

Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I thought that someone else might be writing this column this fall, but as fate would have it, the hapless job of president has fallen once again on yours truly. I can say, however, that, after 8 or 9 years on the Executive, that this will indeed be the last time. When my term finishes in August, I will retire from the fast-paced but lucrative political life of the Association.

For the most part, it has been a terrific experience. Lake WahWashKesh people have made it so. I have been fortunate to have met some wonderful individuals through the Association, and many of you I can call friends. For that I am thankful. Moreover, I have worked with some incredibly dedicated cottagers who care passionately for this unique bit of Canadian geography, and it has been a relationship I have found inspiring (if not, at times, perspiring).

It has been a busy experience as well. The scope of issues we have tackled has been a bit daunting at times: land use, the acquisition of the docks, the reconstruction of the dam, amalgamation, lake studies, Lands for Life and countless other items have dominated our agendas. And it does not look like it will get any less hectic, at least in the near future.

This Association has a long history; it must continue to be a critical advocate for the long term health of the lake and for those who love it.

In closing, I would like commend all of you who have served tirelessly on the executive, who have acted on committees, who have contributed funds (often in substantial amounts), and who have supported the work of the Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association in countless ways. It has been a pleasure.

W. Lennox

CITATIONS

The Executive initiated the awarding of the Lake WahWashKesh citation last year; it was presented to Ed Bennett, Bill Auld and Frank Squires. The Executive has some worthy recipients in mind, but we would also like to invite nominations from the membership. Please call, write or e-mail me if you have a suggestion.

W. Lennox

FIREWORKS DISPLAY

At our last Executive meeting, we discussed the possibility of a fireworks display for the 1st of July. If anyone is interested in coordinating such an event, please notify me.

W. Lennox

LIVING LEGACY UPDATE

Some of you are no doubt aware of the Lands for Life initiative of the Provincial Government (this is a plan to take doctors and turn them into tree surgeons...just kidding!). We have referred to this process from time to time in the newsletter.

The policy that has emerged from this initiative has been dubbed "Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy". Part of the Conservative plan is to expand Ontario's protected areas (here, here!!). One of the proposed "Conservation Reserves" encompasses a large area that includes Island Lake and the north shore of WahWashKesh.

The Government is currently seeking input regarding the boundaries of these reserves from interested groups. I, for one, laud the Harris Government for this enterprise, and I hope that the membership will take the time to write to the government to show their support. The more our area is recognized for its uniqueness, the more likely we will be able to minimize over-development.

Information can be obtained from or comments mailed (before Dec. 15th) to:

Dorothy Shaver, District Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources, 7 Bay Street, Parry Sound, Ontario, P2A 1S4

(705) 773-4231, fax: 746-8828

Information on Ontario's Living Legacy is available on the MNR's website:

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/oll/.

TRANSITION BOARD

In the fall, I resigned from the Board set up to oversee the creation of the Township of Whitestone. Other obligations and the likelihood of increasingly frequent

meetings precipitated my decision to withdraw (what's ironic is that it is the only damn involvement that actually paid!).

I have been and will continue to stay in touch with Tom Sutcliff—the reeve of Hagerman. A recent telephone conversation revealed that nothing precipitous has occurred since my departure. Things are more or less on track for the 1st of January: the new snowplow should arrive any day now, they are still searching for a new CAO, the Road Superintendent seems to be doing well, the tax rate is pretty much what we anticipated, plans for the upgrade of the Ardbeg Firehall are proceeding, but the interim land-use by-law will not be effected until June.

John Onda and Debbie Brear were the elected representatives for the unorganized areas on the Interim Council (remember the election held in August; the Interim Council will sit until November of 2000, at which time there will be a general municipal election for the new township)

W. Lennox

Web Page Photo & Personal Story Contest

Over the winter, we will be putting together the Association's first Internet Web page. We hope to register the name http://www.lake_wah-wash-kesh.org/. Some of the topics to be included are (let us know if you have any other ideas):

- **About us** About us – a description of the Association, its purpose and its history.
- **Committees** – a description of the major efforts underway, who's involved, progress
- **Newsletters** – we do send all members copies, but here you can see them all.
- **Annual Meetings** – copies of the minutes and presentations made
- **Directors** – a listing of the directors, their addresses and telephone numbers
- **Personal stories and photos of the lake**
- **Calendar of Events** – key dates for the year (meetings & events on the lake)
- **Contact us** – ability to send e-mail messages to the secretary.

To celebrate the launch our new Web Page, the Association is sponsoring a **Photo and Story Contest** about our Lake and its residents. Your pictures should be 5" X 7" and your stories must be typed and limited to 500 words or less. When the web site is up and operational in the New Year, we will put all your entries onto our site for all to see. The deadline for your entries is May 31, 2000. You or a family member must belong to the Association to enter. There will be three classes; entries from those aged 13 years and under, 14 – 17 years and 18 years and over. There will be 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each class for the photo category and also for the story category. All winners will be recognised at the next Annual General Meeting at the lake.

Send your entries to Doug Marks, 123 Poyntz Avenue, Willowdale, Ontario, M2N 1J3, (416) 222-6515, E-mail: dougmarks@sympatico.ca. **Good Luck to all!**

Andy Vurma

Consultant Recommends a Rock and Crib Dam

After receiving approval at the AGM, tenders for the initial engineering work, were requested from STANTEC Consulting Ltd., totten sims hubicki associates and Georgian Engineering. Following an analysis of their submissions, an interview and a review by both the Dam Committee and the Executive, STANTEC was awarded the contract for the initial study at a cost of \$18,150 paid by the Association. A site visit to the dam was made on October 9, 1999 with the Final Report issued by STANTEC on November 30th.

In their study, STANTEC considered 3 options:

- Repair the existing dam (\$475,000);
- Build a new concrete dam at the same height as the old dam, some 80 metres downstream (\$485,000); and,
- Build a new rock and crib dam at the same height as the old dam, some 80 metres downstream – recommended (\$275,000).

The Association is now analysing this report in detail and will be working with the stakeholders (MNR, Hydro, Township of Whitestone, Federal Government & Provincial Government) to determine the next steps. More details to follow in the next newsletter.

Andy Vurma

Membership Directory and 911 addressing

As a result of our summer canvass of all cottages, we have received address updates for 82 cottages representing some 168 families Thank-you! Since the lake has over 200 cottages, we have a way to go before our information is fully updated.

Included with this newsletter, is a form that you can return with your updated address information.

It is now unclear how quickly the new Township of Whitestone can complete their 911 addressing. With the transition to the new Township on January 1, 2000, there is so much work to be done that the existing Hagerman staff is overloaded. We expect that completion of 911 addressing may take much longer than originally anticipated.

Andy Vurma

Dock Report

We have just completed our first season of dock operations .The recently signed operating agreement with the MNR is now in place till May 31, 2004 providing we exercise good care.

As most are aware numerous repairs to the Indian Narrows dock were completed in 1999 and as well donation boxes for casual users and explanatory signs were installed at both landings (a particularly big thank you to John Kormos).

The dock committee does not have a chairman but is being capably led by Eric Disley and Stan Harding—thanks to both of you for your initiatives and many thanks to the other supportive dock committee members.

Below, you will find a "financial status" report covering dock operations in 1999 and projected revenue and expenses for the year 2000. This report covers a 2 year period, as we wanted everyone to be aware of 1999 dock revenue and expenses as well as both revenue and expense plans for year 2000.

Thank-you to all those who bought dock stickers in 1999 --- 102 --were sold generating revenue of \$2550; all of these monies will go toward dock expenses and nothing else. Dock stickers will be sold for year 2000 and you will learn about availability elsewhere in this newsletter—the price again is \$25.00 per sticker

The main project for year 2000 will be replacing flotation under the Bennetts' Bay dock—which we all know is ineffective and tired. The dock committee has yet to see under the dock so is not aware of what all will be required. In early April, the worst dock section will be removed, turned over and repaired as needed. So if the main dock seems a little short in the spring, be patient. Subsequently, other sections will be removed and repaired. This plan should allow us to have a dock in place for May 1st and at the same time, be conducting repairs one section at a time.

Once again, thanks for your support, and we look forward to a 2nd successful year of operation.

Dalton Ferris

MEMBERSHIP DUES AND DOCK PERMIT DECALS

Included in this mailing is the membership renewal form and the dock permit form (remember, you don't have to be a member to buy a dock permit, and currently we certainly cannot force anyone to buy a permit; permit revenues are directed solely towards dock maintenance, so we encourage dock users to support the efforts of the Association to keep our facilities in good repair).

As in the last few years, we have included an envelope already addressed to our treasurer for your convenience (you might as well put that cheque in there now and add a stamp before you forget!).

Please support the Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association. In the spring, we will mail you your membership and/or dock decals.

Fisheries Study

The Fish Committee would like to thank the Association for its wonderful support at the Annual General Meeting, and we would like to thank Ed Bennett for making the Willy Wackers, which many purchased. More are now available for \$25.00 each. All monies go towards Fish Committee efforts

We would also like to thank the staff at WahWashKesh Lodge for their story on WahWashKesh Willy.

The MNR has decided to keep the lake closed for ice fishing this year, and will be doing a volunteer creel survey on Victoria Day Weekend. They have been doing some Lake Trout research this fall and will relate information to us when finished.

The Fish Committee is looking for volunteers to assist with gathering information from approximately April to October. Anyone interested in helping please call Ken Taylor at 746-0972 or Ed Bennett.

The MNR and SAAR Environmental have committed to training those who volunteer to help with the program. We are still accepting donations with cheques made payable to the WahWashKesh Conservation Association (please send to the treasurer)

Ken Taylor

1999-2000 EXECUTIVE

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