



# Acton Island Association

June 2009

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## Summer is back...

...And while it got off to a late start the warm days finally appear to be upon us. The boats by now should be out on the lakes in full force and my family and I are looking forward to spending our summer up north and getting back to all our favorite summer activities. Particular favorites of ours always include the Walkers Point annual Canada Day fireworks show (fingers crossed for good weather this year!) and Toronto's Second City's Muskoka summer performance in Port Carling. I'm also determined to make sure that this will be the year where I will finally outperform my brother on the wakeboard and I am eager to get practicing! Whether it's driving up to the Rosseau Farmer's Market, getting an ice cream cone in Bala, or just relaxing on the dock... SPF 30 in tow of course... there is never a dull moment at the cottage. Wishing everyone a safe and fun-filled summer in Muskoka,

Amy Scott

## Annual Acton Island Meet and Greet

**Sunday July 5, 2008 - 2pm to 4 pm.**

Bill and Mary Tannahill's (Belhaven Bed and Breakfast)- 1022  
Guy's Rd

This is an excellent opportunity for the membership to get to know their neighbours. Last year we had over 50 people come out and enjoy the afternoon on the deck.

Please bring your own hors d'oeuvres /snacks for approximately 6 Refreshments will be provided by the AIA.

## **Annual General Meeting**

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at the Bala Community Centre. Please plan to attend.

### **Guest Speaker**

Ms. Hart has agreed to make a slideshow presentation of gardens and suggestions for plantings in Muskoka. If you need help in a landscape design or would like suggestions on what to plant in your garden, this year's speaker would be happy to assist you.

### **AIA Clothing**

We have had many requests for information on where to get the AIA logo-shirts and sweaters. Examples of items and their costs will be available to order at this meeting, and information will soon be added on our website: [www.actonisland.com](http://www.actonisland.com).

### **2009 Membership Roster**

The latest additions will be mailed out in early June to all paid members. If you don't receive one please contact Gordon Richards at [g-richards@sympatico.ca](mailto:g-richards@sympatico.ca) or at 705 762 5394. Copies will also be available at the AGM.

## **Bala Falls Hydroelectric Project**

The "Save the Bala Falls" group has been lobbying for support for some time with regards to the elimination of the proposed Bala Falls hydroelectric project.

The project, engineered by Swift River Energy Limited could generate up to 4.5 megawatts of electricity if implemented.

The groups, which are opposed to the project, have asked that the council consider the project to be located at the South Falls of Bala. Swift River Energy Limited has approval to build at the north falls on district-owned land.

Your board has received many emails and notices about this project and finds that a firm commitment fore or against the project is beyond our scope. The board is willing to assist you in finding published information on this project and request you to consider your own direction on this matter.

The Swift River Energy Limited project website: [www.balafalls.ca](http://www.balafalls.ca)

<http://savethebalafalls.com>

[www.mla.on.ca](http://www.mla.on.ca)

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## **Update: 1065 Innisfree Road**

### **Re: Collaci Property**

At the end of November 2008 residents who are located adjacent to the construction at 1065 Innisfree Road were notified that the Township Committee of Adjustment was called to hear an application for minor variance related to the minimum front yard setback on the property on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. The Board of Directors of the AIA was notified by the membership and in response filed a letter of objection to the committee. Board members and many other concerned island property owners attended the hearing to express views on this application.

As a result the Committee of Adjustment defeated the motion and noted:

The location of the dwelling could comply with the requirements of the by-law; however, there was a blatant disregard for measurements (as advised by the inspector). The applicant had an opportunity to adjust the location prior to pouring the footings and foundation. The neighbours are in opposition, and the height of the dwelling in the current location would have an impact on the surrounding area.

Furthermore, as the property bordering on the road is owned by the municipality and was damaged during construction, it has been ordered by the committee that it be reinstated.

A council member has advised us that no appeal to the OMB was registered and it is expected that the existing structure will be demolished in due course.

## **Boathouse Tax**

The installation of boathouse taxes, while seemingly another cash grab by the government, can be used to work in your favour. In many past cases boathouse owners have tried to purchase the water lot property (the land underneath their boathouses) without success. The current ability to acquire the water land in front of your cottage is therefore likely to be a unique opportunity. Given that in many cases the boathouses have values that range from several hundred thousand dollars into the millions, there is something to be said for owning the water land to protect your existing investment. While you could lease the land from the government, you can be just about sure that at the end of 20 years the lease rate will again be higher, either through an increased appraised value, higher interest rates, or further administrative fees. At that time, you may also have no option but to pay whatever is demanded as there may be no opportunity to purchase the water lot or the purchase price may be much higher. One other thing that we have working in our advantage on Acton Island is the absence of a road allowance. On the mainland if you have not already purchased this strip of land running by the water then you would have to include this in the purchase. Protect your investment and get a water survey completed and buy while you can. Also do not forget that the purchase cost and survey cost should be added to the capital cost of the cottage for capital gains tax purposes. For more information, contact [lawrencejacksonscott@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencejacksonscott@gmail.com).

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## **Water Quality Portfolio Update**

Throughout the autumn and winter the Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) has been working to continue the Muskoka Lakes Water Quality Initiative. The Water Quality Initiative is expanding to measure further the levels of phosphorus, E-coli and other pollutants within the Muskoka Lakes. We are pleased to report that the bays surrounding Acton Island; Dudley Bay, North Bay and Whiteside Bay all received the highest water quality rating of 5 diamonds, meaning that all readings for all parameters were within the expected range of averages. The full detailed report can be found at [www.mla.on.ca](http://www.mla.on.ca). This was the first summer since 2005 that some of these bays had been monitored and the program will be continued throughout the 2009 season.

As several areas of the lake are approaching or are over the district phosphorus threshold a number of actions are recommended on the MLA website to ensure the waters of the Muskoka Lakes remain safe and ecologically sound, including:

- Buy phosphate free soap, shampoos, cleansers, detergents (esp. dishwasher detergent)
- Maintain a natural shoreline with trees and bushes to absorb nutrients before the water
- Keep organic matter such as raked leaves away from the waters edge
- Ensure septic system maintenance

Anyone who wishes to volunteer with the MLA Water Quality Initiative can do so by contacting the program at [info@mla.on.ca](mailto:info@mla.on.ca).

## **Dealing With Outdated Septic Systems**

Outdated septic systems can cause a number of problems for your property and the lake. Ensuring that your septic system is up to date and functioning properly can minimize your environmental impact. There are several indicators of an outdated or malfunctioning septic system.

- Ground around the septic tank or over the leaching bed may feel soggy or spongy to walk on
- Toilets, showers or sinks may back up or may take longer than usual to drain
- Occasional sewage odors may become noticeable, particularly after a rainfall
- Grey or Black liquids may be surfacing in your yard or backing up through fixtures in your house.
- The water level in the septic tank is higher than the outlet pipe (an indicator of water ponding in the distribution lines).

If you have any of these problems or believe that you have an outdated septic system you will need to have an inspection done by a qualified practitioner. It is required by law that any problems or repairs be reported to the local authorities before one proceeds with any work or replacements. A final inspection and a use permit will need to be granted before you can legally use a new or altered septic system.

For more information contact the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing at 416- 585-7041

Please take responsibility for your contribution to the ground and water quality and ensure that any outdated septic systems are dealt with properly.

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## Pedestrian Safety

The AIA is considering installing “Walk Facing Traffic” signs along Acton Island Road and Innisfree Road, similar to those found on Mortimer’s Point Road near Foreman Road. A reminder to always make sure you are walking where cars will be able to see you.

## Afterword

- Reminder that as of September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009 all adults are required by the law to have their Pleasure Craft Operators Card. PCO Cards can be obtained [www.boaterexam.com/canada](http://www.boaterexam.com/canada)
- It has been suggested that the board request an increase police presence to monitor speeders on the island. It is therefore a reminder that speed limits be closely observed.
- In October 2008 the Muskoka Lakes Township-Port Carling has won first place in the National Communities in Bloom Competition for the population of 1-1000. This is Port Carling’s second win. We would like to acknowledge the Acton Island residents who give their time to volunteer each week participating in the beautification of Bala for this competition.
- The township was also recognized for its’ Environmental Stewardship of Lake Waters.
- The MLA is working in conjunction with a number of other organizations to preserve the “quiet enjoyment” of Muskoka. Please remember that ‘excessively’ noisy boats are not allowed to operate in restricted waters (that is 8km from shore- making all the Muskoka lakes restricted waters). Please also remember that the speed limit for all of the Muskoka lakes is 10 kph within 30m of the shore. Please be a safe and respectful boater this summer.

For more information, feel free to contact:

### **Your Township Mayor and Ward C Councilors**

**Mayor:** Susan Pryke, [spryke@muskokalakes.ca](mailto:spryke@muskokalakes.ca),  
705-765-5412, Office 705-765-3156

**Deputy Mayor/District Councilor:** Stewart Martin, [smartin@muskokalakes.ca](mailto:smartin@muskokalakes.ca)  
705-765-3370

### **Township Councilors:**

Karen Ellis, [kellies@muskokalakes.ca](mailto:kellies@muskokalakes.ca) 705-765-6337  
Brian Hare, [bhare@muskokalakes.ca](mailto:bhare@muskokalakes.ca) 705-765-5527

## Upcoming Events in Muskoka, Summer 2009

### Your Acton Island Association Board of Directors

**President:** Leslie McCann,  
1133 Innisfree Rd.,  
705-762-5784 or 705-645-8645  
[leslie@summitmortgage.ca](mailto:leslie@summitmortgage.ca)

**Immediate Past President and  
Membership Director:** Gord  
Richards, 1153 Acton Island Rd.,  
705-762-5394  
[g-richards@sympatico.ca](mailto:g-richards@sympatico.ca)

**Secretary:** Brian Atkinson,  
1153 Acton Island Rd.,  
705-762-5394  
[brianratkinson@sympatioc.ca](mailto:brianratkinson@sympatioc.ca)

**Treasurer:** Bruce Patterson,  
1250 Acton Island Rd.,  
705-762-5270  
[oldpeakroad@yahoo.com](mailto:oldpeakroad@yahoo.com)

#### Directors:

Malcolm Foulkes, 1054 Kemp Rd.,  
[r.d@bellet.ca](mailto:r.d@bellet.ca)  
John McMechan, 1314 Innisfree Rd.,  
705-762-3748  
[kmcmechan@hotmail.com](mailto:kmcmechan@hotmail.com)  
Larry Scott, 1173 Innisfree Rd.,  
705-762-2548  
[lawrencejacksonscott@gmail.com](mailto:lawrencejacksonscott@gmail.com)  
Tom DiGiacomo, 1048 Kemp Rd.,  
705-762-0150  
[tadico@aol.com](mailto:tadico@aol.com)  
Amy Hall, 1018-2 Poste Rd.,  
705-762-55819  
[Amyhall93@hotmail.com](mailto:Amyhall93@hotmail.com)

Your board is here to serve the  
needs of its members. If you have  
ideas or topics to discuss please let  
us know

Leslie J. McCann  
President

### JUNE

Muskoka Lakes Spring/Summer Art Tour- June 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>  
Doors Open Muskoka Cottage Tours- June 14<sup>th</sup>- 15<sup>th</sup>  
Flavours of Muskoka- June 11<sup>th</sup> at Red Leaves Resort  
Gravenhurst Antique and Classic Car Show- June 20<sup>th</sup>, Gull  
Lake Rotary Park  
Craft Show- Bala- June 27-28

### JULY

Canada Day Fireworks at Walker's Point Marina- July 4<sup>th</sup> 8pm  
Gravenhurst Antique and Classic Boat Show- July 11  
Cottage Country Craft Show- Bala Arena- July 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>  
Gravenhurst Triathlon Race- July 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>,  
[www.multisportcanada.com](http://www.multisportcanada.com)  
In-water Boat Show and Ribfest- Muskoka Wharf- July 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>

### August

Muskoka-bana Mardi Gras Street Party and Festival-  
Gravenhurst- August 1<sup>st</sup>- 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Craft Show- Gravenhurst- August 15<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup>

### Summer 2009

Muskoka Music Festival- July through August  
[www.artsinmuskoka.com](http://www.artsinmuskoka.com)  
Summer Ski Show every Tuesday night at 7:30 June 30<sup>th</sup>-  
September 1<sup>st</sup> at Windsor Park in Bala  
Bala Summer Market- every Monday 9am- 2pm

Check the Muskoka Lakes Chamber Business Directory or  
their website for more information.  
[www.muskokalakeschamber.com](http://www.muskokalakeschamber.com)

