



2012 BLACKSTONE LAKE COTTAGERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jessie Metelka

Cottaging season 2012 is finally upon us!

As your new and green BLCA President I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself to the BLCA members. My father built the family cottage with his father years ago. I have been cottaging on Blackstone Lake every summer that I can remember and even a few that I can't. Cottaging moments that I'm most fond of remembering include snorkeling at Black Rock shoals, canoeing Ludwig's Swamp (as we refer to it...), and boating through Blackstone River with my dad and sisters on calm, dark nights while shining lights on sleeping fish.

Over the years we have grown accustomed to new activities (wakeboarding, tubing etc.) but the sentiment of the cottage remains the same - it is a place to relax with family but also to explore and respect. Looking back on my 27 years on the lake it is hard to believe just how much things can change in a relatively short amount of time, especially when you really pay attention. In my own experience I have observed the fish population change, frog populations dwindle and human populations increase. As we continue to increase the impact we have on this ecosystem, I believe it is important to be conscious of the positive effects that we can have. It is my hope as President to help members and non members understand how to interact within this ecosystem as sustainably as possible.

However my biggest goal as President is merely to get to know my neighbours. As many years as I have spent on this lake, I know only a few of you! I would love to see an increased sense of community on the lake. Our grandparents and parents have done their parts to introduce us to these special summers at the lake. It is up to us, the "next generation", to take our place so that future Blackstoners will continue to treasure their own summer days!

Happy Summer of 2012!

FIRE AND MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE

By Dave McCamus, Emergency Response Committee

The executive of BLCA have asked me to take the lead in Fire Response on Blackstone Lake. For many years we have been developing our capacity to respond effectively to lake emergencies. When the Township of the Archipelago was just formed years ago, there simply was no outside assistance available. Many of us acquired our own portable fire pumps to protect our own properties and those of our neighbours. From this we developed a network of 14 fire pumps scattered around the lake, plus one fire boat. A few years ago Dr. David Rosen led an effort to define an approach to medical emergency response for our lake. All of this work is now summarized and available to all cottagers on Blackstone in the form of the EMERGENCY RESPONSE GUIDE. In recent years, The Township of the Archipelago has developed a 911 system for Police and Medical emergencies, but not for fire. Thus we do continue to have the need for our own self-sufficient fire response capability. The 911 service does apply to medical emergencies, and EMTs will be dispatched in response to a 911 call. Given our remoteness, however, there is the question of how best to provide interim assistance until help arrives, so we still need a local medical response capability. It is essential for all of us to understand that this is a self help fire and medical response system in which we all have a role to play. It is based on the simple concept of neighbours helping neighbours in a critical situation. You should have a copy of the *Emergency Response Guide* prominently displayed near a telephone, as well as a map of the lake showing property locator numbers (civic address), and you and your family should be familiar with its contents and have a plan to deal with emergencies. We have included the Guide at the end of this newsletter for you to copy as needed. You can also download both items at <http://blackstonelakeassn.ca/>.

FIRE ON BLACKSTONE LAKE

On April 13th, 2012, there was a very dangerous fire on the north shore of McRobert's Bay. Fortunately, no cottages were affected and no one was injured. The owner heroically fought the fire singlehandedly before MNR fire bombers, and an MNR fire fighting crew arrived by helicopter, and extinguished the blaze, along with help from fellow cottagers. As you can imagine, despite our efforts to provide our own fire protection, at this time of year there was no one around to bring our pumps to play in this situation. This raises the issue once again of whether or not we could work out an arrangement with Seguin Fire Department to provide full fire protection for our lake. Please note that Seguin Fire does have water access capability. You may recall that Ian Mead led the charge a few years ago on this very idea, with both Blackstone and Crane Lake included in the discussions. At that time, Seguin was prepared to provide this service at a cost of \$185/year/property. This was turned down primarily, it seems, because the folks on Crane Lake felt they had adequate protection by virtue of their fire barge and volunteer fire brigade. Ian Mead is now contacting as many of us as possible by email to see what support exists for him to approach Seguin Fire Department on the basis of Blackstone Lake only. If you have been contacted by email by Ian, and have not responded, please do so now. If you are not on Ian's email list, please email me at davidmccamus@cogeco.ca.

So far it looks like a majority would support this move.

FIRE PREVENTION:

Obviously Fire prevention starts with all of us being conscious of the potential fire hazards around us, in the cottage, and in the woods as well. We need to take the same precautions that we would at home with regard to open flames, disposal of lighted cigarettes, turning off appliances, etc. Let's not forget about the importance of smoke alarms in good working order as well. It is a good practice to routinely change the batteries every spring. You should have fire extinguishers in good working order readily available. Check your fire extinguishers regularly to ensure the status indicator is in the green zone. Keeping a garden hose connected at all times is strongly recommended. Avoid burning leaves or brush, if possible. Blow leaves into the bush and let nature recycle them as nutrients. Consider chipping excess brush and using the chips on your walkways and gardens. If you are burning brush, do so only when the Fire Hazard Level is Low or Moderate, and only during the period 2 hours before sunset until 2 hours after sunrise when the winds are light. You should always burn in an open area that is free of long grass and exposed tree roots. Always have water available i.e. a hose, or buckets of water, to squelch any breakouts from the controlled blaze. Start with a small fire and add wood very gradually to the fire. At the end of the fire make sure you drown any remaining embers, making absolutely sure the fire is out before you leave the fire pit. Around the cottage be sure to have your chimneys cleaned every few years to reduce the build up of creosote which is the cause of most chimney fires. Also, check the clearing along the path of your electrical service on a regular basis looking for trees that could fall on the lines, and vegetation encroaching on the right of way. There are a number of local woodsmen available who could clear this brush for you, if you wish. Finally, take care to store gas cans, and propane tanks away from main buildings in a cool environment.

FIRE RESPONSE:

The most important first step in responding to any fire is to make sure everyone is out of danger. Obviously, the sooner you get a fire extinguisher or water on the fire the better. Hopefully, you have located your Emergency Response Guide in a visible location along with your property locator information. Assign someone to begin the call sequence spelled out on the Guide. Start with calling the wardens, if you don't get a response, just keep going down the list until you do, make sure to give them your locator number! If you can't find your Response Guide, call me at 705-378-0383, a neighbour, and/or Sylvia at Angler's Inn 705-378-2352. The recipient of your call will bring their pump to your location and call others to come as well. There are currently 14 fire pumps on the lake plus one fire boat. Make sure you know where the pumps nearest to you are located. This summer we are encouraging all of our pump owners to familiarize their neighbours with the location of their pumps and how to operate them, so you can access them directly in their absence. Given the construction and age of many of the cottages on our lake, it is most unlikely that we can save your cottage unless your initial efforts to extinguish the fire are successful. That being said, in the past, we have been successful in preventing fires from spreading to the surrounding woods and to other cottages in the area. In the event of a full blown forest fire, we would call in the resources of MNR at 1-705-746-4882. All of this information is contained in your Emergency Response Guide

MEDICAL RESPONSE:

As indicated above the 911 service provided by the Township of the Archipelago does respond to emergency medical situations. They will dispatch EMTs to your location. In the case of water access cottages send someone to meet them at Angler's Inn. To supplement this we have medical emergency equipment, including defibrillators, located around the lake and volunteers who will come to your assistance, *as available*. As noted elsewhere in the Newsletter, the BLCA is organizing a special First Aid training session, with special emphasis on CPR, again this summer. *We strongly recommend that all adults learn CPR, which is the essential response to someone who is not breathing.* Again all of this information is contained in the Emergency Response Guide included in the newsletter. It is updated yearly and you can access the current version of the Emergency Response Guide and Map at the BLCA website at: <http://www.blackstonelakeassn.ca/>. If you have any questions or suggestions on any of this information, please do not hesitate to call me at 705-378-0383

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER **(MAY 2012)**

By Ian Mead

Spring is here after a very non-winter. Here's hoping last winter isn't indicative of what we can expect going forward.

Let me bring you up-to-date on some things that are going on in the Township.

BOATING SAFETY/RULES

Over the past few years, the subject of boating rules/safety/etiquette has been up front and center at most Council meetings. In this past January session we invited the OPP to come to Council to see what we could do to help them with the situation. During a 2 hour question/answer period the subject of speed close to shore came up in all Wards. The rule is if you are in an unmarked channel your maximum speed within 100 feet of shore can not legally exceed 10km/hour. At the end of our session, the OPP said that they would concentrate more effort this summer looking for offenders of this rule. I'm letting you know this so that you have a heads up and don't get caught. There are really only a few spots on our lakes where you can't get more than 100 feet from shore – Crane Lake narrows on Crane and the Lawson Bay narrows on Blackstone. Safe boating!

GREEN ENERGY ACT – LARGE SOLAR ON SHORELINES

Last year the Georgian Bay Association became a very strong lobby group against the proliferation of large solar panels on our shorelines. Well, it looks like their efforts paid off. With the 2 year review of the Green Energy Act it appears that large scale solar installations will be disallowed on residential property. Thank you GBA!

You know, in the past I always questioned the value of an inland lake belonging to the GBA – that's changed. With GBA's involvement in things like the Green Energy Act and Georgian Bay Forever's work on the Asian Carp situation I think it's extremely important for all Associations to support the tireless efforts of the GBA.

TAXES

You will be happy to know that the TOA tax rates this year are down from last. This means if your taxes go up, it will be entirely due to your MPAC Assessment increase exceeding the average. This decrease in rate is due to many factors one being that we as a Township are controlling costs very well. We are fortunate to have a great staff with excellent management.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Last summer was the first season where we had all of our waste sites manned and compactors in place. The results were nothing short of amazing:

- We had zero rejects due to cross contamination of our recyclables
- We had a bigger volume of recyclables
- We had less waste hitting landfill
- The reuse centers worked like a dream keeping a lot of stuff out of the landfill – one person's garbage is another person's treasure 😊
- Because of compaction, our trips to the landfill or recycling yard were cut by almost 2/3.
- Because we have our own roll-off truck there was never an overflow situation
- We began using our marina in Parry Sound harbor as an off-load spot for the waste from our 2 island sites. This worked flawlessly much to the surprise of local residents and Seguin Council. This will save us many dollars going forward.
- Again, we have amazing staff that have persevered and now have a system we can all be proud of.

WATER QUALITY

Last but certainly not least is the subject of water quality. As I've mentioned in previous communications, water quality is directly related to how we treat our shorelines. I've been reading 100's of pages of articles relating to water quality over the past year and with a doubt, the common thread is shoreline preservation. This not only dramatically affects water quality as it relates to bacteria but more importantly how it relates to reducing nutrient loading. I am convinced that Nutrient Loading in our lakes will be a huge issue in the future and we need to do all we can **now** to change our actions that contribute to this silent killer of water quality.

- We may think that it will never happen in our lakes but just so you know:
- Sturgeon Bay, up north, has been having yearly blue/green algae blooms since 2000
- Three Mile Lake had a significant blue/green algae bloom a few years ago
- Horseshoe Lake (part of our watershed) had a blue/green algae bloom 2 years ago
- A few large Bays in Georgian Bay Township had blue/green algae blooms last summer
- And a photo taken from space of Lake Erie on Feb 20, 2012 showed most of the lake green from algae.
- Frustratingly, I have failed over the winter to get the rest of Council to share my concern but I'll keep trying – there's nothing more important, in my mind, than water quality and I'm sure you will agree.

- Please do not hesitate to contact me with your thoughts, ideas, questions or concerns re this issue – I’m all ears and obviously need help.

E-MAIL

As most of you know, I utilize E-mail to do most of my communication. I have E-mail addresses for 87% of the ratepayers in Ward 5. If I don’t have yours, I urge you to send me an E-mail at ianm@vianet.ca and I will add you to the list.

Cheers

Ian

Address – 206 Crane Lake Water
Parry Sound, ON
P2A 2W8

Phone - 705-378-2089

GEORGIAN BAY LAND TRUST

2011 REPORT FOR OLDFIELD LAKE RESERVE

By: Carolyn Rymell
Steward and GBLT Director

2011 was a very quiet year at the Oldfield Lake Reserve or Rat Lake as it locally known, which is a good thing. The wetlands and hemlock groves remain healthy with little intervention from human beings. The continued presence of provincially rare plants is proof of this.

One of the potential negative impacts identified in the management plan for this reserve was human development. This threat was significantly reduced last year by the agreement reached between the Township of the Archipelago and Mr. Kolbuc regarding an abutting piece of property, lot 17. The Township assumed ownership of this property and will retain its non-development status. This will ensure that developmental threats will be kept to a minimum. The Township deserves our thanks and full support for recognizing this environmentally sensitive property as vital to the general health of both Rat Lake and Blackstone Lake. As we all know flora and fauna do not recognize artificial lot lines.

While the Land Trust does not want to see wholesale tromping over the property you are invited and encouraged to visit this pristine property. Just remember that no motorized vehicles are allowed on the property except snowmobiles in winter, including along the trail. Nor are campfires or camping permitted. The stewards’ canoe(s) are available for use but please return them to the shoreline on the Blackstone Lake side so that they are available for the stewards’ use. Last summer the canoe I put over there for stewards’ use was moved to the other end of the lake with no communication.

If you are visiting the property and see something, which does not seem to be in order please let me know.

If you wish to visit the property and are uncomfortable going there, let me know and I will escort you to ensure an enjoyable visit.

THE GBLT CONTINUES TO BE A LEADER IN LAND CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP

By: Laura Gibson, GBLT Communications – Development Administrator

The Georgian Bay Land Trust is pleased to announce a brand new opportunity for Americans who wish to donate land within Canada. The American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts (AFCLT), an American charity dedicated to providing those in the US opportunities to donate land and fund land trusts working in Canada, recently received prescribed donee status. This new status allows AFCLT to offer Americans donating land in Canada equivalent benefits to those received by Canadians, including a US income tax receipt and relief from capital gain tax in Canada.

Now that the AFCLT is recognized as a prescribed donee, it has become even easier to protect Canada's myriad natural wonders, including our beloved Georgian Bay and its watershed. To read more about the new status, please visit (<http://www.gbtl.org/how-you-can-help/give-property/information-american-land-donors>) or visit AFCLT on the web (<http://www.nmnt.ca/af/>).

If you are thinking about donating property to the GBLT and would like more information about the process, please call Mark Carabetta at 416.440.1519 x1 or email info@gbtl.org.

In 2011, the GBLT proudly celebrated its 20th anniversary marking two decades of astonishing accomplishments. From the acquisition of our first property in 1991, the GBLT's capacity to obtain and steward new lands continues to grow. To date, we manage 34 properties totaling over 1300 acres and we are fortunate to have 90 volunteer stewards, who provide their valuable time to assist with the protection of those lands.

We are excited to announce the launch of a new Visitors Guide; a friendly set of guidelines to allow our visitors to leave no trace as they use and enjoy GBLT properties. The Visitors Guide will be useful to you and your families who wish to practice preservation on their own property as well as GBLT properties to ensure the natural state of the flora and fauna is maintained for future generations. It will be distributed in our property guest boxes and available on our website.

If you missed the 2011 Bayscapes Photo Auction, you can still purchase the "Birds of Georgian Bay" poster for only \$ 20.00. Visit [ww.gbtl.org](http://www.gbtl.org) for details. Keep an eye on our website (www.gbtl.org) for upcoming events throughout the year, and while you're visiting, make sure to sign up for our free **Property Pals** program (<http://gbtl.org/become-friend-gbtl-property>)! Become a pal of your favourite GBLT property and submit photos and stories about your experiences enjoying the beauty of the Bay and its watershed. Property Pal images and memories have a chance to be featured in our online and print publications, so submit yours today!

WATCH YOUR WAKE

By: Dave McCamus, Lake Steward

Here is a situation that I wish everyone would give some attention to. At last year's annual meeting, there were a number of people who expressed concern about the effect of wakes from boats proceeding at high speed near their properties. Everyone enjoys our lake in their own way whether it is swimming, canoeing, kayaking, riding a sea-doo, sailing, fishing, water skiing, or wake boarding. If we are going to stay safe, however, we have to be conscious of how our activities can affect others. The regulations established by Transport Canada to govern water based activities calls for a speed limit of 10 km/h (6mph) within 30 meters (100 ft) of shore. Given the size of the boats being used on our lake these days we have to see this as a bare minimum requirement. I am sure you agree that we ought to all take special care to WATCH OUR WAKES in the following areas of the lake:

- Angler's Inn docks - please go directly into your slip at low speed and exit the same way. Avoid going parallel to the shore.
- The north shore of McRobert's Bay between the island and the shore.
- Around Peanut Island.
- Mouth of Blackstone Creek.
- Lawson's Bay narrows.

In other words, any place where our wakes could cause difficulty for other people. I think this is just part of looking out for each other as we take part in this special privilege that we have of enjoying this very precious and delicate environment!

LET'S JUST DO IT!!

LET'S GET PUMPED!

It's spring time again, and that means it's time to get the cottage ready for the summer. In the process, let's not forget about our **SEPTIC SYSTEMS**.

The Township of the Archipelago's guidelines call for your septic system to be pumped out once every 5 to 7 years, depending on the level of use. If you haven't pumped it out in recent years, or don't know when it was last pumped out, you should definitely do so this year! It is not only important for you, it is important for all of us!

In order to encourage you to do so, we try to make it as convenient as possible for you to get your system pumped. Once again this spring we are making arrangements for Muskoka Septic to bring their barge onto the lake in early June. If you have that gnawing concern that you ought to be doing something about your system, Here's your chance to get this done!

The charge is \$725 plus taxes which you pay directly to Muskoka Septic. They will bill you directly. This is a group rate base on their ability to do a number of customers at the same time. All you have to do to get on the list for this spring is to call or email;

Dave McCamus at davidmccamus @cogeco.ca or 905-337-3016/705-378-0383

BLACKSTONE LAKE WATER QUALITY TESTING 2011

By: Digby Sale, Water Quality Monitor

There are two tests of water quality sponsored by the Township of the Archipelago. One test measures bacterial concentration (total coliform and *E. Coli*) in water samples taken (in 2011) at five sites on five dates throughout the season. The second test measures water clarity using a Secchi disk. This was done at one site (main channel) on six dates throughout the season. Water clarity is correlated with the “enrichment” status of the lake (e.g. algae growth).

Total coliform (TC) concentration averaged across sites and dates was 448 ± 495 MPN. For perspective, the averages for 2009 and 2010 were 773 ± 892 and 852 ± 1026 , respectively. The \pm refers to the standard deviation (SD) of the average (mean) values. The standard deviations are quite large, indicating large variation in measurements taken at different sites and dates. For 2011, seasonal averages ranged from 261 to 693 across the five test sites. With data collapsed across test sites, the largest TC concentrations occurred on Aug 11 (1060) and the lowest on Sep 12 (94). The township objective for TC is a maximum of 100, whereas the province considers lake water with sustained concentrations above 1000 unsuitable for recreational use. Although we have been concerned about Blackstone’s high TC relative to the township objective, the township consultant does not seem concerned given the low EC concentration (see below).

E. Coli (EC) concentration averaged across sites and dates was 3.7 ± 4.0 MPN. For perspective, the values for 2009 and 2010 were 4.9 ± 5.4 and 2.9 ± 3.1 , respectively. In 2011, the seasonal average ranged from 1.6 to 5.3 across the five test sites. With data collapsed across test sites, the largest EC concentrations occurred on July 10 (5.6) and the lowest on Sep 12 (1.8). The township objective for EC is a maximum of 10, whereas the province considers lake water with sustained concentrations above 100 unsuitable for recreational use. Blackstone’s EC results remained below the township objective throughout the season.

Secchi disk depth readings increased progressively throughout the 2011 season, from 4.7 m on May 31 to 6.0 m on September 9. The season average was 5.2 ± 0.5 m. For perspective, the averages for 2009 and 2010 were 4.8 ± 0.8 and 5.3 ± 0.6 , respectively. There is no township or provincial standard for Secchi disk depths. Blackstone’s 2011 average of ~ 5 m, which has been maintained over a period of years, indicates very good water clarity. Over a period of years, water clarity could decline due to increased run-off into the lake as a result of factors such as clearing shoreline of vegetation, agitation of shoreline by large boat wakes, and faulty septic systems. Increased run-off reduces clarity by increasing the phosphorus concentration in the lake. Increased phosphorus promotes algae growth, which in turn reduces water clarity.

In addition to the bacterial and Secchi disk measurements sponsored by the Township of the Archipelago, our association has, for the past two years, participated in the provincial Lake Partner Program. The program consists of a one-time test (in May) of water clarity (Secchi disk) and phosphorus concentration (water sample). Phosphorus test results for 2011 are not yet available, but the 2010 test results were good (i.e., low).

GEORGIAN BAY ASSOCIATION UPDATE FOR 2012

By: Rob Moos, Past President BLCA & Secretary, GBA

For the past year the Georgian Bay Association (GBA) continued its work on behalf of member cottager associations, of which Blackstone Lake Cottagers' Association is one.

For the most part the GBA focuses on issues of concern in the broader Georgian Bay watershed, leaving local issues to be dealt with by local associations. However, during the past year GBA did engage with environmental concerns associated with the Ontario Camp for the Deaf. As well, the close proximity of solar panels to Blackstone Lake prompted concerns that under the Green Energy Act there were no controls over the location of small green energy (primarily solar and wind) installations (large commercial scale installations must be 200 metres from lakes or streams). Consequently GBA has lobbied the provincial energy ministry to put regulations in place to control the location of small installations, or allow municipalities to do so (currently the Green Energy Act exempts green energy installations from municipal by-laws).

The GBA's Executive Director, Bob Duncanson, and the board did an effective job pursuing a number of broader issues. This often involves political engagement at the local, provincial and even international levels, as when dealing with Great Lakes water levels and invasive species. Some key issues on which GBA expended considerable effort include:

- Restricting open cage aquaculture
- Preventing Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes
- Management of other invasive species
- Other fishery issues (primarily in conjunction with the Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council)
- Regulation of water levels in the middle Great Lakes (which includes Lake Huron/Georgian Bay) to limit dropping water levels
- Ensuring green energy installations are environmental sound
- Boating safety
- Sound municipal governance (this is an issue primarily in Georgian Bay Township to the south)
- Matters of public health and safety

Going forward there will be much for GBA to work on. The Ontario and federal budgets both indicated governments' intentions to cut back on environmental protection. This will ensure that GBA has plenty of lobbying to do on behalf of member associations.

GBA ACTIVITIES APRIL 2011 TO MARCH 2012

FISHERIES COMMITTEE

- Petitioned the MNR to continue to support the efforts of EGBSC including hiring a replacement for their retired Coordinator.

- Worked with EGBSC to support their Walleye restoration projects and published article to educate our members on this. (UPDATE Vol.21 No.2)
- Petitioned the MNR to curtail gill net fishing on Georgian Bay
- Petitioned the MNR to change the rules for large scale fishing tournaments to limit their catches and release their fish back to the areas where they were caught.
- Petitioned Federal and Provincial politicians to engage on the Asian Carp debate and ask their US counterparts to pursue a solution to prevent their introduction into the Great Lakes.
- Published an article to educate our members on the issues surrounding Asian Carp. (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 1)
- Consulted with WWF Fresh Water Trout Dialogue as they set standards for the certification of farmed Trout.
- Worked with MOE and MNR as they develop new guidelines for the licensing of fish farms.
- Met with the Chair of the Federal Parliamentary Committee reviewing aquaculture practices in Canada.
- Presented our argument for the elimination of open net cage aquaculture practices to Federal and Provincial Ministers and their staffs over the course of at least 10 meetings.
- Met with experts in closed containment aquaculture technology and published an article explaining this technology to our members. (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 2 and UPDATE Vol. 22 No. 1)
- Communicated with Environmental Commissioner of Ontario re aquaculture. He included a detailed section on aquaculture in his 2011 Annual Report.

LANDS AND FORESTS COMMITTEE

- On behalf of Blackstone Lake Association, petitioned the Provincial Government to curtail the environmentally damaging motor cycling and ATV racing at the Ontario Camp for the Deaf. UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 1)
- Monitored and reported on White Nose Syndrome that is killing our resident bat population. (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 3)
- Researched and reported on Phragmites which is an emerging threat to our coast wetlands and properties. (UPDATE Vol. 22 No. 1)
- Reviewed the MNR's Crown Land Use Policy and the potential sale of crown land and published a report to our members on same. (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 3)
- Published a report on a range of Terrestrial Invasive Species. (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 2)
- Published an article on Cougars in Ontario (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 1)
- Published an article on increasing electricity rates and what cottagers can do to lessen the impact of these on them (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 2)
- Filed an EBR submission regarding commercial wind development and the Natural Heritage Assessment Guide and reported to members on same (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 1)
- Petitioned the MNR, MOE and Ministry of Energy to review the Green Energy Act to close the loop hole that enables the installation of large ground mounted solar arrays without any community involvement or municipal oversights. Reported on same (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 3)

WATER COMMITTEE

- Continued to sit as a property owners' representative on the Advisory Panel to the Canadian negotiators of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).
- Continued as a public representative on the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Water Protection Committee and reported on the work of this committee (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 1)
- Co chaired a meeting between property owners and the International Upper Great Lakes Study Board (IUGLSB) to review their interim findings.
- Participated as a member of the Public Interest Advisory Board for the IUGSLB at which we pushed for better regulation of water levels in the Middle Great Lakes.
- Travelled to Lake St. Clair to meet with landowners there to discuss Middle Lake water regulation.
- Convened a meeting of organizations with interest in Middle Lake water levels (Sierra Club, GBF, Great Lakes United and GBA) to try to find common ground in our positions.
- Published a report to members on the GLWQA in UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 3.
- Presented GBA concerns and suggestions to Minister Bradley (Ontario MOE) who has been charged to develop a Great Lakes Protection Act.
- Published a report to members on same (UPDATE Vol. 22 No. 1)
- Petitioned the MNR to permit the use of Phoslock in Sturgeon Bay in order to address on ongoing Blue Green Algae issue.
- Met with York Region and reviewed their plans for waste water treatment in the Lake Simcoe (Georgian Bay) watershed. Reported to the members on this (UPDATE vol. 21 No. 3)
- Reviewed and reported on the botulism outbreak that occurred in southern Georgian Bay last summer and fall (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 3)
- Used this botulism outbreak in our ongoing discussions with both the Federal and Provincial governments in which we asked for more support in addressing near shore water quality issues and invasive species control.
- Met with the Township of Georgian Bay, and water testing organizations including GBF to discuss water testing protocols for coastal Georgian Bay. (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 3)
- Attended and reported on the International Joint Commission's Biennial Conference (UPDATE Vol. 22 No. 1)

BOATING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

- Participated as a member of the National Recreational Boating Advisory Council (Peter Frost).
- Participated as a member of the Ontario recreational Boating Advisory Panel (Stephen Murch).
- Briefed Minister Clement on our issue of excessive boat noise (UPDATE Vol. 21. No. 3)
- Reported to our members on Shipping on the Great Lakes (UPDATE Vol. 21 No. 1)
- Sponsored the OPP "I Got Caught Wearing My Lifejacket" initiative (UPDATE Vol 21. No. 2)
- Continued to dialogue with OPP re issues brought forward by our members.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

- Held meetings with Tony Clement, Norm Miller, Linda Jeffery (MNR), Jim Bradley (MOE), and senior staff at MNR, MOE and Environment Canada at which we presented a range of issues that we are working on (see detailed issues above).
- Met with Township of Archipelago Council to review GBA activities.
- Hosted a South Georgian Bay Conference with the Township of Georgian Bay.
- Met with representatives of Wikwemikong First Nation and Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to discuss areas of common interest.
- Consulted with the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario on aquaculture and invited him to address GBA members at our Annual Spring meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES

- Published three annual editions of GBA UPDATE and circulated these to all GBA members plus politicians and others with whom we dialogue on a regular basis.
- Secured advertising to enable this publication to be printed and distributed on a break even basis.
- Maintained the GBA web site.
- Held a meeting with reps from GBA member associations to discuss the future of association communications and specifically electronic communications.
- Established a Membership Committee to work with the Communications Committee and our member associations to grow membership in the local associations and therefore in GBA.

OTHER COMMITTEES

In addition to the above committees that have primarily an “external” impact, the Finance, Nominations and Governance Committees continued to ensure the smooth, efficient running of GBA. This year an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee was formed, reported to the board and disbanded, having completed and received board approval for a GBA strategic plan.