



President's Letter

Is it an early Spring or will Mother Nature surprise us with another dose of Winter? That was the question in February and March as Orleans saw record warmth, bitter cold, high winds, torrential rains, blizzards, and just about everything in between. As noted by a member of Orleans Police Department, it's great to live in an area with four seasons, just not all in the same week!

If you have checked out the Mass.gov GIS map depicting over a hundred years of change in Nauset Spit and Estuary, you realize that it's not just the weather that changes. We enjoy an evershifting, dynamic and amazingly spectacular area. The beach has eroded in some areas, shoaled in others, and stretched to the north, changing contours as well as habitats.

While the Spit continues to be re-sculpted by Mother Nature, there have also been a number of changes on the Heights itself. Although we are sorry to say farewell to a number of long-time members, we are happy to welcome several new homeowners.

One of the major changes during the late Winter was the demolition and rebuilding of the NHA stairs. A huge thank you to Jim Tyng, Carl Trevison, Fred Turner and King Nelson for spearheading this important project that benefits NHA members now and for future generations. Please see the "The NHA Has New Stairs" article on the rebuilding project in this issue.

Thanks also to our wonderful volunteer Board of Directors and Committee members who work hard year-round advocating on behalf of our neighborhood, managing communications and finances, and planning a wide range of fun activities. NHA events are a great way to meet new neighbors and reconnect with friends. Please check out the calendar in this issue and plan to join us.

Wishing you and your families the best for a fun-filled summer.

Sandy Davidson
President



The NHA Has New Stairs

After property lines for 51 Nauset Road were redrawn by the Town in January, 2015, it was determined that the upper portion of the NHA Stairs rested on private property rather than on a former public right of way. The lower portion and beach ramp continued to rest on land known to be owned by the Cape Cod National Seashore.

A number of options were pursued which would provide for continued use of the stairs and protection for new owners of the property from contingent liabilities. In the end, it was determined that the most sensible, long-term solution would be to build new stairs on the extension of

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2017 Calendar

May 6, 2017
Spring Fling Clean-up

June 10, 2017
Horseshoe Crab Walk

June 17, 2017
Board Meeting

July 15, 2017
July Member Meeting

July 17, 2017
Golf Outing

July 22, 2017
Family Beach Bonfire

July 29 & 30, 2017
Tennis Tournament

August 5, 2017
Lawn Party

August 12, 2017
Sand Sculpture Contest

August 19, 2017
Annual Member Meeting

September 9, 2017
Board Meeting

October 14, 2017
Fall Spruce-up

The NHA Has New Stairs

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Nauset Road, an approach which would ensure complete separation of the properties for the future.

A subcommittee of Jim Tyng, Carl Trevison, and Sandy Davidson worked on this project for the NHA. With assistance from Ryder & Wilcox, the surveying, engineering, and regulatory requirements to build new stairs were finally completed in December, 2016. After months of meetings, negotiations, and hearings, the NHA received final approval from the State, a Special Use Permit from the CCNS, and a recorded Order of Conditions permit from the Orleans Conservation Commission.

After considering four builders, and with the unanimous approval of the Board of Directors, the demolition, removal, and reconstruction of new stairs were completed this winter by Jeff Norgeot, Inc. of South Orleans. Harrow & Seed of East Orleans has done the environmental remediation required around the old stairs area. King Nelson coordinated and monitored the entire project for the NHA throughout this off-season.

The stairs will be a fabulous new asset for decades to come. We owe a special thanks to John and Maura McCormack, the new owners of 51 Nauset Road, for generously sharing in its costs.



Nauset Spit Update

Driving ORVs on Nauset Spit is no further resolved than last year at this time. The Town won both its two legal battles with Eastham over their Conservation Commission's August, 2014 "cease and desist order" which prevented driving on the Spit. However, the effort to redraw the town line along the inlet channel northward ended unresolved when the Land Court ruled it did not have jurisdiction over the issue, and said that Orleans needed to take its case to the Massachusetts Legislature. Thus, the boundary remains at about the halfway mark, and driving beyond the line is still a violation of Eastham's bylaw and subject to fine.

The Hannah Family suit in Land Court is still in the discovery phase over the ownership and rights to some of the barrier beach in Orleans just south of the line. John Hannah originally purchased ninety acres of the beach and marshlands in 1926 to be used for farming grasses to make building bricks. Finally, Orleans is now dealing with two independent lawsuits regarding access to the Spit from Aspinet and Inlet Roads.

In the meantime, Mother Nature has taken control of Nauset Spit and Beach. Heavy erosion of the outer beach may prevent us from driving even as far as the town line. All of Nauset Spit is turning into a wildlife sanctuary. We are used to being restricted by the endangered birds. A recent study estimates there are now more than 30,000 seals, and at least 400 great white sharks, endangering both water quality and human safety along the Outer Cape beaches. As early as 2018, Orleans is considering removing and rebuilding the structures at Nauset Beach, and beginning construction of a 200-foot wide, 25-foot high, and 1500-foot long sand dune to protect the remaining parking area from the onslaught of erosion.



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NHA Horseshoe Crab Walk

One of the special things about Nauset Heights is the access to its diverse ecosystems. On Saturday, June 10th Janet Bush will lead an informal walk and talk on Nauset Spit about horseshoe crabs – one of the most amazing creatures in existence. At over 500 million years old, horseshoe crabs are not really crabs, but belong to their own class of Arthropods (insects, arachnids and crustaceans) called Merostomata (meaning "legs attached to the mouth").

Janet is a NHA member and long-time Horseshoe Crab Volunteer for Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. She will talk about how Audubon does spawning surveys and monitors the numbers of horseshoe crabs in Nauset Estuary and will discuss their spawning habits, their current medical use, and the threats they face today.

The walk will start at 1:00 PM. Watch for future details, including on where to meet. Why is the walk on June 10th? Here's a hint – have a look at the moon phase schedule!

For more information on horseshoe crabs, check out MassAudubon.org (type horseshoe crab in the search field) or HorseshoeCrab.org.



Member Corner

For over 60 years, the mission of the Nauset Heights Association has been to foster a sense of community and cooperation among homeowners to protect and preserve this special place.

Our association today is 182 member families strong. Please join us in welcoming our newest families who joined in 2017:

Duquette, 29 Priscilla
Kowalski, 6 Rabbit Run
Lipe, 31 Doane
Robertson/Ayer, 16 Snow Goose
Scharf, 14 Alden

In Remembrance

The following Nauset Heights Association members or former members have passed away since the fall. We send our sympathy to their families. They will be dearly missed.

Harriet Brigham 3/18/2017
Edie Shedden Cowgill 3/20/2017

Cape Gardening

It's Spring and for many of us, thoughts turn to our yards and gardens.

The Town of Orleans [Conservation Department](http://town.orleans.ma.us/conservation) (town.orleans.ma.us/conservation) has a wealth of information and guidelines for gardening, lawn and yard care.

[Cape Cod Cooperative Extension Service](http://CapeCodExtension.org) (CapeCodExtension.org) also offers valuable resources, including how to get your soil tested. Both Conservation Department and the Extension Service offer ideas for native plants that thrive here and that attract pollinators, such as bees, butterflies and birds. They also have information on combatting and controlling invasive species, such as Bittersweet, Virginia Creeper, English Ivy and poison ivy, that can strangle trees and bushes, and attract mosquitoes and hornets. There is also a list of plants that are prohibited in Massachusetts (who knew!?!).

NHA's Environmental Committee will be hosting an information table at our July member's meeting and will be on hand to answer your questions.

Happy gardening!



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