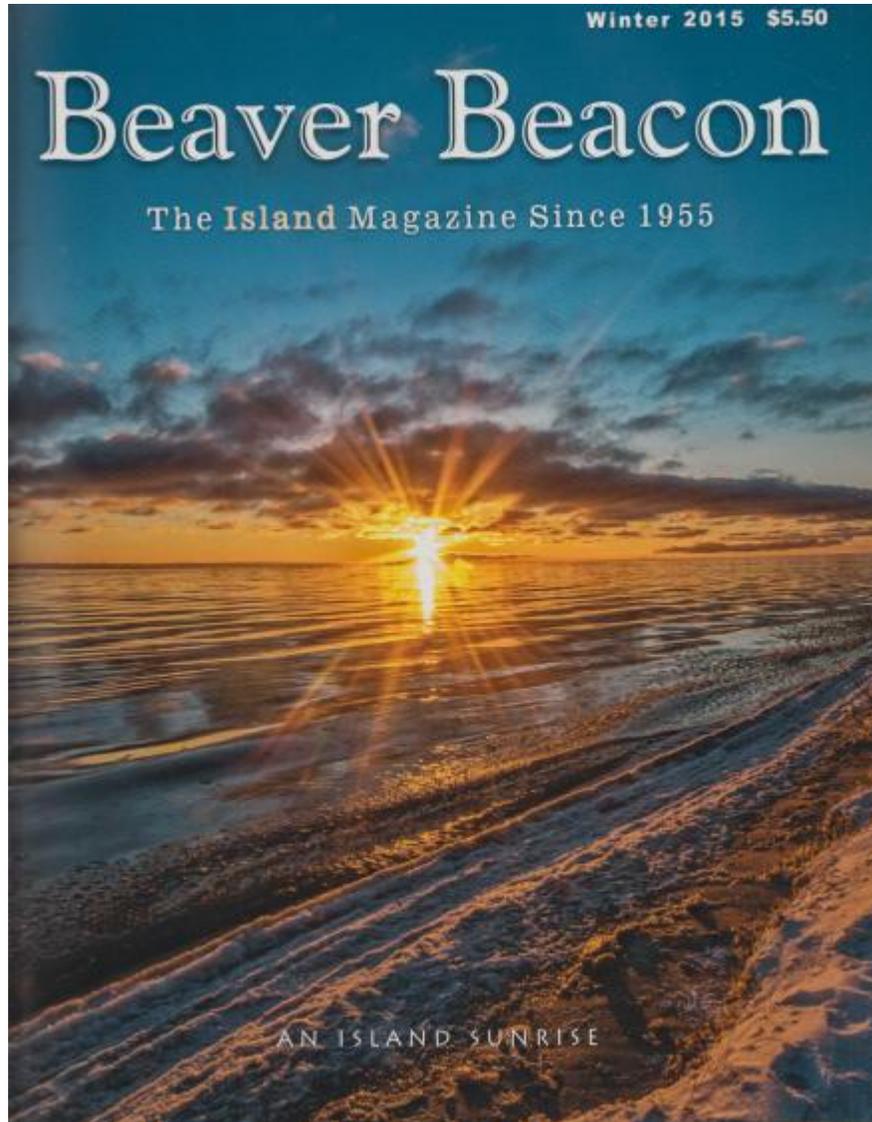


Beginnings

[7](#)



Here it is: the very first issue of the Beaver Beacon with my name attached.

I had a great deal of help – and many other offers of help – from friends and family and supporters. There were those who helped for my sake, and others for the sake of this island magazine that has become such a welcome institution over the years. Because I don't yet have the software that will allow me to do the layouts, Jeff Cashman kindly took the time to put this issue together. Some folks allowed me to write about them; others contributed their own stories. Others offered photographs, creative writing and research. Without their help, this issue would not have been possible. A huge thank you to all of you!

My introduction is here:

Hello...

I am Cindy Ricksgers.

You probably already know me.

You may have seen me at the Shamrock, where I was a daytime server for about twenty years, or at the Old Rectory or the Lodge, where I served dinner. You might have seen me at the hardware store, where I've worked for ten years. Perhaps (be still, my heart!) you are familiar with my artwork, on display at Livingstone Studio and a few other locations. I hope you've read the articles I've been writing for the Beaver Beacon; I'm pretty proud of them.

I've been visiting Beaver Island all of my life. My Dad was raised here, and this was where we came for vacation. I was always the kid draped over the railing at the back of the boat, sobbing because I hated to leave. I first moved here in 1978, and have been off and on (mostly on) the island ever since.

I've been reading the Beaver Beacon most of my life. My parents subscribed to it, and it was always a special day when it showed up in the mailbox. I've watched it change and grow over the years from a few type-written pages, mimeographed and stapled together in the upper left corner, to the glorious full-color publication it is today. I am honored and humbled to step into the role of editor here.

I have three primary goals.

First, I would like to not make a complete fool of myself. My experience in putting out a periodical is limited. In 1968, I was part of the team putting out the high school newspaper in Lapeer, Michigan. Bringing the "Panther Press" to the public involved manual typewriters, graph sheets and a lot of cutting and pasting. Things have changed quite a bit since then, in the printing world! With my limited knowledge of computers and software, this could be a very public, epic failure.

Second, I want to maintain the standards of excellence that we've all grown accustomed to. Bill and Jeff Cashman set the bar very high. It seemed that every issue outdid the last in remarkable photography, timely and interesting articles and outstanding features.

Third, my aim is to keep my eye on the readers. Times have changed; the Beaver Beacon is no longer the only news source coming out of Beaver Island. We have a radio station, for heaven's sake! Beyond that, the Northern Islander provides information in a monthly newspaper format, and Beaver Island News on the Net posts happenings at least weekly. I check the Beaver Island Forum for death notices and up-coming social events. No matter, I know there is still a place for the Beaver Beacon. I know many look forward to it showing up in the mailbox, just as my Dad used to. Many eagerly anticipate the Beacon appearing on the newsstands, and look forward to the pictures and stories. My goal is to continue to put out a publication that is a joy to receive and a pleasure to read. I have already received a great deal of help, and many other offers of assistance. I have been given photographs and stories, and ideas for features and articles. It is all greatly appreciated. I welcome your ideas and input, as I muddle my way through this. With your help, the Beacon has hope of continuing to be the Beaver Island tradition it has grown to be. Beyond that, if I can have a little fun, enjoy this as a creative outlet, and not make any enemies, well...I will count that as a huge success!

A big sigh of relief...and then on to the next issue.

I am, of course, interested in the news. Current events, births and deaths all have a place in the Beacon. I'm trying to develop categories so that I can try to cover all the bases. I will say right up front that I prefer good news over bad. I will try my best to be kind and fair in all reporting. I don't want to set too many plans in stone; as I get accustomed to the process, I'm sure my ideas will evolve. Jeff has told me I'll start to relax after the second or third issue. I hope so!

If you have news items or ideas you'd like to contribute, or if you'd like to purchase a subscription (one year – 6 issues – is \$30.00 at standard mail rate, or \$45.00 for first class mailing), you can write to:

The Beaver Beacon . P.O.Box 254, Beaver Island, MI 49782

Thanks a million!