



CCA Board of Directors

Chair: Kara Hunter

Treasurer: Matt Murphy

Communications: Molly Giroux

Recreation Program: Christine Davis & Meghan Finkle

Environment: Jack Giroux

Director at Large: Doug Cooper

Vice Chair: Meagan Carney

Technology: Jeff Eland

Membership: Cathie Bowden

Municipal Affairs: Gregg Badger

Events: Nancy Bennett

Cottager Editor: Barb Russell

Past Chair: Sue Carter

Secretary: Suzanne Bennett

Services: OPEN

GBA Liaison: Sandy Thompson & Tom Halpenny

Planning: Marc Kremerer

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

As the days lengthen and the boats return to the water, it's a pleasure to welcome everyone to another much-anticipated cottage season in Cognashene. After a true Ontario winter, complete with deep snow and cold days, we've earned the return of warmth and time on the Bay.

Over the off-season, your Board has been hard at work across a number of priorities, including growing membership, strengthening governance, advancing environmental stewardship, supporting our Recreation Program, and continuing our work with the Township and Georgian Bay partners. This progress is only possible through the time and effort of our volunteer directors and committee members, whose dedication makes it all happen.

Winter Patrol

I would like to recognize the outstanding work of our winter patroller, Scott Murray. Several members shared how much they appreciated receiving photos of their properties through the winter, offering real peace of mind. In one instance, a blown out window was identified early, preventing what could have been significant damage. Scott's dedication and conscientiousness are truly valued.

New CCA Event

This summer brings back many of the traditions that help define our community, along with a new and exciting addition—our inaugural CCA Golf Day. More than just events, these are opportunities to connect, meet neighbours, and spend time together. A community that has fun together grows stronger together—and that spirit is at the heart of Cognashene!

Marina Waste Bin Transition

You will notice one change this season. Despite our best efforts, and those of our councillors at the Township of Georgian Bay, public waste bins at marinas have been removed as mandated by the Province of Ontario. In some cases, marina operators have sourced private waste collection services, with costs passed on to cottagers. Otherwise waste must be taken to the Honey Harbour depot or the Baxter Road (South Bay Road) site during open hours. If you would like to share your thoughts, please consider directing your input to the District through our District Councillors, Brian Bocheck and Peter Cooper, as well as Mayor Peter Koetsier and District Chair Jeff Lehman. Contact information can be found in the Township directory

CCA Champion of the Bay Winner

The CCA is also proud to share that our association's Champion of the Bay is **Jack Giroux**. In recognition of his outstanding leadership in environmental stewardship since 2018, Jack will receive a Champion of the Bay certificate and be featured in the GBA UPDATE publication alongside recipients from across Georgian Bay.

Georgian Bay Vision 2050 Project

As a token of appreciation for the CCA's \$5,000 donation to Vision 2050 last year, the Board received a copy of the book *Letters from the Broken Coast*, a 2025 King Family Bursary-winning work blending art, photography, and reflections on Georgian Bay. It's a meaningful reminder of the landscape we share and the importance of protecting it.

Save the Date: Annual Meeting of the Members (AMM)

Finally, is a reminder to mark your calendars for the CCA AMM on **Saturday, July 4th, 2026**. With a municipal election on the horizon, it's a great opportunity to meet candidates, hear from your Board directors, local leaders and experts, and stay engaged on what's happening in our community. It's also a chance to connect with neighbours at the start of the season—we hope to see you there.

Get Involved!

If you'd like to get involved, or have suggestions or feedback, please reach out and let us know. Your voice is always welcome. The Board experience is highly rewarding with volunteers who care deeply about Cognashene and enjoy working together. If that sounds like something you'd be interested in, see the open Director roles mentioned in the newsletter.

Thank you for being part of this incredible community.

Wishing everyone a safe, relaxing, and memorable summer,

Kara Hunter

JOIN THE CCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We would like to inform you that there are currently three open director positions on the Cognashene Cottagers' Association Board for the 2026/2027 year. This is a great opportunity for members who are interested in contributing to the on-going success and stewardship of our cottage community to volunteer in one of the following roles:

- Vice-Chair
- Services Director
- Member at Large

If you are interested in putting your name forward, or would like to nominate another member, please contact me at pastchair@cognashene.com by May 31, 2026.

We welcome individuals who are enthusiastic, collaborative, and committed to the well-being of our association and its members.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement.

COMMUNICATIONS

Stay Connected Online

We are on Instagram **@cognashenecottagers**. Follow us for updates, event info, photos, and community highlights throughout the season. Access is private to ensure a safe, members-only space. To request an invitation, please reach out to our Communications Director at: communications@cognashene.com

Facebook coming soon – stay tuned!

RECREATION PROGRAM

We are very excited to announce the return of the Cognashene Cottagers' Recreation Program for the Summer of 2026. Our staff have been working hard to plan an excellent and engaging summer program for the families of Cognashene and surrounding communities.

This summer we welcome Katie Wilson as our Head of Program. She will be working with Sedona, Swimming Lead Instructor, and Lucas, Watersports Lead Instructor, to plan, execute and deliver programming in collaboration with our talented staff - Allison, Nora, Neve, Miller and Maeve.

We also welcome our amazing volunteers this summer!

This year the Recreation Program will run Lifesaving Society Swimming Lessons, Watersports, Y.P.O.C, Camp Cognashene and Cognashene Kinders. Additionally we are thrilled to re-introduce a dedicated sailing program for our senior campers on Tuesday afternoons. While this program is not CANSail accredited we hope it will allow our campers the opportunity to learn the basics of sailing small recreational craft and give them the confidence to participate in the Rystone Cup. There will also be two canoe trips this summer. One in July for our younger campers (age 7-9 years) and one in August for our most senior campers (age 10 – 13 years). Please refer to the Recreation Program Calendar on our website for the specific dates/weeks that these trips are scheduled to occur.

Registration for the Recreation Program is open and accessible via the CCA Website. We offer programming for two main age categories. Please see the list below to see what programs are available for what age of campers.

Kinders & Juniors (infants to 6 years old)

- Swimming Lessons
- Cognashene Kinders

Senior Camper (Age 7 - 13 years old)

*entering Grade 2

- Swimming Lessons
- Sailing
- Watersports
- Camp Cognashene
- Y.P.O.C (ONLY ages 10 – 13)
- Canoe Trips

We are asking that registrations are completed by Sunday, June 7th, 2026 so that staff have ample time to review the list of participants, purchase supplies and finalize lesson times for swimming. All specific program information and descriptions for the CCA Summer Recreation Program is hosted on our website:

We encourage families to bookmark the Recreation Program website as well as follow us on our social media channels for up-to-date information and announcements.

The CCA Recreation Program will be continuing our partnership with Georgian Bay Public Libraries TD Summer Reading Program. Please see the blurb below regarding how to sign up your children (and yourself) for this excellent literacy boost this summer!

Recreation Program Website: sites.google.com/view/cca-rec-program/home

Instagram: @cogrecreation

Facebook: Cognashene Recreation Program

TD Summer Reading Program

The CCA Recreation Program is continuing our partnership with the Georgian Bay Public Library (GBPL) to support summer literacy for our community. Campers in the CCA Rec Program will be able to pick-up and drop-off pre-packaged/customized reading materials from Arthur Beach throughout the summer on a bi-weekly basis.

The joy of arriving at the swim beach and receiving a hand-selected/customized package of books was a big hit for campers who participated last summer.

Summer 2026 Pick Up/Drop Off Dates from Arthur Beach:

- **Pick Up 1:** Fri, July 10, 2026 - Drop-off: Wed, July 22, 2026
- **Pick Up 2:** Fri, July 24, 2026 - Drop-off: Wed, Aug 5, 2026
- **Pick Up 3:** Fri, Aug 7, 2026 - Drop-off: Wed, August 19, 2026

Registered campers and their families will be able to visit and access the GBPL independently at any time if these dates do not work for you. Campers who participate in the program will have their progress tracked and shared with the GBPL so that they will be entered into the raffles and draws at the GBPL at the end of the summer.

How to Register in five easy steps:

- **Step 1:** Ensure you have a GBPL Library Card (FREE).
- **Step 2:** Sign up for the GBPL TD Summer Reading Program.
- **Step 3:** Let the CCA Rec Program know you have registered so we can facilitate book pick-up and drop-off.
- **Step 4:** Pick Up Books from Arthur Beach (on pre-determined dates - see above) or manage yourself as a family.
- **Step 5:** READ!

(Step-by-step instructions and live links can all be found on the Recreation Program Website under the heading TD Summer Reading Program)

Register Now: Sailing Program

Tuesday: 1:00-3:30pm (Weeks 2 - 7 only) @Arthur Beach

The CCA Sailing program is an add-on to our regular weekly programming. Senior Campers (age 7 and up) can sign up to participate in this weekly program on Tuesday afternoons at Arthur Beach. There is an additional charge of \$40.00 per week for this program.

Campers will learn the basics of sailing Laser PICO's. This will involve learning the following basic sailing skills:

- common sailing knots
- wind and weather awareness
- boating rules (including right of way, boating safety, and parts of the boat)
- how to rig a sailboat
- positioning in the boat
- capsizing and righting a sailboat
- sailing at points of sail

Campers should come to this program prepared to get wet while on the water. There will be a dryland and on-water component to all sessions.

Please Note: we are not a CanSail (Sailing Canada) certified program. This program is intended to teach campers the basic fundamentals of sailing small recreational craft in local waters and encourage participation in the Rystone Cup and recreational sailing on Georgian Bay.

We also want to thank the Georgian Bay Township for its continued support of our program. We have been given a grant again this summer to support our summer programming.

We're looking forward to a wonderful summer!

CHAMPION OF THE BAY

The Georgian Bay Association's annual Champion of the Bay Award recognizes and honors outstanding community members who actively steward the Georgian Bay in a manner that promotes environmental wellbeing.

The purpose of this award is to 1) collectively appreciate the contributions of committed community members, 2) share grassroots efforts occurring in our 18 cottage associations and 3) inspire more people to participate in stewardship activities.

Jack Giroux



As the environmental director for the CCA, Jack Giroux inspires environmental advocacy through community events and civic engagement. In particular, Jack has worked to bring leaders and scientists from Georgian Bay Forever (GBF), Georgian Bay Biosphere (GBB) and Georgian Bay Land Trust (GBLT) to community events, including last year's revival of Environment Day. He has also made special efforts, working with CCA's recreational day camp, to provide environmental education for kids on a variety of topics, including water quality testing, habitat conservation, invasive species and more.

Jack also serves as a member of GBA's Water Committee. Over the course of the year, Jack helped research the current threats of cruise ship discharge pollution in Georgian Bay. This past fall, he wrote a letter detailing the committee's concerns regarding pollution from exhaust gas cleaning systems, also known as scrubbers. Jack and GBA Executive Director, Meredith Denning, presented this letter to the MP of Parry Sound - Muskoka, Minister Scott Aitchison, and urged him to create a No-Discharge-Zone for Georgian Bay.



Please help us recognize more wonderful community members and share their stories. Nominees may be of any age and may participate in or lead a variety of projects. The overarching purpose of the award is to feature environmental stewardship.

No effort is too small and we encourage nominations of all scales. From a family picking up litter along a shore to a community shoreline clean-up day, we want to hear about and celebrate what's going on in your community! We also encourage nominations of young people or newcomers who show inspiring potential. Take photos this summer and send in your nominations throughout the summer as you see inspiring stewardship activities.

We invite you to take a moment and nominate someone to be recognized next year. No effort is too small and we welcome nominations of both youth and adults. Scan the QR code to learn more and nominate your Champion of the Bay.

ENVIRONMENT

Growing up on Georgian Bay comes with several rites of passage; cherished experiences we can all reflect on to get that hit of nostalgia, transporting us back to those simple summer days of childhood. For me, jumping off the bluff, canoe trips up the mythical Musquash river, day trips to the South Pines, and the timeless rec beach corn roast - to name a few. But there is one sundrenched summer motif that I think we can all conjure, when in the depths of winter, we just need to feel a bit of the Georgian Bay warmth. I'm talking, of course, about the coveted swim rock. Everyone has one. Whether it's around your cottage, up the shore, or at a friend's place, the swim rock comes with memories unweathered by time. Whether it's learning to swim, the feared and frigid May-long plunge, or just dipping your feet in, this place is special.

But something has changed.

Those once-smooth, sun-warmed rocks are now often coated with a thin, brownish layer of organic material. And sometimes, due to wave action or the shuffling of feet across the bottom, small wisps of this material become dislodged, deterring even the most seasoned cottagers from taking a dip. What is it, and why is it suddenly so visible in the places we've always loved?

The answer begins with an invasive species: the **Quagga mussel**. These tiny but voracious filter feeders have largely replaced the once dominant Zebra mussel as the primary benthic bivalve on Georgian Bay. Occupying subsurface territory that is far deeper than its predecessor and cousin, Quagga are remarkably efficient at removing plankton from the water. Quagga mussels exist by the billions in Georgian Bay, forming dense colonies on the lakebed at over 10,000 per square meter. Each mussel can filter more than 1 liter of water per day. The sheer volume of Quagga mussels is difficult to comprehend, but the increased filtration of lake water is having a profound effect.

As a result of increased filter feeding on suspended organics, the water in Georgian Bay has become noticeably clearer. But with clarity comes a less noticeable yet illuminating effect: sunlight now penetrates deeper. Deeper penetration of sunlight can stimulate the growth of lake vegetation, causing microscopic algae to flourish. On rock surfaces, the resultant buildup of organic matter is called Biofilm. What we see on our swim rocks, therefore, is a thin layer of microorganisms, mainly bacteria and algae, mixed with other organic material that naturally forms on submerged surfaces. The proliferation of biofilm is a direct result of human-caused invasive species introduction.

Originating in the Black Sea, both Quagga and Zebra mussels hitched a ride to North America in the bales tanks of transnational cargo vessels sometime in the mid-80s. Believed to have started in Lake Erie, and after only three years of colonization, these mussels continued their hitchhiking journey to all of the Great Lakes, and have even made it as far as the Colorado River.

The effects of Quagga Mussels aren’t limited to our swim rocks; they have reshaped the entire Great Lakes ecosystem, altering food availability for fish, shifting nutrients to the lake bottom, and changing how energy flows through the lake. The collapse of Lake Whitefish stock is a direct result of filter feeding. Indigenous communities on the Great Lakes have practiced sustainable harvests of White Fish for centuries, and the destruction of which has disproportionate effects on their communities.

Climate change means warmer water. Parts of Lake Superior, which were once believed to be impenetrable, have become increasingly susceptible to invasive mussels due to warming water temperatures. Parts of Georgian Bay have seen average surface water temperature increases of almost three degrees over the last 50 years. Maximum annual ice coverage is similarly diminishing on a decadal time scale. These effects compound, resulting in a longer growing season for biofilms and an expanded range for mussels.

The hard truth is that there are currently no viable solutions to the issue of Quagga Mussels. Scientists and community members are working hard to change this reality. But until that time, the best we can do is educate ourselves on how to NOT spread these mussels further, to inland lakes that have yet to be colonized.

While the thin layer of biofilm on our swim rocks may be a little off-putting, it’s just the tip of a much larger story unfolding across Georgian Bay. Beneath the surface, the lake is changing in profound ways; Invasive species, shifting nutrient cycles, microplastics, and warming temperatures are all altering the way the ecosystem functions, from microscopic algae to fish and beyond. Seeing biofilm is a small, tangible reminder that the Bay we love is a living, evolving system. Understanding these changes helps us appreciate why protecting shorelines and using the lake responsibly matters now more than ever, ensuring that future generations can still experience the same sun-warmed rocks, sparkling waters, and timeless summers that live in our memories.

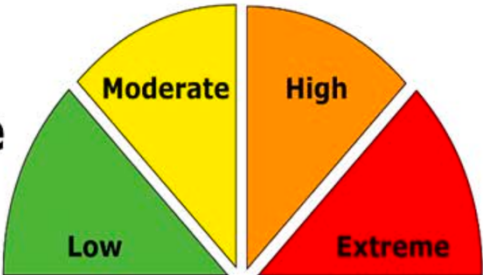
SUMMER SAFETY

Fire Rating Reminder

As we head into cottage season, please remember to pay attention to the local fire rating for southern Georgian Bay and the surrounding area.

Small fires are permitted in most areas of Muskoka. You must have adequate tools and water to extinguish the fire if the need arises and you must be with your fire at all times. Consult with your local Fire Department for outdoor burning regulations in your municipality.

Fire ratings and allowable activities



Activity	Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
Campfires (not bonfires)	✓	✓	✓	✗
Burning (with permit)	✓	✓	✗	✗
Fireworks	✓	✓	✗	✗

Staying Safe This Summer

Add the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) number into your phone. Emergencies on the water can be reported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year:

- Toll-free (within Canada) at 1-800-267-7270
- *16 on a cell phone (for most carriers)
- If toll-free service is unavailable, please dial 613-965-3870

You Can Be Found with...1, 2, 3 Words - Help Emergency Services Find You Fast

- OPP's Provincial Communication Centres (PCCs) have recently implemented the technology app "what3words" into their locations protocols.
- The what3words app is free for users to download and the OPP is encouraging Ontarians to do so in case of emergency. For more information, visit **what3words.com**.
- Use of the app has the potential to reduce call times to the PCC and search times for officers when they arrive to their dispatched location, given the precise nature of the information provided by the software.

SUMMER EVENTS – KEY DATES

We are looking for two eager cottagers to take over the Regatta and Art on the Rocks. If you're interested in being the Regatta Coordinator or Art on the Rocks coordinators, please email:

- **Regatta Coordinator** – contact Carolyn Wilson: carwilson41@gmail.com
- **Art on the Rocks Coordinator** – contact Catherine Gillespie: Gillespie.cath@gmail.com

CCA Golf Day

June 26, 2026

Bonaire Golf Course, Coldwater

Tee off the summer at our CCA Golf Day, supporting the Food Bank, Honey Harbour Library and CCA Recreation Program.

Yoga with Angela

July 24, 31 | August 7, 14

10:00 – 11:00 AM

Aunt Edna's / Davis Cottage (E08)

Please register online under the Events tab on the CCA website and enjoy a fantastic yoga class in a stunning setting - Namaste!

Long Distance Swim

July 25

1:00 – 3:00 PM

Thompson's Dock

A classic summer swim event for everyone!

Art on the Rocks

July 26

12:00 – 4:30 PM

Maxwell Island

A highlight every summer! We are hoping to attract some new artists this year. Contact Catherine Gillespie if you or someone you know is interested.

Regatta

August 1

12:30 PM

Townsend Island

Start planning now for the Anything But A Boat Race!

Ryestone Cup

August 8

Tawaststjerna Cottage

Skippers Meeting: 12:30 PM | Race Start: 1:00 PM

A highlight for sailing enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels.

Environment Day

August 15

1:00 PM

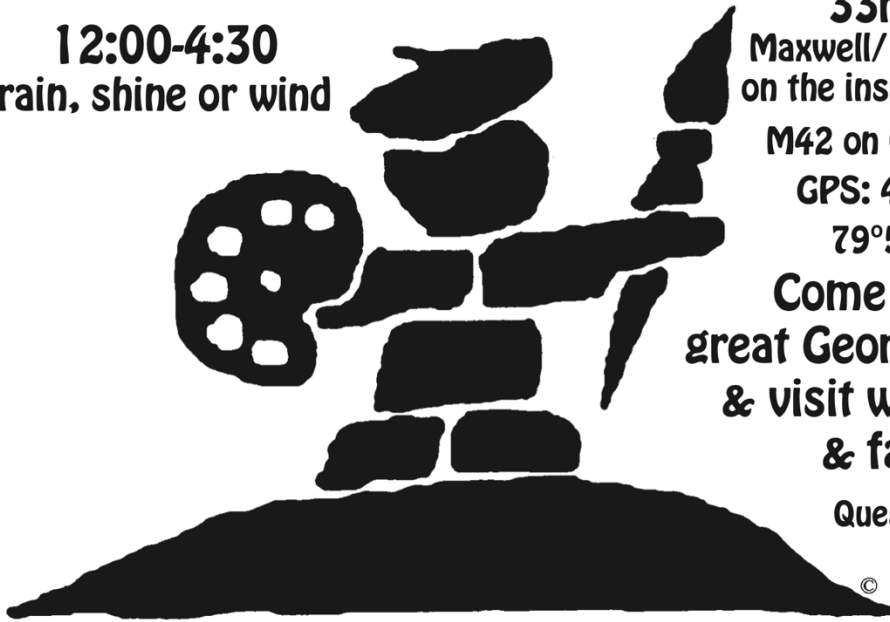
Aunt Edna's / Davis Cottage

Join representatives from Georgian Bay Biosphere to learn more about the Massasauga Rattler.

ART on the ROCKS[©]

Sunday July 26

12:00-4:30
rain, shine or wind



33rd Annual
Maxwell/ Whalen's Island
on the inside main channel
M42 on Cognashene map
GPS: 44°55'17.7"N
79°55'00.1"W
Come and see
great Georgian Bay art
& visit with friends
& family!

Questions? Call or text
716.517.0855

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