



The Loon's Call

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SUMMER
2017

President's Message

WELCOME BACK! Even during mild winters my thoughts wander from time to time, picturing myself on the dock, early morning, steaming coffee in a thermal mug. Is there a better way to de-stress and void one's thoughts from the busyness and intensity of daily life in the city? I doubt it. This is my 50th season on Gull Lake and I am so grateful. For most of my life I have summered here and known such joy from the simple pleasures life has to offer--swimming in soft, clear water, watching the great heron searching for food for her young ones, the return of wild strawberry plants, trilliums and fiddleheads. I eagerly watch for the hummingbirds and nut-hatches to re-visit the feeders and drift off to sleep listening to the lone whippoor-will. One of my favourite past times is reading our guest book. It chronicles so many memorable moments when my family opened our summer home and hearts to those who mean the most in our lives. This is our Muskoka experience at its best.

So, what's yours? Each of us would define that in a slightly different way. But we would all agree that we come here (or are permanently here) to "get away". And there are underlying assumptions in this concept. One of them is being safe and this season, we are focusing on just that. Safe boating, safe campfires and security of your residence and possessions. How to address these things to encourage common sense and courtesy so that we all feel safe and get the maximum benefit from the Muskoka experience? This is our challenge and we are embracing it! Stay tuned.

Thank you to all the folks who visited our booth at the Canada 150 celebration in

Gull Lake Rotary Park on July 1. We were so proud to be amongst the hundreds dressed in red and white for this special day. Thank you to the Town of Gravenhurst for organizing this historic festivity. [And be sure to seek out and read the historic plaque unveiled during the speeches, commemorating the efforts of the German prisoners of war who built stone steps, break walls and a granite pier at the Park.

We recently sent out an email inviting you to participate in a survey for Safe Quiet Lakes. In the next week or so we will be sending out a second survey, this time on behalf of the District of Muskoka. This is your chance to have your say and potentially effect real change.

Our annual water testing program has begun and we sincerely thank the Bertrand family for stepping up once again to conduct the testing for both Gull and Silver lakes. We also welcome Bruce Elliott of the North Shore Rd. community who has volunteered to take on the testing after this season. We are so grateful for all your efforts! What would our experience look like without safe and pristine water? Unimaginable!

I look forward to meeting up with all of you at the upcoming AGM. Just look for us in the room flanked by a brand new logo banner! Our presentation will include updates for water testing, finances and local development. See you there! .

We are excited to be back and we are truly grateful ...*Donna McLean, Pres.*

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RENEW YOUR 2017 MEMBERSHIP!

It's that time again! We have attached a copy of the 2017 Membership Renewal form for this purpose.

1. You may complete the process at the upcoming AGM or
2. You may print off the form and mail it along your check to the address provided. [Note you may also pay by email transfer. Instructions for this can be found on our website].

We are trying to go digital to improve the communication process and reduce costs. Make sure we have all your up-to-date email addresses for our list.

Liz Palatics



GSLRA Annual General Meeting

July 22nd, 9am - Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre



Gull Lake Rotary Club Beach SAVED! by Liz Palatics

In the 2012 budget deliberations, the Council of the Town of Gravenhurst considered ending the long running summer program at the Gull Lake Rotary Club Beach. This would have meant not only the end of swimming lessons, but the end of a guarded beach as well. Further repercussions would have been the loss of the swimming docks as well as the maintenance of the beach. A campaign was instigated to fight this closure. Handwritten petitions, as well as an on-line version were signed by nearly 1,000 people and dozens of supportive comments were posted on line. Letters of support were also provided by the Gull and Silver Lake Residents' Association as well as the now defunct, Gravenhurst Residents' Association. A deputation was made to the Town of Gravenhurst Council in their further deliberations. The program was saved and a commitment was made not to revisit the issue for at least five years. The town and cottage residents responded appreciatively: Enrollment in lessons has increased every year since! Last year alone there were approximately 254 lessons taught, as well as 22 bronze level students. These were the highest numbers in recent memory! Most importantly, the beach has remained a safe, clean, family oriented destination enjoyed by so many. The support of the GSLRA was extremely helpful!!

Canada's turning 150

In honour of Canada's sesquicentennial we are asking for our members to upload their memories to our Archive section on the website - www.gull-and-silver-lakes.ca. Dig out those albums and share your best Muskoka memories with us!



Dog Days of Summer - Pet Safety at the Cottage by Trinela Hutcheon

Is your dog a swimmer like my golden? Be sure to remove any slip collars/choke chains before they head into the lake. These collars can become caught and inadvertently choke your pet. While plenty of dogs are great swimmers you should equip your dog with a **well-fitted life jacket** for them to wear (especially when they are in a boat), or around open water unsupervised. Even the strongest swimmers can get into trouble fast, but lifejackets are an effective way to manage the risks. Always rehearse with your pet how to get in and out of the water (at a safe location) and make sure they are confident swimmers before you leave them unsupervised. Remember that if the lake is too cold for you, it is too cold for your pet. Take special care to supervise your pet in the spring, fall and winter to ensure they don't accidentally take a swim. Lifejackets are available at retailers like Algonquin Outfitters - Swifty's Surf Shop in Bracebridge and the Muskoka Store south of Gravenhurst.



Did your email address change?

Email us: gullsilverlakes@gmail.com

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SURVEYS—Your voice matters

A. Safe Quiet Lakes

This organization wants to know “the positives about activities on the water and the lake environment and what, if anything, detracts from your enjoyment of the lakes”. The results will be compared to those gathered from the 2013 survey. **THIS IS DUE BY MONDAY July 10, 2017.**

B. District of Muskoka (DOM) “Second Home Study”

There are more seasonal residents than permanent residents in Muskoka and the DOM wants to gather information from us in order to “better shape services, programs and infrastructure to best meet the changing needs of all residents”. This valuable information will also be shared with local businesses as a tool to better understand the needs of those they serve. They want to know things like size and characteristics of your second household, how often do you use it, if you plan to move here permanently and where you shop and what services you would like to have access to in Muskoka.

We encourage you to logon at www.muskoka.on.ca/2ndhomestudy and complete the survey. We will also have paper copies of the survey available at the AGM for those interested in completing it in writing. **THIS IS DUE BY AUGUST 31, 2017**

Gull & Silver Lakes Residents' Association
Attend the Annual General Meeting
9:00 am, Saturday July 22, 2017
Muskoka Steamships and Discovery Centre
185 Cherokee Lane, Gravenhurst

YOU'RE INVITED — to the GSLRA 2017 AGM.

Doors open at 9:00 a.m. for coffee/baked goods. The formal meeting will start promptly at 9:30 am. Join us to hear about and discuss:

- The environment and water quality of our lakes
- Finances/membership
- Updates from the Town
- Official Plan updates
- The Election/Re-election of the Board of Directors

AGM
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members and non-members alike are all are invited to attend! It's a great chance to find out what's going on and meet your neighbours!



Questions? Comments? Want to help out?

Email us: gullsilverlakes@gmail.com