

CURRENT CONNECTION

Spring 2015 Vol. 26, No. 1



The purpose of the Lake of Bays Association is to promote, maintain and enhance a clean and healthy natural environment, a well-served community and a safe and peaceful Lake of Bays.

Congratulations to our Contest Winners

Visual Arts and Photo Contest sponsored by Aben Graphics



Photo Contest Winners

Life at the Lake

- 1st Sophie Angers
- 2nd Christine Andrews
- 3rd Sue Parr

Nature

- 1st Anne Boa
- 2nd Susan Johnson
- 3rd Janine Geddes

Landscapes

- 1st Jacquie Godard
- 2nd Mary Lee Prince
- 3rd Stephen Barr

And the Winners of the NEW Visual Arts Contest are...

- 1st Brenda Turnour
water colour "Winter Dichotomy"
- 2nd Ann Boscariol
acrylic "Overlooking Lumina Island"
- 3rd Marion Remen
fibre matt "Dwight Beach"

An exhibit of the winning pictures and artwork is planned for the Dwight Library in July and the Baysville Library in August. Look for these images and other entries in the 2015 yearbook that will be mailed in June. Also, be sure to check out the photo gallery on the LOBA website www.loba.ca. Thank you to Aben Graphics in Huntsville for sponsoring the exhibit and awarding the winners with a plak mounted poster of their winning photo and painting.

Photo by Anne Boa



The water colour painting above titled "Winter Dichotomy" by Brenda Turnour took first place in the new Visual Arts Contest. Seven artists submitted their work in a variety of media. This was a great start to what could become an annual. Look for details on the 2015 Visual Arts and the always popular Photo contests in the Yearbook (mailed in June).

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President's Message

by Ian Beverley, President, Lake of Bays



This Current Connection will reach you with the winter weather finally gone, and your thoughts turning towards the cottage and a long, warm and sunny summer.

A key planning issue LOBA members should be aware of is the required statutory review of the Township of Lake of Bays Official Plan ("OP") currently in progress. LOBA planning committee directors Brian Simpson and Barry Morrison continue to be part of the community advisory group reviewing the OP with Township planning staff. LOBA also wrote to the Township, and made submissions at the OP Review Open House held in Dwight in early March. This meeting was the first of two required public statutory meetings. The date of the second meeting has not been confirmed.

The OP is a critical planning document required by the *Planning Act*. It sets the underlying vision for planning and development in the Township and all municipal by-laws must be consistent with it. It is the single most important planning document in all municipalities.

LOBA commends the Township for its review process. We share some of the concerns of the Township and others regarding the growing complexity of the OP but have planning concerns about some of the proposed changes. An outline of our submissions to the Open House is available on our website www.loba.ca. We encourage members to become familiar with the issues, to share their views and to participate in the final stages of the OP review.

The yet-to-be scheduled second statutory public meeting is the final step in the review process before Township Council votes on the final proposed amendments. We encourage members to become engaged in the OP review process so that your views are heard on this important planning document.

Ian Beverley

DO NOT READ THIS if you have already paid your 2015 membership fees...

Every year we have a small percentage of our members who are slow to renew. As a 'slow payer', you probably don't think your single \$60 payment to a lake association that has been going strong since 1927 makes a difference. But you are wrong. LOBA's strength is in our numbers and every member is critical to our collective voice. And from a practical point of view, renewing in a timely manner puts the brakes on a renewal reminder process that costs the Association both time and money. In March, our phone committee contacts all unpaid members individually and they are always surprised to hear the comment, "but I never got a reminder!" Despite two mailings and several emails it seems our reminders still get lost in the shuffle of our busy lives. So here it is, nearly April, and this is it—the final reminder. The yearbook goes to press next month and the mailing list will be finalized shortly after that, so please don't miss out. Let this annual membership fee be a vote of confidence in the hard work of the many talented and dedicated volunteers of the Lake of Bays Association who are working to ensure Lake of Bays remains a place that we all love. If the dog ate your reminder invoice in February, just go to www.loba.ca and click on JOIN to pay your membership online or print off a membership form to return by mail. If you have questions, please call Beverley Govan at 705-767-3395.

Email Versus Snail Mail...

For an association whose members consider the environment an important issue, reducing the amount of paper we use makes sense. While the Yearbook will always remain in print, our newsletter is a vehicle that offers our members the opportunity to 'go paperless'. Aside from saving trees, it reduces the cost of production and distribution to zero, is immediate, interactive, and offers versatility of design. No, we aren't pulling the plug on the old-fashioned newsletter, but we will be giving you the option to switch to email. Your 2015 membership renewal form asked if you prefer to receive the newsletter and/or your membership invoice by email or regular delivery. We also asked that each LOBA family provide a primary email address and consent to send you email, as required by the new anti-spam regulations. This allows us to send you timely news and information. Times have changed. Canada Post has raised their rates and is phasing out home delivery. One day, email will be the only way to conduct business and LOBA will need to be ready. Over the remainder of the year we will be developing an online format for our newsletter. In the meantime, please help us serve you better by providing a primary email address and providing consent for us to contact you by email.

Meet Our New Board members...

Mary Ann Peden and Maureen Richardson

Mary Ann Peden

Mary Ann first came to Lake of Bays as a baby, spending her childhood summers at the Eyers family cottage on Black Point which was purchased by her grandfather in the 1940s. She met her future husband, John Peden, whose family cottage was just down the shoreline past Norway Point, at the Lake of Bays Sailing Club. They were married at Norway Point Church and their two children continued the tradition of going to the sailing club and spending almost every summer and holiday at Lake of Bays. In June, Mary Ann will be retiring from her career as a teacher and is looking forward to finally being able to stay at the cottage into the fall season. Mary Ann volunteered for many years as a director and commodore of the Lake of Bays Sailing Club and more recently as an Area Steward for LOBA. Because her entire family has always considered the cottage their gathering place Mary Ann accepted the opportunity to get more involved in LOBA initiatives in order to preserve this special place for future generations. Mary Ann has joined the Board as a member of the Membership Committee.



Maureen Richardson

Maureen first started coming to her brother-in-law's family cottage on Glenmount Road in the '70s and when another sister purchased a cottage near Norway Point in the early '80s, Lake of Bays became a cherished and frequent destination. Maureen and her husband Wayne Acton were lucky enough to buy their own cottage in the late '90s and became full-time residents on Glenmount Road in 2013 when she retired from Scotiabank. Maureen is a Chartered Professional Accountant and looks forward to contributing to the Lake of Bays community as a member of the Finance Committee.



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

LOBA consists of a group of volunteers who are passionate about the work they do for the lake and enjoy getting to know it and their neighbours better. The Nominations Committee is seeking volunteers for Directors of the Lake of Bays Association. Each Director will serve on one of the following committees: Environment, External Affairs, Planning and Development, Membership, Communications, Finance and Safety. We are also seeking people interested in being Area Stewards, particularly in the Rabbit Bay and Bayview Point areas. If you are interested in getting involved or would like more information about serving on LOBA's board or one of its committees, please contact Ian White at 416-231-9598 or email Ian at ian.white@rogers.com.

WINTER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Key Issues, Hot Topics and Priorities for 2014

News, Info and Hot Topics for 2015

We invited local politicians to share their news and views on municipal matters with LOBA at our Open Winter Board Meeting on Saturday January 24th in Baysville. More than 50 people attended, including representatives of the Lake of Bays Renewable Energy Cooperative (LOBREC), the SS Bigwin, and the Dorset Community Healthcare Hub. Each group was invited to provide updates on their activities in 2015. Here are the highlights of those updates..

From the District of Muskoka Chairman John Klinck

New District Council—John Klinck was re-elected for a second term as District Chair. His new council will consist of seven new members and 15 incumbents. Lake of Bays is the only municipality with all three district representatives returning. Lake of Bays Mayor Bob Young will serve on both the Planning & Economic Development and the Corporate & Emergency Services Committees, District Councillor Shane Baker will serve on the Engineering and Public Works Committee and Bob Lacroix sits on the Community Services Committee. Huntsville taxpayers are represented on District Council by newly elected Mayor Scott Aitchison and District Councillors Nancy Alcock, Karin Terziano and Brian Thompson.

Past Performance—Chair Klinck noted that the previous District Council had improved public participation and financial accountability. He was pleased to report that council delivered an average budget increase of only 1.3 percent over its four-year term. This was accomplished despite an average of two percent increase negotiated in the first year of the term with the four collective bargaining unions representing 78 percent of district's 493 employees. Also over the last term corporate assets increased through programs by 5 percent and net debt was decreased by 13 percent (\$12 million). Cash and equivalents have increased by \$3.3 million. The

District of Muskoka investments grew by \$23.2 million over three and a half years and reserve funds increased 43 percent.

Next Term of Council—During the election campaign last fall, Chair Klinck attended all-candidate meetings and consulted with members-elect of district and municipal councils. He sees the following issues as the most important for the District of Muskoka in the new term:

1. Environmental Sustainability and Fiscal Responsibility
2. Economic Development—requiring an inclusive District-wide collaboration
3. Structural Change and Operational Efficiencies—requiring a fresh look at political representation, governance structures, and shared or re-aligned service delivery
4. Infrastructure Planning—requiring an examination of capital projects scheduling and methodology
5. Broadening Communication and Public Engagement Protocols—too many people don't know what the District of Muskoka does!

At the time of the meeting District Council was just starting the work of setting the 2015 Rate Supported Budget (for user pay services such as sewer and water). The Tax Supported Budget, which impacts approximately 40% of our property tax bill, will be finalized in April.

From Huntsville Mayor Scott Aitchison

Newly-elected Huntsville mayor Scott Aitchison mentioned his personal connection to Lake of Bays and said he is excited to see where Huntsville and Lake of Bays can work together. Huntsville will be undertaking a review of their Official Plan in the next year and Aitchison feels that there are areas where our land use policies should complement each other, particularly on the shores of Lake of Bays and Peninsula Lake that are in Huntsville. "Just because you are on one side of the line doesn't have to mean that policies are dramatically different," says Aitchison. He noted that Peninsula Lake is facing some significant

changes over the next few years as Deerhurst Resort undergoes re-development. Huntsville Council has been working closely with the Peninsula Lake Association to ensure the concerns of the broader community are met as they work with Skyline Developments to allow them to proceed in a way that respects the surroundings. Huntsville Council has four new members and four returning councillors. Brunel Ward on Lake of Bays is represented by Dan Armour on Huntsville Council.

From Township of Lake of Bays Mayor Bob Young

Official Plan Amendments—Mayor Young announced that the first draft of the proposed amendments to the Official Plan have been posted on the Township website (www.lakeofbays.on.ca) and a public meeting to receive input is scheduled for March 10, 2015. He emphasized that no decisions have been made and that the purpose of the draft document is to put all the ideas in print and find out what people think, so it is critical for the public to get involved. He encouraged all residents to look at the proposed changes to the Official Plan, otherwise "you get what you didn't participate in."

Note: For more information on the Official Plan Review, visit www.loba.ca.

Development Charges—Development Charges are used to pay for the infrastructure growth required to support new development. The province requires that Development Charges be reviewed every five years. The consultant hired by the Township to undertake the review has recommended that development charges be reduced. Mayor Young expects council to recommend a reduction in Development Charges of 50 to 60 percent, which, when added to the 50 percent reduction by the District of Muskoka, will bring Development Charges to a "more reasonable level," says Mayor Young. There has been concern at the Township and District level of government that growth and development in Muskoka has been held back by high Development Charges.

Winter Meeting Highlights *continued*

Roads Study—A mandatory study of the condition of Township roads has been completed and Mayor Young reports that he was pleasantly surprised to learn that the main roads in the Township are in better condition than anticipated. To complete the study, the consultant drove every Township road for a physical assessment. Traffic counts were conducted in June in order to assess a busy, but not peak, time of year. This study will form the basis of road repair work schedule. The study noted that traffic counts will be taken into account when priorities for repair are determined. “A road may be in terrible condition, but if it only has two cars per day using it, it may not be first on the list for repair,” explained Young.

Financial Report—The Township enjoyed a strong fiscal performance in 2014 due in part by unexpected income from shore road allowance sales. A surplus of \$531,000 is projected.

At the time of the meeting, the first draft of the 2015 budget had been presented. There is a \$25,000 allotment in the 2015 budget for the Dorset Nurse Practitioner Station, an initiative that Mayor Young said council strongly supports and will ensure succeeds. Subsequently a second draft has been presented showing a \$107,000 increase to the levy representing a 2.6 percent increase. However, at the February meeting, council discussed adding another \$137,000 for items on a “wish list” that includes; \$100,000 additional gravel for roads, \$12,000 addition to the Planning budget, \$25,000 additional funds (for a total of \$50,000) to expand the Dwight public dock to permit the SS Bigwin to dock.

Note: A third and likely final draft of the budget 2015 budget was to be presented to Council at the March 17th meeting. Look for a full Property Tax Update from LOBA in the Summer Issue of Current Connection.

HOT TOPIC—OPP COST INCREASE!

How will the District of Muskoka Allocate Policing Costs to Municipalities?

The Q & A session of the January meeting

developed into an impromptu panel discussion with District Chair Klinck, and Mayors Aitchison and Young sharing their views on the recent increase in policing costs, how the District of Muskoka plans to share those costs with municipalities and the broader implication this issue has on decision making and voting structure at the District of Muskoka.

A new billing model that will result in a \$5 million (47 percent) increase in policing costs for the District of Muskoka came into effect on January 1, 2015. Despite objections from Muskoka and other municipalities facing an increase, the province remains committed to its new billing model. The current challenge for the District of Muskoka is to determine how to share this increase among the District’s three towns (Bracebridge, Huntsville and Gravenhurst) and three townships (Lake of Bays, Muskoka Lakes and Georgian Bay)

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have provided a breakdown of the \$15 million total cost of policing in Muskoka, and the Lake of Bays portion is \$1.2 million, which is roughly equivalent to the township’s current policing costs. The current Police Services Act, however, suggests costs should be allocated based on property tax assessment and the high property values in Lake of Bays mean that policing costs in the township would rise to \$1.8 million (an increase of \$600,000). For the Township of Muskoka Lakes, the property tax allocation will result in a \$3 million increase and Georgian Bay Township will have an increase of \$296,000. Yet the towns, where there is a higher demand for police services, will see decreases of \$1.7 million for Huntsville, \$1.3 million for Bracebridge and \$800,000 for Gravenhurst.

District Chair Klinck acknowledged that the cost allocation by property assessment is flawed in small rural communities like Lake of Bays where property values are high and population density is low and noted that District staff are aware of two municipalities that have adopted a different cost allocation for OPP services, both based on their own version of a per property cost allocation. Chair Klinck believes there are opportunities for the District to

explore other options for the OPP costs. But the final decision on cost allocation reform is subject to a vote at District Council, and the voting structure on District Council gives the three towns a total of 12 votes and the rural townships 10 votes. The townships may win the right to change the cost allocation method, but they are unlikely to win a District Council vote. “There needs to be some form of dialogue within the Muskoka framework to try to come to something that is far more fair,” said Chair Klinck. “It’s going to take some looking into the eye among members of District Council.”

Huntsville Mayor Scott Aitchison agreed that the allocation for OPP costs is unfair, but he also provided a historical perspective on District governance. The District of Muskoka was formed in 1972 to create a broader tax base. This helped pay for expensive infrastructure, such as water and sewers, that the towns could not afford. Mayor Aitchison acknowledged that some District services may benefit the towns more than the rural areas, but the health and prosperity of Bracebridge, Huntsville and Gravenhurst is important for all of Muskoka. Stimulating growth and investment in the towns will lower the tax burden in the townships... the high tide carries the ship. Mayor Aitchison felt that rather than focus only on the OPP service cost allocation, the District of Muskoka needs to look at the bigger picture. “We need a frank honest discussion about what really needs to be a District service and what doesn’t.” Responsibility for roads maintenance was cited as a service that would be managed more effectively by the municipalities and discussions are already in progress at District Council to explore how that might work in Muskoka. According to Mayor Aitchison, if District services are streamlined in a way that makes sense and shared services are properly integrated, then the District model is sustainable.

LOBA President Ian Beverley wrapped up the session by urging all our political representatives to continue with a rational and fair-minded debate at District Council, allowing Muskoka to make optimal decisions that consider the interests all constituents.

COMMUNITY NEWS

LOBREC and LOBHF

Lake of Bays Renewable Energy Cooperative

The Lake of Bays Renewable Energy Cooperative (LOBREC) has secured a 20 year contract with the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) for a 50kW solar installation to be erected on the roof of the Baysville Community Centre. Established in 2011 as a not-for-profit non-share capital cooperative, the goal of LOBREC is to bring community owned renewable energy generation to the Lake of Bays community.

At LOBA's Winter Board meeting in January, LOBREC president Melinda Zytaruk presented plans for their first project, which will be installed in April 2015. The cost of the Baysville solar installation is \$200,000, which is being funded by the sale of bonds. The first bond campaign raised \$70,000 and a second bond offering is available now (settlement date July 1, 2015). The 10 year bonds cost \$500 each and earn 3.5 percent annually. An additional \$28,000 has been received in grants and interim financing has been secured to ensure the project will go ahead as scheduled, with interim financing to be repaid by the sale of bonds.

The Baysville solar installation will generate 55,000 kW hours per year (55mW/yr) and the energy income for the first year is projected to be \$30,402. Over the 20 years of the lease the net benefit to the community is projected to be \$173,000. Melinda explained that LOBREC intends to direct a percentage of each year's surplus back into the community through initiatives such as grants to environmental projects and other opportunities with environmental benefits as determined by the cooperative.

LOBREC's vision is for the communities of Lake of Bays to be recognized as leaders in community-owned renewable energy while encouraging sustainable economic development for the benefit of all. In addition to reducing greenhouse emissions through clean energy production, the Baysville installation supports "smart grid" technology that encourages many smaller places of generation that are more resilient, resulting in a stronger grid. The Baysville project will also allow the public to access information online at the library to see exactly what the energy production is in real time and relate it to the physical installation on the building.

For more information on the Baysville project, LOBREC, and how to purchase bonds, visit www.lobrec.org. Or consider supporting LOBREC by becoming a lifetime member for only \$10.

Join the Friends of the Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation by Mike Peppard



Join the Friends of the Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation and become a champion of nature!

- Have you ever wanted to learn which bird makes that song?
- Have you ever wanted to learn more about the lives of the animals in the forest?
- Have you ever wanted to become a 'citizen scientist' and teach others what they can do to protect our wilderness?

If the answer is yes, then the Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation would like you to join our new 'Friends of' group.

The Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation is a community-based, non-profit organization committed to protecting the natural, built and cultural heritage of Lake of Bays.

In late 2014 we received a grant from Environment Canada to establish a 'Friends of' group that will champion the stewardship of our properties on the lower Oxtongue River, including the popular Marsh's Falls site.

This spring, we are inviting you to become a 'Friend' and help us to steward and preserve a beautiful part of our natural heritage in Lake of Bays.

Why join?

Participation will offer you the opportunity to learn from experts and local naturalists and to teach others about our shared natural environment.

The lower Oxtongue is an idyllic place to learn and teach. Here you will find evidence of fox and wolf, bear and deer, turtles, salamanders, grouse, woodpeckers and a multitude of other wildlife and plant species.

The Friends of the Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation is also a wonderful place to meet real friends who are as keen as you to enjoy and preserve our great outdoors.

To learn more please contact Mike at mike@greenassetspromotions.com.

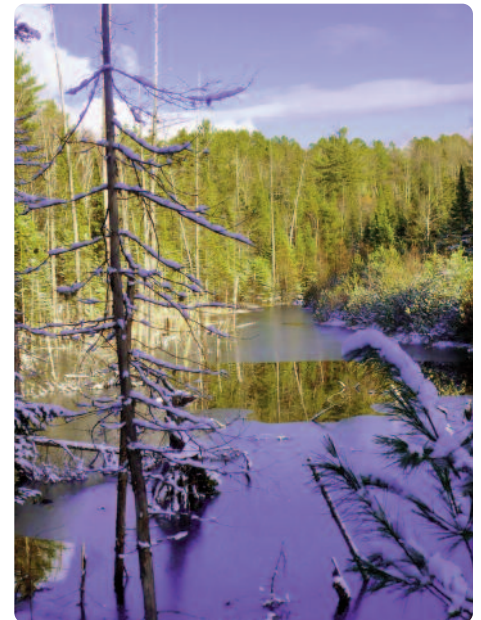


Photo by Brian Simpson

The Oxtongue River under a blanket of snow.

COMMUNITY NEWS *(continued)*

SS Bigwin and Dorset Community Healthcare Hub

SS Bigwin

2014 marked the first full season of commercial operation for the SS Bigwin. This 32-passenger vessel that was faithfully restored by the Marine Museum and Navigation Society offered regularly scheduled public cruises from Dorset last summer from June to October and, despite unusually cold and rainy weather, the operation managed to break even. SS Bigwin Board Member Colin Reaney reports that they are confident their plan to have the operation generating revenue within four years is attainable.

The 2015 season will see some exciting new cruise offerings, including special events and cruises leaving from multiple locations on Lake of Bays. Weekly cruises out of Port Cunnington will be added and a cruise-golf-dinner package that sails from Norway Point is being planned in partnership with the Bigwin Island Golf Club. The SS Bigwin will also be at special events such as the Baysville Antique Boat Show in August and a new Father's Day event (June 21st) sponsored by the Lake of Bays Brewing Company, also in Baysville. Look for details on these activities and more on the SS Bigwin website (www.ssbigwin.com) or call 1-844-4-BIGWIN.

The SS Bigwin is part of the Economic Development Plan for Lake of Bays Township. Last summer, the SS Bigwin employed 13 people and its gala raised \$200,000 for community enhancements such as the new Pavilion in Dorset. In 2015, the Gala will be contributing a larger portion of funds raised to multiple purposes, including the Dorset Nurse Practitioner Station scheduled to open in 2015. "We see the SS Bigwin as an engine for tourism promotion throughout the Township," says Collin Reaney. Stay tuned for more details as they become available!

Dorset Community Healthcare Hub

The proposed Nurse Practitioner Station in Dorset received operational funding of \$230,000 per year for the next three years from the Province. Now called the Dorset Community Healthcare Hub, the facility is scheduled to open for the summer of 2015 with a mandate to provide primary and preventative care to communities throughout Lake of Bays and the Algonquin Highlands. In addition to having a Nurse Practitioner on site, the public will also be able to access health care professionals for multiple services including addiction, mental health and nutrition counselling. If there is sufficient demand and funds, a doctor may be available at the clinic periodically. The local hospitals will continue to provide primary acute care and patients using the Dorset Healthcare Hub will not be jeopardizing their relationship with their family doctor. Collin Reaney says that the Dorset Community Healthcare Hub is a demonstration project showcasing an innovative way to bring healthcare to a population that includes a local community, a full time retirement community and a huge seasonal population. More information will be available soon on the date of opening and hours of operation.

Fundraising will be ongoing as the needs of the community are determined. This, along with financial support from the Township of Lake of Bays and Algonquin Highlands will augment provincial funding. In 2014, the Lake of Bays Association contributed \$2,000 from the Action Fund to this initiative. Another \$20,000 was raised at the Deep Freeze Winter Campout in February. To make a donation to the Dorset Healthcare Hub you can mail a cheque to the Dorset Community Partnership Fund, P.O. Box 41 Dorset ON P0A 1E0, for more information please contact Barb Townes—bjtownes@vianet.ca or Sarah Coombs info@v3productions.ca. For more information on major gift opportunities please contact Collin Reaney collinreaney@aol.com.

Launch 1000 Canoes is their next major fundraising event.

Collect donations and then launch your canoe on Saturday May 23rd at 12 noon, either in Trading Bay or off your own dock. If you plan to participate please email dorsetontario@gmail.com so that they can keep a tally on the number of canoes participating. Tax receipts are available for donations over \$20. For more information go to www.DorsetCanada.com and watch the count as it rises towards their goal of 1,000 canoes!

Muskoka Stewardship Conference

Theme: Living in Cottage Country— What You Need to Know

Saturday, May 2, 2015 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Nipissing University—Muskoka Campus

Keynote Speaker: Robin Tapley, Naturalist, Nature Trails
Cost: General Public \$50, FWM \$40, Students \$30

To register go to: www.muskokawatershed.org.

The Muskoka Stewardship Conference is an annual event organized by the Muskoka Watershed Council, the District of Muskoka and Friends of the Muskoka Watershed Council. This one-day conference provides an opportunity for lake stewards, land stewards, and other interested members of the public to network, share ideas and learn about stewardship topics from a variety of experts.

Shop Locally

Please do your part by supporting the merchants and service providers in Lake of Bays and Muskoka. The production of our yearbook is 100 percent supported by our advertisers and we encourage you to consult your 2014 Lake of Bays Association Yearbook before making your next purchase. All our advertisers are listed on our website www.loba.ca. Just click on LINKS to access our advertiser listing twelve month a year.

LOBA helps with land purchase at Marsh's Falls and support of Dorset Nursing Station

Marsh's Falls is one of the best known sites on Lake of Bays. In the fall of 2014 the Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation (LBHF) secured a 90-acre parcel of land, including 3400 feet of shoreline on the north side of the lower Oxtongue River at Marsh's Falls. The LBHF secured this land with funds held in reserve in their *Land Conservation Fund*, plus donor pledges and a mortgage on the property for just over \$200,000. The Lake of Bays Association contributed \$15,000 from our Action Fund to the purchase. Protecting properties such as this is exactly what was intended by the LBHF Heritage Foundation's founders in 1985, and LOBA's Board was unanimous in their decision to help make it happen. The Foundation has worked with ecologists to assess the habitat and species found on the property to develop a permanent stewardship plan.

LOBA and the LBHF are partnering in two events this summer so that the public can get a closer look at this wonderful preserve. The Silent Boat Rally Eco-tour of the Lower Oxtongue River will be held on August 1st and a guided Nature Walk will be held on August 9th to explore the newly acquired property on foot. Mark your calendar. Details will be available soon.

LOBA was also very pleased to be able to contribute \$2,000 in 2014 to the recently-approved Dorset Community Healthcare Hub. Enhancement of a well-serviced community is a mandate of LOBA's and the Board of Directors is thrilled that Lake of Bays will have its own Nurse Practitioner Station to serve both the local and seasonal population. Look for more information on this new initiative under Community News in this issue of Current Connection.

2015 MEMBERSHIP DRAW

Thank you to our sponsors for supporting our membership drive and helping us offer our biggest, best and most valuable prize draw ever. Sixty-five percent of our members qualified for the draw by joining or renewing by December 15th. Thanks to your prompt payment of membership fees, LOBA's membership committee can focus their energy on delivering Welcome Packages to new property owners instead of chasing down renewals. Thanks to all who have renewed for your ongoing support.

And the winners are:

OLD MILL MARINA Boat Storage & Winterizing—value \$1500	Michael & Jane Green
BIGWIN ISLAND GOLF CLUB Golf Package—value \$300	Mr. & Mrs. John Turner
PORT CUNNINGTON LODGE Dinner for 2—\$125 Gift Certificate	Jim Garner
RAFTERS OF MUSKOKA store in Dorset & Baysville—\$100 Gift Certificate	Mark & Lorraine Boehmer
BEAVER LEVER KINDLING CUTTER—value \$175	Julie Medland
DWIGHT GARDEN CENTRE—\$50 Gift Certificate	Scott & Cherlyll Pennock
LAKE OF BAYS BREWING COMPANY—\$40 Gift Certificate	Eric & Vizma Sprott
OXTONGUE CRAFT CABIN—\$35 Gift Certificate	Betty & Larry Nicholson
BUSH COMPANY BAR & GRILL—\$25 Gift Certificate	Ian & Linda Sommerville

SAVE THIS DATE

LAKE OF BAYS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, July 11, 2015 9:30 a.m.

Dwight Community Centre

Guest Speaker:

Craig MacDonald

Topic:

Native travel routes in the Lake of Bays Area and stories of early contact with white settlers

Craig Macdonald has been a Recreation Specialist in Algonquin Park for the past 25 years, where his expertise in wilderness travel and camping is legendary. His work in the Park primarily involved trail design, construction, maintenance and mapping, however he has worked in many capacities during his 47-year career with the Ministry of Natural Resources, including wildlife surveys, fisheries, road construction, rock blasting, timber cruising, archeology, fire fighting, land surveys and recreational publications. Craig loves to be in the woods at all times of the year and goes on yearly snowshoe expeditions that have taken him through many wilderness areas of northern Ontario and beyond. A gifted historian and story teller, Craig lives in Dwight with his wife Doris.



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