



<http://www.foxlakeassociation.org/>

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello and Happy Spring to everyone in our Fox Lake community. I hope you all had a good winter, or at least as good as the coronavirus pandemic would allow. Fortunately, our winter weather was not very severe this year and the ice left the lake earlier than usual.

As we move into summer, it remains unclear how pandemic restrictions will impact our FLA summer activities. The provincial steps of reopening determine what kinds of outdoor social gatherings we can have and how many people can attend and we cannot predict the dates that these regulations will take effect nor when they might need to be reversed. So, your FLA executive remains flexible! We are planning a "hybrid" Annual General Meeting on Zoom again but with the possibility that some people can attend in person. We are putting together some simple plans for a modified and physically distanced Regatta, with options that can be confirmed at the last minute. Announcements about FLA summer activities appear later in this newsletter, and we will provide updates by e-mail to our mailing list and on the FLA Facebook page so you will know what is happening.

Camp Winnebago plans to be operating this summer after being closed all of last season. I thank the Camp for accommodating members of the community who used the camp beach to launch their boats this spring.

The past year has seen a shift in the population around the lake, with many more seasonal and part-time residents spending more and more time here, often working and attending school online from Fox Lake. It has been wonderful to see so many people out and about and greeting each other on the roads and on the water. However, the increase in people also brings pressure on our fragile lake environment. Later in this newsletter you will find reminders about noise, lighting, fireworks, garbage and short-term rentals. Please be considerate of your neighbours, both human and wildlife!

Please feel free to contact me or any other member of the FLA executive if you have comments, concerns or suggestions for the Fox Lake Association.

Sincerely,
Alix Yule
FLA President

MEMBERSHIP

We had a strong membership last year (67 properties) and I hope we continue to grow.

We continue to monitor lake parameters, communicate with the town, participate in the Federation of Ontario Cottager Associations and, of course, organize social events. With luck those will be more like normal this year.

I want to extend a particular welcome to the newer owners at Fox Lake. Please feel free to ask for support or advice on any lake or cottage issue and remember that we have a facebook page you can join (https://www.facebook.com/groups/318929168304976/?ref=group_header). And please come out to our social events - a great way to get to know your neighbours and others on the lake and to discuss any issues you may have. Participation in the Annual General Meeting is another opportunity to learn about current issues and to make your opinions count.

The membership dues for 2021-2022 (\$40) can be paid, preferably by e-transfer to foxlaketreasurer@gmail.com or by cheque delivered to 422 East Fox Lake Road, Huntsville ON, P1H 2J2.

I look forward to seeing you around the lake this summer.

Robin Yule
Membership Officer

PLANNING AHEAD-SUMMER 2021 EVENTS

Please put the following dates in your summer calendar. As uncertainty continues with respect to public gatherings due to the pandemic, the FLA will still try to put some fun into our summer and we are trying to adapt to the new rules as best we can.

- **FLA Annual General Meeting - Saturday July 10th at 10am.** Limited in person attendance at Alix Yule's (422 East Fox Lake Road) as per Provincial Reopening Guidelines (anticipated to be a maximum of 25 people outdoors-RSVP required), plus virtual attendance via Zoom. The Zoom link will be e-mailed along with the meeting agenda and ways to RSVP a week in advance of the meeting.

- **Fox Lake Regatta – Saturday July 31.** This year, we will be replacing our traditional Regatta format with a format that will feature some smaller events that can be done safely! As last year, we anticipate the sandcastle competition and other activities for kids will be on your own beach/shoreline – *including prizes for evidence or artwork of the Fox Lake Monster!* We are tentatively planning to hold a safe horseshoe competition (players only, no spectators) and some canoe races or boating events. Details coming soon.
- **Fox Lake Corn Roast and Fall Fair – Saturday September 4.** We are going to decide on if, and in what format, we can hold this event by early August. We will send out details as soon as we know what they are!

LAKE STEWARD REPORT

Ice-On occurred on December 16, 2020. The lake was frozen for 113 days until Ice-Off on April 8, 2021. This was the fourth shortest period of ice cover on record.

Water samples were submitted to the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks this spring, so we should have results for Phosphorus and Calcium for 2021. We are expecting to conduct Benthic Monitoring on Friday August 20. The exact protocols are yet to be finalized by the District of Muskoka due to changing COVID-19 restrictions. More details will be provided when available.

The following paragraphs, from last fall's newsletter, are worth a re-read after the concerning algae occurrence last September.

“One significant development this year were reports of unusual algae blooms. Apparently, this has been an issue throughout the Muskoka region this summer.

In September a report of a bloom on the west side of the lake was investigated by the FLA and reported to the Ministry of the Environment Conservation & Parks (MECP). MECP was to come and investigate, however with no access to a public boat launch (they are prohibited from using private craft) and the passage of time, the obvious bloom had dispersed and could not be sampled.

Algae naturally occur in ponds, rivers and lakes and are the base of the food web. Algal blooms typically occur in the late summer and fall in shallow, slow moving and warmer water. A “bloom” is when a population of algae increases rapidly. One of the suspected triggers for these events is high levels of nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorus. Recommended actions to minimize the risk of blooms include ensuring septic systems function properly, maintaining/ planting shoreline vegetation to reduce runoff, and minimizing lakeside lawns and fertilization.”

The following web sites provide information on what to look for, what to do and best practices for bloom mitigation and prevention.

Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit site:

https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae_copy1.aspx

Ontario Provincial site:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/blue-green-algae>

If you do see an unusual algal bloom, please be cautious to avoid exposure, report it to the Spills Action Centre at 1-866-663-8477 and the Fox Lake Association. The Ministry will provide the FLA with sampling equipment and perform the subsequent analysis.

David White
Lake Steward

OTHER NEWS YOU CAN USE:

COTTAGE RENTALS IN 2021

There are two provisions within the Ontario Emergency order that affect cottage rentals in Huntsville/Fox Lake right now:

1. The **short-term rental ban** continues as part of the Ontario Emergency Orders that have been extended until at least June 2. That means that no short-term rentals are allowed except in cases where emergency accommodation is required. Short-term rentals are permitted once Ontario moves into Step 1.
2. Social gatherings: outdoor only for less than 10 people until Ontario reaches Step 2 (early July).

The OPP is responsible for enforcing these Covid-19 related emergency orders and can be contacted at 1-888-310-1122

Separately, as part of a public consultation process that began in early 2019, the Town of Huntsville has enacted bylaw 2019-122, which is an act to **regulate short-term rentals** in our area. This by-law has a significant impact on the rental of cottages in our area.

Some of the key provisions include:

- a. **All rental properties must be licensed** with the town. Licensing includes requirements such as a site plan be submitted for the property and the property will be inspected to ensure it meets all current fire and safety codes.
- b. An **annual fee** must be paid to the town to operate the rental;
- c. Limits on the number of people and cars are mandated as part of the license, including **occupancy limited to two (2) people per legal bedroom**, and cars limited based on the amount of legal parking space available.

There are other significant provisions included in the by-law which we encourage you to read at:

<https://www.huntsville.ca/en/home-property-and-planning/short-term-accommodation-rentals.aspx>

Licensed properties with alleged violations (non emergency) can be reported to:

- The Town of Huntsville By-law Department can help deal with community concerns such as excessive noise, improper burning, dogs running at large etc. They can be reached during business hours at bylaw@huntsville.ca or phone at 705-789-1751.
- Ingrid Armstrong, Short Term Accommodation Licensing Coordinator, 705-789-1751 ext. 2402 ; Toll Free: 1-888-696-4255

DARK SKIES

Both Fox Lake Association and the Town of Huntsville's Plan encourages landowners to help Stop Light Pollution in Our Night Skies.

FOCA points out that there are many benefits to "**Dark Night Skies**". They list and elaborate on the following:

WHY we should care:

- Star gazing is an amazing family activity:
- Better nighttime with less nuisance glare
- Increased safety on both land and water. Light pollution from unshielded, broad range lights near lakes is made worse by the reflection off water.
- Energy and Monetary savings
- Protection of wildlife and lake ecosystems. Light plays myriad roles in nature: changing light patterns can disrupt an ecosystem's balance. In water environments, daily cycles for organisms such as zooplankton are controlled by light, while others, such as fish, are attracted or repelled by it. Studies show that moths, fireflies, salamanders, frogs, songbirds and other wildlife are affected when artificial nighttime lighting influences navigation, predator-prey relationships, foraging behaviour, reproduction, mating, and other biological and ecological characteristics.

HOW we can help - landowners are encouraged to prevent light pollution by:

- When shopping for lights ask questions and seek out lights that reduce light pollution.
- Light for necessity only
- Choose glare-free lights and lights that are shielded to direct light down on targeted areas and stop light from escaping sideways and upwards.
- Aim lights down and away from water. Choose lights that direct light onto the ground, where it is needed.
- Install lower wattage bulbs
- Use dimmers and timers

Not sure about the light spillage from your property? Go out after dark and observe them from the water or ask a neighbour to provide feedback.

For further information, please visit –

<https://foca.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Night-Skies.pdf>

NOISE AND FIREWORKS

Noise travels much farther over water than it does over land. Noise from equipment, barking dogs and sound systems can be disturbing, especially to those across the water. Please ensure that your sound system speakers are facing away from the water and the volume kept to a level that you can enjoy but your neighbours can't hear. The Huntsville Town Noise By-law prohibits most loud noise between 9:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. and loud music between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

The Town Fireworks By-law allows fireworks to be set off only on weekend evenings (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) between 6:00 and 11:00 p.m. and on Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day and New Year's Eve between 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. Fireworks are not allowed at all when the fire hazard rating is severe and outdoor fires are also banned.

GARBAGE AND RECYCLING

Garbage/recycling pickup is weekly May to the end of October. November to the end of April pickup is biweekly for garbage and weekly for recycling. With pickup on Tuesdays for West Fox Lake Road and Thursdays for East Fox Lake and North Fox Lake Roads, garbage left by weekend visitors may sit outside for several days awaiting pickup. Animals of the woods and birds of the air can make a mess of garbage and recycling left outside unless it is in proper containers. Plastic bags and open recycling boxes are temptations for birds, in particular ravens, and four legged creatures. Please ensure your garbage is in an animal proof bin and your recycling covered. Suggestions for recycling - make sure recycled containers are clean and left in clear bags (required) or blue bins that are covered by a blanket or tarp or placed in a specific covered container designated for recycling. If this is not possible, please take recycling home with you.

Recycling Requirements - Muskoka continues to have a two-stream recycling program with paper products separated from plastics, cans, glass and aluminum. Cardboard boxes need to be broken down, flattened and tied together. Find the list of what can be recycled here below and note it may not be the same as other municipalities where you recycle. For example, Muskoka DOES recycle coffee cups (paper) and dark plastic coffee cup lids (plastics) and black plastic

takeout containers: <https://www.muskoka.on.ca/en/garbage-and-recycling/two-stream-recycling.aspx>

Large items such as barbecues, chairs, broken tables, mattresses will not be picked up and must be taken to the Stisted or Bracebridge landfill site for proper disposal by the property owner. Hazardous waste disposal is available at the Bracebridge site and on specific days at the Madill transfer station. Electronic waste can be dropped off free of charge at All Ontario Recycling (Port Sydney), Bracebridge landfill site or McIntyre Electronic Recycling, 7 East Airport Rd. Huntsville. (9-5 M-F, 9-12 Sat) Bins are available for 24/7 drop-off.

We trust that this information is helpful in ensuring our Fox Lake roadways remain free of garbage litter.

Did you know....

*According to ancient legends the Fox Lake Sea Monster exists!!
It has been spotted over the years peering out of the depths and turning
somersaults in the middle of the lake.*

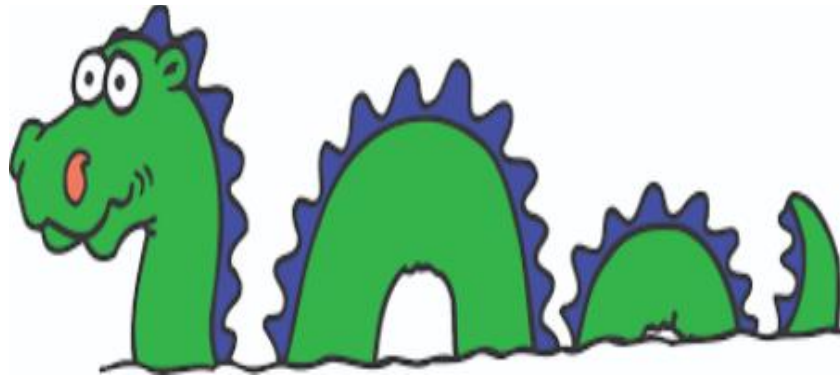
*Unidentifiable dragging and scrapings have been observed on the beaches over the
decades.*

*Does it swim and lunge or does it have land legs and is able to creep onto our
beaches?*

*What does it eat? Is that why all the bull frogs have disappeared?
Does it sneak up on unsuspecting swimmers and nibble their toes?
Is it one headed or more? Can it spy on you from in front and behind as well as beneath the
water?*

*If you spot any clues or see a sighting please post on the Fox Lake Association
Facebook page.*

We are hoping this legend will be proven at last!!



On the day of the Regatta the judges will be searching for the monster on your shoreline!

Prizes will be awarded for it's live capture and release afterwards of course.

Residents of East Fox Lake may have noticed the absence of the "the mailboxes" for most of summer 2020. The stand holding the mailboxes had rotted and then fallen over during winter 19/20. Well, the mailboxes are back and looking great with a new stand and a fresh coat of paint.



Fox Lake Association:

Board of Directors:

Alix Yule – Director, Chair of the Board, President

Bill Knight – Director, Vice-President

Tom Gillette – Director, Past-President

Cindy Taylor – Director, Treasurer and Social Media Administrator

Ellen Fox – Director, Website Administrator

Christa Casselman-Sharp – Director

Jim Harper - Director

Officers:

Katie McMahon – Newsletter

Jim Watson - Secretary

David White – Lake Steward

Robin Yule – Membership

Want to get involved with the FLA?***Have a question or concern?******Email: foxlakeassociation@gmail.com***

This newsletter is published and funded by the Fox Lake Association Inc. It is distributed to all Fox Lake residents for their information and pleasure. If you have enjoyed reading it, please consider supporting the Association by becoming a member if you have not already done so.

In order to keep our membership records current, please include your name, home and Fox Lake address, phone number(s) and your email address (so the Association can communicate information to you cost-effectively).