



MISKWABI AREA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

SERVING COTTAGERS AND RESIDENTS ON LONG, NEGAUNEE, WENONA
AND MISKWABI LAKES
www.mymaca.net

Winter 2015 Newsletter



Miskwabi North Wetland late December 2014

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

Best Wishes to everyone on our lakes for a wonderful 2015.

The lakes did not permanently freeze over until after Christmas. This made the thin ice treacherous for both man and beast. More on pages 2 and 5. We more or less had a “green” Christmas and New Years. The first major snowfall happened January 3.

2015 MEMBERSHIP

The membership renewal is included. Please take the time to fill it out and return it before February 28 to be included in the early-bird draw. You can also order a copy of the Miskwabi Area Watershed Plan to be mailed to you.

WINTER EVENTS

February 14 – Haliburton Frost Festival at Head Lake Park.
A family event with lots of free activities including dog sled rides, ice fishing, snow games, pony rides and more.

February 17 to 19 – 2015 Ontario 55+ Winter Games.
Being held at various locations throughout the Highlands, over 1000 competitors will go for gold in alpine, Nordic, curling, hockey, skating and many indoor events. See the website www.ontario55pluswintergames.com for details.

March 17 to 21 – Maple Fest

Held at the Haliburton Highlands Museum from 10 to 5. See and taste maple syrup being made the old-fashioned way. Lots of tasty samples and treats as well as fun contests and kids’ crafts and activities. Contact info@haliburtonhighlandsmuseum.com.

DYSART MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS RESULTS

The following people were elected October 27:

Reeve – Murray Fearrey

Deputy Reeve – Andrea Roberts

Ward 2 Councillor- Derek Knowles

Paul Casey, our former Ward 2 Councillor retired after unsuccessfully running for Deputy Reeve. At the first Council meeting after the election he was applauded for his contribution to the Ward and Council. A major project for Council in the upcoming four years will be updating the Official Plan of the Municipality. The process allows for input from citizen groups and local associations.

Murray Fearrey was also appointed Warden of the County of Haliburton at its meeting in November.

MACA MERCHANDISE

Flags



Some folks expressed interest in a MACA flag. We are still trying to reach the minimum quantity of 20 to order them. They are 18" by 36" and will cost \$25.00.

Hats and T-shirts

The following are still available in limited numbers:

40th Anniversary hats –Grey

Ladies T's – Chocolate (M, XL); Butter (L, XL); Red (L, XL)

Men's T's – Beige (L, XL, 2XL); Chocolate (L, XL, 2XL); Red (2XL),

Kid's T's – Chocolate (S, M); Red (S, M, L); Beige (S).

Hats and T-shirts are \$10.00

Contact Phyllis at phyllis.mcculloch058@sympatico.ca to purchase. Deals available for more than one!

If you have an idea for other items, clothing or novelties with our logo on please get in touch with Phyllis.

STAY SAFE ON YOUR SNOWMOBILE

Again this year, the OPP is asking snowmobilers to always exercise caution and to travel at speeds that take into consideration both the ability of the operator and the condition of the trail. The following safety tips are strongly recommended by the OPP:

Always wear a helmet.

Travel only on trails which are posted as "open".

When travelling on frozen water surfaces ensure the ice is strong enough to support you and your snowmobile.

Watch out for open water around docks and shorelines.

Be aware that lower water levels have caused normally submerged hazards such as rocks to now be exposed.

Be aware that docks may be covered in areas where there has been blowing and drifting snow.

Travel only at posted speed limits – don't speed.

Only operate snowmobiles you are familiar with.

Practice Zero Alcohol: Alcohol is involved in over 70% of snowmobiling fatalities. Even small amounts can impair your perception, slow reaction time and limit your ability to control your sled at critical moments. Operating your sled under the influence is punishable under the Criminal Code and if convicted can result in loss of all driving privileges including your car or truck.

Night Riding: Nine of Ten fatalities occur after dark. Don't overdrive your headlights. Wear outer clothing with reflective trim on the arms, back and helmet. Never ride alone at night.



In 12 ft of water below this rescue frame lays an ATV that went through the ice on Miskwabi December 31.

The driver jumped to safety seconds before his ATV sank and after hours of work the ATV was recovered with aid of ladders, rope and a tractor.

BE SAFE WHEN ON THE ICE

The following are depths of ice necessary for safety:

15 cm (6 in) Individual person

20 cm (8 in) Group

25 cm (10 in) Snowmobile

HALIBURTON 2014 REAL ESTATE UPDATE

Submitted by Century XX1 www.futurecottage.com

2014 was another strong year for the Haliburton real estate market, with modest increases in both volume and prices over the previous year.

There were 317 waterfront cottage/residential sales in Haliburton in 2014 (Haliburton Highlands district, Ontario Lakelands Real Estate Board). This is up from 294 sales in 2013, an increase of 7.8%.

The average sale price was \$385,494, up just over 2% from 2013. Average Sale-to-List ratio (average sale price as a percentage of list price) was 95.4%.

The lower and middle price ranges dominated the waterfront market in 2014, with 40% of the sales under \$300,000, and 38% of the sales between \$300,000 and \$500,000.

A BIT OF LOCAL HISTORY

from Director Phyllis McCulloch (Wenona Lake)



When the Watershed Plan was being researched many interesting things were uncovered. This picture is one that Fernando Griesser found in his collection of family pictures. The story is that the Totem Poles were up when lots were being purchased in the 60's. They were located on Trapper's Trail Road where the water runs down from the dam at the end of Wenona Lake. Do you remember seeing them?

Do you have old pictures of the MACA area when cottages were being built? Let us know as it would be nice to gather any old pictures and put them together as more history of our area.

WINTER PARKING ON LOCAL ROADS

The Municipality of Dysart et al's winter parking regulations prohibit the parking of vehicles on any municipal road between midnight and 7 a.m. from November 1 to April 15.

In addition, any vehicles found parked on municipal roads interfering with the removal of snow, sanding or road maintenance will be subject to a \$200.00 fine and/or may be towed at the owner's expense.

2014 GIVING AND RECEIVING

MACA Donations:

Haliburton Hospital Foundation \$100.00 in memory of Margaret Montague, former MACA director and secretary.

Haliburton Point in Time Youth Centre \$50.00 in memory of Director John Ewing's daughter.

Donations Received:

Century XXI Real Estate \$300.00 (each time they close a sale on our lakes they donate \$100.00 to the association).

A Note from Director John Beadle (Negaunee Lake)

Local hunters noticed a decline in the deer population this fall which could be caused by last year's hard winter. Hunters were not as successful as they usually are.

There has been some ongoing selected tree harvesting near Negaunee Lake and on the north shore of Miskwabi Lake. This has the benefit of improving the over all forest health. Cutting of mature trees allows the smaller trees to get more sunlight and thus grow much faster.

MACA 2015 Events Mark your Calendar!!!

Spring Road Cleanup and BBQ – Sunday, May 17
Annual AGM – Saturday, July 11
Golf Tournament – Saturday, July 18
Wine & Cheese Party – Saturday, August 29

The End of 2014 in Photos



Above: Immature Bald Eagle feeding on its share of a deer kill.

Photo: Larry Holden

Right: Otter enjoying a fish. Photo: William Bunn

Below: Deer in rutting season. A novel way to attract females??

Photo: Mike Tipping





Above: Adult loon with catch. Photo: William Bunn



Right: Doesn't he look cuddly! However, this wolf is protecting a deer kill on Miskwabi Lake in late December. Photo: William Bunn

Below: Magnificent September lightening strike near Wenona Lake Photo:William Bunn





The Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners' Association (CHA) is a member-driven group made up of 45 property owners' associations (including MACA) from

about 80 water bodies across the geographical limits of Haliburton County. The vast majority of property associations belong to the CHA.

The CHA mission statement is:

The CHA is a broadly based Haliburton Coalition drawing upon the collective knowledge and strength of its member associations to create synergy through sharing Best Practices, effectively studying common issues, developing common solutions, recommending County wide policies and influencing outcomes. Member lake associations remain autonomous.

Although formed not too many years ago, the CHA has had a powerful, positive impact in the Haliburton Highlands.

- Instrumental in giving a united voice for common issues
- Development of a Lake Steward's Manual.
- Initiatives regarding proper septic system maintenance and inspections.
- Proposal to help protect the Lake Trout of the Highlands.
- Citizen science efforts for water quality testing.

In addition to the above, the CHA was awarded, late this past fall, a \$100,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Association for Shoreline Assessment under the Love Your Lake Program. The purpose of the project is to provide property owners with simple tips on shoreline improvement to benefit the health of their lake. Septic system maintenance and the upkeep of a healthy shoreline are the two keys to foster the water quality of a lake. During the summer of 2014 the program was started and assessed 2500 properties on 10 lakes. There are 47 lakes, including our 4 lakes, on the waiting list. Property owners can receive a private evaluation of their shoreline. "It is unbelievable," said Paul MacInnis, the CHA Chair, "the number one question people ask is 'When do I get my report?'" A very positive experience for owners and the lakes.

The CHA website www.cohpoa.org has a wealth of videos, PDF's, and documents of interest to property owners on lakes in Haliburton County. Some examples are:

Ribbons of Life

Beginners Guide to Shoreline Stewardship

10 Tips for Closing the Cottage before Winter

Posters for Cottage Renters

"Poop Talk" – Rob Davis (a highly-acclaimed video on septic systems)

Wetlands – Paul Heaven

Lake Trout – Dr. Casselman

DID YOU KNOW?

Turtle Road Mortality Project



Many of Ontario's turtles are currently at risk and categorized as Endangered, Threatened, or Species of Special Concern. With the fragmentation of our landscape by an ever-expanding network of roads, road mortality has become one of the greatest threats to Ontario's turtles. This threat is not unique to turtles as many species are threatened by the road network. Much work has been done on mitigating the impacts of roads on our wildlife communities: ranging from the installation of signage to the construction of vegetated road overpasses for larger mammals such as bears and wolves.

In 2013 the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust, with partners, began investigating a system to help reduce turtle mortality on Highlands roads. Specifically, the design consisted of a suitably sized culvert to act as a drift fence and guide turtles through the underpass. In 2014, a 3-year scientific study began to gather data and assess the value of the system. The first year involved monitoring candidate sites during May and June when turtle activity is at a peak. Candidate sites were selected based on historical observations, habitat and suitability for mitigation. Well over 130 volunteers (some from our community) put in almost 3000 volunteer hours of observation and data collection at these sites. Based on an analysis of the data collected, 1 test site and 2 control sites were selected for monitoring in 2015 and 2016. The test site is located on County Rd. 1 in Gelert. During the fall of 2014 the new mitigation system was installed. A barrier system on each side of the road guides turtles away from the road and towards the culvert.



Over the next 2 years volunteers will continue to monitor the 3 sites. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Haliburton Land Trust at 705-457-3700.

NATURE NOTES

OWLS



Do you know these owls? It's possible that all four could be seen or heard around our lakes this winter.



GREAT HORNED OWL

Size: 46 –63 cms (18 – 25")
Wingspan: 1 –1.5 m (3.3 – 4.8')
Weight: 1 –2.4 kg (2 – 5.5 lbs)

Great Horned Owls are one of the largest of North American Owls (along with the Snowy Owl). The Great Grey Owl of the Boreal Forest is the largest. Great Horned Owls are bulky

with large heads and long ear tufts or "horns". Their colours are generally warm brown upperparts with a conspicuous white bib or throat "beard", and heavily barred on the chest.

The Great Horned Owl is found in a greater variety of habitats than any other owl. Its breeding range extends from just south of the Arctic in Canada to the pampas of South America.

Renowned for ferocity, Great Horned Owls prey mainly on small to medium size mammals – mice, rats, squirrels, weasels, opossums, and even skunks. In addition, they prey as well on about 50 species of birds including song birds, grouse, ducks and geese. They are nocturnal, but can be seen hunting at times in early morning and evening. If not seen easily, they certainly can be heard, especially beginning in early winter when males are occupying breeding territories. The soft, low, muffled hoots carry great distances. The male calling pattern is four to five hoots: "whooh, whooh-hoo, whooo, whooo".

Nesting begins in late January or February and is usually in a hollow tree, a crow's nest or a rock crevice with the addition of a few feathers as the only improvement. Chicks hatch after one month, are able to fly after about ten weeks, and depend on their parents throughout the summer.



NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL

Size: 18 –21 cms (7-8.5") – just smaller than a robin.
Wingspan: 43.2 –50.8 cms (17 – 20")
Weight: 7.1 gr (2.5 oz)

While the Great Horned Owl is one of the largest owls in the Western Hemisphere, the Northern Saw-whet Owl

is the smallest. Both include Haliburton as part of their home and breeding range.

The Saw-whet Owl has a round head with no tufts. The underparts have soft blotchy brown streaks. The eyes are yellow and the bill is black. This owl is very tame.

Saw-whet Owls range between the area north of Lake Superior in Ontario, Manitoba and Quebec to the Carolinas in the U.S. Their wintering patterns are irregular.

Although thought to be relatively common, the Saw-whet is not easily seen because of its size and its nocturnal habits of feeding largely on deer mice. However, its call can be heard during mating season. The song is a mellow whistled toot repeated in large succession, often 80 – 100

times a minute: "too, too, too, too", etc. The name Saw-whet is thought to come from its call which sounds like a saw blade being sharpened on a whetting stone.

Saw-whets are cavity nesters, utilizing both natural cavities and those made by woodpeckers and small mammals. Eggs are laid in early April.





BARRED OWL

Size: 43 –50 cms
(16.9 – 19.7 ins)

Wingspan: 99 –110 cms
(39 – 43.3 ins)

Weight: 470 –1050 gr
(16.6 –37 oz)

Oldest recorded age: 24 yrs.

The Barred is a large, attractive owl with a round head and deep brown eyes. It has brown and white striped plumage and a barred tail. The Barred Owl is a New World species ranging from Central America through the eastern half of North America. It has expanded its range through parts of Western Canada and the Pacific Northwest. They do not migrate and tend to remain in their home territory.

Barred owls have a wide-ranging diet: mice, squirrels, rabbits, other small mammals, birds, frogs, snakes and insects. Their most serious predatory threat (especially to young owls) is the Great Horned Owl.

Mating time is late winter and nests are in existing tree cavities or abandoned large tree nests, e.g. squirrel and crow nests. Eggs are laid in early April. The female stays with the eggs and young while the male hunts. Like the Great Horned Owl, hunting is a night activity. They can be seen in early morning or evening.

Like most owls, the Barred are much easier to hear than see. The baritone call usually consists of eight accented hoots in 2 intervals of 4: “hoo hoo-hoo hoo; hoo hoo-hoo hooaw”. Translated “Who cooks for you; who cooks for you all”.

As all of the three above owls do use tree cavities for nests, it is important for their continued survival that mature trees and dead trees with cavities are available to them for nesting.

SNOWY OWL



Size: 52 –71 cms
(20 28 ins)

Wingspan: 1.3 –1.5 m
(4.2 – 4.8 ft)

Weight: 1.6 –3 kg
(3.5 –6.5 lbs)

Average lifespan: 8.5 yrs

The magnificent, ghostlike Snowy Owl is not a resident of Haliburton but can be a winter visitor from the Canadian Arctic – and this is one of those winters. Experts at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology say that the most likely reason for the influx of Snowy Owls in the south is the abundance of lemmings in the Canadian Arctic last year and again this past summer. This helped produce large number of owl offspring which has sent many owls up to 2000 miles south in search of new hunting areas. It would appear that, for different reasons, Snowy Owls come south both when lemmings are scarce and when there is an abundance of them. Although they prefer areas that resemble their Arctic range, over the years Snowys have been seen in winter around our lakes.

The Snowy Owl is circumpolar, breeding on the arctic tundras of the world. They have keen eyesight and great hearing which helps them find their prey under thick vegetation or snowcover. An adult can eat more than 1600 lemmings a year (3 – 5 a day).

Snowy Owl nests are usually in a slight depression on a raised hummock, outcrop or ridge. Because of the almost continuous arctic daylight, in summer Snowy Owls hunt both day and night. Their only possible breeding areas in Ontario are in the northwest corner of the province near Fort Severn. In their nesting territory, they have a deep booming “hoo”. Otherwise, they tend to be silent.

Suggestions for finding Haliburton Owls:

- On walks, listen for the hoots of the Great Horned, Barred and Saw-whet owls. Each is distinctive. As well, both the Great Horned and Barred will respond to mimic calls.
- Look for owl pellets – the undigested fur, feathers, bones, etc of prey animals. These accumulate and indicate that an owl is nesting or perching in the tree above.

Owls on the wing picture identification: Left to right – Saw-whet, Snowy, Barred, Great Horned owls