



### Sharing Skins on the Sand at Sunset

By IVY ASHE

AT SIX O'CLOCK ON TUESDAY, State Beach seems as it does any other day of the week at this time. Calm waves lap the shore as seagulls fly above and toddlers race through the sand.

But there are a few more — several more — groups and families on the beach than would be usually expected at this hour. The reason becomes clear with the sound of the first drumbeats.

The event is described simply as Drumming on the Beach, and it is the brainchild of Drum Workshop founder and director Rick Bausman. Each Tuesday during the summer season, Mr. Bausman and his drummers bring their instruments down to the shore and perform an open-air concert. The songs are from the musical traditions of Haiti, Cuba, West Africa and Brazil, but the appeal is universal — old or young, it is nearly impossible to keep from tapping one's own toes or breaking into dance upon hearing the drums. The instruments themselves remain static the entire time, while the musicians change places with every song, their hands flying over the taut leather drumheads as they tap out vibrant beats.

The shifting of positions has been vital to the continued success of Drumming on the Beach, which Mr. Bausman started 30 years ago when he decided there was no reason to practice his craft indoors in the summertime. He and his friends started to play on Menemsha Beach in the 1980s; however, the combination of radiant sunsets and drum rhythms proved to be a bit too much of a good thing — one concert in particular saw 850 parking tickets handed out to beachgoers. Following the ticketing overload, the drum party was moved to Lucy Vincent Beach,

where parking again backed up a mile in each direction along South Road.

No such problems exist at State Beach. Indeed, the long, flat band of rock-free shore is accessible to all, as evidenced by the bright red Camp Jabberwocky bus parked along the dunes.

"It's the highlight of the week," said camp director Jack Knower. "[Campers] like to dance and they like to swim."

Jabberwocky and Drumming on the Beach are inextricably linked — it was because of his time as a counselor at the camp that Mr. Bausman decided to move to the Island, and he continues to share his drumming knowledge (and his superb kitchen skills) with the campers to this day. His areas of instruction with the Drum Workshop include programs for those with Parkinson's disease and those affected by autism; he has most recently taken his expertise overseas to teach drum workshops with Israeli and Palestinian children.

"Drumming is immediately accessible to any group of people," Mr. Bausman said in a pre-performance interview. "There's real transformation that occurs."

"The idea," he continued, "is to show... common humanity."

Mr. Bausman's words play out in the drum circle as if scripted by Hollywood. While the sun slowly sinks overhead — concerts end when the fireball touches the horizon — a lucky few from the 200-strong crowd join the musicians, including two-and-a-half year old Maisy Tommei and her father, Albert, both of whom are visiting from California, and Jabberwocky campers, one of whom takes up a tambourine while another sits with the main group of drummers. Those who do not play continue to dance.



ANTHONY ESPOSITO AND LUKA JELISAVCIC DUEL ON DRUMS.

When the sun is gone, beach chairs are folded, towels put away and wheelchairs pushed back up the boardwalk. The drums are stored in their cases and loaded vans and station wagons.

But they will be back without fail this Tuesday. After all, said Mr. Bausman, "It's a Vineyard tradition at this point."

On Saturday, a 5K run for Camp Jabberwocky will be held in Edgartown. The run begins at Katama Farm; registration is \$25 for runners and walkers, and \$12 for the Frabjous Fun Run and Wheel race. The run begins at 9 a.m.; walkers begin at 8:30 a.m. The half-mile Frabjous fun run begins at 10:30. Runners may register before the race at active.com or at Camp Jabberwocky on Greenwood Avenue in Vineyard Haven. Registration the day of the race will take place at the Farm Institute from 7:15 to 8:30 a.m.



RICK BAUSMAN AND SON HUDSON ARE IN SYNC.



DRUMMING ON THE BEACH DRAWS HAPPY CROWD WHO SWAY, SWIM AND SNACK.


Pictures by Ivy Ashe



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The Rev. James B. Bergquist is the Assoc. Minister of the Wallisley Hills Congregational Church (UCC) in Wallisley Hills, MA. He received degrees from North Park College and North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL. Following graduation he served as Minister to Youth and Families at churches in Worcester, MA, Winnetka, IL, and Seattle, WA. His sermon topic will be "One by one by one..."

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