

# Shabica & Associates, Inc.

## Beach Design & Shore Protection



Photo by HNK Architectural Photography, Inc.

### Creating More Than Just Shore Protection



A spotter works with the machine operator to ensure proper stone fit (above).

Stairs through the revetment provide safe access to the water with vertical stone hand rails (left).

Quarrystone revetments are more than utilitarian structures that protect your property from Great Lake stormwaves. A revetment can provide safe access to the water, a spot for fishing, a place to build a bonfire, and even a patio flat enough for a table and chairs.

Working together with Edward E. Gillen Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, we have perfected the art of 'flat top' stone placement. This technique of special placement locks stones together, thus maximizing structural stability.

This progress hasn't come overnight. It all started with a field trip to Martha's Vineyard more than ten years ago with a Gillen project superintendent, engineer and backhoe operator interested in seeing how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers places stone on the east coast.

This technique allows even a small child to safely navigate stone stairs through the revetment and across a patio. This allows the revetment to be more functional and safer than traditional 'throw and go' revetments that were built over the last 100 years. We've come a long way with stone placement, and we're excited to see the development continue in years to come.

Special placement allows for the addition of stairs and walking paths that provide access along the site (below).



### *In This Issue:*

- Ravine & Bluff Inspections
- 2007 Year at a Glance
- Getting There is Half the Fun
- American Beach Grass

# Ravine & Bluff Site Inspections

## *What To Look For This Spring*

Now that the snow has changed the landscape, don't forget that bluffs and ravines will need special attention this coming spring. While providing a beautiful landscape and privacy, bluffs and ravines can also become unstable when drainage issues are not addressed properly. Here are a few things to look for:

- Cracks in the yard or tableland
- Leaking sprinkler systems
- Overflowing, clogged or non-functional drains
- Excessive piles of landscaping debris
- Failing, tipping or outdated retaining walls
- Loss of streambed armor (stones) or high scarps adjacent to the base of the ravine

**Please call us at (847) 446-1436 if you have any immediate concerns or if you would like to schedule a site inspection.**



## 2007 — YEAR AT A GLANCE

This was a great year of new projects, challenges and growth as Shabica & Associates continues to work in the Great Lakes and beyond.

We are continuing work on a marina for a private 600-acre 'eco-velopment' in Belize. The Belizean government approved our Environmental Impact Assessment Report in 2006, and we've been monitoring environmental conditions as the project progresses.

In April, we succeeded in obtaining a revetment permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality for a homeowners association in South Haven. This permit is a major step toward improving the Michigan shoreline. Michigan current permitting regulations are based around building setbacks based on the premise that erosion is unmanageable. Historically, the



Winnetka bluff restoration project... more to come.

State asserts that riparian land is not valuable and that owners are responsible for moving their homes back from eroding bluffs rather than protecting the property.

A recent bluff restoration project in Winnetka exceeded all expectations, from the homeowner to the backhoe operator. The landscape architect's vision for the site, the general contractor's expertise and attention to detail, new construction techniques, and our design for the shoreline all helped to create an exquisite bluff environment. More information will follow as the landscaping matures and the project is completed this spring.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources still has a moratorium on lakefront projects in place. In an October, 2007 letter to Senator Dick Durbin, Gary R. Clark, Director of the Office of Water Resources stated that he is "hopeful that the Department will be able to complete its review and announce a decision in advance of the next construction season." The IDNR moratorium has been in place since July 29th of 2005.

These are just a few highlights from 2007. From all of us at Shabica & Associates, Happy Holidays!

Jon Shabica



# Getting there is half the fun!

Your hillside property has potential for great views. Take advantage of the scenery by eliminating the effort of climbing up and down stairs! A tram combines convenience with safety, comfort and style, and can be built in conjunction with landings or decks to enhance access to the bluff, beach or ravine.

Consider this: stairs can be dangerous in wet or icy weather and require maintenance in keeping them clear of snow, ice and leaves. And stairs don't provide access for a family member with limited mobility. A tram is an excellent alternative to stairs. It can cost less to install (depending on the height of the

bluff) and may be easier to permit than a stair system as it requires fewer retaining walls and creates less disturbance to the bluff.

Additionally, a tram makes the job of transporting beach furniture, coolers and sports equipment a lot easier and safer!

**“Enjoy the view from the top, the beauty below, and everything in-between.”**

- Hillside Cars



A tram provides a safer option than descending stairs and can be installed to minimize the visual impact from the house

## Stabilization & Habitat Benefits of American Beach Grass



A beach is one of the best defenses against damaging stormwaves. However, sand from beaches is often lost over time due to wind and wave erosion. Along with sand replenishment, planting native beach grass can help to stabilize a beach as it controls the constant shifting of sand. American Beach Grass is an important dune stabilizer as its vertical root system can extend over 20' beneath the sand, thus serving to knit a dune together. It is an Illinois endangered species.

For more information, check out <http://plants.usda.gov> and search for American Beach Grass (AMBR).

Shabica & Associates, Inc.  
550 Frontage Road, Suite 3735  
Northfield, IL 60093



“Don’t grow up  
too quickly,  
lest you forget  
how much you  
love the beach.”

- Michelle Held



*Inside:*

- Ravine & Bluff Inspections
- 2007 Year at a Glance
- Getting There is Half the Fun
- American Beach Grass