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## President's Message

*Doug Deeks*

It was one of those summer's that will make us wonder for years to come why we insist on trying to have dinners outside only to be driven back in half way through because of the mosquitoes. And while mosquitoes are the norm on a typical summer's eve, we will forever vaguely recall a time when it wasn't that way. A hot dry summer, where those ponds and puddles which serve as the maternity wards of the pesky bug, ceased to exist, afforded virtually an entire summer of evenings outdoors with a hardly a single curse uttered or ankle slapped!

For your CCA organization it was, I believe, a summer of some achievement with some old files closing successfully (Open Space development by-law, Blasting By-

Law) some long term files developing favourably (Twp of GB relationship, Official Plan Review), others newly opening (the Bluff becoming a destination for party boats and now a contentious speed zone) and others in an area of uncertain progress (Ward Boundary review, mooring cruiser volume).

As September closes, water levels are touching the all-time low for this time of year set in 1964 and this long stretch of low water (14 years) can no longer be considered a part of the normal cycle of ebb and flow in the Great Lakes. More than an irritant for docks and the damage from newly discovered shoals, persistent low water and the potential of further decline, is now a serious issue for the local economy, water quality, the vitality of both native aquatic and terrestrial species and the viability

of some shoreline areas as water access only cottage destinations. We have responded as have many of you to the IJC during the public comment period and have asked the same of our local government who are yet to analyze the long term impact of permanently lower water, but who cannot ignore the financial impact that will ultimately be borne at the local government level on marina operations, water only access ways, contractor depots, invasive species, tourism and water quality. Water in terms of both volume and quality are the 2 critical resources that make the area viable for all parts of the coastal communities.

As the CCA continues its long tradition of involvement and representation there continues to be a Cognashener involved in virtually every organization that affects the coastal area including

local government (Pat Edwards, Jim Bowden, Beth Halpenny), the GBA (Craig Bowden, Wendy Parker), the IJC (Chris Baines), GBLT (Peter Cooper and many others), GBBR (Becky Pollock), EGBSC (Karl Schiefer). By no means is that even close to a complete list and I commend all of those who are putting their time into the governance, monitoring and activity of the area for surely without that effort, unintended consequences would abound from uncoordinated and ill conceived policy and activity.

To the CCA Board I welcome continued change with the arrival of new Board members Bob Snider and Carol Webb. Bob brings a diverse background to the Board being both a cottager, a cruiser and nan engineer and perhaps has the singularly most central vantage point in Cognashene, sitting as he does on Delasco Island which provides a rare 360° view of most of the community. Bob joins as a Member at Large as a starting point to what I expect will be a

couple of terms of terrific contribution. Carol joins as Secretary, and brings a heap of Cognashene background with her including being a contributing author to *Wind, Water, Rock and Sky*, a cottager of some decades, a former recreation program badge holder and a frequenter of the old store back in the day. Carol is a lawyer in the spare time that she carves away from Cognashene.

We also welcome many new members in this issue and before we say good-bye to some others we ask that you make sure you have intended to end your involvement in the CCA and where not I invite you to secure your membership before we finalize the cottage locations for the winter patrol. Dennis Robitaille will again be the off-season steward of Cognashene checking in on all properties 3 times in the November to April period. Cruising the area in the off-season sounds dreamy but the reality of what Dennis perseveres through to reach all of the properties regularly during poor

and dangerous ice conditions and of course more recently no ice conditions is a testament of his commitment to the members of the Association.

Look for an update on the Official Plan review which has become a very interesting local lightning rod drawing much opinion, conjecture and at times theories of conspiracy! I believe it is all working out well and in the words of our hard working and dedicated local Councilor, Pat Edwards, "you can try to satisfy most of the people most of the time but you can't satisfy them all, all of the time". I expect that the OP once complete will not be perfect from anybody's perspective but overall for the communities of the Township I believe it will be a step forward.

Enjoy the autumn and the joys and chores that it brings your way.

Best to all, Doug Deeks

[dougdeeks@gmail.com](mailto:dougdeeks@gmail.com)

## Membership News...*Douglas Carr*

So far this year, we welcomed 20 new families to membership in the CCA. While a number of these new members are families who have recently purchased properties in Cognashene, others are from families with a long connection with Cognashene who have either taken over family cottages or bought additional properties. As well, we have a few families who did not realize they were in the Cognashene area, but are pleased with the activities where they see our association taking a leadership role, and in fact, they are now encouraging their neighbours to join! A particularly gratifying note is that several of the new members are families with young children who are now enjoying the recreation program!

Unfortunately, however, we also have a number of families who have not yet renewed their membership for the current year. It does seem unusual that we continue to get memberships mailed in during August using the return envelope which was sent out in February! **As we are about to finalize the list of members whose cottages will be patrolled during the winter, all those who have not yet renewed their memberships are encouraged to do so promptly.**

## Recreation Program...*Lisa Merry and Ann Nicholls*

We all had a great summer!!!! The weather could not have been better and it made swimming lessons that much more enjoyable for our kids! Enrollment included approximately 68 registered children representing 40 families. We also had a number of guests join us along the way. Hilary Adams headed up an incredibly keen and well-organized staff. Our volunteer program was more structured this summer which gave many kids the opportunity to be a part of the recreation program and see how things worked.

As in past years, our program included Red Cross swimming lessons, sailing lessons, Junior and Senior arts and crafts, YPOC, Kids Club and Water Sports. We also enjoyed our overnight canoe trips (and the weather cooperated for both!), an afternoon on the Lizard learning more about our environment, a visit from the Fire department and Coast Guard, the ever popular YPOC party and an amazing end of year theme party. This year's theme was Knights in Shining Armour.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hilary and all the staff for a great summer. I have come to the end of my reign as Program Director, while Ann Nicholls will remain on for another year. Jane Starr will be working with Ann on next summer's program. It has been a pleasure helping the Recreation Program for the past two years.

Have a safe and happy winter and we look forward to seeing everyone next summer on the beach!

Ann and Lisa



## Cottager and Newsletter Updates...*Laura Adams*

Just a reminder to start downloading your photos and jotting down story ideas for the next edition of the "Cognashene Cottager". Submissions are due by January 15, 2013, however while summer is still fresh, feel free to send them anytime to [lauraeadams@sympatico.ca](mailto:lauraeadams@sympatico.ca). When sending photos please include who took the shot, as well as a bit of information about the picture: names of the individuals, the event, and / or location.

Also, just a reminder that this newsletter is meant as an information vehicle for and about our association and cottage community. Should you have something that you would like to share, feel free to email the details to me. I will do my best to get it out there!

Please visit [www.cognashene.com](http://www.cognashene.com) for contact information, registration forms, events and dates. Watch for the next CCA Newsletter coming to you towards the end of November.

## Municipal Affairs...Janet Cox

### Ward Boundary Review:

The Township is undertaking a review of the Ward boundaries further to a petition from a number of residents in Baxter Ward following the last municipal election complaining that, under current boundaries, given the population in that Ward, they were underrepresented.

The Township hired a consultant, CivicSolutions+Inc., and solicited views from stakeholders. Last fall, Wendy Parker, on behalf of the Association, indicated a preference for a 2 Ward Township. Her submission noted: "This would give us 4 area councillors, and 2 district councillors (2 wards each) and the mayor...a total of seven. This number omits the 'tie' vote, is more in keeping with the rest of the District and also gives better representation to this extremely diverse Township, with rural mainland, towns, river, lake and coastal water residents."

CivicSolutions+Inc. came back this spring with a report offering a series of 2 and 3 ward options (see report at <https://georgianbay.civicweb.net/Documents/DocumentDisplay.aspx?ID=62199>). A 4 ward option was not included, ostensibly because it was seen as too expensive.

At a public meeting in late August, Jim Bowden, supported by John Birnbaum, made an impassioned pitch for a 4 ward system. In Jim Bowden's view, any proposal had to recognize that there were two District members as well as achieve three goals: (1) rep by pop, (2) provide a voice for the diverse communities in the Township, and (3) attract good people to serve. Two District Councillors means, in his view, that any system of Wards should be divisible by two. Both 2 and 3 Ward options would include positions beyond that of Mayor that would be representing the entire Township. But based on his experience, "at large" positions are too onerous to campaign for and therefore a barrier to having good people serve. Further, any system with only 5 representatives made it too easy for 3 to dominate - a disservice to the many diverse communities.

In addition, a number of constituents and members of the Association, including Cathy Cooper and Beth Halpenny, have argued that the population numbers the consultant used to divide up the Township into possible Wards are flawed. These are based on growth projections for permanent residents that are highly optimistic. It is, in fact, our understanding that while the number of seasonal residents is rising, the number of permanent residents is declining.

At a recent meeting of Council, it directed Township staff to request a quote from the consultant to produce a number of 4 Ward options using the minimum acceptable population projections. Two public meetings, one in the Township and one in Toronto, will then be scheduled to receive public input on the full set of Ward options.

We will update you as soon as the public meetings are scheduled.

" Township residents are expected to receive re-assessments of their property values from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation over the next couple of months. We are expecting that these will reflect the increases in property values in the community, the issue will be to mitigate the impact on our property taxes. This is an issue we hope to follow closely. We will be back to you in short order with more information."

## Regatta...*Nancy Bennett*

The Regatta was held on Saturday August 4th, and just like the rest of the summer of 2012, it was a beautiful, hot, sunny day. The day went very smoothly primarily because of our fabulous host families (Thank you Kohler, Davis and Endress families!) and dedicated volunteers and eager participants of all ages! Many thanks to our sponsors who support the regatta by donating prizes, refreshments, ice, the port-a-potty and raffle table items. This year we raised just over \$900 which will go towards replacing the swim lines for the recreation program. Every year we list who our sponsors are in the Regatta Report in the Cottager so please take a look at the list and support their businesses because they are so generous in supporting us. The regatta is truly a community event and could not happen without the support of so many volunteers and those who helped out are:

Regatta 2013 will be held at Townsend Island on Saturday August 3rd and is in the very capable hands of Margaret Eaton who has volunteered to be the Regatta Coordinator. We are always looking for volunteers, sponsors and raffle items so please contact Margaret at if you can lend a hand.

Margaret's email address is [meatonkent@gmail.com](mailto:meatonkent@gmail.com)



Many thanks to all of our volunteers; those people who run our association and work tirelessly for it, who give so much of their time to make sure our regatta runs smoothly, whose energy and enthusiasm is so appreciated by the families who enjoy our Rec Program, and all those who simply lend a hand when it is so needed.

*Thank you, thank you, thank you!*

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Laura Adams, Chris Baines, Joan Baines, Ann Bennett, Meg Bennett, Michael Bennett, Nancy Bennett, Suzanne Bennett, Ailsa Boyd, Catriona Boyd, Thea Boyd, Douglas Carr, Alex Carter, Sue Carter, Ian Clark, Anna Cook, Janet Cox, Brian Dale, Christine Davis, Ian Davis, Kathleen Davis, Meg Davis, Neil Davis, Robert Davis, Rose Davis, Ruth Davis, Spencer Davis, William Davis, Doug Deeks, Sue Eastwood, Matthew Eaton-Kent, Margaret Eaton, Heather Eland, Derek Friend, Jack Giroux, Molly Giroux, Gale Harild, John Harild, Chris Hawley, Matt Hawley, Nina Hawley, Drew Kohler, Katie Kohler, Jane Lotimer, David Matthews, Peter McConville, Carol McKnight, Leigh-Anne McKnight, Tom Merry, Brian Neely, Diane Neely, Heather Neely, Michael Neely, Ann Nicholls, Wendy Parker, Eve Petit, Shantel Popp, Nancy Robitaille, Connor Roth, Nancy Setchell, Kim Simpson, Peter Simpson, Bob Snider, Nick Stark, Jane Starr, Tim Topornicki, Larry Uniac, Joy Uniac, Haydn Walker, Roger Walker, Tama Walker, Carol Webb, Fiona Wilson

# Environmental Report...via Bruce Hanson (Area Councillor Ward 3, Township of Georgian Bay)

## Township of Georgian Bay Recreational Water Quality Program

### September 2012 Update

The annual water quality program is essentially a four step program:

**Step 1: Field Work** - Collect the physical samples (this may include things like water, plants, sediment, and tiny "critters" contained in the water samples) and other raw data (this may include things like sonar and or literature samples).

**Step 2: Lab Work** - analyze the physical samples and produce respective raw data

**Step 3: Analysis and Reporting** - analyze all raw data and produce a report that: a) displays the data, identifies trends, provides conclusions, and makes recommendations based on the observed data.

**Step 4:** Use these recommendations to determine what actions should be taken including what will be included done in the following year's program.

In 2011 we took a major shift in direction within the Township of Georgian Bay in regards to our Water Quality Program. For the first time we moved towards looking into the cause of observed phenomena with the intent of making future recommendations on prevention and, where possible, remediation. Second, we successfully brought together various organizations operating in the Township of Georgian Bay. As part of that alignment in testing we moved to new laboratories and increased the sensitivity of phosphorous testing. We did so, and came in \$12,000 under budget.

In 2012 we continue in both our traditional and our new direction. Georgian Bay Forever and Severn Sound Environmental Association continue as our primary partners. Through them, as well as independently, we have formed alliances with the MOE Lake Partner

Program, the University of Guelph, York University and The University of Waterloo.

The following is a summary and status of your 2012 program. Results of this years program will not be available until all data has been analyzed. This traditionally takes place in the February timeframe.

### 1. Causation Study (new in 2011/2012)

**Objective:** To determine why are we seeing more prolific aquatic plant growth in Honey Harbour

#### 2011 Data Synthesis Project

This work began in 2011 as a direct result of observations reported by the Honey Harbour Association. In addition, the Honey Harbour area is one of the most densely developed waterfront communities in our township. In 2011 a data synthesis project reviewed twenty-seven existing studies as they related to the Honey Harbour area. The study was unable to identify a direct link between a specific "driver" and the resulting stress indicators, stress indicators being such things as total phosphorus concentrations, rooted plan growth, and cyanobacteria blooms. The study concluded however that bays monitored by the Coastal Monitoring Program should all be considered as having the potential for having cyanobacteria blooms. The largest uncertainty regarding the identification of what causes the various observed stress indicators is how the water bodies themselves behaved in the more distant past. Paleolimnological studies can be used to help determine conditions before colonization, as well as the impact of human activities over time such as logging, and even to estimate whether there have historically been blue green algae blooms in the area studied. This information helps us understand and determine what the true background levels are and what the effects of human activity and other driving factors are on the area's water quality. A Paleolimnological study was one of the recommended next steps in the process.

#### 2012 Paleolimnological Study (Sediment Core Sampling)

This year, in the Honey Harbour area, we have obtained the sediment core samples needed for our

paleolimnological study. We will be looking back through time to look at any changes in the plants and chemical conditions in the North Bay and South Bay areas, as well as whether or not there were algae blooms in the past. The cores are currently in the queue for dating. This is all leading towards being able to understand why we are seeing more prolific aquatic plant growth in this and many other areas.

## **2. 2012 Church Bay Bacteriological Testing**

**Objective:** To determine what are Church Bay bacterial levels and what is their likely source.

As a result of preliminary and inconclusive testing done by the Honey Harbour Association in 2011, we have expanded bacterial testing into Church Bay. In 2012, Intense bacteriological testing was performed in and around Church Bay which included looking at both the water and sediments. Final analysis of the results will be available in the New Year

## **3. Water Quality Monitoring Program**

**Objective:** To determine, monitor, and track the water chemistry in the inland lakes and coastal areas.

New this year is our partnership with the MOE Lake Partner Program whereby GBF arranged volunteers, training, and distributed test equipment while MOE will do the analysis, and will host and publish the data on the web. We will then be able to pull the data off the web and use it to do our reporting. In addition, we will continue to validate our current results which now use low phosphorous testing, to our historical results.

## **4. Inland Lake Eurasian Milfoil Shoreline Study**

**Objective:** To report on the occurrence of Eurasian Milfoil in Six Mile Lake and to assess alternatives for its control.

Eurasian Milfoil is becoming a problem throughout the township. This study is to assess its spread in the inland lakes and to investigate possible methods of controlling it.

## **5. Stewart Lake Aquatic Vegetation, Water Quality and Sediment Study**

**Objective:** To gain a greater understanding of the ecology of Stewart Lake and provide recommendations for how to maintain and improve water quality.

This work began in 2011 in conjunction with the University of Waterloo. In 2012 the township provided partial funding for the continued study by the university. It was instigated in part by an explosive growth of Richardson's Pondweed as well as a sudden degradation in some of the water quality test results. There was also a "Dock Talk" program in 2012.

### **Other Programs:**

#### **Septic Inspection Program**

Although not funded by the Water Quality Budget, the township initiated septic inspections in 2012. This is a multi year project with different areas of the township being tested each year. This year saw properties in North Bay, South Bay, Church Bay and Stewart Lake inspected. Several infractions were found and are being corrected. Progress reports have been made to Council.

### **Other GBF Work**

Although not funded by the Township of Georgian Bay, we will benefit from the results of the following studies that have been initiated in 2012, some of which are taking place, in part, in our township.

#### **Blue Green Algae Study**

**Objective:** To determine where we might next expect to see blue-green algae blooming given that we are now seeing blooms in low phosphorus conditions.

While high internal loads of phosphorus may be the predominant factor in high nutrient Sturgeon Bay blooms, recently there have been numerous examples in the scientific literature showing that toxic blue-green algae blooms are occurring in lakes and bays with

lower levels of phosphorus. Understanding the mechanisms triggering these blooms in both types of conditions is critical to predicting whether other locations in Georgian Bay might experience blue-green algae blooms, and to developing successful mitigation strategies.

GBF's work with York University this summer in 12-Mile Bay, Deep Bay and Sturgeon Bay as well as three other embayments is examining the mechanisms for these blooms to allow us to determine where they might happen in the future.

The team has been intensely monitoring the changing conditions all summer to see if they can spot the triggers. Observations so far show that the bays have become anoxic, that biomass is increasing sharply, and that the distance between the anoxic bottom waters and the top water layers is changing, all of which contribute to conditions that are conducive for a bloom to form. As a result, residents of Sturgeon Bay have applied to have

the deep hole treated with Phoslock™. GBF is supporting this proposal and will monitor the effects of this treatment through their ongoing water testing program and their new DNA barcoding project with the University of Guelph.

### **Biodiversity Study**

Objective: To determine what is happening to biodiversity in the Coastal Archipelago of Georgian Bay.

Looking at low water levels is also important in order to understand what is happening to our coastal wetlands. This project is designed to provide a measure of the biodiversity of Georgian Bay. GBF will be working with Guelph University on a DNA Barcoding project. This will provide important evidence of any changes that might occur in the ecosystem resulting from climate change, lack of action to protect our water levels or optimistically from the results of taking action to prevent further water levels declines.

### **Addendum to "Digital TV at the Cottage" Article...*Ian McGibbon***

Things just went from bad to worse for local TV reception in Cognashene. Effective Aug 1, 2012; TV Ontario, CBC English and CBC French all decided to shut down their remaining rural analogue TV transmitters in Ontario. This means TVO 51, CBC E 20 and CBC F 34 are no longer transmitting. The carriers were not obligated to shut these stations down by the CRTC but did it for cost cutting reasons.

This leaves channels 3 Barrie, 7 Global, 67 CHCH on digital and channel 21 CTV on analogue available in Cognashene. For additional channels and networks you will have to subscribe to a satellite service.

### **Planning Directors Report...*Ian Davis (Director of Planning)***

The last few months have been very busy, from fighting drought conditions that once again hit us hard, and also dealing with multiple deadlines that all were converging at the same time. I have trouble enough multi-tasking with personal and business life, but add to that, a ward boundary review, the International Joint Commission, a long awaited update to the 20 year old Township's Official Plan, a new Committee of Adjustment, a new citizen focussed Planning Committee, and finally, introducing Jill Lewis, the recently hired Director of Planning and Economic Development, to Cognashene.

#### **Where to start...**

The Township has moved to a joint citizen-appointed and Council-member Committee of Adjustment (COA). The COA now consists of 4 members from the public and two council members. The council members are represented by The Chair - Paul Wianko and Vice-Chair - Louise Rivett. The members of the public include Member Ferguson, Member Hill, Member Childs and our own Jim Bowden. Much of our efforts this past summer with the COA was to give them the opportunity to see Cognashene. We were



fortunate, not only with the weather but with the turnout: four members of the COA, and Township Planning Staff members Jill Lewis, and Katie Mandeville were able to participate. Starting at Kings Bay we gave the group a coastal tour lead by Neil Davis, Dr. Karl Schiefer, Peter Cooper and Jim Bowden. The day included joining our neighbours and friends for the GBLT rock talk on the Lizard and winding up for refreshments on Artist Island. Overall, the day was a huge success as many of the new and old COA members had never had the opportunity to see Cognashene. Thanks go to the Captains and tour guides. A special thanks to Jim Bowden for once again sacrificing his much deserved personal time in again serving our community interests, as our coastal community representative on the COA. I would like to also thank Pat Edwards for his dedication in defense of our community plan and putting Cognashene first these last two years as a member of the COA.

The second issue taking considerable time and organizational effort these last few months is the Townships updating of the Official Plan. Our efforts have been guided by one, a resolution of the membership of the association and two, committee members, Cooper, Cooper, Halpenny, Davis, Davis, Scheifer, Deeks, Cox and Parker. While the process has been ongoing for close to a year, it only began to get traction in August as members of the community, the Chamber of Commerce, marina owners and contractors started to decipher 226 pages of planners speak, once the first draft was issued for public comment. Updating the Official Plan (OP) is a major undertaking for the township as the current OP is now over 20 years old. Your association and the committee members that were tasked to assist in this process offered the following advice:

- (i) Add a section on Coastal Communities as the present section; Waterfront is too broad based to capture the clear distinctions of the diversity of waterfront communities.
- (ii) Sustainable Growth in the Coastal Communities should not be a policy objective.
- (iii) The Official Plan must continue to recognize the Community Plans and their, policy objectives supersedes the Township of Georgian Bay policies except in areas of environmental protection.
- (iv) We sought some minor clarifications in the wording of the Cognashene Community Plan to more accurately define its intent or meaning.

We have presented our position and advice to staff and council. Your committee will continue to advise, review and lobby on behalf of the CCA. A special thanks to Cathy Cooper in this effort.

On a very positive note Beth Halpenny will take a seat on the recently formed Township Planning Committee consisting of 5 members from the public and two from council. Beth's professional experience and planning knowledge will be invaluable to our Community and this newly formed Committee.

As you can see the community of Cognashene is well represented in all areas of planning. We will continue to update you as the second draft of the Official Plan is released mid-month and the evolution of the new Planning Committee.

*Hope you have, or had, a wonderful Thanksgiving weekend!*