The longer story is that there was a major shake-up in the county after the November election. The Erie County Sanitary Engineer was fired, and those responsibilities transferred to the Erie County Director of Utilities. One of the two county commissioners we had worked with was also ousted. The remaining commissioner, who is also the one that truly holds the purse strings, remains steadfast that we won’t get any monetary help.

We’ve had some further insights and understanding as well. When Erie County offered us the loan in 1964, it was probably only because the Erie County Commissioner that held the purse strings to the county at that time was a resident of Heidelberg Beach. We had not understood until now that we had probably been given a special favor—access to money that would not have been normal. This explains too why the project might have fizzled out 50 years ago. Our resident commissioner’s term probably ended before the county was able to start the work. This is just a theory, but at this point, it is an educated one.

We hope you can agree that the Board has worked hard to turn over every stone in this investigation. The only viable option now is to save up for this expense.

The Board’s Plan for moving forward:

The Board will hold its first meeting of the year on Sunday, May 28th. The primary focus will be planning for the Annual Meeting (scheduled for Saturday, July 15th). This year we will more formally survey the community, by way of ballot, as to your agreement or disagreement to various aspects of moving forward to replace our infrastructure. We will also present a new rule for the Building Rules & Regulations document to
address the tap-in fee for any future cottages built (see the October 2016 Resolution from the October 3rd Board Minutes).

As always, please contact any of your Board members with comments, concerns, or suggestions.

Respectfully,
The Board of Trustees

January Water Main Breaks on W. Virginia Rd.

Last summer (2016) we saw the first signs of a new sinkhole developing along West Virginia Road, west of the Bratton cottage (42 West Virginia) and very near a previous repair where in July of 2015 the storm sewer cracked and caused another sinkhole.

Just after the Holidays, the sinkhole opened up and it was time to address the issue.

What follows here is an abbreviated version of the whole story that can be found on our Web site.

Unfortunately, 2 days later this happened:

Because they’d removed the compacted clay around the pipe, another rusted section burst open just a foot from the first repair. This photo was taken by Larry from Franklin Sanitation who was able to put his cell phone camera under the water pipe for this amazing shot.

We had been thinking that this was surely another crack in the storm sewer line (as happened in July 2015). We were wrong—it was a pinhole leak in the water line, that opened up as they carefully “vacuumed” out the dirt around the water pipe. The repair is shown below.

The photo below shows both repairs complete.
Septic Tanks Cleaned

Abel Sanitation cleaned everyone’s septic tanks in March for a cost of $110/tank (same price as it has been). This cost will show up on your Second Half Invoices in June. Many thanks to Harvey Foote for managing the effort.

6 Pennsylvania For Sale

Kate & Herb Foote are offering their cottage for sale. For information call Kate at (440) 315-3621.

Kate & Herb plan to use the proceeds to buy a permanent place in Florida—the trips back and forth are getting harder. They do plan to be here this summer—starting in late May.

76 Indiana is still For Sale (now listed publicly)

Please contact Tom O’Dougherty at (216) 978-7878 for more information.

Saving Important Information on the Neighborhood Reference Page of our Web Site

To not lose important information about our community, John Macko has documented some notes about our water system and maintaining the Heidelberg Beach Web site on the “Neighborhood Reference Information” page of the Web site.

It is worth a refresher for you to see what we have on the Neighborhood Reference Information page if you haven’t looked at it in a while—there is much valuable and useful information out there. No need to memorize the details, just familiarize yourself to know what information exists. This is a living repository, so help us add to it or correct it!

Regarding the water system: When John worked with Harvey in December 2016 to turn off and turn on our main water supply up by Route 6, it seemed prudent to write down the idiosyncrasies for anyone that might have to do this in the future (without Harvey or John around). It will also be worthwhile knowledge when a new water system is designed.

Regarding maintaining the Web Site: Just to make sure more than one person has the information, John has given our Web Site details to the two other beach members that have the required technical skill to run and maintain the Heidelberg Beach site—Aaron Hamilton and Brice Chidester (the Community Task List was updated to reflect this). Just in case something happens to John, all the information on the Web Site will be preserved and accessible.

What to do with Large “Trash” or Donatable Items?

Do not leave large items (like mattresses, bookcases, furniture) down by our dumpster. These items will not be taken by our trash pickup service, and then one of your neighbors will end up having to clean up after you.

If you have large items to dispose of, please consider one of the options below:

• Offer the items to your neighbors by sending an email message to HBAdmin@roadrunner.com, and we'll post your items.

• Place the items outside your cottage with a sign on them. Do this only when you are present on property—please do not put them out and then drive home.

• Take them to the Huron Goodwill (right behind the Huron Dairy Queen and next to the Drug Mart). They accept all types of items during regular business hours.

• Donate them to Habit for Humanity by either taking the items to the ReStore location on Rt. 250 on specified days and times, or call for free pick up service.

• Twice a year in May and September, Vermilion Township offers free dump days.

• For regular recycling materials, Vermilion Township’s Recycling Center is open 24 hours a day, every day.

• Erie County has debuted a new Web site at www.ErieCountyRecycles.org, with lots of detailed information about how and where to dispose all kinds of materials—including hazardous items.

Losses over the Winter

• Delores and Dan Warder (17 West Virginia) lost Delores’s mother in October 2016.

• Jeff Belmont and Judy Destro (64 Kentucky) lost their mother, Mary Lou Belmont, in January 2017.

• John Macko (82 Indiana) lost his father in February 2017.

• Ruth Schneider (24 W. Virginia) passed away March 28th, 2017.

• Clarke Martin (97 Ohio) passed away April 12th, 2017.

Newly Retired

Congratulations to Rev. Richard Henderson (62 Kentucky)!