

Bay Lake Property Owners Association Newsletter

www.baylakeontario.ca



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

'Spring is in the Air', although you'd never know it with the amount of ice and snow still on the lake! You may recall that at this time last year the ice was out and one of our neighbours had his boat in the water on April 1st. I think that was a record!

What hasn't changed is that your Executive is hard at work preparing for our biggest Fundraiser and Event of the year -- the **Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction** (see the article on page 2). As always, the success of this event is dependent on good attendance and generous donations. Thank you in advance for your support of this important event.

Also crucial is the participation of our regular volunteers who enable us to hold these events year after year. This year we find our group of volunteers has decreased and therefore we welcome new volunteers who would like to help out and support the community and this lake association. Please contact Janice Paterson at 705-636-0568 if you or any members of your family are able to give us a hand.

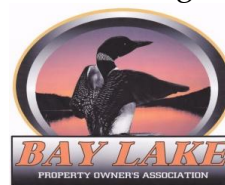
Further to my winter message, I am now able to confirm that your Executive has decided to

host an open-house in celebration of the **30th anniversary of the Bay Lake Property Owners Association**. It will be held at the Hall following our 2011 AGM and will be open to all current and past residents of the Bay Lake. Please let me know if you have any ideas or would like to be involved in the planning or hosting of this celebration.

Glen Vey

BLPOA LOGO

Visit our website to cast your vote for which of these two logos will be the winner!



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ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, May 22nd ◀▶ 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Clear Lake / Bay Lake Hall

We've been collecting items for our Silent Auction which will take place again. This is our **major fundraising event of the year**, so in order to make it a success we count on the generosity of others to donate new items, gift certificates, bake goods (wrapped or in a non-returnable container) and/or services. If you would like to **contribute to the silent Auction please contact Sherry Vey at 705-788-3724.**

We encourage more of you to come out and volunteer your time. **Attention Teenagers:** by helping at the Pancake Breakfast you can accumulate volunteer hours for school. Just let us know if you are available and we'll have a job for you. Contact Janice Paterson at 705-636-0568 and bring your forms for sign-off.

In addition to the cost of your **breakfast**, you will have the chance to **shop** (Bay Lake hats, shirts, towels, etc.), buy items at the **Silent Auction**, purchase **50/50 Draw** tickets, and pay your **membership dues**. So don't forget your money!

NIGHT SKY ACTIVITIES

A lot of people are interested in where in the sky we can view the **International Space Station (ISS)**. The link below takes you to a NASA site that provides real-time data on where and when we can spot the ISS...and the space shuttle if it is up there!

<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/realdata/sightings/cities/view.cgi?country=Canada®ion=Ontario&city=Huntsville>

As a reminder, there are a few things you can do year-round to **lessen the impact of your lighting** on the night sky at Bay Lake:

- Use or create light caps that focus the light downwards;
- Switch from a timer to motion lights;

- Use lower wattage bulbs;
- Point lights where they're needed (at the building or pathways) and not out toward the lake.

And a special thanks to all who participated in Earth Hour by turning out their lights.

ANNUAL REMINDERS

- **Fire Permits** are once again required for outdoor fires and are available at the Recycle Centre on Highway 592 (check the **Fire Risk Sign** on Bay Lake road for the current risk level);
- The **ATV speed limit** on the roads surrounding Bay Lake is 20 km/hour.

LOONS

We will be launching the **Loon Nesting Platform** as soon as ice is out to make sure it is there for the early arrival of our loons. They checked it out last year and we are hoping that this year they will nest on it.

Wanted: Snorkelers or Scuba Divers

We need someone to help us recover one of the 3 warning floats we put out last year around the Loon Nesting Raft. These floats are there to warn boaters away from the nesting loons and one of the floats has disappeared.

We think that wave action may have moved it into a nearby 40-foot hole and that it is being held down there by its weights. The float is on a 12-15 foot tether rope so it should be bobbing about but we can't see it from above.

We are hoping that a volunteer snorkeler or scuba diver will be able to see it and hook recovery ropes on for us. Please contact Bill Paterson at willyp@xplornet.ca or 705-636-0568 if you can help.

ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Once again the Environment Committee will be doing **e-coli testing** on 10 sites on the lake. These 10 sites will be tested 4 times each, in May, July, August and September. You can click the Water Testing link on our website to see where the 10 sites are. The samples taken are rated against the established standards for e-coli levels acceptable for use of the water for recreational activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, etc., but not drinking. We are in our third year of sampling and we have never had a test above acceptable levels.

We are hoping that residents will continue to adopt a site and pay for the e-coli testing of that site for the year. The cost for one site is \$42.40. Please contact Bill Paterson or any member of the Executive if you wish to participate on this **Adopt-A-Site Program**.

In addition, we do **comprehensive testing** during the August sampling on 3 of the sites for additional items: Nitrates, Nitrites, Total Nitrogen (TKN), Total Microcystin (blue/green algae), Fecal Strep (duck poop) and in the past Phosphorous. Because phosphorous is sampled in other tests, we have decided to drop it and instead test for Calcium. Declining calcium levels have alarmed scientists in our area as Calcium is used by wildlife from the smallest critters in our benthic tests to the largest fish to make shells and bones.

Thanks to the efforts of Judy and John Dunn, we also participate in the **Lake Partner's Program**, which monitors water clarity and phosphorous levels.

We will also be doing **Benthic testing** again and this year and not only has the District of Muskoka committed to sending out a technician again but Judy Dunn will be taking a Certification program at Nipissing University in Bracebridge in April to become certified herself.

We would also like to hear from volunteer carpenters who would like to **help us build Wood Duck nesting boxes**. We will supply the materials and plans. We hope to place them from the ice next winter. Please contact Bill Paterson for details.

BEAR NECESSITIES

Here are some tips to **avoid bear visitors**:

- Do not leave composting food waste or garbage outdoors.
- Do not feed birds in the summer.
- Dispose of grease, fat, bacon and other meats in sealed containers.
- Do not burn garbage.
- Clean garbage cans frequently with ammonia, bleach or Lysol.
- Place mothballs, air fresheners, Lysol or ammonia-soaked rags or camphor disks in garbage cans to mask food odors.
- Use plastic bags inside garbage cans to help hide odors.
- Store garbage cans in a secure place such as a garage.
- Remove the grease can from gas and charcoal grills after every use.
- Turn off kitchen exhaust fans that vent to the outside when not in use.
- Do not feed family pets outside.
- Do not leave dirty diapers or diaper pails outside.

Bear encounter tips provided by the MNR:

- If the bear is not paying attention to you, slowly and quietly back away.
- If the bear knows you are there, raise your arms to make yourself look as big as possible. Speak in a firm but non-threatening voice while looking at the bear and backing away.
- If the bear makes contact, fight back with everything you have.

To report bear problems, call the Bear Reporting Line at: 1-866-514-2327.

FOR NATURE NUTS

Spring is back and along with spring comes bear season. With the arrival of warmer weather in April and May black bears emerge from their winter dens. Males emerge first, followed later by females with cubs that were born in the den in January.

During their winter hibernation bears live off stored body fat. Males lose between 15-30% of their entire body weight during hibernation, while reproducing sows can lose as much as 40%. When they emerge, they will be hungry and need to feed.

Within only 4-5 months, the bears must put on enough weight to successfully breed and to survive their next hibernation. They depend on good weather to ensure they have sufficient food. They will happily take advantage of compost, human garbage, pet foods, bird seed and other human attractions...and they have learned to tolerate people to get at easy meals (see Bear Necessities on page 3 for avoidance and encounter tips).



*A visitor to Maple Drive in a previous Bear Season
Photo by Willie Rostek*

Initially, with not much food available, bears will feed on grass, new shoots and young leaves. Once available they feed on

raspberries, blackberries and in the fall on beechnuts and acorns. Bears are omnivores and will eat whatever seems edible. The bear's stomach is not efficient at extracting nutrients from plant matter. Bears need highly-digestible plant foods like berries and acorns to ensure they get enough nutrition to meet their reproductive requirements. A prolonged diet of grasses and leaves cannot sustain a bear and without access to other foods they will slowly starve. A bad year for berries and nuts is a bad year for bears.

Bears breed every other year in June and July. The female black bear has the remarkable ability to delay implantation of her fertilized egg, allowing her to ensure her cubs are born at the right time (or not at all if her body weight is too low). Cubs born the previous year are chased off to live on their own when their mothers go into heat in June or July.

A healthy black bear female weighs 100-200 pounds but an adult male is larger, weighing 150-350 pounds (though individual males have been recorded at over 600 pounds!). Without human intervention, black bears can live from 25 to 30 years in the wild

Bears have very short tails and bodies that don't facilitate sending signals with body language, so they use their mouths to send signals. Snarling, baring teeth, huffing or making "clacking" sounds usually indicates an agitated bear. Often a bear will rise up on its hind legs to get a better view of you. If the bear feels frightened or intimidated, it may bluff-charge - run full speed then stop just short of you. This is usually a strong signal for you to leave the area. This type of behaviour is common with females, who will aggressively protect their cubs. A female will often send her cubs up a tree until she is sure it is safe for them to come down.

Submitted by Janice Paterson