

currentconnection

THE LAKE OF BAYS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

SPRING ISSUE 2017

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.



Last call to
renew your
membership
before the 90th
Anniversary
Yearbook goes to press

If you have not yet renewed your LOBA membership for 2017, please do so before March 31st to have your name included in the Membership Directory, 2017 Yearbook. If you're not sure whether you've renewed, if you want someone else in your family to be the point of contact for LOBA or if you have sold your property, please contact Beverley Govan at 705-767-3395 or info@loba.ca.

TO RENEW

ONLINE: Go to loba.ca and click on **RENEW** Fill in the information under **RENEW ONLINE** and proceed to checkout.

You can pay with your PayPal, Credit Card or Visa Debit.

BY MAIL: Go to loba.ca and click on **RENEW** Print out the Printable Application in PDF Format, and mail in the completed form with a cheque or credit card information.

This year is LOBA's 90th Anniversary and you won't want to miss receiving our special Anniversary issue, packed with fabulous features, including a look back on the history of LOBA and a feature about Lester Weaver the founding member of our Association.

On behalf of the 2017 Board of Directors, thank you for re-joining LOBA and contributing to our ongoing efforts and collective voice.

Spring
beauties
are
making
their
debut
see page 6



What's this all about?

By Caroline Konarzewski

Algae!

Algae are plant-like organisms that occur naturally in ponds, rivers, lakes and streams. They are an important element in the natural food chain and there are many different kinds. Sometimes we see algae clinging to rocks and ladders and boat hulls, but most of the time we cannot see it at all. It can be an annoying nuisance and sometimes smells funny, but most of the time it is perfectly harmless.

However, blue-green algae (cyanobacteria) can become a serious problem when excessive amounts of it develop to form a scum called a bloom.

Sometimes these blooms become very dense and form into clumps.

These blue-green algal blooms can be toxic. We do not want to see them in Lake of Bays and luckily to date, we have not.

It is worrisome when we learn that information collected by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change indicates that incidents of algal blooms in Ontario have been increasing since 1994.

continued next page

above: Up close and personal with a trout lily. **right:** Green algae under a microscope. It is thought to be the first form of plant life millions of years ago.





Why is this happening?

Known factors that affect algae growth include phosphate and nitrogen levels in the water, storm water runoff, climate change that may affect water temperature, wind speed, turbidity and rainfall amounts. Even water depth and the shape of water bodies can make a difference. Because scientists know that algal blooms are occurring in water bodies where previously it was never found, there are likely other factors that have yet to be determined or fully understood.

What is LOBA doing about it?

LOBA is continuing its stringent water testing program. LOBA is also working with the Muskoka Watershed Council and scientists at the Dorset Environmental Science Centre to investigate appropriate, meaningful actions that will help in the gathering of knowledge, and the establishment and implementation of best practices to prevent and treat algal blooms.

above: Blue-green algae bloom.



WHAT CAN I DO IF I SUSPECT A BLUE-GREEN ALGAL BLOOM?

Report it immediately to the Spills Action Centre 1-800-268-6060 the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 and LOBA at caromike@gmail.com

Assume toxins are present.

Avoid using, drinking, bathing or swimming in the water

Restrict pet and livestock access to the water

If it's near your water supply, do not drink the water. Home treatment systems may not remove toxins and can get easily overwhelmed or clogged, so they should not be relied on. Do not boil the water, or manually treat the water with chlorine or other disinfectants, as this could increase the toxin levels.

WHAT PREVENTIVE ACTIONS CAN I TAKE?

Use only phosphate-free products

Check that your septic system is functioning properly

Do not use fertilizers that contain phosphates and/or nitrogen

Naturalize your shoreline to prevent erosion and to filter out phosphates and other contaminants

You can learn more about algal blooms by going to ontario.ca/page/blue-green-algae.

You could also attend the Muskoka Watershed Stewardship Conference 50 Shades of Green: all about algae on Friday, May 12 at the Port Carling Community Centre. This should be an extremely interesting and informative conference that LOBA is supporting with a contribution towards the keynote speaker. Why not make a long weekend of it? Come to Muskoka for the Friday conference and spend Mother's Day weekend at the cottage. Register at muskokawatershed.org/before April 15th and save \$15.

Call for Volunteers



LOBA wouldn't exist if it weren't for our many volunteers. They are passionate about the work they do for the lake and enjoy getting to know it and their neighbours better. Do YOU have some time to help us out?

The Environment Committee is looking for volunteers for the Water Quality Team, the Invasive Species Team, and the LOBA Shoreline Buffer Grant Program as well as for an algae studies initiative.

The External Affairs Committee and Planning and Development Committee both need additional volunteers to carry out their functions.

And the Communications Committee is looking for a volunteer to copy-edit Current Connection.

We are also seeking people interested in being Area Stewards, particularly for South Portage Road, the Trading Bay area and Port Cunningham Road.

If you are interested in getting involved or would like more information about an opportunity, please call:

Ian White at 416-231-9598 or at ian.white@rogers.com.

Thanks to Jane



Surely you have noticed the new look of this newsletter. Jane Dupere, a LOBA Board member has worked her magic once again. She is responsible for the professional look of our Yearbook, last year she updated the design of our website and now she has turned her talents to *Current Connection*. We can't thank Jane enough for the hours she volunteers to LOBA and how good she makes us look.

Water quality, Dedicated volunteers AND Wendy Gibson

Ian Beverley

President, Lake of Bays Association



It's been a winter of unpredictable weather, but we were lucky on January 21 that it cooperated and we were able to host almost 50 LOBA members and guests at our annual Open Winter Board meeting at Bethune United Church in Baysville. We were pleased to see Mayor Bob Young; Councillors Bob Lacroix, Nancy Tapley and Ruth Ross; representatives from the Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation, Paint Lake Association and Shoe Lake Ratepayers Association in addition to many members. Summer Valentine and Christy Doyle of the Muskoka Watershed Council clearly explained the District of Muskoka Recreational Water Quality Model Review; and Katherine Craine highlighted the many fund-raising activities of the Huntsville Hospital Foundation. You can read more about the meeting in this issue of Current Connection.

The 2017 Budgets have passed at each level of local government; District of Muskoka, Township of Lake of Bays and Town of Huntsville. You will find an update on these budgets and how they impact your tax bill inside. Many thanks to the hard-working volunteers on our External Affairs committee who monitor District and Township meetings in order to keep our membership informed.

LOBA members have a vital interest in water quality because our water is such a critical part of our environment and our enjoyment of Muskoka. To support the long-term health of Muskoka water quality, LOBA is contributing \$1000 to the

upcoming Muskoka Watershed Council Stewardship Conference "50 Shades of Green; all about algae" to support the keynote speaker. LOBA members will recall that algae is one of the critical issues that the Watershed Council is concerned about with climate change and this conference will support learning and knowledge about algae and its implications for our lakes. You can find more information about this important conference in this issue along with a number of water-related

To support the long-term health of Muskoka water quality, LOBA is contributing \$1000 to the upcoming Muskoka Watershed Council Stewardship Conference


features. Caroline Konarzewski, Chair of our Environment Committee has written about algae and also presents preliminary results from our 2016 water testing program. LOBA volunteer Penny Thomas has described a day-in-the-life of a Lake of Bays water tester, and longtime water testers Douglas and Emma Turner describe why they are passionate about their volunteer work.

After reading about the great work of these dedicated volunteers, you might feel the urge to give your time to LOBA. Past President and Chair of Volunteer Relations, Ian White has put out a call for volunteers in our Environment, External

Affairs and Communications programs and for Area Stewards. From personal experience I can tell you that working as a volunteer is fulfilling, challenging and fun! Please contact Ian at ian.white@roggers.com if you are interested in helping us.

We welcome our newest Board member, Don Eastwood who comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge. Sadly we have said goodbye to Wendy Gibson, who retired on January 1 after 10 years as LOBA's Executive Coordinator. LOBA has been incredibly fortunate to have Wendy's sound judgement, energy, tact, humour and remarkable organizational skills backing us over this time. We hope she will stay engaged with LOBA in other capacities in the future. We are equally fortunate to have, as Wendy's replacement, Lili Davis-Burchat, who joined us in December. All of us on the LOBA Board have been impressed with the way Lili has taken the reins from Wendy and got up to speed so quickly. Lili can be reached at executivecoord@loba.ca or 647-834-0186.

Finally, I'm sure you are enjoying the refreshed look of this issue of Current Connection. Many thanks to our Communications Committee and particularly Jane Dupere for making us look so good.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday July 8 at the Dwight Community Centre. 



Lake of Bays' excellent water quality grants us

BRAGGING RIGHTS

By Caroline Konarzewski



Each year, volunteers carefully collect samples from about 20 deep-water and nearshore sites. Our dedicated H2O team can be seen, rain or shine throughout the summer.

The LOBA water quality monitoring program took its first tentative steps in 1968. Over the years, the program has expanded and evolved. Site selection has changed with an ever-increasing understanding of water quality conditions in Lake of Bays. Since 2009, sampling has focussed on deep-water sites and nearshore undisturbed locations. This approach allows comparison with other water quality programs, such as the Lake Partner Program of the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and the Lake System Health Program of the District of Muskoka, which collect data in central, deep offshore areas of the lake during spring overturn.

Our water testing program continues to demonstrate that Lake of Bays is a clear water lake with low phosphorus and bacteria levels and no obvious impact of development on water quality.

In the summer of 2016, volunteers, coordinated by Deb Cumming of the LOBA Environment Committee, collected samples for phosphorus analysis on five occasions (July 1 and 18, August 1 and 14, and

above: Provincial water testers sampling lakewater.

September 1) and on one occasion (August 1) for bacteria (E coli and total coliforms). These water samples were collected at 20 sites in Lake of Bays chosen to include deep, open water locations and nearshore sites adjacent to developed and undeveloped shorelines, as well as the Oxtongue and Hollow Rivers, and the river-influenced site at the Oxtongue delta.

The 2016 Water Quality Report prepared by Hutchinson Environmental Sciences Ltd. indicates that our lake has excellent water quality. Phosphorus and bacteria levels remain low at all sites. Bacteria levels did not, at any time, pose any human health risk with respect to exposure from recreational activity. However, this does not mean that our lake water is suitable for drinking straight out of the lake. If you use lake water in your home or cottage, please be sure to continue filtering and treating it appropriately.

In the future the LOBA monitoring program will continue to focus on total phosphorus concentrations. This is essential as increases in phosphorus loads can result in increased growth of aquatic plants and algae, which in turn can lead to a deterioration of water clarity and decrease deep water oxygen concentrations that affect cold water fish habitat.

Because bacteria levels have been consistently low over the years, Hutchinson Environmental Sciences has recommended that future bacteria testing be conducted

every five years. This will allow assessment of long-term trends, while increasing resources to expand the program to include other parameters of interest to the Association.

We certainly do have bragging rights here in Lake of Bays. Our water testing program continues to demonstrate that Lake of Bays is a clear water lake with low phosphorus and bacteria levels and no obvious impact of development on water quality.

Full details of the 2016 Water Quality Report will be available for viewing on LOBA's website within the next few weeks.

LOBA's water testing program



By Penny Thomas

What's it like being a volunteer?

LOBA's longest ongoing project has been water quality monitoring of phosphorus and bacteria levels, as indicators of our lake and watershed's health.

The LOBA water testing program meets the standards of the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and the District of Muskoka.

Each year, volunteers carefully collect samples from about 20 deep water and near-shore sites. Our dedicated H2O team can be seen, rain or shine throughout the summer. A water tester's day begins early with a check of their equipment and preparation of their reports. At each of their sites, they collect samples and information and record the data. You might see them leaning over their boats checking the secchi depth (a measure of water clarity), recording water temperature and site conditions or dipping their equipment into the water. Once they have completed their work, testers take their record sheets and samples to Deb Cumming's dock. If she's not out visiting a site herself, Deb is waiting to greet and receive each water tester's contribution. All the data and samples are sent for analysis and a final report is prepared annually for LOBA members.

Many volunteers have been with the program for several years and there are some families on the lake who have contributed multiple members to the H2O team. We asked the Turner family to share their experiences with the water testing program.

Turner Family

Douglas Turner, 10-year water testing veteran

My family has spent their summers on Lake of Bays for 70 years and we have been instilled with an appreciation for the environment in which we grew up. Lake of Bays has seen drastic environmental changes in the last two decades. Large-scale construction, transformation of our shorelines, increased boat traffic in certain locations, and chemical runoff are threatening the lake we know today. Decision-makers on these environmental issues depend heavily on long-term, broad, and precise data to ensure protection against environmental degradation.

Moving into the future, it is more important than ever that decision-makers have accurate and precise information on the water quality of Lake of Bays.

We all want to preserve the natural environment of Lake of Bays. The list is endless: our clear water, the variety and abundance of our fish stocks, the aquatic flora, our natural shorelines, our streams and our forests. In order to do this however, we need to understand the impacts on our water system, which requires complete and comprehensive data.


When I began high school, my mom and I started doing water testing, and our family has never stopped. Even now, I have been known to book off work the occasional Monday morning during the summer so that I can continue to contribute to this important project. Water testing is easy, it is rewarding, and it is hugely important.

Emma Turner, 5-year water testing veteran

My family has been involved in water testing for over half of my life and I wanted to continue the tradition. It doesn't make sense to spend the entire summer at our cottage and not give back to the lake that has given me so much. It is a really simple thing to do that helps the environment. It is important to do our part for the environment, especially nowadays.

Doing water testing is about more than just the environment but also about helping the community and meeting new people. It has connected us to people like Deb Cumming, who runs water testing for LOBA and who has helped change the future of the lake.

Even though all I do is collect water samples, it does put things into perspective. Our lake is fragile and we need to take care of it before it is too late.

Thank you for sharing with us Douglas and Emma! If you are interested in volunteering with the water testing program, please contact Ian White at **416-231-9598** or at ian.white@rogers.com. 




Huntsville Hospital Foundation Healthcare for Life Here



Katherine Craine, Executive Director of the Huntsville Hospital Foundation (HHF) provided a lively overview of the great work being undertaken by the Foundation in support of Huntsville Hospital at our winter meeting. "We want to position Huntsville Hospital as central to Healthcare for Life in the Huntsville region", says Katherine. Currently the Foundation raises almost \$2 million every year, but the goal is \$3 million. To that end, they have launched a Business Cares program and in the first year, 25 businesses have signed up. The goal is 40 businesses each committing to donate \$5,000/year for 5 years to reach \$1 million. HHF holds two annual, signature fund-raising events—the in-town After Party with local entertainment held at a different business location every year, and the Bigwin Island Golf Tournament in June. Watch for an e-newsletter launching this Spring, and cottager focused fund-raising efforts this Summer.

The HHF board is a good mix of seasonal and permanent residents as well as three staff members. "They are a dream board", Katherine exclaims, and Lake of Bays residents are well represented.

To learn more or to donate, visit the HHF website huntsvillehospitalfoundation.ca, and if you want a tour of the hospital, give Katherine a call. 

SAVE THE DATE AGM

Lake of Bays Association Annual General Meeting

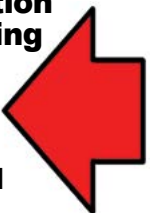
Saturday July 8, 2017

9:30 am – noon

Dwight Community Centre

This is an open meeting and
everyone is welcome.

Look for details on our website soon.



RENEW And the Winners are . . .

Congratulations to the five lucky winners of our Early Bird Membership Renewal draw, and special thanks to the local businesses who donated prizes. Please support them with your patronage! Almost 750 members, including 13 new members had renewed or joined LOBA by December 9 to qualify for the draw.

- Sally and Bill Tindale** Bigwin Island Golf Club (Golf for 4, value \$840)
- Bernie and Tina Bax** Old Mill Marina (\$125 gift certificate)
- Josie and Mike Mancuso** Rafters (\$100 gift certificate)
- Barb and Jim Poole** Oxtongue Craft Cabin & Gallery (\$50 gift certificate)
- Frank and Cathy Dennis** Lake of Bays Brewing Company (\$40 gift certificate)



Don Eastwood

The Lake of Bays Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Don Eastwood to the Board of Directors.

Don has had a long and successful career in community and economic development in numerous Southern Ontario cities and municipalities.

Don's skills in strategic planning, business development, land use planning and by-law enforcement are already proving invaluable to the Board, particularly on the External Affairs committee. He has participated on many Boards, was a Rotarian, a literacy tutor and has been a guest lecturer on strategic and economic development.

Don and his wife Pat now enjoy a more relaxed retirement pace of life at their home on Lake of Bays.

Don enjoys boating on the Muskoka lakes and Georgian Bay, canoeing and kayaking and walking Kipper their energetic, young Golden Retriever. Don also enjoys golf, but those who have seen him play wonder why...

Welcome to the Board Don, and thank you.



trout lily



blueflag iris



trillium



squirrel corn



Spring Flowers

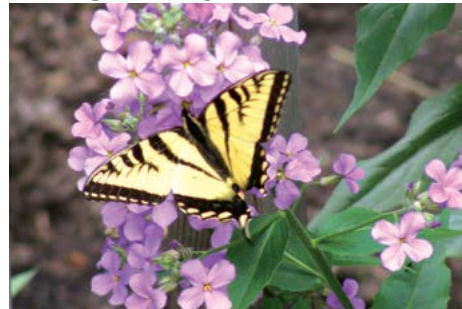
By Caroline Konarzewski

Spring is beautiful in Lake of Bays.

The new leaves are that special, fresh green colour seen at no other time of year. But rather than looking up to the trees, take a stroll with your eyes on the ground and you might be surprised at what other spectacular colours nature has on offer. Even before all the snow has melted the forest floor starts to bloom. As the days warm, more flowers appear. Keep your eyes open because some are very small and they don't last long. Blink and you might miss them.



spring beauty



fireweed

DOWN TO BUSINESS



BUDGET UPDATES

District of Muskoka

The Tax Supported Operating Budget was adopted on February 21, 2017 and there is an overall increase of 1.78% over the 2016 tax levy. This translates to a 0.94% increase after estimated assessment growth and equates to an increase of \$5.40 for a property with an assessed value of \$200,000.

The proposed operating budget for 2017 has expenditures of \$117.4 million, operating revenues of \$45.7 million and a net levy of \$71.7 million. The single biggest expenditure item in the District budget is for policing services - \$15.1 million. This is a 6.2% increase over 2016.

Rate-Supported Budgets for water, wastewater and solid waste were adopted by District Council in late 2016 and will affect only those residents in Baysville who are on municipal water and sewer.

The combined user fees and urban service area charges on a typical residential customer have increased 2.3% or \$3.70 per month.

The 2017 Budget for Solid Waste shows an overall net levy increase of 2.6%. The individual municipal net levy changes range from a decrease of 1.6% for Lake of Bays to an increase of 3.4% for Georgian Bay.

Township of Lake of Bays

Council approved the 2017 Operating and Capital budget at their December 2016 meeting. The total budget is \$9.45 million

with \$6.5 million for operations and \$2.95 million for capital expenditures. The tax levy will be \$4.93 million, an increase of 4.3% over 2016. The Lake of Bays portion of property taxes will be about \$341 per \$200,000 of assessed value, an increase of about \$7.09 (2.1%) from 2016. Major capital expenditures include:

- Road repairs and construction of approximately \$1.7 million
- Expansion of the Dwight municipal offices (\$550,000)
- Extending the Dwight Beach dock to accommodate the SS Bigwin and additional boat slips. Rebuilding the west dock and ramp at Norway Point and demolishing the east dock.

Town of Huntsville

For those LOBA members with property within the Town of Huntsville, there will be an average increase of 5.48% on the Huntsville portion of their tax bill.

WINTER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

On Saturday January 21, almost 50 people attended the LOBA annual open board meeting.

News from Township of Lake of Bays Mayor Bob Young ...

The 2016 budget showed a \$200,000 surplus due to good fiscal management.

Staff changes at the Township include a new planner, Melissa Markham and new building inspector Mirella Lisi. Morris Bryant is retiring and the new Supervisor of Parks and Recreation is Scott MacKinnon. Through a joint services agreement with the Township of Perry, Mike Wilmon is available for by-law enforcement on an as-needed basis. The Economic Development Officer, Jennifer Pilon started official in August 2016 and FedNor has agreed to fund 90% of this position for 3 years.

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change has introduced D4 Landfill Assessments for planning applications within 500 metres of a landfill site. There are between 50 and 60 former landfill sites around Lake of Bays and there is a list at the Township office. The assessment process is costly and time consuming.

Lake of Bays is the only municipality in Muskoka without an ambulance station. Mayor Young has suggested a station in Dwight on Township owned land, but does not have District support at this time. The District trialed a roving, single paramedic response vehicle in the Township to reduce response times.

DISTRICT OF MUSKOKA WATER QUALITY MODEL REVIEW

Christy Doyle, Director of Environmental and Watershed Programs, District of Muskoka and Muskoka Watershed Council, and Summer Valentine, Director of Planning, District of Muskoka provided a comprehensive and understandable overview of the Recreational Water Quality Model Review.

For 10+ years, lakes have been classified into several levels based on their sensitivity to phosphorus and then a tiered approach to planning was applied.

Hutchinson Environmental Services was hired to review this approach and their research showed that:

Overall, water quality in Muskoka lakes is excellent. Phosphorus is a good marker of water quality, but other factors like calcium decline, invasive species and climate/temperature change should also be monitored.

While the current model works well at the watershed level, it does not accurately predict water quality on a lake-specific basis.

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The proposed new model suggests best practices be considered for all waterside development. These include:

- ✓ Well vegetated shoreline
- ✓ Shoreline naturalization
- ✓ Protecting shoreline from erosion
- ✓ Managing storm water
- ✓ Limiting impervious surfaces
- ✓ Ensuring appropriate septic and building set backs

In addition the new model proposes causation studies be undertaken on any lake where one or more of the following three markers is occurring:

- ✓ phosphorus level above 20 micrograms/litre
- ✓ a long term trend of rising phosphorus levels
- ✓ a blue-green algae bloom

The impact of this new model will be minimal for Lake of Bays since we have a good Development Permit By-law that minimizes the negative impact of human activity by regulating shoreline development and vegetation removal in the shoreline buffer zone. 

INTRODUCING

Lili Davis-Burchat

The Lake of Bays Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Lili Davis-Burchat to the position of Executive Coordinator effective December 1, 2016.

Lili's experience as a business owner/operator, office manager, teacher/instructor and running her own catering company has provided her with a wide range of skills that are well suited to the challenge of coordinating an active volunteer organization like LOBA. Lili and her husband Mike live in Toronto and spend as much time as possible at the Davis family cottage on Glenmount Road. As a long-time cottager on Lake of Bays, Lili has a deep connection to the lake and she looks forward to contributing to the protection and enhancement of the lake through her work with LOBA.

Feel free to contact Lili at executivecoord@loba.ca or by phone at 647-834-0186. 



above: Mike, Lili and their 15½-year-old-and-still-going-strong doggie Dreyfuss, splitting and stacking for winter.

LAKE OF BAYS ASSOCIATION 2017

photocontest winners



Landscape:
Hilary Currer

Nature:
Gloria Woodside

Life at the Lake:
Hilary Currer



Landscape:
Matthew Lombardi

Nature:
David Ticoll

Life at the Lake:
David Fulford



Landscape:
David Sutton


Nature:
Hilary Currer

Life at the Lake:
Merilee Chisholm

The first place photos will be exhibited at the Dwight and Baysville libraries this summer. Special thanks to **Aben Graphics** for sponsoring the exhibit and awarding the winners with a mounted poster of their photo.

Over 40 members and their families submitted 100+ photos for consideration. Three LOBA members and the good folks at **Aben Graphics** carefully reviewed all the submissions and with great difficulty selected the winners.

You will be able to check out the winning photos in the 2017 Yearbook, along with many other contest entries. Throughout the year, we will use the photos on our website and newsletters.

Many thanks to all of you who sent in your shots. They tell rich and personal stories of our connection to Lake of Bays. Start clicking now for the 2017 contest and stay tuned for some changes to the categories. 



CURRENT CONNECTION is published periodically by The Lake of Bays Association for the information of its members. Suggestions, inquiries, manuscripts, photos, etc. can be sent to: Lake of Bays Association P.O. Box 8, Baysville ON POB 1A0 ■ Phone: 705-767-3395 Fax: 705-767-1044 ■ info@loba.ca ■ www.loba.ca ■ www.facebook.com/lobaontario/

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