



# THE BEACHCOMBER

DUNE ACRES, INDIANA

[WWW.DUNEACRES.ORG](http://WWW.DUNEACRES.ORG)

November, 2015



## New Clerk-Treasurer

Dune Acres resident, Jan Bapst, assumed the office of town Clerk-Treasurer on October 1st, and will be continuing work with the newly elected Town Council in January.

The Clerk-Treasurer's office is located in the Town Hall. Regular office hours are Tuesday-Thursday 12:00 to 2:00, plus by appointment. Residents needing information or other assistance are encouraged to contact Jan via email at [datownclerk@frontier.com](mailto:datownclerk@frontier.com) or at the office, 787-1900. She is available to process permits, provide information, or assist residents any day of the week, including weekends.

The Clerk-Treasurer serves as financial officer of the town with duties including budget administration, payroll, maintaining town records and keeping official minutes. The Clerk-Treasurer is responsible for ensuring town administrative activities conform to Indiana statutes and procedures established by the Indiana State Board of Accounts.

## Fall Clean-Up

More than fifty residents turned-out to lend a hand at the Town's October 24th fall cleanup. The enthusiasm was impressive, the weather was cooperative, the food was delicious, and the results were amazing. Crews replanted the area adjacent to town hall and removed burning bush, barberry, bittersweet and other invasive brush at Crest Drive Park and along East Road. This will help to revitalize these natural areas which are home to many native plants, including blazing star, wild columbine, lowbush blueberry, maple-leaved viburnum, Pennsylvania sedge and American wintergreen. The beach gang worked hard to winterize East and Ridge Beaches and prep the skating rink for the upcoming season. A new liner will soon arrive and the grill and picnic tables were put in place for the active "off" season ahead.

In addition to tremendous volunteer participation, the environmental commission received more than \$3500 in cash and in-kind donations! Thanks to everyone who attended-- and a very special thanks to environmental commissioner, Robin Tenant, who organized the gathering and graciously hired the Rolling Stonebaker pizza truck to cater the event.

*by Mary Ann Crayton*



Mike Swygert, Lynn Boeke (background), Luis from Cardenas Landscaping & Rich Hawksworth tackle trees during fall clean-up. Photo by Carolyn Mellen.



## THANKS TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS – BUT SUE SMITH WAS REALLY SPECIAL!

If you have ever wondered how the Town Hall, Security Office and the Clubhouse are adorned with such beautiful annual flowers, perennials and native plants, it is due to our wonderful Garden Club. Unfortunately, one of the leaders and hard working volunteer, Sue Smith has moved to Wisconsin to be near her family.

Sue and Dianne Swygert have for years and years, spent time on their knees with their hands in the soil, beautifying our town, with little or no recognition. Sue has also done many other tasks without much ado. I remember last spring seeing Sue and Dianne up at the Clubhouse gardening (of course), when Sue mentioned that the Town Hall flag was looking worn and she asked if she could replace it – and of course, she did! Every year she lent the town her red, white and blue holiday banner to decorate the Town Hall for Independence Day. Sue started the UFO (Unfinished Objects) club that meets weekly for those crafters in the community. There was hardly a Town Clean-up ever, in which Sue didn't participate. She was Environmental Commissioner for many years, and led the Dune Acres fight against the invasive plant garlic mustard.

Many people do many things around town, but Sue Smith will be missed not just for her volunteerism but also for her positive spirit, kindness and laughter. We wish for Sue and Rob a happy future and we will miss them both.

On the topic of volunteerism...we are a lucky town to have so much volunteerism! If you've never worked a Town Clean-up, or participated in throwing a town party (which we ask all residents – part-time and full-time, to do), or even attended a Town Council meeting, you are missing an opportunity to feel the camaraderie of teamwork and friendship that make this town unique. I encourage everyone to get involved – the more you do, the more you'll treasure this town, as I do.

*by Lou Mellen*



At our November Elderberry meeting Clarice Gourley showed us the beautiful quilt that she started 25 years ago and finished a few months ago. She was quick to say that she hasn't been working on it all of that time.

*by Mary Ann Crayton*



As of October 7th the Geraniums in the Town Box and Impatiens at the Security Office were still "growing strong". Gardener's Sue Smith, Cathy Bomberger, Lois Nixon, Dianne Swygert, Jane Dickey and Pat Krug admire the vibrant color and enormous size of the plants in both areas. Thank you ladies, and so many others willing hands, for making Dune Acres so special.

*text and photo by Robert Smith*



Now that Clarice finished her quilt, she had time to help out at the town clean-up on October 24. Thanks, Clarice.

*photo by Lou Mellen*



## Dune Acres - Where the Wild Things Are

### Reports of An Early Snow(y) in DA

Most people don't associate snowy owls with Indiana, but the Dunes are the best place in the state to see these majestic birds. According to the Indiana Dunes Birding blog, this large white owl of the north doesn't visit Northwest Indiana every year, but when they do, they inspire a thrill among birding enthusiasts who flock to see them at locations such as the Port of Indiana and the Michigan City pier. Their numbers usually peak around mid-November, but in good years some birds can be found throughout the winter. On Sunday October 25th, my son Kaden spotted this beautiful snowy perched on the Evans' boat while we enjoyed a walk on the Dune Acres beach. I reported the encounter to the Indiana Dunes State Park and was pleased to learn that it was the very first snowy sighting of the 2015 season!

*-text and photo by Rich Hawksworth*



### Swan Lake, Dune Acres style



Bev Hubbs and Bonnie Thomas spotted these four white swans in Lake Michigan headed westward from Bonnie's home on Ridge Drive. Bev called saying they might be near our house on Shore Drive. I grabbed my camera, went out into the yard and, sure enough, they were headed westward already having passed our place and were in front of the Roberts' home. I took some photos but not with a telescopic lens so the pictures are blurred given the long distance away.

*text and photo by Mike Swygert  
clever caption by Dana Treister*





## I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

*by William Wordsworth*

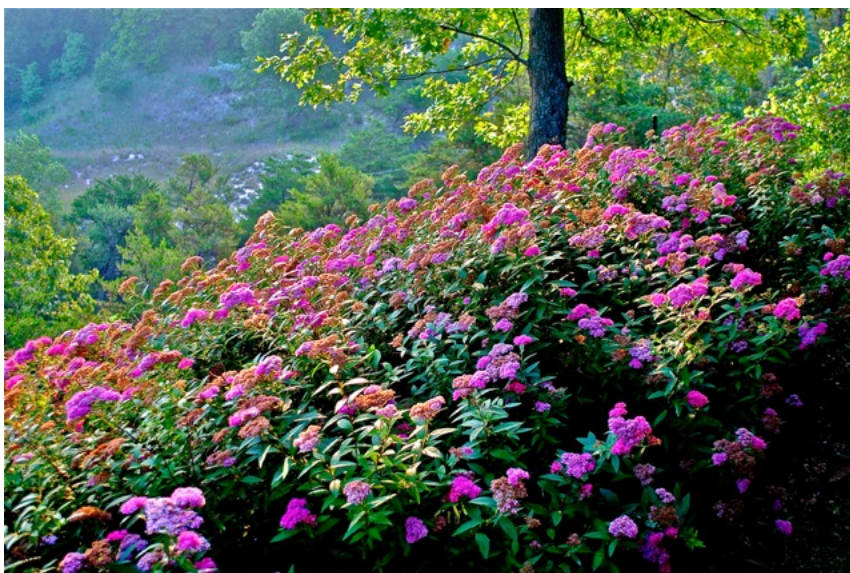
I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

*Poem submitted and Photos  
by Mike Swygert*





## 'Tis the Season

If you're looking to cut your own Christmas tree this year--or just looking for some evergreen boughs--get in touch with Robin Tennant [robintennant@me.com](mailto:robintennant@me.com) before you head-out to the tree lot. Robin has several perfect-sized evergreens that she plans to remove from her property. She'd love to share them with any DA neighbor who might be interested.



## Thanks To Mark and Howard

A big thanks to Mark Hull and Howard Silverman who recently announced they are resigning their town volunteer responsibilities. Mark most recently served as road commissioner, but he's had his hand in many town-improvement activities from refurbishing the ice-skating rink to installing and maintaining our security cameras. Howard has worn several IT hats--serving as the DA webmaster, managing the town email and robo-call communications, and maintaining the online town code.

Moving forward, town-clerk Jan Bapst will handle all town communications. So, if you have an official message to be distributed, please send it to Jan at [datownclerk@frontier.com](mailto:datownclerk@frontier.com). Rich Hawksworth will maintain the website through the end of the year, and John Sullivan will be the point person for roads-related issues, including snow plowing, through the end of the year as well.

## Beach-Season Draws to a Close

With the first snowflakes flying, we mark the end to another fun-filled beach season. This means it's time to pack-up personal belongings (beach chairs, fireplaces, flotation devices, etc.) and remove them from the town-owned parts of the beach. Also, remember that all watercraft (boats, kayaks, canoes, etc.) are prohibited on the Town beach between November 1st and March 31st. According to Town ordinances (Sec. 42-25) "Any personal watercraft, trailer or watercraft left on the Town beach property...may be subject to removal and disposal by the Town." Please do your part to keep our beautiful beaches clean and clear for those who enjoy them in the offseason.

Thanks to the following people who made this issue happen:

Jan Bapst  
Mary Ann Crayton  
Rich Hawksworth  
Carolyn Mellen  
Lou Mellen  
Irene Newman

Robert Smith  
Mike Swygert  
Mary Ann Tittle  
Dana Triester  
Sharon Tutlewski

If you would like to contribute a story, photo, poem, art, something from your children or grandchildren, etc,

**The Beachcomber is going on winter break!**  
Next publication date: March 15, 2016

## November Fitness Schedule

Saturday, Nov. 21 Stress relief yoga

Saturday, Nov. 28 Rubber Band workout

**\*Remember to bring your mat to every class!**

Classes will be on Saturday mornings at **10 am.**  
\$5 per person or \$3 per person if 10 or more show up.

Any Questions or Comments or Suggestions  
call or text Ashley at 219-841-2496  
email [ahall@dunelandymca.org](mailto:ahall@dunelandymca.org)

*by Sharon Tutlewski*

## Where There's Smoke There's Prescribed Fire

If you were anywhere near Dune Acres on Monday, November 9th, you undoubtedly witnessed the rising smoke that signaled the planned prescribed burn to the south and east of the town was underway. The National Lakeshore's fire effects crew administered the burn to the areas south and east of DA known as the Howes Prairie/Lupine Lane "burn unit." According to the NPS's Neal Mulconrey, the burn went "very well" and successfully achieved the mosaic pattern of burned and unburned areas that they strive for.

The purpose of prescribed burning is twofold: to reduce the buildup of combustible fuel (e.g. leaves, brush, etc.) and as a tool to help restore and maintain the savanna and prairie ecosystems. According to the folks at Pleasant Valley Conservancy (<http://pleasantvalleyconservancy.org/burns.html>), fire, whether natural or man made, has provided the same advantages throughout history. In the midwest, "...fire was used by Native Americans to encourage berry production, expose acorns for collection, fireproof villages...concentrate game, and help maintain trails." The practice was inherited by early European settlers and continued into the 20th century.

A spate of high-intensity wildfires, a result of accumulated slash from logging operations, inspired a sea-change in attitudes beginning in the late 1800s. State laws were enacted and, at the federal level, "Smoky the Bear" became an icon of fire suppression. It was one of the most effective public relations campaigns ever, but had unintended consequences. Fires were less frequent, but when they occurred, they could be ferocious. The 1949 Dune Acres fire is case in point. Historical images show evidence that the fire must have been uncontrollable—it easily leapt over water and roadways as it raced from the rail tracks to the doorstep of the clubhouse.

By the 1970s ecologists began to recognize the natural processes that had been disrupted and reintroduced fire as a land management tool. Prescribed burns are now used throughout the country, safely and with tremendous benefit. The NPS first burned Howes Prairie/Lupine Lane in 1986 and has been burning it every several years since that time. This year, the total area encompassed 174 acres.

*by Rich Hawksworth*



PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**The Fine Print:** *The Beachcomber* is published on-line monthly during the summer and periodically during the winter. All information, news, creative contributions, articles, reports, corrections, suggestions, Letters to the Editor, art work, comments and otherwise are welcomed and encouraged. *The Beachcomber* is a grass roots publication not officially affiliated with either the Town of Dune Acres or the Dune Acres Civic Improvement Foundation, Inc. (DACIF). All content is believed to be reasonably accurate and reliable but not "guaranteed!"

Editorial Board: Carolyn Mellen, Irene Newman and Mike Swygert.

Email submissions to [inewman680@aol.com](mailto:inewman680@aol.com). Please use "Beachcomber," in the subject line.