



# THE BEACHCOMBER

DUNE ACRES, INDIANA

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

October 2025

## D.A. Residents Support Chesterton Art Center in Many Roles

Did you know that Dune Acres residents support the Chesterton Art Center in a wide variety of roles?

Let's back up for a moment, are you familiar with the Chesterton Art Center (CAC)?

### Chesterton Art Center

is a hub of artistic and cultural activity in the Duneland area. CAC widens access to art, arts education, and outreach to build a creative community that includes everyone. The CAC's roots started in the 1960's with the popular Chesterton Art Fair. You can visit the Center to view exhibitions, take classes and learn more about art in our community.



Ellen Kollar (pictured above with CAC Executive Director Hannah Hammond-Hagman) is a member of the CAC board, responsible for overseeing the organization's programs and fundraising.



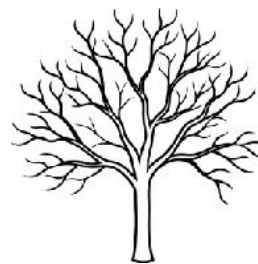
Ivan Chermel (pictured in action, left) leads a drop in life drawing group and is an accomplished artist himself!



Bette Norris (right) and Shirley & Joel Hull (above) recently loaned artwork from their personal collections for the Hazel and Vin Hannell show.



Nicole Wilbur (pictured below) has work displayed at the CAC as well as her own art space, Copper Sky Studio LLC, 1050 Broadway, Chesterton.



Find more information at [chestertonart.org](http://chestertonart.org)

*Dune Acres boasts some historic homes and buildings (think Clubhouse! Log cabins!). But our community also has four homes designed by famous architectural firm of Keck & Keck. We asked architect and Dune Acres resident Fred Bamesburger to write an article for the Beachcomber about his Keck & Keck home. Enjoy!*

## Renowned Keck & Keck Architecture in D.A.

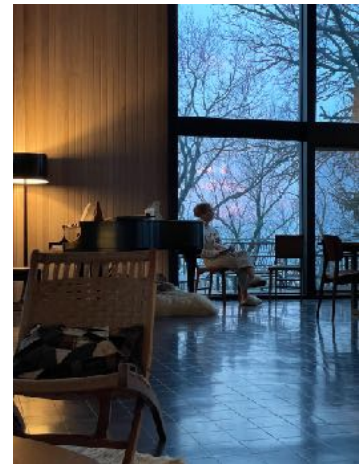
*By Fred Bamesburger*

When we first saw the house at 28 West Road in 2019, it was being marketed as a teardown. Realtor Jack Wehner invited us to take a look, thinking the site might interest a client. But the moment I drove up the winding hill, I was captivated. The house was in disrepair—overgrown, with mice scattered across the floors—yet there was no mistaking its magic. The towering trees, the dramatic two-story living space, and the way the home revealed itself felt extraordinary.

I couldn't wait for my wife, Leslie, to see it. The instant she walked through the door, she turned to me and said, "We have to buy it." From that point forward, the house became a true labor of love. Restoring it demanded no shortage of blood, sweat, and tears, but the process has been deeply rewarding.

Designed by the pioneering Chicago firm **Keck & Keck**, the house embodies many of the ideas that made the brothers early leaders in modern architecture and environmental design. Their forward-thinking approach—embracing passive solar strategies, natural ventilation, and deep connections to site—still feels remarkably fresh today. Once featured in *Architectural Digest* in the mid-1970s, the home carries a rich architectural legacy that we've sought to honor. We restored and furnished the spaces with reference to the photographs the original owner created for the magazine feature, bringing the house back to life while staying true to its origins.

Today, the home offers what first drew us in—remarkable views, abundant sunlight, and spaces that are at once expansive and intimate. Just as important, it has welcomed us into a warm, vibrant community. We couldn't be happier to call this place home.



*Photos of Bamesburger/Nuss house restored.*

There are four Keck & Keck homes in Dune Acres built between 1951 - 1957. You can spot them by the natural ventilation (louvers) that are often adjacent to the large windows.

George Fred Keck was the pioneering designer of passive solar houses. He used "fresh air vents to help control temperature" when making use of passive solar energy. The Century of Progress "House of Tomorrow" currently being restored on Lake Shore Drive in Beverly Shores is a 1933 Keck creation.



*16 Crest Drive, built in 1952*



## The Old Soccer Field: A Natural Gem Hiding in Plain Sight

By Richard Hawksworth

On July 27, 1952, Dune Acres resident Lois Howes spent a summer afternoon with a talented young botanist named Floyd Swink. Whether by plan or by chance, the two intrepid plant enthusiasts explored the open, sandy meadow at Mineral Springs and East Road.

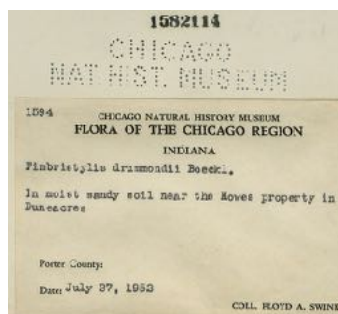
We know this because Mr. Swink left us a paper trail. He collected eleven rare plant species that day and later preserved and mounted them on archival paper. These "voucher specimens" were neatly labeled as found "in moist sandy soil near the Howes property in Dune Acres" and deposited with the Chicago Natural History Museum herbarium—where they remain today. Remarkably, most of the plants Floyd and Lois observed that summer Sunday still grow in the meadow, or as some like to call it, the soccer field.

To the casual observer, the site may look like an overgrown field. But to those who look closely, it's an ecological treasure—one of the most biologically rich spots in the Indiana Dunes. The prairie's varied hydrology—transitioning from very dry to very wet in only a few steps—supports an astonishing diversity of plant life, across an area of just over one acre.

In the drier sections, prickly pear cactus, blazing star, milkweeds, and wild lupine thrive. Toward the south, spring rains can leave water standing knee-deep. In some years, the exquisite fringed gentian will appear. And botanists have recorded Atlantic blue-eyed grass, rare spikerushes, and four species of violets that support butterflies like the regal fritillary. Hairy fimbry, long considered extinct in Indiana, was rediscovered here in 2019.



*Fringed gentian is among the loveliest of dunes wildflowers. It was first noted in the meadow in 1961, when a Mrs. Sims lamented the rare wildflower had been mown down by town workers.*



Dune Acres resident Barbara Plampin—a protégé of Ms. Howes—documented many of the meadow's rarest plants, including the tiny adder's-tongue fern, late coral root orchid, and Hall's bulrush, found in fewer than 100 places worldwide.

Wildlife thrives here too: the endangered Blanding's turtle, a wide array of birds, dragonflies, frogs, wild turkeys, deer, and coyotes. Two-legged visitors—including researchers from the Indiana DNR, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife—are often spotted as well.

Despite periodic efforts to tame it—a softball field in the 1950s, Thanksgiving Day football games—the land always reclaims itself. Loose sand, biting flies, and wet ground remind us that nature has the final say.

There are many things that make Dune Acres a special place to live. The most enduring are not what we have built, but what we've chosen to leave untouched. Remember this the next time you walk the mowed path through the meadow. Pause for a moment. Look closely. What you see is more than a vanishingly rare example of pre-settlement duneland—it's a gift preserved by those who came before us, and a legacy worth passing on to those who come next.

*Left: The voucher specimen for Floyd Swink's collection of hairy fimbry in Dune Acres.*

*Right: Staff from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources monitor several "state listed" plant species growing in the meadow.*



*Michigan lily grows in the moist organic soil in the southwest corner of the meadow.*



## Welcome New Residents!

MARKIE and TOM CONDON have been in their 42 Circle Drive home since June 1, 2025. Although their primary home is in Glenview, Illinois, Tom's industrial real estate development business has been expanding in the Northwest Indiana region. With one of the Condon's three adult daughters living in St. Joseph, Michigan as well, a year-long experiment in living the Dune Acres lifestyle appealed to the Condons.

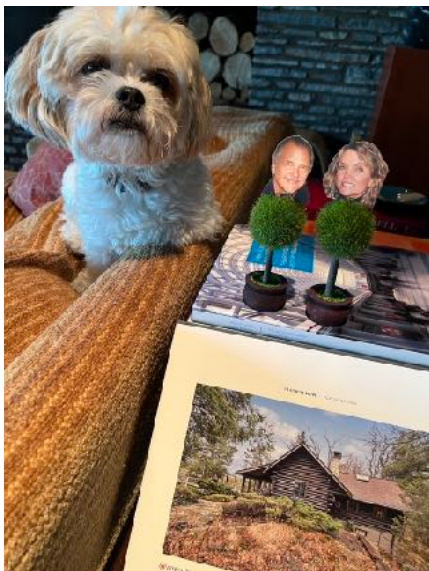
Tom enjoys gardening, biking, hiking, travel. Tom and Markie both play tennis. Markie sews, cooks, and has a passion for fashion and design, arts and crafts, as well as an interest in fitness, nutrition, and other aspects of health. You may have seen the Condons walking their cat Chi Cho on a leash or in a stroller. Markie invites neighbors in the Dune Acres community in need of an extra dose of joy to please reach out - ChiCho is gentle, beautiful, and would probably make a good therapy cat!



## Ciao from the Belluschis to Dune Acres and Friends

Marti and I have been residents in Dune Acres since the Fall of 1991 when I bought the log cabin from Mrs. Sims. When I discovered the logs were from Oregon, my home state, I was hooked and never looked back. Even with the age of the cabin, built in 1932, I bought it on the spot.

It needed some immediate attention and, as an architect, I set out to design and add the gazebo and deck with a bridge going out to it so we could see the wonderful views of Lake Michigan while having a glass of wine and dinner. This was the perfect place for us to host our wedding reception when we were married in 1992. The cabin was only 45 miles from our home in Chicago's near north side, so we could visit often.



In 2009, unfortunately or fortunately, depending on your view, we inherited a wonderful mid-century modern home in Portland, Oregon which was designed in 1948 by my father, mid-century modern architect, Pietro Belluschi. He lived there for many years, after buying it from his original client. Our move to Portland made spending time in DA more difficult because of the 2,200 mile distance.

We sold our log home this past summer and have now moved out of Dune Acres. We are very pleased that the new owners of our home appreciate the history and magic of living in a log home in a wonderful community.

We wanted to send a simple message to our neighbors and friends that our times in DA were very meaningful, memorable and fun - certainly important to us in our life story. The dinners and parties with friends, Social Committee responsibilities and participation, community gatherings, parties at the Club House, the 4th of July parade - including Tony's cars, and fireworks on the beach, providing architectural advice for the Club House and some homes, Tony's presentation at the Club House on the hottest day in history - thank you for

attending, of course our list could go on endlessly. We never had the time to connect as much as we wanted to.

**Ciao means both hello and goodbye in Italian.** So, if any of you wander out west to Portland, let us know. It would be great to show you around. And, we will hope to see you again with another visit to Dune Acres.

## Dunes State Park Bird Tower

Looking for a ‘destination walk’ from Dune Acres? Head east along the beach and discover the Indiana Dunes State Park Bird Tower!

Located just west of the park’s lakefront Pavilion, the tower offers a challenging climb up a series of stairs - with views of both the lake to the north and rolling dunes to the south.

Completed in 2018, the tower was made possible in part by a grant from the Flora Richardson Foundation—an organization created by Dune Acres residents that champions environmental education and preservation.

Today, it serves as a hub for Indiana Audubon’s spring and fall bird migration counts. But you don’t have to be a dedicated birder to appreciate it—the tower rewards anyone who makes the climb with a great perspective on our remarkable dunes.

Mobility challenged? Visitors can drive to the tower from the park entrance and utilize the accessible ramp leading to the top platform.



## D.A. Town Roads

Our town enjoys some of the best-maintained roads in Porter County, thanks to volunteer Roads Commissioner David Kudrna and Clerk-Treasurer Bonnie Hawksworth. Their efforts, combined with annual Community Crossings Matching Grants, ensure our infrastructure remains in excellent condition.

Established in 2016 by the Indiana General Assembly, the Community Crossings Matching Grant (CCMG) helps municipalities improve roads and bridges. Towns with fewer than 10,000 residents receive 75% funding for qualifying projects! Dune Acres has successfully secured over \$1 million in CCMG’s. Combined with about \$75,000 in annual tax revenues, the grants deliver resources needed to properly maintain our 7.5 miles of public streets.

The CCMG application and administration process is complex and time-consuming. Each year, Bonnie and David determine the scope of proposed projects, secure Town Council approval, submit grant applications, prepare project specifications, conduct the statutory bidding process, then oversee construction and submission of final grant documentation. Eligibility requirements include maintaining detailed road condition inventories, along with Management, American with Disability Act, and Title VI Plans.

David brings extensive engineering experience to the table, having overseen the construction and rehabilitation of runways at O’Hare and Midway Airports for over 20 years, and more recently working with F.H. Paschen in NW Indiana on bridge and infrastructure replacement projects.

Like all town commissioners, David believes in giving back to his community. David and his wife Kristin

Schriber reside in the Dune Acres home first purchased by David’s family in 1990. They have lived part time in Dune Acres since 2018, then moved here full time in 2023.



*David and Kristin*



## National Park Superintendent Visits D.A.

Indiana Dunes National Park Superintendent Jason Taylor joined town residents at the clubhouse in August for an informal “Meet and Greet.” Calling Indiana Dunes a true “People’s Park,” Taylor shared some interesting facts about our surrounds:

- Home to more than **1,900 species** of plants and animals
- Ranked **#5 in biodiversity** among all U.S. national parks—despite its modest 16,000 acres, far smaller than other parks on the list
- Boasts **more orchid species than Hawaii**



### Save the Dates - Fall Town Clean Up

Oct 15-22	Yard Waste Dumpster near courts
Oct 22-29	Household Waste Dumpster at clubhouse (acceptable items to be announced)
Oct 27	Roadside Chipping



## Remember to Check for Ticks!

*By Cheryl Evans*



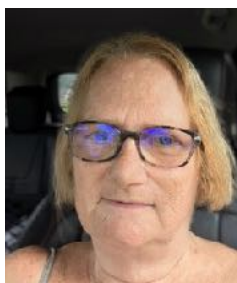
A Dune Acres resident was recently diagnosed with Alpha-Gal Syndrome following a tick bite. AGS is an allergic reaction to red meat and dairy products. Symptoms vary in severity and include hives, gastrointestinal distress, joint pain, and even life-threatening anaphylaxis. There is currently no cure for AGS. Because many doctors have never heard of it, diagnosis can be difficult.

Unlike the better-known Lyme disease, there is no “bullseye rash” associated with AGS. Symptoms may not strike until 3 to 5 hours or more after eating mammal-based foods, making the condition especially hard to recognize.

And if those rotten ticks aren’t sneaky enough, not everyone who contracts Lyme disease from a tick bite develops the bullseye rash. When the rash does occur, it might be in a hard-to-spot location such as the back, scalp, or behind the knee. Now doesn’t that really tick you off?

## Meet the Guard

Clara Zaideman has been greeting residents and guests during the wee hours of the night in Dune Acres since 2022. Before joining our security team, Clara was a corrections officer with LaPorte County for 14 years. At Bethlehem - Mittal Steel, she worked security and was an EMT/firefighter. She served as volunteer firefighter for the Town of Burns Harbor for many years. Outside of work, Clara loves horseback riding. She owns two horses – a 19-year-old Standardbred pacer and 17-year-old Mustang. She was a member of the Porter County



Mounted Posse for 12 years. Clara also enjoys bowling and hiking in her free time, occasionally walking the Cowles Bog trail from the guardhouse after her midnight shift!

## Local Duneland Events & More!

### Field Station Frenzy - October 5 - Run and Walk School Benefit

Field Station Cooperative Preschool, located in the National Park, is a non-profit run by parent volunteers. Dune Acres' Laurie Metz was the founding president and currently Director. Many other Dune Acres residents have served as teachers, board members, fundraising chairs and parents of students. Field Station is centered on nature study and seeks to develop in all of its students a love of learning.

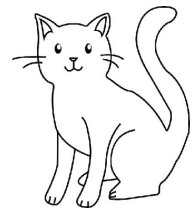
The October 5th "Frenzy" is a 5K trail run/walk, a 1 kilometer kids fun run and a 500 meter kids fun run, all held at Chellberg Farm. Some of us have run in the 5K but the highlight is watching the energy and joy of the kids fun run events. Come out and run or walk or watch. The 5K is on scenic trails, including some that are usually closed to the public. It makes for a nice morning stroll or workout.



### Independent Cat Society Yard Sale Donations

*Cheryl Evans*

The Independent Cat Society, a no-kill cat shelter, is holding its annual Aunt Kitty's Trash and Treasure Fall Yard Sale on October 4 and 5 at its Westville shelter. If you have any items that you wish to donate to this yard sale, you can either drop them off yourself at the shelter in Westville on October 3 or drop them off at the Dune Acres Town Hall through October 3 and I will drop them off at the shelter for you. They do NOT want clothing, electronics, or large furniture. Thanks!



### 219 Taproom - Beer, Food, Music and More

Chesterton's **219 Taproom** is a favorite local option for craft beer lovers and community members alike. This Chesterton pub may only be open Wednesday through Sunday, but delivers big when it comes to craft beers, small-batch spirits, wine, varied menu, and frequent musical guests. And it's family-friendly! Kids are welcome to sit in the comfortable family area adjacent to the main bar and dining room.

Owned by husband and wife Joe and Teresa Juarez, the Taproom was born from a shared love of beer and a desire to bring that passion to their hometown. The mission is simple: *"drink good beer, do good deeds."* Once a month "Giving Thursday" is dedicated to a local cause. When Jan and I visited on a recent Thursday, the day's profits were directed to the Chesterton High School girls' lacrosse team.



With a curated lineup from only a few select breweries, the Taproom prioritizes depth and independence over sheer variety. Their flagship provider is Mashcraft Brewing from Greenwood, IN. While beer takes center stage, there's plenty for everyone on the menu. From brisket tacos, pulled pork sandwiches, flatbreads, Bavarian pretzels, mac & cheese. Beyond craft beer, 219 Taproom offers wine, cocktails, mocktails and even soda. Live events are a staple with music trivia every Sunday, entertainment trivia on Wednesdays, and occasional live performances.



The (219) Taproom is located at 109 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. It's tucked in between the O'Gara & Wilson Ltd. Booksellers on Broadway and the library's main parking lot. Don't let its small outward appearance fool you. The interior is spacious but cozy, and full of personality. Outside dining is available when the weather permits.

Visit their website at [219taproom.com](http://219taproom.com) for more information.

## In Memorium

**Barbara E. Plampin**, age 96 of Dune Acres, IN, passed away peacefully on August 10, 2025, at her home, surrounded by her loving family. She was born on December 1, 1928, in Grand Rapids, MI to Roger I. Wykes Jr. and Marjorie (Mallory) Wykes, both of whom preceded her in death. She was also preceded in death by her sister, Nancy Joan Wykes. On December 21, 1961, in Chicago, IL, she married the love of her life, Geoffrey Christopher Michael Plampin, who passed February 28, 2004.

She is survived by her loving sons, John Joseph Wykes Plampin of Chicago, IL; Christopher Charles Wykes Plampin, his wife, loving daughter-in-law Marta Violetta Plampin of Fort Myers FL; her treasured grandson, Christopher Jan Plampin of Madison, WI; her dear friend and co-botanical explorer Myrna Newgent; Friend and caregiver, Christine Josleyn of Chesterton, IN; her favorite cousins: Roger I. Wykes II and Dawn Holloway of Ann Arbor, MI, Laurie Goodman of Connecticut, Leslie Miller and her daughter Mallory of Connecticut, and Duncan Scott of Connecticut; her nephew, Randy Plampin of California; and by her nieces from Atlanta, Laura, Adrienne, and Ann.

Barbara graduated from Santa Fe (NM) High School (1946), the University of New Mexico (AB 1950, AM 1952), PhD in English, University of Michigan (1958). She taught English at the University of Chicago and the Illinois Institute of Technology for many happy years.

She had a second career as a botanist for the Indiana Dunes National Park, and was a director of the Flora Richardson Foundation as well as a Life Director of the Shirley Heinz Land Trust. Barbara was a devoted member of St. Ann of the Dunes though she preferred hymns from before 1800. Memorial donations in honor of Barbara may be given to Shirley Heinze Land Trust and St. Ann of the Dunes.



**Mary Ann Buddenbaum Tittle**, was born June 24, 1932 in Chicago, IL, and passed away peacefully on September 15, 2025 at the age of 93 in Naples, FL. Mary Ann met her husband, Ray, shortly after graduating from Northwestern University. They were married in 1955 and soon began building a house in Dune Acres, IN, on the shores of Lake Michigan. They lived there, raising their family, until 2013 when they relocated to Marco Island, FL.

Mary Ann loved to travel. She and Ray visited a vast majority of the countries around the world together, and after Ray's death in 2019, Mary Ann continued her travels into 2025. In addition to traveling, Mary Ann was passionate about the arts, frequently going to symphonies, museums and plays in Naples, Chicago, and Aspen. Mary Ann was an early devotee of physical fitness, running 3 miles several times a week starting in the 1950s. She played tennis into her 70s and skied until she was 91. She continued to walk, ride her bike, and do Yoga daily until just a few months before her death.

Mary Ann loved learning about nature, and could identify wildflowers, trees, and birds along any hike in the Indiana Dunes, the Colorado mountains, or the southwest Florida Everglades. She also loved Dunes Acres, and was on the Dune Acres Civic Improvement Foundation for many years.

She was a member of the P.E.O. Sisterhood for 58 years. P.E.O. supports women in their educational pursuits through various scholarships, grants and loans. Mary Ann loved the STAR Scholarship in particular which is given to senior high school girls who will be attending college after graduation.



She is survived by her children, Pamela Tittle Collins (Kevin) and Steven Bruce Tittle (Michael O'Connor), 2 granddaughters, Kylie Collins (Matthew Galvez) and Molly Collins Glascock (Alex), and one brother, Gerald Buddenbaum, in addition to 7 nieces and nephews. She is predeceased by her husband, Ray, and 2 brothers, Christian Buddenbaum and James Buddenbaum. Donations in memory of Mary Ann may be sent to the STAR Scholarship Fund of the P.E.O. Sisterhood – [www.peointernational.org/make-a-gift/](http://www.peointernational.org/make-a-gift/). A private service will be held.



### Small Project, Big Impact

Residents Jackie Dakich and Bob Luckiewicz of Crest Drive thought the street could use a little polish, so they took matters into their own hands, and with neighbors' permission, upgraded the grouping of mailboxes in front of their home. The classic look of brown wooden base with iconic, tunnel-shaped mailbox originally designed by U.S. Postal Service engineer Roy J. Joroleman in 1915 has been the Dune Acres standard for many years. Bob Hartmann and Ray Tittle coordinated a town-wide project back in the 1970's that encouraged all residents to adopt the style. Looks great Jackie and Bob!!! Thank you!



### Birth Announcement!



40 snapping turtle babies emerged on Labor Day weekend from the nest next to our guard house. Guard Irene had been on duty when the eggs were laid in June and it was very fitting that she was there when the first baby turtles appeared. We had several volunteers who shuttled the young turtles to a safe place in the bog. It took hours until the last turtle emerged. Welcome to the world little ones!



## Humane Indiana Brings Animal Ambassadors to Dune Acres

Nicole Harmon, Director of Humane Indiana Wildlife, visited the clubhouse in August to explain wildlife rehabilitation and introduce several animal ambassadors to our residents. She described the importance of local wildlife and tips to help us live together. Humane Indiana rehabilitates injured or orphaned wild animals native to Indiana. Species as small as hummingbirds and chipmunks, to animals as large as coyote, fox, opossums, and eagles are provided various levels of rehabilitation assistance. Wildlife is released when possible. In fact, Humane Indiana released a number of young opossums in Dune Acres this summer - be careful when you are driving around town at night!

Nicole offered tips such as avoiding the use of rodent poison (owls and other animals die after eating the poisoned rodents) and “do not feed the wildlife”. She encouraged us to enjoy the amazing animals living in Dune Acres! If you find an injured animal, Humane Indiana is a great resource for rehab and release. They also have an education center with various programs for children and events for adults.

We had a great turnout of residents who showed up to learn and meet the animals. Flapjack, an opossum, was the hit of the morning. She wandered around the clubhouse and enjoyed attention from kids and adults alike. We also met a Saw-Whet Owl (the tiny owl species recently seen in the woods surrounding Dune Acres), a Barn Owl and an Eastern Box Turtle.

You can learn more about Humane Indiana Wildlife, their rehab center at: [humaneindiana.org](http://humaneindiana.org)



**The Fine Print:** *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”! Any information, news, creative contributions, articles, reports, corrections, suggestions, Letters to the Editor, art work, photos, comments and otherwise (and volunteers!) are welcomed and encouraged to help sustain this publication.

Email contribution to [saralmckinley@gmail.com](mailto:saralmckinley@gmail.com) or [jbapst10@gmail.com](mailto:jbapst10@gmail.com) Please use “**Beachcomber**,” in the subject line.