

October 2014

Dear Fellow SLA Members:

Here we are at the end of another cottage season again. Although we did not have the hot dry summer that most of us wished for, activities around the lake and boat traffic on the Trent-Severn appeared to be as busy as other years.

I had great intentions to get some late-season projects cleaned up this fall, but with the non-stop daily rain, I have considered digging out some old drawings on how to build an ark. Water levels have risen higher than normal for this time of year, but there should be plenty of time for Parks Canada to get them back to winter levels before any freezing begins. Please ensure that you have all docks, ladders, and water toys pulled up well above the high water level point and secured. I would hate to damage them with my ark.

I am sending out this fall news update early this year to ensure that all of our seasonal members are aware of the election process in this area, and to encourage you all to vote. As cottage owners, we pay significant taxes on our seasonal residences to either the Town of Gravenhurst or to Severn Township. Voting for a candidate that you believe in is your responsibility, and that is the best way to ensure that our tax dollars are properly managed.

For our members on the Gravenhurst side of the lake, John Cooper has sent out a memo to explain the candidate interview/rating process used by several of the other cottage associations in Muskoka to help their members with their selection. This memo also included contact numbers and information for advance voting.

For those in Severn Township, I contacted Mayor Mike Burkett for details. There are two advance polls at the Township Office (1024 Hurlwood Lane—south of the Orillia Square Mall or on the road leading to Hawkrigde Golf Course—whichever landmark is familiar to you):

Saturday, October 18 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Wednesday, October 22 10 a.m.–6 p.m.

The SLA Board encourages you to vote. We also wish all the candidates good luck in the election, and look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Your SLA Board continues to connect with surrounding cottage associations: the SRAPO (Severn River Association of Property Owners), the 6 Mile Lake Cottagers Association and the Gloucester Pool Cottagers Association. We all face similar challenges with the Eurasian Water Milfoil weed and large green algae blooms in several areas. There is still no permanent solution to eliminate them yet, but as these toxic weeds and blooms spread through more lakes in Ontario and northern states, they continue to draw more attention and the need for solutions. There are detailed reports and documented studies shown on the FOCA (Federation of Cottage Associations in Ontario) website: [www.foca.on.ca](http://www.foca.on.ca) (see Fall Update). As I have mentioned in many memos, the FOCA website is a great resource for up-to-date information on all sorts of cottage information. A portion of your SLA fees are paid to FOCA for their services, so we encourage you to take advantage of their resources.

The annual SLA Regatta was great again this year. Mike Ewing and a huge group of volunteers were key to its success. This year's regatta marked two major highlights and changes:

- 1) After 6+ years as regatta chair, Mike will be stepping down from this role and passing the responsibilities to Jane Bowman. I would like to thank Mike for all his work in keeping

our largest fun-filled and social event a great success and to welcome Jane Bowman as our new regatta leader. Jane, I know you will get full support from past volunteers and the SLA Board.

- 2) There is another regatta item that I want to share with everyone. After many years of hosting our regatta on the Sunday of the August Civic Holiday weekend, Bayview Wildwood Resort has advised us that we can no longer use their facilities on this specific day. I met with their managers and understand their concerns. Although Sunday is their "turnover" day when most guests are leaving or arriving, the Civic Holiday weekend has allowed many guests to stay through the weekend. This is now their busiest time of the year, and sharing their beach, docks, lawns, and washrooms with hundreds of our cheering SLA regatta participants and families has resulted in negative feedback from their guests. Your SLA Board is now looking at other options, including running the regatta on a different Sunday at Bayview Wildwood or perhaps changing the location to keep the Civic Holiday Sunday date. Stay tuned.

In closing, I would again like to thank the SLA Executive—Judy Moore-Vey, John Cooper, and volunteers Mike Ewing, Jill King, Marten Burns, Karin Prendergast, Wendy Miller, and Meredith Oberfrank—and all the cottagers in our association for their help throughout the year

I wish you all a safe and healthy winter and look forward to another fantastic season in 2015.

Cheers,

Bob Corbett, President  
Sparrow Lake Association