



Acton Island Association

July 2011

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A Letter from the President

Annual Acton Island Meet and Greet

Sunday July 31, 2011 – 1 pm.

Location: The DiGiacomo Cottage
1048 Kemp Road

This year's annual meet and greet is combined with the annual general meeting. Please come out to support your neighborhood.

Please bring appetizers for 6. The association will supply soft drinks, wine and beer.

News from the Board

Recent activities of the board include the continuation of the lobbying campaign for safe boating in and around the island. As a part of this campaign the Acton Island Association has placed signs on the bridge leading to the island, asking people to please boat by example. In light of the number of boating accidents here in Muskoka over the Canada Day long weekend the associations urges you to heed this advice, and remember, “water on the water, beer on the pier”.

In other news, Acton Island was hit by a major storm early in June. While a lot of trees went down and a number of properties on the island suffered fairly substantial damage the island was luckily not as badly hit as some other parts of the lake such as Breezy Point.

Unfortunately, Mr. Colacci, owner of 1065 Innisfree Road (the centre island property) passed away earlier this year. He was involved in an accident on his property and later succumbed to his injuries.

The Acton Island Association is beginning to look for new directors for the board’s next term. Additionally, the association has renewed its director’s liability insurance coverage.

Finally, the Acton Island Association will be selling Acton Island cooler bags at this year’s meet and greet/ annual general meeting. The cooler bags not only look great, they will be sold almost at cost!

Muskoka Heritage Foundation

As mentioned in the Spring 2010 newsletter, the Acton Island Association has been working to get some areas of the island delegated as heritage trust protected lands through the Muskoka Heritage Foundation. The bid was spurred as some areas in the interior of the island were subject to small commercialized logging projects. Through a land trust agreement with the Muskoka Heritage Foundation, some internal segments of Acton Island would be protected from any future commercial and development projects, helping to maintain the biodiversity and beauty of Acton Island for generations to come.

To reach the objective of creating a nature reserve on the island the Muskoka Heritage Foundation has requested that the association submit a letter signed by landowners agreeing to allow the Muskoka Heritage Foundation to do a survey of the centre of the island. The board will continue to work on this project in the upcoming months. Please speak to a member of the board at the meet and greet if you have any questions regarding the project.

Acton Island Sign

Last year the Acton Island Association built and installed a welcome sign at the entrance to Acton Island. Almost immediately after the sign's installation it was cut down with a chainsaw and stolen. While we received quite a bit of local press coverage on this disturbing act of vandalism, we received no leads as to whom or why the sign was stolen.

The Acton Island Association has prepared a new replacement sign to be installed in the same location and have chosen to take improved measures to secure and protect the sign.



The future of the Acton Island Association

Some consideration has been given to the idea of disbanding the Acton Island Association. This notion has stemmed in part as most of the major issues that the Acton Island Association was created to address have been dealt with or have subsided. With no new major issues arising recently it has been suggested that the Acton Island Association may be currently unnecessary. The board has decided to see how things unfold over the next year and then readdress the idea of disbanding in the coming year. For more information, feel free to contact a member of the board.

Name Change Bid

After much discussion there has been a bid to formally change the name of Acton Island to Action Island in order to avoid confusion and maintain consistency with the street signs leading to the island. In the past several years, the street signs at the corner of Acton Island Road and Acton Island Road North have continually been modified to "Action Island." As long-time island resident Leslie McCann says, "the sign says Action Island anyways, we may as well make it official." In order to officially change the name of the island a letter of agreement with signatures from a majority of residents is required. We are asking everyone interested in the name change to please email the Association to show their support.

Bala Falls Hydro Project

As discussed in previous newsletters, the fate of the Bala Falls Hydroelectric Project remains to be decided. In the past several months, a number of important changes have taken place which could impact the form the project will take, or even whether it will be built at all.

The Bala Falls Hydroelectric project, proposed by the Swift River Energy Co. is aimed as part of the provincial government's policy to supply Ontario with clean, renewable energy. However, the project has met with severe backlash from the Muskoka community due to the perceived economic, environmental and esthetical impacts that the dam may have on the surrounding area.

An environmental assessment report was completed by Swift River Energy and was submitted to a 44-day review period this past October in which it received 105 public critiques, known as elevation requests. After going over the elevation requests, the Ministry of the Environment deemed the environmental assessment satisfactory and gave the project the green light to go ahead.

The next step for the Swift River Energy Co. is to secure the leaseholds on the required land. The project has come up with two plans that they refer to as the Option One Proposal and the Option Two Proposal. Option One is an above ground structure built entirely on crown-land by the North Falls. Option Two proposes building 100 feet away from the North falls on both Crown and District land. Retaining public access to the falls this proposal is also half the height of Option One, which will allow the structure to be landscaped over, including two levels of public lookouts. To build Option Two, the less intrusive of the two plans, Swift River Energy submitted a proposal in late June to lease the district lands necessary for the project. However, in early June the district made several decisions that may force the Swift River Energy Co. into adopting the more obtrusive of the two plans. The district made the decision to shortlist several properties needed for the Swift River project as heritage properties, which if successful would block development on them. Additionally, the section of Highway 169 that passes by the falls was transferred from municipal property to the township, placing all the land necessary for the project into the jurisdiction of the township.

Currently, the project is at a standstill as Swift River Energy Co. engages in leasehold negotiations with the township and local organizations and communities weigh in on the two proposals as well as whether the dam should be built at all.

For more information on the current situation and to weigh in on the various options please check out the following websites:

www.savethebalafalls.com

www.balafalls.ca/project

Upcoming Events in Muskoka, Summer 2011

JULY

July 22-24th: Gravenhurst In-water boat show and Ribfest

July 23rd: Memories of Lucy Maud Montgomery/ Everything Anne Day, Bala

July 26th, Woodlot Management & Tree Selection Course, Bracebridge Resource Management Centre

July 29th: Bracebridge Midnight Madness

July 29th-31st: MacTier Big Weekend Festival

July 30-31st: 10am-9pm on the Muskoka Wharf, PirateFest and fireworks

July 31st: Muskoka Rocks Road race for Camp Oochigeas, Minnett

August

August 6th: Gravenhurst Garden Tour

August 6th-7th: Bracebridge Fall Fair

August 8th- 31st: Wolf Howl, Near Algonquin Park

August 10th: Annual Vegetable and Flower Show

August 12th-13th: Cottage Country Comedy Festival

August 12th-14th: 10am annual Power Boat Regatta

August 13th: Muskoka's 3rd Annual Amazing Race

August 14th: 1-4pm Brooklands Farm, Savour Muskoka Field to Fork Tasting Event

August 18th: Bracebridge's Got Talent

August 19th- 20th: Gravenhurst Steamship Festival

August 19th-21st: Gravenhurst Dockside Festival

August 20th: Bracebridge Highland Games

August 20th-21st: Reggae Muskoka Bob Marley Festival, Bracebridge

August 26th: Summer Sizzler for Hospice Muskoka, JW Marriott

August 26th-28th: 27th Bracebridge Antique Show

August 27th: Muskoka Beer Festival, Bracebridge

September

September 20th: Severn Bridge Fall Fair

September 22nd-24th: Huntsville International Film Festival

September 30th: Muskoka Bicycle Festival in Gravenhurst

Summer 2011

Every Monday at 9am is the Bala Summer Market

Every Tuesday SWS Ski Show, 7:30pm, Windsor Park, Bala

Every Wednesday, 7:30pm, Bala Bay Inn, Muskoka Haunted Walking Tour

Every Wednesday, 6-8pm at the Muskoka Wharf in Gravenhurst is Charity Bike Night

Every Wednesday 9am on the Muskoka Wharf is the Gravenhurst Farmers Market

Every Thursday 9am is the Port Carling Farmer's Market

Every Saturday 8:30am Bracebridge Farmer's Market

July 18th- August 29th: Fabulous All Day Cottage Cruises, www.realmuskoka.com

Your Acton Island Association
Board of Directors

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Your board is here to serve the needs of its members. If you have ideas or topics to discuss please let us know

Malcolm Foulkes
President

For more information, feel free to contact:
Your Township Mayor and Councillors

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