



# Leech Lake Cottagers' Association NEWSLETTER

January 2025

## **2025 Dues and a Membership Request**

Happy New Year and welcome to 2025! We're looking forward to a great year on Leech Lake.

Our 2025 Dues invoice can be found [here](#). In this document you can find the different ways to pay up, and ways you can direct additional contributions (thank you!).

The LLCA executive has set the 2025 baseline dues at \$375, an increase of only \$25. Once again, we have a discount of \$25 for early birds, so **if you submit your dues by January 31, 2025** your baseline dues amount will be \$350.

### **The Request: Road Maintenance Costs – a 2025 Update**

Current road maintenance expenses, both summer resurfacing and gravel, and winter plowing, consume approximately 80% of the Association's expenses. Winter costs are likely going to increase even more than summer costs, given that estimates we received from potential winter contractors for this current 2024/2025 winter were anywhere from two to six times what we had paid Muskoka Landscapers in 2023/2024.

The jury is out on Local Legends, our winter maintenance provider for this winter. It has been a difficult start to the winter season, with heavy snowfalls that insulated the ground so it did not freeze, followed by warmer temperatures and rain, creating mountains of slush. This weather has been unprecedented, and it has been a tough time to break in a new provider and do the dance of figuring out just how we're going to work together. There have been some disappointments, and we continue to work to get to a place where everyone is comfortable with the job that is being done.

Part of the reason we chose to work with Local Legends was because they came closest to fitting into our small budget. As we all know, sometimes the lowest priced option isn't the best option – but it is what we could afford. The LLCA executive is thinking about ways to manage this in the future.

There are currently 10 LLCA members who are year-round residents on Leech Lake using this address as their primary residence. In recognition of the benefit they derive from the year-round road maintenance, the LLCA executive has voted to respectfully request that year-round road users consider making an additional dues contribution equal to 50% of the annual dues (\$187.50). We will give you a loud Shout Out in the Newsletter recognizing your contribution to the upkeep of the roads.

We would also like to ask that year-round cottage users, often affectionately referred to as "winter warriors," consider making an additional dues contribution equal to 25% of the annual dues (\$93.75) in light of their additional usage and the need for winter maintenance to enable year-round enjoyment of their cottage.

## **2025 Save the Date!**

Early Bird Dues Deadline	January 31, 2025
Ash Drives (Friends of Muskoka Watershed) See more details later in this newsletter	Saturday, Jan. 18 Saturday, Feb. 15 Saturday, March 15 Saturday, April 26
Curbside Garbage Collection resumes	Monday May 5, 2025
<b>Annual General Meeting on Zoom</b>	<b>Wednesday June 18, 2025</b>
Bug Count (benthic monitoring)	TBD July, 2025 – stand by!
Photo Contest – deadline for entries	TBD July, 2025 – stand by!
Leech Lake Regatta	Sunday August 3, 2025 12:00 noon-3:00 pm
Bottle Drive	Every Sunday in August

## **The LLCA Needs YOU!**

We are currently operating without a president, and our treasurer position will be open as of the annual meeting in June when Shelley Bumstead steps down after four years of doing a bang-up job in the role. The stewardship chair position may also be available to someone who has an interest in this area. We need people to step up to help – our small but mighty executive can't function if it gets much smaller! Volunteering on the executive helps you to better get to know people on the lake, and better understand the issues we face. It's also fun!



Please contact vice president Rob McGill at [rob@ramlaw.ca](mailto:rob@ramlaw.ca) or secretary Leslie Wood at [leechlakesecretary@yahoo.ca](mailto:leechlakesecretary@yahoo.ca) to find out more.

## **IMPORTANT NOTE re Parking in Snow plow Turnaround on Lorne Rd.**



Please refrain from parking in the area designated as the snow plow turnaround (area by the LLCA white notice board) during the winter season. Some have already found their vehicles boxed in with snow due to snow clearing by the town on Lorne Rd. The safest place to park is parallel to the brown Bell box closer to the hydro poles. There is ample parking there but first we need the snow cleared to make that area a viable parking place.

We are waiting on a call back from the Town of Bracebridge regarding making safe parking spots for vehicles. Will also get them to push out the roads edges so that two cars can safely pass on Lorne Rd as well as getting them to clean up the snow by the North Rd-South Rd split.

## **Help! Emergency!**

Are you prepared for an emergency situation at your cottage? If you need to call for assistance, make sure you have all the information emergency services will need from you, including any medical conditions of your family and any guests, as well as how to find your cottage. We all hope that we'll never need to use this information, but if you're ever in an emergency situation, you'll be glad you took the time to prepare.

Fill out this **emergency information sheet** and keep it close by at your cottage. To find the GPS coordinates for your cottage, this **website** can help. Enter your address or approximate location, then zoom in to get the exact coordinates for your cottage.

## **Sharpen Up Your Winter Driving Skills**



Does winter driving sometimes give you the heebie-jeebies? Do you tense up when driving on City, Municipal, District or Private roads during the Winter?

Do yourself a favour - build your confidence and learn new driving skills that will make you a better winter driver. Get the most out of your winter, get outside and have some fun. Check out some different options below:

<https://carcontrolschool.com/products/winter-driving-course>

<https://driveteq.ca/motorsport/extreme-winter-driver-training/>

## **Learning about Propane!** – by Guy Pattison

During the last week of December and the first week in January the local propane companies were onsite to refuel propane tank(s) at properties around the lake. Should you ever smell rotten eggs or a rotten cabbage smell around your propane-powered appliances or around your propane tank(s) you may have a gas leak. If in doubt call your propane service provider.

FYI – propane tanks get filled to 80% capacity only. This is to allow for the expansion of the propane. Remember to clear all snow on and around your propane tank(s) to avoid a freeze-up or impairing your tank's operation. Brooms and brushes are best to clean ice and snow from and around your propane tank(s). Do not use metal tools, shovels or scrapers to break up any ice or snow buildup on your tank(s)

### **Average Propane Usage Based on Household Square Footage**

- 1,000 square feet will use an average of 440 gallons on an annual basis.
- 1,500 square feet will use an average of 670 gallons each year.
- 2,000 square feet will consume up to 900 gallons on an annual basis.
- With 3,000 square feet or more, you can expect to use 1300+ gallons or more per year.

### **Propane Usage Based on Appliance Type**

- A furnace will use about 1,000 gallons a year.
- Your hot water heater will use an average of 250 gallons per year.
- You can expect a gas fireplace to go through about 200 gallons annually— depending on use.

- Propane stoves use about 35 gallons annually.
- A clothes dryer will average 20 gallons annually.
- A 22 kW generator may burn 2.1 gallons per hour at half load, and 3.6 gallons per hour at full load. A 38 kW generator may burn 3 gallons per hour at half load, and 5.4 gallons per hour at full load

## **Fuel For Thought**

Have you ever thought about purchasing a maintenance plan for your propane powered appliances?

A maintenance plan can offer you peace of mind, it strives to ensure that your propane fireplace, stove, water heater, fridge, A/C, furnace, BBQ and generator are all working optimally. Some service companies offer you a soup to nuts plans, or appliance specific plans. There are Monthly and Annual plans available from various service providers in and around the Simcoe-Muskoka region.

Check them out – we’ve listed a few below. They will all have different pros and cons, so find the one that’s right for you. As an example (this is not a recommendation!), Gravenhurst Plumbing, Heating and Electric gives a fifth year for free if you purchase a four-year plan.

<https://gravenhurstplumbing.com/>

<https://smhomecomfort.com/hvac-protection-plan/>

<https://www.stevensonplumbingandelectric.com/muskoka-service-programs/>



## **Dock Bubblers Add to Ice Risk**

Leech Lake is a small lake and because it is spring fed there is not much current, so the ice does not push structures in the water like fixed docks. This means there is scant benefit from a dock bubbler, but there is absolutely additional risk to the ice on the lake.

If you choose to use a bubbler, be aware of your responsibilities. “Section 263 (1) of the Criminal Code of Canada is very clear that those who make or cause to be made an opening in ice are under a legal duty to guard the opening in a manner adequate to prevent persons from falling in by accident, and adequate to warn them that the opening exists. If you fail to perform these duties, the Code states that you may be found guilty of serious offences, up to and including manslaughter.”

Please see [FOCA information on Bubblers](#) (scroll down on the page).

## **ASH Drives – Friends of the Muskoka Watershed**

The December ash drive generated over a ton of fireplace / wood and pellet stove ash. This goes a long way to helping our environment. A big thank you to all who’ve contributed with the ash drives over the years.

Please continue supporting this initiative that is proven to restore a forest's health and improve regeneration after decades of damage from acid rain. **Upcoming ash drives in 2025 from 09:00am to 01:00pm are on Saturday, Jan. 18, Saturday, Feb. 15, Saturday, March 15 and Saturday, April 26.** You can drop off your wood ash at the Rosewarne Transfer Station at 1062 Rosewarne Drive in Bracebridge.

FOTMW also has a DIY kit for those who want to improve / rehab the forest in and around their cottage / home property. Contact them, and let them know what you are ashing so they can gather your data / stats / observations, etc. Contact - [friends@fotmw.org](mailto:friends@fotmw.org).

You can find an FAQ about wood ash donation [here](#).

## **One, two, three – count the chickadees!**

The worldwide bird count takes place Feb 14-17, 2025. The Bird Count is an inter-organizational effort between the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society, and Birds Canada. They work together to bring the joys of bird-watching to their members.

Wherever you are in the world you can participate. Set aside 15 minutes on one day, or all four days. Identify the birds, count the birds you see and then submit your info.

More info and a video can be found [here](#).



## **Keepers of the Lake**

It takes an army of people to build community. We know there is lots of helping and kindness that goes on around Leech Lake, and we want to call out some of our helpers in each newsletter. If you know someone you'd like to have recognized for something they did, please email [leechlakesecretary@yahoo.com](mailto:leechlakesecretary@yahoo.com) and we will get it in our next newsletter.

To everyone who helped out to make life better during the late November-early December snowmageddon snow squalls and power outages – a big thank you for all you did to make a difficult time a little easier for all of us.

Many offered help by clearing snow, cutting up fallen trees not only on our roads but also on the town and district roads. Some ran errands, while others picked up emergency supplies to make being snowbound at the lake and without power a little more bearable and livable for all.

A big thank you to Dal and Joey Petrina for their help by making driveable tracks on parts of our roads. They also did some clearing of residents' driveways so that a car could be parked on the drive and not on the road. A thank-you also to Don Hill for some north road clearing and providing a sand bin at the lake's entrance roads.

There were also a few of you -- who prefer to remain anonymous -- who did what came naturally to you which was to help out as best you can. They simply did what needed to be done, quietly and often behind the scenes, and we hope they see our thanks here.

Unfortunately, in spite of the extraordinary situation and the selfless volunteering of many, a few people offered up only criticisms. This was incredibly disappointing, and we hope in future those folks can find their way to being positive contributors to our lake community.

A heartfelt thank you to Don Hill for his continued attention to detail with clearing / sanding portions of the North Rd and providing a sand bin which is located at the North Rd / South Rd split. Also want to thank Lloyd Watson for his help in the late fall that did not make it into our last newsletter. These gentlemen make life better for those around the lake.

### **Bits 'n Pieces**

1. **FOCA Elert:** the most recent Federation of Cottage Associations newsletter is full of great [information](#).
2. **FOCA information on bubblers:** <https://foca.on.ca/ice/>
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**

<b>President</b> - vacant	<b>Vice-President</b> - Robert McGill <a href="mailto:rob@ramlaw.ca">rob@ramlaw.ca</a>
<b>Treasurer</b> - Shelley Bumstead <a href="mailto:leechlaketreasurer@gmail.com">leechlaketreasurer@gmail.com</a>	<b>Secretary</b> - Leslie Wood <a href="mailto:leechlakesecretary@yahoo.com">leechlakesecretary@yahoo.com</a> 416-464-7000
<b>Road Advisory Committee Chair</b> - Guy Pattison <a href="mailto:Leechlakeroads@gmail.com">Leechlakeroads@gmail.com</a> 705-646-3565	<b>Road Advisory Committee Vice-Chair</b> - Blair Clark <a href="mailto:revblairclark@gmail.com">revblairclark@gmail.com</a> 289-259-9543
<b>Stewardship Chair</b> - Valerie McCoy <a href="mailto:leech.lake.stewardship.committee@gmail.com">leech.lake.stewardship.committee@gmail.com</a>	