

DHBA NEWSLETTER

Feb/Mar 2021

Notes from the BOT

Members,

As you are now aware, Shawn and Heather have given the BOT notice to leave their employment with DHBA. The current plan is to work with them to button items up and prepare for a transition thru the month of March, with their last day scheduled for the 31st.

The BOT, on behalf of our team and the membership, want to share a huge thank you to Shawn and Heather for all that they have done in support of DHBA and wish them the best in their next endeavors. They brought a rare combination of skill, experience and interpersonal skills to the role that will be missed. Fortunately they are not going anywhere. Continuing to live in Anacortes and Heather taking a role with the Island Express means we are parting ways, but not saying goodbye.

The BOT is actively working on finding their replacement. Over the course of the next month, we will be working with Shawn and Heather to continue with our plan to have the water lines connected in the spring, wrap up some of the in flight projects, and prepare for a gap of on-site caretakers.

We are looking forward to the spring and upcoming primetime draw. We have some updates to our COVID policies on the way. Stay tuned for more information.

DHBA BOT



Notes From the Caretakers

There is nothing like a snow day in the islands! We postponed our vacation by a week in mid-February to tend to the property during the freezing temperatures and strong northeast winds. We received a beautiful blanket of roughly five to six inches of snow which brought out a number of islanders with sleds and snow toys.

The daylight hours are slowly increasing which is a wonderful sign of spring to come. The lagoon birds – buffleheads, mergansers, mallards, kingfishers, wigeons, and geese – keep us well entertained with their bobbing, diving, and playful antics.

As of March 1st, all of the cabins are open and de-winterized. We are beginning the deep cleans of each cabin in preparation for spring break and summer prime time. As March can still whip up some good north winds, we will be looking towards April before putting the dock back in position.

A happy and healthy soon to be spring to you all!

Heather and Shawn



Maintenance Updates

Along with the snow and blustery north winds came freezing temperatures which allowed us to test the new heated wires on the water supply lines. So far we have not detected any leaks or burst pipes. A leaky kitchen faucet in cabin 6 and slow dripping toilet water line in cabin 5 have been fixed and all cabins are back online.

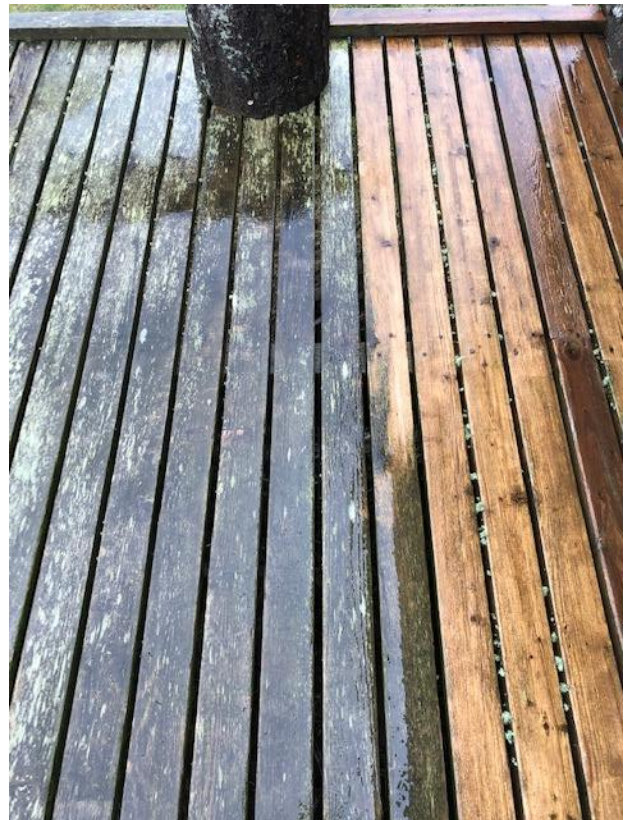


During the strong northeast wind and waves, the ramp on the dock suffered damage. The board that connects the ramp to the pier cracked, and two additional floats came off. We were able to collect the floats and will be repairing the cracked board on the dock. While working on the ramp, we will also be adding new non-skid to help prevent any slips on the slick wood.

With the approach of spring we are busy working on thorough deep cleans of all the cabins. Stoves and fridges are pulled out to clean below and behind, water tanks are drained, walls and ceilings are vacuumed of dust and spider webs, all linens are washed, kitchen items inventoried and replaced when needed, special logs are burned to help tackle creosote in the chimneys, carpets steam cleaned, decks pressure washed and much more.

Cabin 7 will soon be having all new heaters installed, replacing the old baseboard electric heaters. We have purchased four new hydronic heaters (two currently installed) and one electric baseboard heater for the cabin. The new hydronic heaters provide radiant heat that will be more efficient and cost effective.

We have also gone through each cabin and each light fixture checking for LED bulbs. We replaced 14 incandescent bulbs with LED bulbs.



With the approach of spring and summer not far off, we have been gearing up for the busy prime time season. Cabins are being inventoried and supplies ordered. A fresh supply of wine glasses and coffee mugs were ordered to resupply broken and missing stock. We placed DHBA on the waitlist for a propane delivery and now have full tanks for running the hot water heater and driers in the laundry room. Unlike last year in which cleaning supplies and toilet paper were in very short supply, this year the cabins are all amply stocked and ready for the season.



In early March three alders were cut down near the tennis court. Before attempting to repair the fence damage from an alder falling earlier this winter, we wanted to remove additional troublesome trees before leaves begin to appear. The three trees were located on a steep hill and all came down in perfect placement.



After speaking with a member of the DHBA stewardship committee, we offered to contact our former employer at the San Juan Preservation Trust for additional guidance. Dean Dougherty, Director of Stewardship at the Trust will be coming to DHBA to survey the property and offer direction on how to best preserve and protect this special piece of land. We will be monitoring how spring progresses and will coordinate his visit to when the native wildflowers begin to bloom on the Head.

For a full list of completed maintenance and repair projects happening at DHBA, please visit the Member Information tab on the Decatur Head website:

<https://www.decatourhead.org/updatesfaq/>

DHBA Tips

With firewood in high demand we are continuing to buck and split as much wood as possible. Over the past year, we have been fortunate to find free wood supplies at the OPALCO solar station, fallen trees on DHBA land, and also on private property. Unfortunately this supply has been nearly exhausted and we need to search for new supplies. This may mean purchasing wood from island residents. When visiting the Head, please keep in mind that firewood is a valuable resource and with increased visitation over the past year, wood supplies are becoming limited.

In hand with the firewood, we are also in need of newspaper to use as fire starters. As many people are using the internet and online subscriptions for news, supplies of old newspapers are becoming harder to find. If anyone has a newspaper bin heading to the recycler, we would gladly take any donations.



During the September board retreat, a discussion was had concerning pet hair on the furniture in the cabins. As some pet hair and dirt can be difficult to remove from upholstery fabric, it was decided to have a supply of sheets available for use to cover couch and chair cushions to help protect the fabric. Due to COVID-19, the volunteer run thrift shops in Anacortes have been closed and we have not been able to purchase any inexpensive supplies. If any members have old sheets or towels they would like to donate to the Head, we would be very happy to take them off your hands.

During the winter season, we had a few periods of high water flooding at DHBA. For those who store items under the locker building, keep in mind this area is prone to flooding. Items stored under the building float out and are deposited around the property once the water recedes.



Decatur Island Updates

Jill Bliss, whom you may know from the farmer's market for her wonderful watercolor art, updated the Decatur Island directory for 2021. The new directory now includes email addresses along with phone numbers. For any who would like to have a copy of the directory, I have uploaded the spreadsheet to the DHBA website under "Member Documents": www.decatourhead.org/governance/

After a strong blow in mid February, we found a unique creature had washed ashore on the south beach. A *Beringraja binoculata*, or big skate, roughly four feet in length, was found in the sand. These skates are the largest in North America and are found on the sandy ocean floors between Alaska and Baja. According to the Seattle Aquarium, the skate derives its name from the Latin "*bi*," meaning "two," and "*oculatus*," meaning "eyed." This refers to the two large eyespots on the big skate's fins, which resemble eyes. Scientists think these "eyes" might confuse predators or make a smaller skate look bigger, and therefore less vulnerable to a predator, such as a shark.

During the strong winds, snow, and freezing temperatures, a power line came down near the western side of Davis Bay. In light of recent events in Texas, we were very fortunate at the Head to not have been affected by the power outage. OPALCO was on the scene almost immediately working on the line and restored power to the west side of Davis Bay in record time. A big thank you to those workers at OPALCO for taking care of the Decatur Island community!

