

# BBLA Newsletter

Fall 2022

## Chairman's Letter

Welcome to the Big Basswood Lake Association's Fall 2022 newsletter.

We sincerely hope that all of our members and their families are safe and well.

It's hard to believe that the summer has come and gone so quickly. The lake certainly seemed to be busier this summer although I don't think that we have returned to pre-pandemic activity levels yet. However, it was wonderful to see everyone back enjoying Basswood Lake again.

The board has been extremely active again this summer. Our new board members and our returning board members continue to work very hard on your behalf. This newsletter will give you an update on some of the activities that we are currently working on.

Joanne Falk and Phil Conley have retired from their positions on the board effective at the AGM this year. We thank Joanne and Phil for their outstanding service and look forward to continuing to get their valued feedback on the work of the lake association.

As always, we are still looking for new board members so if you are interested in joining the board, please let us know

We held our spring board meeting on June 20<sup>th</sup> and our fall board meeting on Sept 6<sup>th</sup>, both conducted virtually via Zoom. Although we weren't forced to the Zoom platform this year by the same pandemic lockdown restriction that we have had in the last couple of years, we still found it an effective way to let all board members participate, even if they are not physically present on the lake.

The AGM was held in person this year at Melwel Lodge. It is a perfect place to hold the meeting as we can enjoy a view of our beautiful lake as we discuss the issues that are so important to the stewardship of Big Basswood. Thanks to the Provenzano family, the new owners of Melwel, for allowing us to use their facility and thanks. Also thanks to Monique Brock for looking after refreshments and snacks for us. We welcome them to the lake and look forward to their active participation in the association.

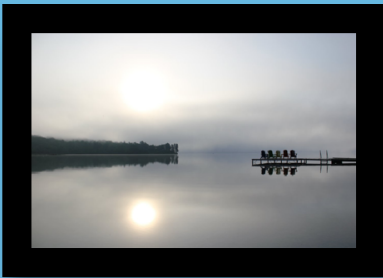
At the AGM, we discussed a number of major topics that will each be covered in greater detail in this newsletter.

The summer, we partnered again with the Sowerby Heritage Society and the North Shore Sentinel for a social evening and performance at the twelve sided barn. We are very pleased that these events have resumed. This year, the event we held another performance by Vernon Bailey and Bill McCleneghan (unfortunately delayed several weeks due to a Covid outbreak). The event was very well attended and \$3000.00 was raised for the North Shore Health Network. We look forward to partner with these organization for a number of additional events in 2023 – stay tuned for further announcements



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# Membership

## We Need Your Support!

The summer of 2022 saw a return to more a more normal Basswood season, allowing many of our friends and neighbors to return for longer stays. The pandemic restrictions imposed by governments in the past two years, resulted in a drastic drop in our membership numbers. This summer, however, our numbers have rebounded slightly. We currently have approximately 80 paid memberships to date. This number still represents only about two thirds of the number of memberships we had prior to the pandemic and very few of the 220 properties on the lake.

**So why is membership in your lake association important?** The association aims to grow and care for our lake. Currently there a number of issues that threaten to affect the quality of our lake and our cherished Basswood life style if left unchecked. Our efforts in addressing these issues are more effective when backed by robust membership numbers.

In addition your annual membership in the Big Basswood Lake Association provides several Benefits:

- ¥ **Annual events** focused on Lake Stewardship, area History, ongoing education.
- ¥ **Automatic membership in FOCA** (The Federation of Ontario Cottages Association) and access to the many informative publications they provide concerning issues faced by cottagers.
- ¥ **Participation at the Annual General Meeting** which offers the opportunity for you to provide your input on the issues that affect property owners and the preservation of the Basswood Lake environment
- ¥ **Savings on Cottage Insurance through FOCA**

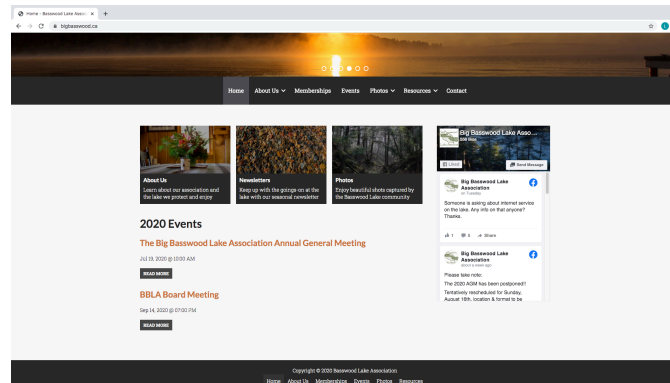
In the last two years, a number of properties on Basswood have changed ownership. If you have a new neighbor or a neighbor that is not yet a member, please reach out to let them know about the benefits of joining the BBLA. The annual membership fee remains at \$25 per year. Non-voting Associate memberships are also available to local Businesses and friends and family who visit the lake frequently.

## Payment Options

- ¥ **USE PAYPAL**
- ¥ **E-TRANSFER** from a Canadian Bank account to our treasurer Cynthia Wood since48@gmail.com
- ¥ **SEND A CHEQUE** to Big Basswood Lake Association, P.O. **Box 337, Thessalon, ON P0R 1L0**

***Please join us in caring for our lake. Your voice and opinions are welcome and very much needed!***

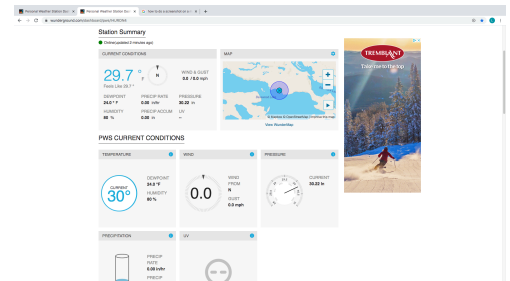
# Lake Association Web Site



We hope you enjoyed another fantastic spring and summer on Big Basswood Lake. As discussed at this year's Annual General Meeting, we have made some significant improvements to the Big Basswood Lake Association website. A new news and alerts section on the home page provides quick, easy access to important developments affecting the lake community.

Other changes include new photographs throughout the site, as well as an online version of select BBLA newsletter articles. Be sure to check out the community history articles, transcribed with commentary by BBLA board member Bobby Swain.

- Home page links which allow users to more easily access information
- Additional photos
- Updated historical section
- Previous news items and newsletters
- Upcoming dates for meetings and socials
- a link to real time weather (coming soon).
- a link where membership fees can be paid – PayPal option is available. We encourage everyone to participate in BBLA membership. Your contribution is appreciated.



You can help to further improve the website by providing your own pictures of life on Big Basswood Lake. Please email photo submission to BBLA board member Matthew Aho for inclusion on the website.

Thank you for your support of the BBLA. The board is working on your behalf to ensure that Big Basswood Lake is maintained and continues to be the beautiful, pristine lake that it is. We welcome suggestions and feedback from our association members.

Wishing you all a great winter and look forward to seeing you back on the lake next summer.



## Chairman's Letter

(continued from page 1)

We also took an active interest in the recent municipal elections, engaging with the candidates whenever possible and publishing an information circular on the voting process and the issues that we felt were important to the lake association. We welcome the new council and look forward to working with them going forward.

In closing, I'm sure you will see that there is a lot going on at the BBLA that impacts the ongoing stewardship and enjoyment of our beautiful lake. However, as our treasurer Cynthia Woods notes in her submission on membership, we still only enjoy participation from less than half the property owners on the lake. We strongly believe that given the importance of the issues that we are addressing and the continued low cost to membership of \$25 that we should have a much higher percentage of membership. We encourage you to sign up if you haven't already done so and to ask your friends and neighbors on the lake to sign up as well.

Your lake association will continue to work hard on your behalf. Have a great winter and, as always, let me know if there are any issues that you would like to see us addressing.

Stay safe .... Larry



# 2022 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Once again, due to the generosity of Frank and Christian Provenzano, we were able to hold the meeting at Melwel Lodge in the screen porch of the dining area. This is an ideal venue for the meeting since we are able to meet for a couple of hours on Sunday morning while enjoying the view of our beautiful lake as we discuss the important issues that impact our experiences on that lake. Thanks also to Monique Brock for providing refreshments for our members that morning.

It was great to have everyone gathered again for the second year in a row without the prior restrictions imposed by the Covid pandemic. We were, however, to take advantage of one technological innovation forced on us by the pandemic in that we were able to concurrently live stream the proceeding on Zoom for those that couldn't attend in person. The experiment went relatively well and we would expect to continue this in years to come.

We discussed a number of important topics including:

- Treasurers Report
- Membership
- Stewardship
- History
- Update on Dam Operation Plan/Replacement
- Mike Hunting Award
- Update on Bill Philips Campground
- Enhanced web page/communications
- FOCA Update
- Member Survey
- Broadband
- TFN Boundary Claim
- Canada Water Agency

In addition, mayor Georges Bilodeau attended and provided us with an update from the Municipality of Huron Shores and also fielded questions from the floor.

If you have any questions about the topics covered, please see the minutes published in the website, the updates provided in this newsletter or be in touch with one of the members of our board whose contact information is listed at the end of this newsletter.

# Huron Shores Municipal Election

On Monday, October 24 2022 municipal elections were held in Huron Shores at the same time as new councils were elected across the province.

The Big Basswood Lake Association board participated proactively in the campaign running up to the election. We talked to many of the candidates individually, attended the all candidates meeting on Wednesday Sept 21 in Iron Bridge, submitted questions at the meeting and circulated an information communication to our membership prior to election day.

The information sheet that we provided called for our membership to be active participants by registering their vote. We also supplied links for online voting and listed out the candidates that were running in the election.

In that communication, we listed out the following issues that we believed were important to the BBLA in this election:

1. Improvements to waste management and cleanup of the dump facilities – particularly in Ward 1 and 2
2. Reinstatement of the private road grants that were retroactively phased out in the spring of 2021 with no consultation with private roads committees and no consideration of the value add that maintenance of our private roads provide to taxpayers and the municipality.
3. By-law and official plan enforcement must be implemented for trailer parks within the municipality. The incumbent councilors and the mayor have not provided any guidance to staff on this matter over the past term. This enforcement policy should include provision of coordination with Algoma Public Health, the Ministry of the Environment, and a By-law enforcement officer on sewage disposal, water supply, shoreline density and setbacks. MPAC must also be contacted to review assessability of all structures within trailer parks.
4. Careful consideration be given to the net amount of taxes being paid by BBLA ratepayers – taxes have increased by up to 30% over the past 4 year term of the incumbent Mayor and Council. More judicious use of our tax dollars for services that are important to Big Basswood Lake residents. This includes a transparent and open annual consultation process with the constituents of Huron Shores. It will also be critical for each member of council to carefully consider the impact of the upcoming MPAC market value reassessment, currently scheduled for 2024. Council must ensure that the mil rate is reduced to keep property taxes in line with a carefully planned and executed municipal budget.
5. Active support of the environmental stewardship of Big Basswood Lake and it's watershed. Examples include mandatory septic inspections and active municipal involvement in policing lake side trailer parks as previously noted.

In this communication, we called for change in the council to address these important issues.

# Huron Shores Municipal Election

(continued)

We are pleased to acknowledge that there is, in fact, significant change in council as a result of this election. Following is the new council:

Mayor – Matt Seabrook  
Councilor - Ward 1 – Roger Mulligan  
Councilor – Ward 1 and 2 – Blair MacKinnon  
Councilor – Ward 2 – Peter Falk  
Councilor – Ward 3 – Tim Currie  
Councilor – Ward 3 and 4 – Jane Armstrong (acclaimed)  
Councilor Ward 4 – Jock Perrie (acclaimed)

The board has already been in touch with Mayor Seabrook and he has committed his willingness to work with our association and the incoming council on these important issues that impact our lake residents.

## Loon Survey

### Loons on Basswood Lake and Volunteer Loon Watchers

Loon sightings for the last few summers have been “hit and miss”. An official Canadian Lakes Loon Survey was not submitted to Bird Studies Canada this year. However, In the three previous years before 2020, volunteers from all areas of the lakes contributed data to the surveys designed and recorded at Bird Studies Canada. They reported loons sighted from May through August. This represented categories such as:



1. Number of days surveyed in May – for example
2. Maximum number of adult loons
3. Maximum number of mated pairs
4. Maximum number of young
5. Maximum number of Large Young in August
6. Number of nests observed and number of eggs present

Here is a link to the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey:

[Canadian Lakes Loon Survey | Birds Canada | Oiseaux Canada](#)

There is lots of information on recording data information. And lots of tips and information on observing and getting to know loon behavior.

# Citizen Science on Big Basswood Lake

## Lake Partner Program

BBLA has been supporting and promoting Citizen Science initiatives on Big Basswood Lake for approximately 23 years. We continue to participate actively in the FOCA Lake Partner Program has built a network of volunteers to sample water from over 550 lakes across Ontario. Testing includes phosphorus levels, calcium and water clarity which we submit to the program for analysis and recording in their data base.. Volunteers over the years have consistently submitted water samples and secchi disk This citizen science program represents the largest and longest standing one of this kind in North America. FOCA partners with the DESC. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks coordinates this program.

For a very comprehensive report on the lake partner program, please click on and review this link with a detailed report on the program.

[https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/LPP-Long-Report\\_FINAL-REPORT.pdf](https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/LPP-Long-Report_FINAL-REPORT.pdf)

We have been monitoring the lake partner data base over the summer and many of you that checked it out may have noticed that it is missing the 2021 data. We have been in touch with FOCA and are informed that they have fallen behind in data recording because of the pandemic. We will continue to monitor and report when the information is caught back up.

In the meantime, Bobby Swain and Laura Foley have continued to diligently record secchi disk readings. The data for this year so far is:

### East Basin

Date (DD/MM)	Time (24 hour)	Secchi Depth	Secchi Disk hits bottom	Comments (water temperature, pollen, weather conditions)
24-May	13:00	10.5	No	some pollen - light wind
15-Jun	15:00	11	No	clear and calm
20-Jul	16:00	11.5	No	cloudy and calm
15-Aug	16:30	11.5	No	cloudy
10-Sep	10:30	12	No	sunny

### West Basin

Date (DD/MM)	Time (24 hour)	Secchi Depth	Secchi Disk hits bottom	Comments (water temperature, pollen, weather conditions)
24-May	13:30	10	No	some pollen - light wind
15-Jun	15:30	10.5	No	clear and calm
20-Jul	16:30	10	No	cloudy and calm
15-Aug	17:00	11.5	No	cloudy
10-Sep	11:00	11.5	No	sunny



# Update on Canada Water Agency

Despite requests we have not received an update from the Federal Government on either the timing of implementation of the plans to form the new Canada Water Agency, or the decision on the location of the head office of the Agency.

The City of Sault Ste. Marie has remained diligent in their lobby for the opportunity to be the home of the Agency when it is established. We trust that the newly elected Mayor of Sault Ste. Marie and the new faces in Council will choose to carry on with this lobby which we expect will provide benefits to all of Algoma.

The BBLA has continued to voice support for the Sault initiative to both the Task Force and outgoing Mayor Christian Provenzano, who is a Big Basswood Lake property owner at Melwel Lodge and a BBLA member. Mr. Provenzano has played a vital role in engaging the Sault community to support the city's bid to the Federal Government.

The BBLA Board will continue to monitor this file and support the Sault with any assistance we can provide and update the Membership with any news. We are hoping that the establishment of the Agency, and then locating of the headquarters in Sault Ste. Marie, will be beneficial to the BBLA's initiatives to provide for the preservation of the water quality in our unique Lake

## Important Dates for 2023

Spring Board Meeting - 6/19/2023  
Annual General Meeting - 7/16/2023  
Fall Board Meeting - 9/11/2023

# Mike Hunting Lake Stewardship Award

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In the spring newsletter, we were pleased to announce the re-launch of the Mike Hunting Lake Stewardship Award Program.

The intent of the program is to honor those who demonstrate leadership and/or make notable contributions - past or present - to the enhancement of the Big Basswood Lake experience. This prestigious award is named in memory of our friend and a past president of the Big Basswood Lake Association, Mike Hunting.

Notable contributions may include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- participation in citizen science relating to the Lake by participation and/or collaboration in scientific research - this may include meaningful contributions to data collection and monitoring programs
- initiatives which assist in the maintenance or improvement of the water quality of Big Basswood Lake waters
- socially constructive initiatives which invite participation from the Lake community at large and improve the Membership's enjoyment of the Lake
- educational initiatives which may enhance knowledge of the lake and/or the surrounding natural environment
- programs to preserve or improve the natural or modified shorelines and surrounding areas - including mitigation of risk from invasive species
- development and implementation of participation sports events which would invite the involvement of the Lake community
- public safety initiatives which may contribute to improving the safety of the Membership on and around the Lake
- any other initiative which may enhance the spirit and/or promote the solidarity of the Big Basswood Lake community

We invite nominations for the Mike Hunting Lake Stewardship Award by email to Larry Allcorn at [lallcorn@bell.net](mailto:lallcorn@bell.net)

Nominations should include a description of the initiative and a short summary of the outstanding contribution. Nominations for the inaugural 2023 award should be received by December 31, 2022. Nominations will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and follow-up information or details may be requested. The Board's goal will be to present the inaugural Award at the 2023 AGM of the Big Basswood Lake Association.

All residents of Big Basswood Lake are strongly encouraged to think of someone they would like to nominate for this important award. The health and sustainability of the lake affects us all, not only now, but for future generations as well. Please take a moment and think of someone you know who contributes to the greater good of our lake and deserves to be recognized for their efforts.

# News Alert - Break and Enter on Frairs Bay Road

For information, there was a cottage break-in on Frairs Bay Road this past week. Entry was gained by forcibly using a crowbar to pry the door open from doorframe. After breaking in, the perpetrator(s) appeared to go through every cabinet in the cottage searching for valuables with many items removed.

Police did not have any leads on the property theft as of October 24th, so if you noticed any suspicious or uncommon activity on the Lake or in the vicinity of Frairs Bay Road/ Basswood Lake Road please call the OPP with details.

Some related ideas for your property and for increased diligence follow:

- arming your vacated property with alarms or video surveillance, and informing uninvited persons that the property is being monitored through signage can improve your chances of avoiding intrusion
- it is very easy to pry a wooden door frame open with a crowbar - there are reinforcing products available to make this more difficult and perhaps discourage intrusion if your cottage is not a specific target
- all year-round residents or frequent off season visitors should be vigilant at all times if you see any suspicious in the quiet months when fewer cottagers are around - record details and if suspicion is high, make a report to the OPP
- when possible, remove valuables and keep sakes from your cottage at the time of your annual shutdown - local break-ins at this time appear to target items such as liquor as a priority
- if you have valuable electronics visible through uncovered windows, this may create a desire for intrusion for specific items - perhaps store electronics out of site or remove at close-up
- update your inventory list to your insurance company as major items are added

There are no failsafe methods for preventing theft however we want to ensure that you are aware of a current trend in the Big Basswood Lake community so that you take steps to avoid or at least mitigate impacts.

# Big Basswood Water Levels/ Harris Creek Dam Replacement

In recent newsletters we have mentioned the Harris Creek Dam replacement and the Operating Plan from MNRF for Basswood Lake water levels. Unfortunately, with the sudden passing of Robert Berry, our contact at MNR, this past spring we have to date been unable to re-establish meaningful communications with MNRF. We are eagerly awaiting his replacement to be announced so that we can reestablish regular contact and continue to receive updates on the water levels, Operating Plan and eventual replacement of the Harris Creek Dam.

Currently Basswood Lake water level is very low, with very little outflow into Harris Creek. This is creating challenges for anyone who still has boats or docks in the water. While we don't have any concrete historical data on Basswood Lake levels, we do know that fall is typically the low water point of the year. We were able to find some data on two neighboring watershed areas that the Federal Government tracks and has an excellent website to share real-time and historic data for those. These are the Little White River to the North, and the Mississauga to the East. A review of five years of data shows that for both, water levels and flow are currently at a low which is not exceptional for the time of year. This is normally the lowest point of the year, and these are both within the statistical normal low ranges for the season. While this data isn't for Basswood Lake, maybe we could draw some comparisons.



We look forward to our new contact at MNRF and being able to share an update on that front.



# Thessalon First Nations Boundary Land Claim

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In the Spring newsletter and at this year's AGM, we informed the membership that the negotiation around the Thessalon First Nations boundary claim had been paused and that the matter had returned to the courts.

You will recall that boundary claim centers around the interpretation of the boundary of the TFN reserve lands as defined in the Robinson-Huron Treaty of 1850. Specifically, the issue has to do with the definition of the actual boundaries due to confusion in the units of measure. The First Nation understood leagues as the boundary unit of measure while the treaty used miles – a factor of 3 difference.

We were informed last year that the issue that is being reviewed in the courts is that the First Nations is seeking a "Declaration of Aboriginal Title" from the courts to provide some clarity in further negotiations. Whether or not this will be ultimately ruled on is unknown at this time.

The Canadian Encyclopedia defines aboriginal title as:

"Aboriginal title is an inherent right, recognized in common law, that originates in Indigenous peoples' occupation, use and control of ancestral lands prior to colonization. Aboriginal title is not a right granted by the government; rather, it is a property right that the Crown first recognized in the Royal Proclamation of 1763. It has been subsequently recognized and defined by several Supreme Court of Canada decisions."

A recent follow up (Sept/2022) with Jane Thomas confirms that nothing has changed and that the matter is still in the courts with no next steps scheduled.

We asked her to reconfirm that private lands would not be affected in this negotiation and she provided the following guidance:

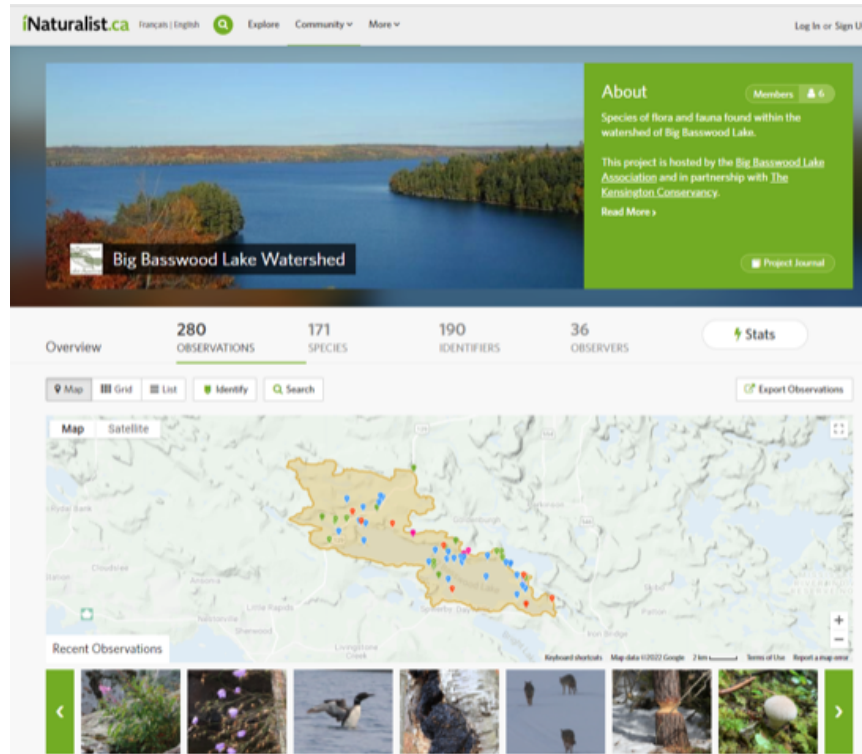
**Ontario does not expropriate private lands in settling a land claim. Private property could be included in a land claim settlement if an owner is willing to sell the land and Ontario chooses to purchase it. (See [The land claim negotiation process | ontario.ca](#))**

We will provide further updates as more information becomes available from Jane. If you have questions for her, she can be reached at:

[jane.e.thomas@ontario.ca](mailto:jane.e.thomas@ontario.ca)

# iNaturalist

As a result of the 2021 AGM BBLA partnered with Carter Dorscht from the Kensington Conservancy to establish the Big Basswood Lake Watershed Project on iNaturalist. The iNaturalist platform allow users to post observations, submit photos of flora and fauna for identification, communicate with others with questions and observations and, as you can see on the opening page, provides an overview and data on what has been noted in the area.



The home page has a lot of information—photos and stats. This page provides you with an overview of what has been seen, where it was spotted, photographed and recorded in the Big Basswood Lake Project.

Check it out and plan to sign up. It is easy to sign up. Just got to [inaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org) and sign up. After you sign up you can click on Community then choose Projects from the drop down menu and join the Big Basswood Lake Watershed Project. Then explore and add some photos. See what other people have observed. You can compare notes with other users.

BBLA is planning on hosting a workshop on iNaturalist this summer to learn about the platform and its potential and to share experiences. Get a head start during these quieter winter months and see what has already happening with this project. Thank you to those of you that have already started and contributed.

Questions? Contact Jim Falconer [kjimf@rogers.com](mailto:kjimf@rogers.com) Marilyn Kellum & Jim Falconer

## CHECK IT OUT!!

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/big-basswood-lake-watershed>

# Sandbar/ Survey of Members

You'll probably recall that we published some suggestions in the spring newsletter regarding conduct at the sandbar and in other locations on the lake. This was in direct response to a number of concerns raised by members in terms of the activities at these locations and the overall impacts on all property owners on their enjoyment of Big Basswood and long term stewardship of our lake.

We are pleased to report that improvements have been observed this summer with few if any complaints about conduct. Residents have still enjoyed the use of these locations but also done a good job of eliminating excess noise, garbage etc etc. Everyone is to be congratulated on doing their part to the betterment of all of our lake experience.

The BBLA is happy to publish any concerns that our members may have on any activities around the lake and we consider it part of our mandate to promote lake stewardship for the benefit of all members and property owners.

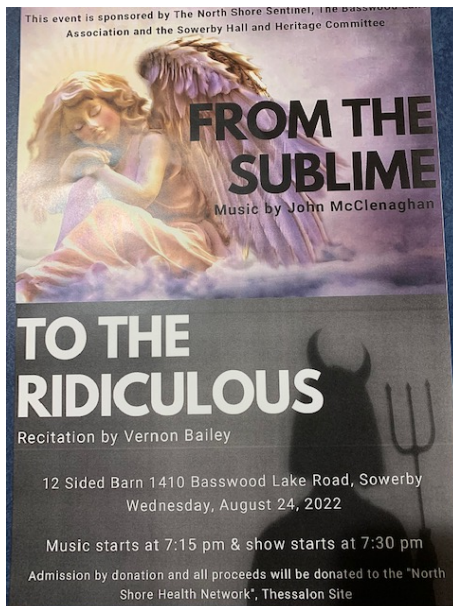
To this end, we asked for a show of hands at the AGM on who would like us to develop a survey on initiatives which benefit the majority of members. These initiatives might include lobbying Municipal and Provincial authorities on specific issues, development of a Lake Etiquette Guide, or any other item which the survey may identify as being of a high priority among our group.

There was unanimous support at the AGM for circulating of a survey such as this. To that end, we have researched other surveys sent out by other associations and developed a draft of our own survey to be sent out to Big Basswood lake residents. We are currently awaiting feedback from a similar survey conducted this summer by FOCA for all of its lake association members. We are expecting to receive an update at their fall seminar on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>.

We will be doing a final update to our survey, reviewing it with the board and hoping to get it out to you by end of year with a goal of having the results compiled and analyzed by the start of the 2023 season.

Please stay tuned and take a minute to fill it out when you receive it in the mail. It's important to us to get everyone's feedback on the issues that are important to them.

# Sowerby Heritage Event



As we announced in the spring newsletter and at the AGM, the Sowerby Heritage Evenings were resuming this year after a 2 year hiatus due to Covid social gathering restrictions. You may recall that these evenings, organized by Dave Ratz and Will Samis of the Sowerby Heritage Society had been very successful and well attended pre pandemic. As we did previously, the BBLA agreed to partner with Heritage Society and the North Shore sentinel to make this a community event.

The 2022 scheduled event was "From the Sublime to the Ridiculous" – a recitation by Vernon Bailey with music by John McClenaghan. This was an encore performance that was originally presented

by Vernon and John in 2019 with some updated material.

The event was originally scheduled for Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup> but had to be rescheduled to Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup> due to a positive Covid diagnosis the weekend before.

All accounts are that the event was enjoyed by all with a sold out crowd in spite of the rescheduled date. \$3000 was raised through a "pass the hat" donation that went to the benefit of the North Shore Health Network. We look forward to more successful events in 2023!

## Internet/Broadband Update

There is still some confusion around federal and provincial funding of a fibre optic backbone project for Algoma. The BBLA board is attempting to get a clearer picture of the status of this initiative by consulting with federal and provincial officials and meeting with the new incoming mayor and council to determine their understanding and intentions.

We are aware of a number of lake residents that have subscribed to the satellite based internet service, Starlink, and are very happy with its performance (including several members of the BBLA board). For further information on the Starlink offering, please visit their website at: <https://www.starlink.com/>

In addition, we have been made aware of Leepfrog Networks intention to build a new tower at the corner of Melwel Road and Hwy 17, currently scheduled for the spring of 2023. This tower is purported to cover 2/3 of Basswood Lake. For more information on Leepfrog and/or to register your interest in their service when it becomes available, please visit: <https://www.leepfrogtelecom.com/>

In the meantime, the BBLA will update you as more information becomes available





A reminder to all of our members that a membership in the Big Basswood Lake Association includes a membership in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association.

The association is currently some 500+ members strong representing over 50,000 waterfront land owners in the province. They provide us with a number of valuable services:

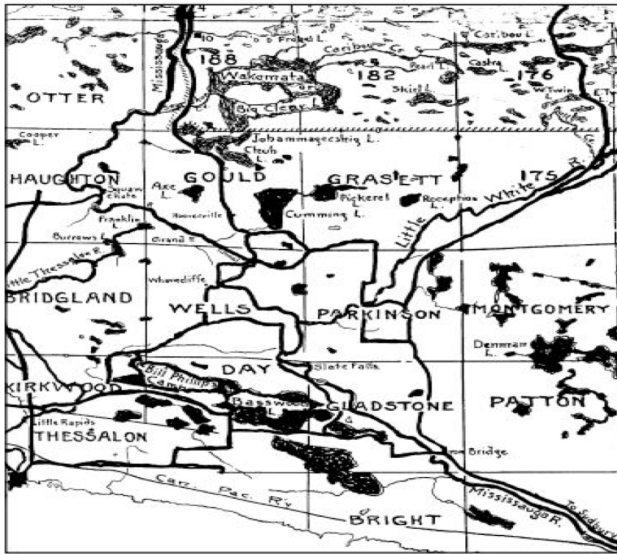
1. Ongoing participation in their lake partner program. We submit our lake test results for clarity and phosphorous levels to the lake partner data base every year. This data base continues to show Basswood as one of the clearest lakes in Ontario
2. FOCA holds a spring and a fall meeting every year, both of which usually feature valuable information. The fall event will be held virtually on Nov 17th and will be attended by BBLA board members. Online sessions include a FOCA update on programs, a report on the economic impact of waterfront property owners, a report on the recent survey completed by FOCA, launch of revised website and tips for engaging with incoming municipal councils.
3. Also, the FOCA web site contains a large amount of valuable information on lake stewardship and the ongoing initiatives that FOCA is working on. Please visit the website at <http://www.foca.on.ca/> for more information

We encourage our members to take advantage of this powerful tool as there is a lot of excellent information and reference material to be found there.

4. A valuable lobbying resource that can speak effectively on behalf of the 500 member associations.
5. FOCA also offers ongoing discounts on a number of products and services. These are also listed in the website above.

# History Corner

BBLA  
Fall



*This Blog entry is reprinted courtesy of the Basswood Lake Outfitters website. It contains an article published in the Sault Star in February of 1979 detailing the somewhat confusing and often contentious naming, and renaming of Big Basswood Lake.*

*It appears that the bureaucracy got involved and the name of our Lake became a moving target during the previous century. I have seen the name Waquekobing used in articles from the early 1900's detailing among other things, the quite famous canoe trip down the Mississauga River from Biscotasing to the portage near Slate Falls on the river (now under Red Rock Lake reservoir). The*

*portage led up to the Canadian Camp Clubhouse on the north shore of what is now called Basswood Lake – I guess!*

*Considering this, the 1979 article appears to have jumped over that early part of our Lake's history. Regardless, we thought that people on the Lake and in the area might be interested in how this all came down back in the day – we hope you enjoy this little nugget of local history.*

## *Basswood Lake Outfitters*

Transcribed from an article in the Sault Star in February 1979

Basswood Lake or Lake Wakwekobi

Pleasing everyone—an impossibility !

Pleasing the majority of people is one thing, but pleasing everyone is an impossibility as Names Researchers found out with a well-known lake in Day Township (between Blind River and Thessalon). Attention was focused on the lake in Homer Foster's column of last July 17.

Reporting on geographic name changes he commented, "Of course, the name change which caused the biggest foofaraw in the Thessalon area was that of Basswood Lake to Wakwekobi. This occurred on government maps a number of years ago.

By now, virtually all tourist literature has been converted to Wakwekobi and even the resort operators have had to give in because government literature uses Wakwekobi and to keep Basswood would just confuse visitors. People in the area, however, continue to call it Basswood Lake, it's been Basswood Lake for many, many years and I suspect it will stay Basswood so far as residents there are concerned for many, many more".

In actual fact, the provincial government did the opposite. The lake first began to show up as "Wakwekobi" on maps dating back as far as 1855 (derived as the European pronunciation of the Indian name "Waquekobing" - something to do with round as in a curve or an eddy or whirlpool).

## History Corner (cont'd)

The name was made official in 1910. Later reports from area foresters and other residents persuaded government Names Authorities to change Wakwekobi — though not without some hesitation at forfeiting a distinctive Indian name — first to Big Basswood Lake in 1961 and then after further local study to Basswood Lake in 1970.

Official maps have reflected these changes over the years. But as Northern Ontario toponymist Debbie Cunningham ruefully admits "This was strictly a no-win situation! Our files show that a reporter from the Port Arthur News-Chronicle was not impressed with the name Basswood when it first appeared and lost no time in blaming the Government for its appearance."

In an article entitled, *The Name-Changers at Work*, appearing in that paper in the mid 1950s and reprinted in *The Ottawa Journal* the reporter described the shock experienced during a return trip to the Thessalon area of finding that not only had the general scenery changed over the years but even the lake and stream names. The reporter cited Wakwekobi in particular. "Someone, probably a disciple of the principle of ease, thinks it would look better spelled Basswood and for purposes of distinction there could be a Big Basswood and Little Basswood . . . Even if some civil servants prefer names that are easier to spell and remember, some of the old ones have their qualities too."

According to the Names Board, people tend to regard names personally, so when a feature is known by more than one name, each will have its own supporters, making it impossible to please both groups.

The 'damned if we do and damned if we don't' feeling that momentarily pervades Nomenclature staff when faced with this type of situation can be very frustrating. It never, however, dampens their enthusiasm. Instead they've long since come to regard it as one of the 'hazards' of the job.

Basswood or Wakweboki—take your choice



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