



# Leech Lake **Cottagers' Association** **NEWSLETTER**

April 2023

## **President's Message** – Susan Baskin

Happy April to all. Spring is in the air. The snow and ice are melting away and soon life will spring anew on, in, and around Leech Lake with greenery and flowers, bees and hummingbirds, and (we hope) a new loon family.

As we move into April the LLCA will be working on: **membership and finances**—please pay your 2023 dues; **road maintenance**—see below for upcoming plans; **stewardship**—sharing and implementing an action plan based on the recent Fleming College Report on the State of Leech Lake; **governance**—planning for the 2023 Annual Meeting; and **community building**—planning for the 2023 Regatta.

As always, a huge thank you goes out to everyone who keeps things moving along: to Leslie for the excellent newsletters; to Shelley for keeping our finances in shape; to Guy for overseeing winter plowing; to the volunteers on the LLCA Road committee for contributing to road maintenance throughout the winter; to Valerie and the Stewardship Committee; and to everyone else who contributes behind the scenes to make our Leech Lake community a better place.

## **LLCA 2023 Membership Dues Update**

Thank you to the many members that have already submitted their 2023 dues, early payment is greatly appreciated! We currently have 40% paid as of March 25th. We had a very strong membership base in 2022 at just over 90% and hopefully 2023 will be just as strong or even stronger. Please refer to the attached invoice for payment details. Thank you for supporting the LLCA!

The fees are \$315. The dues invoice is attached. Please fill it in and email or mail it to treasurer Shelley Bumstead at the addresses in the dues invoice document. The easiest way to make payment is to e-transfer your dues to Shelley at [leechlaketreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:leechlaketreasurer@gmail.com). Please use **2023dues** as the password.

## **In Memoriam**

As a cottage association we extend our sympathies to Susan Baskin and her family on the death of her father, Rabbi Bernard Baskin, on January 18th in his 103rd year. Below is a link to the published obituary of this remarkable man:

<https://www.legacy.com/ca/obituaries/theglobeandmail/name/bernard-baskin-obituary?id=39780279>

Rabbi Baskin was Steve Paikin's rabbi growing up in Hamilton. Steve (TVO - The Agenda) gave a very touching tribute at the service, which you can read online at this link:

<https://www.tvo.org/article/remembering-rabbi-bernard-baskin>

## **Save the Date**

There are lots of things to take note of, please mark your calendars. Meet new people! Make new friends! Build and enjoy a spectacular lake community! Details about these events and activities will follow, but for now you've got the dates.

Sat Apr 22	Ash Drive – take your ash to Rosewarne Stn 9:30 – 1:00
Sun Apr 23	Last day for winter garbage and recycling collection
May 1	First day of roadside garbage and recycling collection
TBD	Annual Meeting over Zoom – there will be a separate email blast
Sat July 1	Concert in the Cove
Sun Aug 6	Leech Lake Regatta

## **A Winter Wonderland**

Ice huts, ice fishing, cross country skiing, snowmobiles, ATVS, ice skating, and even some curling have taken place on our lake over this winter snow season. There was something for everyone to do up here this winter! For those of you lucky enough to have enjoyed those activities, please post some pictures on Facebook so the rest of us can see what we missed.

## **Snow, Snow and Snow**

### Roof snow loads

There is some snow build-up on most of the lake's cottages/homes but depth has dropped due to warm temperatures and rain over the past few days. The spring melt has started and in the weeks ahead most of your roof snow will be gone.

### Road snow loads

Our lake roads are showing signs that spring is around the corner. About 80% of our roads are now down to gravel, while there are ice trolley tracks on the other 20%. The trolley tracks have no sun exposure to aid in ice melt, but they will disappear once we have consistently warmer temperatures. The frost heaving has introduced some dips, drops and/or humps in our roads with some mushy, muddy spots. These conditions will correct themselves once the warmer temps arrive and dry out the roads. Flooding may be a concern in the days ahead as we are expecting 40-50mm of rain on Wednesday.

### Lake snow loads

The lake is still frozen over but in a few spots the shoreline is now showing water. It has been an interesting snow season in 2022-2023. To date we've seen a 25% increase in snowfall over the 2021-2022 snow season. The current snow total for 2022-2023 stand at 112 inches. December was the biggest month for snow accumulation as we received a total of 42 inches, with half of that landing over Christmas. There were also a few days of whipsaw temperatures with some days experiencing 15c-20c-25c-30c temperature changes from night to day and/or day into night.

## Road Work Ahead

We have identified various spots on the North and South roads that will have road work performed on them in 2023. Proposed plans will include the following;

- Road grading in May
- Road grading in Sept. or Oct.
- South Road
  - 1002 to 1012 - additional road gravel
  - 1246 to 1256 - additional road gravel
- North Road
  - 1101 to 1107 - additional road gravel
  - Boat launch access road - additional road gravel



## Lorne Rd - Construction Update

The Town of Bracebridge will be onsite mid-June to mid-July in order to complete the upgrades they made to Lorne Rd back in 2022. There will be additional gravel added to the new road base, then two applications of a tar-based top coat / slurry to hold it all in place.



A ToB representative will be onsite 1st week of April at the request of the LLCA roads team to investigate last year's culvert and gravel road work. There are several road dips, humps and sunken culverts that need remediation. Two curves may need to be opened up to make them safer and to reduce the risk of your wheels dropping off the road edges and into the ditch.

We are requesting these issues be resolved before the application of the top coat. Our biggest concern with their repair efforts is that over time

Lorne Rd will experience the same type of road surface issues and degradation that has dogged Fraserburg Rd for many years.

## The Loo Police

Is this the year you'll be thinking about a Septic system pump-out?

We will be working with a septic system service provider in the months ahead and based on the numbers of cottages who participate in this service there will be a "volume discount" reduction in your pump-out cost. That reduction is to be determined.

If you're interested, email Guy at [leechlakeroads@gmail.com](mailto:leechlakeroads@gmail.com).



## A Brush with an Invisible Killer (an account from one of our very own Leech Lakers)

Saturday night of Family Day weekend was quiet. We went to bed early as hubby had to leave for a conference early Sunday morning. We both woke around 5 AM and said our goodbyes. I went back to bed, and around 7am I was shocked to find my head spinning as I reached for my phone to check the time.

After consulting “Dr. Google” about dizziness, Tylenol, sinus rinses, food, and a lot of water and electrolytes ensued. However, I got no relief; I spent the rest of the day in bed listening to an audiobook while drifting in and out a of fog. Around 4:15pm all that hydration poked at my consciousness, and I was forced to get up.

Minutes later I came back to consciousness on the floor in an adjacent room. My head was swimming. The afternoon sun was getting weaker and I was alone in a house in a remote area. My phone had been in my yoga pants pocket all day as I knew something was really not ok. Reluctantly, I called an ambulance and crawled to the front door to unlock it.

Not too long after, the attendant entered the house with a portable unit of some sort. Immediately alarms went off and the attendant said “We need to get out of the house - there’s carbon monoxide in here!” I was put on a stretcher and started on oxygen in the ambulance while parked in the driveway. They called the fire department who arrived and donned protective equipment.

Once the firefighters confirmed the presence of CO they asked where the carbon monoxide detectors were. Even in my foggy state, as I said I wasn't sure I was admonishing myself for not making something so important my business. We'd had major HVAC work done in the house and I was perplexed as to how this could have happened.

We proceeded to the hospital as the firefighters looked for the source of the CO and aired the house. Apparently the most common source is a bucket of ash - but not in our case. We think we are careful people! The source was our airtight wood stove in the basement which had been dampened down Sat evening, combined with a long chimney and an airtight house.

The white discs that sit high up and not very visible in our “newish” house? Smoke detectors only. After a week of feeling headache and woozy, I bounced back. I never thought this could ever happen to us. All ended well in this case. Others have not woken up. Please check your detectors – make sure you have them and that they are working!

Important information from Government of Canada website [here](#).

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Symptoms		
LOW level CO poisoning	MID level CO poisoning (or exposure to lower levels for longer time)	HIGH level CO poisoning (or exposure to lower levels for longer time)
<p>Flu-like symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tiredness</li><li>• Headache</li><li>• Shortness of breath</li></ul> <p>Impaired motor function:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Muscle weakness</li><li>• Partial/total loss of function of a limb or limbs</li></ul>	<p>Dizziness</p> <p>Chest pain</p> <p>Poor vision</p> <p>Difficulty thinking</p>	<p>Convulsions</p> <p>Loss of consciousness</p> <p>Coma</p> <p>Death</p>

## **Spring Start-up Safety Equipment Checks**

We're thrilled to get back to the cottage in the spring. Opening up for the season can be a lot of work, and often water systems can be difficult and suck lots of time. It's important to remember an annual check of your safety equipment as part of your cottage-opening checklist. Think about things like this:

- Check electrical cords to make sure they're not frayed (mice are weird creatures, cats too)
- Replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors – you do have a carbon monoxide detector, don't you?
- Check the expiry date on fire extinguisher – you do have a fire extinguisher, don't you?
- Check your AED: it is advisable to read the maintenance requirements section of the manual and have your AED serviced annually. It isn't just the batteries and electrode pads expiring that you should be thinking of. Performing periodic thorough testing of software and right down to the function of the shock button provides an assurance that your AED is rescue-ready. (MediQuest.ca)
- PFDs, life vests and Life Jackets do not have official expiry dates. However frequent use, wear and tear, and prolonged exposure to the elements eventually make life jackets unfit for use. In traditional life jackets, the foam progressively loses its buoyancy and ability to effectively keep the head above water.  
For inflatable life jackets, recommended replacement dates may vary, depending on the environment in which lifejackets are used, but generally they should be replaced within three years of service. The date of manufacture is stamped on the bobbin. (see [here](#))
- Check the orange "marine boat essentials kits" in your boats – do all the boats still have one? Do they still contain everything they should (whistle, rope with a weight, flashlight – with working batteries)?



## **Pass (on) the Salt**

Your roads chair attended a webinar in early February on road salt and its impact on your life, and on our environment.

The speakers provided insights into how to combat the overuse of salt on our town roads, sidewalks and parking lots. Any reduction in the amount of salt used by the District of Muskoka will help bolster the health of our lakes, rivers, etc.

Some notable facts:

- One of the biggest salt emitters are water softeners. Who knew?
- While the Muskoka region, and its lakes, are not in any present danger we need to be vigilant and reduce salt use. All of these lakes have a way to go before they start to suffer from Freshwater Salinization Syndrome (FSS). There are some lakes in Wisconsin that are deemed to be in decline due to FSS, and one lake is now considered a dead lake due to salt. The final destiny of an FSS lake is algae blooms.

- One surprising, or maybe an alarming, fact introduced at the presentation was about the District of Muskoka and its salt use on our roads, etc. Based on the volume of salt the district uses during the winter season it equates to one tonne, per household.
- Northern Ontario and those in much colder climates use far less salt than the DoM uses due to their roads staying frozen longer, and they have fewer freeze/thaw cycles vs central or southern Ontario.

## **Keepers of the Lake – Thank You!**

A big thank-you note to all of those who make life better for all of us.

**Don Hill** - For his time and energy in making portions of the North Rd. safer this winter by way of his homemade road sander.

**Steve Cook** - For taking down some potentially dangerous trees, as well as opening up the sightlines on a few corners on the North Rd.

**Gail and Tom** - For taking the time during their walks to spread sand on some portions of the roads to make walking on our roads safer.

**Laszlo and Sophia** - While taking a stroll on our lake they noticed a cottage with open back doors. They reached out to the LLCA and a local resident made a site visit, checked for property damages, looked for any local wildlife taking up residence in the cottage and then closed and locked the opened doors.



## **Bits 'n Pieces**

1. **FOCA Alert:** the most recent Federation of Cottage Associations newsletter is full of great [information](#).
2. **Ash Drive:** Your wood ash will be used to rehabilitate Muskoka forests to combat their calcium decline. Please drop off your wood stove, fireplace or pellet stove ash to the town dump site on Rosewarne Dr from: **9:30am to 1:00pm on April-22-2023**.
3. More info on Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW) can be found here – <https://fotmw.org>. **For the kids, check out how you can become a Citizen Scientist with FOTMW.**

## LLCA Contact Information

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