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NEWSLETTER - FALL 2020

CONTENTS

- President's Message
- Key Issues
- Website
- Membership
- Environment
- Treasury
- Events
- Sailing
- Hiking Trails
- Board of directors
- Contact information
- Condolences



KEY ISSUES

Shoreline Erosion

Water Levels

Milfoil

Water Safety

Responsible Wake

Development

Water Quality

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

With winter just around the corner, one can't help but look back at the 2020 cottage season with a little more gratitude than usual. Some decided to spend extra time at the lake to work and keep kids busy during the pandemic, and a number of people decided to make Grand Lake their home for the whole season - many for the first time ever. Despite restricted gathering rules, cottagers seemed to make the most of the terrific weather by participating in a multitude of water activities like paddling, swimming, snorkeling, sailing, fishing, water sports, hiking and cliff jumping. We had to eliminate several of our regular lake events such as the annual golf day and the poker run, but hopefully 2021 will see them return in well-supported form. Despite the fact that the AGM needed to be held via Zoom this year, many members were able to participate.

We are indeed fortunate to be part of the Grand and Green Lake experiences we share, and, as you will continue to read in this and future issues, we must all be continually diligent and vigilant to ensure that our lake environment remains as pristine as we found it for future generations. We are all responsible for this legacy.

The Board is proud to represent all members of the Grand Lake Association and appreciates the diversity of interests and views that members have expressed over the past year. Feedback received has helped to identify key issues on which to focus our efforts and we encourage all members to continue to share their suggestions and ideas about protecting our environment and fostering a healthy lake community.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy winter.

Jim Nicol, President

WEBSITE

Thanks to all who contributed to the website this season, including lost and found, for sale, write ups, photos and Sailing Race results. This year of course there were no postings for many lake activities, cancelled due to COVID restrictions, with the exception of Sailing, which did go ahead and the race results went up each week as received.

With the creation of a new Directory this year we also have a new Lake Map which has been posted on the website. Coming additions this year will include sections on Milfoil, Shoreline Erosion and Wake Awareness/Boating Practices.

We are always looking for new content that would be of interest to cottagers and which would make the website more engaging. Contributors and volunteers are always welcome! Please contact butlerpauld@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

In spite of Covid-19 restrictions, we were very successful in reaching out to existing and new owners over the past year. Thank you to all departing members and current lake neighbours who passed along the coordinates of new owners. The Association currently has 198 members - approx. 91% membership!

There are many advantages to being a member of the Association. This summer in particular, members were able to participate in the formulation of priorities to be brought to the attention of the Municipalité de Val-des-Monts. Nearly 50% of our members shared their points of view on matters affecting our enjoyment of Grand and Green Lake and our ability to preserve them. The Executive will seek further feedback from our members next spring to better understand concerns and ensure informed discussions at the next Annual General Meeting.

A new directory of members was published by the Association early this fall. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to deliver the printed copies. These efforts help us to better know our neighbours.

Last but not least, a new information sheet will go out in the Spring seeking to update pertinent information on our members. This will allow us to maintain an up-to-date Directory. We hope everyone will take the time to fill out the form.

ENVIRONMENT

Note from the Milfoil Committee

We want to shout out a huge thank you to all the many volunteers who helped retrieve missing buoys in the spring, re-install the large white milfoil information buoys and take them out again, and finally take out and store ALL the green buoys in late summer. Here is a picture of some hung up to dry.



Many of you were hanging over the edge of your boats, getting mucky with the slimy rope, enlisting the aid of unsuspecting visitors, and giving up your time – thanks again!

Update

We are sourcing yellow buoys that will comply with Transport Canada guidelines as we continue our efforts to prevent the spread of Eurasian milfoil in our lake. This cannot be achieved without the help of every lake user. Please check the milfoil web page for more information at http://lacgrandlake.ca/en/?page_id=2453 .

Enjoy the winter and see you in the spring!

WATER QUALITY

The year 2020 was a challenging one for our testing regimen. The border closing delayed our initial phosphorous testing until late May. The results are posted on the web site at http://lacgrandlake.ca/en/?page_id=806 .

There were also further challenges, and no additional testing was completed this year.

In the spring of 2021, just after the ice leaves, once again we will test for phosphorous. The ongoing plan is to test for phosphorous three times per year and e-coli twice per year. To accomplish this, we need more volunteer assistance.

We are currently looking for volunteer recruit(s) to get involved in the water testing. The commitment is not onerous; it would involve perhaps 2 hours per testing session, and a planned 5 times per summer. If you are interested please contact Tim Frank at tim.frank@sympatico.ca or Dale Smith at dale@dalegsmith.ca.

Our water testing methodology is constantly being reviewed with a goal of looking closely at what other similar lake associations and association groups are doing, and the magnitudes of annual budget that is accepted as good stewardship. Any appropriate adjustments will be made as needed.





IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Grand Lake remains a member of the Federation of Lakes of Val-des-Monts.

The Federation has recently seen a major change in its relationship with the Municipality of Val-des-Monts. The annual funding contribution which the Municipality has provided for many years was terminated. This was the bulk of the Federation's budget revenue.

The Federation's role and ongoing operational status is being reviewed and the current Board of Directors will be working closely with Lake Associations to develop a functional and appropriate scope of activity.

“It is our collective and individual responsibility to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live.”

- Dalai Lama

The direct link between human activities on a lake and phosphate increase/water clarity decrease is irrefutable. Short of Draconian measures, which would be totally unrealistic and unsupportable, there is really no action that will halt or reverse the gradual degradation of the lake without complete buy-in and cooperation of all lake residents. Simply, water quality and environmental stewardship is, and will be, the responsibility of all of us.

The three most significant contributors to this degradation are shoreline erosion, chemical runoff, and careless operation of boats.

The three most effective countermeasures to which we can all contribute are:

- 1) **Maintain your shoreline in the most natural state possible.** Native vegetation does an effective job of retaining many of the products of surface run-off, particularly phosphates and nitrates, and offers some protection against shoreline erosion.
- 2) **WYW** ~ Watch your wake. There are still a few boaters who seem completely unaware of the serious impact of their wakes on the lake shoreline or simply are unconcerned. The Grand Lake Association Boating Guidelines were not formulated as an attempt to restrict fun or use of the lake; rather, they were intended to acknowledge the large increase in lake population over the years and the need to try to balance the varying uses of the lake with a minimal impact on its ecosystems. Wakes require time and distance to expend their energy, otherwise, the full impact of that energy will be absorbed by the shoreline directly. A wake that drives hard onto shore will drag sediment back into the shallow water, causing silt to cloud the water and gradually smother the bottom.

The first 10 feet of lake bottom supports almost 90% of the aquatic life in the lake. It is not rocket science to extrapolate the importance of protecting that buffer zone.

If you are within 100 feet of shore, you should be travelling dead slow, and producing no wake.

Try to avoid all patches of weeds. There is more than likely milfoil within most patches, which will continue its invasion of our lake if cut loose.

There are still too many boaters who cruise around the entire lake 50-60 feet offshore at speeds that produce a substantial wake. Firstly, our boating guidelines suggest DSNW for the first 30 meters from shorelines. Secondly, we should be leaving at least the first 30 meters for swimmers/kayakers etc. The key is to know your boat and the wake it distributes at all speeds.

- 3) Perhaps the easiest, make **“greener” decisions regarding many household products** (we are a long way from a municipal drainage system with sewage treatment etc.). For example, if you operate a dishwasher, consider using an environmentally gentler brand of detergent...same with laundry soaps. There are many other examples. Specialty shops now cater to this market niche. In most cases, the cost is comparable to “less-green” items.

EVENTS

TREASURY

Our treasury, as usual, reflects a strong surplus position going into the fall season, with government-backed investments (GIC's) of \$64,944 and a normal operating account balance of \$4,339 before paying for the winter patroller.

Our membership dues essentially fund all annual operating costs of the Association. Great value for \$25 a year, and we very much appreciate the tremendous ongoing support of our members!

As a result of someone filing a complaint with Transport Canada this summer about our various environmental and navigation/cautionary buoys, we have had to acquire some new buoys and more will be needed next spring in order to comply with their regulations.



We continue to work towards increasing the size of our reserve fund for contingencies and unexpected disasters to maintain its purchasing power.

27th Grand Lake Annual Golf Classic - Cancelled

Unfortunately pandemic rules did not permit golf tournaments in 2020 and we were forced to abandon this event. Last year's fall newsletter somehow did not get updated properly for the winners of the 2019 26th Golf Classic and so we will give those winners proper mention in this Fall 2020 Newsletter:

- Grand Champions (low gross score) and the Brian Reynolds Trophy – Mike Enos, Jesse Noonan, Travis Lyndon and Bill Shannon (net 67 by retrogression)*
- Most Honest Team – Dave Helgason, Corey Browne, Erika Strelbisky, Gen Gunther*
- Closest to the Pin Women – Adrienne Duff*
- Longest Drive Women – Deb Graham*
- Closest to the Pin Men – Nathan Cooper*
- Longest Drive Men – Lee Bujac*
- Longest Drive Senior Men – Don Poole*
- Putting Contest – Peter Helgason*
- Opposite Hand 7 Iron Contest Women – Adrienne Duff*
- Opposite Hand 7 Iron Men – Rick McIntyre.*



We did thank all the right sponsors and organizers last fall for the 2019 event, so that will not be repeated here. Let's hope 2021 will allow us to once again hold this long-standing fun event.

GRAND LAKE POKER RUN & FAMILY BBQ

The 2021 POKER RUN is planned for Saturday, Sept 4th with a rain date of Sept 5th. SAVE THE DATE!!!



Unfortunately COVID rules prohibited this great event in 2020, the traditional wind up of our special summers at the lake. The weather was great and it would have been a fun party. Hopefully 2021 will see it return and be the best ever. Thanks to Don and Sue Goodwin, perpetual organizers, for being on standby and even trying to suggest a new format that would work under provincial health rules. Let's save the day for 2021- Saturday September 4.

CANADA DAY



Despite COVID regulations preventing social gatherings, an impressive number of creatively decorated watercraft made their way around the lake on Canada Day, each on their own mission. We really missed Dave Helgason and his team hosting the floating BBQ. Fingers crossed for next year! We understand that there was also a fireworks display in the south bay, which a number of socially distanced boaters enjoyed.

SAILING 2020

The 2020 sailing season has now come and gone. It was a unique year that will definitely go down in our history books. Despite the constraints resulting from the Coronavirus, sailing was able to continue safely, albeit with some changes. In particular, we chose to cancel the usual onshore social elements, and also dispense with onshore timers. This meant that we had to improvise on how to start the races and deal with handicaps. We adjusted with some compromises but there were some positive elements as well. For instance, Sarah Potheary, whose Laser 4.7 was started five minutes before the other boats as an adjustment for her smaller sail commented, "*It was fun to be out in front to start the race.*" And given that participating boats are typically one person boats such as Lasers and Sunfish, and a selection of Albacores (which can indeed be sailed single-handedly as Terry Ford has shown us on occasion), the number of unique "bubbles" needed were minimal. Thus, the changes we implemented didn't affect participation, nor the quality or fun of the sailing. The camaraderie and enjoyment were as great as ever.

We sailed seven out of the nine scheduled races and even added a fun race on Labour Day (congratulations to Sarah's daughter, Hannah, visiting from the UK, for winning that one - by mere inches!!). The two cancelled races were due to weather. But weather was ideal for our Annual Founders Regatta on August 16; where we managed to sail five short, back-to-back races on a beautiful day with both wind and sun. The interest each week was pretty steady with six boats on average and often as many, or more spectators watching from shore, or on the water.

Although the racing remained casual and fun, the skill level was notched up with the arrival of Dan Gray and his son Tyler who were renting on the lake for the summer with their two Lasers. Their enthusiasm and sailing prowess were a great addition to the group. Their other family members were equally eager to participate by managing marks or starting us when called upon. This kind of enthusiasm is the norm across the fleet and beyond.

Ongoing sailing enthusiast Chris Wanczycki migrated from a Sunfish to a Laser this summer and there are rumours that Warren Stroud may also be in the market for a Laser. Next year could see both of them on the water staring down the competition in Lasers.

Sailing clearly adds to the quality of the collective Grand Lake summer experience for both sailors and non-sailors, and the summer of 2020 was no different. Volunteers helped with tracking results, setting out and collecting marks on Sundays, maintaining equipment, taking pictures and posting results to the Grand Lake/Lac Grand website. The ongoing support received and the respect shown by fellow boaters by keeping clear and maintaining a small wake (particularly during a race!!) were very much appreciated. Thanks to all involved in making the 2020 sailing season a historic success!

For further information, contact Duncan Vipond (devipond@rogers.com) or Ian Maclaren (ikmaclaren@gmail.com).



It's remarkable how quickly a good and favourable wind can sweep away the maddening frustrations of shore living.

Ernest K. Gann

FINAL RESULTS

1. Ian Maclaren
2. Dan Gray
3. Duncan Vipond

HIKING TRAILS

This summer was a wonderful time for hiking on our trails on the Crown land at the north end of Lac Grand and Lac de la Montagne (Green Lake). Not only was the weather generally good well into the Fall, but the number of people spending time at their lake properties to escape the COVID-19 restrictions in the city meant more people looking for new activities.

According to the sign-in book at the main trailhead, the trails have been busy and a great many first timers have taken advantage of an amenity where social distancing comes naturally.

There have been many improvements to the trail network this year. There is a new dock and ramp at the West Trailhead (replacing the former 'green' dock) as well as a new, second dock at the Main (east) Trailhead. The entire trail system has been cleared of the remaining fallen trees and debris left strewn about and across our paths after the logging operations in 2016. And, additional white metal blazes have been installed where needed (on the right hand side of the trails in both directions) along with signage to help hikers find their way along the routes.

A new trail linking the Main and West Trailheads along the shoreline of the NW arm of the lake has been established. This path is well-marked and will benefit from hiker footfalls to clearly establish the route.

The only part of our trail system that remains troublesome is the old logging road from the east end of the Lac de la Montagne circle route back to the starting point. The problem is an infestation of tasty but extremely thorny raspberry and blackberry bushes that have entirely taken over the road. It is possible to walk this route, but long pants and sleeves and heavy work gloves to push the bushes out of the way are highly recommended. A small scythe might come in handy too!

For enthusiasts looking for winter activities in the brilliant sunshine we often get, the old logging road is a great route for snow shoeing and cross-country skiing. The Main Trailhead is the best starting point. The fallen trees that have blocked the path up to the logging road have been cleared and access to the logging road is now straightforward. Tromping along the logging road with snow shoes or skis once we have good snow cover may help keep the berry bushes in check next summer.

Many people have contributed to these trail improvements including donors of old docks which were re-deployed or scavenged for wood for 'new' ramps, and people who cleared brush, cut and removed fallen trees and debris, and marked and developed the new trails and needed workarounds. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the annual Fall Colours Thanksgiving Hike and Lunch which celebrates the trails and thanks those who help maintain them. Thanks to all of you who contributed to these tasks and to everyone who walks the trails.

The trails are always in need of upkeep. This Fall we developed a Trail "job jar" which lists projects ranging from maintaining docks and ramps to clearing debris, building benches to replacing the picnic tables which have deteriorated after 15 years or so in the elements, and so on. If you are interested in helping out, please get in touch using the contact information below.

Finally, to reflect all of the above, there is a new map which more accurately reflects the trail system, the condition of the routes and estimated times for various hikes. The map is available for viewing and download or printing on the lake association website at: http://lacgrandlake.ca/en/?page_id=510 . The map is also posted at the trailheads so you can take a picture with your phone when you start your hike.

Happy trails!

Abby Hoffman

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

At the first meeting of the Executive following the 2020 AGM, Jim Nicol, Sr. was re-appointed President, Gary Beach was re-appointed Treasurer and Paul Butler was re-appointed Secretary for the coming year. Ray Otten was re-appointed Vice-President. James Levesque, Melanie Boivin and Michel Rossignol were re-appointed directors-at-large for one year as provided in our GLA By-Laws, as amended. Peter Kearns resigned his three year director appointment by the members, and this position remains vacant until the next AGM to be appointed by the members. Dale Smith continues to be an active part of the Board by virtue of his lifetime non-voting appointment by the membership.



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2020-2021 Contact Information

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James Levesque	Director-at-large	(H) 613-220-3824 jlevesqueca@yahoo.ca
Michel Rossignol	Director-at-large	Michel.rossignol@hotmail.com

1 Vacancy until 2021 AGM

CONDOLENCES



John Herbert Lee (beloved husband of Sally, and father of Kelly and Robyn)
died peacefully May 24, 2020.

Our sincere condolences to family and friends.