



Clear Lake Property Owners' Association

Torrance, Muskoka, Ontario

www.clearlakemuskoka.ca

Annual Newsletter - 2012

Greetings to all Clear Lake Cottagers and welcome to Summer 2012. 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 at one of the earliest dates in recent memory. With the lack of any Spring rain of note, water levels are already a little low this year so let's see what the rest of June brings. Last year we had record wet May weather so I guess you never know what you'll get from Mother Nature these days. Nonetheless, 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 June 30

The meeting will be held at the **Torrance Community Centre** beside the fire hall on Torrance Rd. in Torrance. Please note the meeting time is **10:00 a.m. sharp to 12:00 noon as there is a lot to cover.**

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 so remind your neighbours and carpool over!

*******There will be an update on the Camp Pine Crest rezoning application*******

Most of you are aware that Camp Pine Crest was looking to rezone their property to allow for a potential 45,000 sq. feet of additional building in effect doubling the current building sq footage. With the help of the Township of Muskoka Lakes Council, we were able to get the application deferred with their instructions to work with the CLPOA to find a solution to the unprecedented concern and opposition that appeared at that winter meeting. Your Executive attended a public presentation at the camp this May 5 where we heard from the Toronto management that the YMCA is intending to amend their request down to 25,000 sq ft. Many Councilors attended as well as CLPOA members and area residents and the mood was very uneasy to say the least. I think it's fair to say that there are a lot of questions still unanswered. Clear Lake Road safety continues to be a major concern, among several remaining.

Your Executive met again with the camp on June 9th to again voice our concerns and try to broker an acceptable compromise. But it appears that YMCA is intent on pushing ahead with their request for rezoning and 25,000 additional sq ft to be built as their funding allows. Importantly, they also reserve the right to apply for a further 25,000 sq ft. Their stated goal is for expanded 4 season usage and in our opinion, more corporate retreats. Our concern is that they are moving somewhat away from a true youth focus.

It's that time again: CLPOA Executive Election Year

I always want to take a moment to thank the Clear Lake Executive for all of their hard work, time and commitment to work for our common enjoyment and stand on guard for Clear Lake. This is an election year and we're particularly looking for a NEW Secretary to keep detailed notes at 3-4 meetings per year. If any CLPOA member would like to put forth another's name to stand for election (with their agreement) as President, Vice President or Director, please come along prepared to nominate them at the AGM.

Please carefully consider helping as new blood is always welcome!

Regatta back in the Little Bay – Saturday, Aug. 4

Another holiday weekend, another Regatta! Returning on **Saturday August 4th** with the usual program of the hotly contested, decorated Boat Parade at 11:00 a.m. for the coveted “Broken Paddle Award” leaves from the Big Bay (north west end of the lake) for a tour around the lake, followed by swimming events, prizes and refreshments (hot dogs, corn on the cob and pop free for all who attend) starting at 1:00 p.m. in the sandy beach waterfront area of Little Bay Rd. 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.

We'll have the waterfront area well marked for boat parking and you can also come by road.

Last year we reintroduced a few events for the adult crowd such as the paddle boat race. Cheating was encouraged and fun was had by all. Let's do it again and show the young ones we can still serve as a great example of spirited competition. Further details will be communicated by flyer later in July.

This is our sole big event this year so come down to socialize with your neighbours and a bite to eat, even if you don't have kids competing. You can cheer on mine, instead!

Water Quality

Our lake clarity and quality, 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 but 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

Not only was the ice out just about as early as anyone can remember but the loons were back in April! 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 4th 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

Last year, we had a very large female bear and 3 cubs! They will be a year older and still with her this year. 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.

There are two very healthy looking foxes that have been making the rounds on Clear Lake Rd.

Membership Lists

An updated membership and address list will be available for pick up at the AGM & Regatta. 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 a big success. 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 member events and the very important water testing program. All of the Executive volunteer their time 100%. Early return of the fees in the enclosed envelope will be appreciated or bring them to the AGM. You can have up to four paid voting memberships per property so get the next generation involved!

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
Clear Lake Property Owners Association