

# Sandscribes

Heidelberg Beach  
Vermilion, Ohio

Fall 2016



## Season Wrap-Up

A few reminders as everyone begins to shut down for the winter:

- Remove all containers, boats, and objects from the beach, and store at your cottage for the winter. The winter storms can blow these things around, or break apart the containers and spread the contents across the beach. Please do this before mid-October, which is when we have the beach bank cut down.
- Shut off your water if you leave your cottage unattended for long periods of time.
- The dumpster pickups will be reduced to *every other week*, starting October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The dumpster will be locked from November 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Continue to look out for your neighbors and neighborhood! (See vandalism article below.)

*Jane & John*

## Deciding the Assessment Method

Dear Community,

As I mentioned in my last letter to you, the Board is looking at the assessment formula we use here at Heidelberg Beach.

While we were discussing this on August 28<sup>th</sup>, we observed what a balanced cross section of the community that we had on the

Board. By representing 25% of the cottages on the Board, with our 12 members, we have trustees covering the whole spectrum of “categories” under discussion. This really helps to keep all of us humble to the other points of view.

## Land (lot) Valuations

Seven years ago, the Board modified the assessment formula because the lakefront land values had increased at a dramatically disproportionate rate to the rest of the property. Land valuations were removed from the assessment formula.

## Cottage Valuations

The cottage tax valuations were left in the formula as a way to differentiate between the small cottages and the large ones. The assumption being that these tax valuations would roughly correspond to the market value proportions (i.e. a bigger or newer cottage would be taxed more than a smaller or older cottage).

With the possibility of increasing our assessments to build up an infrastructure reserve, the Board took another look at this.

The way that Erie County has valued cottages over the last decade has been completely haphazard. Some cottages have never been re-valued (or even increased for inflation)—and others have had more recent adjustments, putting them more in line with today’s values. Some cottages with new

additions or improvements have had taxes raised significantly—while others have been passed over. There is actually little correspondence to what you would expect a particular cottage to be assessed.

### Examples

In the charts below, two cottages are compared that had similar valuations over a decade ago. *None of these cottages have had any improvements done.*

The first chart compares two non-lakefront cottages; the second chart compares two lakefront cottages.

### Non-lakefront Cottage Valuations

Year	Cottage 1	Cottage 2
2003	\$36,390	\$36,180
2006	\$47,320 (up 30%)	\$39,900 (up 10%)
2012	\$50,360 (up 6%)	\$27,810 (down 30%)
Total	up 38%	down 23%

### Lakefront Cottage Valuations

Year	Cottage 1	Cottage 2
2003	\$86,780	\$80,290
2006	\$117,530 (up 35%)	\$90,370 (up 13%)
2012	\$66,770 (down 43%)	\$46,900 (down 48%)
Total	down 23%	down 42%

As you can see, unfortunately, the cottage valuations are not functioning in our assessment formula as planned. There is no rhyme or reason for the huge valuation swings shown in these charts, or for numerous other inequities across our property.

### Removing Cottage Valuations from our Formula

As a result, at our last meeting on August 28<sup>th</sup>, the Board voted unanimously (11-0) in favor of removing the cottage valuations as a part of our assessment formula.

### The Next Step

The Board is now considering exactly how to structure the assessment formula. We have several options under consideration, and hope to make a decision at our next meeting on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

We also plan to finalize the budget for 2017—and most specifically, vote on the proposal to start saving money for an infrastructure reserve.

I hope you will continue to share your feedback. These are not easy issues to deal with or decisions to make—so let's just keep the dialog going.

All 12 of us are grateful for your support.

Jane Chidester,  
President

### Car Vandalism

Be aware we've had two recent car vandalism events here at Heidelberg Beach.

One was at the Corrigan Cottage (89 Michigan). In an unlocked car, money was taken—but credit cards and electronics were left behind (but thrown to the ground).

The other event happened at the Murray Cottage (8 Pennsylvania). Someone was trying to get into the trunk of one of their vehicles. The perpetrator got the trunk open, but the dog heard the commotion and scared whoever it was away.

We all get lax with the comfort of our neighborhood—so this is a good (and sad) reminder to keep car doors locked and cottage doors locked.

### **Volunteer Sought: Street Signs**

The Board is looking for a volunteer to research either rehabilitating or replacing our neighborhood street signs. It was noted at the Annual Meeting that most of them are leaning significantly. We'd like to have someone look into this, present a solution to the Board, and implement the project. Please contact Jane Chidester if you are willing to help.

### **Joyce Foote is Home!**

Joyce Foote (25 W. Virginia) is now recovering at home (at 25 W. Virginia). She continues her therapy, and continues to progress!

### **Tennis Court Resurfacing**

Been meaning to post a picture of this all summer. In the late spring the court was beautifully redone. Thank you to Ruth Schneider and all who helped out with this effort!



### **Cottages For Sale**

Contact Tom O'Dougherty for information on either cottage listed below.

Office: (440) 333-6500

Cell: (216) 978-7878

Email: [tomodougherty@howardhanna.com](mailto:tomodougherty@howardhanna.com)

### **5 Pennsylvania For Sale**

Barclay Rohrbaugh's former cottage is for sale.



### **76 Indiana For Sale**

Roger Nehls is offering his cottage to the Heidelberg Beach family this fall.





## Belmont Family Update

This past May 21st, Chris and Jeff Belmont's (64 Kentucky) son Andrew married Jasmine Moore in Suffolk, Virginia Cobb Horse Stables. Congratulations to all!



Andy is currently deployed on the USS Eisenhower Navy carrier deployed at least through Christmas (but no one knows for sure). For anyone wanting to send him a card or package, his address is:

**Commanding Officers HSC-7  
ATTN: AM Belmont Andrew  
Unit 20030  
FPO AE 09503-0900**



Chris and Jeff are also now grandparents three times over.

Their daughter Aubrey (who was married at Heidelberg Beach in October of 2014) and her husband Andrew had a little girl Elsie on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and are currently living in Berlin Heights.



Their other daughter, Allyson, and her husband Izaak have two boys, Jonathan (1 1/12 years old) and three-month-old Frank born June 11th, 2016. They live in Westerville, Ohio.



## Minutes for the Heidelberg Beach Board of Trustees Meeting August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Present:** Jane Chidester (President), Bill Hertzner (VP), Tom Eshelman (Secretary), Dick Castele (Treasurer), Mary Chidester (Real Estate), Jack Corrigan, Jan Peer, Bill Richardson, Claudia Springer, Barbara Weber, Scott Welch.

**Absent:** Dick Henderson

**Opening Prayer:** Bill Hertzner

**Real Estate Report:** Mary Chidester

- A letter to Kim Leahy has been mailed. The legal bill not yet been received. Receipt has been confirmed.
- Mary is working on an infrastructure disclosure document for use in cottage sales.
- The next full tax audit of the community will be in 2018 (payable in 2019).

**Treasurer's Report:** Dick Castele

- Jack Corrigan will audit the 2015-16 books.
- The OHM bill (for re-investigation/estimation work) has been received and paid. \$770.
- A tree bill for work in August has been received and paid. \$1,174.25
- The pavilion rehab bills have been received and paid. \$1,338.
- A bill from Franklin has not been received, for re-snaking the south end of W. Virginia. It was partially clogged. The cost is expected to be around \$600.
- Items for the upcoming budget meeting:

- \$600 for annual W. Virginia clean out.
- Move to annual septic tank cleaning.
- No change to trees, communications, snow plowing, mowing.
- \$50,000 to infrastructure reserve.
- Method of Assessment discussion.
  - Our current assessment method: 1/3 by cottage, 1/3 by lot, 1/3 by county tax evaluation.
  - A handout showed that cottage tax valuations (determined by Erie County) are too haphazard to be useful in our assessment method.
  - A motion (Springer/Welch) to remove cottage valuation from the assessment method passed (11-0).
  - The next meeting will discuss proposed new assessment methods.

**New Business:**

- The street signs need to be renovated or replaced. A leader is needed for this task.
- A box for flag storage to be placed by the flag pole has been suggested. A volunteer is needed to build this.

**Next Meeting:** Monday October 3, 5pm, with dinner provided, at the Peer cottage. This will be the budget meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Tom Eshelman*  
Secretary