

From the Beach Committee

~Kate Penn, Beach Chair

Spring Work Day: Thank you to all the volunteers who braved the weather and helped clean up the community beach during our spring work day event. We had 20 volunteers, including a few children. With all those hands our work was quickly finished. We were able to clear debris from the beach and drainage swale, weed and rake the volleyball court, and rake up fallen branches on the lawn.

Be sure to join us for the Earth Day work project and celebration on Saturday, April 25th, from 9 am - noon. We'll replenish grasses at the wetland area, weed and mulch the rain garden, and touch-up paint on the equipment. Lunch will be served afterwards so we can relax and enjoy our handiwork. If you have suggestions for projects, please contact Kate Penn at beach@hillsmereshores.net or call 410-263-4456.

Shoreline Update: The HSIA Board has approved a contract with Environmental Systems Analysis, Inc. (ESA) for a comprehensive shoreline study of the Community Beach. The total contract amount is \$15,200 and includes data collection, reporting, and conceptual design. ESA will collect information concerning littoral drift, wave energy, boat wake, fetch, currents, weather patterns, and shoreline erosion rates during storm events. Data will be collected both from publications, including from the MD Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and from their own survey of our shoreline over the next year. ESA will report the data findings to the HSIA Board and to the entire community.

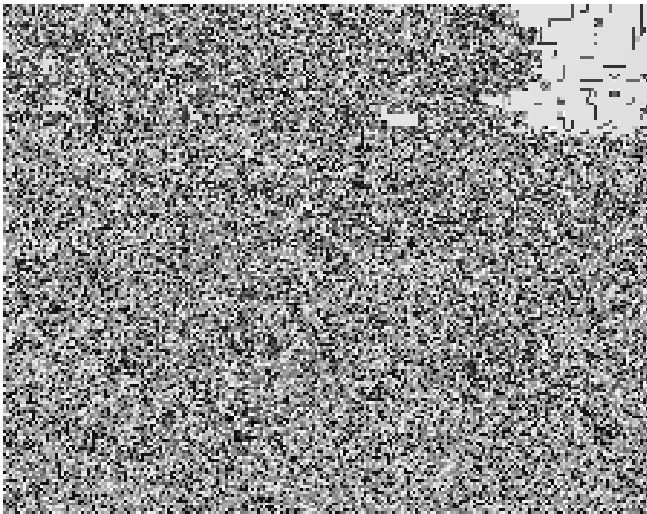
ESA will develop several conceptual designs, one of which will be in general the existing beach configuration with minor changes as recommended by ESA. Based on the information collected, conceptual designs will provide suitable shoreline protection while preserving the community's recreational uses and ensuring environmental compatibility. ESA will work with the Beach Committee to develop pros and cons for each design, and will then present these designs for community review. In addition to reports at General Meetings, the Beach Committee will conduct a series of town hall style meetings with the community to discuss the design options and answer questions about the designs.

A copy of the ESA contract will be posted on the HSIA website for further information.

Maintenance and Improvements: The Beach Committee has explored a number of permeable surfacing options for the parking lot in order to reduce storm water runoff. We have ruled out pavers as too expensive, and are investigating permeable concrete as well as gravel, which is the current material. The new parking lot will include measures to collect, slow, and filter storm water from the drainage trench at Hillsmere Drive, across the parking lot, to the swale in the lawn. We will also address the problem with standing water behind the large pavilion and the swing set. The piling fence around the parking lot will be replaced after completion of the parking lot construction. A proposal will be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

The other planned maintenance this spring is the replacement of damaged equipment at the big-kid play system. We will be replacing all the tube slides as well as the buckle bridge. Labor and materials to complete this work is \$7,636. When this project was budgeted, we planned to replace only one cracked section of one slide. During the past year, however, three additional sections have cracked. To minimize the labor costs for the work and avoid further damage, we determined it would be best to replace the entire system, rather than just the broken parts.

Beach Workday Success Thanks to Our Volunteers!



Thanks to the more than 20 volunteers of all ages who participated in the first Hillsmere Beach Workday of 2009. Buoyed by coffee and donuts in cool, drizzly weather, they enthusiastically prepared the volleyball court for the games of spring and cleared the debris of winter from our beach readying it for the Easter Egg Hunt, April 11th.

The next opportunity to join with your friends and neighbors in keeping our beach clean and beautiful is Earth Day, April 25th. See you then!

The Beach Committee also wants to thank our many friends and neighbors who everyday pick up trash and debris on their morning walks or while playing with their children and grandchildren. You help keep our beach clean and enjoyable for all. Your contribution has not gone unnoticed. Thank you our “stealth” volunteers.