

Lake WahWashKesh

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



– SPRING 2024 –

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

For those we come to the Lake for the summer season welcome back. For those of us here year round we can reflect on the winter that wasn't. As avid snowmobilers Mary Ellen and I patiently checked the OFSC app every day hoping the trails would open without luck. Hoping the erratic weather subsides so we can look forward to a great summer season.

In my first year as President I had a lot to learn and have been grateful for the support of our Board to help with the transition. Unfortunately Steffen Rauh has left as a Director. We will miss him but appreciate his hard work especially on the Parking Taskforce. Currently we are short two Director's positions and are actively seeking volunteers. Please contact any one of the Board members if you are interested.

Another learning curve for me was my first experience dealing with our Municipal Council as we were trying to negotiate the dock and Hobolink transfer. More information is provided in the newsletter articles on those subjects but for me this was a very enlightening encounter. We are a Conservation Association tasked to represent the best interests of the lake and our members but it is increasingly apparent that we need to be vigilant when monitoring Council activities and views affecting us.

Lots of other news to report on water quality testing, invasive species, membership, social activities etc. so enjoy this issue of the newsletter and please feel free to get back to us with thoughts or concerns you wish to share.

Rob Slykhuis

VOLUNTEERS!!!

Everyone is busy! Everyone wants to enjoy their time at the lake! *Help us all by sharing the load.* Volunteers needed to help support the association with a range of activities

If you are interested we can be reached at:

OUR NEW EMAIL ADDRESS
FOR THE ASSOCIATION... admin@WWKCA.ca

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIPS

3 WAYS TO PAY

1 - PayPal - Go to www.lakewahwashkesh.ca

top of the home page select:
SHOP MEMBERSHIPS

Add the number of memberships to the cart.
Select PayPal/credit card

OR 2 - Email Transfer
treasurer@lakewahwashkesh.ca

OR 3 -

Mailing a cheque

From the home page: Scroll down to **"Download your 2024 membership/permit form here"**

OR see page 18 of this Newsletter, and mail it with a cheque made payable to: Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association - P.O. Box 183, McKellar, Ontario P0G 1C0

****Memberships are no longer available at Bennett's store****

THANK YOU for your SUPPORT of the ASSOCIATION

Lake WahWashKesh Association members are now also members of



The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association (FOCA).

FOCA speaks to, and on behalf of, 250,000 waterfront property owners. Their membership consists of 525 lake & road associations in rural communities across the province

There is a wealth of information, resources and educational opportunities available through FOCA, some of which are only available to members.

Some of the current information and events are as follows:

- Information on recently announced changes to the capital gains tax which will impact seasonal cottage owners
- **Webinars:**
 - Estate planning/creating a family trust
 - Tips for Creating Cardiac Safe Cottages and Communities
 - Fire Smart Tips for the 2024 Ontario Cottage Season (increase your property's resilience to wildland fire)
- Emergency preparedness: Rain, Hail and Windstorms
- Spring Water Levels & Safety
- Short Term Rental Updates
- Boat cleaning instruction app
- Lake Management & Community Engagement: A new paper

**If you are a member of the
Lake WahWashKesh
Conservation Association
and you have not yet
set up your account with
FOCA, contact**

**treasurer@lakewahwashkesh.ca
to get the link**

Lori Graham-Watson



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ENFORCEMENT

of WHITESTONE COUNCIL RESOLUTION

TRAILER PARKING

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 7, 2024

Lake WahWashKesh residents recently received correspondence from the Municipality of Whitestone regarding enforcement of a resolution passed by Council on December 12, 2023 and further amended on April 16, 2024.

As noted in the correspondence, the most relevant provision for residents and users of the public landing boat launch and lake access points is related to trailer parking.

Specifically, the provision is as follows:

3. THAT it be confirmed that no trailers are allowed to be parked or stored at any Public Landing within the Municipal owned lands and lands where the Municipality of Whitestone holds a Land Use Permit with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) unless attached to a vehicle, and that if attached to a vehicle, that the trailer can remain no more than 14 days as of August 6, 2024.

As a result, trailers must now be attached to a vehicle if they are in the parking areas at Bennett's Landing and Indian Narrows. As of August 6, 2024 trailers that are not attached to a vehicle will be removed by the Municipality.

It is our understanding that this provision does not apply to the storage of boat trailers at the site of the former dump as this is not a municipally controlled parking area and the Municipality does not hold a Land Use Permit from MNRF for this land.

The trailer parking provision also references a 14 day limit for parking of trailers. As noted in the letter from the Municipality, this is an annual limit. The Association has written the Municipality indicating our concerns regarding the practicality of this requirement and the challenges related to monitoring and enforcing it. Despite these noted challenges, the requirement remains in effect.

It is important to note that the WahWashKesh Conservation Association Mayor's Taskforce members were not involved or consulted in this process.

Residents that have comments or concerns related to the resolution, please ensure you direct any questions or comments directly to Council via email info@whitestone.ca

In order to better understand how this bylaw may impact you directly and to help us continue to advocate on your behalf through the Taskforce, please consider CC'ing the WWKCA (admin@WWKCA.ca) in your correspondence with Council.

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www.lakewahwashkesh.ca

HOBOLINK: UPDATE

As most of you know we have had the Hobolink logger set up for many years. The unit tracks a number of things but for most of us it is the best way to monitor the water level, especially during the spring. Since the unit was installed, George Comrie has been the one to maintain it and probably the only one who understands how it works including the online monitoring which we very much appreciate. At the beginning of this year he advised us that the current unit would no longer be supported and needed to be upgraded at a cost of

\$2,500, certainly not an expected or welcome expense.

During the meetings of the Parking Task Force it was recommended that the responsibility for the Hobolink be transferred to the Municipality of Whitestone along with the docks as we no longer receive the dock and parking revenues to offset the costs. Despite our best efforts, and the support of the Mayor, the Hobolink transfer request was denied. We were however encouraged to seek a donation to help with the one-time costs to upgrade the system and

received \$1,500 from the Municipality for which we are grateful. In addition our own VP, Anna Small has donated \$500 for which we are also extremely thankful.

The replacement unit had been ordered and George will be looking after picking it up and installing it very soon so we expect no disruption in service. On an ongoing basis we will be responsible for the annual maintenance costs of ~\$500. This is a good example of a service that is fully supported by membership fees.

Rob Slykhuis

WATER QUALITY RESULTS

- The results for sites tested in May 2023 -

Rob Haddow, from Morton's Point Camp generously volunteered his time, expertise and boat to complete the 2023 testing. The 2024 phosphorus testing will be done again this May with an additional volunteer - Rob Slykhuis.

Site ID	Site Description	Lat	Long
2	Indian Narrows/SW Turk Island	454317	800212
3	Big Lake-Hogsback Bay	454442	800328
5	MortonsPtCamp/Sandy Hook	454445	800329
6	Straubs & Graves Pt	454351	800118
7	Top Lake-Deadman Is.	454436	800044
8	Eberles Pt	454122	800127
10	Bennetts Bay-DeepSpot	454306	800132
21	N Wedding Cake Island	454423	800221
22	off E Birch Island, 2nd version	454150	800247
23	Deep part of Big Lake	454131	800208

The following description gives a general understanding of the importance of testing phosphorus on Lake WahWashKesh (provided by Lake Partnership program through FOCA)

"Total phosphorus concentration are ideally used to interpret nutrient status in Ontario lakes, since phosphorus is the element that controls the growth of algae in most Ontario lakes. Increases in phosphorus will decrease water clarity by stimulating algal growth. In extreme cases, algal blooms will affect the aesthetics of the lake and/or cause taste and odour problems in the water.

Many limnologists place lakes into three broad categories with respect to nutrient status. Lakes with less than 10 µg/L TP are considered oligotrophic. These are dilute, unproductive lakes that rarely experience nuisance algal blooms. Lakes with TP between 10 and 20 µg/L are termed me-

sotrophic and are in the middle with respect to trophic status. These lakes show a broad range of characteristics and can be clear and unproductive at the bottom end of the scale or susceptible to moderate algal blooms at concentration near 20 µg/L. Lakes over 20 µg/L are classed as eutrophic and may exhibit persistent, nuisance algal blooms.

Note: Tea stained lakes, with high dissolved organic carbon (DOC), are called dystrophic lakes and do not share the algal/TP relationships described above. Generally there can be more TP in a dystrophic lake without the occurrence of algal blooms. The chemistry of these lakes is quite complex."

Each site has a report attached outlining the phosphorus levels since 2005.

Lynn Brennan

INVASIVE SPECIES

in Lake WahWashKesh

Did you happen to notice a small, pale white jellyfish floating by your dock last year? That was the freshwater jellyfish *Craspedacusta sowerbyi*. You have almost certainly seen the tall fronds of *Phragmites* (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis*) along Hwy 400. Both are invasive species to Ontario. Invasive species can be benign, but many are highly disruptive to our eco-



system and cost a great deal to control. The impact of the freshwater jellyfish is unknown; hopefully it will be harmless. However, *Phragmites* has been labeled one of the worst invasive species in Ontario. It grows primarily in damp areas like marshes and aggressively crowds out native species such as bullrushes. It creates a solid, dense wall of tall stems that traps animals like



frogs and turtles who die amongst their stems. It also grows in disturbed areas and beside roads, blocking sightlines and making driving more difficult. Removing *Phragmites* is difficult and expensive. Zebra mussels, another damaging invasive species, have been reported upstream of WWK in the Ahmic lake system, and are also widely reported in Georgian Bay.

There are dozens of invasive species - plants, wildlife, insects, and fungi and diseases. For a short read of some of the worst, you may appreciate this article from the CBC: Ontario's top 5 invasive species of summer 2023

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/invasive-species-summer-2023-ontario-1.6943591>

What can you do? A little effort can go a long way:

Prevention: We can all help prevent the spread of invasive species through simple actions. For example:

- Boaters are urged to "Clean, Drain and Dry" boats, live-wells, and boat trailers before moving a boat to a new waterway. The municipality of Whitestone will be posting signs at public boat launches to remind boaters of this important preventive process.
- Gardeners can help by careful plant selection, not moving plants from the city to the cottage, and proper disposal of any invasive plants found in the garden.
- Cottagers can help by using only locally sourced firewood.

Find out more about what you can do to help here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/invasive-species-ontario>

Identify and Report: The free app iNaturalist is an easy and accessible way to identify just about any plant or animal. Invasive species can be reported via the EDDMapS website at <https://www.eddmaps.org> or free app, or you can call the Invasive Species Hotline 1-800-563-7711.

WWKCA Board member Kathy Deuchars sits on the Whitestone Environmental Stewardship Committee. This committee hopes to launch an invasive species education and public engagement initiative this summer - look to the WWKCA and Municipality of Whitestone websites for more information later this spring!

Kathy Deuchars

Green Corner

by N. Glenn Perrett

The following are some quality useful tools for the cottage!

Irwin Quick-Lift Construction Jack

www.irwintools.ca

There are lots of uses for the Irwin Quick-Lift Construction Jack. We recently used it to hold an old, pine door in place while we replaced damaged hinges with new ones. The “Quick-Lift” effectively held the door in place while old hinges were removed and new ones attached.

There is lots to like about this tool that lifts, holds, levels and spreads. The Irwin Quick-Lift Construction Jack has a 330 pound lifting capacity and it lifts up to 10 inches. Squeezing the handle lifts the object while the tool also features precision controlled lowering. This handy tool will regularly be used around our house and cottage!

DeWalt 20V Max 5” Variable Speed Random Orbit Palm Sander & Dust Bag (DCW210B)

www.dewalt.ca

As with other battery tools, I like the convenience of using this battery-powered sander in various places and not having to rely on electrical outlets. The first job that we used this sander for was to sand one of our outdoor Muskoka Chairs that sustained some damage from an animal over the winter. Someone had chewed the edges of the back slats! These needed sanding to remove the rough edges before applying another coat of exterior stain to the chair.

The DeWalt 20V Max 5” Variable Speed Random Orbit Palm Sander & Dust Bag effectively – and quickly – smoothed out the damaged edges of the wood. Complementing the efficient performance of the sander is the locking dust bag which collected the dust. The sander can also be connected to a shop vacuum system. Another nice feature of the sander is the variable speed dial to match the speed to the application.

This sander (DCW210B) is only the tool only and does not include a battery or charger.



Craftsman V20 Oscillating Tool Kit

www.craftsman.ca (Item CMCE500D1)

Another versatile tool that can do a variety of tasks is the Craftsman V20 Oscillating Tool Kit. The kit includes the cordless oscillating tool, a lithium ion battery, a lithium ion charger, a wood blade, a bi-metal blade, a scraper, a sanding platen, two pieces of 240 grit sandpaper, three pieces of 100 grit sandpaper, three pieces of 80 grit sandpaper, one small storage bag.

We haven’t had this tool for long and we’ve already used it in our home renovations as well as restoring some furniture. Because the blades can access hard-to-reach areas, this tool was able to cut off the edge of a board flush to the framing in a ceiling we are restoring. The sanding part of the tool efficiently gets into corners that conventional sanders can’t access and worked well on an older piece of furniture.

This tool will be frequently used as we renovate our 1895 house and restore antique furniture!



**Black + Decker
Dustbuster Pivot Vac
Cordless Hand Vacuum**
www.blackanddecker.ca
(Item BDH2000PL)

Chances are you will appreciate this cordless 20V lithium hand vacuum from Black + Decker.

The hand vacuum is light and easy to carry and use and it has good suction. The nozzle pivots and has features that allow it to easily clean larger areas as well as tight areas. There is also a brush to clean upholstery making this cordless vacuum ideal for cleaning vehicles. The vacuum features washable filters and comes with a charging base.

DeWalt Rechargeable LED Flashlight
www.dewalt.ca (Item DCL183)

With the more frequent and severe storms associated with climate change, it is a good idea to have a quality flashlight nearby. This DeWalt Rechargeable LED Flashlight not only provides considerable light, but it has many other good features too besides being rechargeable.

There are two brightness settings on the LED spotlight and there is also a side LED light. The spotlight LED in high mode has a brightness of 1000 lumens and lasts approximately 2.5 hours while the lower LED spotlight setting has 250 lumens and lasts approximately 6.5 hours. The side LED light has 400 lumens and lasts about 6.5 hours. Charge time is approximately 75 minutes.

Other features with the flashlight include a magnet, a belt clip, a hang hook, an LED charge indicator, a USB charging port cover and a USB charging cable.



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 A photograph of three people jumping into a lake, used as a background for the photography business advertisement.

*WahWashKesh artist is the driving force behind a public art project to build community pride and spirit
— Read more to see how you can participate in this exciting family activity —*



OUT of WATER

Last year, working with three other artists we installed a public art project at no cost to the Municipality of Magnetawan entitled “X Marks the Spot”. That work of art has remained up since the installation in mid-June 2023. It will remain in place at the Village Green park throughout this summer. This year we have two additional projects that will be installed

On Friday, March 22 the municipality launched our 2024 art project for placement in the Village Green park. In addition, the North Bay Nugget has issued an article about the project.

<https://www.nugget.ca/news/more-than-100-painted-wooden-angel-fish-to-adorn-magnetawan-park>

Our creative team strongly believes in the community, the local schools and community libraries. Our efforts include the donation of 100 fryling size fish and the paint for students at the Magnetawan and Whitestone K-8 schools to participate. In addition, we have donated a large fish to each of the libraries. Right now, the students and library teams are busy creating their own work of art that we will start to install in the park in mid-May!

We have also planned an art project to be installed in front of the Whitestone Library & Technology Center at no cost to the Municipality. This work will be installed in mid-May and is connected with our Magnetawan community art project. We are confident that residents, cottagers and tourists will enjoy visiting both villages and the community art projects for great picture opportunities.

Having a family owned cottage on WahWashKesh since 1963, we recognize another significant component of the community are the cottagers and their associations. While we would hope to break even, our project is intended to build community pride and spirit.

This project allows families, friends and visitors to use their creative talents and create a work of art suitable for family presentation in the Village Green in Magnetawan.



We anticipate interest from cottagers to be able to paint a fish while at the cottage. Thus we have scheduled multiple installation dates to install the fish as they are created and delivered to the Municipal offices.

And lastly, all fish that the sponsors do not want back, will be raffled or auctioned off around Thanksgiving with all proceeds going to municipal charities such as Habitat for Humanity, arts and recreation groups, etc.

Please see the next page for more project details.

Al Gilewicz

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OUT of WATER -PROJECT DETAILS

The Municipality is looking to encourage individuals, families, and businesses in the community to participate in a public art project. The public is encouraged to sponsor and paint and/or decorate a “fish” with whatever design they choose.

All items attached to the fish must be adequately adhered using only non-toxic adhesives. Finished artwork cannot contain hate rhetoric, sexual content or utilize business names or logo to promote a specific business. The Municipality reserves the right to remove or not display any of the artwork that the Municipality and artist deem as offensive.

All works will be installed outside to be viewed by the general public. At the end of the temporary installation the fish will be removed and available for the owners to pick up at the Municipal offices. All sponsors will have the opportunity to keep their fish or donate it to a silent auction or other fundraising efforts like Habitat for Humanity or other community organizations that benefit our amazing community.

Risk and Responsibility

Artists should understand that the finished work will be installed in a public park exposed to the weather for the duration of the exhibition. The park may require mowing during the exhibition period. Therefore, the Municipality cannot guarantee the duration of the work's display or be responsible for any damages or modifications of the artwork due to required park maintenance or wear and tear due to weather. The fish will be secured to a post driven into the ground and securely anchored to the post.

Artists should also be aware that the Municipality cannot guarantee that the work may not be vandalized and that vandalized works may not be repaired, restored or replaced. This is dependent on the damage created, the availability of the project arts, or available funding. Artists must accept this risk and that their artwork may be removed if damage or vandalism occurs at the Municipality's discretion.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Each sponsor will be provided with their selected fish size, prime coated white with exterior grade primer paint, instructions on paint materials to be used, and schedule of critical dates. Installation of all fish will be performed by the artist Albert J. Gilewicz and his team of participating artists. Prior to the installation, each newly painted fish will be coated with a spar type varnish suitable for outdoor weather for increased durability. Each fish will be mechanically attached to a metal post that has been driven into the ground.

Sponsorship Levels

Type	Size on the Edge	Sponsorship Amount
Frylings	1'X1'	\$20
Juvenile	2'X2'	\$30
Adults	3'X3'	\$45
Lunkers	4'X4'	\$60

Submissions and Timelines

Fishing Season Opening fish can be picked up any time at the Municipal Office located at 4304 Highway 520, Magnetawan, Ontario P0A 1P0.

Submissions can be dropped off at any time at the Municipal Office located at 4304 Highway 520, Magnetawan, Ontario P0A 1P0.

Exhibition Period: June 2024 thru to Thanksgiving 2024

Contact

Laura Brandt
Deputy Clerk Recreation and Communications
(705) 387-3947 Ext 1002
lbrandt@magnetawan.com

PARKING/DOCKS and the Municipality

During the spring of 2023, the WahWashKesh Conservation Association Parking Task Force celebrated their understanding that the vehicle parking areas and the lake access points including the docks at both Indian Narrows and Bennett's Bay were taken over completely by the Municipality of Whitestone. This was reported at the 2023 AGM. As we got to the final stages of ensuring that the docks were fully transferred in September 2023, it was discovered that the motion that was put in front of Council in April 2023 was a maintenance agreement only.

As a result, your Directors began discussions to formally and finally transfer the dock and all related structures to the Municipality. We undertook the process of asset transfer by offering a reduced book value settlement to the Municipality in exchange for the docks. Settling on a book value during asset transfer is common practice with respect to asset management and transfers of ownership. This offer was completely rejected by the majority of the Council. During this exchange, some members of Council indicated that there could be a scenario where WahWashKesh public access points would be without a dock if we maintained our pursuit of recouping some of the current book value costs of the docks. This was not a risk your Directors were prepared to take.

In order get this transfer back on track and completed for the 2024 season, we agreed to transfer the assets (both docks, ramps and connection points) to the Municipality of Whitestone for the minimum asset transfer cost of \$2. This transfer was supported without discussion at the April 16 Council meeting. The direction from Council requires the preparation and execution of an agreement between the WWKCA and the Municipality that will be finalized by the Clerk and Mayor as soon as reasonably possible.

The Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association membership gave us a mandate to find a safe, accessible and viable solution for parking and lake access at both public landings on Lake WahWashKesh. We have a working relationship with the Municipality

for vehicle parking including accessible parking spaces, side by side as well as bumper to bumper parking spaces for cottages who have multiple vehicles on site at the same time. There are designated spaces for vehicle parking with attached trailer as well. The Public Works Department of the Municipality has made improvements to signage, brushing back the perimeter, adding more aggregate as available and has accepted an offer to maintain our relationship as stewards for parking concerns, suggestions as well as providing volunteer support where possible to help keep our vehicle parking safe, accessible and viable for years to come. Evidence of this partnership was seen in the work done at the Bennett's Bay dock last season when several bolts that anchored the gangplank to the shore broke. Mr. Creasor (Public Works Director) directed his Department to repair the situation with a permanent fix quickly.

The transfer of the docks in their entirety releases the WWKCA from carrying Liability insurance for the assets. In addition, maintenance, replacement or improvements are now part of the Municipality's asset management planning. The Association Directors have submitted a summary of necessary and wishlist work for the docks to the Public Works Manager for budget consideration. In addition, the Municipality will be looking into ways to ensure the docks meet the OADA requirements in the future. The purpose of the docks continue to be to provide safe, accessible and viable access to the lake at both public access points. Monitoring and possible enforcement of boats that are parked at the dock has not been addressed by the Municipality at this time.

The Association Directors that are members of the Mayor's Parking Taskforce look forward to continuing the working relationship we have with the Municipality. It is this partnership that has been in existence since the Municipality's inception that has netted the current state of Parking and Lake access for the Municipality.

Team Marshall

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What are the bugs in the mud of Muskoka Watershed's lakes telling us?

– THE STATE OF OUR WATERSHED –

By Rachel Plewes

Article from: **Muskoka Watershed Council** muskokawatershed.org

Article was updated Mar 22, 2024



Muskoka, lake monitoring is done to answer two questions: 1) Is the lake healthy, and 2) If not, why? Biological monitoring of benthos (bottom-dwelling organisms) can complement monitoring of physical or chemical attributes of the water. In effect, the larval invertebrates that live on and in the sediments can tell us things about the quality of their habitat.

The types of organisms present in benthic invertebrate communities can be used to assess the biological health and integrity of a lake or river ecosystem because these organisms vary in their tolerance to stressors like local chemical pollution or physical stressors like siltation. Sensitive benthos species, such as mayflies, dragonflies and caddis flies, are intolerant to ecosystem disturbances that result in poor water quality or habitat alteration. These species primarily inhabit sediments of lakes during their lengthy larval and nymph stages, serving as an important food source for fish. Monitoring the percentage of mayflies, dragonflies and caddis flies serves as a valuable biological indicator, with a higher abundance indicating a healthy lake. Conversely, in lake ecosystems with poor water quality or degraded aquatic habitats, the percentage of sensitive benthos will decrease.

The collection of benthos samples is the focus of the biological monitoring program run by District of Muskoka because it helps identify lakes that are possibly being neg-

atively affected by such stressors. The Muskoka Watershed Council's 2023 [Muskoka Watershed Report Card](#) examined the data that had been collected since 2012. We used the percentage of all mayflies, dragonflies, and caddis flies in samples as an indicator of lake health — studies done in Europe showed that when less than 9.8 per cent of organisms belonged to these three groups, the lakes showed signs of degradation and compromised ecological condition. We found that 12 of the 37 lakes with adequate benthos samples (32 per cent) were of potential concern because they had less than 9.8 per cent of sensitive benthos. The other 25 lakes were deemed not of concern. For six additional lakes, too few samples (fewer than three since 2012) had been collected to accurately assess condition.

Most of the 12 lakes of potential concern have high levels of habitat alteration caused by shoreline modifications (e.g. docks) and nearshore development. Nearshore development and shoreline modifications can degrade aquatic habitat by increasing shoreline erosion and removing habitat features such as logs, rocks, trees and vegetation. Barron's Lake was the sole lake with a high percentage of natural shoreline that was of potential concern, but other stressors exist in that lake. Runoff from road salt applied to Highway 400 has increased the chloride concentration of Barron's Lake to 50 milligrams per litre, degrading its water quality to

the point where that may influence its benthic community.

Continued biomonitoring is crucial to help identify lakes that are being negatively impacted by human and natural stressors. The percentage of sensitive benthos can be used as a screening tool to identify lakes that need restoration or management efforts. However, a higher sampling intensity and the sampling of more lakes in Muskoka are needed for better lake assessment. Volunteers have provided valuable support to the biological monitoring program by collecting samples. District staff are available to work with lake associations and other community organizations to collect benthic data by providing expertise and equipment, while the association provides volunteers. Learn more about the biological monitoring program at [Muskoka WaterWeb](#)

This is the 10th in a series of articles from the Muskoka Watershed Council on The State of Our Watershed. Each explores environmental issues and management challenges revealed in our 2023 Muskoka Watershed Report Card.

This week's contributor is Rachel Plewes, a biologist based in Kelowna, B.C.

2024 SOCIAL EVENTS

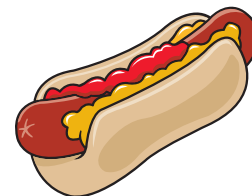
As Directors, we feel it is critical to continue to develop a sense of community among cottage owners, guests and visitors to Lake WahWashKesh. It is our belief that spending time together socially strengthens us collectively.

In support of this core belief, we hope that you will mark a few dates in your calendar and participate in some or all of the following social events:

July 20 Annual Weiner Roast

4:00 - Straub's Beach - Thank you to the Busenhart Family for their generosity in letting us use this spot again this year.

We will have a dock in place for accessible drop off at the roast (if you wish to use this dock for accessibility reasons, please pull up to unload. Assistance to move your boat to the beach will be available). Boat parking will be along the beach.



July 29 to Aug 9 2nd Annual Fishing Derby

Can you land the largest Largemouth Bass, Walleye or Pike? Measurements from snout to tail must be clearly visible in the photo that you send to admin@WWKCA.ca

This event is open to all cottage owners and their guests. Please include the angler's name and contact information with all photos. Photos received will be posted on the Association webpage. Winners will be contacted and their names, species entered and winning length will be published. Good Luck!!

Aug 3 Annual General Meeting followed by Artisan Showcase & Sale

Bennett's Barn - Our Annual AGM will commence at **9:30AM**.

Outstanding Membership dues can be paid at the entry desk from 9:00-9:30. Please remember that only current members can make comments, ask questions and vote at this meeting.

Following the AGM, there will be refreshments available as you socialize and visit the artisan display in the barn. There will be even more artisans participating this year, building on last year's success. Thank you to Hagen Materne for championing this amazing addition to our social menu this year. *If you are an artisan interested in participating, please reach out the Association and we will connect you with Hagen.*

We would like to thank the Bennett family for their generous donation of the barn for our AGM and Art Show. It is the perfect spot for both events!



Aug 17 Annual Corn Roast

4:00 - Straub's Beach - Thank you again to the Beusenhart Family for their generosity in letting us use this spot for the roast.

As with the wiener roast, we will have a dock in place for accessible drop off and assistance to move your boat to the beach. Boat parking will be along the beach.

Book Reviews

by N. Glenn Perrett

Guardians of the Valley: John Muir and the Friendship That Saved Yosemite

Dean King

Scribner

2023, 437 pages

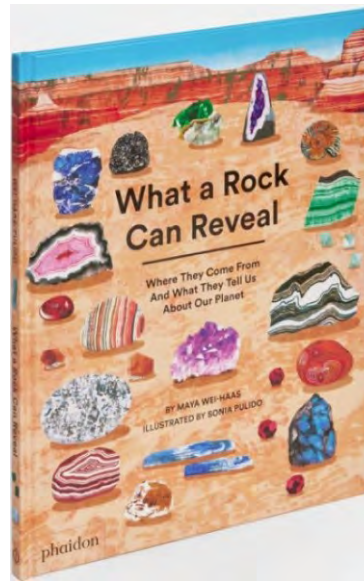
ISBN: 9781982144463

I enjoy reading about John Muir, who is known as the father of the national parks in America, and his efforts to protect natural areas. *Guardians of the Valley: John Muir and the Friendship That Saved Yosemite* is a fascinating book about his friendship with his editor of Century Magazine – Robert Underwood Johnson – and how they were influential in creating Yosemite National Park and the creation of parks and forest reserves.

Also in King's well-researched book that contains correspondence from Muir and Johnson is their fight to preserve the stunning Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park from becoming a water reservoir for the city of San Francisco. And while their attempts to protect the valley weren't successful, their actions did educate people far and wide of the importance of protecting nature.

As you read about Muir's and Johnson's ongoing fight to protect wilderness, you learn about Muir acting as President Roosevelt's guide in Yosemite, the creation of the Sierra Club – and lots more. Complementing the intriguing text are maps and photographs.

Guardians of the Valley is an engaging read for those who like nature while highlighting an enduring friendship and the power of the written word!



The Little Book of Mushrooms: An Illustrated Guide to the Extraordinary Power of Mushrooms

Alex Dorr, illustrated by Sara Richard
Adams Media

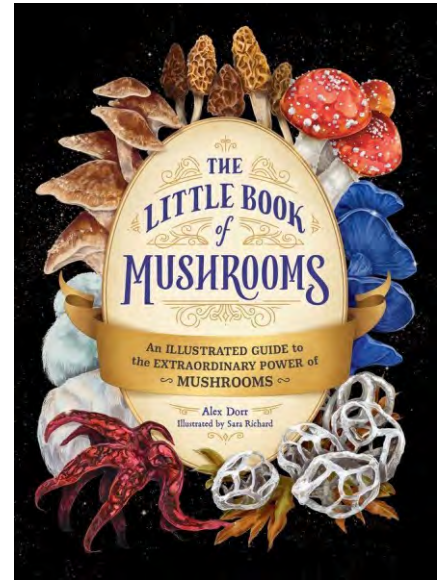
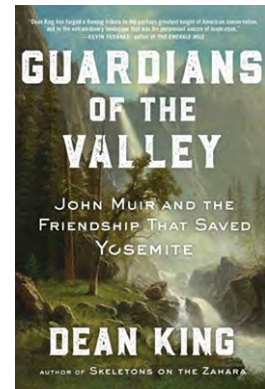
2023, 256 pages

ISBN: 9781507219591

Whether you are interested in learning about mushrooms or would like a beautifully illustrated guide of 75 mushroom profiles you will enjoy this fascinating book featuring "...the remarkable properties of these unique, beautiful, and scientifically astounding fungi."

The book begins with "A Basic Introduction to Mushrooms" which includes sections on "What Are Mushrooms?" as well as "The Life Cycle of Mushrooms", "Kinds of Mushrooms" – and more. Part Two covers the 75 species of mushrooms from "Aborted Entoloma" to the "Zombie-Ant Fungus." In this profiles you will learn about the mushrooms featured including their geographic location, where they grow in the environment, their characteristics and their primary use.

Complementing the fascinating text by Alex Dorr are exceptional illustrations by Sara Richard. The Little Book of Mushrooms: An Illustrated Guide to the Extraordinary Power of Mushrooms is a beautiful book for nature enthusiasts!



What a Rock Can Reveal

Maya Wei-Haas, illustrated by Sonia Pulido

Phaidon Press

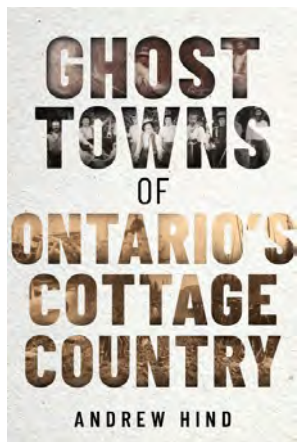
2024, 48 pages

ISBN: 9781838667900

ages 6+

What a Rock Can Reveal: Where They Come From and What They Tell Us About Our Planet is an interesting and educational book about rocks for children of all ages. As the author states at the beginning of the book, "Every rock you'll ever find has an exciting story to tell."

Besides listing various kinds of rocks (the illustrations are excellent) the author looks at rock textures, colours, and minerals as well as where rocks can be found. Where rocks come from is also covered. According to the author, "The way a rock looks can tell us where it comes from and



what adventures it's had along the way." Volcanic rocks, metamorphic rocks, mountains, sand, sedimentary rocks, meteorites, fossils and geologists are other topics covered in the book.

What a Rock Can Reveal is an interesting look at a fascinating subject for kids!

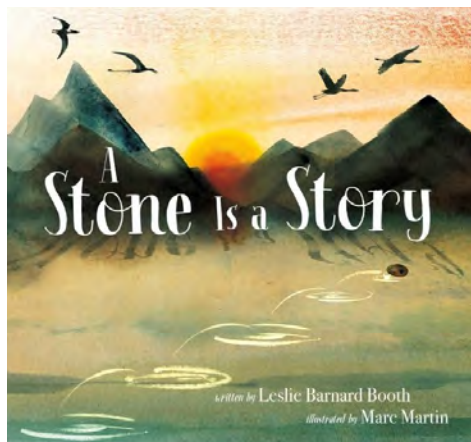
A Stone Is a Story

Leslie Barnard Booth, illustrated by Marc Martin
Margaret K. McElderry Books
 2023, 35 pages
 ISBN: 9781534496941
 ages 4+

A Stone Is a Story is a very good picture book by Leslie Barnard Booth and illustrated by Marc Martin. The book looks at rocks, where they have been, how they were created and how old they are.

At the back of the book there is an informative section on "Rocks: Not Set in Stone" that looks at igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks and how they are formed. There is also a good "Glossary" that defines various words associated with rocks.

A Stone Is a Story is a wonderful nature picture book for young children.



Ghost Towns of Ontario Cottage Country

Andrew Hind, Dundurn Press
 2023, 197 pages
 ISBN: 9781459751132

Whether you enjoy visiting areas with interesting histories or you are looking for a fun outing in cottage country, you will discover some interesting destinations (13 in all) in Andrew Hind's book *Ghost Towns of Ontario's Cottage Country*. Divided into three sections, this guide includes ghost towns in various places including Haliburton County, Bracebridge, Seguin Township, Algonquin Park, Byng Inlet – and more. Hind's research and interesting text is complemented with fascinating black-and-white photographs along with directions to the once busy settlements and communities. I particularly enjoyed reading about the history and people of Swords (Seguin Township), Germania (Bracebridge), Byng Inlet (Wallbridge Township) and Kiosk (Algonquin Park.)

Lights Out: A Movement to Help Migrating Birds

Jessica Stremer, illustrated by Bonnie Pang
Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers
 2024, 43 pages
 ISBN: 9781665931977
 ages 4+

A good picture book is both entertaining and well illustrated. Those that are also educational and address important issues are exceptional. And *Lights Out*:



A Movement to Help Migrating Birds is an exceptional book providing interesting and useful information to educate readers about problems facing migrating birds and how people can help.

The story follows a flock of sparrows who are migrating south in the fall. Many of the birds travel at night using the stars to help guide them. Unfortunately, when the sparrows arrive in cities with numerous lights, their starry map disappears and the birds become confused. Some of the birds are killed or injured when they collide with buildings. When a little girl finds a sparrow who needs help, she takes it to someone who can care for the bird and then she asks how she can help.

Taking action to help the birds involves educating others about the importance of turning off lights at night and hanging posters and pictures in windows so that birds don't fly into the glass.

Besides the story the book includes more important information with the sections "Birds, Migration, and the Dangers of Light Pollution", "More about Lights Out", "How to Help" and "Flyways." There is also a "Bibliography" where more information can be obtained.

Lights Out is an extraordinary nature picture book that not only informs readers about an important issue, but shows them how to take positive action to improve the problem.

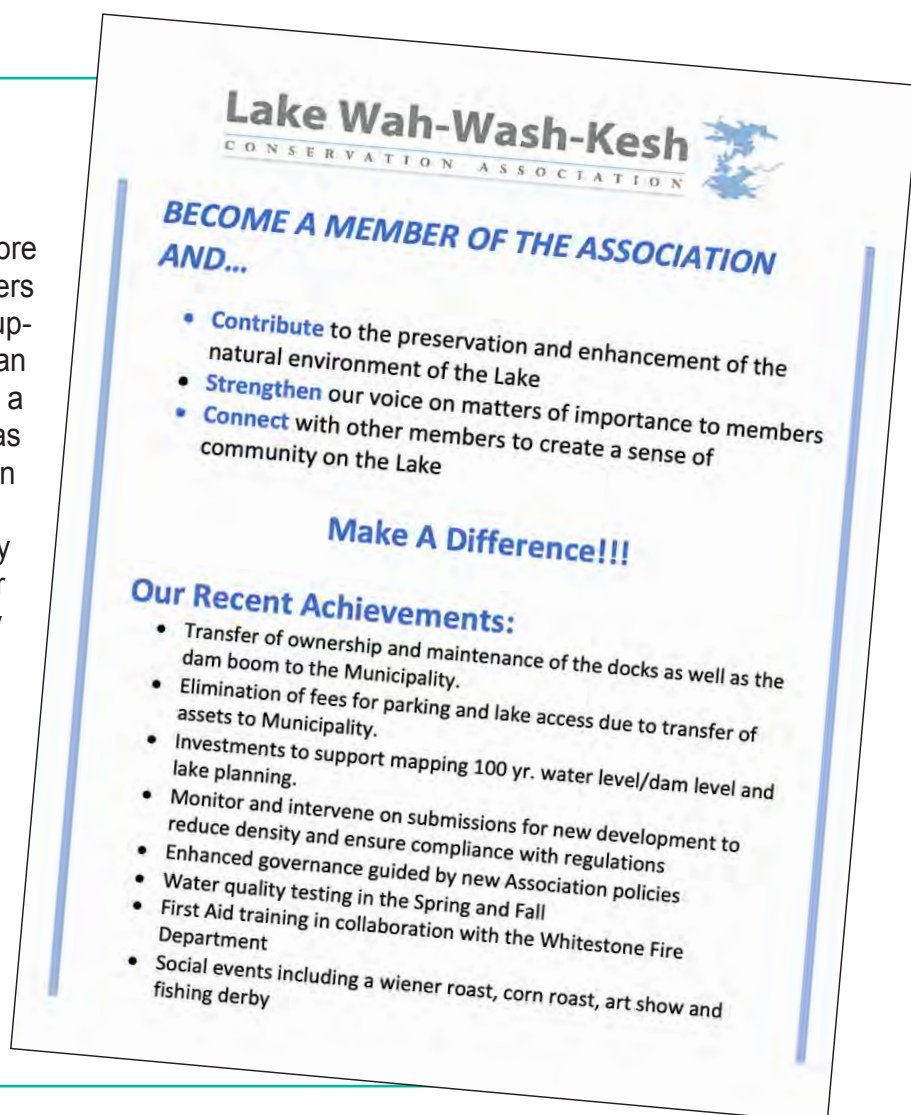
MEMBERSHIP AND LAKE DIRECTORY

We have been working toward creating a more comprehensive contact list of all property owners on the lake. Using past membership lists and updates from volunteers, we are putting together an email list which we will use when we send out a survey to all residents to support the Lake Plan as well as to notify residents of important information that all residents should be aware of.

We are also taking the opportunity to identify for residents the importance of being a member of the Association and the impact we can jointly have on issues of importance to the natural environment of the Lake.

Please take a look at the attached flyer and consider becoming a member of the Association. If you receive this and are already a member, thank you for your support.

Rob Slykhuis



PARRY SOUND EMERGENCY ROOM – WAIT TIMES TRACKER –

The West Parry Sound Health Centre (WPSHC) has rolled out a new tool to better inform the community about wait times in the emergency department.

It shows how many patients are waiting, and the approximate time until you will see a doctor. The emergency department must always prioritize critical patients, which can result in rapidly changing and longer wait times for those with less critical needs.

Designed to inform people of the current wait, in real time, the

tracker also provides predictive data showing average wait times over the course of the day.

The predictive data — illustrated by the white line in the graph — will become more and more accurate as the tracker is able to collect more data.

In addition to wait time information, WPSHC has also included information about potential alternatives to access qualified health advice. While many concerns will still need to be seen to in person, the expanse of virtual care options

can help individuals make more informed decisions about how to proceed.

The new tracker was made possible by efforts put forward by the West Parry Sound Health Centre Foundation and a very generous donation from the Friends of Muskoka Lakes, a philanthropic collective with a special interest in the health of the region.

To see the tracker, visit wpswc.com/disclaimer/

DEVELOPING A LAKE PLAN FOR WAHWASHKESH

As you may recall from last summer's AGM, the WWKCA has established a Lake Plan Taskforce.

What is a Lake Plan? As defined in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations Lake Planning Guide, "Lake planning is a strategic process that provides the opportunity to engage all people, governments and business operators to develop and implement actions to maintain or improve the natural and social qualities of life on our lakes, rivers and shoreline communities."

Rather than relying on top-down processes by government as is typical for water and fishery resource management, Lake Planning is a newer, community-based approach. The objective is to engage the full community including our local municipal government to contribute in an open and iterative process. The final product, while customizable to the interests, objectives, and budget of each lake planning group, can help to:

- Identify and protect specific lake values
- Promote community discussion and action
- Educate and communicate with all community members (lake and rural residents, commercial operators etc.)
- Set a future vision for the lake
- Set environmental and social targets
- Recommend stewardship actions
- Recommend land use policy
- Create a current inventory or snapshot of resources
- Identify issues and impacts
- Help recognize and address new issues

The WWKCA sees a lake plan as an opportunity to document the history and current state of the lake and set the direction for the future health, beauty and enjoyment of WWK for all, while building stronger community bonds.

We hope to work with our municipal government throughout the process. However, at the moment the council has deferred any active involvement due to the fact that they are hiring a new planner, and want to wait until that happens before engaging. The new planner is expected to be on board next fall.

We plan to forge ahead, and an important first step that we are working on now is to conduct an initial survey of our community on their main values and interests - concerns, needs and suggestions with respect to a lake plan. We will be approaching other nearby lake associations to see if there is interest in coordinating some aspects of the lake plan process so that we can establish common elements that could be used to inform municipality-wide action.

Kathy Deuchars

IN MEMORIAM

Bernard Douglas
Deuchars

July 2, 1932 - May 8, 2024



Bernard Douglas Deuchars died peacefully surrounded by his loving family on the afternoon of May 8th, after a short illness.

Long-time Lake WWK cottager, former member of the WWKCA board and avid fisherman of WWK bass.

Full obituary and details of a planned Celebration of Life can be found on the Mount Pleasant Cemetery website at this [link](#).

Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



2024 MEMBERSHIP PURCHASE FORM

*Be a member to help promote the conservation of the natural resources of Lake Wahwashkesh.
To protect and improve the natural environment of the Lake for the benefit of all users
and protect and promote the property interests of landowners*

Parking and Lake Access Permits are no longer required as responsibility has
now been taken over by the Municipality of Whitestone

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Lake 911 Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cottage Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership @ \$50 each: _____ Total \$ _____

Members must be minimum 18 years of age

Names of each individual: _____

*By completing and signing this form, you agree
to receive email correspondence from the
Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh Conservation Association*

Signature: _____

☐ I wish to unsubscribe from receiving email correspondence from the LWWKCA

****Memberships are no longer available at Bennett's store****

Please complete this form and email it to: treasurer@lakewahwashkesh.ca

3 Options To Pay For Your Membership :

- 1. PayPal** - Go to www.lakewahwashkesh.ca Top of the home page select: SHOP MEMBERSHIPS. Add the number of Memberships to the cart. Select PayPal/credit card OR
- 2. Email Transfer** - treasurer@lakewahwashkesh.ca
- 3. Mailing a cheque** - Fill out this form and mail it with a cheque made payable to:
Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh Conservation Association - P.O. Box 183, McKellar, Ontario P0G 1C0

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