

Acton Island Association
(www.actonisland.com)
Report to Members
May, 2005

Introduction

I hope that you all had a great winter and are looking forward to spending another season at the lake.

The purpose of this semi annual newsletter is to outline matters that your Board believes would be of interest to you, both about happenings on the island and roads leading into it as well as about other general matters of interest.

2005 Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held on Sunday June 26, 2005 at the Bala Community Centre from 1pm to 3pm. The association's year end was changed to April 30 at the August 29, 2004 AGM so the AGM could be held earlier in the summer. This will allow your new Board of Directors more opportunities to meet and address issues of concern arising during the summer months. Please plan to attend.

The speaker at this year's AGM will be your District and Township Councillor, Stewart Martin. Plan on coming to meet him. He will answer general questions after a making a short presentation.

July 3, 2005 Meet and Greet Party

Eleanor and Jim Lewis have again graciously agreed to host a Meet and Greet Party on the back lawn of their cottage at 1043 Innisfree Road on Sunday July 3 between 3pm and 5pm. This has always been a great gathering and an excellent opportunity to meet new people and renew old acquaintances so mark this date on your calendar. Please bring your own refreshments and a contribution towards the "nibbles".

New Waterfront Density By-Law

The Township of Muskoka Lakes, after two years of public debate, passed bylaw 2005-05, effective January 3, 2005. This by-law places significant restrictions on waterfront development in the township. Some of the significant changes are:

- Creation of a shoreline buffer zone which prohibits the removal of vegetation within 50 feet of the high water mark.
- Limiting the construction of two story boathouses to properties that have a minimum of 300 feet of frontage. The width of a two story boathouse will be limited to 13% of the shoreline frontage to a maximum of 75 feet.
- Limiting the size of a dwelling to 7,500 square feet, including the basement if it is 6' in height, but excluding a garage or porch.
- Increasing the building setback to 66 feet from the high water mark.

Visit www.township.muskokalakes.on.ca for more informatio. Follow the links to "departments" and then "planning".

Taxation

Your association financially supports the efforts of "Wraft", Waterfront Residents after Fair Taxation. This organization is a coalition of over 107 associations representing

25,000 property owners and close to 100,000 Ontario voters with an objective of achieving equity in waterfront property taxation.

Wraft has completed research on property tax systems in the US. The results, which include many examples of assessment capping, were used to form part of a report presented on April 13 to the provincial government on specific proposals for reform.

There are two elements to the proposal. The first asks for a limit on future assessment increase modeled on the Oregon System. Oregon capped assessments and limited increases to 3% per annum. The second proposal is for a separate waterfront class which would have a tax rate established to prevent the class in future from picking up a greater share of the tax load.

The 2005 goal of Wraft is to either have reforms implemented in time to impact the 2005 assessment or have the next assessment postponed until 2006. This is important as a 2005 property assessment would be used to set taxes in 2006.

More information on Wraft can be found at www.wraft.com

Safe Boating

The Muskoka Lakes Association will be offering courses in safe boating again this summer. The course consists of 4 half-day sessions covering the many aspects of boating including safety on the water, rules and regulations, rights of way, parts of the boat, buoy rules, etiquette plus preparation for the Pleasure Craft Operators Card exam. The Youth and Family Courses begin July 4, 11, 18 and Aug 3. The Adult Courses begin July 11 and 18. For more information contact the MLA at 705-765-5723 or visit their web site at www.mla.on.ca.

Federal Legislation has established pleasure craft age and horsepower restrictions as well as competency requirements. They are as follows

Age Horsepower Restriction

Age	Power Restriction
1) Under 12 and not directly supervised*	Boat with motor less than 10HP
2) Between 12 and 16 and not supervised	Boat with motor less than 40HP
3) Under 16	Not allowed to operate a PWC**

* Directly supervised means accompanied and directly supervised in the boat by a person 16 years of age or older
** Personal Watercraft

Note: These restrictions are made under the Boating Restriction Regulations and are not affected nor superseded by the Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations. The Boating Restriction Regulations and Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations are entirely separate regulations and their respective requirements should be looked at separately in order to avoid any confusion.

Pleasure Craft Competency Requirements*

Who it applies to	When it applies
1) If born after April 1, 1983	September 15, 1999
2) All operators of boats under 4m of length, including PWC's	September 15, 2002

3) All operators

September 15, 2009

*Competency as demonstrated through the passing of the Pleasure Craft Operators exam. These rules apply to non-residents operating their pleasure craft in Canadian waters after 45 consecutive days. Operator card or equivalent issued to a non-resident by their state or country will be considered as proof of competency.

[Update on Mr. Colacci](#)

Mr. Colacci owns property on Innisfree Road, about 500 metres off Acton Island Road. A couple of years ago he applied to have his property rezoned from residential to institutional. The Township refused this request as their policy is to permit this land use only where properties border on major thoroughfares and thus allow easy access. Notwithstanding this, he has continued to hold gatherings on his property two to three times per year, with two to three busloads of attendees. He has also been charged and fined for building without a permit. While no building permits have been issued to him and there have been no signs over the last months of any attempts to build without a permit, your Board continues to monitor the situation. Please notify us if you are aware of gatherings on his property so that we can inform the by-law enforcement officers.

[Bears](#)

As mentioned in my last newsletter, there were a number of bear sightings last summer and fall, most revolving around bears seen rummaging through bagged garbage left by a driveway or bears foraging for food in wooden garbage containers. Leaving bagged garbage by your driveway or in a wooden container other than on Wednesday morning, garbage collection day, is an invitation to the bears. Using a metal container for garbage is safer and will frustrate the bears but may not keep them away. The best way to keep them away is to only put your garbage out on Wednesday morning. If you are going back to the city and therefore won't be here for Wednesday collection please consider dropping your garbage off at the Eveleigh transfer station (open M-F 8-6, Sat 9-6, Sun 11-8), or taking it with you to the city. Once the bears find a garbage location they will continue to come back to it.

[Garbage and Recycling](#)

Weekly garbage collection from non seasonable and seasonable roads began Wednesday May 4 and will continue until Wednesday October 26. After October 26 collection will be bi-weekly for the winter but only on non seasonable roads.

Weekly recycling began May 4 but will stop after October 26 for seasonal roads. Recyclables should be separated into “**Container Recycling**” - wax cartons, cereal and other boxes, aluminium trays and foil, clear and coloured bottles and jars, metal food and beverage cans, empty paint cans (lids off) and plastic containers and “**Fiber Recycling**” - most newspapers, magazines, flyers etc. Blue recycling boxes can be purchased at the Eveleigh Transfer Station for \$5 (small) or \$8 (large).

Get more specific information at www.muskoka.on.ca . Click on “Index of Information and Services”, “Roads and Waste Management” and then “What’s Recyclable”.

[Household Hazardous Waste](#)

Household hazardous waste can be dropped off at the Eveleigh Rd Transfer station between 8am. and 2pm. every other Thursday until October 20 as well as on Saturday July 2 and August 13. Household hazardous waste includes batteries, paints, solvents and oils, propane cylinders, and pesticides.

Road and Water Speed Limits

Please continue to observe the new 50 kph speed limit signs on Acton Island Road and Innisfree Road so that joggers, walkers and bikers can safely enjoy our roads.

Your Association financial supports the The Marine Patrol of the Muskoka Lakes Association. The Marine Patrol will again this year be monitoring speed in critical area around Acton Island including under the Acton Island Bridge and through the cut between Acton Island and Bala Park Island where the speed limit is 9 kph.

The more our members observe the speed limits, the more others will follow. Thanks in advance for helping to make your stay in Muskoka a safe one.

Your Township Mayor and Ward C Councillors

Mayor – Susan Pryke, spryke@township.muskokalakes.on.ca or 705-765-3156

Dist/Township Councillor - Stewart Martin, smartin@muskoka.com or 705-765-3370.

Township Councillors - Karen Ellis (705-765-6337), Brian Hare, brabbit@muskoka.com. (705-765-5527)

Your Acton Island Association Board of Directors

President: Gord Richards, 1153 AI Rd., 705-762-5394 or 416-486-0507,

grichards@sympatico.ca

Past President: Jim Lewis, 1043 Innisfree Rd, 705-762-1799,

leanor.lewis@sympatico.ca

Director of Operations: Bob Anderson, 1247-11 Innisfree Rd., 705-762-5200,

bobkathanderson@sympatico.ca

Director of Communications: Jim Claydon, 1123 Innisfree Rd., 705-762-3170,

jayclay@vianet.ca

Director at Large: Sally Hastings, 1029-2 Ham Rd., 705-762-5171

Secretary: Gwen Jocelyn, 1150 AI Rd., 705-762-2422, gjocelyn@muskoka.com

Treasurer: Leslie McCann, 1133 Innisfree Rd., 705-762-5784,

leslie@summitmortgage.ca

Director of Membership: Bruce Patterson, 1250 AI Rd., 705-762-5270,

oldpeakroad@yahoo.com

Director at Large: Bill Tannahill, 1022 Guys Rd., 705-762-0938, tannahill@encode.com

Your Board is here to serve the needs of its members. If you have ideas or would like to become involved please contact me or one of the other board members.

Have a great summer,

Gordon Richards, President