



Clear Lake Property Owners' Association



Torrance, Muskoka, Ontario
www.clearlakemuskoka.ca

Spring Newsletter - 2011

Greetings to all Clear Lake Cottagers and welcome to Summer 2011. As always, this annual newsletter is intended to inform you of events of interest and to thank you for your continued support of the Association. For newcomers to our lake, a warm welcome to you as well and we hope that you will find something of interest in our calendar of events.

The ice is long gone and with the record wet weather we experienced in May, water levels are about as high as they get. The forecast is for a long hot and drier summer this year so here's hoping for a beautiful period of both fun and continued environmental stewardship of the wonderful shared asset that is Clear Lake.

Annual Meeting – Saturday July 2nd NEW LOCATION

The meeting will be held in the **Torrance Community Centre**, beside the fire hall on Torrance Rd. in Torrance. Please note the meeting time, **10:30 sharp to 12:00**

Try to arrive with a few minutes to socialize and catch up on the winter news so that we can respect everyone's desire to adjourn on time and get back to enjoying the lake. There are always a few relevant issues on the agenda for anyone who calls Clear Lake their summer home. Refreshments will be served and we'd love to see every cottage represented!

*****Many of you are aware that we had a bit of an "issue" with the Clear Lake Camp Pine Crest last fall. At what we consider to be extremely late notice, we became aware of an application for rezoning by the Toronto YMCA on behalf of Camp Pine Crest to in effect, double their allowable building sq. footage, which would have allowed for a potential increase of 45,000 sq ft. In other more imaginable terms, that's an allowance of 45 X 1000 sq ft winterized cottages or a single 45,000 sq ft resort style building.

We are not trying to be alarmist nor do we have any indication that current plans call for any such large scale development. But when calls to the Toronto YMCA at the highest level were met with "see you at the Council meeting", our antennae goes up. Among many objections, we would list the over threshold (phosphorous) nature of our lake and the inadequate infrastructure/safety precautions (Clear Lake Rd) to handle such a potentially massive increase, without any justification given.

We were able to alert many CLPOA members as to what was going on and received dozens of emails in support of our opposition as well 40 people from both Clear Lake, Echo and Gullwing Lakes jammed Council chambers for the zoning meeting. As a synopsis, the YMCA application was deferred and they were asked to work with the various Lake Associations potentially affected. From that date until this week, we had not heard a word from the camp but we recently received an email that the YMCA has been working with the municipality to find a solution. There will be an update at our AGM. It's exactly for issues such as this that we ask you to be sure and provide us with your home email address at the end of this letter. It will never be shared or used for commercial purposes except for the annual newsletter or emergency contacts to keep you informed.

Regatta – Saturday, July 30th NEW LOCATION Help needed!

It looks like the “new location” is a theme this year. Regatta returns with the usual program of the hotly contested, decorated **Boat Parade at 11:00 am** leaving from the Big Bay, followed at **1:00 pm** with swimming events, prizes and refreshments (hot dogs, corn on the cob and pop) starting at 1072 Clear Lake Rd. Either park on the road or if you’re coming from the water the property is in the NW corner of the lake (Cleverdon’s). We’ll have the dock/water area well marked. Further details will be communicated by flyer to your cottage later in July. We’ve been blessed with good weather and great participation over the past few years and I’m sure that kids young and old are looking forward to the thrill of competition again this year.

SummerFest – Saturday, August 13th at Clear Lake Village Resort Help Needed!

Kind of a new location but the same as the inaugural event last year.

Here’s a chance to get out and enjoy the day, see your neighbours and be either as active or quiet-and-social as you like. We have fun and crazy mini-Olympic style events for all ages; last year we ranged from 3-80 years old. We’ll have a hamburger BBQ with drinks and chips included for all who attend. **Games and food start @ 5:00**

Finally, we’ll have a **live band and dance from 7:30-10:00**, suitable for the late teen to 100 year olds. Plan to come for any or all of the afternoon and evening as your interests and time permit.

Cost is \$10 per person, open to all CLPOA members and their guests, tickets will be available at the AGM, the Regatta and at the gate. Age 12 and under come free!

You can arrive from the water or the road but bring your cameras to take in all the fun - I still can’t get the image of my own mother leading the gum spitting race out of my mind!

Water Quality

Our lake clarity and quality for drinking, recreation and support of natural aquatic life remains the top priority of the CLPOA. Our Lake continues to be listed as “above threshold” for phosphorous levels. This directly feeds ideal conditions for algae growth which in turn can produce algae blooms and reduced clarity, especially in hot, dry summers as forecast for this year. The lake is still in good shape and continues to be a jewel of Muskoka, but trends towards higher levels of phosphorous should be a continued wake up call against all products containing phosphorous, especially washing machine detergent. Remember, what goes in the septic still ends up in the lake to some degree. There are viable green cleaning products widely available that any Board member would be only too happy to discuss with you.

Your CLPOA Board has unanimously agreed to continue funding of regular Clear Lake water testing in conjunction with the Muskoka Lakes Association. This year, calcium testing has been added. Lower calcium levels, thought to be caused by acid rain and other factors have the potential to have negative impacts on daphnia and other tiny organisms that feed on algae and bacteria. Crayfish are also being affected. All health organizations recommend boiling any lake water if used for drinking. Cottagers who wish to be assured that the water is free of contaminants have several options available to them including boiling, filtration, or arranging their own periodic testing of their tap water. Clear Lake testing is for general quality benchmark assurance and not for drinking safety. Specifics to be reviewed at the AGM.

Get your septic tanks pumped every two years; it's a cheap insurance policy against very expensive repairs or replacements ahead of their time. Similarly, herbicides and pesticides of any nature are a strict no-go anywhere around the lake environment. Dandelions are nice at the cottage! Think twice (and think again) when cleaning boats, power washing docks or filling gas tanks....a little common sense goes a long way and little efforts really add up. Make sure any renters know these rules as well.

Loon nest

We have a loon educational poster that will be on display at the boat ramp and available to view on our website. We've been lucky enough to have a returning pair of loons on Clear Lake for as long as I can remember and they arrived this year in early May. Cottaging just wouldn't be cottaging without them. Some years they have successfully reared young but oddly enough, two very different types of boats are a threat to them; wakeboard boats (or any boat making a large wake) which may wash out a nest and canoes/kayaks which encourage well-intentioned nature lovers to get a bit too close. Please keep boat wakes to a minimum around nesting sites or the loon chicks while they are young. Under no circumstances should you approach the nesting area or young, even in a canoe or kayak. Let's give them a chance!

Fishing

We'd love to see your fishing (or any wildlife pictures) on the CLPOA website. Please email them to executive@clearlakemuskoka.ca

I've always found it preferable to keep a one-use camera in my tackle box to record the memories of "the big one" and then practice catch-and-release as well as use non-leaded weights. Remember, Smallmouth bass season doesn't open until midnight, the last Saturday in June. Fishing for anything before that date, means you run the very real risk of pulling aggressive bass off of their spawning and putting their fry at risk to other predatory species.

Largemouth Bass continue to gain more of a presence in Clear Lake and the newly present pike appear to be here to stay; both more numerous and larger individually. Pike are not indigenous to Clear Lake, can be kept at any time and disposed of (away from any properties please) in an effort to cull their numbers.

Launch Ramp

As a reminder, the launch ramp on Clear Lake road is a private ramp, located on Dr. MacBain's property. All cottagers' are reminded to ask permission before using the ramp and to restrict their use to a single seasonal launch and removal if possible. Please also be reasonable in your planning... late night or early morning disturbances are not appropriate. Also, please discourage renters from bringing boats with them, as they can harbour invading species on their hull or as part of internal water. Moving your own boats from lake to lake can result in similar problems. Returning boats should be left out of water for at least 24 hours or until completely dry, then scrubbed or power washed. Internal water should be drained on dry land, far away from the watershed area.

Cottage Watch

There will be a "Cottage Watch" report at the AGM. With the advent of more year round residences, incidents of break-ins have lessened. However, if you or any one you know has suffered a break-in or attempted break-in over the last year, please let any one of the Executive know as soon as possible.

Wildlife Watch

This would be the year for a new set of cubs for our local bear. She and her friends will take every opportunity to open your birdfeeder or check through your garbage to see what you've been eating that week. Please, place garbage in a bear/raccoon proof container only on the morning of your regular pickup.

Membership Lists

An updated membership and address list will be available for pick up at all three of our events this year. If you have any changes, please complete the attached and return it to Sharon Cleverdon at your earliest opportunity.

Thanks

The operation of your association and the success of its events are a testament to the support of cottagers and to the efforts of the dozens who volunteered their time and energy. A big hat's off to all of you who pitched in to help last year....you made our lake a better place.

As always, we need continued help and volunteers to make the Regatta and the new SummerFest a big success. **We particularly need help at the Regatta this year.** Anyone who is thinking of helping out, even in a small way is invited to complete the attached form and return it as soon as possible or bring your thoughts to the AGM.

Finally, I'd like to ask for your financial support of the Association again this year with payment of the **annual \$30 membership fee**. These fees help to fund Association responsibilities, such as marking the shoals with our new buoys (no tying up to them!) plus offsetting the costs of the Regatta and SummerFest. All of the Executive volunteer their time 100%. Early return of the fees in the enclosed envelope will be appreciated and you can have up to four paid memberships per property.

In an effort to be more environmentally friendly and save postage, starting in 2012 we will begin to email this annual newsletter to all members who have supplied their email address.

Don't forget to visit our very own website www.clearlakemuskoka.ca and have a safe and happy summer, everyone. See you on the lake and be sure to wave.

Yours truly,

Gary Deathe
President
CLPOA