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Cognashene Cottagers Association

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President's Report

It's hard to believe that this will be my last report as President of the Association. The last two years have been very busy yet the time has flown by so quickly just the same.

This edition includes the summer calendar, which is full of events for the upcoming season. Your Board has been working throughout the year to make available as many programs as possible for the summer months.

While we attempt to provide as many services as possible, we are again struggling with our membership numbers. To date, fewer members have renewed than at this time last year, which are fewer than the year before. Clearly, we need to review a process that has worked well in the past. If you have not renewed, PLEASE do so now, by completing the enclosed form or online at www.cognashene.ca.

At the Township Council Meeting of May 31st, Council chose not to fund the Georgian Bay Forever's water testing program in southern Georgian Bay. I wrote a letter on behalf of the Association in support of continued funding, as did the president from Wah Wah Taysee. However, Councilors Lett and Sutcliffe and Mayor Walden voted against the motion, which therefore failed to pass with a majority. Water quality is a cornerstone for residing in a water-based community; we need to be assured that those who serve as our elected representatives are in tune with such fundamental needs.

With respect to the upcoming municipal election on October 25th, I

am pleased to advise that a citizens committee working on public education and engagement has been formed following a meeting attended by members of the Board this past January. It is called "Georgian Bay Vote 2010" which has representation from all parts of the Township and includes Chris Baines from Cognashene. The objective of the committee is to educate all eligible voters on issues of common concern across our Township and on the positions of the declared candidates for municipal office. A comprehensive list of questions will be developed through a consultative process with community associations across the Township with candidates being subsequently interviewed and their responses distributed. Ultimately, the measure of success will be determined by voter turnout (which was roughly 30% at the last municipal election). It is hoped that a larger number of eligible voters will be well informed of their choices when it comes time to cast their ballot. As time advances toward the election we will continue to communicate and seek your input on this very important issue.

The Annual General Meeting is set for 10:00 a.m., Saturday July 10th, at the church on the Freddy. Please come out and hear more about the work that your Board of Directors does on your behalf. The Association is grateful to the church committee for lending us the use of the church for our AGM and for our recreation program.

The Georgian Bay Association continues its work and advocacy on several fronts affecting all residents and other interested stakeholders on and around the Bay. I encourage you to read the enclosed edition of UPDATE for further details.

On a personal note, it has been a distinct honour to be President of the CCA. I am continually impressed by the dedication of the members of the Board and the respective committees who give so freely of their time as volunteers. These are the people, who by their unselfish commitment, help to make our community an incredibly wonderful place. I encourage anyone, who is so equally inclined, to contribute to such a personally rewarding experience.

I hope that everyone has a safe and happy summer at the Bay.

Best wishes,

Craig

Dates to Remember:

- June 26th
Honey Harbour
Master Plan mtg
- July 2nd
Beach cleanup
- July 5th
Rec program start
- July 10th
AGM
- July 17th
Environment Day

Service Report - Derek Friend

Fire: The risk of fire is high. A fire ban has been in place throughout Cognashene and area. Fire prevention inside and outside can be a part of your cottage opening. Please take the time to read the fire prevention information that accompanies your "Cottager" this year. I am still collecting the names of interested cottagers who are willing to make their private pumps available in an emergency [please send your e-mail to dfriend@rogers.com]. Perhaps this is the year that a water pump makes it into your boat? A hands on fire pump demonstration is being planned as part of environment day – details to follow. Remember to inspect or check or refill your fire extinguishers before the cottaging season really starts.

Police: Please let me know if you have had a break-in. It is important that you report crime to the O.P.P. They advise that a string of break-ins in the Bone Island area has them concerned. As more cottagers "open up", additional reports of break-ins are being made.

Bears: Our Environment director Doug Deeks says that bears are expected to be a concern again this year. Provincial Constable David Hobson of Southern Georgian Bay OPP [Phone: 705-526-3761; david.hobson@ontario.ca] reminds cottagers to follow a few simple tips [*Prepared from information located on the Ministry of Natural Resources website www.mnr.gov.on.ca] to help keep your family and pets from encountering a bear in your area. By following these tips you can avoid attracting bears to your property. Nuisance bears can be reported at anytime by contacting the Ministry of Natural Resources Hotline at 1-866-514-2327 or the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Prevention is the key:

- Eliminate odours. Put garbage in containers that have tight fitting lids
- Whenever possible, store garbage in bear-resistant containers, or indoors (house, shed).
- Put meat scraps in the freezer until garbage day
- Frequently wash garbage cans and recycle containers and lids with a strong smelling disinfectant

- Fill bird feeders only through the winter months
- Do not leave pet food outdoors. Feed pets indoors, not outside or in screened in areas or porches

- Be aware that cooking odours can attract bears

Remove grease and food residue from barbecue grills, including the grease cup underneath, after each use

Coast Guard: Again this year the Inshore Rescue Boat of the Coast Guard at Brebeuf Lighthouse will be a familiar sight.

A Voice from the Past - David Matthews

Enclosed in this issue of our Newsletter are reprints of letters/reports which have been brought to my attention. While Cognashene Cottagers' Association endeavors to stay out of the political arena I felt it was important to share with you what has been happening at the Township of Georgian Bay, particularly in an election year.

These articles are available as public domain and have been included with the permission of the author.

Enjoy the summer of 2010.

David Matthews
Past President

Municipal Affairs - Cathy Cooper

Honey Harbour Master Plan

The next public meeting about the plan will be held at the Delawana Inn on Saturday June 26th, from 9:30 to noon. If you do not want the character of our little service community to change too dramatically, you might want to attend. The CCA is sending board members to guarantee representation of the viewpoint of cottagers who are dependent on the marinas in the harbour. We also want to monitor the expense factor of any plan, since there is a potential for large tax increases if the plan is overly ambitious.

Planning Issues

The Township continues to overlook objections made by the CCA when granting variances well outside the intent of our community plan. The Planning Act allows for "relief" from by-laws in the form of variances. Some of the criteria for applicants seeking relief would be that they have no other viable option, or that there is some impediment on their property making it impossible to be compliant. With the rugged and irregular shapes of many properties

out on the islands this flexibility is necessary.

What is not intended by the Planning Act, however, is the interpretation of an applicant's 'wants' as a 'need for relief'. For example, if someone simply wants a larger cottage or sleeping cabin than the by-laws allow, that is not a 'need'. However, an applicant might require a larger dwelling because they have a difficult site. Take the case of someone who decides to terrace their cottage over differing levels of rock, using several sets of interior steps, in lieu of blasting a flat surface for a one-level cottage. Several sets of steps would eat up a lot of interior space that could not be used as living space. It would seem reasonable to grant a variance for a few extra hundred square feet of dwelling size for this applicant to facilitate the steps and the 'need' to avoid blasting.

It is unfortunate that the Township is interpreting 'need' and 'want' as synonymous. This has led to the granting of variances that erode the intent of our plan. Remember to vote this fall if you wish to see change.

Election

Soon we should be hearing from the committee that is going to vet all of the candidates for the municipal election in October for us. If you have particular questions that you would like the committee to ask each candidate, please let someone on the board know and we will forward it to the committee. They will be asking about support for community plans, about spending and budgets, about accountability and transparency of government. We are fortunate that we have a group willing to do a considerable amount of work on our behalf to get the positions of each candidate on a number of important issues. This will allow each of us to vote in an informed manner. Stay tuned for more on the committee, and make sure you are on the voter's list. I can almost guarantee that when you hear the issues, you will want to vote!

Regatta 2010 & Long Distance Swim- Nancy Bennett

Mark **Saturday July 24** and **Saturday July 31, 2010** on your calendars!!! The Long Distance Swim is on July 24 at 1:00 starting at Rob and Val Thompson's Dock (M69 on our map). The 85th (yes 85th!!) Annual Cognashene Regatta is being held once again on Townsend Island (E23) on Saturday July 31 at 12:30. Everyone is welcome to attend both events.

The Regatta requires the assistance of many dedicated volunteers and we are always looking for people who would like to lend a hand with the many tasks that go into such a wonderful community event. If you are interested in being a volunteer, please contact me, Nancy Bennett, at nbenne1636@rogers.com.

On a personal note, I have thoroughly enjoyed helping to organize the Long Distance Swim and the Regatta for the past two years and this will be my last year as the Regatta Director. I am looking for someone who would like to take on this truly fun job and assist me this summer to learn the ropes with a view to take on organizing these events in 2011. The team of volunteers who help out every year really make my job as Director so easy and it really is a wonderful job that is time-limited and specific and just lots of fun. Please email me at the above address if you would be willing to take on this great job!

Environment Report - Doug Deeks

Much needed rain has graced the islands this past week providing a good long soaking following a long, dry and unseasonably warm run; a little late for the strawberry harvest but good for everything else!

A rambling update on a few areas of note and presumably interest for you:

If you've been to the cottage in the past few weeks you will have noticed that water levels around your shore have been stationary and not moving upward, as is expected at this time of year. Water levels have been little changed since March 1st and aren't likely to change much more between now and the seasonal peak which is usually achieved during the month of July. That lack of upward mobility continues to be the hangover effect from the negligible spring run-off and as a result, the delta between the '09 levels and the '10 levels continues to widen and is now standing at 9 inches/22 cms. What effect will lower levels have? At the least, if you built a bass nest last year in your shallows and are anticipating the hatching of some fry this month, you may be disappointed (my 2 nests were receiving little more aquatic action than the lapping of waves at their entrances until I moved them). The issue of lower water levels does not seem to want to go away and we are now into our 12th straight year with levels (well) below the long term averages of the lake system that includes Georgian Bay.

Some discouraging news out of the Township office last week was the canceling of funding for the annual

water quality testing program despite persuasive lobbying by the cottager Associations of the area, the GBA and the GBF. Little insightful explanation was provided as to the reason. I consider this one of the more important and effective areas of funding that the Township provides our community and the cancelling of it is concerning to say the least. I might note also that the Township has not provided for the full cost of this program in the past but is rather a contributor, albeit a major one. The GBF leads the program and numerous volunteers contribute by doing the legwork while the funding is used for the professional analysis. There appear to already be lots of troubling questions surrounding our local government and this is now another one.

Besides my wife's run in with a bear on the long weekend and the timely discovery of bear scat during a somewhat dry and buggy section of the Minnicog walk that I lead a few weeks back, I haven't heard much on the bear front but as a word of caution, don't let that lull you into a complacent state. The weather has been conducive to good early season foraging but it has not been good for putting forth a strong berry and mast season, which is on the cusp of starting. Hungry bears will be looking for easy pickings, particularly of the like that they found last year. Remain vigilant with respect to garbage, bird

feeders and barbecues to name a few.

Cognashene Environment Day is 5 weeks away on Saturday July 17th and we have an excellent line-up of presentations and demonstrations which cross over from the pure environment portfolio and pick-up a couple of cottage maintenance and safety items as well. The day will include:

Solar Panels for Cottages in Georgian Bay – an overview with Q&A

Conservation Stewardship for Cottagers – the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve will provide an intro to this do-it-yourself guide

Fire response and fire pump operation – a few cottages have gone missing recently due to fire and this session will aim to educate on the locations of pumps, operation of pumps and basic fire response tactics and preparedness

Septic System Maintenance and Pump-Outs – an overview of basic maintenance and operation of septics and a pump-out demonstration (how exciting is that?)

More on the program in the days leading up to the event.

As usual, I am available for consultation and can be reached best by email at doug-deeks@gmail.com.

Enjoy the early days of summer!

Recreation Report - Introducing Meg Bennett

As I sit here writing this, there are approximately 32 days until the program begins once again, and personally I cannot wait!

Let me start by welcoming you to another amazing summer at the beach. I am thrilled to be this year's Program Director and to welcome back Tristan Simpson who is our Head of Swimming this year, Ailsa Boyd as our Head of Sailing, and Hilary Adams, Michaela Eaton-Kent, and Alexander Limoges-Friend as our full-time instructors. I would also like to welcome our new assistant instructors Claire Russell, Abby Hornell-Kennedy, Mitchell Carter and Thomas Tawaststjerna to the program. I am extremely excited to be working with this fantastic staff for an excellent summer once again (hopefully the weather agrees with us this year as well!)

This will be my sixth year working in the Recreation Program and I want to make this year as terrific as it can be. I want to make sure that any questions, comments or concerns that anyone may have are addressed before the summer, so please do not hesitate to contact me throughout June. I can be contacted through my email, missmegb@hotmail.com prior to the summer and the program cell number 705-241-3072 after July 1st.

Once again, we invite everyone to come out and help tidy the beach on Friday July 2nd at 10:00 am. Any and all help is welcome

and rakes, shovels, buckets and elbow grease are greatly appreciated!

The program will commence on Monday July 5th. There will be a staff "meet and greet" before swimming lessons at 10:00, where each child will meet and find out who their instructor will be for the summer. We are looking forward to introducing ourselves and would love to see you there!

As in previous years, space on the beach is limited and we request that you boat pool and come in small boats as much as possible. Just a reminder that the Recreation Program does not have the use of the side shore of the beach, so boats should not be pulled up or tied off to it. The beach is only to be used during scheduled program hours and cannot be used for private purposes. We also request that participants arrive no earlier than 9:50 and leave no later than 12:30, as the staff cannot be responsible for any children or patrons before/after these hours.

We will be running the Sailing Program once again this year. There will be two senior sailing sessions, one in July (Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 2-4) and the same times in August, as well as a Junior Sailing running Thursday mornings in July and August. Please register early as space is limited! We will be teaching the Red Cross Swim Program and the Lifesaving Society Bronze Levels. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Tristan Simpson if you have any questions regarding the swim program or contact me or Ailsa

Boyd regarding any sailing program questions.

A Few Notes

- We do have several peanut allergies on the beach and to make the beach safe and fun for everyone, we will be having a NO PEANUT rule once again on the beach. Please make sure that snacks for Jr. Crafts are also peanut free.
- We will be running tie dye again this summer so please remember to bring white shirts, socks, pillowcases etc. to dye!
- Remember to check the bulletin board for weekly updates on the program's activities as well as rain date locations.
- We are in need of gently used camping equipment. If you have some that is no longer in use and could donate it, we would greatly appreciate it!

Once again I am extremely thrilled to be a part of this amazing program and cannot wait to start what I know will be another fun filled summer in Cognashene.

See you all on July 2nd for beach clean up!

Meg

Communications - Ian Melhuish

The CCA Board has been discussing the idea of enhancing the Cognashene web site to include a secure area where members can view and update their personal information (address, email address etc). It may also be possible to use this area to register and pay for the

summer recreation program and to renew memberships. If this is something that you would like to see in the future let us know what you think.

Email CCANews@cognashene.com

The board has also been approached with an enquiry as to the interest in the community about having a wire-

less high-speed service installed in the Cognashene area. This would involve the installation of radio towers in the area to provide service rates of about 2.5M bps.. If anyone would like any more information please contact me at CCANews@cognashene.com.

CCA pennants and Tote Bags available for order

What is old is new again!

The Association is proud to offer a remake of the original CCA pennant, designed in 1949 by Ivan and Dorothy Melhuish. The pennant has been reproduced in three formats: 12" x 18" Pennant, 27" x 42" Pennant and a Canvas Tote Bag. All are available for purchase – please see the enclosed order form.



Classifieds

Wanted - 14' Boat - no motor needed. If you have one available please contact Mike or Lisa at merrys@xplornet.com or 905-331-8171.

Cognashene Cottagers Association



The Cognashene Cottagers Association represents a water-based community on the east shore of Georgian Bay. Its mandate is to represent and coordinate the communal interests of its membership, to assist in the preservation and protection of the area known as Cognashene and beyond to ensure an ongoing enjoyment of the Bay and to build a strong sense of community.

- The membership includes permanent and seasonal visitors.
- The Association facilitates the provision of programs and services to protect and enhance the members' enjoyment of the Bay.
- Through the participation of the membership in the programs and services offered, a great sense of community is achieved, communal interests are safe guarded and knowledge of issues is obtained.
- A partnership with the Georgian Bay Association and other related organizations assists in the promotion of careful stewardship of the Georgian Bay environment.
- The Association promotes an effective and ongoing communication with all of our membership and respects the diverse needs of the membership.

Visit our website at www.cognashene.com