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Peaks Island Opinion, Vol 1, No 9 : Jan/Feb 1994

Jenny Yasi

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OPINION

JOURNAL OF ISLAND THOUGHT

Boat Business

As part of our commitment to keep Peaks Islanders informed about the "goings on" relating to the Casco Bay Lines, one or more of the four island residents who serve on the CBITD Board will be writing this column in "The Opinion" on a regular basis. We hope this communication vehicle will answer some of your questions, keep you abreast of developments, and provide some insight. We will also be posting notification of CBITD meetings at Feeney's, on the Peaks Community Center bulletin board, and other locations that you recommend.

A recent issue of the "Bayliner" (that's the monthly, or so, CBITD Newsletter available at the terminal) offered an explanation for the boat cancellations of Sunday, November 28th. Pat Christian, General Manager, has committed to "keep a crew on hand for at least one hour past the last scheduled trip to the island, so that, if conditions improve, service can be run." Furthermore, in the future, weather conditions will be reviewed on a trip-by-trip basis to assess if boats can operate safely. We expect these developments will be welcomed by islanders.

The new Peaks passenger pier is well underway. Some material deliveries have been

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Brush Cutting

As Chairman of the Environmental Committee of P.I.N.A. and more particularly of the sub-committee studying the growth, the cutting, and the danger of erosion along the "Back Shore," I have been asked to clarify the current situation and where we stand at present. Let me state at the outset that all of the facts are not in and that nothing is written in stone.

There are two opposing points of view with many shadings or gradations in between. At one pole are those who want everything cut in order that "an unimpeded view of the shore" is made possible at all times and places. At the other pole are those who think nature in her wisdom has given us a very valuable barrier to the power of the sea and the forces of erosion by wind and water and man. These people see beauty in the red of the sumac, the accent of the bayberry, as well as the loveliness of the rose. In between these two extreme positions are many gradations and combinations of beliefs—and all of these must and will be taken into consideration.

The sub-committee, in response to a petition circulated in support of cutting, requested a meeting with Marge Erico, who requested the recent cutting and Eunice Curran, who circulated the petition, to see if some rapprochement was possible between the two groups. It turned out that indeed it was. At the conclusion of the meeting, five areas of consensus seemed apparent.

1. Everyone wants to avoid further erosion such as is occurring at Whaleback.
- 2 The "how" is as important as the "where." Cutting should be done with attention paid to how plants grow, not only for their survival but the aesthetics of both plants and view. Pruning and thinning of growth, rather than wholesale clearing of areas; trimming of plants rather than the breaking of stems and branches which is unattractive at best.
3. Everyone agreed on the need to seek the advice of an environmental expert. Annette Naegel of the Island Institute agreed to come and look at the area in question on January 6th. She will submit a report to us which will be made public and accessible to all islanders. Following that, we hope to establish a guideline for the City that will represent the best thinking of all concerned Peaks Islanders.
4. Mowing a three-ft. wide strip for recreational, safety and snow-plowing requirements was viewed as appropriate by all.
5. If necessary, it seemed reasonable to recommend forma-

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Friends of Animals

Who We are: Friends of Island Animals is a group of individuals on Peaks who are actively concerned about the needs of homeless animals on the island. We are in the process of incorporating as a nonprofit group so that we can raise funds to help with adoptions, veterinary care, food, and spaying and neutering for these animals.

Our Goals: Initially, we are focusing our efforts on stray cats because they are the most obvious and numerous animals in need here. We hope to expand to include care for dogs, and to work with other groups to determine if there is an over-population of deer on the island and, if so, to find nonlethal means of controlling the size of the herd.

We also plan to put out information about issues that affect humans and their pets here as well as strays, such as disease. Island residents should be aware, for example, that cats trapped in the Torrington Point area within the past several months have tested positive for feline leukemia—a fatal and highly contagious disease among cats that have not been inoculated against it (inoculation is too late once a cat contracts the

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Peaks Island Opinion...

A place where we can agree to disagree: this is the intellectually open environment we value in our community, and hope to nourish in this forum.

We depend upon our sponsors for funding. Thank them for making this forum financially possible

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Gretchen Hall, Kathy Caron, Cynthia Cole, Laurie Cox, Ellen Tripp, Betty Heller, Steve Schuit, Albert Presgraves

Deadlines: By the first of each month please send material or hand deliver to Jenny at 7 Central Ave. Ext. Submissions must be signed; please include your phone number.

Sponsorship: \$20 per issue. \$200 per year. Please call Jenny Yasi 766-2604

The Peaks Island Opinion is a volunteer run, community service paper. We are seeking newsbites editor, cartoon and illustrations editor, layout and finance crew.

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Friends of Animals

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virus). Of even greater concern is the strain of rabies that has been working its way up the East Coast and is expected to hit Maine in 1994. Unlike feline leukemia, which is limited to cats, rabies is a deadly threat to all of us and to any of our pets that haven't been inoculated against it. We all have a stake in controlling the population of stray cats, as these animals, most of which have never been inoculated against anything, will be both prime victims and prime transmitters of this disease.

Another goal of the group is to break the cycle of suffering by promoting spaying and neutering and helping people obtain that service at reduced rates for their pets and for strays that they may be caring for.

We also need to address the problem of abandonment of animals, both by full-time and summer residents.

How we operate: Members respond to calls for assistance from people who are aware of cats in need—usually animals that are injured, sick, or are struggling with litter after litter of homeless kittens and need to be spayed. We work closely with the Animal Refuge League, which provides shelter, veterinary care, and homes for strays and works to socialize feral (wild) cats so that they too can be adopted. (The last edition of "The Opinion" incorrectly reported that under a new policy, cats are held for 40 days at the shelter; actually, there is no time limit. Wherever possible, cats are kept indefinitely in hope of finding homes for them). We urge anyone who is

skeptical about the shelter to visit it and see for yourself the facility, the animals, and the dedication of the people who run it.

What you can do: You can find out more about the group by attending our next meeting at the Senior Center on Tuesday, January 18, at 7 p.m. Our meetings are open to the public and we invite you to attend and join us. We also need financial support (our thanks to the Peaks Island Lions club for getting us off to a good start with a very generous contribution); look for our collection jars at Forest City Lumber and Feeney's, or send your donations to Friends of Island Animals, c/o Gary Gustafson, 5 Boulder Rd., Peaks Island ME 04108. If you are currently feeding stray cats and would like some help with cat food or getting them spayed/neutered or if you know of an animal that has been abandoned or is sick or injured, call us at 766-5606. We welcome your support and ideas.

Donna Marchinetti
for Friends of Island Animals

Announcement

EVERYONE INTERESTED IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT please ask our Librarians at the Peaks Island Library for the magazine box that has some interesting materials on this topic. The box is shelved in the corner near the photocopier.

Boat Business

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late for the construction crew, pushing the schedule behind by three weeks. According to Bob Elder, the MDOT representative on the CBITD Board, the construction "is going fairly well" with an anticipated completion date slated for "the June-July time frame."

Our newest boat, the Maquoit II, is also making good progress at the Washburn & Doughty shipyard. With interior design and lighting decisions behind us, the boat is scheduled for Portland delivery by mid-May. A sincere thanks is extended to all the islanders who persistently and constructively shared their opinions, insights and expertise. A better boat, meeting more of your needs, will be the result.

Recently, a petition was circulated to present a complaint concerning the handling of boat cancellations on November 28th. Petitions can, and often do, play an important role in providing feedback and influencing change. Ultimately, a revised petition was forwarded to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in Augusta as an official complaint. We are proud of the responsiveness that the Board and CBITD management have demonstrated when residents have voiced their concerns through petitions and other constructive means. We believe the timely responses to the events of November 28 described above reflect both our commitment to you, our neighbors, and our integrity.

Stephen Schuit, Tom Cox,
John Carroll, Bob Johnson

Brush Cutting

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tion of an island task force to perform the pruning and/or substitute planting if the City still kept to its antiquated and inappropriate methods of cutting and equipment. Particular attention must be paid to those areas designated as being in the flood plain.

We are—all of us guardians of the land, and the "Back Shore" is precious to all of us no matter where we live on Peaks. More importantly it belongs to all of us and we must all do what we can to preserve it. It is foolish to draw a comparison of shore growth with a Brazilian rain forest, but both have an important role to play in the total ecological system.

We no longer do many things we once took for granted, such as burning our raked leaves every fall. No longer do we put lead in our house paints or spray our roadsides with DDT. We now recognize that it is not all right to dump our sewage and our chemicals into the sea. Spray cans are becoming a thing of the past. Maybe, just maybe, we will also realize that we can no longer afford to cut down the plants that line our shore, plants that break the force of wind and water, plants that protect the road from washing out and thus enable us to walk and drive our way around the island.

If we can talk to each other, I believe we can find a way. With talking comes consensus, a feeling of place, of community, and of being neighbors.

Betty Heller

From the Editor:

We're looking for more staff members to lighten the load, and improve the content of our journal. If you have five hours a month, we need you! You'll notice, I hope, that this issue is not so political. A big part of our job, as we see it, is community building. We want to solicit new writers and new topics. If you haven't written yet, or you want to write something in a new or different style (funny? a short story?), please, jump on board.

In the next two months, behind the scenes political battles are heating up. The State Legislature will reconvene and then decide whether or not Peaks Islanders will be allowed to vote in a referendum next Fall. If the ballot is allowed, Peaks Islanders will have the opportunity of choosing to continue with City of Portland Government, or Town of Peaks Island Government. If it fails in the legislature, tensions on Peaks Island will have to find a way to resolve themselves.

The UNION! group put out a publication just after our deadline for articles, and we received a flood of requests to

accept late articles in response to their letter. While UNION's newsletter—which does not name authors—may be making valid points, it would be unfortunate to kill the bill with strategic lobbying before it's been fairly debated. Now is the time for thoughtful and respectful community discussions.

Along those lines, congratulations to Marge Erico and Betty Heller, who demonstrated the wise womanly way of resolving conflict. They got together, along with a larger group, to walk along the back shore and compare concerns about the roses and the view. As Betty's article indicates, they seem to be negotiating toward a compromise that will make everyone—rose lovers, and view admirers, happy. This is a model of conflict resolution we should all be proud of. If we could all remember the value of solving problems together over a forgiving cup of tea, maybe the world would be healed of its suffering...

Big hugs to both of you.

Happy New Year!

A Prisoner of Cold

A ransom's worth of golden treasure
is buttressed against my walls.
The fallen glory of oaken empires,
swept up and hoarded.
The forces of winter content across the moat.
I am huddled in my queenly robes, cloaked in blankets.
A miser for warmth besieged in Maine's snowy keep,
Till rescue comes.

Julie Cherubini

Long Island Fishy Pier

A friend on Peaks Island called last month wondering about the new town commercial fish pier facility proposed for Long Island. My reply was that I really didn't know very much about it, as it was only one of many intriguing ideas floating around that had not yet been researched, but it might be considered in the future if people were interested. And surely if the voters of this community feel, after appropriate deliberation, such a facility is worth it nor not, they will vote for it or against it.

Curiosity prompted me to ask why that particular concern was worth the phone call, not that I didn't enjoy the call! It turns out that a copy of a letter to the Editor of The Forecaster, of November 3, 1993, titled "Island Secession: Questions on the Long Island Experience" by "Jonathan MacVane" had been posted on the bulletin board at the Peaks Island grocery store. This same letter more recently appeared in the December 1993 Inter-Island News.

Now the issues "Jonathan" commented on, including the "fish pier" might be worthy of a written column or discussion under most circumstances and they would surely be dealt with squarely at appropriate meetings (selectmen, planning board, school committee, etc.) if they were asked or presented. Unfortunately, most citizens of Long Island were amused by them! Why? Is the new town callous to its citizens' concerns? Hardly, but Jonathan MacVane is a local problem. We have called every MacVane known on

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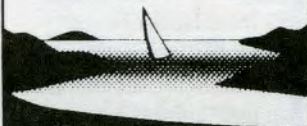
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Long Island Fishy Pier

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Long Island and even reached out to Cliff Island for distant relatives, all to no avail. "Jonathan" is a hoax.

Putting aside that two reputable newspapers, that always do a real fine service reporting island issues, were fooled. "Jonathan's" concerns are valid ones, in spite of the fact they are asked by someone who has obviously not participated in Long Island goings on. "Jonathan" would be pleased at the progress on just such issues if he (they) would understand that our new democracy out here is a

process that appreciates and requires constant questioning by an involved citizenry. All questions are welcome, but letters published over false names are often low on reliable content and therefore it is difficult to know where to begin a serious response.

As offered in the last issue of The Opinion, I am glad to respond to any questions or concerns you might have about Long Island issues.

Mark Greene,
Box 125, Long Island ME
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(766-4440)

Newsbites

Peaks Island's Warriors, the elementary school's basketball team won 22-16 over the Hall School. The Warriors is a mixed team of boys and girls, competing in an otherwise all boys league. "We don't have enough players to make separate boys and girls teams, so Peaks Island's been allowed to include the girls." Says coach Brad Burkholder. "They played great, the defense is picking up." The team has one more game, then a playoff. "We're optimistic!"

Congratulations to Alex and Lisa Agnew on the birth of Madeline, in December.

Ralph Ashmore says he was "jumping for joy," when he received a memo from head of DEP Construction grants Dennis Purington. "We are not committed to a particular solution," Purington writes of island wastewater treatment

plans, saying a plan must be underway by Nov., 1, 1994, and that the date could be extended. "The solution must be cost effective, and an environmentally sound solution." Ashmore is leading the effort to examine alternatives to sewage expansion. Purington's memo indicates there is time to review options, without placing funding in jeopardy.

Charlie Hale says the Study Circle project is moving along. The Maine Council of Churches has enlisted the help of the Muskie Institute, which will be researching some of the controversial points in the debate between Union and PIRC. If you are interested in participating in the initial stages of the study circle process- which involves the creation of a central, neutral resource book which would include arguments from several points of view, you should give Rev. Hale a call at the Brackett Memorial Church Rectory.

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