



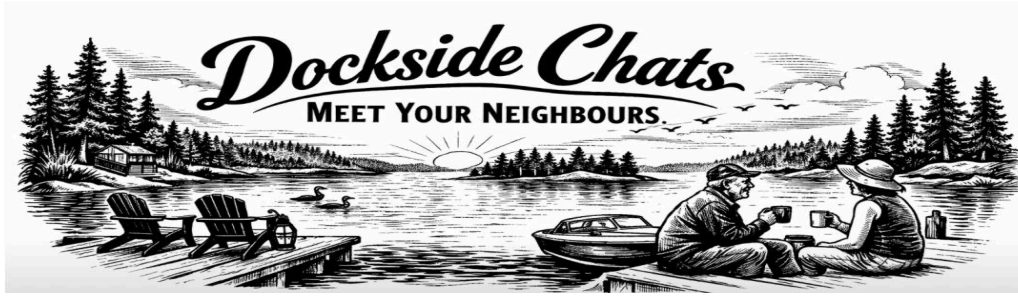
Monthly Digest Vol. 2 May 2026

## Neighbours Helping Neighbours

A big thank you to those who helped on Sunday of the long weekend with donations of their time, energy, boats, and barges! We were able to help a family in need who experienced devastating loss and damage to their property due to the flood. Thanks for doing what you do to help each other out. But then again #ThatsLakeWahwashkeshcommunity.

A shout out to Paul Thompson, who coordinated the event, mobilized the team, and made sure they were all well fed and hydrated.





## **The Story of Camp Miakonda and the Family Keeping the Magic Alive**

If you've spent any time on Lake Wahwashkesh over the past 70 years, chances are you've witnessed one of the lake's most iconic sights - a flotilla of bright red canoes gliding across the water filled with laughing, singing young girls.

For generations, those canoes have belonged to Camp Miakonda - a place where lifelong friendships are formed, confidence is built, and the magic of Lake Wahwashkesh is discovered for the very first time. And for one camper in particular, that magic never let go.

That camper is Pam Lamont.

Today, alongside her husband Dave Smith and sons Brandon and Drew Smith, Pam proudly carries on the traditions of Camp Miakonda as its current owner and guiding force.

Growing up in Wallaceburg, Ontario, Pam and her three sisters made the annual pilgrimage north each summer. Their mother would pile the girls into the car for the long drive to Toronto, where they would board the camp bus bound for Wahwashkesh. From Auld's Landing, campers would be ferried across to Birch Island - arriving wide-eyed and ready for adventure.

Pam was just seven years old during her first three-week stay at camp, and from that moment on, she was hooked.

Summer after summer, Camp Miakonda became a second home. She developed a deep love for the outdoors, the lake, and the sense of independence that camp life inspires.

Years later, while studying nursing at McMaster University, Pam received a call from her sister, who was heading to Miakonda as a counsellor. The camp urgently needed a nurse - affectionately known as "Patch." Pam jumped at the opportunity.

What began as a five-week role turned into 14 unforgettable summers as a Camp Nurse.

Outside of camp life, Pam worked as a nurse in remote Indigenous communities, then in critical care, and later taught at the University of Toronto. Her experiences serving isolated northern communities, often without a doctor on site, prepared her well for the fast-paced and unpredictable world of summer camp nursing.

Even after Pam and Dave started their family, camp life continued. In true Miakonda fashion, Pam returned one summer with a two- week old baby in tow, beginning a new generation's connection to Birch Island. Dave's career in the medical equipment sales industry took the family to several places across the United States, including California and New Hampshire, but Lake Wahwashkesh always called them back. Then came the opportunity that just made sense. In 1998, after owning the camp for 20 years, Catherine Ross approached Pam and Dave about taking over Camp Miakonda. It didn't take long for them to say yes. Following a transitional summer, they officially stepped into ownership in 1999.

Over the years, Pam and Dave have enhanced parts of the camp and expanded programming while staying true to the traditions and values that have defined Miakonda since the beginning: creating a safe, inclusive environment where young women can discover confidence, independence, resilience, and lifelong friendships.

And what a history it is.

Camp Miakonda began as a vision of Mary and Jock Liddell. Inspired by Mary's experience with Girl Guides and camping - along with Jock's work as a horticulturalist with the Niagara Parks commission - the couple dreamed of creating a summer camp for girls. After an extensive search, they found the perfect location: Birch Island on Lake Wahwashkesh. They purchased the island in November 1955, and on July 1, 1956, Camp Miakonda officially opened with just 13 campers. Many familiar local names helped bring the camp to life. Fred Nesbitt oversaw construction, hiring Sam Duggan along with Bernie and Charlie Stiles. Ellen Stiles served as camp cook while a young Ed Bennett (Sr) worked as a chore-boy.

From those humble beginnings, the camp has grown into a thriving summer community hosting more than 100 campers at a time.

Ownership changed hands over the decades - from the Liddells to Bill Auld, then to George and Catherine Ross - before eventually landing with Pam and Dave, whose connection to the camp began all those years earlier in the seat of a red canoe. Today, another generation is carrying the torch. Sons, Brandon and Drew, have stepped into the role of co-owners with Brandon as Director of Operations, continuing the family tradition of creating the magic on Birch Island. After working nearly every job imaginable at camp, earning degrees in engineering and business entrepreneurship, and spending time in the corporate world, Brandon ultimately found himself answering the same call that brought his mother back year after year. The pull of Birch Island is hard to resist.

Each summer, campers aged 7 to 16 arrive for two and four week sessions filled with canoeing, sailing, swimming, rock climbing, campfires, songs, and memories that will last a lifetime.

As Pam and Dave begin easing into a slower pace of life, they are now busy building their dream cottage on the mainland - remaining close to the lake they love, just from a different

vantage point. And while the view may change, one thing certainly won't: the enduring magic of Camp Miakonda and the generations of memories still waiting to be made on Birch Island.

Make sure you wave the next time you see the flotilla of red canoes.



---

## Simple Point of Use Water Treatment

If you have any concerns about your drinking water quality, be it surface water i.e., from the lake or from a well, there is a simple and effective solution for you.

Reverse Osmosis (RO) is a compact, easy to install water filtration system that will provide safe drinking water for most situations. RO is not a sanitation system, such as the one a municipal water system uses, which relies on chlorine injection and filtration, but rather a system that provides molecular filtration of your water. These systems remove microbes, heavy metals, and Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) through various stages. The first stages remove larger sediments and, if installed on a treated water system, chlorine is also removed. The RO membrane removes metals, TDS, and microbes. After the RO membrane, there are options for post-treatment filters that polish the water for taste and colour and add back beneficial minerals.

The RO membrane is a form of hyperfiltration, which is down to 0.2nm. How small is a nanometer (nm)? Good question: 1/1,000,000 of a millimeter. A human hair is about 60,000–80,000 nm; a Giardia (Beaver Fever) cyst is 8000 nm; and another waterborne parasite, Cryptosporidium oocysts, is 4000 nm. The system achieves this level of filtration

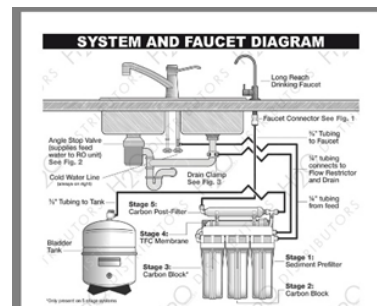
as the source water is forced through the RO membrane, creating two streams of water, one purified water and one wastewater.

Point of Use (PoU) systems consist of the treatment filters, a small pressure storage tank, and a tap dedicated to the system. The system is connected to your current pressure water system using a saddle clamp, like an icemaker connection, connected to the RO unit, to the storage tank, then to your tap on the counter. The wastewater needs to be connected to a drain.

There are many different units from many different manufacturers and suppliers, but always look for a unit with the NSF58 certification for the reduction of contaminants as defined by Health Canada.



Typical Unit



Typical Installation

Thanks to Ross Lister, WWKCA Director, for this interesting and informative article on Water Treatment - timely given the increased risk of contaminants with the recent flooding we have experienced.

---

Below is a summary of a CBC article from May 19th:

## **What people in northern Ontario need to know about flood insurance after a soggy spring**

Insurance experts warn that most policies don't include overland flood protection unless specifically added. People across northeastern Ontario are being urged to carefully review their home insurance policies after spring flooding left significant property damage across the region. The flooding- driven by a combination of rapid snowmelt, heavy runoff, and rising water levels - moved quickly through many rural parts of the region, causing extensive flooding and damage. Many who believed they had flood protection through their insurance find out they are not covered. Insurance experts say the situation reflects a widespread misunderstanding of how water damage is defined in insurance policies. Anne Marie Thomas, director of consumer and industry relations at the Insurance Bureau

of Canada, says standard home insurance does not automatically include overland flooding. A typical homeowner package policy only covers plumbing failures, but sewer backup and overland flooding have to be purchased as an add-on to your existing policy. She also cautions that coverage may not be offered in high-risk flood zones.

### Advice for homeowners navigating damage

Thomas says immediate documentation is essential for any insurance claim. “Take pictures of any damage. Keep receipts of any purchases that you’ve made,” she said. “If you need emergency repairs, you can do them and keep receipts.” She says homeowners should also create a full inventory of damaged items. “Once you’ve connected with the insurance adjuster, they can give you further direction.”

**SUMMER Social Calendar**  
**LAKE WAH WASH KESH**  
*Hosted by*  
**LAKE WAH WASH KESH CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION**

	<b>FISHING DERBY</b>	JULY 18- AUG 1, 2026	LOCATION: LAKE WAH WASH KESH
	<b>AGM</b> FOLLOWED BY ARTISAN SHOW & CHELSEA BUN BAKE OFF	SATURDAY AUG 1, 2026 @ 9:30 AM	LOCATION: BENNETT'S BARN
	<b>KIDS REGATTA</b>	SUNDAY AUG 2, 2026 @ 10 AM	LOCATION: STRAUB'S BEACH
	<b>WEINER ROAST</b>	SUNDAY AUG 2, 2026 @ 4:30 PM	LOCATION: STRAUB'S BEACH
	<b>CORN ROAST</b>	SATURDAY AUG 15, 2026 @ 4:30 PM	LOCATION: STRAUB'S BEACH

**Community • Conservation • Connection**

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram:



Lake Wah Wash Kesh Conservation Association



wwkconservation

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

---

# Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

