

# Grand Lake Association / Association du Lac Grand

[www.lacgrandlake.ca](http://www.lacgrandlake.ca)



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## NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2021

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### LOOKING FOR PHOTOS!!!



Do you have photos of wildlife or beautiful lake views that you'd like to share with the Grand Lake and Green Lake community? You can send them with a short description to Rosaline Frith at [rosfrith@outlook.com](mailto:rosfrith@outlook.com). Photos may be used in future newsletters or on the GLA website.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The ice left us April 9, 2021 making way for the second COVID-influenced summer at Grand Lake and Green Lake. One hopes that with an increasing number of people being vaccinated, life at the lake with family and friends will gradually get better and better as we move through 2021. A number of people have made the lake their work-at-home office now for over a year, and appear to be enjoying it considerably.

The Lake Association continues to work on addressing some very important issues such as the ongoing erosion of our shorelines, control of invasive plant species, water quality monitoring and boating safety. You can read more on these efforts in the following sections.

This year's Annual General Meeting, scheduled for **7:00 pm on July 6<sup>th</sup>**, will be held virtually once again. All members are invited to submit and present a proposal for the membership to vote on, along with recommended actions and next steps. Details on how to submit a motion for consideration will be provided in advance.

We are always seeking energetic candidates with new ideas interested in joining the Board of the Grand Lake Association, or volunteering to chair and manage special projects or activities. If you are interested in submitting your name for consideration, please do so by using the form attached to this newsletter. You may also submit the name of another member for consideration (with his/her approval of course!). All submitted names will be reviewed by the Nominating Committee, who will report at the AGM. We have had a significant renewal on the Board and special project committees and the future looks good for our Association. We currently have 11 Board members (8 appointed by the Members and 3 appointed by those Board members). Of the eleven, three were appointed for the first time in 2019.

Your Lake Association encourages members to communicate with any member of the Board if you have any questions, comments or information that could be of interest to your Association. Please refer to page 11 of this newsletter for a complete list of directors and contact details.

Wishing all of you a safe and enjoyable summer.

Jim Nicol, President



## WEBSITE

The website has been updated with a new section on shoreline erosion and 2021 boating guidelines regarding wake reduction. With the cancellation of all events last year and certain ones again this season, due to the Quebec COVID public health restrictions, many of the existing 2019 photos and listings appear quite out of date but cannot be updated until new events take place.

2021 Sailing Race Results will go up each week.

The Lost and Found has been very active this spring and there are often new listings on For Sale and Wanted - so check back regularly!

For Services, Sale or Rent we post in the language we receive. Submitting your ad in French and English guarantees the largest audience.

We're always looking for ideas, photos and other content that would be of interest to our members. You can contact Paul Butler at [butlerpauld@gmail.com](mailto:butlerpauld@gmail.com)

## BOATING AND SWIMMING SAFETY

Navigational safety buoys continue to be maintained. Three hazard buoys were replaced this spring and markings were updated on the "Dead Slow No Wake" buoys to ensure compliance with Transport Canada requirements.

### Important Safety Measures

- EVERYONE who operates a motorized pleasure water craft (PWC) must carry on board at all times a proof of competency (such as a Pleasure Craft Operator Card, a Boating Safety Course Completion Card, proof of the successful completion of a boating safety course, or a certificate or other document pertaining to boating safety). Proof of competency is not required for pleasure craft without motors. Visit [www.boatingsafety.gc.ca](http://www.boatingsafety.gc.ca) to get details.
- Please refer to the map in the latest Directory.
- All watercraft (powered or not) must be equipped with navigation lights if operated after sunset or before sunrise.
- Remember to carry an up-to-date fire extinguisher on board.
- Operating a boat or PWC if you are under age is subject to a fine of \$100.
- Scan constantly for people, objects and other watercraft on the water.
- Be alert for conditions that limit your visibility or block your vision of others.
- As you leave or arrive at your dock with your boat or PWC, you MUST BY LAW use a 90 degree angle in order to avoid unnecessary wake, hitting swimmers or collision with other boats.
- Please practice BOATING sport activities as far as possible from the shoreline where the lake is wide and clear of obstructions.
- Swim in designated swim safe zones (WITHIN 100 feet from shore) and boaters use extreme caution in these zones where most people swim.
- Be visible at all times while swimming. There have been reports of swimmers crossing the lake without proper accompanying spot boats or markers. This is a very dangerous situation, and we have had near misses.

## MEMBERSHIP

Last year, we achieved 91% membership with 198 members. In spite of Covid-19 restrictions, we reached out to existing and new owners as much as we could. Thank you to departing members and current lake neighbours who passed along the coordinates of new owners.

The Association distributed a new directory of members' names and numbers last fall. We also sent out an electronic version that had corrected information that came to our attention after the print release. Let us know of any changes so we can keep an updated digital version on the go.

We have reached over 60% paid membership at the time of this newsletter and hope everyone will take the time to pay their dues prior to July 1.

If you're up at the lake and you see something of interest please share it with Rosaline Frith by emailing her at [rosfrith@outlook.com](mailto:rosfrith@outlook.com) so that the Association can keep everyone informed.

# 2021 SAILING SEASON

Welcome aboard the 2021 sailing season!

The breaking news is, based on the COVID-19 measures in place for our region, outdoor sports competitions with spectators will be permitted effective June 25!! This allows on-the-water sailing activities to get kicked off as per the schedule to the right (also online on the Lac Grand website). As for onshore sailing events, the COVID-19 guidelines will be monitored and options assessed as the summer progresses. At this time there is nothing planned. Any update will go out to the sailing distribution list via email (Please contact Sarah Potheary at [spothecary@strabo.ca](mailto:spothecary@strabo.ca) if interested in being added to the sailing distribution list.).



Both sailors and non-sailors are invited to enjoy the friendly, informal sailing races held each Sunday. As always, all Grand Lake cottagers and their visitors are welcome to participate. There are typically about six Lasers, Albacores and Sunfish sailing each week on one of the three pre-defined courses. A handicap system allows boats of different types to participate. If interested in joining in, simply show up in your boat ready for a noon start at the location identified on the schedule. There are no expectations except to have fun - and bring along a lifejacket. You'll find you get all the support needed from the more seasoned racers to get started. If you require a little practice or guidance before coming out, feel free to contact Terry Ford. Terry has offered to coordinate opportunities to kickstart any interested newcomers; in his boat or yours. And if there is sufficient interest, some on-the-water training later in the summer is a possibility.

For non-sailors there will be race summaries and results posted to the Lac Grand website following each race. Also, watching the race either on-the-water, or onshore at your own cottage is fully supported. For those spectating on the water you're asked to stay back from the sailboats and avoid waves. (Note: the preferred way to pass a sailboat that is racing is to cross behind them at a distance, with as little wake as possible).

If you have any questions please reach out to one of the co-Commodores Ian Maclaren ([ikmaclaren@gmail.com](mailto:ikmaclaren@gmail.com)) or Duncan Vipond ([devipond@rogers.com](mailto:devipond@rogers.com)). Their contact information can also be found in the sailing section of the Lac Grand website.

## 2021 Schedule (date/start location):

- 27 June - Ford dock
- 4 July - Potheary dock
- 11 July - Maclaren point
- 18 July - Ford dock
- 25 July - Potheary dock
- 1 August - Maclaren point
- 8 August - Ford dock
- 15 August - Potheary dock
- 22 August - Maclaren point
- 29 August - Ford dock
- 5 September - Maclaren point

## DEVELOPMENT

We continue to closely follow any indications of development activities that could impact our lake and environment in any way, and regularly meet with appropriate representatives of the various authorities who have some role in this domain.

Nick Barber has a mandate to make appropriate enquiries and report regularly to the Executive and in due course to our Association members.

If you are aware of any such activities that warrant further research, please advise Nick or any one of our executive.

At the Zoom AGM, we will invite the Mayor to speak on the latest development activities that could impact us, as well as other matters.



# PROTECTING OUR SHORELINES



The erosion on Grand Lake in the last 2 decades has been dramatic. Some shorelines which were intact 20 years ago have been inextricably altered. Old growth tree roots have been exposed as their soil has been carried away, trees have toppled into the water and shorelines moved inland. Relentless ongoing erosion can be seen all around the lake, and each year the high spring water further batters this already fragile shoreline.

Grand Lake is on a major multi-lake watershed, with a waterfall at the Culbute (awe inspiring in the spring) pouring hundreds of thousands of tons of water into the north basin. The fixed static dam at the south end of Dam Lake and the constriction caused by the old Chemin Barrage bridge greatly slow the flow of water into Dam Lake. The backup of water causes a rapid rise in water levels, often well over a meter.

While the high spring water is the primary source of shoreline erosion on Grand Lake, there are other contributing factors including excessive boat wakes and unstable shorelines.

The Association is taking steps to try to improve the health of our shorelines:

## **Shoreline Re-Vegetation Grant**

The Association reached out to the Municipality of Val-des-Monts last fall to discuss the possibility of a grant program for shoreline naturalization that could help members take steps to protect their shorelines and reduce erosion. The Municipality of Val-des-Monts launched a program this past March offering to pay 50% of the cost of plants for lakeshore revegetation, up to a maximum of \$400 per property. Details were circulated to the membership in March and May. The application deadline was June 1. Members will be notified if and when additional opportunities arise in the future.

## **Discussions with Mayor and the Quebec Ministry of Transportation**

We continue to press the Municipality and our MNA Robert Bussière to do something about the water flow restriction at the Barrage bridge that simply gets narrower and shallower each year because of ongoing shoreline erosion. As we are all aware, proper dam management protocols on the Dam Lake dam would also help, but they have been perpetually denied by the Municipality.

A request has also been made to the Quebec Ministry of Transportation for an on-site meeting with an engineer to discuss options for improving the flow of water into Dam Lake in the spring.

## **Wake Strategy**

Wake-related sports and cruising at low speeds other than dead slow too close to shore can take a real toll on the shoreline. Our shorelines continue to show devastating effects and we are losing very special old trees every year. All recreational boaters are reminded to take extra precautions and watch their wake at all times.

We are following closely an initiative being undertaken by the Lac. St. Pierre Association to try to reduce shoreline erosion caused by certain watersport activities that rely on huge purposefully-generated wakes. The Lake Association has also reached out to the wake boarding community on Grand Lake and Dam Lake to initiate a dialogue around best practices. On Saturday August 7, at 10am, there will be an opportunity for collaborative discussions between water tow sports enthusiasts, with an objective to develop a framework to promote responsible and courteous boating etiquette. This will also be a great opportunity for NEW boaters on our lake, to become acquainted with the areas on the lake, best suited for their wake related sports so as to have the least impact on our shorelines. Please come with your boat and meet in front of Dorothy Laflamme's cottage on August 7 at 10am for this informative session. If you have any questions beforehand, please contact James Beach at (613) 894-1058.

When participating in wake-related sports, please help to protect the shorelines of others by playing as far from shore as possible and by distributing activities along the full length of the lake (as opposed to creating large wakes in front of the same properties repeatedly).

## Grand Lake Annual Golf Classic

### Poker Run and BBQ

It is possible that we will be able to organize this event in 2021 if Quebec's gathering rules keep getting more relaxed. We are hoping the rules change in time for Sue and Don Goodwin to organize the event in their usual style, the 2019 event winner, Siobhan Devlin, is certainly ready to acquire and husk the corn! We will keep you posted.



As a result of current COVID-19 restrictions relating to such gatherings, the Golf Committee has decided to forgo this event again for 2021. We could definitely play golf under current COVID-19 rules, however, gathering for cocktails, dinner and prizes is still a no-no. Edelweiss has suspended all clubhouse activities for the foreseeable future. The Golf Committee will continue to monitor rule changes and report.

### CANADA DAY



Based on what we know at this time, the GLA believes that we can organize a Boat Parade on July 1 safely and within Quebec's COVID guidelines expected to be in place from June 25 forward. The organization of events is subject to the approval of regional public health officials and the competent authorities, and we believe we have such approvals, subject to us asking each boat/family unit to observe the current COVID protocols/maximums for their boat and of course each boat needs to observe the 2 metre distancing from other boats (no rafting!). We will start the parade at 12 noon in the north bay towards the entrance to the Culbute. As for fireworks, currently VDM is not issuing fireworks permits because of the draught but we will monitor this and keep members posted.

## IMPORTANT MESSAGES

- Over the years, buoys of all sorts have been observed drifting in the lake, or sinking (partially or completely) to the bottom. Going forward, GLA volunteers will remove all GLA-owned buoys each fall to ensure that they are in good condition and properly re-positioned every spring. If you use private buoys in the vicinity of your property please keep an eye on them, and remove them in the fall to ensure the safety of boaters, recreational water users, and snowmobilers, and to keep the lake clear of abandoned plastics.
- Abandoned docks are becoming a real problem in Grand Lake. The Lake Association is pursuing options for having these docks removed due to safety and environmental concerns. Please remember when replacing a dock that it is your responsibility to remove the old dock from the lake. We must all do our part in keeping Grand Lake beautiful.
- We remind folks of the latest septic system inspection rules and also new garbage collection and composting rules being imposed by Val-Des-Monts. Some carry significant fines for non-compliance. Details are available on our lake website and on the Municipality website.
- We hear a number of complaints about noise and frequent fireworks, as well as broken glass, campfires and related mess at Crepin Beach. We ask that all neighbours of Crepin Beach be respectful of that beach property and of the rights of others to peaceful enjoyment of their time at the lake. It has also been reported that a number of local residents drive to the north end of Barrage road, and then proceed onto Crown Lands to make noise and party-particularly since the onset of COVID. Concerned nearby lake residents are trying to take actions to curtail this activity.



# INVASIVE SPECIES

## *Eurasian Water Milfoil*

Our collective efforts to date to help stop the spread of Milfoil on our lake have proven to be very successful. Thank you to everyone for your continued support through being very mindful of the buoys in place indicating the most sensitive areas, and scooping out floating milfoil. Also thanks to the many volunteers who have given their time and efforts to help with the Milfoil program.

Last year, inexplicably, Milfoil was much less predominant in some areas, however, it remains a significant problem in other, mainly shallow areas. These have been marked on the map on our Grand Lake website and we ask that you pay particular attention to avoiding these areas as much as possible. An enormous help is to follow our boating guidelines and not operate your watercraft within 100 feet of our shoreline as these are obviously the shallowest areas on our lake. The five large, white Milfoil buoys with approved signage currently mark the biggest problem areas.

We are currently looking into Transport Canada-approved yellow buoys to continue marking off particular areas of concern.

We will be meeting again in August with the environmental specialist that has been studying and mapping our lake for Milfoil growth every year, since 2018. We will be looking forward to her report showing the areas that have dissipated and areas that have increased in Milfoil growth.

Please note that we are expected to have unusually low water levels this season and this will unfortunately give Milfoil a big boost during its growing season.

We are aware that Milfoil is high on the list of priorities of the Federation of Lakes, and we understand that a number of lakes (including ours) have flagged to the municipality that we want them to focus more efforts on new solutions to control this invasive species of plant.

Thank you for continuing to do your part. It is a fact that scooping up even 10 nets worth of floating plant cuttings a year will make a difference.



## *Phragmites*

The Grand Lake Association reminds you of the importance of not allowing Phragmites colonies to become established on the secondary roads leading to Grand Lake. The attached brochure tells you how to eliminate this invasive plant.

For more information you can contact Michel Rossignol at 819-684-0979 or [michel.rossignol@hotmail.com](mailto:michel.rossignol@hotmail.com)

# GRAND LAKE TRAILS

*“The best experiences on the trail are the spectacular views of the lakes from the look-outs on both trails.”*

## Trail FAQs

*How do you get to the trails ?*

There are two docks in the northwest arm of the lake leading to the Culbute which provide access to the trails. The main trailhead is located at a dock on the NE shore visible on the R after you pass through the serpentine narrows to this arm of the lake. The other dock is on the N side after you pass the two islands. There is a sign-in box at the main trailhead. Feel free to provide an account of your outing and any suggestions for improving the trail system.

*Do you have to have a boat or can you get to the start of the trails on foot ?*

Theoretically one could walk to the N end of Chemin du Barrage, walk through the woods to the old logging road beyond Lac de la Montagne and head west to meet up with the trail. This would make for a very long hike !

*Is there anything to see on the trail ?*

In addition to trees, shrubs, wild flowers, cliffs, streams, ponds, moss and mushrooms, there are lots of birds, including the occasional owl. Then there are racoons, flying squirrels, salamanders, small garter snakes, deer and foxes. You may see scat and footprints of larger mammals, but they are rarely seen. The best experiences on the trail are the spectacular views of the lakes from the look-outs on both trails.

*Is there anything to eat on the trail ?*

By mid-July there are lots of raspberries and blackberries and even a few gooseberries adjacent to the trail. If you can stand wading into the thorns you can have a pretty nice snack. There are no fast food outlets, so bring your own sandwich etc. (and water). There are ponds and streams, but there is no safe drinking water on the trail.

*Are the trails suitable for kids ?*

There are steep parts, some clambering over rocks and a few wet spots – all negotiable by anyone. The trails provide for both out-and-back and circle routes, so length (and pace) can be tailored to capacity and preferences.

For very young kids (and the young at heart who just want a pleasant stroll) there is a new shoreline path linking the two docks.

*Is there a map ?*

There is a map on the Grand Lake Association website and maps are posted at the two trailheads.

### *How long are the trails ?*

You can determine your own distances anywhere from a few kilometres to 10-12 by selecting out and back, circular or combination routes. Distances are marked on the maps.

### *How do I find my way on the trails ?*

The trails are marked with white metal blazes on trees on the R-hand side of the path. Double-blazes indicate an imminent change of direction (in the direction of the higher blaze). If you think you are off the trail, retrace your steps slowly looking for the white blazes.

### *Can anyone use the trails ?*

The marked trails are entirely on Crown Land. There is no restriction on use of the trail at any time of the year. It is best to stay off the trails during the main deer hunting seasons (usually the first 2 weeks of November).

### *How can I help maintain the trail ?*

The footfalls of every hiker help keep the path clear. You can help informally on your hike by removing debris (fallen branches etc.), bringing a pruning device to cut off saplings growing on or overhanging the trail, and taking all of your garbage back home with you. If you would like to participate more formally in trail maintenance, please get in touch with me. When we get to the post-pandemic 'new normal' we will once again organise group work parties to tackle special projects like new ramps and dockage, safe crossings over small streams, removal of large fallen trees and construction of benches.

### *Any final tips ?*

Take your own water and something to eat. Bug spray and a hat are a good idea too, Take a whistle or attach a small bell to your pack if you are worried about avoiding an encounter with a large mammal. Unless you are hiking in the early morning or at dusk the latter is highly unlikely.

Most importantly, walk at your own pace and enjoy some refreshing forest-bathing. (You can also do some real bathing from the trailhead docks.)

Abby Hoffman

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# ENVIRONMENT

## WATER QUALITY

The ice went out of the lake Spring 2021 on April 9th. Water samples were taken at the five traditional sites on May 6<sup>th</sup>. The 5 test sites are posted on the website and are fixed by GPS coordinates. Three samples were taken at each location and the test results were averaged.

**Phosphorous** ~ while the results indicate a notable increase over last year, a review of past results does show that there have been previous peaks of equivalent magnitude. But behind occasional spikes, the 20 years of data which we have shows a clear upward trend over this timespan, which should be the focus and concern of us all.

Last year's numbers show a down-spike, which could have been attributable to a few factors, including: 1) due to COVID restrictions the spring testing was done later than usual (i.e. further from the target of "as-close-to-ice-out as possible.") 2) less boat traffic at that point, for the same reasons.

**Milfoil** ~ Still of great concern is the constantly increasing spread of European milfoil. This is an invasive species which is difficult to control, but which is frequently assisted by careless human activity, most commonly, boat traffic through milfoil patches. This results in quantities of milfoil "cuttings" which are capable of drifting with currents, settling to the bottom in a new site, rooting, and spreading further in this new location.

Mitigation of milfoil is a responsibility that we all must share.

### Developments in water testing program and protocols

The Municipality of Val-des-Monts has undertaken a centralization of water testing in our lakes. Details can be found on the website => [Municipality of Val-des-Monts](#). The Coles Notes version is that they have hired a staff biologist who has developed a cadre of volunteers on most of the lakes who will perform an enhanced program of water testing. Among the advantages of this approach are: 1) continuity of recording, 2) standardized methodologies, 3) professional guidance and an increased scope of testing.

This program has great potential, and we are optimistic that the implementation will be successful.



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 unupportable, 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.

# Water Quality Tips

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

The three most effective counter measures 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 number of boaters who seem completely unaware of the serious impact of their wakes on the lake shoreline. 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. Protecting that buffer zone is critical. If you are within 100 feet of shore, you should be travelling dead-slow, and producing no wake. Also try to avoid patches of weed. There is more than likely milfoil within the patch and if it is cut loose, it will continue its invasion of the lake.

- 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.

In conversation with the president of a Muskoka area lake association, she described a great result that they achieved by a concerted effort to convince cottagers to use 100% non-phosphate dishwasher detergents. Most supermarkets have products of this type; it is an easy switch and most users found that the performance was as good or better than the phosphate-containing types.

## TREASURY

Our treasury continues to reflect a strong surplus position, with reserves of \$63,492 invested securely and conservatively in CDIC-insured instruments plus a current account balance of \$1,677. As usual, our annual fees cover all administrative costs, which are minor, and all Association events are designed to be self-financing. In fact, some events actually contribute funds to the Association.

As most of you are aware, the Association maintains the reserve funds largely for contingencies and unexpected events that could arise and potentially impact our Members. Certain reserves are also earmarked for specific purposes.



## GRAND LAKE ASSOCIATION

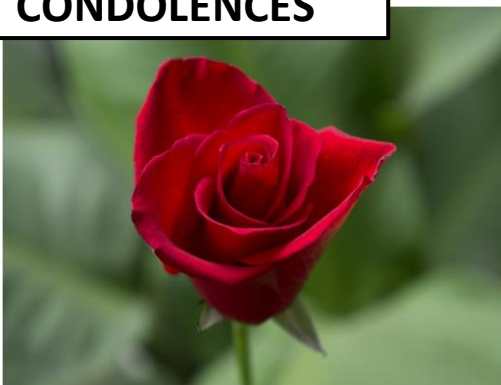
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**1 Vacancy until 2021 AGM**

## CONDOLENCES



**Gordon Maclaren** passed away suddenly in Japan in early May 2021  
**Frederick Gordon** passed away peacefully at his home in early December 2020  
**Our sincere condolences to family and friends.**