

# Discovery

## Summer Newsletter from the Ferry Beach Park Association

SUMMER 2014

In this issue, Discover news about...

- Debt Challenges
- A Magical, Musical August
- Culture of Stewardship
- Hopkins House Renovation
- Board Updates
- Upcoming fall and winter events and retreats
- Preliminary Summer 2015 conference schedule

### Debt Challenges Ferry Beach

*Several years back as I was driving with my young daughters, a storm passed through. Across the sky, a rainbow streaked through the wet sunshine. My four year old, sitting in the car seat in the back, exclaimed, "You mean rainbows are in real life?"*

*"Yes," I said.*

*"Then we need a fast car because there is a pot of gold at the end of that rainbow!"*

Ferry Beach is a pot of gold, full of beautiful vistas, awesome loving communities that come and go each week in the summer, white sandy beaches, a verdant and rich forest of trees, and a living history of more than one hundred years.

If Quillen Shinn were alive, he would probably be smiling, knowing that his risk to mortgage his own property to buy the hotel at the end of Ferry Park Avenue is still giving back to thousands of people who have found their "spirit at the sea" these last hundred years. How proud he would be to see that we have expanded to 32 acres, 19 buildings, and a robust schedule of programs, conferences, and workshops all focused on that organizing idea of Universalism.

Several years ago, Ferry Beach took another risk, a campaign to envision and build a dining hall that can serve people year round. DeWolfe Dining Hall has become a hub for the campus, with its wide veranda-like porch, looking out over the volleyball court and play area. It is the center of activity during any conference. While our capital campaign was successful, it didn't include the cost of future maintenance needs, nor did it reduce our existing loans that had been previously executed to address the challenges we face in maintaining old structures. The salty sea breezes and constant battering of the ocean age our historical buildings and structures a little faster than if we were situated more inland. But that's what we love so much about Ferry Beach, isn't it?



The Ferry Beach board, in concert with the staff of Ferry Beach, has organized a debt position paper, outlining the sources of the debt as well as our goals to repay. To quote from that paper:

*"The long-term debt is the result of previously existing debt of \$340,000, which included a line of credit and credit card debt of \$115,000. An additional \$400,000 of debt was incurred during the 2009-2010 capital improvements. The debt was consolidated into one loan with Bangor Savings Bank in 2010 and subsequently refinanced at a lower rate in 2013. These are commercial term loans with a 5-year fixed rate that will revert to a floating interest rate over time."*

While our market value represents more than \$20 million dollars, the debt and our maintenance issues remain a challenge. The debt itself is akin to having a mortgage on a home. Our job, while reducing the debt in the coming years, is to balance our deferred maintenance needs with additional debt repayment.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## August Fun!

August at Ferry Beach is a magical—and musical—time! During several of our wonderful conferences this month, we are excited to welcome three singer/songwriters to help us feel the energy of music and song, and connect it to the power of social justice and social action.

Carolyn McDade joins us on August 9<sup>th</sup> for the first three days of our Women's Week conference and will be providing us with soul-enriching programming on Sunday and Monday. Carolyn is the author of "Spirit of Life," a song that fits with Ferry Beach so well—we sing it almost every week in the summer!

Also that week, our Aging with Grace conference is an opportunity to explore our connection to Spirit as we age. Join Nancee Campbell, UU Minister and Susan Murphy, Episcopal Minister in this four-day retreat.

Inspirational singer/songwriter and activist Holly Near joins us August 16<sup>th</sup> for a concert in the GAYLA Theatre, joined by Emma's Revolution. UUs have been singing Holly's music at marches, rallies, and church services for decades. Holly will be here on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday to do workshops connecting us to songwriting and social justice, and help us in our journey to find creativity and fun among the work we do in the world. Joe Jencks, another singer/songwriter joins us on Wednesday through Friday morning. Joe will provide workshops and activities, including singing and vocalizing.

Pierre Garraud, Peruvian Shaman returns to Ferry Beach August 16-22 to add more magic throughout our community. He is joined by his partner, Janice Johnson, who will be working with us on healing energy and nurturing, and offering Laughing Yoga. We will also have our singing bowl jam as we did last year and a ceremony/ritual on healing the Mother Earth.

Do you love Ferry Beach but just can't make a full week work? Join us for a weekend of fun featuring a Saco River cruise and more, August 22-24, with long time coordinators, Karen Goldsmith and Heidi Hertel-Therrien as they create a wonderful Getaway Weekend.

Quilting always offers a lot of fun and creativity in our sunny, beachy Dolphin Room during the last week of summer, August 23-29. A wonderful 12-step conference, "Stepping Out with Grace and Gratitude" will be transformative that week as well. Photography of our beautiful seacoast is also offered this week.

Finally, don't miss Labor Day weekend, a fantastic way to end the summer. Saturday offerings include an all-you-can-eat BYOB barbecue from 4-8pm accompanied by live music by Portland's *Downeast Soul Coalition*, along with games for all ages. Sunday will include a volleyball tournament, a bike ride, and a Talent/No Talent ending the festivities. We'll sing songs after breakfast on Monday and close out the year. You won't want to miss Ferry Beach on Labor Day weekend.

## Culture: Service and Philanthropy Define Stewardship

*I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. (Tagore)*

There has never been a place that invokes so many good feelings of love and joy as does Ferry Beach. We are a place of laughter and song, sharing and compassion, learning and understanding, growing and changing.

In a survey of members done several years ago, the sandy beach and beautiful ocean were named by 40% of the participants as the number one reason they come to Ferry Beach. We know however, that we also come for singing, dancing, eating, playing, sharing, learning and growing.

The board of Ferry Beach is working on an initiative to encourage more people to volunteer their time at Ferry Beach. As a not-for-profit organization, we are grateful to not pay property taxes on this beautiful piece of the earth. You'll notice on your statement from your conference that you don't pay Maine's 7% hotel tax or the 5% sales tax.

We survive because people are willing to donate their time, talent, and treasure to assure that Ferry Beach will be here for years to

come. We are working on a name for this group, separate from the privilege of membership. At town halls each week, we have been sharing our need to build a culture of philanthropy and a culture of service.

As you may know, we have more than 700 life members, yet only a fraction of those members are sustaining donors. Most of our life members have not donated to the beach since they paid their life membership. With more than 3000 people who come to Ferry Beach each year, less than 100 of those are regular donors (either annual or sustaining).

Most not-for-profits are able to provide more mission-related activity through the generosity of their donors. We are hoping as we build a culture of philanthropy, we will be able to offer more in the way of scholarships as well as help seed new conferences on topics critical to today's world. We are also going to use our additional support to make sure that our physical facility stays in good shape for years to come.

Won't you join us in sharing your time, talent, and treasure? If you like this idea, let the board know at [board@ferrybeach.org](mailto:board@ferrybeach.org)

## Help Us Build Five New Rooms

This summer, we are raising money to renovate Hopkins House, a Ferry Beach dwelling at 8 Morris Avenue. This space will be turned into



five private baths, lodging that many conferees have expressed interest in having here. Hopkins House is particularly special because it is winterized, so we are very excited to be able to have it available to us every day of the year! We anticipate that it will generate revenue throughout the year as a space for winter weekend retreats.

We are redoing the inside of the home and keeping the outside ramp, making rooms accessible. We will also add a new roof, new siding, and several new windows.

Our goal is \$75,000. An investment in the renovation project will bring revenue to Ferry Beach for years to come and help us be able to provide more for our conferees all year round.

As a fun and creative way to increase donations, we are transforming our guests into "movie stars." If you are visiting Ferry Beach this summer, keep your eyes open for our roving videographer, PJ, who is producing weekly "Happy" videos starring Ferry Beach guests! Each "Happy" video is available to take home on DVD through a \$10 minimum donation to the Hopkins House renovation fund. We are grateful for your support!

## Board News

At Ferry Beach's Annual Meeting on June 21, 2014, the Nominating Committee put forth and the membership voted in the following:

**For Director:** David Beseda, first term (2014-2017) and Lydia Gibb, second term (2014-2017)

**For the Nominating Committee:** Rev Sue Gabrielson, first term (2014-2017) and John Robinson, first term (2014-2016)



**David Beseda** is from Portland, ME and has been coming to Ferry Beach for a little over three years. His fiancée Catherine and he have a blended multi-generational and multi-racial family with seven children between them. David plays guitar and drums, and looks forward to the many Ferry Beach jam sessions and the spiritual experience of music at the Chapel in the Grove.

He has been involved in UU social justice work at Allen Avenue UU in Portland for many years, and believes it is an important goal to increase the economic and racial diversity of the Ferry Beach community. He has experience in program management and budget oversight through participation on other non-profit boards. He works at a non-profit agency in southern Maine that serves homeless men, women and children, and has three decades of successful experience with fundraising, program development, supervision of volunteers, proposal writing expertise, budget and operations management, affordable housing development, and oversight of architectural design and construction management.



**Lydia Hempel Gibb** is from Barkhamsted, CT and has been coming to Ferry Beach since she was a child. She is the academic Dean of Talcotte Mountain Academy of Science Mathematics and Technology, a school for intellectually excited students in grades K-8. She holds an MA in Educational Psychology and a BS in Environmental Science and Wildlife Biology. She serves as an Academy Fellow of the Connecticut Academy for Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology, and a Globe

Scientist for the University Center for Atmospheric Research. She also served as Principle Investigator on two National Science Foundation grants focusing on women and minorities in science.

Lydia is a fourth generation UU and introduced her husband, George to Ferry Beach many years ago, where they brought their children to camp in the Grove. She is on the subcommittee meeting with the Ecology School and is the chair of the program committee.



Elected to the Nominating Committee is **Reverend Sue Gabrielson**, who has been a UU minister for 11 years. She is the Executive Director of the Religious Coalition Against Discrimination, a state-wide non-profit whose mission is to educate and publicly advocate for the civil and human rights of all people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, in diverse Maine congregations and communities.

Sue sees that her work in southern Maine can be helpful to the Nominating committee as she has many contacts in the south of the state. Sue lives in Yarmouth with her husband, Rudy, her two children Ellie and Grace, and their dog, Penny.



**John Robinson**, of Portland, ME is a commercial real estate broker and a writer. John teaches literature at the Maine College of Art. He served on the Board of the Maine Green Building Council and The Tate House Museum, and as a committee member for the Maine Real Estate Developers Association. He graduated from Harvard College and received a Master of Fine Arts from Brown University. John is also the author of several well received works of fiction, as

well as one Hollywood movie. John's wife and he have raised four children in a blended family. By volunteering for Ferry Beach and the Nominating Committee, he hopes to offer a greater connection between the FBPA and the local community.

This year's Nominating Committee consisted of Gary Adams, Bradley Cohen (chair), Rick DeWolfe, Cyd Melcher (Board Liaison) and Rev. Wendy von Zirpolo. Rev. von Zirpolo resigned in April in order to be more available to help with family illness and to her ministerial responsibilities. The Committee is grateful for her many contributions during two years of dedicated service, and to Gary Adams as he completes three years of dedicated service.

*Continued from page 1: Debt*

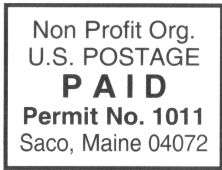
With this legacy of stepping up to any challenge and risk, Ferry Beach finds itself optimistically looking to reduce some of our debt and address items on our list of deferred maintenance. In 2014 we are on target to pay off the line of credit we have taken in the past years. We are also making all of our payments on the term debt and hope to continue to further reduce the principal in the coming year. We will balance the need to reduce the debt with our need to make sure we are able to keep Ferry Beach's physical plant viable and operational.

To that end, the Board has also identified ways you can help. Members can volunteer to help at the Beach on physical plant

projects to fulfill maintenance needs. Additionally, the Beach thrives on the generosity of our membership. We are asking each of our members to financially support the Beach and consider becoming a sustaining member. These steps will help us to address current challenges and move forward with prosperity and abundance.

We are so fortunate that we already have a pot of gold. Join us as we preserve and share it. For more on this, see the article on page 2 in this month's Discovery (*Culture*). To read the complete debt paper on line, visit:

<http://www.ferrybeach.org/member-home.html>



## 2014-2015 Fall & Winter events and retreats

Save the date! Ferry Beach's annual Fall Harvest event will be held on November 8, 2014. The festivities begin at 5pm in Rowland. It will be a wonderful evening of friendship and fundraising, so be sure to join us! Formal invitation to follow.

We are offering a men's retreat for the weekend of November 8, 2014. Please join Stephen Andrew and Rodney Machia as they facilitate a wonderful thought- and feeling-provoking weekend.

Join Myra Green, STOTT Pilates instructor, and Vanessa Breault Mulvey, Body Mapping specialist from November 14-16, 2014 for a nourishing weekend to refuel and rekindle your mind and body. This is the perfect weekend if you seek more graceful movement, enhanced muscle tone, improved coordination, or a better understanding of your body. Conference begins Friday at 6pm with dinner and ends Sunday at 11:30am, and the fee is \$225.

During our winter retreats, we will be using Kelley Cottage, Morris, and the two cabins for lodging. Nightly rates for rooms are



\$50 for a semi-private room and \$125 for a private room. Six meals are included in each conference, at a cost a total of \$75 for the entire weekend.

Please call for reservations (207.282.4489) for any of our conferences and retreats, and visit [www.ferrybeach.org](http://www.ferrybeach.org) for more information and updates.

### Sneak Peek: Summer 2015 Conference Schedule

#### June

- 5-14 Buddhist Profound Treasury
- 15-20 Work Week
- 21-July 4 Youth camp weeks: KFTE, Different Drummers, and FUUTURES

#### July

- 4-10 Religious Education Week
- 11-18 GAYLA & Choralfest
- 18-25 Yoga Retreat, Writers' Conference, Kayaking, Spiritual Ecology
- 25-August 1 Family and Friends

#### August

- 1-8 UUFAF
- 8-14 Women's Week
- 11-14 Aging as a Spiritual Practice,
- 15-22 Spiritual Pathways, Circle of Music,
- 21-23 Weekend Getaway
- 22-28 Quilting by the Bay, The Art of Seeing (Photography), 12-Step

#### September

- 5-7 Labor Day BBQ Party

### Call for Proposals!

Do you have a great idea for a conference or a retreat? We are looking for ideas for weekends in the winter months for 10-20 people. We will have warm space open from November 15 through early March. Perhaps a meditation or a group intensive around a specific idea or concept? Maybe teaching or learning a skill, or how about a group of friends wanting to get together for a weekend getaway! Please call us with your ideas! 207.282.4489