



The Perfect Shoreline for Muskoka?

Imagine you're standing in your cottage looking out at your shoreline. It is the definition of paradise; the waves gently lap against the shoreline, free of unsightly logs, rocks and trees. Now, picture that same shoreline in a few years. Outside of the algae that blanket its surface your lake supports little life.

Unfortunately, waterfront property owners' attempts at attaining the perfect shore are making this second scenario a reality. Shoreline development, if not executed properly, can often result in habitat degradation. Your shoreline is a part of a larger ecosystem, and every alteration made affects the system as a whole.

Here are a few factors important to the health of lake ecosystems that people often overlook while developing their ideal shoreline.

Removing Aquatic Plants

The idea of a clear, weed-free place to swim is appealing. Nobody really enjoys the feeling of brushing through weeds as they swim. What many people don't realize is that maintaining a completely weed free swimming area can have strong negative effects on the rest of the lake.

Aquatic plants that grow near the shoreline are an integral part of lake ecosystems. As well as providing a number of animal species with a source of food, these plants make up the backbone of an important habitat. It's tempting to adopt the reasoning that "if I'm only removing the weeds from where I want to swim, surely that's fine", but it's really not that simple. Removing aquatic plants can have a big impact on many different species that depend on a continuous stretch of cover to move around in the lake. In some cases, this can lead to extreme declines in population size for the small weed-dwelling animals which in turn may disrupt entire food webs. As well as providing a source of food and shelter, aquatic plants also act as a filtration system for the lake by taking in some impurities. Lakes are a catch-all for pollutants and without the filtering action of plants, they can accumulate having a strong negative effect on the lake and all of its occupants.

Algae are very similar to plants as both require nutrients for them to grow. Algae and aquatic plants both take in nutrients from the water, and the two end up competing for sustenance when nutrient levels are not very high. By removing large quantities of aquatic plants, we eliminate the competition for the algae. As a result, algae populations can explode with

growth or "bloom", creating giant blankets of slime as large quantities of them begin to die.

There is a simple solution to all of these problems: simply do not remove all of the aquatic plants from your area of the lake, no (clear cutting!) It is good practice to leave a few plants to keep a bit of continuity in the shoreline habitat, keeping the critters happy, reducing the chance of algae bloom and helping to filter harmful pollutants.

Removing Woody Debris

Removing logs and sticks from your swimming area and shoreline can be tempting. Many see them as undesirable but they also provide many services to the lake and those that live on it. Many cottage owners don't realise that removing the dead fall from a lake is known to have serious negative effects on fish populations. The woody debris that lines your lake's shallows provide safe havens for juvenile and prey species of fish. As the number of juveniles decline, so does the next generation. To make matters worse many fish also depend on woody debris for breeding and nesting grounds and their removal even further reduces the number of fish to reach maturity. If a lake's biodiversity plummets, those birds and animals that depend on fish and other aquatic organisms for food will begin to leave the area in search of a better food source.

Logs also provide long-term effects on lake stability and nutrient levels. By anchoring sediments, the logs slow erosion of the shoreline. Furthermore, by decomposing over time to provide the woody debris acts as an important source of nutrients to the organisms in the lake.

Continued on page 4

MUSKOKA WATERSHED COUNCIL WOULD LIKE YOUR INPUT.

Your Views on Algae are Wanted for a Study!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/algae1>

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President's MESSAGE



Welcome to the Spring 2018 edition of Shorelines. As you receive this, it may actually look and feel like Spring; but as I write this the ground at home here in Toronto is covered in the nasty “while stuff” that was delivered by the mid-April ice storm. A quick look at the Allport Marina webcam (Allport Bay, Lake Muskoka) confirms my worst fear – lots of ice – not likely I’ll

be boating in April this year. Being an Islander and therefore dependent on boating, that translates into an unwelcome deferral of cottaging.

As I was lamenting this sad reality to my mother (a very sharp 92 year old), she recounted a quick story from her mother intended to make me feel better (I think); the tale’s short version being that in the 1920’s her parents were enjoying a visit to Muskoka’s Sparrow Lake on what was then known as the Dominion Day weekend (July 1st). Upon arising one morning that weekend, Granny was appalled to be greeted by SNOW breezing past their window. Fun story, but truly, I didn’t feel that it helped my personal situation this year! On the other hand, a late start is, I am

certain, better than a flooded one ...

Mark the date: *Seedling Day (May 19th this year)* is the MLA’s official kick-off for 2018 events. Have you placed your order? Special this year is the launch MLA’s 125th anniversary Celebration – *we’ve added a suite of kid centric activities to this year’s Seedling Day event*. It’s also Water Quality training day, and your first chance to pick up your yearbook. Do come out, join the fun, pick up your seedlings and Yearbook and catch up with neighbours and fellow MLA members. There will be coffee and cake too!

Look for your Advantage Card update sticker in the very front of your Yearbook again this year, and plan to make good use of it at our retail partners this year (we’ll be updating the list of Advantage Card retailers periodically and we move into summer, so bookmark the MLA website and visit it regularly for retailer and event updates - Advantage Card Partners 2018).

We are advised that the Muskoka Steamship & Discovery Centre in Gravenhurst (formerly known as Grace and Speed) will be launching what sounds like a fabulous educational project to be called Watershed Wonders. Currently scheduled for opening in July 2018, this new, world class exhibit will be insightful, interactive and well worth a visit. Complementing the new exhibit will be MLA’s own showcase entitled “*Preserving Muskoka for Future Generations*” – truly a must see. Grand opening date in early summer 2018 – tba.

**Plan to attend the MLA AGM
at the Discovery Centre in Gravenhurst on July 27th
and get a look at the amazing displays!**

We hope you enjoy this edition of Shorelines. See you soon in Muskoka

Robert Ensor - President

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New Members

Please welcome the following as new members of the MLA! From January 2 to April 15, 2018

Mark ABEN	Kina LINDROS
Bill BALAN	Wendy & John MADURI
Tom BENSON	Sharon MARSHALL
Dan BRAZIER	Malik MARTIN
Chris BREW	Monica MARTIN
Jill & Richard COLES	Patrick & Louise MORAN
Jeffrey & Lauren DINSMORE	Jack & Barb RAWLINSON
Samuel DUBOC	John & Enid RAYMOND
Bruce & Madeleine DUNLOP	Raymond REICHERT
Paul FLINT	Kevin REID
Alexandra FLYE	Paul SARACHMAN
Stephen FORCHON	Bryan SHAW
Janice GILLESPIE	Darlene SMITH / DIDONE
Bianca HARRIS	Bruce & Sharon STAFFORD
Simon HERMANT	Dave WHARRY
Maureen & David HULBERT	Clarice WILLIAMSON
Daryl IDIENS	Michael WISZ

Your contribution matters. Help to preserve the Muskoka you cherish for future generations. If you haven't already done so, please renew your membership at www.mla.on.ca or by calling our office at 705-765-5723.



Days of Future, Past

MLA 2018 Yearbook

Back in the 1970s, the University of Toronto was celebrating its 150th birthday. In a country as young as Canada, it was the first time most of us had come across the term “sesquicentennial.” As a young undergrad I remember speculating with friends about what the word would be for a 125th anniversary. Would it be demi-sesquicentennial? Would a 112th and a half anniversary be a demi-hemi-sesquicentennial? A 225th anniversary simply beggared nomenclature.

The country has a few more decades under its belt, and anniversaries over the 100 mark are becoming more and more commonplace. Port Carling marked the centennial of its incorporation as a village in 1996. This year marks the centennial of the end of the First World War. The bicentennial of John A. Macdonald’s birth was in 2015. Ten years ago, Quebec City left the rest of the country in its celebratory wake, with its 400th anniversary: its quadricentennial.

And the MLA can flaunt the term quasiquicentennial as it celebrates its 125th year. (The word was, apparently, coined by an editor at Funk and Wagnall’s, the encyclopedia publisher.)

The yearbook was an obvious place to launch celebrations. The anniversary committee wrestled at length with a variety of thematic proposals, finally deciding to cover past, present and future all in one, under the title Days of Future, Past. One cannot celebrate an anniversary without reflecting on heritage and history, but it pays to consider what that heritage has built today, and what it might allow an organization to do in the future.

Dawn Huddleston dipped back into history by interviewing some of the handful of families that have resided on the lakes for as long as, or longer than, the MLA. Among those was Elizabeth Mason, whose presence in the yearbook has almost become an annual thing; her ancestral line leads directly back to the founding of the association. The Duncans’ remarkable cottage, The Bungalow, has been handed down not from father to son, but mother to daughter, for 131 years. Keewaydin Island’s pedigree has passed through several families, but its history is an essential link to the history of the lakes.

It’s not all “significant” history, though. The lakes have spawned their own culture, and as Sandy Lockhart writes, that culture has included



summer jobs that have become golden memories of the best years of youth, whether it was piloting Ditchburns for the guests of lodges, scooping ice cream in Port Sandfield, or running a sailing school. The flip side to jobs was recreation, and Patti Vipond spanned the roughing-it days of the first sporting trips to the region; the years of the great resorts and dance halls, the boom years of summer stock theatre. Some pursuits change, but others continue, she found, with wooden boats now revered for their craftsmanship rather than their workhorse powers. With regattas, there’s the pride that comes with defending titles over generations.

One theme running through the MLA’s past, present and undoubtedly its future, is the bid to keep the lakes pure. Matthew Sitler covers the challenges and triumphs that have come with the MLA’s campaigns against acid rain, overdevelopment, and

algal blooms and preparing for climate change.

Finally, the look to the future involves a series of short pieces from notables within the MLA offering their opinions on where the association should turn its focus in the coming years. Lawton Osler, rather than looking to the future, paid a tribute to some past presidents he considers to be the most influential of the last half-century.

Days of Future, Past is a play on Days of Future Passed, from the Moody Blues, produced in Canada’s centennial year, 1967. It contained one of the band’s signature pieces, Knights in White Satin. But I like the lyrics of a lesser known song, that make a poetic statement about our own need to reflect on the past, present and what may be...

*Now that you’re knowing, pleasure starts flowing
It’s true life flies,
Faster than eyes
Could ever see*

*You’re here today, No future fears
This day will last
A thousand years
If you want it to,*

John Challis, MLA Yearbook Editor

THE FUTURE OF RESORT DEVELOPMENT IN MUSKOKA

Sunday, July 15, 2018 – 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Port Carling Community Centre

The MLA is pleased to offer a special information update on a most controversial topic; **The Future of Resort Development in Muskoka**. Regardless of where you are located in Muskoka, this issue has the ability to impact your property. As such, resort development has become the red-hot land use issue in Muskoka and, with an election scheduled this October, all Muskokans need to be informed.

Anne McCauley, Chair of MLA’s Political Land Use Committee, has been leading the charge, in collaboration with our legal counsel, and will be talking about the latest information on this topic, what new resorts are being proposed or are under construction as well as answering your questions. Anne is a professional land use planner and will explain why some of the District and Township ideas are of concern and why they are not consistent with MLA values.

Members and the general public are equally welcome.

RSVP to 705-765-5723 or info@mla.on.ca

The Perfect Shoreline for Muskoka? *Continued from page 1*

Like with aquatic plants the secret is moderation. It is key to leave as much of the shallows untouched as possible. Raking small patches of deadfall and, when necessary, dragging away a few logs from your shoreline will not have a very large impact on the lake or even on the animal community living there.

Shoreline Vegetation

Everyone tries to find the ideal cottage location that affords them the best view of the lake. This can be difficult so the popular approach is to cut down trees and shrubs that block the view. Unfortunately it's the lake that

Wind, runoff from rain, and melting snow can carry soil particles from the shore into the lake. The shore wears down and it can result in the transformation of the edge of the lake into a swampy, mucky mess. Rocks and the roots of shoreline plants act as a sort of net, holding the earth together and preventing a large amount of this erosion.

pays the price. The shore above the water line and the vegetation that grows there are often forgotten. Trees, shrubs, rocks and grasses play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy lake ecosystem. Plant roots and rocks prevent erosion of the shoreline. Wind, runoff from rain, and melting snow can carry soil particles from the shore into the lake. The shore wears down and it can result in the transformation of the edge of the lake into

a swampy, mucky mess. Rocks and the roots of shoreline plants act as a sort of net, holding the earth together and preventing a large amount of this erosion. When soil is washed into the lake from an agricultural area with high nutrients this can lead to algae blooms and declines in fish populations.

Along with their physical and chemical benefits, shoreline plants can also be key parts of habitats for wildlife at the lake's edge.

If there is a large tree in your way and you must cut it down, consider replacing with shorter shrubs that will help prevent erosion. Also, instead of keeping a gigantic sandy beach, you could try planting some grasses that will be soft under foot but hold the soil in place.

We have seen that, if left unchecked, shoreline development can seriously affect the health and abundance of the species that live in and around a lake. If your lake becomes covered with algae, if the fish in the lake disappear or if the shoreline erodes, your investment depreciates. Not only will your property value decrease but your family will no longer get the same level of enjoyment you once did from visiting your cottage.

Condensed version from Alex Buttle and Nathan Clark

MLA Members – Frequently Asked Questions:

Q – I recently received my renewal notice by mail and it stated that if I would like my Yearbook mailed to me, I need to renew by June 1, 2018. Is this new to the MLA?

A – Yes, going forward we ask that you renew by June 1 of each year if you would like your MLA Yearbook mailed to you. The reason for this is that we have a company that does the bulk mailing of our Yearbooks at a discounted rate, and we must give them the list by June 2 for mid month mailing. If renewals come in after this date the office does the mailing at a much higher rate. We know you would prefer your Annual MLA membership fee goes to more useful issues. Please note Yearbooks are readily available at the office for pick up. For office hours and further questions, please feel free to contact us at 705-765-5723.

Q – My yearly membership goes from what date to what date?

A – The MLA is in the process of switching to a calendar year for renewals, so our annual memberships will go from January 1 – December 31 each year. In the past, our memberships have been from November 1 to October 31. Going forward we would like our members to renew before the Yearbook comes out so (between Jan 1 and June 1). Although we will always welcome your renewal, see above for Yearbook mailing restrictions.

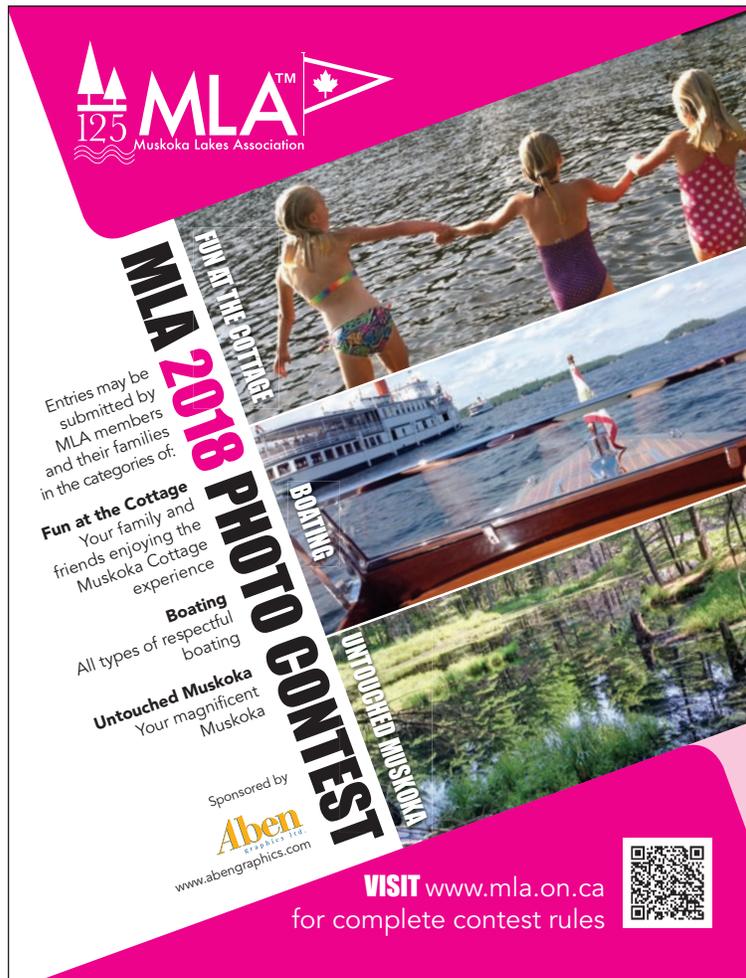
Are you a new member and have been asked to renew before you have been with us for a full year? Hopefully the above paragraph helps you understand our renewal process.

Q – Primary MLA Memberships are \$120 per year and Secondary Memberships are \$50 per year. What is a Secondary Member, and should I be one?

A – Secondary Members are those over 30 years of age who share the family cottage but reside at a separate permanent address.

This membership provides an opportunity for future generations to receive all of the MLA correspondence and benefits with the exception of a Yearbook.

The greater the MLA membership, the more we can do to protect the Muskoka we know and love.



The poster features a collage of three images: a family of four in swimwear on a lake, a boat on the water, and a shoreline with trees. The text is arranged around these images. At the top left is the MLA 125 logo. The central text reads 'FUN AT THE COTTAGE' and 'MLA 2018 PHOTO CONTEST'. Below this, three categories are listed: 'Fun at the Cottage', 'Boating', and 'Untouched Muskoka'. At the bottom, it says 'Sponsored by Aben' and 'VISIT www.mla.on.ca for complete contest rules' next to a QR code.

As a matter of good environmental stewardship, and to protect your waterfront investment, FOCA encourages all landowners to look after their septic systems.

Why? Proper maintenance can help to avoid potentially serious impacts, including:

Overload/leaking of sewage

A septic system is designed to treat a set volume of waste water. Every time water goes down the drain into your septic tank, the same amount of liquid leaves the tank and enters the leaching bed. If too much waste water enters the tank – from extra guests, heavy water use – too much waste is forced out, too soon. Untreated waste water escapes, including solids that can clog up pipes and/or enter the leaching bed, as well.

Wiped out waste digesters

Sewage is broken down by millions of bacteria and enzymes in your septic tank and the soil within the leaching bed. That bacteria is harmed or killed by cleaning products that are antibacterial, non-biodegradable, chlorine-based and/or full of toxic materials; and hazardous products like varnish, paint, pesticides, and gasoline.

Build-up of solids

There's a lot that can't be digested by your septic system. Fats, oils and grease don't break down, and can form a scum layer at the top of your septic tank. Paper products, coffee grounds, hair, tampons,

and other items inhibit the work of bacteria and quickly fill tanks. Combined, they can clog the system – significantly hampering your system's effectiveness.

A septic system treats your waste water and sewage, if you are not on a municipal water system. Your household drains connect to a septic tank and a leaching bed. Both are buried beside your home or cottage. The leaching bed is made up of pipes with holes, buried in gravel and surrounded by natural or imported soil. (see image, page 6).

Poisoning yourself

Hazardous products (paint, varnish, pesticides, gasoline, antifreeze) dumped down your drain, come out of the septic system just like they went in, but now they're in the ground and water with the potential to poison wells and lakes.

Continued on page 6



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Contaminated drinking water and swimming areas

Septic systems were designed with public health in mind. They are designed to remove contaminants such as organic solids, bacteria, and viruses, but not to prevent the release of nutrients. If your sewage is leaking, not getting cleaned, or building up, the end result could be contaminated water entering wells, ground water, lakes, streams, etc. Your health and the health of the environment are at risk.

Learn these “septic slogans” to stay on the right track to a healthy lake:

What goes in must come out

To allow waste water the time it needs to be treated in the tank, conserve water. Ensure the size of your system can handle the quantity of waste water you create. Many older septic systems may be grossly undersized.

Don't poison your poop processor

The importance of using biodegradable, non-toxic shampoos, detergents, soaps, and cleaners can't be stressed enough. Many products in your cottage are loaded weapons. Make septic-friendly products the popular choice!

Nutrients not needed

Keep the input of phosphorus to a minimum. Use low phosphate or phosphate-free cleaners.

Regular maintenance

Like all household systems, your wastewater treatment needs to be maintained. Regular maintenance includes ensuring that the tank is less than 33% full of solids (in the first chamber), cleaning the effluent filter at least annually, and visually inspecting the leaching field for liquid break out, odours or other signs of trouble. Excess solids means it's time for a pump out. Replacing or repairing a septic system (and its impacts) is expensive; maintenance keeps thousands of dollars in your pocket and emergencies at bay.

It's not a garbage can

Don't put garbage down your drain. That includes grease, oils, fats, and other non-biodegradable items.

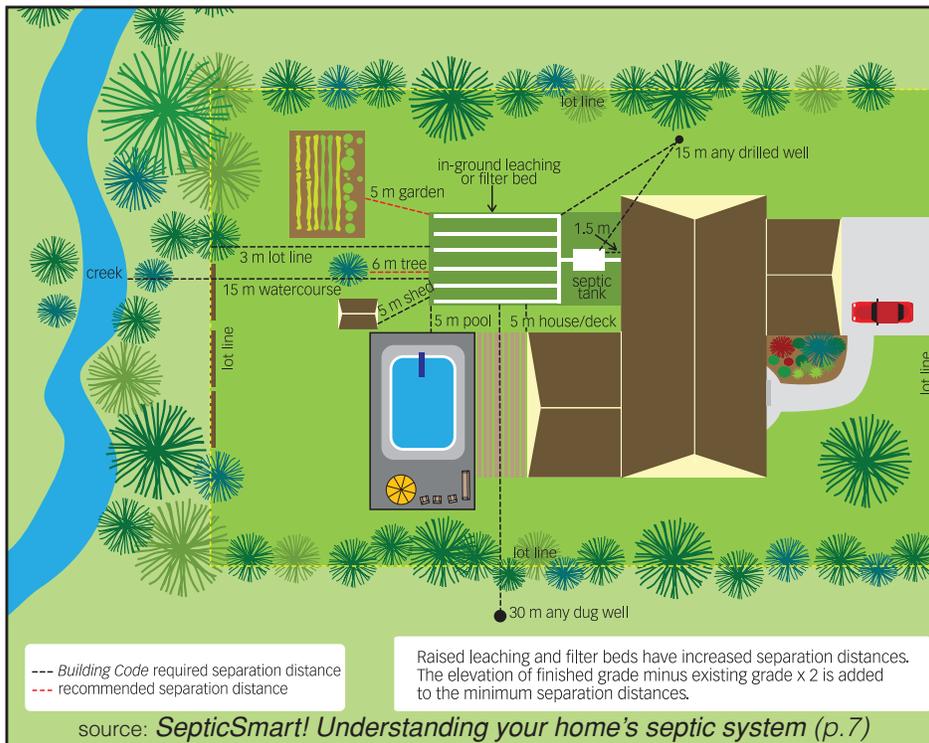
Plants not trees

Plant with caution in the nutrient-rich area on top of the leaching bed. Do not plant trees or shrubs within three metres of the tank or bed. Roots will seek out and crack your pipes. Shallow-rooted ground covers are ideal.

Location, location, location

Soils play a big role in how water travels from the leaching bed, what contaminants get absorbed/broken down, and how far they travel. Your septic system must be designed for the type of soil around your cottage. Make sure your system meets the rules (Ontario Building Code) that specify how far a septic tank and leaching bed can be built away from buildings, wells, and waterbodies.

Minimum Separation Distances For Leaching Or Filter Beds



New – March 2018

FOCA has released a **video about Cottage Country Septic Systems**, including an overview about parts of a septic system, maintenance tips, signs of trouble and more! Scroll down this webpage to view the video, or click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VeTGVnkYA4> or <https://foca.on.ca/cottage-country-septic-systems-video/>

Don't forget your Advantage Card!



By using your MLA Advantage Card or key fob, you will receive preferential pricing or special deals from more than 100 restaurants, retailers and service providers throughout Muskoka. We are stepping up our program with more providers and all will have an Advantage Sticker in their window to remind you that they are participants. The MLA Advantage Card is about more than the benefits you receive as a member; it's part of our effort to encourage members to “Stock up in Muskoka” supporting local business and strengthening the District economy.

Every Vote Counts In This October's Municipal Election

The MLA strongly advises all our members to take a few minutes to make sure you are registered to vote in this fall's municipal election. Municipal elections take place Monday, October 22nd. To ensure you're on the Voters List, visit www.voterlookup.ca. or call 1-866-296-6722. Check your municipal tax bill to find out if both you and your spouse are listed. For more information all township websites have detailed information on how to proceed.

In addition to candidates for Mayor, local Council, and applicable School Board, your ballot this year will include a chance to vote for District Chair for the first time.

Updating this information will help to ensure that municipal Voters' Lists are accurate and up-to-date in preparation for municipal and school board elections occurring this October.

Voting Method

New for 2018 - The Township has approved the use of **Internet and Telephone Voting** only for the 2018 municipal election. Eligible electors will be able to vote in advance of Voting Day electronically by using a telephone, computer, cell phone, iPad, tablet or laptop. **You can vote between October 12th and 22nd, 2018.**

You'll need a PIN number. Your municipality will be sending out an information letter around the end of September containing your individual PIN number and instructions. Please note that vote by mail will not occur in the 2018 municipal election.

VOTING DAY

The next municipal election will be held on **Monday, October 22, 2018**

for the 2018-2022 term of office. As with previous elections, voters will be able to attend the municipal office and cast their vote if they do not wish to vote online or by phone.

Nomination Period

Nomination period will commence on Tuesday, May 1, 2018 and closes at 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, Friday, July 27, 2018.

Our vendor has shared a short video for casting your vote online which can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuiKz3DceNM&feature=youtu.be>. This link will be updated when a new version is released.

For more information, go to <https://gravenhurst.podbean.com/elkayla-thibeault-director-of-legislative-services-clerk-gravenhurst-municipal-election/> to hear useful information on the new municipal voting process from Gravenhurst clerk Kayla Thibeault.

The MLA urges every Muskoka property owner to check to ensure you are on the Voters' List, and to cast your vote this October! Muskoka's future is in your hands.

Times Running Out – Get your Seedling Order in Today!

The annual MLA Seedling Day will be held on Saturday May 19, 2018 at the Port Carling Community Centre from 9am until noon. Seedling order forms available for download at www.mla.on.ca If you have any questions about the seedlings, or if you would like to place your order by phone, please call the office at 705-765-5723. Please note payment must be made at the time of order.

The final order deadline is Monday May 7, 2018



Muskoka Lakes Association Exhibit

July 2018 – June 2019

**Muskoka Discovery Centre
Gravenhurst Wharf**

“The MLA STORY – Celebrating 125 Years”

Saturday May 19, 2018

SEEDLING DAY FAIR

Port Carling Community Centre

Children's Activities

9-noon

CHECK MLA
website for
details!
MLA.on.ca

Every one of
your 2018 MLA
events will
celebrate 125
years!

2017 District of Muskoka Second Home Study

The seasonal population is a vital component of Muskoka's culture, traditions and overall economy. In fact, there are more seasonal residents than permanent residents across our region. Given the significance of the seasonal population, the District of Muskoka periodically collects information through an anonymous online survey called the Second Home Study.

District council works hard to shape services, programs and infrastructure to best meet the changing needs of all residents – so this survey is a very important tool for collecting the voices of our seasonal residents. The results also provide valuable information to local businesses and the individual area municipalities (Muskoka Lakes, Gravenhurst, Bracebridge, Huntsville, Lake of Bays and Georgian Bay).

During the summer of 2017 the District of Muskoka undertook a comprehensive survey of Second Home owners. Below is a summary of key findings.

General Statistics

Over 23,000 Second Home Residents in Muskoka

Only 16% participated in survey

48% of Muskoka's Second Home population is 55+

64% of Second Home Residents come from the Golden Horseshoe which includes communities in the Regions of Durham, Halton, Niagara, Peel and York, and the Cities of Toronto and Hamilton.

Average Annual Second Home use 8.9 weeks per year. 4.7 weeks in Summer, 2 weeks in Fall, .08 in Winter and 1.4 in Spring.

Visitation: 3.99 guests per visit, 2.73 nights per visit and 28.2 visitor nights per year.

92.7% have never rented their Second Home.

Key Findings

Is your Second Home winterized?

52% Yes

17% No winterized yet but plan to

31% Not winterized and no plans to

Average Annual Second Home Household spending in Muskoka

\$ 6,738

spending common items annually

\$ 11,690

spending on major items annually

\$ 18,428

Total spending per Second Home Households

\$18,428 X 22,859

Second Home Households

Equals \$421 million total economic impact

Health Services

59% of Second Home households access emergency services in Muskoka

Waste Management

If curbside waste collection is provided, does your household use the service?

78% Yes

22% No

Improvements

53% Want free large item disposal at transfer stations and landfills

48% Want large item collection from property

Muskoka Airport

Would your visitors/household members use commercial airline services if offered at the Muskoka Airport?

9% Yes

59% No

32% Maybe

Muskoka Lakes Association Exhibit
July 2018 – June 2019
Muskoka Discovery Centre
Gravenhurst Wharf
“The MLA STORY – Celebrating 125 Years”



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