



BBLA Newsletter

FALL / WINTER 2013 / 2014

**See you at the
AGM on
Sunday July 20,
2014 at 10 am
at Sowerby
Hall!**

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Chairman's Letter

What have you done for me lately? People say that all the time. Hopefully members of BBLA will not be saying that about our association.

What are we doing? Your association has hired Lincoln North to study local Real Estate assessments to make sure they are fair. We will discuss this in more detail later in this newsletter and at the annual meeting. We have also added a new feature to our website, "bigbasswood.ca". We now offer a classified advertising section. Do you want to sell your property or are you looking to buy? Not just property, but almost anything...boats, motors, ATV's...if it's legal, we'll post it! Create a login and password and just sign in here to advertise: <http://www.bigbasswood.ca/>

[classifieds.php](#)

As many of you know my wife and I spend the "offseason" in southern Ohio. We have shown many of our Ohio friends the Big Basswood Lake website. Unanimously, they all say it is so beautiful. Several friends have visited us and all agree that we have the most spectacular lake they have ever seen. Where else can you see a Loon swimming 30 feet underwater, on a clear calm day? We are so fortunate. Let's keep our lake beautiful: 1) never bath in the lake. Phosphorus in our soaps or shampoos can cause algae blooms; 2) always clean you boat and motor if you have been on another lake. We do not want invasive species; 3) if you notice algae or strange sub-

stances call Algoma Health or the MNR. They may be able to determine the cause.

We have had unusually high water level this summer and fall. Two huge rainstorms contributed to this. In September, up to 6 ½ inches fell in less than 24 hours, causing significant damage and road closures for up to one week. Water levels rose almost one foot in 2 days. Below are two pictures showing damage to Basswood Lake Rd, and, water flowing out of Big Basswood through Harris Creek.

(cont'd pg. 2)



Update on Membership

As we reported to the Annual General Meeting in July, the board of directors of the lake association undertook a concerted effort to increase our membership numbers in 2013. Our membership numbers had steadily declined from a high of 86 members in 2007 to a low of

35 members in 2012.

It is very important that we maintain our membership at a high level. Not only does this ensure that we are properly representing the needs of the majority of the property holders on Basswood Lake but it also

positions us to apply for federal and provincial government grants. Many of these grants require a minimum membership.

Consequently, the board of directors undertook an initiative to contact all property owners, (cont'd pg. 3)

Find Us on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/bigbasswood

Chairman's Letter (cont'd)



Harris Creek

(cont'd from pg. 1)

You may want to know how the MNR regulates our water levels. Ray Lipinski, of the MNR, gave me this response earlier:

[http://
www.bigbasswood.ca/
members/water-](http://www.bigbasswood.ca/members/water-)

[levels.php](#)

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank The Big Basswood Lake Tennis Association for their gift to BBLA, in the amount of \$4082. Our most recent financial statement can be viewed on our website.

Sincerely, Michael L. Hunting, Chairman
BBLA

BBLA
NEWSLETTER

Big Basswood MPAC Property Assessment Update

At our Annual General Meeting in July, we announced an intention to establish a committee to examine the property assessments on Basswood Lake as established by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation. At that meeting, we heard a presentation from Lincoln North, a local Thessalon resident whose professional practice was involved with MPAC appeals and assessments. He volunteered to act as an advisor to the Big Basswood Lake Association on how best to deal with MPAC on property assessment appeals.

Since that meeting, the committee has been working to get some historical perspective on actual sales on Basswood Lake over the last several years. They have compiled a list of 16 property sales which represent property transactions on our lake dating back to October 31, 2008. Interestingly, when the average sales price for these 16 transactions is compared to the corresponding MPAC property value assessments, there is very little variance overall. Although the difference between the assessed value and the actual sales value vary from property to property, the overall variance between the MPAC assessment and the sales price is almost

zero ie. the assessments are representative of the actual sales price **on average**.

Therefore, the committee does not believe that there is an argument at this stage for residents on Basswood to take action on a collective basis. Instead, they are recommending that individual property owners who believe that their assessment does not represent their true property value consider an independent appeal to MPAC.

In the near future, the committee will be sending a survey to each Basswood Lake Association member individually soliciting your feedback on how your MPAC assessed value compares with the estimated sales price for your property. The results of these surveys will be kept in strictest confidence and will be compiled to gauge the current perspective of the lake association members. The committee will be in contact with members who indicate on the survey that they believe that they have grounds for an appeal to MPAC with a recommended course of action.

Please watch for the survey emailed to you within the next 60 days. If you do not receive them, please contact the lake association to ensure that your email address is accurate on our records.



Weldon and
Melba
Moore -
Melwel
Lodge

Update on Membership

(cont'd from pg 1) beginning in the fall of 2012, and continuing until last July's annual general meeting. Our goal was to ensure that all property owners were aware of the work of the association and the timing of the 2013 general meeting. It also helped us to understand the concerns of all residents on the lake. A by-product of the initiative was an update to our member data base with current contact information.

As a result of this effort, we are pleased to report that the current membership of the lake association has increased to 66 members as of the end of 2013.

However, we still believe that this number can be substantially improved. Therefore, over this off season, we are planning the following:

1. We will be re-contacting, by phone or in person, all property owners prior to next year's general meeting. This is essentially the same initiative

that we undertook last year but we feel that it's important to re-connect with everyone that we can on an annual basis to ensure that you are informed of the projects that we are working on and that we are aware of your ongoing concerns

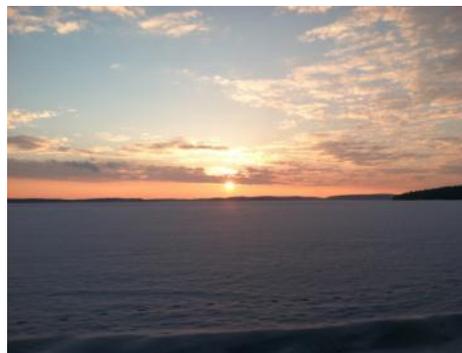
2. We would continue to ask that you encourage your friends and neighbours on the lake to participate by joining the lake association. As noted, it's to all of our benefits to have increased membership numbers.

3. The board of directors has updated the by-laws to establish an associate membership. In years past, only persons that owned property within 500' of the lake could join the lake association. We believe that there

is a wider community of vendors, friends and family that are also concerned with the well-being of Basswood Lake. Therefore, beginning in 2014, they will be able to support the lake association by purchasing an associate membership.

Thank you for contributing to the improved membership numbers in the Big Basswood Lake Association in 2013 and we look forward to your continued support in 2014.

Larry Allcorn



"We would continue to ask that you encourage your friends and neighbours on the lake to participate by joining the lake association. As noted, it's to all of our benefits to have increased membership numbers."

THE SHORELINE: What It Does For Our Lake

Lake shorelines are often referred to as "the ribbon of life". This phrase attempts to

capture the key role the shoreline plays in maintaining the complex and diverse environment that supports the fish and wildlife we value. The shoreline is where the land and water meet, but it is dependent on the land above and the water below. A healthy shoreline provides filtration, prevents erosion, mitigates run-offs, and provides a rich wildlife habitat. A natural and healthy shoreline is one of the most important factors involved in main-

taining water quality.

And what can we do for the shoreline? As much as possible, we should just let it be. General guidelines recommend leaving 75% of your shoreline in its natural state, using the the remaining 25% to access the lake. A buffer of natural plants, trees and shrubs at least 10 metres deep is a good starting point (even more is recommended for a cold water lake such as Basswood) in maintaining or reestablishing "the ribbon of life". Natural buffer zones provide food and cover for birds, insects and animals. The root systems of native

plants stabilize the soil to prevent wash-outs into the lake. These root systems also absorb excessive nutrients and pollutants. Native plants are perfectly suited to provide habitat and protect the lake from erosion and contaminants.

In addition to protecting the shoreline, we must consider that whatever goes onto our property or into our drains will eventually find it's way into the lake. The Healthy Shoreline Checklist provides a quick reference of things we should consider and actions we can take to protect the qualities of Big basswood Lake that make it so special. (cont'd page 4)



THE HEALTHY SHORE LIST
 HOW DOES YOUR WATERFRONT CHECK OUT?


PLANT A BUFFER ZONE OF NATIVE VEGETATION CLOSE TO SHORE
 ___ The tangle of roots filters impure runoff from your cottage and slows erosion of the soil

SWEAR OFF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES
 ___ They end up in the water and are bad news for aquatic life

OPT FOR A FLOATING OR PIPE DOCK
 ___ It causes the least disturbance to the shoreline lakebed

MOOR THE SWIM RAFT FARTHER OUT TO SAVE SHORE PLANTS
 ___ Birds nest and fish spawn in those things you call "weeds." Don't tear them out

"SOFTEN" HARD WALKWAYS AND DRIVES
 ___ Unlike asphalt, pea gravel or wood chips soak up runoff

PRESERVE YOUR PROPERTY'S MATURE TREES
 ___ Their deep roots stabilize the slope down to the water

FORGO FERTILIZERS/UPGRADE YOUR LEAKY SEPTIC SYSTEM
 ___ Both send phosphorus into the lake, fuelling algae growth and depleting oxygen

LEAVE FALLEN TREES AND BRANCHES IN THE SHALLOWS
 ___ Wood nourishes all sorts of underwater critters and provides cover for fish



KEEP OIL AND GAS WELL AWAY FROM THE WATER'S EDGE
 ___ Even a minor spill has big consequences for vulnerable lake dwellers

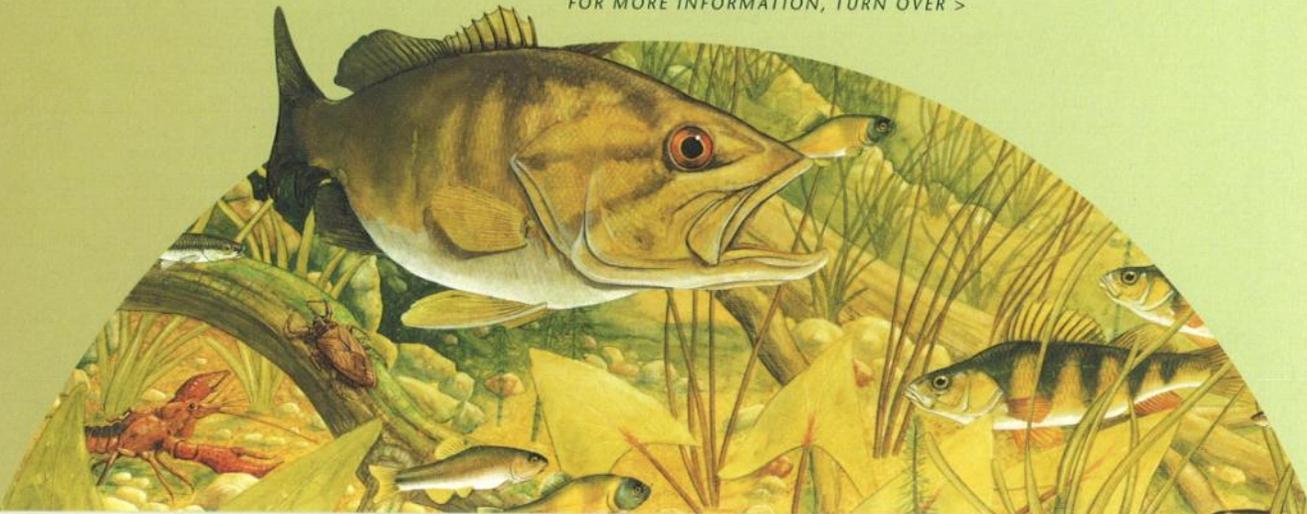
USE UNTREATED WOOD FOR SHORELINE STRUCTURES LIKE DOCKS
 ___ Preservative-free materials, such as cedar, are pricier but much safer for aquatic inhabitants

KICK THE COTTAGE LAWN HABIT
 ___ Turf lets up to 55 per cent of rainfall wash away

REPLACE THAT CRUMBLING CONCRETE BREAKWALL
 ___ A gently regraded slope withstands waves and looks a lot nicer

SHARE YOUR WATERFRONT WISDOM WITH NEIGHBOURS
 ___ Healthy-shore practices benefit everybody, from cottagers to fish

FOR MORE INFORMATION, TURN OVER >



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE HEALTHY SHORE?

GETTING APPROVALS for a shore project: Whether you're replacing a dock or restoring a shoreline, you want to be sure your project suits your waterfront's needs (and doesn't go against the *Fisheries Act*!). That means giving the authorities a plan of your grand scheme. Start with the Conservation Authority or Parks Canada; they'll tell you if you need a permit or more input from the Ministry of Natural Resources or Fisheries and Oceans Canada. (For more info on the approvals process, check out *The Shore Primer* or *The Dock Primer*, listed below.)

HELPFUL CONTACTS

www.fish-habitat.com

for quick access to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Parks Canada, Conservation Ontario, and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

**Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Ontario – Great Lakes Area**

Fish Habitat Management Program
867 Lakeshore Rd.
Burlington ON L7R 4A6
Tel: (905) 336-6424
Fax: (905) 336-6285
www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/canwaters-eauxcan
(You can find Fisheries and Oceans Canada publications on this website. Just click on the "Infocentre" link.)

Conservation Ontario

120 Bayview Pkwy., Box 11
Newmarket ON L3Y 4W3
Tel: (905) 895-0716
Fax: (905) 895-0751
Website: www.conservation-ontario.on.ca
(You can find contact info for Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities on this website. Just click on the "Corporate Profile" link.)

The Living By Water Project

5524 Dickinson St., Box 599
Manotick ON K4M 1A5
Tel: (613) 692-3571, ext. 122
Fax: (613) 692-2806
Email: shorelines@lrconline.com
Website: www.livingbywater.ca

Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA)

156 Duncan Mill Rd., Ste. 18
Toronto ON M3B 3N2
Tel: (416) 429-0444
Fax: (416) 429-4944
Email: info@foca.on.ca
Website: www.foca.on.ca

Parks Canada – Ontario

111 Water St. E.
Cornwall ON K6H 6S3
Toll-free: 1-800-839-8221
Fax: (613) 937-1331
Email: information@pc.gc.ca
Website: www.parksCanada.gc.ca

**Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
Lands and Water Section**

300 Water St., Box 7000
Peterborough ON K9J 8M5
Tel: (705) 755-2000
Fax: (705) 755-1677
Email: mnr.nric@mnr.gov.on.ca
Website: www.mnr.gov.on.ca
(You can find a copy of the 2003 Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources fishing regulations on this website. Just click on the "Fish and Wildlife" link.)

On the Living Edge: Your Handbook

for *Waterfront Living*, by The Living By Water Project. Produced by Conservation Ontario and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. Order from: The Living By Water Project (see "Helpful Contacts").

Keeping Your Lake Great (annual lake stewardship newsletter), by the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations. Order from: FOCA (see "Helpful Contacts").

FURTHER READING



The Shore Primer, by Ray Ford. Produced by Cottage Life and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.



The Dock Primer, by Max Burns. Produced by Cottage Life and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Order free copies of *The Shore Primer* and *The Dock Primer* from: Fisheries and Oceans Canada (see "Helpful Contacts"). Both primers are also posted on www.cottagelife.com and www.fish-habitat.com.

SHORELINE LINGO

BUFFER ZONE: a replication of nature's riparian zone (see below) by conscientious cottagers, using native plant species. The wider the buffer, the better for your lake.

LITTORAL ZONE: the thriving strip of water closest to shore, where up to 90 per cent of lake species either lives or passes through.

NATIVE PLANT SPECIES: vegetation indigenous to your cottage area. Born of local soil and climate, they're hardier, managing without pesticides and fertilizers.

PHOSPHORUS: a "nutrient" occurring in nature, but also in human products, such as fecal matter and fertilizers. Too much phosphorus in runoff force-feeds algae and disrupts the aquatic balance.

RIPARIAN ZONE: the thriving strip of trees, shrubs, and plants at the water's edge. It acts as a "buffer," purifying runoff and securing soil, and provides shelter for shoreline wildlife.



Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Pêches et Océans Canada



(FOCA) Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations



Conservation Ontario



The Living By Water Project



Your directors are here to serve the members of our association. Below is a list of the current board members, with their contact information:



DIRECTORS OF BBLA

Michael Hunting, Chairman, 705-842-1833, 513-683-2238,
mlhuntingsr@gmail.com

Maeve Coccimiglio, Vice Chairman, 705-842-2454, mmcoccimiglio@gmail.com

Ron Trivers, Treasurer, 705-842-2883, lyndatrivers@gmail.com

Phyllis Coosaia, 705-842-1472, 760-340-1964, rlc7@msn.com

Marilyn Kellum, Secretary and lake stewardship, 734-428-8725,
mkellum@umich.edu

Larry Allcorn, Membership Chairman, 416-484-1172,
lallcorn@rogers.com

Andrew MacKay, Website, Communication, and Technology Officer,
705-842-6263, andrew@artisblind.com

Lolly Hunting, Historian and Vendors List, 705-842-1833, 513-683-2238,
mlhuntingsr@gmail.com

Jack Hodgson, Co-Historian, 248-588-7409,
johnhodgson000@comcast.net



THE SHORELINE: What It Does For Our Lake

(cont'd from page 5)

More resources available:

FOCA Fact Sheets:

NATURAL SHORELINES http://www.foca.on.ca/xinha/plugins/ExtendedFileManager/demo_images/test/Natural_Shorelines.pdf

ENHANCING HABITATS http://www.foca.on.ca/xinha/plugins/ExtendedFileManager/demo_images/test/Enhancing_Habitat.pdf

POLLUTION PREVENTION http://www.foca.on.ca/xinha/plugins/ExtendedFileManager/demo_images/test/POLLUTION_PREVENTION.pdf

by Marilyn Kellum

Other Resources

LOVE YOUR LAKES Resources and Downloads on a wide-range of topics:

<http://www.loveyourlake.ca/?pg=en/resources/>

Web-site supported by the Centre for Sustainable Watersheds & the Canadian Wildlife Federation

Native Plant Information:

<https://sites.google.com/site/mishorelinepartnership/home/mnsp-native-plant-materials/mnsp-native-plant-list>

<http://www.shoreline.msu.edu/resources/native-directory/>

<http://www.loveyourlake.ca/?pg=en/resources/>

Be sure and check out the Resource Table every year at the AGM. The BBLA provides hand-outs on many of these subjects.

References:

A Shoreline Owner's Guide to Healthy Waterfronts, FOCA 2011

http://www.foca.on.ca/xinha/plugins/ExtendedFileManager/demo_images/Water-shed_booklet_FULL_2011_with_covers.pdf