



BBLA Newsletter

Summer 2018

Chairman's Letter

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Welcome back to Big Basswood Lake for the summer of 2018.

An unusually late spring has given way to a gorgeous early summer on the lake. This was the first year that many can recall that the ice was still thick enough in early May to permit fishing through the ice after the lake trout season opened.

Your lake association continued to be very active over the winter. We picked up several new members over the winter bringing our total membership to 114 for 2017. Although this represents a record membership level thanks to the hard work of our membership chairman Mike Hunting and the other members of the board, we believe that we can exceed these numbers in 2018. Please see the article on membership and continue to tell your fellow property owners on the lake about the initiatives the association is undertaking on their behalf and how important it is for them to join up.

Mike has resigned from the board for this year and we thank him for his years of dedicated service to the BBLA, both as association chairman and as membership chairman. **THANK YOU MIKE!**

Over the winter, the association focused on three main initiatives.

- **Applying for a Trillium Grant** from the Ontario government to fund our planned septic inspection program. Please see the article in this newsletter on the status of septic inspection program.

- **Keeping up to date on the Thessalon First Nations land claim.** Although the negotiation process is still in it's early stages, we have been doing our best to keep up to date on the negotiation. Please see the article in this newsletter for further information.

- We have also been keeping up to speed on activities with **Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association.** Although we were not able to attend the spring AGM this year, we did attend an excellent fall seminar in Toronto and have been continuing to keep up to speed on the information on their web site.

The format of splitting our summer meetings into two separate events has continued to be very popular so we will continue that format this year. The AGM business meeting will be held on July 15th and the less formal speaker evening, the Sweet Sowerby Social will be held on August 15th. Both events will be held at the Sowerby Hall on Basswood Road

Membership Report

In 2017, we set an all-time record for membership finishing with 114 paid members. Thank you to everyone for your support last year, especially our board members and Mike Hunting our membership chairman.

However, we have approximately 230 residences on the lake. Our goal this year is to exceed 50% membership. With all of the activities that we have going on in

support of the stewardship of our beautiful lake, we believe that we can far exceed this goal – why wouldn't everyone on the lake want to participate? Remember that we introduced the concept of a non voting or associate membership a few years ago. This allows non property owners who care about the issues and stewardship of our lake to contribute by joining the association. Please

consider mentioning this alternative to friends and family that make frequent use of your cottage or land. They may well be interested in contributing. Again, thank you for your support in 2017 and look forward to your participation in 2018.

Larry Allcorn
Acting Membership
Chairman

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Other important topics that are covered in this newsletter are:

- Update on the 2018 photo contest to be judged at this year's AGM
- Update on lake partner/lake monitoring program
- Update on MNR partnership activities
- The Loon Survey initiative

We hope that you will find the information in this newsletter interesting and informative. The board

continues to work hard on the stewardship of our beautiful lake. We believe that this is an important time in the life of our lake and that we should all give our full attention to preserving it's beauty and enjoyment. If you have any feedback or suggestions for us, please contact me or any member of the board directly - our contact information is included at the end of this newsletter. Please remember to

contact your neighbours and sign them up as well. In closing, this is an election year for the board and we will be re-electing the board at the end of the AGM. Should you wish to serve on the board, please contact Bill Landon at bill.nancy1288@gmail.com

Larry Allcorn - Chairman

Photo Contest 2018

Seasons at Big Basswood Lake

2017-2018

Big Basswood Lake Association Photo Contest

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The judging has begun and a winner is about to be decided and presented with an award on July 15 th at the Annual General Meeting to be held at Sowerby Hall. The entries are all eligible for our next Calendar to be issued for sale in 2019. A huge thank you to all you shutterbugs for sharing your special photos and moments on Basswood lake with us, as collectively we can cover so much more of the lake than any one individual would be able to in a given year.



Our panel of judges this year include Sheila Currie a renowned local artist from Coles Bay Road who has traveled to 7 continents and has a studio right here on the lake. Sheri Minardi a recently retired teacher who focuses much of her own photography business on wildlife photography and has taken numerous photography classes along with participating in local artistic events like the Sylvan Circle. Adriano DiCerbo a photography teacher and artist in his own right has presented a number of shows as well as exhibitions has agreed to apply his expertise to the project. Our final judge Joanne Falk paints and creates her own line of jewelry. She has participated in the Sylvan Circle and more recently returned here to Basswood and joined with fellow artists in local events. We thank all these judges for their time and commitment. We look forward to hearing the result.

Submitted by:

Maeve Coccimiglio

Septic Inspection Program

As announced at last year's AGM, the lake association is moving forward with a septic inspection program for properties around Big Basswood Lake. The lake association believes that this is an important initiative for the long term health/stewardship of our beautiful lake.

In the fall of 2017 we notified Huron Shores council and Algoma Health of our intent to proceed in 2018.

With the support of Debbie Tonelli, clerk at Huron Shores, we prepared and submitted an application to the Ontario Trillium Fund for some \$50,000 of funding towards the cost of this project. This application was submitted in February, 2018. Unfortunately, the Trillium Fund only approves funding once a year in early July. Since we have no prior experience with the Trillium Fund, it is difficult to predict if this funding will be approved or not.

We will be engaging Tulloch Engineering to perform the inspections. Tulloch was selected after a review of 2 competing bids because of their experience and local knowledge. In addition, the intent is to hire a summer student to work in the Huron Shores office to catalogue all properties on the lake and to record any information available on existing wastewater disposal systems on each property. This student will work with the Tulloch coordinator to schedule appointments for each property's inspection. No property will be inspected without an appointment.

Ideally, an inspection will take place while the property/septic system is in use. For seasonal residences, this would imply that the inspection should take place during the busy summer months. Because of the timing of the grant approval and the lead time required to get the project up to speed, it's anticipated that only a few properties would get inspected this year and that the remainder would be inspected in 2019.

Each inspection would consist of the Tulloch engineer reviewing the location, specifications and any other information that is known about the existing septic system including the last pump out date. In addition, a visual inspection would determine if any effluent is visible on the surface. Under no circumstances will any invasive inspections involving digging take place in this round of inspection. If problems are suspected, the property owner and Algoma Health would be notified for follow up inspection and remediation.

If the property does not have a septic system, then the existing waste disposal system will be documented and a comment may be included in the report as to whether the disposal conforms with current best practices/ codes.

Submitted by Larry Allcorn and Marilyn Kellum

Canadian Lakes Loon Survey

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For the second year in a row BBLA is taking part in the annual nationwide loon survey, a project of Bird Studies Canada.

Like last year, a group of Basswood Lake volunteers is keeping watch in their general area of the lake noting presence of adult loons and loon pairs, nests and eggs present, if any. They will also be watching

for hatchlings and then the presence of any surviving juveniles toward the end of the summer. Last year juveniles were reported in groups getting ready for migration as late as mid October. In the fall, the data collected will be summarized and sent to Bird Studies Canada.

Other important information is the presence or absence of other water birds on the

lake.

If you have seen loons and visit the visit the Sowerby Farmers' Market, stop by the BBLA table to report your sightings. Thanks!

For more information, contact Dixie Olmstead at 651-271-6558 or dixie_olmstead@yahoo.com



Nesting Loon

June 2018

Little Island - West End of Lake

Photo by Sheri Minardi

(one of our judges for this year's photo contest)

Mark These Dates for 2018

Annual General Meeting	July 15th, 2018
Sweet Sowerby Social	August 15th, 2018
Fall Board Meeting	September 17th, 2018

Lake Partner Water Quality Testing

THE 2017 NUMBERS— — —

Secchi disk reading (water clarity): **10.6**

Total phosphorus:

1.9 West Basin

2.0 East Basin

Calcium: **3.2**

AND WHAT THEY TELL US— —



Water clarity has been the benchmark quality indicator for Big Basswood since BBLA began participating in the Lake Partner Program (LPP) in 1999. The annual average secchi disk readings have been consistent through the years at 10-12 meters making us one of the clearest lakes in Ontario.

Total phosphorus is a measurement used to manage and assess lake nutrient status and algae growth. Phosphorus occurs naturally but also finds its way into lakes via human pathways: e.g. septic wastes, fertilizers, laundry detergents, etc. Human caused changes can impact the natural phosphorus cycle. An example of this would be recent algal blooms. Big Basswood Lake TP is, and has been, consistently low.

Calcium is an essential element that is present in natural waters. It's in limestone and other types of rocks. Calcium gets into the water through leeching of soils, weathering of rocks, effluent and other point sources. It is important to all life forms, both aquatic and terrestrial. Calcium levels are declining in Canadian Shield Lakes which are proving to be a stressor for many aquatic species. Calcium levels are essentially unchanged on Big Basswood. The range of Calcium levels reported by LPP participating lakes is approximately 2-37.

For more information—check out:

<https://foca.on.ca/lake-partner-program-overview/>

<http://foca.on.ca/lake-partner-program-sampling-assistance/>

https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Secchi_Summary_September_2017.pdf

Annual General Meeting

It's Meeting Time!

Meet your friends, meet your neighbors & get the latest news about all things Big Basswood!!

Come to the AGM!

Sunday July, 15th

10 AM

Sowerby Hall

Plan on attending BBLA's Annual General Meeting Sunday morning, July 15th, at Sowerby Hall. There is a lot going on including updates on a lake management plan from the MNRF, information regarding the Thessalon First Nation land claim process, the septic inspection program, winter wildlife monitoring, and the announcement of the **2018 Photo Contest** winners.

It also is an election year for BBLA board members. Please consider this opportunity to get involved with all things Basswood. Currently we have eight board members but the board can be composed of up to eleven members!! If you would like to serve please contact Bill Landon, who has volunteered to chair the Nominating Committee, at bill.nancy1288@gmail.com or call him at (705) 941-1583.

Looking forward to seeing everyone!!

The Sweet Sowerby Social

Hold the Date

Wednesday, August 15th, 2018

7 - 9 PM

Sowerby Hall

"Big Basswood Lake History"

Bring a Dessert to Share with Your Neighbours and Hear Speakers on the History of Big Basswood Lake

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry



Over the last several years, the Big Basswood Lake Association working relationship with the MNR has been very good. Peggy Wilson, the MNR's local partnership specialist continues to do a good job of engaging with the lake association to keep us up to date on MNR initiatives.

Recently, the MNR published a document entitled "Sault Ste Marie Partnership Strategy" which documents the partnership between the local MNR offices (Blind River and Sault Ste Marie) and local stakeholders such as the Big Basswood Lake Association. Please reference the link to this document from the BBLA web site.

Recently, the MNR has engaged on three separate initiatives:

Information Exchange – Peggy and her team offered to present to us at last year's Sweet Sowerby Social on the permitting process and conservation reserves.

Broad Scale Fish Monitoring Program – in June, two technicians from the MNR have been working on the lake using both large and small scale fish nets. The purpose of this monitoring program is to monitor fish population in Ontario lakes on a 5 year cycle. The fish population is monitored for water quality, angling activity, large and small fish species, invasive species, contaminants in fish flesh and habitat.

To view netting results for individual lakes, please visit FISHONLINE at

www.Ontario.ca/page/fishing

and for contaminant sampling results, please visit

www.Ontario.ca/fishguide

Dam Operating Plan – the MNR has informed us that they will be undertaking a review of the Big Basswood Lake Dam Operating Plan that outlines operating parameters for the dam. The plan is a guideline to the decision making that goes into determining when our dam will be opened or closed resulting in an increase or decrease in water levels. We look forward to reporting on its progress to the membership as we find out more details.

Melwel Lodge Dining Hall

Basswood's historic Melwel Lodge looks forward to next stage of upgrades



Melwel Lodge founders Weldon and Melba Moore, right, are shown in 1995, in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Lodge sitting on the porch of the dining building.

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 the North Shore Sentinel

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October 18, 2017

BASSWOOD LAKE – This week, the office and dining room building at Melwel Lodge will be demolished to make way for a new 4,400-square foot complex. The new structure will be designed to accommodate up to 150 event guests, geared to hosting wedding receptions and conferences, as well as smaller gatherings.

When founders Weldon and Melba Moore - whose names formed the resort's now iconic trade name - opened the lodge in 1945, Melwel offered the American Plan, very popular with guests at the time and for the next many years.

Renting one of the Lodge's cabins included housekeeping and meals in the central dining room.

Over the generations, the American Plan became less popular with guests, as destination lake stays evolved with consumers' changing demands.

Since 1981, when the Moores first sold Melwel to a Sudbury couple, the property has changed hands a few times and managers have tried different hospitality models, as guest expectations changed.

Eventually, in 2007, the Lodge was sold to Dale Harrison, a Sault Ste. Marie-born Toronto stock analyst, looking for an investment in this area.

Mr. Harrison owned a cottage on Lake Huron in the Thessalon area and had been introduced to Big Basswood Lake by an engineer with whom he'd been working.

At the same time, a friend from Toronto was investigating the Muskoka area for a potential vacation home and Mr. Harrison suggested he consider looking at the North Shore of Lake Huron.

Stumbling upon the Melwel property then available for sale, Mr. Harrison and his friend partnered on the purchase of the Basswood property, which featured a west-facing view and private bay.

Immediately, the new owners began upgrading the cabins and converted a conference centre into a large cottage. By 2008, the cottages had been upgraded to meet contemporary guest expectations.

By 2015, Mr. Harrison bought out his partner and, as sole owner, continued the move to upgrade the complex with a review of the original dining building.

Built over 70 years ago and without a foundation, Mr. Harrison says the dining building simply couldn't be upgraded.

He hopes to reconcile current building code standards with the lakefront location and the significance of the building in the Melwel heritage.

Mr. Harrison says the new building will incorporate some of the fixtures and artifacts of the original structure.

Following the scheduled October 18 demolition, it's anticipated that site preparation and foundational work will begin immediately.

Framing will commence as soon as the slab foundation work is complete and Mr. Harrison hopes the structure will be closed in by late fall.

While Mr. Harrison lives in Vancouver and visits regularly, an on-site manager will oversee the new construction on his behalf.

Mr. Harrison doesn't anticipate that the new dining room building will ever feature a daily restaurant, as it once did in the past.



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Current Stage of Construction





A reminder that a membership in the Big Basswood Lake Association automatically includes a membership in FOCA with benefits including:

- . Access to "CottageFirst" Insurance
- . Discount on Cottage Life Magazine
- . Discount on Coleman Products
- . Discount on Dock in a Box Products
- . The FOCA Lake Stewards Newsletter
- . Access to all FOCA collateral on website

Please visit the FOCA website at:

www.foca.on.ca

2018 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS IN BBLA AREA

Farmers' Market every Saturday from 9-2 at both the Round Barn in Sowerby and the Iron Bridge Historical Museum.

Jamming Session at the Thessalon Curling Club every Wednesday at 7:30 PM. Show your skills with an instrument or just sit back and enjoy the music.

The Community Action Program for Children (CAP-C) is held in Iron Bridge on Wednesdays from 9:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Huron Shores Public Library (10 Main Street). For more information, please contact EarlyON Child & Family Centre at 705-356-4677.

July 28: Sault Ste. Marie Can-Am Powerboat Poker Run at the Thessalon Marina - see "pokerrunsamerica.com" or call 1-800-354-9145, ext. 227 for details.

August 2-6: Thessalon Community Days featuring baseball, music, games, parades, and fireworks.

August 6: Country Fair and Silent Auction at the Heritage Park and Museum in Little Rapids, from 11AM to 3PM.

August 10-12: Iron Bridge Lions Club Family Days featuring baseball, a pancake breakfast and dance.

August 11: Bagpiping concert on Hunting's dock at 4PM - Southwest side of lake.

September 1: Iron Bridge Fall Fair - Check "Huronshores.ca" for more details.

September 15: Sylvan Circle Art Tour from 9AM-5PM - See "sylvancircle.ca" for more details.

September 29: Arts on the Trail in Elliot Lake - Many artist display and sell their works throughout the city.

Thessalon First Nations Boundary Land Claim

As discussed at our AGM last year and documented in our fall newsletter, the Thessalon First Nation has filed a boundary land claim with the federal and provincial governments. In this land claim, Thessalon First Nation asserts that there was a miscommunication in the drawing of the boundaries during the negotiation and signing of the the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850 and that the boundaries of the reserve should have been expressed in leagues (3 miles) instead of miles so that the total area covered in the treaty was one ninth of the area. The asserted area for the new boundaries encompasses Big Basswood Lake in it's entirety. Note that the actual candidate lands for transfer to the First Nations will be determined during the negotiation

The government has agreed to negotiate this claim. The negotiation is

being led by Mark Richard of the Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR). Mark has agreed to discuss status/progress with the Basswood Lake Association as we are important stakeholders. He has promised to make himself available whenever we require a conversation/ discussion.

At this point, the negotiation is just beginning. Terms of the negotiation have been agreed on but no actual negotiations on the land areas to be transferred have yet taken place. We are assured by Mark that a series of public consultations will be undertaken when there are concrete proposals to put forward. This is not likely to occur for some time yet.

There have been 2 meetings that have taken place on the land claim recently.

On June 8th, Tom Isaacs spoke to a large group of local residents at the Odd Fellows Hall in Thessalon. This was attended by Larry Allcorn on behalf of the board. Mr Isaacs is an attorney who specializes in aboriginal law. He consults with multiple governments and corporations who are involved in various land claims across the country. Although not familiar with the details of this specific negotiation (since it is being conducted under a strict confidentiality agreement), he was able to give us a good history of the changes in the law that have led to these type of negotiations. He had reviewed the details of fact sheet number 1 (see below) with Mark Richard and was able to reassure us that there was nothing unusual in that document. In particular he re-iterated that there was never any expropriation of private lands and that access to private lands was always protected in these

Boundary Land Claim

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On Wednesday, June 20th, Mark Richard and colleagues addressed the Huron Shores council directly on the history and status of the negotiation. This council meeting had been re-located to the Iron Bridge arena because of great public interest. This meeting was attended by multiple BBLA board members on behalf of the association.

Because the negotiation is in it's early stages and not in public consultation yet, the meeting was tightly controlled. Mark and his colleagues addressed their comments to the councilors and fielded both prepared questions and ad hoc questions directly from the councilors. The public was not able to pose questions during the

council meeting, only observe. However, Mr. Richard was good enough to stay for a considerable time after the meeting to answer any questions that he could from members of the public that were in attendance.

We draw your attention to these important documents for your review:

1. Fact Sheet #1 – Published by Ontario MIRR dated September, 2017 and published in our fall newsletter
2. Circular published by Thessalon First Nations in November, 2017
3. Article Published in the Sentinel

Newspaper June 30, 2017 edition on Tom Isaacs presentation

4. Article published in the Sentinel on June 27, 2018 documenting the 20 pre-prepared questions that the councilors asked of Mr. Richard, Ontario Negotiator

These documents will be made available from our web site

Submitted by:
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Larry Allcorn

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