

The Beaver Island Association

*Supporting Environmental and
Economic Sustainability*

beaverislandassociation@gmail.com

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Beaver Island, Michigan 49782

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Bill Haggard

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Attached to this memo is a 2 page description of the Maine Island Institute project which the Beaver Island Association has been working on in conjunction with the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes.

Members of the Beaver Island Association board of directors are planning to attend the St. James Township supervisors' meeting at 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 2nd to answer any questions you may have about the project. We also plan to attend the Peaine Township supervisors meeting on Wednesday, September 9, at 7:00 p.m.

We believe this project has potential to help Beaver Island move forward and we are looking forward to your participation and support.

If you have questions prior to the meeting, please give me (448-2582) or Pam Grassmick, the project leader, (448-2314) a call.

Sincerely,

Peter Igoe for The Beaver Island Association Board of Directors

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The Maine Island Institute

The Island Institute, a non-profit organization, was founded in 1983 with a goal of ensuring balanced use and a healthy future for the islands and waters of the Gulf of Maine (www.islandinstitute.org). With a staff of 41 full time and 4 part time employees, and 10 Island Fellows who live and work in communities, the Institute operates according to a three-year strategic planning cycle, with priorities developed in collaboration with island residents and our 22-member Board of Trustees. The Institute retains an annual membership of approximately 4,500 paying members, of which 10% have been members for more than 25 years.

Its mission is to work to sustain Maine's island and remote coastal communities and to exchange ideas and experiences to further the sustainability of communities here and elsewhere. Maine has 15 year-round un-bridged island communities, with approximately 5,000 year-round residents, and another 144 working waterfront communities reliant on fisheries, with a coastal population of 100,000. While these communities continue to struggle with extreme challenges in creating sustainable livelihoods and community institutions, we have seen evidence of improvement and local success. The Institute is dedicated to sharing lessons learned from our partnerships with island and remote coastal communities in Maine and elsewhere. The Institute brings focus to developing and sharing models to inform similar work in isolated, rural communities throughout the U.S. and beyond.

The Institute's current programming focuses on: K-12 education programs; college scholarships and internships; a leadership and entrepreneurship training program; small business support through a micro-loan and investment fund; and targeted programming to stabilize energy costs and to ensure that fisheries remain a viable economic base for isolated, natural-resource dependent communities. The Institute also supports Fellows who live and work in these communities on locally-defined projects for one or two years. In addition to programming, the Institute publishes a weekly e-newsletter, a monthly newspaper with a distribution of 65,000 (www.workingwaterfront.com) and an annual Island Journal.

Maine/Michigan Islands Sustainability Project.

This project will establish a collaboration network of the Beaver Island community in Michigan and one or more of the unbridged island communities in Maine. The objective is to identify actions to improve island prosperity including: education, health care, tourism, transportation, communication, the economy and the environment. Project members will explore the potential to collaborate with other Great Lakes and Maine island communities. There is potential for mutual support in addressing isolated island community problems. Project initiation contains three components: an open house community meeting on Beaver Island and two "knowledge exchange trips" between islands. It is the goal of the project to serve as a springboard for long-term, broader collaboration. The Maine Island Institute and the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes will provide programmatic, technical, and logistical support.

- Community Open House, Beaver Island Community Center, Tuesday, September 22nd, 3-6:00 p.m. Everyone welcome.
- Beaver Island Program team to visit an island or islands in Maine which will be determined by the interest of issues identified during the Beaver Island meeting. November 9-13, 2015.
- Maine Island Project Team to visit Beaver Island from September 21-24, 2015.

Beaver Island Trip Nominees

Possible nominee from St. James Township Board: Jim Wojan

Possible nominee from Peaine Township Board: Ernie Martin

Patrick McGinity (Director, Beaver Island Library, BIA board representative)

Pam Grassmick (BIA board and project organizer)

Bill McDonough (Business Owner)

Maine Islands Institute Current Projects

Ben Algeo is providing direct support to the local electric utilities on diesel powered island Monhegan and Matinicus as they work toward energy efficiency measures. Ben graduated from The University of Maine, Orono.

Erin Love is working to strengthen the ties between the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership and Casco Bay island communities in order to develop inter-island programs to address common environmental challenges. Erin is a graduate of Colby College.

Ian Watkins runs a parent support blog through the Ready by 21 Program for parents to share information to help their children succeed. He also works with the Eastern Maine Skippers program building distance learning resources and facilitating communication between participating schools. Ian graduated from Appalachian State University. Ian is supported, in part, by the Willoughby Stuart Fellowship Endowment.

Jessica Duma is working on a joint collaboration between the Great Cranberry Historical Society and the College of the Atlantic to collect information about island agricultural history in order to develop maps as well as a curriculum to engage students and the wider community more directly with their agricultural heritage. Jessica graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Kelsey Byrd is working with the Vinalhaven Community Wellness Coalition on initiatives to increase health and awareness within the community in three areas: substance abuse, aging in place, and fitness and nutrition. Kelsey is a Dartmouth College graduate. Kelsey is supported, in part, by the James & Joanne Cooney Island Fellowship Endowment.

Kendra Jo Marsh is working with the Islesboro Central School, Community Connections Steering Committee, and the Town of Islesboro to build a functional directory of resources for island professionals, to raise awareness about resource access, and to identify areas where no resources exist. Kendra Jo graduated from the University of Connecticut. Kendra Jo is supported, in part, by the Louis W. Cabot Fellowship Endowment.

Lucas Milardo is working to plan, develop, and implement high-quality, long-range service learning projects for students in the Frenchboro School. He also works as the Fellows Service Learning Coordinator, assisting in training, strengthening the resource library, and providing support to Fellows as they implement their own service learning projects. Lucas is a Bowdoin College graduate. Lucas is supported, in part, by the William Bingham Fellowship Endowment in Rural Education.

Maddey Gates is spending one quarter each on Chebeague, North Haven, Swan's Island, and Vinalhaven, using different tools to address short-term elder care and aging in place projects, while evaluating each site for commonalities to create a longer-term project to address these issues across islands. Maddey graduated from Western Kentucky University.

Meghan Cooper is building a website to increase awareness and transparency in town government in collaboration with the Town Selectmen on Isle Au Haut. She is also working with the Isle Au Haut Historical Society to catalogue and digitally archive their collection. Meghan graduated from Vassar College and recently spent a year on a fellowship in Azerbaijan.

Sidra Nasir is working with the Chebeague Fire & Rescue Department to create resource maps for hydrants and FEMA, streamline their administrative operations, and develop a community safety awareness program. Sidra is a graduate of the University of California, Irvine.