



# Leech Lake Cottagers' Association NEWSLETTER

May 2025

## **2025 Dues and Membership Update**

Thanks to all those who have paid their 2025 LLCA membership dues!

We have currently received 103 payments of a possible 133, which equates to 77.4%. Last year we had 93.2% membership and are hoping to exceed that percentage in 2025.

For those who have not yet submitted their membership dues, please see the link to the invoice and payment details [here](#).

If you're not sure if your dues are paid, you can check by reaching out to our treasurer Shelley Bumstead at [leechlaketreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:leechlaketreasurer@gmail.com).

## **Annual General Meeting on Wednesday June 18<sup>th</sup> 8:00 pm**

Our annual meeting is coming up on June 18<sup>th</sup>. It will be held on the Zoom videoconference platform. Mark your calendars and please plan to attend. We will share results from our recent membership survey, and there will be lots to discuss!

Thank you to those who, in our membership survey, offered to volunteer with the LLCA. Rob McGill will be in touch to discuss what you might like to get involved with.

The final AGM package will be distributed to paid-up members of LLCA on Wednesday June 11. It will contain the Agenda (with the Zoom link needed to join the meeting), motions to be voted on, an electronic voting form and a proxy form.



## **Ferocious Black Flies**

Wouldn't it be nice if mowing all the grass got rid of the blackflies? Unfortunately it doesn't, but the bugs are happy for your company during the process. Please consider shortening the blackfly feeding session by leaving an unshorn fringe on either side of your path to the waterfront. Mother Nature will thank you as you flee to the safety of the indoors. A bug jacket is probably truly your best weapon against the springtime human predators. Check out and download 'A Green Guide to Cottage Care' from Watersheds Canada [here](#).

## **2025 Save the Date!**

<b>Annual General Meeting on Zoom</b>	<b>Wednesday June 18, 2025</b>
Bug Count (benthic monitoring)	Saturday, July 19, 2025 10:00 am
Leech Lake Regatta	Sunday August 3, 2025 12:00 noon-3:00 pm
Bottle Drive	Every Sunday in August

## **Photo Contest**

The photo contest is on hiatus this year, unless we can find a volunteer to organize it. If you're interested, please contact Valerie McCoy at [leech.lake.stewardship.committee@gmail.com](mailto:leech.lake.stewardship.committee@gmail.com).

## **Leech Lake Road Work**

On May 21st Robinson Haulage was onsite to install two new culverts and apply additional gravel to some areas of the south road that were damaged by heavy trucks on the road back in late March. There is some additional fortifying work required to secure the new culverts which will take place this week by the LLCA.



The main roads of Leech Lake roads will be graded in early June. Exact dates for when service provider Robinson Haulage will be onsite will be coming soon.

## **Ice storm damage and ongoing cleanup**

Over the past month all of the visible storm damaged around our roads (downed trees, branches, limbs, crowns, and brush) from the March ice storm was cut up, cleared and carted off to the town dump. We also cleared up the downed brush at the boat launch.

There are still tree limbs, branches, brush and downed trees on residents' properties which the property owners will need to address.

The waived fees for dumping brush at the town dump site ends May-31-2025. Starting in June you will have to pay a nominal fee to dump your ice storm-damaged brush at the town dump site in Bracebridge. The other option if you don't feel like taking it to the dump is to safely burn it. Please watch fire warnings carefully if you choose this option.

On some spots on the south road there was much-needed grading required due to warmer temperatures in March which led to the heavy truck traffic on this road put deep ruts into the roads. The road grading/scraping that took place was provided free of charge by a local, we did not get their name as they were just happy to help out. They may have been from the Anonymous family. The ruts were filled in by some full-time residents on the lake.

The silver lining of the ice storm is that it produced a bumper crop of firewood. Those with time, energy, ambition and the right tools post storm, took home lots of free BTU.

## **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. The secretary wouldn't mind stepping down either!

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.



## **REPOST: District Of Muskoka Mandating Clear Garbage Bags**

As of March 1, 2025 **ALL** curbside garbage picked up by the District of Muskoka must now be placed into clear plastic bags. You can no longer hide your waste behind Green or Black garbage bags. This change has been put in place in order to reduce both recyclables and organics finding their way into the garbage streams. By redirecting the Recyclable and Organic wastes the DOM can extend the lives of the region's dump sites. No changes have been made with the recycling streams as you still place your curbside recyclable materials into the blue bags or blue bins.

## **Muskoka Lakes Association Leadership Forum**

We will attend the complimentary inaugural Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) Leadership Forum June 21st. The keynote session will be Managing Muskoka's Watershed presented by Kevin Trimble, Director and Past Chair of the Muskoka Watershed Council. Breakout sessions of interest are: Diana Piquette, President of Safe Quiet Lakes and Director of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association (FOCA); and Monitoring and Managing Water Quality in Muskoka presented by Deb Martin-Downs, Chair of the MLA Environment Committee, President of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association (FOCA) and Past President of the MLA.
















The MLA has lots of interesting resources on its [website](#). You can order a "NO WAKE" sign to post on your dock [here](#).

The MLA's Good Neighbour Code is displayed on the next page, and a Boaters Code on the page after – feel free to print them and post them in a high visibility place at your cottage.



Cottaging is a great way to share time with family and friends and your waterfront is where it all starts. Whether you're an owner, family member or guest here is the **MLA's RECOMMENDED GOOD NEIGHBOUR CODE** to help keep your shoreline in harmony.

# I WILL

-  Remember that all noise, including casual conversation and barking dogs, carries significantly as it travels over the water surface.
-  Not inflict my taste in music on my neighbours.
-  Do my best to let my neighbours sleep in (a bit) by delaying use of power tools until after 9am.
-  Let my neighbours know of pending tranquility interruptions such as a party. Perhaps I may invite them.
-  Share the waterfront by limiting oversized inflatables and watercraft operations close to shore (water skier dock drops excepted).
-  Reduce my wattage and unnecessary outdoor lighting so that we can see the stars and make night boating safe.
-  Maintain my shoreline vegetation to reduce erosion and preserve water quality.
-  Minimize my near shore wake to maintain natural habitat and avoid damage to my neighbours' watercraft and property by observing the 9k speed limit.
-  Keep my septic system in good working order to help preserve water quality.
-  Obey fire bans, including fireworks, and obtain necessary permits for daytime burning to prevent wildfires.
-  Manage my garbage in a responsible fashion using animal proof containers.
-  Install a blue warning light and "Danger Open Water" sign when using a bubbler.
-  Opt for boat exhaust systems and settings that minimize noise pollution.
-  Ensure that everyone in our family who drives a boat is qualified to do so and possesses a valid boating license.
-  Not bathe in the water with soapy products because this contributes to poor water quality.

DISCLAIMER: These are probably behaviours that you and your cottage family members are already aware of and adhere to, however, it would not hurt to put them on your fridge!

FOR MORE DETAIL ON THESE TOPICS CHECK OUT [WWW.MLA.ON.CA/MLACODE](http://WWW.MLA.ON.CA/MLACODE)

# BOATER'S CODE

Respectful boating guidelines from Safe Quiet Lakes

1. I will never operate my boat beyond the level of my skills.
2. I will be aware of and obey all laws and regulations governing operation of my boat.
3. I will operate my boat with caution and courtesy to others at all times.
4. I will minimize my wake impact on shorelines, docks, structures and people.
5. I will always steer well clear of other boats, swimmers and wildlife.
6. I will set a speed and heading that is safe and comfortable for my passengers and others on the water.
7. I will provide safety instructions and offer appropriate life jackets or PFDs to everyone who travels in my boat.
8. I will carry all equipment necessary to operate my boat safely and within the law.
9. I will not consume drugs and alcohol in my boat or allow my boat to be operated by anyone who is impaired.
10. I understand that boating is a shared experience and I will not create excessive noise or operate my boat in a manner that disrupts the peaceful enjoyment of the lake by others.



## Happy Birthday – Town of Bracebridge

In 2025 Bracebridge has its 150th birthday. Lots of food, drink, music, entertainment and activities for everyone. Come join the fun from **June-7th to June-8th**. More info [here](#).



## Let's talk Septic Systems

For those who are interested, here are a few links about septic systems, maintaining, servicing by DIY, or via septic service providers:  
<https://www.alltoconstruction.com/blog/septic-pumping-ontario>  
[https://inspectapedia.com/septic/Septic Tank Pumping Schedule.php](https://inspectapedia.com/septic/Septic_Tank_Pumping_Schedule.php)  
<https://www.pumpmytank.ca/why-pump.html>

There are several factors that determine how frequently your holding tanks should be emptied. The average time between holding tank pump-outs is 3 - 5 years, if your place is a home or a cottage. It's up to 8 years if you have an extra-large septic system (1,500 to 2,000 gallons). You may have to pump out your holding tanks every 2 years if your tank is 800 gallons or smaller. These are all just averages, and other factors will affect septic system maintenance.

Some of you have asked if there is a way in which you could tell if your septic system needs to be pumped out. We posed this question to our septic system service provider. "How can a septic system owner check to see if their system is okay, and how can they tell if it needs to be pumped out. Are there any visual clues?" Their response: "Break the crust up. If it's 4" to 6" thick it needs to be pumped." And now you know!

## Leech Lake Septic System Pump-outs 2025

We will be engaging a local service provider this year to take care of our residents wanting to have their septic holding tanks pumped out.

If your system requires this service please send an email to [leechlakeroads@gmail.com](mailto:leechlakeroads@gmail.com) to get added to the schedule. Pricing will be available 1st week of June with service taking place during the 2nd 3rd or 4th week of June.

**4 SIMPLE TIPS FOR**

# SEPTIC SYSTEMS

If you take good care of your system, you will save yourself the time, money and worries involved in replacing a failed system. Here are a few tips.



**1 SCRAPE YOUR DISHES**

Scraping your dishes into the garbage will make sure solids don't go into your septic system



**2 KEEP THE PLANTS AWAY**

Don't plant trees or shrubs too close to the system or leaching bed



**3 CLEAN IT OUT**

Pump your tank out on a regular basis (3-5 years) and keep accurate records of septic system maintenance and service calls. Keep an 'as built' system diagram for reference and familiarize yourself with the location.

**4 CONSERVE WATER**

Reduce the amount of wastewater your system must treat. Replace old toilets with low-flush models



**A POOR SYSTEM CAN DEGRADE WATER SUPPLIES AND REDUCE PROPERTY VALUES**

[www.oowa.org](http://www.oowa.org)

## **Volunteer for the 2025 Leech Lake Regatta**

The 2025 Regatta needs a committee of volunteers to take on the planning of the event. Following is a list of the roles / tasks required. Please email [leechlakesecretary@yahoo.com](mailto:leechlakesecretary@yahoo.com) or [leech.lake.stewardship.committee@gmail.com](mailto:leech.lake.stewardship.committee@gmail.com) to let us know your interest and we'll connect the volunteers to take it from there. LLCA will provide the committee with a budget for the event.

### Site Co-ordinator (plus two other volunteers)

- Site prep - tidy boat launch area – raking, clean-up as needed
- Arrange for BBQs and transportation to boat launch
- Arrange for tables transportation to boat launch and set up
- Arrange for kitchen tent and set up
- Arrange for garbage and recycling containers and transportation to boat launch
- Site take-down and clean-up
- Garbage/recycling disposal

### Food Co-ordinator (plus two other volunteers)

- Plan and purchase food
- Plan and purchase supplies as needed (tablecloths, napkins, ice, etc.)
- Arrange for 2 coolers
- Recruit cooks (2)
- Set up food area
- Support cooks and keep food area clean/tidy
- Support site take-down and clean-up



### Prize Co-Ordinator

- Ribbon planning & procure if needed
- Prize count from last year & procure as needed
- Co-ordinate system of giveaways with games volunteer
- Support site take-down and clean-up

### Games Co-Ordinator (plus two other volunteers)

- Plan games & schedule (favourite past games have been Musical Buckets, Sack Races, Donut Eating Contest, Egg Toss, Swimming)
- Pick up & inventory supplies from previous year. Procure supplies as needed
- Procure megaphone / loud volunteer
- Co-ordinate award of ribbons & prizes with prize coordinator
- Support site prep - raking, clean up as needed
- Support site take-down and clean-up

We will also need volunteers to undertake communication pre-event and prepare signage as needed on the day.

Let's make this a regatta to remember!

## **Fleming State-of-the-Lake Study Update** – by Valerie McCoy

We continue to be challenged with a lack of communication from the modified program at Fleming. We hope to get some feedback on the fall sampling. - with the realization that the instrument meant to save water testing costs did not function as expected.

We had tremendous feedback about water testing and lake stewardship in our membership survey. This will be discussed at the Annual Meeting on June 18.

## **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.

It took many hands to clean up after the ice and freezing rain event back in March. Most were happy to contribute their time, tools and energy to help with the tree debris clean up. Thank you to all who did their part and cleaned up what they could.

## **Bits 'n Pieces**

1. Simple but complete cottage opening checklist [here](#) – check it out!
2. Bracebridge birthday celebrations – June 7-8 – further info [here](#)
3. Bracebridge provides free drinking water at two locations – further info [here](#)
4. **FOCA Elert:** the most recent Federation of Cottage Associations newsletter is full of great [information](#).
5. 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>	