



## FALL 2011 NEWSLETTER



**Autumnal Equinox Lake Miskwabi**

What a summer! It started out wet in May and June but once it settled in, it was wonderful! The lakes were warm; the sun was shining; there were few clouds. And to date, autumn has been glorious.

### **Annual Meeting Highlights**

Even though it was a very hot day, close to 70 members were at the airport strip for the meeting. President Larry Holden welcomed everyone.

#### **Directors' Reports**

Phil Wiseman reported that the Roads Committee had sent a report on the area roads to Dysart et al Superintendent Brian Nicholson. Nicholson was commended for the work that his crew had done on area roads, recognizing limited budgets for any major

improvements. Wiseman thanked Karen Harding, Jack Van Roosmalen, Phyllis McCullough and Nigel Hollings for their work on the committee.

Moe Welch, Special Events, reported on the upcoming golf tournament, pontoon boat afternoon, and the Wine and Cheese Party.

Treasurer Virginia Vranckx presented her financial report. She thanked Norm and Louise Fowler for leaving the books in excellent shape for her. The MACA bank balance at year end 2010 was \$6,799.

Director Mike Giza, giving a report on the threat of invasive species in our lakes, reported that as of last fall the lakes are free. He cautioned everyone about zebra mussels and spiny water fleas, recommending that if boats are brought

into member lakes, they should be first washed down to prevent unwanted species from entering.

He also reported that the members of the Lake Plan Committee had their first meeting in June. The total planning process is expected to take until 2014.

President Larry Holden reported that the amalgamation/merger of MACA with the Miswkabi North Cottagers' Association (MLNCA) was finally put past the legal "blockage" and he expected the associations would be one by next summer. The executive of the two associations are currently working together to combine by-laws and do all that is necessary for the merger.

### **Elections**

The elections for MACA executive were then held.

Former Secretary Margaret Montague was formally thanked (in absentia, as she was unable to attend the meeting) for her years of service to the association as she had stated that she was not running again for the executive. Larry Holden explained that he was stepping down as president but would remain on the executive as past-president. He stated that he had 5 goals when elected five years ago: new postal boxes for the area; high speed Internet access; amalgamation of MACA & MNSCA; a shelter built at the airport strip for the AGM's; and an increase to MACA's membership, especially from Long Lake area. Some goals have been achieved and some plans are still in progress.

Member Kay Hubbard stood and thanked Larry on behalf of all the members for his work as president.

The slate of directors of Andy Mosher, Phil Wiseman, Susan Rohricht and Phyllis McCulloch was presented, and as there were no further nominations, a motion was passed to elect them and the new directors were congratulated.

### **Guest Speakers**

Dale Walker, Executive Director of the Haliburton Highlands Hospital Service Foundation, was introduced.

According to her "Everyone knows where the hospital is but no one wants to visit it!" She explained that the HHHS is working in a surplus situation with a \$20 million budget. The current fund raising campaign, with a goal of \$300,000 is to provide new x-ray machines. The hospitals provide 11,000 x-rays a year and serve 30,000 emergency patients. Walker concluded that if anyone were in a position to donate, it would be greatly appreciated.

Larry then added that MACA has made yearly donations to HHHSF and thanked Walker for her time and association with the hospitals.

Murray Fearry, Dysart Reeve and Haliburton County Warden, was then introduced.

Fearry commented that fireworks on area lakes are becoming a real problem throughout the county and are difficult to police.

On high speed Internet, Fearry said that \$141 million was earmarked for Eastern Ontario for work to be completed by 2014. The Haliburton area is scheduled for completion by 2012.

He also reported that a new tree preservation by-law will be forthcoming at the County level. It is intended to preserve water quality by keeping a buffer zone around lakes. He said water quality is the key component of maintaining the property values on our lakes.

Fearry was then thanked for making his 36<sup>th</sup> appearance at MACA's AGM.

### **General**

A draw for a \$150 valued basket of Nature Clean environmentally-friendly cleaning products was won by Louise and John Ewing. The draw for two tickets to any production at the Highlands Summer Festival was won by Lynn McCullough.

A total of \$137 was made from the draws for the association.

President Holden thanked Lois and Moe Welch for stepping in at the last minute and manning the BBQ. They were ably helped by Nancy and Dave Luke and the BBQ was enjoyed by all.

### **2012 Directors**

After the AGM a Directors' meeting was held and the following roles were agreed upon:

President – Mike Giza

Past-President - Larry Holden

Vice-President - Sandra Bishop

Treasurer - Virginia Vranckx

Secretary - Susan Rohricht

Water Quality - Haden Heathcock

Membership - Phyllis McCulloch

Web Site - Andy Mosher

Special Events - Moe Welch

Roads - Phil Wiseman

### **May Long Weekend Clean-up**

This year we had an excellent turnout of 24 volunteers who walked the roads around our four lakes and collected another trailer load of trash and recyclables. Hopefully, one of these years the quantity of garbage will start to go down!

The heaviest area is along the first part of Trapper's Trail Road adjacent to Hwy 118. In particular, the mailbox area is cluttered with flyers and junk mail that appears residents discard when retrieving their mail. Many thanks to the following dedicated MACA members: Nancy and Dave Luke, Pam Cox and John Butt, Paul Saberton, Joseph Dobransky, Tim Payment, Kelly and Shirley Mitchell, Lorrie Giza, Patricia, Rachael and Mitchell Devenyi, Donna, Connor and Cameron Stevens, Andrew Fraser, Nancy and Larry Holden, Mike Giza and Virginia Vranckx, Sandra Bishop and our Mascot – Roxy!

### **Wine and Cheese Party**

IT WAS A PARTY! If you were there, you know; if you weren't there, you missed one! Our thanks go to Kim Wilkinson and Mike Harrison for being such generous hosts.

To support the local community, Director Phyllis McCulloch encouraged attendees to bring along a contribution to the Haliburton Food Bank. Five large boxes were filled with items from baby food to dessert.

During the afternoon, incoming President Mike Giza thanked Larry Holden on behalf of all members for his efforts over five years that made a real difference. Larry was presented with a gift from association members.

The following are some thoughts from Larry Holden that he would like to share with all members:

“It was my pleasure to have been the President of MACA for the past five years. I have enjoyed meeting many of our membership during that time and speaking with so many more, either via email or by phone. I have gotten to know our area much better, not to mention the workings of the municipal government of Dysart et al. I believe that I have received more from MACA than what I was able to give. I am really pleased to know that Mike Giza is our new president. He is a very knowledgeable person whose primary aim is to protect and preserve our area for future generations. His leadership on the Lake Plan Committee is evidence of this. Lastly, but not least, I'd like to thank the membership for the unexpected gift of a certificate for Canadian Tire and the bottles of wine. Mmm, which do I like best????????? It was a very thoughtful gesture which I will always remember. All the best over the winter and again, many thanks for your past support.”

## Lake Reports

**Long** - submitted by Susan Rohricht

It has been a typical summer on Long Lake. We are happy to say that our water levels regulated by the dam were normal through the bulk of the summer.

A special welcome goes out to new residents as many places have either sold this summer or have started to be developed.

Lots of snapping turtles have been seen around the lake all summer and in September two otters were spotted playing in the water.

**Miskwabi** – submitted by Virginia Vranckx

Wild life sightings this year include a bear and cub hanging around the area past the causeway, a family of mink roaming the shoreline on the east side, and multiple moose sightings along the North Shore, not to mention deer in everyone's gardens! Best of all, a growing loon is still swimming on the lake now in mid-October.

After 17 years of faithful use the old loon platform has been replaced with a brand new one which it is hoped will get tenants next spring. Special thanks to Pam Cox and John Butt for the donation of cedar materials to build the platform.

A long section of deteriorated road on Trapper's Trail Road past the Wenona Lake Road cutoff is currently being resurfaced and then new hard top will be laid.

A cautionary sign has been ordered by the Dysart roads department to indicate the right-of-way to continuing traffic on Trapper's Trail Road at the intersection of this road and Miskwabi Lake Road.

**Negaunee** – submitted by Sandra Bishop

Our little lake continues to be an oasis of flora, fauna and fun!

All time low water levels didn't seem to dampen the boating, swimming, fishing or all round enjoyment by all this summer.

Negaunee Lake boasts approximately 25%

year round occupancy - a sure sign that "life at the lake" is better than anywhere else.

We're sorry to see Charlotte Bozin is selling; she was one of the originals on the lake. Her daily row and swim will be missed. We wish her well.

A few bird feeders fell victim to a larger local mammal early in the season, so it's a good reminder to be "bear aware", especially as winter approaches when they're out looking for extra food for hibernation.

Fall colours have been their best in years, and the weather has allowed for great walks in the woods. Negaunee residents look forward to continued outdoor "fun" on the lake: snowshoeing, skating and cross-country skiing. Is it too early to pray for snow?

**Wenona** – submitted by Phyllis McCulloch

It was a lovely summer on Wenona with plenty of sunshine and fish.

You have probably noticed that many of the roads had work done on them this summer. Lots of pot holes were filled. Many thanks to Phil Wiseman and the Road Committee and their submission to Dysart!

After discussions with Dysart road officials, we will see the addition of a road sign at the Argillite and Wenona Lake Road intersection. Just a reminder to take great care when traveling on any area roads.

## MACA Donations

This year, on behalf of the membership, donations were made to the following local area organizations:

Haliburton Highlands Health Services  
Foundation \$300.00

Cottage Dreams \$200.00

Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association  
(for the Fish Hatchery) \$100.00

## *Did you know?*

### **Lake Foam**

Lakeshore property owners sometimes become concerned about lake foam. However, most foam observed in lakes and streams is a product of nature; foam is not necessarily an indicator of pollution.

All lakes contain organic matter, such as algae and plants, and when these decompose they release cellular products into the water, which lessens the surface tension. When the wind blows, the waves on the lake agitate this surface agent, thus transforming it into sudsy white foam.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's, many communities experienced tremendous foam problems in lakes, rivers and sewage treatment plants caused by synthetic laundry detergents that were highly resistant to chemical breakdown and only slowly degradable (broken down by bacteria). By law, the sudsing agent of all detergents now on the market must be biodegradable.

Source: New Hampshire Dept. of Environment

### **Deer Populations**

According to MNR studies the Whitetail Deer populations are reasonably healthy in the Haliburton Highlands. The winters of 2007 and 2008 were particularly hard on deer but 2009 and 2010 were quite mild allowing the deer numbers to rebound.

## **2011 IMPORTANT DATES IN OUR AREA**

**Moose Season (Guns) October 17 - 22**

**Deer Season (Guns) November 7 - 21**

for further details check [www.ontario.ca/hunting](http://www.ontario.ca/hunting)

## **Coalition for Equitable Water Flow**

The annual general meeting of the CEWF, organized in 2006 as a coalition comprised of representatives from the 4 water systems flowing south into the Trent waterway, was held in mid-September. It was attended by representatives of 30 lake associations (including Mike Giza and Larry Holden of MACA) as well as representatives from Parks Canada and the Trent Severn Waterways. A wet May/June followed by a very dry July/August caused significant water level fluctuations and heavy drawdowns showed on many lakes in August. These conditions, coupled with the out-of-date water level information on the TSW website, caused much frustration for many on the reservoir lakes. Parks Canada acknowledged the website problems and has made improvement a high priority for 2012.

The Co-chair Chris Riddle indicated that the CEWF currently has two priority areas:

1. The need for an integrated approach to water management at the watershed level.
2. The development of lake-specific "preferred water levels during the navigation season".

If the second point could be implemented it would certainly be beneficial for the reservoir lakes in Haliburton.

It was acknowledged at the meeting that there is no short-term fix to the water level issue. It is a multi-jurisdictional question and will require cooperation at all levels of government including longer-term investments in the system's infrastructure.

### **MACA T-Shirts**

If you wish to order a MACA T-shirt as a Christmas gift some colours/sizes are still available. Please contact Director Sandra Bishop at [sandrabishop@rogers.com](mailto:sandrabishop@rogers.com).

We anticipate an increased stock of colours and sizes for next spring.

## **Shrubs and Trees at Discount Prices and Free Advice to Go With Them**

Did you know that you can order shrubs and trees to re naturalize a portion or all of your lakefront at discounted prices and then get free advice on how to plant them?

A renaturalized shoreline absorbs toxins and nutrients before they can enter and harm your lake.

The Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council provides the shrubs and trees and provides advice on how to plant them when you pick your trees up in the spring.

Orders should ideally be placed by December but no later than January 13, 2012.

**Help keep your lake Healthy!**

**Get advice on what to order!**

**Get a major discount**

**and a Free demonstration on how to do it**

For advice on what and how to order contact The Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council coordinator Nicole Tuyten at 705-286-5206 or [nicole.tuyten@ontario.ca](mailto:nicole.tuyten@ontario.ca)

Article provided by CHA

## **Mark the Calendar for 2012**

Spring Road Cleanup	May 20
Annual General Meeting	July 21
Pontoon Boat Flotilla	August 11
Wine & Cheese Party	August 25
Monthly Bike Rides	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday May to Oct.

All details will be given in the Event Calendar with the Spring 2012 Newsletter.

## **New Format**

If you have a picture that might fit on the front page of a future newsletter please email to [mfgiza@gmail.com](mailto:mfgiza@gmail.com). We will try to include a new picture with every issue.

## **Nature Notes**

We've added a new feature to the newsletter (last pages).  
Hope you enjoy and find it informative.

Printed on recycled paper

# NATURE NOTES

## LOONS



*“Who has ever paddled a canoe, or cast a fly, or pitched a tent in the north woods and has not stopped to listen to this wail of the wilderness? And what would the wilderness be without them? (A.C. Bent). – Or what would the cottage be without the cry of the loon?”*

Although there are five species of loons, the Common Loon is the species best known to most of us, as its breeding range lies across Canada and it appears on our lakes every spring. In fact, more than 80% of the world’s Common Loons nest in Canada. Of those, an estimated 65,000 pairs nest in Ontario - a good reason for the Common Loon to have been named the Official Bird of Ontario in 1994.

### **Prehistory**

As the prehistoric call of the loon would indicate, they are ancient birds. Their ancestors were on the planet 60 million years ago and the loon of today has been around 10 million years.

### **Body made for Diving**

The skeleton and muscular system is designed for swimming and diving. Their legs are placed back on their body, allowing for excellent movement in water. The head can be held directly in line with the neck during diving to reduce drag, and the legs

have powerful muscles for swimming. Many bones of the loon’s body are solid, rather than hollow like other birds’, aiding in diving ability. During dives, the large webbed feet provide all of the propulsion and the wings are held tight against the body unless they are used to help make sharp turns while chasing prey.

Although males are generally larger, both sexes look the same. Adults are large-bodied, weighing from 2.7 to over 6.3 kg and measuring almost a metre from bill tip to outstretched feet. The bill is quite long, averaging 75 mm.

### **Lives of Loons**

Loons can live up to 30 years. They are predators and their summer diet consists of fish, crayfish, frogs, snails, salamanders and leeches. A loon will peer underwater, moving its head from side to side to locate prey and then aims and dives quickly. It will stay underwater for up to a minute and can dive to depths of 80 metres.



The adaptation that makes loons such efficient divers also makes them heavy and slow to take wing. To take off from a lake, loons run along the surface into the wind. The distance needed to take flight depends on wind speed; in calm times the bird may run as far as several hundred metres before it gains enough speed to take off. Once in the air, the wings beat quickly and have a high degree of curvature to provide lift. During migration, loons fly at an average speed of 120 km/hr. Loons winter in groups down the US coasts to the Gulf of Mexico and the Baja Peninsula.

### **Voice of the Loon**

Perhaps one of the most fascinating things about Common Loons is their haunting and variable voice. They have four distinct calls

which they use in varying combinations to communicate with their families and other loons. These are the tremolo, wail, yodel, and hoot. The tremolo sounds like a crazy laugh and is used to signal alarm or worry and denote annoyance or greeting. The wail is one of the loveliest of loon calls. It is used frequently during social interactions between loons and may be used to regain contact with a mate during night chorusing. The yodel is given only by the male. It is a long, rising call with repetitive notes in the middle and can last up to six seconds. It is used by the male to defend territory. Studies of recordings have shown that the yodel is different for each bird and can be used to identify individual loons. The hoot is a one-note call that sounds more like a “hoo”. It is mainly used by family members to locate each other and check on their well-being.

### ***Nesting***

While loons are supremely well-adapted to their aquatic existence, it's on terra firma that their set-back legs, adapted for speed and agility in the water, let them down. Because they are so clumsy on land, loons nest right at the water's edge on flat or gently sloping ground. The same sites are often used from year to year. Loons use whatever materials are on hand to build their nests. If material is not handy, loons can lay their eggs directly on the mud or rock substrate. Both the male and female help in nest building.

Usually two eggs are laid in the nest in June, although one and three egg nests have been found. The eggs are elliptical in shape, with thick shells of deep olive brown with irregular dark brown or black spots. The bird does not cover them when it leaves the nest. The incubation period is about four weeks, and when born, the chicks are immediately able to swim. They are fed small food items early in their life including snails, small fish

and some aquatic vegetation. After about six weeks, the chicks are able to dive and start providing their own food. By migration time, the young are able to look after themselves and the adults generally leave first with the young following at a later date.

### ***Nest Platforms – Why?***

Islands and peninsulas can be ideal for loon nests as loons need quick access to the water. Unfortunately on lakes that are dammed, like Long and Miswakabi, this presents two problems. Firstly, the lakes are normally kept at a high level until early July. This is different than the natural cycle which would see the spring run-off end by late May with many island/peninsula sites available for the nesting season. Secondly, in these lakes if an available site is found in the higher water and the eggs are not hatched by early July, it is possible that the lake level might be lowered and the nest abandoned. Platforms solve these two problems. Studies have shown that on lakes controlled by dams nesting success is greater with nesting platforms.

### ***Conservation***

The loon is protected by federal law and may not be hunted. Loons have actually adapted quite well to some level of disturbance by people on lakes in Canada. However, there are a number of practices that can be beneficial in guaranteeing loons in the future:

- Observe loons from a distance.
- Be cautious around nests and loons: boat wake can wash out a nest; also, wake can drown young loons in the first six weeks of life when they are unable to dive.
- Do not discard fishing line; it can be deadly.