

CURRENT CONNECTION

Fall 2012 Vol. 23, No. 3



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

President's Message

by Ian White, President, Lake of Bays Association

For most of us, the summer of 2012 will stay in our memories as one of the best ever for weather. Week after week of warm sunny days and comfortable nights, generally free of the usual haze and humidity we experience in this part of the world. The downside was a severe shortage of rain and a high evaporation rate. Many of our trees paid a price for that. Hopefully most will recover. Lake levels across the province dropped to unprecedented low levels, damaging more than a few propellers and causing a number of us to abandon our power boats earlier than normal. You can read more about the lake levels in the article by Deb Cumming, Chair, Environment.

Our Annual General Meeting, on July 28th in Baysville, was well attended. It was my opportunity to initiate my two-year term as your president. As I stated at the meeting, I have spent much of my life in a lakefront environment, but only the last nine years at Lake of Bays. A love of the natural beauty and relative peace and quiet afforded by few other lakes as large as ours is what lured Sue and me to these shores. Protecting all that we enjoy and cherish in the face of the pressures of "development" is one of my passions. Climate and environmental changes, some beyond our control, are challenges we all need to address.

This year's guest speaker was Peter Sale, who has extensive environmental science experience and is an internationally recognized ecologist, professor and author, specializing in the effects of environmental change on marine biology. His presentation, which included stunning photography and compelling arguments, left us committed to work harder for the



benefit of future generations.

Our 2012–2013 Board of Directors was elected at the AGM. I would like to welcome new members, Ian Beverley and Marcia Watt, and thank continuing members for their dedication and tireless work. A special note of thanks goes to retiring board member Barry Johnson for his valuable leadership on the Safety Committee. Past President Betty McDonald will be taking over as Safety Chair, but we look forward to Barry's continued input as a member of the committee. You can rest assured that we have a group of experienced and committed volunteers, all working to represent your interests.

And learning about your interests is the reason that we conducted our Membership Survey in May. It is imperative that we understand the interests and concerns of our members. We will use your input to formulate and influence our future plans and initiatives. You'll find more about the survey results in this *Current Connection*.

Our committees were kept busy this summer, monitoring municipal and district meetings, following development

plans, collecting water quality monitoring samples, facilitating a safe boating course and visiting residents around the lake, to name just a few activities. LOBA is fortunate to have so many hard-working volunteers on the Board of Directors, in working committees, water quality sample takers and area stewards, collectively giving us thousands of hours of their time.

Close to three-quarters of the residents around our lake are members of LOBA, demonstrating the incredible support and loyalty of our community. These high numbers give LOBA a credible voice at all levels of government. The purpose of the Lake of Bays Association is to promote, maintain and enhance a clean, healthy and natural environment, a well-serviced community and a safe, peaceful Lake of Bays.

Please allow us to continue to look after your interests by completing your membership renewal now, either online or by mail. In LOBA, we all benefit by moving forward together.

Have an enjoyable and safe autumn and winter.

Ian White

Bill Rogers

Winner of the Betty Day Award

Congratulations to Bill Rogers, this year's winner of the Betty Day Award. This prestigious award was created in memory of Betty Day, an exceptional volunteer who died suddenly of cancer in 1992 during her tenure as president of the Lake of Bays Association. The Betty Day Award has been presented annually since 1994 to a member of the Association who has made an extraordinary effort in performing volunteer activities that further the goals of the Association.

Bill Rogers is our eyes and ears at the District of Muskoka. He monitors District committee and council meetings and advocates on behalf of the Association members on matters impacting government spending and services. Bill has recently been successful in encouraging the District to move towards a zero based budgeting approach in establishing budget guidelines and has spoken out against annual budget increases that are not supported by a demonstrated need. Bill provided significant leadership in a joint effort by Muskoka ratepayers to ask for a review of core services to find cost savings and efficiencies at the regional level. A Service Review was initiated in 2012, and Bill represents the Lake of Bays Association on the Citizens Advisory Committee. Since 45 percent of your tax dollars go to District we are indeed fortunate to have Bill commit the time and interest required to monitor these meetings.

Bill's involvement in the Lake of Bays Association predates his current role as District Liaison on the External Affairs Committee. He was president of LOBA from 1996 to 1997 and he earlier served on several different committees.



Bill Rogers receiving the Betty Day Award from External Affairs Chair Gloria Woodside at the Annual Meeting in July.

Bill and his wife Ann have been cottaging on Lake of Bays since 1981 and made Lake of Bays their year round home ten years ago. Bill and Ann have two daughters and one son as well as nine grandchildren.

What to Do About Wildlife Harassment and Abuse

By Deb Cumming, Environment Chair

It was brought to LOBA's attention that a dead loon was found on Lake Kawagama. This loon had died, not as many do from lead poisoning after ingesting fishermen's lures or after becoming tangled up in fishing line. Rather someone had used it for target practice. The loon's body was riddled with pellets from a gun. There have been other reported incidents of wildlife harassment and cruelty in the area. For example, two snowmobiles chased a wolf in the deep snow on the lake and then killed it when the animal dropped from exhaustion.

In the event that you should witness an occurrence like the two cited above, please ... report it!

What to Do:

1. Advise the Bracebridge Ministry of the Natural Resources. The local office is located at High Falls Rd, on the west side of Hwy. 11, just north of 117. MNR has some enforcement responsibilities in this area and they can and will help with injured or orphaned wildlife. The number to call is their TIP line, which is intended for reporting any natural resource infractions: **1-877-847-7667**.

2. Contact the Canadian Wildlife Enforcement Services (a division of Environment Canada that has jurisdiction for species at risk wildlife offences) at: **1-800-668-6767** or **819-997-2800**
Email: enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca

Be prepared: this is a painfully slow process that requires you to leave a message and wait for a call-back.

3. If the concern is loon specific, call Andrew Bruce in Enforcement for Canadian Wildlife Services for migratory birds at: **1-705-336-6410**
4. IF ALL ELSE FAILS PLEASE CONTACT: Deb Cumming (LOBA Environment Chair)
Email: dacumming75@gmail.com

If you witness a wildlife harassment or abuse situation, please do your absolute best to document it properly. Take a photo or video to record boat or snowmobile registration numbers, the date and time of day or anything that gives proof of the incident and helps to identify the participants. Conservation and enforcement officers need proof to prosecute.

Recent Fires on Lake of Bays Provide a Wake Up Call

Two fires on Lake of Bays last summer were a sobering reminder of how vulnerable we are in a rural setting where wooden structures, vacant properties and access limitations create additional challenges for fire fighters. On the Victoria Day weekend, a sleeping cabin on Langmaid's island burned to the ground and then in September, a cottage on Jo-Lee Point was destroyed by fire. In both cases, the properties were vacant and thankfully no one was injured. While the loss of personal property is devastating, the bigger concern in a forest environment is preventing the fire from spreading to the bush. In both cases this summer fire fighters succeeded in containing the fire with limited damage to the surrounding trees and no damage to adjacent properties.

Mike Vadlja, Fire Prevention Officer with the Huntsville-Lake of Bays Fire Department reports that the cause of the Langmaid's Island fire is undetermined (the building was completely destroyed so no evidence remained) and the mainland fire is still under investigation. While response times specific to these two fires were not provided, Mr. Vadlja did offer general data on responses to incidents in Lake of Bays from June 1 to August 30, 2012. The Lake of Bays Fire Department responds to about 180 calls per year. On average, they respond to 50 calls over the summer months, representing 36 percent of their call volume. Of these 50 calls, 53 percent are medical calls and the rest are fires, alarms and vehicle accidents. The average response time was 13.32 minutes from the time the call was received until the first vehicle is on the scene.

Several factors can delay or hamper a timely response. Water access only and private access roads that are not maintained can severely impact fire department response times. "We strongly advise our permanent and seasonal cottage owners to ensure that access to their properties is well maintained to provide sufficient clearance for our fire trucks and equipment to reach their properties in a timely fashion," says Vadlja. It was also reassuring to learn that the Lake of Bays Fireboat, which is docked at Haystack Bay Marina, is in the water from the time the ice goes out until it freezes again in the winter.

Of course, fire prevention is the best protection. The fire department provides the following tips as we head into the winter season.

Wood Stove/Fireplace Fire Safety Tips

- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned by a certified, insured Chimney Sweep
- Never start a fire using an accelerant
- Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood
- Clean out the ashes regularly
- Store ashes in a covered metal container at a safe distance from your house
- Obtain a building permit prior to installing a wood stove
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy, make sure it works, and that every household member knows how to use it.
- Test fire alarms monthly or every time you return to your cottage
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years
- Check heating appliances and chimney before you use them
- Keep your private access road free of snow, branches and trees
- If you discover a fire, don't wait. Call 911 immediately and ensure everyone is safely out of the building.

For more information contact Mike Vadlja, Fire Prevention Officer: fire.inspector@huntsville.ca.

A Salute to the H2O Team!

It wouldn't be the fall issue of *Current Connection* without a heartfelt expression of appreciation to the dedicated team of water samplers who are the backbone of the water quality testing program.

The 2012 Veterans: Dee Allott; Jim and Midge Monaghan; Paul and Carol Stueck; The Tompkins (Paul, Anne Marie, Nicolas, Alexander, Michelle); The Turners (Jill, Douglas, Paul, with Emma doing a few assists!)

The 2012 Rookies: Brad Shostak (second Shostak to be a part of the program so not a complete rookie); Aly McLean

LOBA could absolutely not maintain its excellent water quality testing program without a team of committed samplers so—please—take the time to acknowledge these team members for all they contributed to our 2012 program (time, gas, enthusiasm, commitment, accurate and clean water samples).

To my team—a sincere thank you for everything you do to support the water quality program. I absolutely could NOT do it without you!

Deb Cumming, Environment Chair

Please Renew Today!

It's time to renew your Lake of Bays Association membership for 2013. Your prompt payment of the enclosed renewal invoice by the December 31st due date allows us to realize our plans for the 2013 season. You can also renew online at www.loba.ca. Thank you for your continued support.

Advertise NOW in the 2013 Yearbook

The 2013 Advertising Rate Card and Order Form for Lake of Bays Association Yearbook are now on the website (www.loba.ca). Pay before December 31st and receive a 10% discount. For more information and to find out why the LOBA yearbook is the best value for your advertising dollar, contact our Advertising Manager Bryan Dearsley at bdearsley@live.ca or call (705) 627-9479.

GOOD NEWS (and some more general info) about WATER LEVELS

by Deb Cumming, Environment Chair

Lake of Bays water levels were unusually low throughout the summer season generating frustration in the Lake of Bays community. Boaters have had to navigate with extra care and some waterfront property owners found themselves unable to leave their boats safely at their docks because there was not enough clearance to the lake bottom! While I don't think there is going to be an impact on phosphorus levels, the reduced water level, combined with the hot dry summer, certainly led to increased water plant activity.

Managing water levels in the Muskoka watershed is a challenge for the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). Competing needs and interests are at play from the top of the watershed—and Lake of Bays is very near the top of the South Muskoka River Watershed—right down to Georgian Bay at the bottom. Prior to 2006, water levels were managed under the 1940 Hackner-Holden Agreement, whose focus was primarily on maintaining flows required for small hydro power generation. In 2006, however, property owners, boaters, wildlife and fisheries came together to work with the MNR on developing the Muskoka River Water Management Plan (MRWMP). This plan attempts to quantify water level limits in lakes and balance them with the system's flow requirements. It is a tall order because all users place demands on a system that is supplied by nature. MNR manages water flows and levels under the Water Management Plan but has to work with what nature gives it.

And nature was very stingy this year. There was little snowfall in Muskoka, particularly in the east and on the Algonquin Dome, our source of water, resulting in low spring inventories. And things went downhill—quite literally—from there. The hot dry summer meant that inventories were not replenished, and the water levels recorded by the gauge at Lake Kawagama were low, relative to the historical average. (see Table I below)

Table I

Kawagama Gauge

Month	Recorded precipitation	EC Historical
April	25.6mm	61.2mm
May	38.8mm	86.4mm
June	112.8mm	86.4mm
July	24.0mm	90.4mm
August	76.6mm	86.4mm

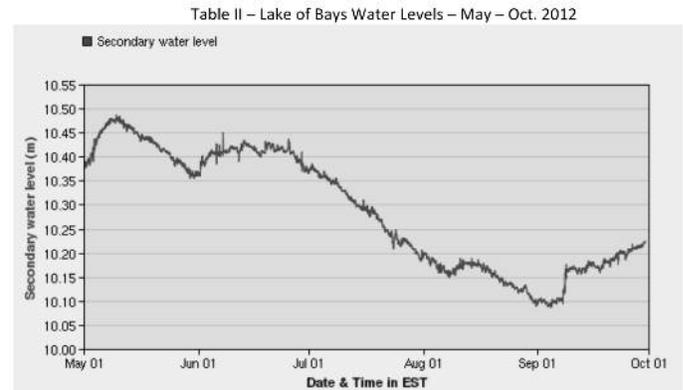
Source: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Table II indicates that Lake of Bays water levels were steadily drawn down in an attempt by MNR to meet demand elsewhere in the system. The MRWMP sets out legally binding minimum lake outflows that are to preserve the ecological integrity of the Muskoka River water quality, fish habitat and to provide sufficient connections between river reaches. The MRWMP specifies that a minimum outflow from Lake of Bays, as measured at the Baysville dam, of 3 cubic metres/second must be maintained to preserve ecological health downstream. Drawdown rates stayed at

that minimum for the entire summer season as MNR recognized the inventory issues at the top of the South Muskoka watershed and tried to balance these with sound river ecology management. Unfortunately, summer rains did not increase water levels. Table I shows that rainfall in July was only one quarter of the historical average. It is both interesting and reassuring to note that this minimum flow rate has been defined by ecological planning principles and is well below the capacities of the run of the river facilities. For example, High Falls generating plant, which is downstream, has a capacity of 10.14 cubic metres per second (MRWMP sec. 5, pg. 15)

Concerned Lake of Bays property owners and recreational users will be pleased to see from Table II that the trend line has been reversed as a result of the low outflow at Baysville and September rains. The net result is that water levels are moving up. Typically water levels are low heading into the winter, much lower than in the spring when Lake of Bays, as a reservoir at the top of the system, is “allowed” its maximum depth.

Table II



Although there is a temptation to compare and contrast lake levels within the system, this can be a frustrating exercise because conditions are not common from lake to lake. Snowfall and rainfall in Muskoka can be highly variable by area as was proven this summer in a comparison of rainfall in the Lake of Bays area relative to rainfall on eastern Lake Muskoka.

Table III

2012 Recorded Precipitation Comparison (approx.) - Lake of Bays versus Lake Muskoka

Month	KAWAGAMA RAIN GAUGE	MUSKOKA AIRPORT RAIN GAUGE
April	25.6mm	40.7mm
May	38.8mm	31.8mm
June	112.8mm	82.6mm
July	24.0mm	7.7mm
August	76.6mm	114.1mm

And Lake of Bays, with its water sourced from nearby Algonquin Park and a catchment area of only 1,481 square kilo-

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metres, does not benefit from the risk diversification of Lake Muskoka. Its water comes from both the north and south branches of the Muskoka River (which, in turn, are geographically separate concerning rain and snowfall patterns) and it has a much larger catchment area of 4,683 square kilometres.

Lower than normal water levels have characterized most of south central

Ontario's lakes and rivers, frustrating property owners and recreational users. Although there have certainly been huge inconveniences for boaters on Lake of Bays, it is important to recognize that water flows have to be managed throughout the system to benefit most stakeholders and to retain the ecological integrity of the watershed. When nature provides a reasonable water supply, MNR and the MRWMP do a good job of balancing com-

peting needs and interests. But when nature does not produce the water supply, MNR has to make some tough decisions and ... water does flow downstream!

Hopefully, understanding the reasons behind the low levels makes it slightly easier to live with them. But, if the foregoing information doesn't help, my suggestion is to wish *hard* for a snowy winter!

2012–2013 Board of Directors



Front Row (L to R): Fraser Govan, Gloria Woodside, Kathleen Black, Gundy Upans, Betty McDonald, Marcia Watt, Josee Hammill. Middle Row: Jim Metcalfe, Brian Simpson, Linda Robinson, Ian White, Deb Cumming, Barry Morrison, David Lennard, Mary Neal. Back Row: Andy Barnett and Ian Beverley.

Thank you to the following volunteers who have agreed to serve on the Lake of Bays Association Board of Directors.

Ian White	President	Andy Barnett	Nominations & Environment Committee
Kathleen Black	Treasurer	Fraser Govan	External Affairs Committee
Brian Simpson	Planning Co-chair	Jim Metcalfe	Membership Committee
Barry Morrison	Planning Co-chair	Linda Robinson	Area Steward
Deb Cumming	Environment Chair	Gundy Upans	Communications Committee
Josee Hammill	Communications Chair	Ian Beverley	Planning Committee
Gloria Woodside	External Affairs Chair	Marcia Watt	Membership Committee
David Lennard	Membership Chair		
Mary Neal	Nominations Chair		
Betty McDonald	Past President & Safety Chair		

Finishing Touches for Dwight Beach Re-greening

The Dwight Beach re-greening project was completed this Fall with the installation of four more maple trees and four beautiful red Muskoka chairs. Many thanks to the Dwight Garden Centre for supplying and planting the trees purchased by the Lake of Bays Association, and a special note of thanks to the donors of the chairs; Dwight Garden Centre, Algonquin Mini Storage, Dwight Lions Club and Deb Cumming. These finishing touches add to the 12 trees and indigenous shoreline garden planted in the spring of 2011. The re-greening of the public beach in Dwight has been a collaborative effort of the Lake of Bays Association, the Township of Lake of Bays and the Dwight community.



Glenmount featured in Heritage Booklet & Video

The Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation profiles communities around Lake of Bays each year at their Annual Meeting. This year the featured community was Glenmount and heritage building awards were presented to owners who maintain and enjoy the area's historic cottages. A video and booklet about the area are available for sale by contacting the LBHF at info@lakeofbaysheritage.ca, or by calling Bruce MacLellan (416) 969-2727.

Member Survey

The Results are in!

Thank you to all who participated in our 2012 Member Survey last summer. In June, 1255 members received the survey either electronically (918) or by mail (337). The 33 percent response rate (408 completed surveys) demonstrates that we have a committed and engaged membership and provides us with valuable feedback on a wide range of topics. Pollsters would consider this to be a good response rate and it's in line with that achieved by our last member survey in 2003-04. Given that it had been eight years since our last survey, it was time to take the pulse of the population we serve and to seek some input about the direction the Association should be headed. The survey consisted of 35 questions of which seven were open-ended to allow for written comments. The number of written responses was encouraging and will be very helpful to our committee chairs in developing programs and services. The results of the survey have been provided to our Board of Directors who will consider your feedback, ideas and suggestions in their planning for next year and many years to come. Here is a brief overview of the survey results.

The survey confirmed that the Association's four cornerstone priorities all continue to be very important to members, in the following order: environmental protection, development and land-use planning, taxes and government services and boating and water safety.

Environment

Respondents strongly support all of our current Environment Committee activities, with water quality monitoring and protection the most valued program with 82 percent of respondents indicating that it was very important or critical. Watershed monitoring and protection was a close second with 77 percent indicating it was very important or critical. Respondents were most interested in seeing the Association becoming more involved in issues related to noise pollution, wetland protection, shoreline naturalization and forest health.

Boating Safety

Noisy boats continue to be a problem for our members, with 57 percent expressing deep concern about them. The survey also revealed an equal level of concern about excessive boat speeds as well as large wakes near shore or in restricted areas. Interest in a seminar on navigation and local boating hazards on Lake of Bays was indicated.

Taxes and Government Affairs

Property tax assessment reform ranks as the most important political issue (rated as critical), followed by monitoring development and land-use planning, monitoring our Municipal and District government spending and interviewing candidates for municipal elections. Also important were strengthening the local economy and single-tier versus two-tier government. Our local hospitals are among the most frequently used public facilities and 78 percent of respondents support tax dollars being directed to support them.

Communications

The communications section of the survey was the most probing as the Association seeks to find the right balance between effectiveness, economy and environmental impact in our communication vehicles. Response to the content of our newsletter, yearbook, website and electronic news bulletins was overwhelmingly positive and the written comments will provide our Communications Committee with inspiration and many new ideas. However, we continue to straddle the electronic divide. The survey did not provide any clear directive to go paperless; 38 percent of respondents prefer to receive the newsletter (*Current Connection*) electronically, 35 percent prefer our current practice of sending it by mail and e-mail, and 27 percent indicated they want to receive it by mail only. Our e-mail bulletin (*Lake Of Bays Newflash*) is well received, with 84 percent indicating that they always read it and 74 percent saying that they forward it to members of their family. However, only 59 percent of respondents had been to our

website in the last six months, despite the fact that 94 percent of those who had visited it found what they were looking for and 97 percent found the site easy to navigate.

Online payments

The vote was almost an even split on method of payment for renewing membership; 51 percent prefer to pay their membership by mail and 49 percent said they would prefer to renew online. It's notable that 27 percent of our members received the survey by mail because they have not provided us with an e-mail address. Many of these members either do not use e-mail at all or prefer not to receive their LOBA communications by e-mail. It is apparent that we will need to undertake our transition to paperless technologies slowly, and continue to supply hard copies of our correspondence.

Member profile

We are a predominantly gray haired crowd; 90 percent of survey respondents are over 50 years old with 32 percent over the age of 70. However, 83 percent said that their Lake of Bays property is used by adult children and their families. As might be expected, survey respondents were predominantly "seasonal" residents (80 percent). But the definition of "seasonal" appears to be changing, as 37 percent of these part-time residents come to Lake of Bays year round and only 44 percent use their property in the summer (from May through October). Of the 16 percent who indicated they are permanent residents, six percent said they live elsewhere for three to six months of the year. Given these demographics, it is reasonable to assume that the next decade will bring a period of transition in terms of property ownership and property use. The Lake of Bays Association will need to remain responsive to these changes if we are to succeed in preserving those aspects of Lake of Bays that we wish to stay the same.

Respectfully submitted by the Survey Committee: Wendy Gibson, Ian White, Josee Hammill and David Lennard

About Your New Property Assessment

Your Share of the Municipal Tax Bill

By now you will have received your updated Property Assessment Notice. This new assessment will determine your share of the municipal tax bill over the next four years (2013 to 2016). Here are some key points to take into consideration when reviewing your new property assessment.

Sales in the time period January 1, 2008 to January 1, 2012 have been used to establish comparisons for a given property. Property value increases will be phased in over a four-year period (2013 to 2016) to lessen the impact of rapidly increasing property values, however any decreases will be effective immediately. There is the possibility that some waterfront communities experienced a decline in the assessed value during the period. The average phased-in assessment of all residential properties in Lake of Bays (waterfront, non-waterfront, rural and villages) has declined by -.84 percent since the 2012 tax year. Your property may have changed by more or less than this average. Since 2008, the average waterfront property assessment in the District of Muskoka has increased by 6.3 percent.

Acceptable deviation for recreational property continues to be 25 percent. This compares to 10 percent for urban properties. Essentially MPAC accepts a higher degree of error for recreational properties compared to urban properties because of the high degree of variation and lack of suitable comparisons in waterfront communities. In urban areas a larger number of sales and greater uniformity produces a more accurate assessment.

“ABOUT MY PROPERTY” (AMP) is an Internet access feature which will assist property owners in determining assessments for comparable properties and answer some questions about how your assessment was generated. A new user ID and password is included on your assessment notice.

“NEIGHBOURHOOD” base values will vary greatly. For clarity on deciphering assessment values, it is important to know what your “neighbourhood” includes. For

waterfront communities, MPAC usually restricts a neighbourhood to other waterfront properties in a localized area of a lake. Therefore the number of sales used for the comparison may be small over the four-year period while variation in quality and features may be high. The rise and fall of nearby, but inland, properties may not have much influence over waterfront values and vice versa. Waterfront lots differ significantly from one property to another. The major factors that contribute to the Current Value Assessment are: lot characteristics such as shoreline length, access, topography, predominant exposure; the size of buildings, quality of construction and finishes and secondary structures.

There will be the same “time adjustment” factors applied to all properties.

This means that a comparison property sale in your “neighbourhood” in 2008 will have a time factor applied to render a 2012 value. Although the pattern of change for high versus lower-value properties may have differed during the four-year period, the same factors will be used.

The Request for Review (RfR) deadline for 2013 is April 1, 2013. If you honestly feel that you could not have sold your property on January 1, 2012 for the

amount of your new assessment, then a RfR may be worthwhile. The deadline to challenge the value is April 1, 2013 for the 2013 tax year. If you are not satisfied with the results of the RfR, then you may file an appeal with the Assessment Review Board (ARB), an independent tribunal of the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General. Refer to your assessment notice for more information and contact details.

An increased assessed value does not necessarily mean your taxes will increase. If the amount of your assessment change is less than the average change in your municipality, you may even be fortunate enough to receive a decreased tax bill. The average phased-in assessment of properties in your municipality since the 2012 tax year is indicated on your assessment notice.

Municipal spending also affects your tax rate. For the last assessment period (2008–2012), the Township of Lake of Bays benefited from an annual assessment increase of 7.68 percent, which in effect lowered the impact of budget increases on the tax rate. For 2013, with an average -.84 percent decline in assessment base, any increase to the municipal budget will directly impact the tax rate and your tax bill.

Lake of Bays Photo Contest **Deadline is December 31st**

Categories: Life at the Lake—people, pets and dwellings
Nature—wild plant & animals
Landscapes—land, water and sky

Open to all Lake of Bays Association members and their families. Photos to be submitted in digital format to Aben Graphics: info@abengraphics.com with the subject line entitled “Lake of Bays Photo Contest.” Each participant agrees to have their photo used by the Lake of Bays Association newsletter, year-book and website.



Photo by Paul Madder.

Area Stewards Program—Members wanted!

By David Lennard, Membership Chair

Area Stewards serve as ambassadors for the Association by visiting residents door-to-door during the peak summer months. Their responsibilities are as follows:

- * To identify and solicit new members
- * To monitor the needs and concerns of the residents of Lake of Bays and convey this feedback to the Board
- * To provide information about the Association.

Area Stewards are assigned specific roads near their own cottage. It is a great asset to know the residents and the area where they are assigned. The Area Stewards cover all the roads and islands on the lake. Each cottage is identified by its fire number.

Before soliciting an area, it is most important to be informed of the Association programs and activities by reading the newsletters, yearbook, website, and attending the annual meeting.

A “Meet and Greet” in June, at a Lake

of Bays location, provides new Area Stewards with much of the information they need. This is a great chance to meet the Executive and other Area Stewards, number around 40. At this meeting the membership packages are available for each of the assigned areas.

Area Stewards are vital to the organization. The Association depends on them to contact non-members and to promote the work of the Association. As Membership Chairman, I would like to thank the 40 Area Stewards who did an excellent job in 2012 by signing up so many new members. They listened to residents with an open ear and were willing to discuss issues of concern. Their efforts helped to keep the paid membership to over 1300.

We were fortunate to have so many capable Area Stewards, but we do need more. Would you like to serve as Area Steward for your lakeside road? If you are interested, please contact David Lennard at d4.lennard@gmail.com or at 905-503-0084.

Update on re-surfacing South Portage Road

If you were using the South Portage Road last summer you will have noticed sections of loose and bumpy surface and may be wondering if this is a work-in-progress or the finished condition of the road. Cyclists in particular were asking for information because the South Portage Road is a significant section of the popular 80 km ride around Lake of Bays. The good news is that the road re-surfacing is a two-step process, to be completed next summer. Last summer it was graded with a “high float,” which is an asphalt/cement mixture that is applied as a spray and has a very gravel-like texture that is rolled and packed and then left to settle for a year. After leaving it for a year, crews can see where potholes and low spots develop and are able to patch trouble spots before applying a final “slurry seal” to give the road a smooth black-top surface. According to the District of Muskoka Public Works department, this final surface will be applied sometime next summer and should cause minimal disruption to traffic over a two-week period.

Safe Boating Course for Kids—a continued success

On July 8th a full class of 14 kids attended the Youth on Board course sponsored by the Lake of Bays Association and BOATsmart Canada.

This course is specifically designed for the 8-to-15 age group and includes a morning in-class session, the PCOC exam and an on-water practice session in the afternoon. The on-water session gives the kids an opportunity to test their knowledge and skills they learned during the morning. The course was presented by a certified BOATsmart instructor.

Our thanks to PRIDE of Lake of Bays Marine for providing excellent facilities and a terrific boat for the afternoon on-water practice.

This course will be offered again next summer. The scheduled date is Sunday, July 7th. Further information will be available on the website (www.loba.ca) in 2013 and in upcoming issues of *Current Connection*.

SAVE THIS DATE

Please Come

Lake of Bays Association Winter Meeting

Saturday, January 19, 2013

Baysville Senior's Centre

10:30 a.m.

Lunch served following

Join us for an update on LOBA activities and other topics of interest to seasonal and permanent residents of Lake of Bays. This is an open meeting, with our municipal and district elected officials and neighbouring lake associations invited to participate. Everyone is welcome. Information on guest speakers and the meeting agenda will be provided by email and on the LOBA website www.loba.ca.



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, Ontario, P0B 1A0

PHONE: (705) 767-3395

FAX: (705) 767-1044

E-MAIL: info@loba.ca

WEBSITE: www.loba.ca

EDITOR: SALLY COUTTS

PHONE: (613) 236-0621 or (705) 635-2567

E-MAIL: sallycoutts@sympatico.ca

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