Transportation and tourism

Transportation has played a central role in the development of Peaks Island. With the implementation of regular ferry service in 1845, the island began to change from a fishing village to a "resort" island. By the turn of the century, a half-dozen steamboat companies were providing service between Portland, many of the Casco Bay islands, and Harpswell. Peaks, being one of the closest to Portland and having a year-round population, received the most frequent service. This convenience delivered literally thousands of people to our shores daily during the summer months. To accommodate the influx of visitors, islanders—mainly the Brackett, Sterling and Trefethen families—built hotels, cottages, stores, restaurants, and amusements. An island businessmen's association was formed to promote tourism.

Islanders became fairly prosperous, but the environment suffered. Our graveled roads were destroyed; our water supply from underground aquifers became depleted; there was a shortage of fuel for lights, cooking and heating; disposal of vast amounts of trash and litter were an ever-present problem.  

continued on page 2

Why Study Circles?

"The goal of the Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC) is to advance deliberative democracy and improve the quality of public life in the United States. By promoting small-group, participatory discussions on social and political issues, SCRC hopes to contribute to a more enlightened and informed citizenry capable of making decisions based on informed judgement." (From SCRC publication)

"The differences that often divide individuals can prove to be strengths when people have the skills to truly hear one another and to work together toward the common good." (Linda Nelson, study circle facilitator from Atlanta)

Study Circles present an opportunity for the neighborhood of Peaks Island to demonstrate leadership in the City of Portland,  

continued on page 3

CBITD & Social Engineering

There has arisen again the issue of what, if any, responsibility the Casco Bay island Transit District should have for the impact that its operations have on life on the various islands that it serves. The current debate again arises out of the impact that the car ferry has on Peaks Island.

At one end of the spectrum of opinion are those who argue that the Machigonne has been a curse to life on this island by making it too easy and inexpensive for visitors, weekenders and summer residents to bring their cars to the island. Some people in this group argue that the District should sharply increase car ferry rates, at least for users who do not live on the island all year. These may be some of the same people who are anxious for the day that a new dock will be built at Long Island, so that the Machigonne will go there more often and come here less. Interestingly, Long Island has opted against having a transfer bridge built (like the newly completed one on this island) precisely because the residents there do not want to make it too easy for cars to be brought to that island.  

continued on page 3
Transportation and Tourism

Continued from p. 1

A series of fires and the Depression ended the tourist boom and ushered in a more low-key type of tourism—summer people who own or rent cottages and daytrippers. In the last issue of the Opinion, one writer suggested forming a Peaks Island Chamber of Commerce whose purpose would be to lure tourists to Peaks and to manage them once they arrived here. But do we really want to become just another tourist destination? I think not. Most of us who choose to live on Peaks year-round do so because we value the peace, quiet and safety that island living affords. At the same time, our current ferry service provides us with easy and convenient access to employment as well as educational and cultural opportunities on the mainland. We have the best of both worlds. Our summer friends and neighbors also value the peace and tranquility of island living. They choose to vacation here precisely because the community is not interested in exploiting the tourist dollar. If they wanted the hustle and bustle of a "tourist area" they would locate in a town like Old Orchard or Camden. Daytrippers choose Peaks because of our frequent ferry service. Where else can one take a 15-minute ferry ride, spend a few hours at the beach or picnicking on the back shore in a place of great natural beauty and be home in time for supper?

Peaks has remained a special place because it is different. Other coastal communities that have become tourist destinations are rapidly becoming clones of one another. A concerted effort to increase tourism on Peaks would result in a need for more ferry service, more lodging and dining facilities and an increased risk of damage to our fragile island environment. More cars and more people mean more dollars being pumped into our island economy. Are we willing to risk losing the very qualities we cherish in pursuit of those dollars?

Kim Erico MacIsaac

Environmental Concerns

To the PINA Environmental Committee:

A topic that should be discussed is the proliferation of tent caterpillars on the island. An effort should be made to carefully remove these from trees and dispose of them properly. Is there a predator for these? Also, before introducing muskrats to this island, a viewing of the video "Cane Toads" (available at Videoport) should be obligatory for the Committee.

Ellie Palais

Care to Subscribe? Opinion Setting In For The Long Haul

Special deal: Get the Opinion mailed direct to your home every month in 1994. First Mate: $55.00 donation includes subscription, Opinion t-shirt, and unlimited free Bulletin Board notices for the year. Captain: $100.00 or greater per year gets you all the above, plus free ticket to our first anniversary celebration cruise next summer, and the knowledge you are ensuring the stability of this community journal. Subscriptions run January to January. Please include both summer and winter address, and t-shirt size. Make check out to Peaks Island Opinion, 7 Central Ave. Ext., Peaks Island, Maine 04108.

An open letter to Peaks Islanders

I am dismayed and disgusted by the latest issue of the Peaks Island Opinion. (ed: Issue #6). The page seven "cartoon" is petty, spiteful, hurtful and divisive. It is a personal attack and, as such, should never have been published.

My hopes that the Opinion could serve to increase communication among islanders have been shattered. I am ashamed that my name is among the sponsors.

Kay Taylor

Editors Note:

I appreciate Kay's concern, and am working to develop a Board of Advisors which would help establish editorial policy on such issues. Where do we draw that line between political criticism and personal attack? For the time being, until such a policy is established, the Opinion will honor the wishes of those who would like the journal to refuse to accept cartoons which feature the likeness of any specifically identifiable individual.
**Why Study Circles**

_at the other end of the debate are those that say that car ferry fares should be set at whatever level will maximize use of the car ferry and the production of revenue for CBITD. Those supporting this position assert that it is not a proper function for CBITD engage in social engineering and that it should solely concern itself with providing the most service possible at the cheapest possible rates.

Also central to the debate is the question of how individual CBITD board members should determine their positions on such issues. Is it appropriate for them to simply vote their own views on such matters and leave it to the election process to vote them out of office if their views do not fit with the wishes of the majority of voters? If not, and if the Board members should be trying to determine what the majority wants, how are they to do that? Are the views of summer residents to be considered, and if so, how are they to be determined and weighed against the wishes of the year-round residents?

**CBITD and Social Engineering**

_Right now the District is already engaged in a major piece of social engineering. The Board has consciously decided on an ongoing basis to use the surplus revenue produced by charter and tour operations to subsidize the fares to the "down-the-bay" islands. We do this because of our belief that a failure to do this would drive fares to these other islands to unaffordable levels and would thereby endanger the very existence of the island communities, especially on Cliff Island. The Board members from Peaks have all supported this policy during rate setting proceedings, but occasionally there has been opposition voiced by members of the public to this policy.

The Board of Directors will be discussing these issues again at its next couple of Board meetings. The constructive thoughts of residents of this island—provided to Board members or at our meetings—would be of great interest to us.

Thomas A. Cox
CBITD President

**A Reader's Response**

_Remarks made by John Carroll in the September-October issue of the Opinion demand a response. There are legitimate debatable arguments for and against self government on Peaks Island, but John's reasons for calling it "tiresome" are not legitimate. Although his philosophy is frightening, it's probably nothing more than background noise. Small town government is the purest form of democracy existing. The reason I support secession is because I support the concept of self-government. Characterization of self-government as "short sighted" and "going backwards" is what's silly. Belief in larger more centralized government rather than government by "the least common denominator" is undemocratic._

Pat Gardner
Who's Responsible for Our Waste?

At a recent meeting, the City of Portland and the Portland Water District unveiled their plans to extend a sewer throughout the southern portion of Peaks Island out to "back shore" to pick up an additional 280 users (approximately 190 now on the line) at a cost of nearly $5 million. This is intended to solve island problems of illegal failing in-ground line) at a cost of nearly $5 million. This is intended to solve island problems of illegal overboard discharge and failing in-ground waste systems. I question whether this is an intelligent, objective or responsible approach, since they have not examined all of the available options and have not calculated the environmental, economic and life-style impacts of the "sewer solution." Points I raised at that meeting and additional points I wish to bring up now include:

The first point concerns the straight-pipe and failing waste system problem at Torrington Point (as well as other illegal overboard pipes on the island of which there are many). Various governmental authorities for more than 2 decades have stated that these pipes must be shut down, yet the law has not been enforced. Responsibility for solving this problem lies not only with those discharging their waste but with all of us who have allowed it to continue, including our City officials. We can begin to act responsibly by examining all the available options.

Secondly, no other solution to this situation besides a centralized sewer system has been seriously considered. The professional engineers from the City and Water District have not conducted soils analysis on Torrington Point. Why not? Because they appear to be geared to urban "big business" solutions. Recently I spoke with Bob Gerber, a prominent local engineer, who has done extensive groundwater studies on the islands. He told me that municipal and federal funds now earmarked to sewer expansion could be expended on mini-sewer systems in neighborhood districts (i.e. neighborhood or smaller collection and disposal systems). I have also been in contact with Annette Naegel of the Island Institute, author of a recent article in the Institute's "Inter-Island News" on sewage disposal alternatives. In this article, she states that the State Planning Office recently established an Islands Water and Sewer Group to address these types of issues. I contacted Guy Marchessault of Applied Wastewater Technology, a firm specializing in the design of advanced on-site and community waste systems. He has agreed to speak to the public in November (see end of this article). I got a "preview" from Mr. Marchessault of a sand filtration system that requires a leach field area of only 80 square feet for a typical 3 BR home. This system costs about the same as a conventional replacement system, with a 2 to 3 times greater lifespan and a lower maintenance requirement. The wastewater then flows out of the leach field is so clean that it can be used to water gardens.

On the third point, I am dismayed that the existence of the treatment plant is dictating the wastewater solution. I strongly suspect that the only reason that the Water District is considering expanding the sewer out to the back shore is that they have excess capacity in the treatment plant to sell. And where did this excess capacity come from? Originally we were told that once the storm water infiltration problem was taken care of there would be just enough excess capacity to extend the sewer to Torrington Point—an additional 25 families so as I recall, making the total treatment plant capacity around 250 residences. Now the Water District states that the plant has capacity for over 800 total residences—enough to sewer the entire island.

Why that's a miracle!

At any rate, does the entire southern part of the island really need a sewer? Again, have alternatives been considered for those systems that are now illegal or substandard?

Fourth, what about the bottom line. I have no expertise on sewer costs, but I do know with the proposed expansion, the total cost of the sewer system may exceed $12 million. This figure, divided by approximately 470 users makes the cost per household nearly $26,000. On the other hand, $10,000—the amount the Water District said a replacement septic system would cost—is very conservative (high) for a conventional replacement septic system and the life expectancy seems too short. The State Plumbing Code is soon to be amended to allow a shallower depth of soils to bedrock, making replacement systems less expensive. With a "sewer solution," even if one has an adequate working system one would have to hook up to the sewer or pay 1/3 of the sewer fee. There are hidden costs too, since more stringent environmental laws will force us an upgrade of our newly created secondary treatment plant within 5 to 10 years. Costs to upgrade and/or retrofit will be tremendous.

More importantly, have the environmental and land use impacts of this expansion been taken into account? Individual and neighborhood in-ground systems put filtered water back into the aquifer, where it belongs (not out into Casco Bay, where it would go if waste went through sewer pipes into the treatment plant). Although many of us are smug consumers of Sebago Lake public water, there are many on the island who rely on wells and need the groundwater to be recharged. The fact that wastewater leaching through the ground is purified and recharges the aquifer is a concept that is little understood by most of us who have no background in geology or hydrology.

A huge red flag goes up for me when I hear about the sewer expansion. George Flaherty said it himself—where a sewer is built, there goes development. I will expand on this theme in a future issue of the Opinion.

The point I want to make is that the remaining vacant island lots in private ownership could be developed or subdivided further (currently, the minimum lot size for a grandfathere d lot on the sewer is 5,000 s.f.) and, in addition, if year-round water were put in the same trench as the sewer (an option with some of the proposed sewer types), many summer cottages could be converted to year-round use.
## Comparison of Dialogue and Debate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Debate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative: two or more sides work together toward common understanding.</td>
<td>Oppositional: two sides oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best thinking and defends it than destroy it.</td>
<td>Temporarily suspending one's beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best thinking, knowing that other peoples' reflections possibly changes a participant's point of view.</td>
<td>One searches for glaring differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is best to be right.</td>
<td>In debate, one searches for strengths in the other positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions for reevaluation.</td>
<td>In debate, one searches for flaws and weaknesses in the other's position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange of ideas and information.</td>
<td>Dialogue involves a real concern for the other person and seeks to not alienate or offend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue has many people have pieces of the same answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.</td>
<td>Debate involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relationship and often belittles or deprecates the other person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introspection on one's own position.</td>
<td>Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of the same answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue remains open-ended.</td>
<td>Debate assumes that there is a right answer and that someone has it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue remains open-ended.</td>
<td>Dialogue remains open-ended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue creates a closed-minded attitude, a determination to be right.</td>
<td>Debate implies a conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One searches for basic agreements.</td>
<td>Adapted from a paper prepared by Shelly Berman based on discussions of the Boston Chapter of Educators for Social Responsibility. Reprinted from &quot;Focus on Study Circles.&quot;</td>
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## Public Mistreatment of Citizen Volunteers

This being an issue of the Opinion devoted to transportation issues, I would like to express some personal views on the secession issue as influenced by my work on the CBITD Board.

At the two recent, and very well-attended, meetings on Peaks Island dealing with the issue of passenger boat access during the reconstruction of the new passenger dock, there was a very healthy exchange of ideas and information. The process was a success in that the public came forward with some helpful suggestions, public pressure influenced the Maine Department of Transportation to become more sensitive to our needs, and a reasonable solution was reached.

Unfortunately, there also was on display at these meetings some conduct by a few that left me discouraged and concerned about the public process on this island. At the first meeting there were a few in attendance who were simply rude and demeaning to those of us who were trying, as volunteers, to deal with a difficult situation. At the second meeting, one speaker verbally attacked the general manager of CBITD in a most demeaning and unjustified manner, and that speaker was then loudly applauded by a few others in the room. The general manager has done an outstanding and professional job in his work for the CBITD Board.

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A P.I.R.C. sponsored forum on self-government, moderated by Jim Brunelle (Portland Press Herald columnist) was attended by a lively group of Peaks Island citizens. Several misconceptions between the two major island political parties were somewhat cleared up among those who attended the meeting. In hiding, were all prominent Union leaders, leaving their recent flyer, generally critical of self-government, to set forth the sentiment of their position.

Eleven Union concerns, taken from an earlier Union publication, were addressed at the forum. Addressing Union's concern about HCD funding, Marjorie Phyfe displayed a poster comparing Peaks Island's HCD funding versus HCD funds received directly from the State by several other Maine islands (see inset). The poster (figures from the Island Institute) pointed out that small island communities successfully apply for and receive HCD funding, and receive more community dollars than Peaks Island has received from Portland's HCD program.

Jane Banquer explained that the Barron Center would continue to receive island residents for long-term care, based on their historic ties to Portland. She also explained that Portland Public Library cards would still be valid, and inter-library loan (a state-wide program) would be available to the Peaks Island Library.

Russ Edwards explained several options in resolving wastewater costs, including remaining a customer of the Portland Water District (like other surrounding towns presently do), which Portland operates at what appears on paper to be a $2 million annual profit. Portland charges its current customers the same rate, distributing all costs over the whole system.

State Representatives Anne Rand and Paul Young (who sits on the Legislative committee that is reviewing the bill) were present. Attendees learned that the legislative hearings simply determine whether islanders will be allowed to vote on this issue. The bill does not separate Peaks from Portland, but would make it possible to vote on separation in November 1994. The exact terms of separation will be negotiated after the bill is passed by the Legislature and before the November vote.

The informative session left many with the sense that the divided approach to problem-solving has perpetuated much false information, and that coming together to look at these issues—listening to all sides of the issue—is the only way to build understanding between neighbors.

The Staff

**Union Leadership Takes a Break?**

**On the Road to Community**

Growing up in my half-Italian, half-Scottish family, expressing strong emotions was not a problem for anybody.

We yelled, we cried, thumped the table and gestured a lot with our hands. We disagreed strongly, we took strong positions on the issues that divided us. And we loved (and continue to love) each other like crazy.

And so when Mayor Anne Pringle comes out to the Island to support the idea of study circles, when she sends out the message that, yes, we can talk out our differences, hammer out our points, listen to one another and it's not going to be fatal to our relationship, every drop of my blood just wants to jump up and down, hug her and kiss both cheeks and yell, "Paisan!"

She seems to understand something a lot of people on the Island just don't get. When folks in my Island family say they don't want to bring the issue of self-government up for study circle dialog, I feel like I'm dealing with an over-controlling parent, or a withdrawn spouse.

"Cause, Honey, we need to talk. We've been having our disagreements out here for quite a few years now, and maybe you're sick of even hearing about it. But how can I responsibly make up my mind what position to take on any of it when we haven't even sat down together, and heard each other out in a reasonable way?

So this study circle idea feels to me a little like family counseling on a grand scale. I hate the idea that the only

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**HCD Funds to Islands**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal Funds</th>
<th>Portland</th>
<th>State of Maine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peaks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaks</td>
<td></td>
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**Portland to Peaks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>$144,284</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>126,107</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>131,000</td>
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**State of Maine to Other Islands**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Island</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1992</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isle au Haut</td>
<td>$340,000</td>
<td>290,000</td>
<td>360,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swan's Island</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Haven</td>
<td>349,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monhegan</td>
<td>180,000</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Portland figures from Union! publication. Other island figures provided by the Island Institute.*

The top part illustrates that HCD funds can come directly from the state (if we are independent) or from Portland as present.

The bottom figures illustrate that other islands have done very well in getting funding via the state.
other way to resolve these issues is by telling each other to shut up, or political strategies where one polar extreme vie to dominate over the other. But I guess we could expect this sort of frustration. After all, in a marriage, one spouse often doesn't want to hear about it when the other is considering an affair. And I'm sure that in the middle ages, the Landowners didn't want to deal with the peasant uprisings either. And today, power companies generally don't want to hear the environmentalists concerns, and the auto lobby doesn't want to hear about acid rain and ozone pollution. But look to Mayor Pringle! She seems to understand that until we can listen (really listen) to one another's concerns, and take a cooperative approach to resolving those concerns, these arguments will continue to be resolved in ways in which everybody loses to some degree.

In my family we used to say things sometimes which we later wished we hadn't said. And there were tears, and ugly moments, as well as a lot of laughter and warmth.

But we waded through it all, we didn't quit halfway and run from the conversation. We did what it took to hear one another out. And we all learned a lot, and grew a lot, and emerged with real faith and trust in one another.

I don't want to live in a kind of community where you're afraid of getting your tires slashed because you have a political disagreement with somebody. And I don't think I do. But I don't take a healthy community for granted anymore than I took my family for granted. I know we all have to work together, listen to each other, take the time to try to hear one another's concerns. We have to wade through these difficult moments rather than simply turn our backs to one another. Otherwise, things really could get worse, where people's frustration and anger starts to get acted out instead of worked out.

So, one man tells me he wishes I'd move off the island. And another man says we hear too many opinions, and need to hear facts (facts in whose opinion?). And I get indignant in a cartoon, others get indignant on the ferry or in letters, and in meetings, and feathers fly, feelings get hurt right and left, and there's a blizzard of casualties stretching from Feeney's Bulletin Board all the way round the Island, cross the Bay and even up the steps to City Hall.

Well, you know what? Peaks Islanders would have done great in my Scottish/Italian family. At least most of us dare to speak our minds, come hell or high water, a habit bound to be better than holding back, and depriving the whole community of the benefit of our varied points of view. But now we need to keep on talking, and spend just as much effort in listening. Mayor Pringle, you've instilled in me a real spark of faith in the City, at least in your office. But here on the island we need to keep on wading through the areas of disagreement, until we get to that someplace of faith and trust in one another.

Jenny Yasi

Who's Responsible for our Waste?

Continued from p. 4

What would the effects be?

An anti-development stance may sound odd coming from an island realtor and businessman, but I am convinced that development that might follow by sewer extension could dramatically change the island as we know it and could seriously affect the quality of life that makes our island so special.

Incidentally, a point was raised at the sewer meeting that houses would be more easily bankable if they were on the sewer—i.e. mortgages could be sold on the secondary market more readily. This may be true in areas already built up, although most lenders I know will lend on a cesspool-type waste system provided that it is in good working condition, because it is "typical" to the area. If more and more houses and cottages are sewered, a cesspool may no longer be typical and it may become harder to procure a loan. More importantly, the City's recent revaluation substantiated that residences on our existing sewer are lower in value than comparable properties not on the sewer, and housing density appears to be the major factor.

Finally, I would like to plead with all those concerned about the big picture—the direction that island land use may be taking—to use their considerable energies to influence the islands' representative in city government, so that we can ensure a responsible presentation of all the options. Right now the City appears to be receptive to island needs. I say we capitalize on the leverage we now have.

This issue must not be neglected due to prevailing island political differences. This issue must be addressed objectively and intelligently and immediately, before this sewer expansion is a "done deal." Islanders can work together toward the common goal of obtaining wastewater solutions that are environmentally and fiscally responsible and that would benefit all now and in the future.

I invite all concerned to attend an informative presentation and discussion of exploring wastewater solutions on November 2 at 7 p.m. at St. Christopher's Parish Hall.

Ralph Ashmore
with Susanna Adams

Who's Responsible for our Waste?

Continued from previous page

Who's Responsible for our Waste?

continued from p. 4

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An anti-development stance may sound odd coming from an island realtor and businessman, but I am convinced that development that might follow by sewer extension could dramatically change the island as we know it and could seriously affect the quality of life that makes our island so special.

Incidentally, a point was raised at the sewer meeting that houses would be more easily bankable if they were on the sewer—i.e. mortgages could be sold on the secondary market more readily. This may be true in areas already built up, although most lenders I know will lend on a cesspool-type waste system provided that it is in good working condition, because it is "typical" to the area. If more and more houses and cottages are sewered, a cesspool may no longer be typical and it may become harder to procure a loan. More importantly, the City's recent revaluation substantiated that residences on our existing sewer are lower in value than comparable properties not on the sewer, and housing density appears to be the major factor.

Finally, I would like to plead with all those concerned about the big picture—the direction that island land use may be taking—to use their considerable energies to influence the islands' representative in city government, so that we can ensure a responsible presentation of all the options. Right now the City appears to be receptive to island needs. I say we capitalize on the leverage we now have.

This issue must not be neglected due to prevailing island political differences. This issue must be addressed objectively and intelligently and immediately, before this sewer expansion is a "done deal." Islanders can work together toward the common goal of obtaining wastewater solutions that are environmentally and fiscally responsible and that would benefit all now and in the future.

I invite all concerned to attend an informative presentation and discussion of exploring wastewater solutions on November 2 at 7 p.m. at St. Christopher's Parish Hall.

Ralph Ashmore
with Susanna Adams
**Self Government**

Peaks Island is awash with problems and controversial issues with no workable mechanism for resolving them, resulting in endlessly meetings signifying nothing and causing much frustration. There exists a process for resolving political and controversial issues—it is called democracy—self government—government of the people, by the people, for the people. Our democracy is not a perfect system and is a risky business, but it is the best system yet devised. The citizens of Peaks Island are crying out for self government—they just don’t realize it yet. Those opposing self government for Peaks fall into three categories:

1. Individuals or small groups who are fearful that their agenda or control will be lost or weakened by majority rule—these individuals or groups might be called "elitists."

2. Individuals who are too afraid, insecure, and/or apathetic to believe they can govern themselves.

3. Individuals, associations and businesses who feel they have a vested financial interest in being part of Portland.

There are a lot of myths about self government being bandied about:

1. The people of Peaks are incapable of self government. Is anything drastically different between the people of Peaks Island and any other small town?

2. There are not enough financial resources on Peaks. In fact, there is over $2 million just in taxes generated on Peaks.

3. Self government will cause more divisiveness. It will be a healthier, lower-level of divisiveness if everyone on this island is held accountable by their vote in a democratic process.

Some truths about self government for Peaks:

1. It is possible.
2. It is a reasonable and probably the best solution to our problems.
3. It will be no small task—but would be well worth the effort.

Everyone seems to be seeking a "consensus" on Peaks—what roads to pave, cobblestones or blacktop, etc. etc. The consensus is that there is no consensus, not one definable in any meaningful way. The magic of Peaks cannot be described in tangible ways—Peaks is a state of mind.

P.I.N.A., the mayor, and concerned citizens are asking the wrong questions. Everyone seems preoccupied with doing something for the island while completely ignoring what they are doing to the island! Beware of those endeavors to make Peaks a better place to live. Amenities are tempting, but sometimes have negative consequences. Ask almost anyone who has lived on Peaks for ten years or more if Peaks is a better place to live today. I have not found a person answering "yes." Change is inevitable, and practical matters need attention, but let's be careful how we react to change and what we do about it. Those who know and love Peaks as "state of mind" are most qualified to decide what is best for the island—not the City of Portland.

Pat Gardner

**How a Study Circle Might Operate**

continued from p. 3

A steering committee brings together individuals with a diversity of perspectives from the community, together with trained staff from the Maine Council of Churches (who train facilitators and are developing this model together with the Study Circles Research Center).

These people pull together resources available and "frame" the topic. If the topic were Island Government, all available published materials from P.I.R.C., UNION, The City of Portland, etc., pertinent to the subject are compiled. How the various figures presented are determined (what was the equation used, and what figures are included or excluded from comparable figures). Perhaps other analysis of legal questions is undertaken, and all the information available is collated and developed into a Study Circle Resource book.

Trained facilitators would then help to 'manage' (keep safe and on task) a series of four meetings of two hours each. In several groups of seven individuals of diverse viewpoints, participants would temporarily set aside their own positions to try to deeply understand a presented side of the issue. For example, on the first night all the positive, negative, and unknown things about the Union position; on the second night all the perceived positive, negative, and unknown things about the P.I.R.C. position (forming a new town and passing legislation); on the third night all the positive, negative and unknown things about the City of Portland position. On the fourth meeting, there might be a form of sharing overall insights gained in the process of examining the issues.

The goal of the study circle process is not to try to resolve any issue, nor to take or recommend action. Study circles aim to promote increased understanding among people of divergent viewpoints. They do not strive to convince anyone to change their positions or to attain any group consensus.

This scenario of how a study circle operates is derived from SCRC publications, and conversations with MCC Director Tom Ewell, and Associate Director Sally Campbell, who presented this model at a recent PINA Steering Committee Session, at the request of the Peaks Island Opinion. The steering committee voted to recommend that the general membership approve this format (at the next meeting—Oct. 19). Please come to this meeting! If it passes at the general membership meeting, the study circle committee will start pulling people and materials together for resource book development. The actual framing of the topic may be somewhat different from my example.

Jenny Yasi

**Next Deadline! November 1**

Theme: "Our Relationship to the Sea," but we’ll print your cartoons, articles, poems, letters, on any topic. "Visions" of the future always welcomed.

Pat Gardner
Lionel Plante Jr. celebrates life in the new Headrush release "Earth Doctor goes Bananas." A wild musical fantasy of sex and going bananas, temptation, God, and a search for wisdom set in a no rules allowed high class showcase—it is sure to get attention!

Also, Peaks Island celebrates Knots & Crosses' recent signing to Island Records, the company which also records U2, Melissa Etheridge and Tom Waits. Now that they're famous, will Alan Williams have to wear sunglasses to the IGA?

Speaking of the IGA, John Feeney sold his IGA store to Bob Hannigan (a Portland resident whose parents have a summer place on Luther St) to retire to his backshore paradise. Mr. Feeney brought the store back to life after an earlier retirement bid had left the store understocked and failing with bare shelves a couple of years ago. His return to work made Feeney's IGA better than ever, with a healthy variety of foods and household goods. Everyone is wishing this respected island businessman all the best in his new adventures.

The P.I.N.A. steering committee voted 5 to 3 to recommend to the general membership that they use the Maine Council of Churches 'study circle' format as a way of promoting community dialog on a variety of topics, including the issue of self-government.

All back issues of the Peaks Island opinion are in circulation at the Peaks Island Library. They can be found in the magazine rack. Thank you to Pricilla Webster.

**Location, location, location**

A back shore still life design won widespread community acclaim during the annual oversize trash pickup week. A complete living environment, with full living room set, magazine rack, television and a fan spinning softly in the breeze was soon embellished with an add-on bathroom and an Ashmore Realty sign. At least one party was held in the wall-less home with a view. Several lookers noted a pleasurably voyeuristic sensation, a feeling of peeping into someone's private quarters, with the recycled art creating such a fully lived in look. So who are "Decorators Three?" Bets are on that it was not Kathleen... Maybe Patty or Lloyd. We're looking forward to the next production.

Jenny Yasi  
Photo and caption by Jamie Hogan

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**Bulletin Board**

**AA Meetings**  Open: 6:15 pm Wednesday evenings, Brackett Memorial Church.

**P.I.N.A. general membership meeting**  Oct.ober 19, 7:30 p.m. The Maine Council of Churches Study Circle format will be examined as a way to support community dialog on significant island issues.

**Sewer meeting.**  Wastewater Alternatives presentation and discussion. Tuesday November 2, 1993, 7 p.m. at St. Christopher's Parish Hall.

**Bunk beds wanted to buy.**  766-2604.

**Recipes**

**Pickled Beets**

Boll syrup one minute. Add beets. Bring to boil. Pack in hot sterilized jars, completely cover beets with syrup. Wait at least three weeks before tasting.

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- 1 tsp. cloves
- 2 cups vinegar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. allspice

Cook small beets until well done, then peel. Large beets can be cut into chunks. Use about 6 cups of beets. Prepare syrup:

**Salsa**

- 2 tomatoes
- 1 small onion
- 3 jalapeno peppers
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 small handful of cilantro

1 tsp. chili powder
1 dash catsup
1 dash vinegar
Salt to taste. Don’t skip the salt; it draws the juices out of the veggies

Chop up vegetables. Put some in a blender, if you want, but not all or it won’t be chunky

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