

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

RON RIMMER | PRESIDENT GLPOA

Wow! What a spring! I thought the freshet was going to be my only worry as I transitioned away from my presidential duties and hand the reins over to our VP, Kate O'Hara. How wrong I was!

Coronavirus, COVID-19, isolation, social distancing—a whole new vocabulary and way of life.

Now with over 900 Facebook members we are seeing some varied responses over social distancing and travel restrictions. Some of the posts had to be removed as they were deemed to be of a bullying or distasteful nature. Governments shutting down all but essential travel caused divisions between some permanent or local residents and seasonal cottagers. I am sure when we are all back together again life will be somewhat normal. I know that I for one will be glad to see our friends that return each spring/summer as sure as the nesting birds do. We have been in isolation for a long winter Covid-19 or not.

GLPOA has had to take some drastic measures in cancelling the smelt fry, poker run, and regular board meetings. We also postponed our AGM. The Ontario government has stated that not-for-profits (NFPs) have up to 90 days after notice of emergency measures cancellation to schedule their AGMs. It remains to be seen when that will happen. We will surely have an abbreviated general meeting this year.

The executive has been in touch regularly by phone and email and have endeavoured to keep all of our board abreast of ever-changing conditions and coming up with solutions. Chris Hamilton and Allison Wood have been stellar in keeping up our



website and administering Facebook. And remember all of our GLPOA board has been in isolation, looking after kids, moving houses, etc., but have also been there for our members. Well done all.

The freshet this year was a week or so earlier and a non event. Water levels were about 10 cm higher than normal with some shoreline flooding in low lying areas. Of course, with the COVID-19 worry and past flooding events still fresh in people's minds there was much anguish amongst our members. GLPOA again posted daily levels and pertinent information from the three townships encircling our lake, trying to reassure residents that weren't able to be here. For the most part this service is appreciated and begets positive response.

No one at time of writing knows when this crisis will be over and life can return to some sense of normalcy. In the meantime, we have to be respectful of the rules and

look after each other as good neighbours do. North Algona Wilberforce Township instituted a cottage check program and trusted members of GLPOA board will provide that service as well. The information was posted to Facebook with contact instructions.

When this goes to print, we are hopeful that the state of emergency will be lifted either fully or partially and we may be able to salvage some part of the summer that we all enjoy on the lake. Perhaps if we have a boating season, we can arrange an ad hoc regatta or sail past of some sort.

As you will see from Jeff Raisbeck's report we have released our corporate sponsors from advertising costs this year. So, when things do return to normal, I urge you to support our local sponsors who have always been there for us—let's be there for them. And remember to say thank you.

Stay safe and we hope to see you soon.

Membership Report

KATE O'HARA | MEMBERSHIP

Well, it's certainly been a different start to our GLPOA season. If we thought flooding was a challenge, we certainly never expected to be facing a pandemic called COVID-19. And this has definitely been a learning curve for every one of us. These are surely different—and in some cases difficult—days for many of us. We hope you all have the support you need to help you manage your way through these very different times.

As outlined in our email blast in early April, we have taken decisions—some difficult—to act in what we believe to be the best interests of our GLPOA community.

One of our decisions has a major impact on how we conduct our annual membership drive. As you know, we have a dedicated group of volunteers who cover the 12 zones on the lake and river; that group is the reason we had record membership numbers for 2019. Proud does not begin to describe how I felt about these people when the final numbers were tallied!

We still believe our canvassers and canvassing system are an important function of our association. It's not only a way we raise funds, but a way to keep our members personally informed about GLPOA activities and interests. But we are not willing to put any of you—canvassers and members—in harm's way, so personal canvassing for 2020 membership is suspended for the foreseeable future.

Maybe we'll be able to carry out our regular canvas in a different format later in the season, but rest assured whatever we decide we will work within restrictions imposed upon us. In time I hope my motto will become "Keep calm and canvas on." We shall see.

We still have options for members to pay their 2020 membership, which remains at \$20. If you are willing—and financially able—payment options can be found on our website, www.goldenlake.co, as follows:

- By credit card
- By e-transfer: glpoatreasurer@hotmail.com. The security question is *What River flows in and out of Golden Lake?*

and the answer is *Bonnechere*

- By cheque, made out to GLPOA and mailed to PO Box 99, Golden Lake, ON, K0J 1X0

We are hopeful many of you will take advantage of these payment options to renew—or come on board—as members of our GLPOA family. We recognize that your support is a very big reason GLPOA is successful, and we want to continue to

support YOU.

We are grateful for your understanding and ongoing participation. GLPOA may not be an "essential service," but we want to maintain our presence—if in a scaled down form this year—as your partner and voice on the lake through these very challenging times.

Be well—stay well—and be kind to each other.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP



JEFF RAISBECK CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

While COVID 19 may have separated us physically, in many ways it has brought us closer together and together we need to rally behind our local community.

Every year, the GLPOA corporate sponsors have been there for us, and now it's our turn.

We realize these are uncertain times and many businesses are doing their best to manoeuvre through the current economic situation as a result of the pandemic.

Although our community is a small piece of the world puzzle, we want to ensure we do what we can to support our local businesses, as they have so graciously done for our lake association. Not only have they been an invaluable corporate sponsor to

our program, but have given endlessly and consistently with donations to our many association events.

I am pleased to say our corporate sponsorship program will continue this year providing our businesses with all its many benefits they have come to know, however, the GLPOA board of directors and executives have agreed to waive the 2020 sponsorship fees. GLPOA is not only about the betterment of our lake and river, but our community that feeds us. Our gesture may be minuscule in light of our current situation, but it's our way of lending a hand.

Please make sure to visit GLPOA at www.goldenlake.co and click on our sponsors links. When you can, shop local and be sure to thank and support those who support us.

Wishing everyone a healthy and enjoyable summer on Golden Lake.

FOCA Webinar

APRIL 14, 2020

Part of your \$20 membership goes towards our association membership in FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottagers Associations). Our board is a firm believer that belonging to FOCA is a very worthwhile investment. That was evident when I recently had the opportunity to participate in an excellent webinar they organized on *Cottage Considerations and COVID-19*.

The purpose of the session was to address how, in these unique circumstances, our associations will be able to:

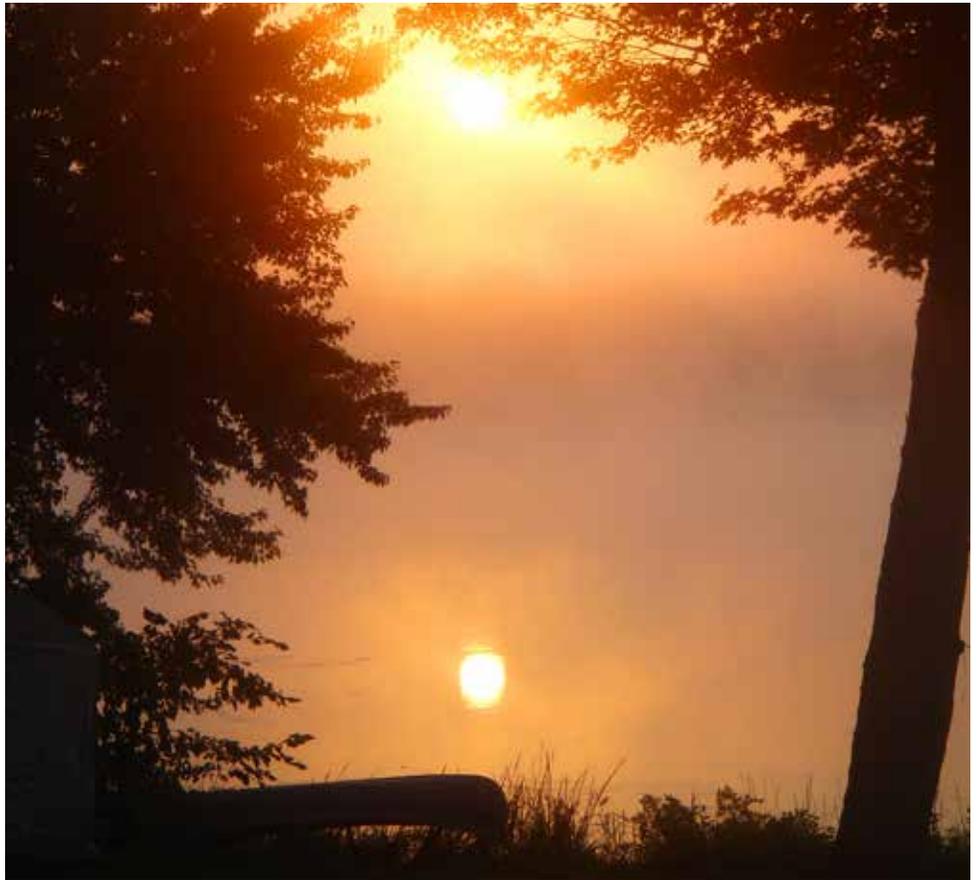
- Communicate to best serve our members
- Maintain membership when we cannot do it personally
- Maintain our sense of community

Terry Rees, Executive Director for FOCA, made the point that any government communication is generally delivered in a stark manner, and in some cases has created division and negativity in waterfront communities. He suggested that our associations can utilize social media to soften – where we can – the tone on these directives without diminishing their importance. Communication with members is paramount during this pandemic, and GLPOA is taking that advice to heart.

We will work to keep our members as well informed and current as possible throughout changing circumstances, including the status of our Annual General Meeting, water-hazard marking, water testing, and membership canvassing. FOCA is posting daily updates on their website with respect to emergency declarations and how they relate to waterfront property owners.

We will post a link on our GLPOA website showing the slides from this FOCA webinar, and we suggest you take a look at that information. The slides also provide links to other sources. Please take advantage of this valuable information. It's one of your benefits of membership!

The webinar touched on questions asked by FOCA members, including: boat launches and marinas (closed until May 12, 2020, unless otherwise advised); American owners (contact Canadian Border Services (CBS) respecting restrictions/conditions



for self-isolation on arrival to cottage. Social/physical distancing, reducing interactions; maintaining support for local businesses; cottage opening (check with municipalities/ neighbours for local information); water hazard marking (change in marking schedule or no marking at all); clear communication (avoid any misinterpretation).

FOCA provided an outline of the state of emergency updates at April 1:

- **Electricity:** Time-of-use billing is suspended for six weeks, but this could change. Ontario Energy Board has deferred its decision to remove seasonal classification for billing.
- **MPAC:** No evaluations in 2020.
- **Fire Safety:** Provincial fire ban is effective April 2.
- **Insurance:** Check your policy for insurer requirements for checking your property.

The overall message is that we must recognize this as an emotional and stressful time for all of us. Our associations can be in a good position to be a force for good, and to steer conversations in

a positive direction to bring back—and maintain—our sense of community.

Treasure's Report

LIVIA VODENICAR
TREASURER, GLPOA

The financial summary for the operating period of January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, shows a starting balance of \$16,586.83, revenue of \$20,880.48, disbursements of \$20,216.02, and an end balance \$17,251.29.

As we highlighted in our winter newsletter, we designed and erected four new boat launch signs, accommodating fourteen additional local businesses. This was our greatest expenditure this past year.

All records are given to an outside accountant for review and a final report will be given at GLPOA's next Annual General Meeting.

Water Levels

FRESHET 2020

The term freshet is most commonly used to describe a spring thaw resulting from snow and ice melt in rivers located in upper North America. A spring freshet can sometimes last several weeks on large river systems, resulting in a significant inundation of flood plains as the snowpack melts in the river's watershed.

This year we were concerned by the large snow pack — especially the snow at Foy Lake in Algonquin Park which forms part of the headwaters for the Bonnechere River. There was 85 cm of snow and *water equivalent* was measured at 180 mm. That is considered heavy and worrisome. This year the freshet started almost two weeks earlier and last around 25 days. It started fast but soon turned into a more classic freshet, as in years' past. The conditions remained favourable with cold nights and warm days coupled with minimal precipitation. By April 16, it was evident we were basically out of the woods, so to speak.

The other concern this spring was Covid 19. With the '17 and '19 floods fresh in everyone's minds, the order not to travel certainly caused anguish with our seasonal residents, and rightly so. Nobody likes to be told they can't go and check their property. The only solution was to have neighbours check and report. North Algona Wilberforce Township offered to do comfort checks on cottages for residents and Golden Lake and Bonnechere River Property Owners Association (GLPOA) piggybacked on that program. We had a few requests and hopefully put people's minds at ease.

With the freshet behind us, I would like to tell you about a few initiatives coming for future spring thaws.

Renfrew Power Generation (RPG) is working with GLPOA and Round Lake Property Owners' Association (RLPOA) to assemble several frequently asked questions (FAQ). We are confident that these FAQs will answer the questions we get every spring, including questions about snow pack, dam operations, why levels are what they are, etc.

The second initiative is the proposed amendment to the Bonnechere River Water Management Plan (BRWMP). The amendment requests an earlier drawdown and lower limit on Round Lake by 50 cm. This will allow more capacity in the deep-water reservoir (Round Lake) and should help mitigate flooding. Golden Lake feeds from Round Lake and 27 more tributaries. These streams, creeks and seasonal streams are not regulated and contribute to our high-water issues. We also have constrictions at the outflow of our lake which causes water to back up in the lake, and this is uncontrollable.

Janice Visneskie-Moore (Mayor of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards), Shawn Cameron (RPG), John Yakabuski (MPP and Minister of Natural Resources), Rob Norris (President of RLPOA) as well as downstream stakeholders have all been working for over three years to achieve this amendment. Three government agencies were involved: two provincial and one federal. If you've ever dealt with the government, you will realize the complexity and effort involved in getting something like this passed. We are confident that this will be approved at least on a temporary basis to observe the effect on species and species at risk.

In conclusion, your GLPOA has been busy and involved in trying to resolve flooding, or at least mitigate the damage caused in both our lakes.



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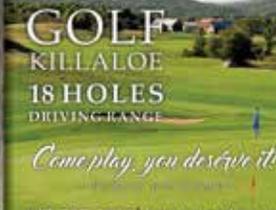
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