

# Dauphin Island

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## PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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### January 2010 Newsletter

Well it's hard to think that another year has come and gone. 2009 was an eventful year, and while I won't attempt to review all that happened, I can summarize by stating that we made some real progress in our overall effort to arrest the erosion and rebuild our shoreline. Progress came about by our settling two lawsuits whose presence was a cloud over efforts to gain support and funding for our shoreline restoration efforts. I will comment more about the most recent settlement below. At the same time, we were racked by late season storms which caused accelerated erosion along the fragile west end beach. I will also comment below on efforts that are underway to solve the pressing shoreline stabilization problem.

Much of the information contained here will be a part of the November board meeting minutes which will be posted on the website after being approved at the February meeting. The November regular board meeting minutes and the minutes from an executive session in December were approved at the January meeting and will be posted to the website forthwith.

**Settlement of the COE Lawsuit.** In late November Judge Futey approved the much discussed and debated settlement agreement (LSA) As a result the DIPOA and Mr. Hartman will jointly administer the settlement fund of approximately \$1.3 million (\$1.5 million less attorney's fees). Use of the funds is restricted to paying for a feasibility/engineering plan for the south shoreline, and/or actual construction of such a project. At this point there are no specific uses identified for the funds, although we expect that a request to apply them to emergency shoreline repair will be forthcoming.

**Shoreline Restoration Plans.** As you may remember, the Town had obtained a \$400,000 grant to plan shoreline restoration for the east end. In December 2009, the Town received an additional \$1.5 million (much thanks to Congressman Bonner) which will enable the planning to cover the entire south shoreline. The Town has engaged the services of Dr. Scott Douglass to oversee the planning process, which will take a long term comprehensive view and is to be developed over a period of 2-4 years.

At the same time, a task force of primarily west-enders is looking into an emergency, stop-gap solution that can be constructed very near term to hold the erosion at bay and buy time for the longer range plan to be implemented. Mr. Stan Graves has headed this effort and I know many of you are receiving information from him and his group.

We should keep in mind that these efforts will require funds—both for construction and on-going maintenance. To that end the Town has established a committee to explore viable funding sources, and the POA will soon consider a motion-- made at the Jan meeting but tabled till next meeting—to once again explore how our assets could be used to this end.

**Upcoming Election of Directors.** Our election cycle will soon begin so I encourage all members to consider “throwing your hat in the ring” and offering your time and talent to help run the POA. As usual, we will elect three directors as the seats of Robin Linn and Bruce Thompson will expire, and we have one

vacancy owing to Bill Harper's resignation. At this point I'm not sure whether these incumbents will seek to serve an additional term, but whether they do or not, we need to field a robust slate of candidates for these important positions. To place your name on the ballot you must submit a statement of 200 words or less—such statement containing information about yourself, your background, etc.-- along with information verifying your membership in the POA. The statement may be submitted by email and must be received not later than 5:00 PM on March 26, 2010. If you have questions about the election process, or the job itself, I'll be happy to discuss it with you—and I'm sure other board members would also.

**Communication.** As I mentioned last time, we have established a website taskforce with the longer range goal of overhauling our site and building in capability to do more “real-time” functions such as reserving POA facilities, conducting opinion polls, etc. In the meantime we're working to keep our existing site up to date and useful. We have a pressing need to expand our email list—we have about 2500 members and only about 1200 email addresses. I know there are some members who don't use email but I would think these days that is a small number. Emailing is not only a much faster way to communicate, but is significantly less expensive than postal mail. So please help us update the list—if you know of any members who are not getting emails, please ask them to contact us.

**Golf Course.** The board approved the repair of the drainage pipe and valve system which enable us to keep the water in the lake at the proper level. The board also approved a small increase in the green fees to be effective March, 2010.

**Isle Dauphine Clubhouse.** We're still working to bring the facility back to good operating condition and to promote it for a variety of events. We are working to post fees on the website-- but in the meantime, if you have questions or want to book the facility, please call Sussi or Katherine at the office (251/861-2343). Remember, dues paying members receive a discount!

**Dues.** Thanks again to all of you who have paid your dues. While not a big amount, it makes a big difference in our budget. So if you haven't paid—please do so now, it's not too late.

**Next Meeting.** Our next meeting is on a Saturday-Feb 20<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 AM, in the wheelhouse.

As I close, I would like to leave you with a final thought. I mentioned earlier that a motion was made and tabled to revisit the idea of somehow using the POA assets—primarily the golf course and surrounding property—as a possible means of creating a trust fund for the ongoing shoreline maintenance that will be required in the future. I don't know whether the motion—if remade—will pass, or if it does, just what kind of proposal(s) may result. But I understand that this is a controversial and potentially divisive topic, and because of that the Board will insist upon and ensure that it is carried out with complete transparency and full input and participation by the members. And keep in mind, it's very difficult to change the nature of the way we own and manage our property. Nothing can be done—nor should be done—without a vote of the membership.

Bruce Jones  
POA President