



# THE BEACHCOMBER

DUNE ACRES, INDIANA

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

January 2025

## Splash Into the New Year!



Dune Acres has its own POLAR PLUNGE FAMILY. The clan of Bruce and Karen Riffle have enjoyed a New Years Day swim at East Beach every January 1st since 2015. It's always cold, but this year's winds and blustery weather made for an extra-wild family experience.

## New Social Committee hosts Festive Holiday Party

Introducing our new Social Committee - Laurie Metz, Elise Dax and Melissa Cassidy are joining forces to provide many social opportunities in the coming year.



If their first event is any indication, we can see some great gatherings in the new year. The clubhouse was transformed into a winter wonderland for the holiday party, with harpist Heidi Studebaker providing music.



## The Power Of Community

As US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy neared the end of his second term as the nation’s doctor, he has offered a most compelling analysis yet about the importance of community:

“Community is a powerful source of life satisfaction and life expectancy,” Murthy wrote in an essay published this month. “It’s where we know each other, help each other, and find purpose in contributing to each other’s lives.”

Building community creates fulfillment, he said, and there are three key elements that make it possible: connection with others through relationships, acts of service to help others and a sense of purpose in life. “Relationships, service, and purpose are the time-tested triad of fulfillment that stands in contrast to wealth, fame, and power which define the modern-day triad of success,” Murthy wrote.

Dune Acres will continue to offer community connection opportunities through organized social events, celebrations, work days, and the ongoing volunteerism that keeps our town functioning. Join in and stay healthy!

## Ice Rink

The cold weather may be uncomfortable for some, but...we finally have ICE! Come and enjoy the Dune Acres ice rink while it lasts. There are plenty of skates and hockey sticks available in the ‘warming hut,’ accessed through the Town Hall’s north door, which is left unlocked when the rink is available for skating – GREEN sign means open, RED sign means closed. The flood light switch is on the building, between the warming hut door and window. **ENJOY!**



*Hockey players Jim and Mark Warmus*

## Bald Eagle Named National Bird



In December 2024, the bald eagle received a title many assumed it already had: the national bird of the United States. For centuries, the bald eagle has been a ubiquitous symbol for the country, almost as recognizable as the American flag.

The bird, with its bright yellow beak, long wingspan and beady eyes, has appeared at the center of “[The Great Seal](#)” of the United States since 1782. It has also been depicted on postal stamps, quarters and the insignia of most military branches. On Christmas Eve Day, by an act of Congress and with President Biden's signature, the bald eagle became our "national bird," recognized in the act as “an historical symbol of the United States representing independence, strength, and freedom.”

Bald eagles frequent the Dune Acres area. There have been recent sightings of two adult eagles near the beach.



*Accompanying text excerpted from the New York Times article by Sara Ruberg 12/16/24*

Photos courtesy of **Asher Powers** and **Sara McKinley**



## Dune Acres Clubhouse



The Dune Acres Clubhouse, constructed in 1925, was the first permanent structure built in Dune Acres. It is a log building on a concrete foundation, and was originally built for visitors and residents for dinners and social events. The Clubhouse is a non-profit Town facility which the Town maintains and keeps available for us all to use, and it is on the register of Historic Places.

The Clubhouse grounds are open for the enjoyment of Town residents each day from sunrise to sunset, weather permitting. There is a lovely observation deck with a telescope on the north side of the Town maintenance building. It is a great place to watch the sunset.

During the summer season (May 1 through Labor Day) the Clubhouse itself is available to residents and their family and friends on Wednesdays from 4:30 until sunset (a Clubhouse key must be signed out from the security office and returned the same day). The Town encourages residents to watch a sunset, enjoy the fire table on the patio, have a picnic or play a game of pool or ping pong. The clubhouse has access to kitchen facilities (the stove and oven must be turned on by Town staff) and restrooms. An adult resident must be present at all times when minors are utilizing the site.

Over the years, the Clubhouse has been the venue for weddings, birthday parties, anniversaries, graduations, and quarterly Town parties hosted by the Social Committee. The Clubhouse may be rented for such social events by the residents of Dune Acres. The rental application/ agreement is available on the Town's web site. There is no regular "staff" so after each use the requirement is that everything be put back the way it was before the event.

*Michele McClead*  
Clubhouse Coordinator

## Dune Acres' Residents Answer

***"What is something fun or interesting you are doing to get through the winter?"***

"...the continuing saga of snow removal from our driveway toboggan slide is our main focus." Harvey Johnson

"I am painting with watercolors for a change. For me watercolors are harder to work with so more of a challenge. I'm also learning how to play bridge ( the card game). It was either bridge or Minecraft!!! ." Mary Boeke

"Traveling to Switzerland to visit my son and daughter-in-law." Karen



## Meet Your Dune Acres' Security Staff

Each issue will profile one Dune Acres' security staff.



**Debbie Wilson** - is one of our longest tenured guards - she has been working at Dune Acres since 2016. Debbie previously worked 31 years at Bethlehem Steel in Security. Debbie also trained as a firefighter and

EMT. Fun fact - Debbie spent 5 years as a casino dealer! Away from the job, Debbie enjoys caring for her cats, going out, visiting casinos and she really enjoys eating!



**Dune Acres' Centennial posters are still available. Contact the Town Clerk-Treasurer to purchase.**

## Turkeys in Town



Dune Acres has been home for a growing number of wild turkeys. You may have seen flocks strolling through town during the warmer months. Indiana's DNR conducts a survey every July-August and our Dune Acres' hens were counted this year.

Next summer you can report observed turkey hens. Here is a link that explains how to count:

[https://www.in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/files/fw-Documenting\\_Turkey\\_Broods.pdf](https://www.in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/files/fw-Documenting_Turkey_Broods.pdf)

Statewide, participants submitted a combined 3,057 observations of wild turkey hens with or without poults. After DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife biologists removed likely duplicates and reports without exact locations, 1,823 unique observations were recorded and used to estimate regional production. You can visit the turkey brood webpage to see an updated 2024 report in coming months.

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/wildlife-resources/animals/wild-turkey/turkey-brood-reporting/>



## Red Cup Cafe Gets a Makeover Thanks to the Kollar Family



Dune Acres residents Tim and Ellen Kollar have been working on an interesting project in downtown Chesterton. In late 2023, they purchased the buildings at 115-117 Broadway. In 2024, they did a complete gut and rebuild of the old Hiestand Law office at 117, which culminated in the move of their tenant, the Red Cup Deli & Café, into that space in November.

Tim and Ellen will now turn their attention to the building at 115 Broadway, which they intend to completely refurbish and create a two-story contemporary art gallery, Gallery 1882, named in honor of the year the building was constructed. They hope to launch Gallery 1882 with an inaugural exhibit in the fall – stay tuned!

Tim summed up their motivation, “We think this is an exciting time for Chesterton, which is perfectly positioned as a place for ever more people to come to visit and live. We’d love to see the historic downtown area become the prime place in our Duneland area for people to linger, make connections and enjoy themselves. And we’d love to be a part of making that happen.”



## Beachcomber Editors

### Sara McKinley

Sara McKinley, a longtime resident of Dune Acres, has deep roots in the community, having grown up in nearby Porter Beach. Her father, Ben Bolton, was an active member of the Dune Acres Town Council and served on various local committees, inspiring Sara's own dedication to community service. She now lives in Dune Acres with her husband, Lee, after retiring from a career in marketing research, where she worked with companies like Quaker Oats, Nestlé, and her own consulting firm.

Sara has served on the DACIF board. Outside of her volunteer work, Sara is passionate about dog sports, particularly dog agility, obedience, and scent work competitions. She also enjoys hiking along the beach and exploring the nearby Dune Acres and National Park trails. In the summer, you'll often find her riding bikes through the scenic areas around town.

Sara's brother, David Bolton, still lives in the family home on Fern Lane, keeping the Bolton family connection strong in Dune Acres.

### Jan Bapst

Jan and Mark Bapst have been full time residents of Dune Acres. for 20 years. Jan was the Town Clerk-Treasurer from 2015 to 2024 following her retirement from a career in school business administration.

The Bapst family history of service in D.A. runs deep. Jan is a former DACIF Board member, Mark served as Fire Commissioner, and Mark's father James Bapst held the role of Clerk-Treasurer during the 1970's and 1980's.

Family roots are strong, with Jan and Mark's niece Gretchen Stasey living next door in the original family home last owned by her mother Patrice Bapst, who passed away in 2022. Jan and Mark's personal connection to our town include celebrating their wedding reception at the Clubhouse back in 1975 (Jan claims she was married at age 5!)

The community spirit and commitment to environmental stewardship are among her most treasured aspects of life in Dune Acres.



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