

Loon & Turtle Lake News!

Spring Edition

Volume 19, Issue 2

May 2002



Chairman's Report

Thank you to all those who took the time to complete and return their membership form. Many of you have provided valuable input for our association. After reviewing your comments, some common issues concerning our lakes continue to arise. These include: the quality of the water and environment, the condition of the roads and the speed that people drive on them, and the use and speed of personal watercraft. If we all make an effort to work together on these issues, we can make a difference.

Work already has begun on the environment and water quality. We ask for your co-operation with septic testing, by the town of Gravenhurst when they enter your property and do their necessary testing. We will be doing more water quality testing and publishing the results in upcoming newsletters. The cost to the cottage association will depend upon the condition of the water and the number of required tests. Your annual membership fee may increase slightly as a result of this necessary testing. We will make suggestions on certain products that can reduce water pollution. There are a few products such as fertilizers or caterpillar sprays that should not be used. We will try to provide you with as much information as possible. Information is also available on the Internet. If you have an e-mail address please let us know so that we can forward interesting and valuable information to you.

The conditions of the roads are deteriorating quickly on both sides of the lakes. We are working to get a commitment from the town of Gravenhurst as to when we can expect some action to correct the problems. We would also like posted speed limit signs along our roads and yellow dividing lines to assist with correct driving lanes. The speed of the vehicles certainly appears to be increasing. There are more children/adults than ever walking, jogging, and/or bicycling on our roads. For everyone's safety, we need to slow down.

Increased use of personal watercraft has become a growing concern of many lakes. The pollution they put into the lakes is incredible compared to the newer outboards and inboards of today. The speed, at which drivers travel keeps increasing and they can take over a lake very quickly, especially small lakes like ours. The drivers have been observed to be quite young and inexperienced. Frequently, my neighbours and I have stopped boating with our children because personal watercraft users are following too closely or operating their watercraft with little regard to safety. This is an increasing concern to many of our cottage owners. We hope responsible personal watercraft owners will set an example for others.

As your cottage association, we also asked for input on the mandate of the members. The advice we received was to provide opportunities for members to share increased information. We will strive to do this.

This issue of the newsletter is being delivered by volunteers during the May 18th weekend. We look forward to seeing you. I hope you and your families have another wonderful summer season. I hope to

see you at the annual meeting on July 20th at the Gravenhurst Scout Hall, and at the many functions that have been planned throughout the summer season. If you have further concerns or comments, please feel free to contact me or any other member of the association.

Dick Thomas - President

For any questions or concerns about the Cottage Association, or its Board of Directors, please call either:

Dick Thomas

Home 905-279-3867
Cottage 705-687-0787

or

Sandy Webb

Home 905-727-3309
Cottage 705-687-3020

or send an email to loonturtle@rogers.com

2002 MEMBERSHIP DUES

Thanks to the many cottagers who promptly returned their \$20.00 membership dues for the Year 2002. So far we have received 160 paid memberships and more arrive each day in the mail. Your financial support is necessary to help us serve our members.

If you have forgotten to send in your 2002 membership, please help make this task easier by responding immediately to this request. Payment of \$20.00 can be mailed to me at:

4200 Preston Trail
Mississauga, Ontario
L4W 4R6

Thanks for your anticipated prompt response!

Dianne Dunn
Membership Director

Cottage Association Website Launch – www.loonturtle.ca

The Loon and Turtle Cottage Association has established a website for the membership. The site, built and hosted by members and their family, will be live on **June 1, 2002**.

The main intent of the website is to provide an 'always on' home whereby cottagers can review information compiled, and provide input on issues, concerns, or to pass on thanks.

Initially, the site provides useful services like:

- The summer calendar of events
- Board member contact info
- A Buy and Sell posting board
- Links to other relevant websites (local government, tourism, etc)
- Interactive Mapping

The Interactive mapping was recently added and allows members to visualize our lakes in context to their surroundings and to find out who our neighbours are.

The content is fully expected to evolve to a highly robust site with:

- Future Newsletter content
- Environmental reporting
- Unsolicited article submissions from members
- Discussion forums

We encourage everyone to stop by www.loonturtle.ca to provide suggestions on enhancements, or to offer to provide content. Having useful, informative and current content is the key to a successful website, and we expect to make this happen.

Thanks to Dianne Dunn, Michael Dunn and Duncan Rowe for spearheading this initiative.

COMMUNITY LIAISON NEWS

**The Gravenhurst Public Library –
Welcomes you back to Cottage Country!**

What better way to relax at the cottage than with a good book – and we've over 30,000 of them.

If you haven't visited our recently built, sunny, roomy, air-conditioned, library at 180 Sharpe Street W (behind the Opera House) please do so. We are open at 10 am every day and on Sundays 1 – 4 PM (call 705-687-3382 for closing times). There are 4 public Internet computers that will allow you to pick up e-mail from your home computer and keep you in touch with family and friends. When you and the children want an outing, try our on-going summer programs posted at the desk in the Library. Or check for these and other news on the Town Web site at www.gravenhurst.net then click on the link to the Library.

In addition to many newly purchased books, you will find old favorites in hard cover and paperback, children's picture books and a toy lending library, talking books, a new music CD collection, videos, magazines and newspapers. If you can't find the book you want, we'll ask for it through our Interlibrary Loan program. Good news, as you leave the cottage for the long drive home, you can drop your books off at the after hours drop box, located to the right of the main door to the Library. Come in, sign up for your membership/library card (no charge), say hello to all our friendly staff, and get set for that afternoon in the hammock.

Barb McCabe 705-684-8333
marbar@muskoka.com

Let's PREVENT a problem with CANADA GEESE!!!!!!

To all cottagers of Loon and Turtle Lakes:

I have noticed, as no doubt most of you have that we have a new gaggle of Giant Canada Geese on our lakes. As cottagers, I think we all have an above-average interest in our lake environment and the wildlife we share it with. What comes to my mind are the problems that have been occurring in cities related to geese particularly. As a practicing veterinarian, my outlook is toward prevention, not that I have any professional expertise with respect to wildlife. I have spoken to Jan McDonnell of the Bracebridge office of the MNR to see if indeed my concerns were of merit and indeed she agrees that we have the potential for considerable problems very soon if we do not

invoke some preventive measures. Indeed the MNR is aware of a significant problem in Bala and a significant emerging problem in the Bracebridge area.

My suggestion is that the GEESE SHOULD NEVER BE FED! This is important in that it ensures that they remain dependent upon habitat not artificial stimuli and pressures on their natural cycle. Feeding increases their dependency upon people, and they quickly become tamer. Losing their natural fear they often become bold and aggressive. They expect to be fed and can manifest negative behaviour when that expectation is not fulfilled.

Improving access to food by feeding also has a direct effect on improving their reproducibility, which of course will only serve to magnify all the issues created by their presence. By feeding the geese, we actually improve and enhance their numbers year by year. Lawns provide an excellent and desirable food supply for the geese, which is of grave concern for those cottages that cultivate lawns, since those cottages will become a favourite feeding place along with the resultant droppings. Ultimately this is a significant issue in that goose droppings are distasteful (green and gooey) and will soil lawns and docks of the affected properties. Further to that issue, it results in excess nitrification of our lake from run off which is a LAKE HEALTH issue in that it affects other forms of water life as well as cottagers' enjoyment of swimming and water activities, due to the resultant alteration in the ecosystem.

Normally these geese eat grass, bugs, water bugs, small fish etc, but they are effective and enthusiastic scroungers. A diet of bread displaces their normal diet and in fact is not even good for them. Feeding encourages congregation and when waterfowl are concentrated in an area, they are more prone to natural diseases such as aspergillosis and botulism etc.

Yet another concern is that by encouraging the geese to be tamer, we are in fact increasing their peril during hunting season, as they are an easy target. This would be a bitter irony since people initiate feeding wildlife out of kindness. My point is that this is a misplaced kindness when in fact not feeding them allows a more natural evolution of events. With our interference in feeding them or indirectly feeding them by

cultivation of our lawns, we increase the likelihood that in the next few years, we will have an issue of how to get rid of excessive numbers of geese, a much more serious humane issue. It is my suggestion that it is more sensible and humane to simply prevent the problem from getting started. Of course, this will require the cooperation of all cottagers.

Yours truly,

Fiona Cameron-Forth BSc DVM
A concerned Loon Lake cottager.

CALENDER OF EVENTS FOR **2002**

ROAD CLEAN-UP Saturday June 8th

Meet at 10:00 a.m.

North Side of Loon Lake – meet at intersection of Loon Lake and Redwing Drive
South side of Loon Lake and Turtle Lake – meet at entrance to Pinetree Road

FIREWORKS Saturday June 29th
Rain date Sunday June 30th

CHANNEL CLEAN UP Sat July 6th

ANNUAL MEETING Saturday July 20th
10:00 a.m. - at the Town Scout Hall

REGATTA Saturday August 10th
Registration 12:30 p.m.
Location – Langer's Cottage 61 Loon Lake Road

CORN ROAST Sat September 14th
Location – Thomas' cottage - **2:00 p.m.**
31 Loon Lake Road

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**Internet Resources to help you help
yourself- www.yourcottage.info!**

With spring here and summer soon upon us, **Dock Equipment** is the topic for our Internet references for this, the second installment of this column

Boat & Dock Marine Equipment Sales
(<http://www.boatndock.com/cgi-bin/store/home.html>)

Notwithstanding, many fine local hardware-lumber stores also carry dock equipment, including, but not limited to:

Home Hardware

Chamberlain's TIM-BR Mart

Follow-up to “ANOTHER SEASON OF CATERPILLARS AHHH!!”

Two important dates for you:

Saturday May 11 - I noticed the numerous tents of the infamous Forest Tent Caterpillar (FTC).

Tuesday May 21 - Zimmer Air Services Inc. hopes to be in the air, weather permitting, to spray the properties that have made arrangements.

Depending on the date you read this update, and the depending on when Zimmer takes to the air, you may be able to arrange your property to be sprayed. Or, if you want to control the infestation, I suggest calling local Pest Control firms to see if they can do land-based application of B.t.

Duncan Rowe

ON THE WATER

Another winter is behind us, spring is here, and the time to get the boats ready for the summer is once again here. Now is also the best time to check and make sure that all of your safety equipment is on board, and in good condition. Have the mice chewed holes in the life jackets? Does the bailing can have a crack in it? Does the battery in the floating flashlight still have power? Has the anchor been bouncing on the buoyant heaving line all last summer, and is now all frayed? Now's the time to replace the damaged items before the boat leaves the driveway or boathouse, gets put in the water and forgotten for the summer. But, if the O.P.P just happens to stop you (and they can be on our lakes, as small as they are, on any given day of

the week or weekend) and if the equipment is not on board and in good condition, they can fine you on the spot. Drinking and driving, or careless driving of a boat (or Personal watercraft) can also lead to the suspension of your drivers' license. Pulling a water skier or tuber without a spotter is also a fineable offence.

And remember a P.W.C has to be classed as a three seater to be able to tow anyone behind it. Please refer to the Safe Boating Guide for the proper list of equipment for your length of boat or P.W.C.

Once again this year the Gravenhurst Power and Sail Squadron has a long list of events for you and your children to take part in, whether it's just for fun, or to go for your Power Craft Operator Card.

Date Event-/Location

June 22 PCOC Challenge- New Ark Marina

July 9-10 Family PCOC Course & Exam-
Campbell's Landing Marina

July 13 Antique & Classic Boat Show-
Sagamo Park, Gravenhurst

July 20 PCPC Challenge-Muldrew Lk Church Site

Aug 6-10 Boatwise Course for Kid 8-15
All Out Marine, Muldrew Lk

Aug 10 PCOC Challenge -All Out Marine, MuldrewLk

Aug 10-11 PCOC Course & Exam - Denne's Marine

Aug 17-18 PCOC Course & Exam-Bala

Aug 24 PCOC Challenge-Muldrew Lake Church Site

For these events and others hosted by the Gravenhurst Power & Sail Squadron, please refer to the web site:

www.gravpowersquadron.homestead.com

There are also many other ways available to you, to get your Power Craft Operator Card. If you just can't find the time to go to one of the Courses or Challenges listed above, you can also study by Correspondence, on the Internet, by independent study, or by classroom. Please check the Canadian Power Squadron Learning web site: www.cps-ecp.org for this and other great information.

The Deadline to have your Power Craft Operator Card is as follows:

All operators born after April 1, 1983	September 15, 1999 – already required!
All operators of craft under 4 m in length, including personal watercraft	September 15, 2002
All operators	September 15, 2009

Have a Happy & Safe Boating Season
Peter Langer
Water Safety Director

News on the Proposed South Turtle Lake Road

At this time we have no additional information on the status of the road. Approval is required from Ministry of Natural Resources and the contact points we have from last year's annual meeting are:

Jan McDonnell jan.mcdonnell@mnr.gov.on.ca
705 646-5517

Paul Gavel paul.gavel@mnr.gov.on.ca
705 646-5510

From the editor.....

It is with much regret, but due to personal and conflicting schedules, I have to give up the position of newsletter editor.

If anyone is interested in taking this endeavor over, please contact Dick Thomas, or any other board member of the association.

Thank you for all your support.

Sandy Langer
Newsletter Director

FOCA and the Environment

David V. J. Bell

FOCA – the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association – has developed some terrific environmental information pamphlets for cottagers. We have been fortunate to receive enough copies to give every member of our Association the following publications:

1. ***Waterfront Living*** – this colorful poster deserves a spot on your wall. It gives 10 pointers about “good practices” that help protect the environment (“Let’s Enjoy”); and identifies 10 other practices that are not so good (“Let’s Talk”).
2. ***“I want to protect my shoreline property”*** is a small brochure that adds further points about shoreline, yard, house and boating. (My favorites: “reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides” and “leave a buffer strip of natural vegetation within 30 meters [or as wide as possible] of the shoreline”)
3. ***“A Guide to Operating & Maintaining your Septic System”*** is a short booklet prepared by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing that contains lots of helpful information about keeping your septic system working well, and how to detect and correct problems.

In addition to these, we have a few copies (not enough for everyone unfortunately) of a ***“Dock Primer”*** which serves as ***“A Cottager’s Guide to Waterfront-friendly Docks.”*** If you are planning to build a new dock or make any changes to your existing one, please contact our President Dick Thomas to get a copy.

I picked up these publications at the FOCA Spring Seminar last month, where I heard a presentation on the “Lake Partner Program” that provides water testing for associations like ours. This year the test for Phosphorous (a good overall measure of water quality) will be completed in May (despite the OPSEU strike!). Water clarity tests will be done every month throughout the summer.

Last year I found that the water clarity (which is measured by lowering a black and white disk into the lake until it is no longer visible) had decreased by more than a third by the end of the summer. As more and more motor boats stirred up the lake, the water got muddier and muddier. Our lakes are very shallow (less than 15 feet deep in most places) and powerful motors churn up sediment from the bottom. Roaring up and down the lakes at full speed is both dangerous to others using the lake and bad for the environment. Also **please consider replacing 2-stroke with 4-stroke engines; but whatever motor you have, please maintain it well, avoid fuel spills and eliminate excessive idling.**

Let’s enjoy the summer and do what we can to improve the natural environment that is such a special attraction for all of us.

Finally I wanted to share with you something that I think expresses almost poetically values and beliefs thousands of years old but increasingly relevant to the 21st century as we struggle to learn ways of living on this planet that will leave a good legacy for our children and their grandchildren:

ABORIGINAL THANKSGIVING ADDRESS

Finally, we acknowledge one another, female and male. We give greetings and thanks that we have this opportunity to spend some time together.

We turn our minds to our ancestors and our Elders. You are the carriers of knowledge, of our history.

We acknowledge the adults among us. You represent the bridge between the past and the future.

We also acknowledge our youth and children. It is to you that we will pass on the responsibilities we now carry. Soon, you will take our place in facing the challenges of life. Soon, you will carry the burden of your people.

Do not forget the ways of the past as you move toward the future.

Remember that we are to walk softly on our sacred Mother, the Earth, for we walk on the faces of the unborn, those who have yet to rise and take up the challenges of existence.

We must consider the effects our actions will have on their ability to live a good life.

Our Fortune – The Loon Lake Wetland (a.k.a, “The Bog”)

Many of us feel that our piece of the world is immensely special, yet did you know that it is also part of Ontario’s Living Legacy? Stemming from the Provincial program “Lands for Life”, our “Bog” (or more exactly, the Loon Lake Wetland) was identified as a *provincially significant wetland*. An informative Fact Sheet produced by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) communicates that there are more than 300 species of plants and many rare plants and animals in the area.

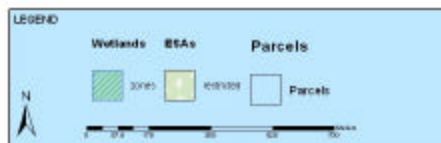
The Loon Lake Wetland is now a regulated “Conservation Reserve” as of June 1 2001. Conservation reserves are areas of Crown land set aside by regulation under the Public Lands Act. MNR is now working to shape both the short and long term use and protection of this site. MNR has invited anyone to participate in shaping management plans for the Loon Lake Wetland. Refer to the Link to the Fact Sheet for contact information

For those that have endured the mosquitoes to enjoy the Bog through the years, our new Conservation Reserve simply confirms what we have long known – this place is cool! For those that have not traveled to the end of Turtle Lake and ventured into the Bog, I encourage it. Take the kids, take a camera, **do it in a canoe**. Navigating the Bog is not intended for small motor boats (gas or electric), but is best done with a canoe. As well, do not litter or otherwise damage the area. The Bog is sensitive, special, and we should strive to keep it that way for our future generations – Ontario’s Living Legacy.

MNR Quick Profile				
ID: C21	NAME: Loon Lake Wetland	AREA (HA): 308	LAND USE: Conservation Reserve	CATEGORY:
AREA DESCRIPTION: Provincially significant wetland in site district 5e-7 between Loon, Turtle and North Muldrew lakes. The area has a high diversity of wetland types. There are more than 300 species of plants, and numerous rare plants and animals.				
LAND USE INTENT: MNR to work with municipality and private landowners on protection of private land portion of wetland.				

Links	
Lands For Life	http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/csb/news/oct9nr97.html
Ontario Living Legacy	http://www.ontarioslivinglegacy.com/
Loon Lake Wetland Fact Sheet	http://www.ontarioslivinglegacy.com/pdfs/c21fs.pdf
Public Lands Act – Conservations Reserves	http://192.75.156.68:81/ISYSquery/IRL68AF.tmp/1/doc

Loon & Turtle Lake Cottage Association Area



**General Area
Loon Lake Wetland**

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