



# THE BEACHCOMBER

## DUNE ACRES, INDIANA

WWW.DUNEACRES.ORG

February 2021

### Winter in Dune Acres

The winter season began mildly enough. The temperatures were not too cold and the snow cover was



anything but abundant with the ground showing almost as much “green” as “white” through the holiday season.

Even the reindeer in front of Town Hall didn’t have to paw through too much snow to find patches of grass to munch.

Someone had to work really hard to find enough snow to construct the proverbial snow man on the playground . . . though he was pretty short due



to the lack of actual snow to construct the poor guy!

Given the mild temperatures, he shrank even more over time!



“Oh, shucks! Mom was right . . . I should’ve hibernated like she told me!”

An old standby, “*The Old Farmer’s Almanac*”, said the conditions would continue through February, forecasting that the month would be “quite mild”.

But, then came the final few days of January and everything changed! The snow fell, and fell, and kept on falling through the following weeks! Not only snow . . . but frigid temperatures as well. The only real question was whether the phrase “single digit temperatures” meant digits below or above 0 degrees!

But the cold temperatures meant one thing for certain . . . the ice rink is open! After a pitiful year in 2020, the 2021 season was off and running — er, skating! An impromptu “first night” party was quite an affair with both pros and newbies taking to the ice.



It seemed that everybody wanted to join in the fun on the ice!

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When it was time to take a break from the ice, there was a generous bonfire for warming-up toes and fingers. Dune Acres' "grill-master", Tony Schirripa, assisted by Bob Pucel, made sure that nobody went hungry with plenty of homemade Italian sausage sandwiches (Bari Foods, Chicago) with roasted peppers



and toasted buns coming off the grill, not to mention a picnic table abundantly filled with potluck contributions! But this



was just the

beginning of several weeks of "magic on ice" as everyone from the youngest to the oldest had a chance to show their stuff on the DA rink.

Lily Lauer (5), granddaughter of Kathy & Bob Lauer shows off her moves on the ice!  
- photo Kathy Lauer

### A spirited hockey match . . .

. . . it was reported that injuries were only minor!



Parry Metz, Paul Willar, Trevor Wright, Joe Hull, Charles Weinberg, with Rob Carstens in the goalie position



(l-r) Tommy Donnelly, Bob Pucel, Rob Carstens, Parry Metz, Trevor Wright, Joe Hull, Kelly Klawson, Charles Weinberg, Paul and Cailey Willar

### Special thanks . . .

. . . to "Ice Commissioner" Rob Carstens and "the crew" that made all the fun possible by laboring to put the liner in place before the season began and to those (not pictured) who helped keep the ice shoveled and smooth during the following weeks.



The Crew (left to right): Sawyer Metz, Quinn Beckwith, Marina Weinberg, Charles Weinberg, Parry Metz, Lou Mellen, Henry Weinberg, Tom Weakland, Cheryl Evans, Heidi Studebaker, Alex Demkovixh, Jason Weakland, Tom Donnelly, Rob Carstens, Todd Klein, Tony Schirripa, Nate Weakland, Mark Taylor.

Rink set-up and hockey photos  
- Rob Carstens.



## Welcome Dunes Acres Newcomers!

— Dana Shepherd Treister

Continuing the long-standing Dune Acres tradition of **WELCOMING** new residents, even in the midst of a pandemic:



**KIM KAMIN and GREG SCHEMENTI, AND GRAYSON Z KAMIN SCHEMENTI (age 17)** have been enjoying their 5 Beach Drive home only since late October. They are delighted to be part of this community, having already appreciated the wonders of Dune Acres for many years, thanks to having dear family friends and family with homes here. The Kamin/Schementi family also has a home in the Gold Coast neighborhood of Chicago. You may have already noticed Greg out on Lake Michigan paddle boarding and kayaking... in his wetsuit!

### DACIF Projects

In cooperation with the DA Town Council, the Dune Acres Community Foundation is pleased to announce two major 2021 projects. With the support of contributions from DA community members DACIF will provide funding for the re-creation of a new lakefront viewing deck, at the site of the former deck destroyed by high water, and the provision for a "beach mat path" to provide easier access to the shoreline at East Beach. The Beachcomber will provide details in the next issue.

### SAVE THESE DATES:

April 12-19: Organic Waste Dumpsters in Town  
 April 17: Spring Town Cleanup  
 April 19: Roadside Brush Pickup  
 July 3: Independence Day Fireworks

More information on these activities will follow!



Although **GRETCHEN and ILDEFONSO CHAVEZ**, with their children **SCARLETT (age 11)** and **EMILIO (age 8)**, and their **5-year-old crazy Old English Bulldog named Diesel**, may officially qualify as the bittersweet new owners of 8 Linden Lane, the previous owner was none other than Gretchen's mother Geraldine Berger...

Gretchen had been coming to Dune Acres since she was a kid, with her mom – so they are hardly new to Dune Acres. From their primary home in the Old Norwood Park neighborhood of Chicago, Gretchen serves as a Diver with the Chicago Police Department Marine Unit (water rescues and recovery) as well as a Real Estate Attorney for RGC Law Group. Idelfonso is an Investigator with the Chicago Police Department in the Asset Forfeiture Division. But even with their demanding careers, the Chavez family does know how to have fun! As a hobby, Idelfonso loves to share smooth bourbons with friends, while Gretchen prefers a nice glass of wine! The family also loves biking, skiing, swimming, and watching movies together. The Chavez family recently had the opportunity to use the Dune Acres ice skating rink where the kids loved making new friends. The entire family looks forward to becoming a part of the community and making so many more happy memories like these over the days, months, and years to come.

## Photography as Prayer

— Rona Talcott

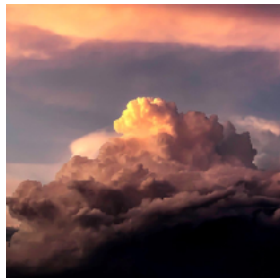
A month of walking the exquisite Duneland trails and beaches during my first month in Dune Acres a few years ago, inspired me to create Photography as Prayer, a meditative practice not done in a quiet darkened room with eyes shut, but with eyes wide open, a cell phone camera in hand.



Seeing the light

Alone in the magically restorative quiet of our beautiful town, I found myself writing about the gifts of seeing through the lens of a camera. My 40-year career had taken me all over the world to photograph people in every conceivable profession and way of life, people struggling to survive to presidents of countries.

Without realizing it, I had developed the practice that would become Photography as Prayer, a way of expanding one's ability to see, to connect with the world, to ourselves, and ultimately to the deepest part of ourselves.



Beautiful

I wanted to make this practice that had so enriched my own life available free to anyone. Photography as Prayer, a centering photo-meditative mindfulness practice using a cell phone camera in guided, simple-to-follow ten-minute practices, went live this month on the App and Google Play stores. It is and will always be free.

The last year of working to create the app version of what has become a powerful creative and restorative photo meditative practice, has been endless, but, worth it.

The app has a month of easy-to-follow practices, its own camera, personal photo files, a contributor gallery and a Prayer Book feature with which users can create their own photographic prayers, with or without words. They can share their photographs in texts or emails, on social media or keep them just for themselves.

[Watch how it works.](#)

[Tap here to download the iPhone version](#)

[Tap here to download the Android version](#)



The perfect moment to reach for your dream

<https://www.facebook.com/PhotographyasPrayer>

### From the Farmers' Almanac

-- Sara McKinley

"Weather lore tells us: If you see a wasps nest built low to the ground, expect little snow. If you see one built high, expect a lot of snow. The weather lore rhyme goes like this: *See how high the hornet's nest, 'twill tell how high the snow will rest.*"



This is a wasp nest located near Dune Acres in the National Park. Folklore says the height of the nest is predictive of the amount of snow in the coming winter. This one is pretty low to the ground, so we are counting on a low-snow winter!

--editor's note: This photo and story missed the fall issue of The Beachcomber. I'm not sure of the measurements shown here, but you decide if the wasps got it right or wrong this past winter. My still aching arms tell me that I shoveled more snow than the height indicated!



## Rest in Peace

### Geraldine “Gerry” Barbara Berger,

70, died peacefully at her daughter’s home, on January 23, 2021, after a valiant battle with leukemia. The former Dunes Acres resident, was born on October 22, 1950, and adopted by Agatha “Connie” Berger and Francis “Frank” Berger of Chicago. She was preceded in death by her husband Cliff Johnson.

With an undergraduate degree in History, from St. Xavier University, Gerry taught history in Chicago at Urban Experience and Leo High School. She pursued graduate studies at Chicago-Kent College of Law School. Licensed in Colorado and Illinois, her legal practice specialized in Family Law. Appointed a Child Representative for Illinois, children’s welfare was the center of her practice.

Devoted to grandchildren, Emily, Scarlett, Abby and Emilio,s she is also survived by her daughter Gretchen, son John, son-in-law Ildefonso, daughter-in-law Heather, and former spouse and father of her children, John Mau.

### Mark Edwin Phelps

died on November 7, 2020, at the age of 72. He is survived by his wife, Susan, of 49 years and his children Katharine Phelps Brunner (Thomas A. Brunner), Major Mark Matthew Phelps, USMC (Benjamin Schock-Phelps), and Elizabeth Phelps Barber (John J. Barber), and grandchildren Samuel and Benjamin Brunner, and Madeleine, Miriam, and J. Finnian Barber.

Mark was born on March 27, 1948, to Edwin C. and Alice B. (Viets) Phelps, who preceded him in death.

He attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Northwestern University. Earning a JD, Mark spent 37 years as a patent attorney with Leydig, Voit, and Mayer, Chicago.

An avid sailor, he spent much time on a sailboat. His competitive streak came out when he picked up a ping pong paddle, which he did at every opportunity. He was fiercely devoted to his family of classical musicians, despite not being able to play or sing a note himself. He will be remembered for his quick wit, unassuming intelligence, and soft-spoken kindness.

### Harry Mark Petrakis

died on February 2nd at the age of 97 in his Dune Acres home. Petrakis “was a major figure, in 20<sup>th</sup> century Chicago literature,” said author Stuart Dybek in the Chicago Sun Times.

The son of the Reverend Mark Petrakis, a Greek Orthodox priest his wife Stella, Petrakis was born June 1923. Suffering tuberculosis he missed years of school but voraciously devoured hundreds of books. On recovery, he never returned to school. He worked a series of odd jobs: steel mills, loading ice trucks and running an ill-fated diner with his wife, which became the centerpiece of so many of his stories. He worked to hone his writing. For 10 years he submitted manuscripts to literary magazines. In 1956, he sold his story, “Pericles on 31st Street”, to the *Atlantic Monthly*. In 1966 Petrakis’ international success, *A Dream of Kings*, was on the NYT Best Seller list for 12 weeks, winning a nomination for the National Book Award for Fiction. Petrakis took his family to the solitude of Dune Acres. He wrote 24 books, dozens of short stories, and non-fiction.

Having never graduated from *any* school, in later years he would be awarded six honorary doctorates and would teach at the university level.

Petrakis’ wife of 73 years, Diana (née Perparos), preceded him in death in 2018. He is survived by his sons Mark, John, and Dean, four grandchildren and a great grandchild.

**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.

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