



TABBY TATTLE

Dataaw Historic Foundation Newsletter

www.DataawHistory.org

Winter 2014



From the President . . . JOHN COLGAN

As we welcome in the New Year, I want to recap for you the major 2013 DHF accomplishments.

We “kicked off” the year with our successful membership/fund-raising drive led by Susan Converse and Paula Campbell. This culminated in March at our sold-out Oyster Roast by the Cannery.

Dawn Schuster and Diane Roney orchestrated that event. Good food, old and new friends and great fun! Even the weather cooperated!

As we moved into summer, Bob Welborn, heading DHF’s archaeological committee and Colin Brooker, DHF’s consulting archaeologist, discovered that the Blade House walls were beginning to bow dangerously due to excavation efforts performed 30 years ago by Alcoa-hired archaeologists. Dirt removed from the interior of the Blade House during their investigations back then had not been replaced. This omission led to a weakening of the foundation supporting the walls. We are happy to report that the problem has been addressed and new fill dirt has been added to shore up the foundations and arrest the problem.

Quietly working behind the scenes, Ken Hirsch, Jane Griffiths, Marilyn Peck, Joel Holden and John Colgan compiled and documented 12,000 years of Dataaw History, creating a manuscript, with pictures and illustrations, entitled “*No Ordinary Place.*” We are currently in the process of finding a publisher to print this book so that we can make it available to the Island by the Spring of 2014.

I am pleased to report to you that good progress has been made on our long sought goal to establish a permanent home for Dataaw’s many historic documents, maps and artifacts. The Dataaw Island History & Learning Center will be located in the historic site near the Sams Plantation Tabby Complex. Thanks to Bill Fox, we now have preliminary elevation and floor plan drawings. The proposed site has been approved by DIOA and the necessary archaeological “shovel tests” have cleared the site for construction. Also, conditional approval has been obtained from Beaufort County Historical Preservation committee. We are now in cooperative talks with DIOA on a number of pre-construction issues. Assuming DIOA membership approves our use of this space, we hope to begin construction in 2015. Once completed, residents, guests and visitors will be able to learn about Dataaw’s rich historic past from volunteer docents who will then take them on guided tours of the Sams Plantation. Would you be interested in docent training? Please call Joan Berra at 838-9935.

Many members, (too many to list here) have contributed money, skills and precious time to this effort over the years. We are very grateful to all of them. This Center will stand as mute testimony to their generosity.

In October, 100 members attended the Low Country Boil, held at the Gazebo. The “Boil” is our “thank you” party every year held for our members.

We closed out 2013 with “*Luminaries and Caroling at the Ruins*” on Monday, December 9th. The Sams Plantation house was lit up with luminaries and the setting looked magical. The DHF Board is now looking forward to an active 2014.

Happy New Year to everyone!



*** SAVE THE DATE!**
DHF's 15th Annual
Oyster Roast
 Monday,
 March 24, 2014



Visit our website!
“A place to appreciate our past”
DataawHistory.org

The 2014 DHF Membership Drive is underway. In your Tabby Tattler packet you will find a membership letter. Please renew your support.
 It is because of YOU that we are able to preserve and share our rich Dataaw History.
DHF is seeking support from all of our residents in 2014!
Membership Questions?
 Call Membership Co-Chairs
 Susan Converse (838-5581) or
 Dawn Schuster (838-2460).

Inside this newsletter
 Luminaries in the Ruins (page 2)
 Explore 'DataawHistory.org' (pages 3-4)
 Did You Know? (page 4)
 A Tribute to Reeve Sams (page 4)
 Ruins Tours Continue to be Popular (page 5)
 Plantation Home Sign Replaced (page 6)
 Preservation Work Completed (page 6)
 DHF Activities on Camp Dataaw (page 7)
 DHF Lowcountry Boil (page 7)
 DHF Board Notes (page 8)

DHF 2014

**Officers, Board Committee
Chairmen and Directors**

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 Tabby Tattler, Layout/Design: Cindy Schafer
 Ruins Preservation Chair: Bob Welborn

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 Volunteers: Joan Berra
 Public Relations/Grounds: Perry Gesell

Other

Technical Consultant: Larry Rowland
 DIOA Representative: John Cashen

If you are interested in working with the Dataw Historic Foundation contact any of the DHF Board members.

Luminaries and Carolers in the Ruins “Magical”

One participant referred to the December 9 Dataw Garden Club Luminary Night segment held in the ruins as an “incredibly beautiful setting (eerie in the misty fog from an earlier rain).”

DHF Grounds Chair, Peter Pearks, coordinated the set up and dismantling with the help of ten volunteers. The group set up 125 luminaries, provided by the Garden Club, on the top of the ruins, in the window openings, in the kitchen fireplace, inside the Dairy and along the Heritage Walk path. People started showing up around 5:30 and by 6:00 a large crowd had gathered to sing Christmas Carols.

Our thanks to Jim Williams for taking the pictures on this page. His beautiful pictures reflect the beauty of the night!



Photo by Jim Williams



Photo by Jim Williams

TABBY TATTLER

Winter 2014

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Explore ‘DatawHistory.org’ — Learn the History of Dataw Island . . . ANN CRAIGMILE

DatawHistory.org constructed by the DHF, is a comprehensive compilation of historical facts, pictures, archived artifacts and stories of Dataw’s unique history. Every resident should spend time exploring this professionally designed site. It is easy to access and simple to browse.



Starting with the Home Page you will see an interesting pictorial introduction showing prehistoric artifacts found on the Island. Then there is the *Chronology of Ownership* beginning with Caleb Westbrook in 1682 through the purchase of Dataw Island by ALCOA in 1983. There are over 40 recorded land transactions spanning this period. William Sams purchased the Island in 1783, and it remained in the Sams family until it was confiscated by the U.S. government for nonpayment of taxes in 1863.

In the *About Us* tab you will find membership information, events, projects and recent issues of the *Tabby Tattler*. The *Dataw History* tab features the *History Wall* along with its *Dataw Timeline* displayed at the Welcome Center. The *Did You Know?* heading recaps the series of interesting facts that you have seen periodically on the Internet.

Video Tour not to be missed . . .

A must see is the *Video Tour of the Ruins* compiled and narrated by DHF 2012 President, Joel Holden. It highlights preservation achievements since 1983. Most interesting is his comparison site pictures from how the ruins looked in 1983 and as they appeared in 2010. To date, over \$150,000 has been spent on preservation of our historic sites. Much of it can be seen in Joel’s pictures.

Collections tab

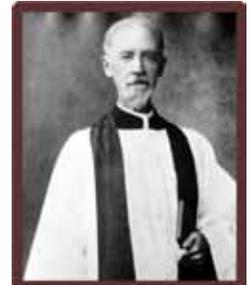
Finally, not to be missed is the *Collections* tab, which includes three incredible menu choices:

- 1) *Historic Artifacts* contains photos of artifacts collected on the Island listed by category. Each artifact photo includes a description, and, if known, includes size, material, location found and viewing location for those on display.
- 2) *Historic Document Archives* reveals a comprehensive collection of archived documents grouped according to subject matter:
 - a. Archeological & Architectural Consultant Studies
 - b. Cemeteries
 - c. Dataw Island History
 - d. Kate Gleason
 - e. Tabby Construction
 - f. The Sams Family
 - g. Trees and Wildlife
- 3) *Photo Archives* gives pictures of our ruins, starting with photos of the ruins taken in the 1900s up to photos taken in recent times of the restored ruins.

Because there are always new projects, events and activities going on, the website is a continual work in progress. Once you access the site, it is difficult to leave it.

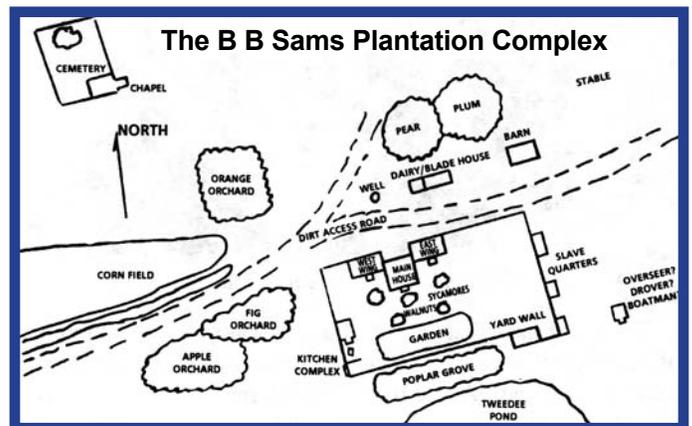
If you “browse” the Dataw Island History section of the Historic Document Archives, you will find a 24–page copy of a document titled “*Datha*” by the Reverend James Julius Sams, D. D. (1826–1918). This journal contains anecdotes and stories about growing up on “Datha.” James Julius was one of the sons of Dr. Berners Barnwell Sams. His story begins, *It was a lovely island, probably more than any of the many scattered along the coast.*

Rev. Julius speaks of his mother and father, his siblings, the house and its surroundings. He tells of mischievous pranks — *Like all children, we were mischievous, often disobedient, but not from any evil disposition.* It is interesting to read about the many orchards on the island — pear, plum (*which was a great place for setting traps and catching red birds*), oranges (*said to be the first orange grove planted for commercial purposes*), figs, and apples. Rev. Julius speaks of cows, hogs, and sheep and about many of the family dogs. There are descriptions of farmed fields, woods, ponds and abundant wildlife. Hunting and trapping stories dominate several pages — squirrels, partridge, marsh hens, mink (the mink was not a favorite on “Datha” because he was so wasteful of fowl life), and especially wild ducks. Oyster picking was one of his great pleasures. An amusement second to none was camping.



Rev. James Julius (one of the sons of Dr. Berners Barnwell Sams) wrote a journal about his childhood on Datha. Find the journal on the DHF website.

The extreme west room was my father’s chamber; the next room in the west wing was a parlor. The first room in the middle house was the girls’ room. It was the scene of all the Christmas preparation and completion. Its very atmosphere seemed to savor of jelly, mince pie, cheese, cakes and syllabub (a perished pastry?). The second room in the middle house was known as the big bedroom. After you left the middle



(Dataw website continued on next page)

Exploring the Dataw website (continued from page 3)

house, you came to the east wing. The first room was called the drawing room. Both in regard to painting and paneling, it was more finished than any room in the house. It was sometimes used as a bedroom and sometimes as a school room.

As children we were required to attend family worship, school and church, and ask no questions. Father provided religious instruction for his servants. While he extracted of us obedience, there never was a Father who did more to make home pleasant to his children. With all of us, home was the spot most dear on earth. Christmas was the merriest and saddest time. The merriest, because we were all together. The saddest, because the time was coming for us to part again.

The last page of the journal is moist poignant: *So many years have come and gone and so many changes have taken place, that I cannot recall all the events and incidents of the past nor have I even jotted down those I have recalled in the order in which they happened. In writing the little I have, my object was to set before you some of the events and incidents of the "Datha" life. "Datha" was to us a kind of terrestrial paradise. With the help of sword and canon and foreign soldiery, the Yankee people have wrested it from us. They have impoverished a rich, rendered unhappy a happy family, scattered a united family and deprived you of your inheritance, small as it was. You must forgive them, and I forgive them.*

Make exploring the website **DatawHistory.org** one of your 2014 New Years' resolutions!



Did You Know?

The DHF hopes the “*Did You Know?*” articles sent via e-mail and posted on the Dataw web site are informative, easy to read and entertaining. They are derived from the extensive historical archives maintained by the Dataw Historic Foundation. We want to reveal nuances about our Island and give you a few “ah-ha” moments.

We want to write about whatever is important to you. Is there something you are curious about? Something you would like to know more about? Just let our DIY editor know, and he will research the topic and try to fill your request. Contact Perry Gesell at 838-2995 or e-mail at perrygesell@gmail.com. Our goal is to write something that is both engaging and educational. We plan to publish a “*Did You Know?*” article every two months, more frequently if particular areas of interest peak our residents’ curiosity.



DHF note cards — a new printing of a previous DHF notecard. These beautiful cards (see above) make wonderful gifts . . . both for you and a friend!

There are 10 notecards in each pack and the cost is \$10 per pack. They can be purchased at the Golf Pro Shop or at the alcove desk in the Fitness Center.

You will be supporting the Dataw Historic Foundation . . . and have a beautiful card to write your notes on!

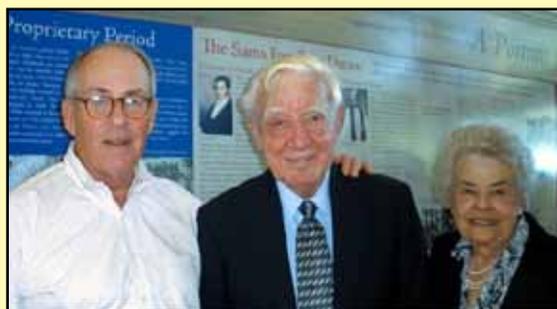
A Tribute to Reeve Sams

A descendent of the Sams family who once owned Dataw Island, **T. Reeve Sams** passed away July 3, 2013, at age 88 in the Beaufort home in which he was born. Reeve and Betty Sams were enthusiastic supporters of DHF and attended many oyster roasts and special events connected with the preservation of the plantation ruins and the history display at the Dataw Visitors Center.

Reeve practiced law in Beaufort for over 50 years, retiring in 2010. He was a trustee of the Old Beaufort College and president of the Beaufort Museum for many years. He was a member of the Beaufort County Historical Society, Historic Beaufort Foundation and the Beaufort County Open Land Trust. In 2002 he received the Howard Danner Lifetime Achievement award from HBF. He was also a member of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Reeve is survived by his wife of 63 years, Betty, his sisters Jeanne Sams Aimar and Therese (Ting) Sams Colquhoun. Other survivors include two sons, a daughter, nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

A funeral Mass was held July 8, 2013, at St. Peter’s Catholic Church with the burial at historic St. Peter’s Church on Carteret Street.



Past DHF President Jack Brown with Reeve and Betty Sams in December 2010.

Ruins Tours Continue to be Popular

Sams Family Group, September 30, 2013

Joel Holden conducted a tour for three generations of the Bruce Sams family. Members included Bruce Sams II and his wife King visiting from California, and his son Bruce Sams III and granddaughter visiting from Germany. It was a very pleasant tour and informative discussions of the Sams Family history.

Earlier in the year John Bonun Sams, Jr. from Mt. Pleasant, SC and his sister Julia Sams Holleman from Atlanta visited and were given a tour by Joel. Researching their ancestry shows that Bruce Sams II, John Bonun Sams, Jr., and Julia Sams Hollerman are all Great-great-great grand children of William Sams. That makes them fourth cousins.

Men's Member Guest, Ladies Group, October 4, 2013

Joel Holden provided a tour for a small group of wives of Men's Member Guest golfers as part of scheduled activities during this popular golf event.

OLLI Class, October 21, 2013

Joel Holden conducted a history presentation in the Cannery and a tour of the ruins for 35 students as part of the OLLI program at USCB. The class had a wait list of 52 people, so OLLI has requested us to present two sessions of the Dataw History and Tour of the Ruins classes in the 2014 Spring semester. The class evaluations reflected a keen interest in our history with all positive comments.



Members of the OLLI program at USCB at their tour in October.

Daufuskie Island Group, November 14, 2013

Jack Brown arranged for this group of 15 from Daufuskie Island to tour the ruins in response from a request from Colin Brooker and Ian Hill. The group included the general manager of Haig Point and members of the Daufuskie Preservation Group. The goal of the tour was to showcase our tabby structures and discuss the work necessary to protect and preserve tabby. Daufuskie has several tabby slave cabins which are in fragile condition.

Historic Beaufort Foundation Docent Group, December 13, 2013

Dataw was selected by the Historic Beaufort Foundation as the place to thank their 2013 volunteer docents. The group had lunch in the Pub and then enjoyed a Dataw History presentation and tour of the ruins. Joel Holden, Jack Brown and John Colgan hosted the group.

Senior Leadership program January 8, 2014

Forty participants in the 2014 Senior Leadership program toured the ruins and then enjoyed a reception in the Canery.

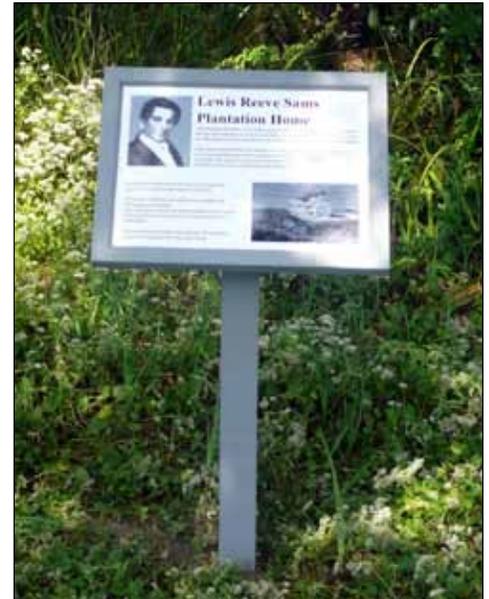
The Beaufort Museum has also scheduled a tour in January.



Historic Beaufort Foundation Docent Group at their December tour of the Dataw ruins

Reeve Sams Plantation Home Sign Replaced

A new sign showing the tabby fireplace and foundation remnants of the Lewis Reeve Sams plantation home along the Morgan River has been installed beside the tee boxes of #14 Morgan River golf hole. Grounds Chair *Peter Pearks* built the frame and erected the sign, which is in a more visible location for golfers or those traveling the cart path. The actual ruins are located beside the Morgan River, closer to the Morgan River #14 green.



(Photo above) The finished project, ready to be viewed by Dataw residents and their guests!

(Photo left) Peter Pearks installing the new sign he built.

Blade House Preservation Work Completed

Last summer Ruins Preservation Chair, Bob Welborn, along with consultant Colin Brooker, discovered that the Blade house walls were beginning to bow because of excavation efforts performed by Alcoa 30 years ago. Floor dirt which had been removed for excavation had not been replaced. Three truckloads of ground fill were hauled in to refill the excavated floor in order to prevent further cracking and movement of the walls.



Colin Brooker along with contractor Richard Ratcliffe inspect the newly stabilized walls.

Colin, helps Thomas and Shaun, and Richard after the work was completed.



**THANK YOU
VERY MUCH**

It is through your membership in the DHF that the Foundation is able to document and communicate the Island's history as well as preserve the Sams Plantation ruins for future generations to appreciate. Work has begun on the 2014 Membership Drive. Your membership materials are included in this newsletter packet.

We hope you all become a DHF member in 2014!



Looking for fun and adventure? Then the Dataw Historic Foundation is for YOU!

Volunteer for the **Docent Training Program**. Learn more about the history of our beautiful island . . . enjoy spending time with your Dataw neighbors and guests as you tell them about our wonderful Dataw history.

For more information about DHF Docent Training, call Joan Berra at 838-9935.

DHF Activities for CAMP DATAW Were Fun for Participants and Helpers

On July 9, 2013, DHF held two sessions for 45 participants ages 6–12. Activities included an archeological dig, a tour of the ruins and the cemetery, and a session where they learned and sang Civil War and spiritual songs.

Marilyn Peck coordinated the event. Cissy Nichols led the singing session, Lynn Maher made her alligator cookies (which are always a hit), and Peter Pearks organized the dig with the help of Diane and Joe Roney. Marilyn thanks all of the volunteers; this event would not be possible without each of them.

Photos courtesy of VAC.



DHF Members Enjoyed the Lowcountry Boil

On October 21, 2013, over 100 of DHF’s best supporters enjoyed the second Lowcountry Boil at the Gazebo. The weather cooperated, the food was excellent, the beverages were plentiful, the setting was grand, and the music by *Sometimes Later* (with Dick Nalwasky) was a special bonus.

Co-chairs Dawn Schuster and Diane Roney outdid themselves in making sure every aspect of the evening was successful. They were grateful to the lady bartenders team, Kathy, Stanton, Susan Converse, Paula Campbell, Diane Roney, and Arleen Cassutti, and to all who helped with setup, serving, and cleanup. They also thank Marilyn Peck for providing name tags and managing the welcome table.

Many compliments were received about the food, which was provided by Reeves Outdoor Catering. Lisa and her crew did an outstanding job. Plans are now underway for the DHF Oyster Roast to be held on Monday, March 24, 2014.



(Photo above) Co-Chairs Dawn Schuster and Diane Roney

(Photos right) Getting ready for the Lowcountry Boil!

(Photo below) Dick Nalwasky and his band, *Sometimes Later*



DHF Board Notes

Membership

The 2014 Membership Campaign has begun; your 2014 Membership Drive packet is included in this newsletter packet. Membership Co-chairs Susan Converse and Dawn Schuster submitted the final 2013 membership figures:

340 total members:

- 11 Benefactors
- 50 Patrons
- 95 Sustainers
- 184 Members

DHF needs support from all Dataw residents and non-resident Club members. Please note all the DHF 2013 accomplishments and 2014 goals included in your membership letter and renew your membership or join for the first time so all future DHF goals can be achieved.

Fund-raising

Co-Chairs Diane Roney and Susan Jorgensen are busy planning for the **Monday, March 24, 2014**, Oyster Roast and Raffle. Anyone interested in assisting with the event, please contact one of them.

Public Relations

Chair Marilyn Peck is heading up the effort to finish the final chapter of *No Ordinary Place — The Rich History of Dataw Island* this spring. The first published history of Dataw Island will be ready for sale by this summer. Marilyn also is coordinating the January, 2014, removal of all DHF artifacts and displays in the Tabby Room area as part of the renovation project. She is planning a Fireside Chat later in the spring and coordinating articles which will appear on the Dataw Net and in *Dateline*, the Club newsletter.

Grounds

Chair Peter Pearks has embarked upon a project to replace the framing on some of the interpretive signs at the various historic sites on the Island. In the process, he will be correcting some of the text as well. Three new signs have been installed. The first is on Morgan River #14. This is a renewal of the old sign about the LR Sams House Ruins. The second sign is at the BB Sams Ruins beside the well. The third sign is behind the green of cotton Dike #9, referencing the ruins of the overseer's house there. (See article on page 6 for more on the MR sign.)

The Grounds chair and the DHF Board would like to extend special thanks to two volunteers who actively support the DHF mission by helping with the grounds maintenance year round. *Terry Lurtz* diligently picks up broken tree limbs and storm debris almost daily as he walks through the ruins from the cannery parking lot to the tennis courts. *Jack Borcharding*, who lives next to the Cotton Dike cemetery, regularly checks the area for fallen debris and fence damage. Both men keep Christi Henry and her landscaping crew up

to date on the maintenance needs in these areas. Christi, in turn, does her usual wonderful job of responding to their requests for debris removal or needed maintenance.

Preservation

Chair Bob Welborn will open an investigation into a structure found behind the Kitchen fireplace. Colin Brooker, our archaeological expert, speculates that it might be the remains of a Pre-Revolutionary indigo vat.

Long-range Planning

John Colgan, Jack Brown, Joel Holden and the committee have worked hard to develop plans that would enable the Dataw Historic Foundation to build a Dataw Island History and Learning Center (DIH&LC) on a site near the Sams Plantation ruins. They have had several meetings with a DIOA subcommittee and significant progress on many details has occurred on the proposal. The DHF would lease the building site from the DIOA, and the building would be funded by the DHF. Before the DIOA can lease Association property, there must be a vote of the DIOA membership. This vote is scheduled to take place at the DIOA annual meeting in February. A letter explaining what DHF intends to build on the leased space will be included in the voting packet which will be sent out by Dataw management. If the proposal is passed by the DIOA members, DHF will be signing a long-term lease with DIOA as the first step in the building process.

Other News

Ron Jacobs has stepped into the Treasurer's role for this year, succeeding Ken Hirsch who will remain as Assistant Treasurer. Ron's job will be to coordinate the financial planning that will lead up to the building of the Dataw Island History & Learning Center. The DIH&LC will be the first permanent home for Dataw's artifacts and archives and will be the focal point for all future tours of the Sams Plantation Tabby Complex.

Sadly, Cece Megrue has retired from her duties as Corresponding Secretary after 10 wonderful years of dedicated service to DHF. Joe Roney will be filling her shoes.

DHF membership information is included in the packet you got with this newsletter. We welcome support from all of our Island residents. So please read the information in the membership letter and complete and return the form to Susan Converse's mail box at 488 B. B. Sams Drive. Our history makes us unique among residential communities and our efforts to preserve and display that history are fun, educational and important to our future.



Membership Questions?

Call or e-mail Membership Co-Chairs
Susan Converse (838-5581, susan_converse@yahoo.com) or
Dawn Schuster (838-2460, weschuster@embarqmail.com).