

FALL & WINTER

DECEMBER 2024

DOCK TALK

Dock Talk is a publication of the Healey Lake Property Owner Association (HLPOA)

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

-- DAVID LATTER --

Unfortunately, the big event on the lake this fall was a fire that burned down the home, (of 40 plus years), of Charlie & Joyce Smith. A sad day for everyone on the lake but a devastating loss for the Smith family. So many memories consumed in less than an hour.

COMMUNITY FIRE RESPONSE

At least 14 individuals responded to the fire and were able to control its spread to a neighbouring cottage and the forest. A very large thank you from everyone on the lake to all the responders. You did an outstanding job! The pumps stored on the lake proved their benefit. Some weaknesses in the system were identified and will be addressed in time for next spring. A "Fire Alert" system has been developed. Any member that wants to be on the list should contact John Mendicino at john.mendicino@gmail.com to be added to the list.

BOTTLE DRIVE

The bottle drive proceeds were down this year. The COVID effect has worn off and a subjective view is that there were fewer visits to cottages this year.

REGATTA ORGANIZERS NEEDED

Thanks to Michelle Burandt & George Youngberg, and their many volunteers for keeping the Regatta tradition alive and thriving on Healey Lake. The event provide lots of entertainment for children & exciting prizes for participants. Michelle & George have announced that they will be passing the torch to a new team for the 2025 HLPOA Regatta.

They have a good system in place and a good roster of volunteers. We would all be very grateful if someone (or two) will step forward to take over responsibility for organizing the Regatta. I am sure George and Michelle will be willing share their expertise and support the new organizer(s).

SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES

The port-a-potty experiment has been successful and it will be available again next year. The "little libraries" were well used and are refreshed as needed.

DAM UPDATE

The dam was reinforced in November by the MNR.



DOCK REPAIRS

Repairs were completed to the two docks at the public landing where the marinas are located and to the dock at the dam which had separated from its moorings and its anchors and floated down the shore a few metres.

GET IN TOUCH

If there are any issues or concerns, please contact me at dlat1712@gmail.com or via my cell at [+1 416 407-4965](tel:+14164074965).

David Latter

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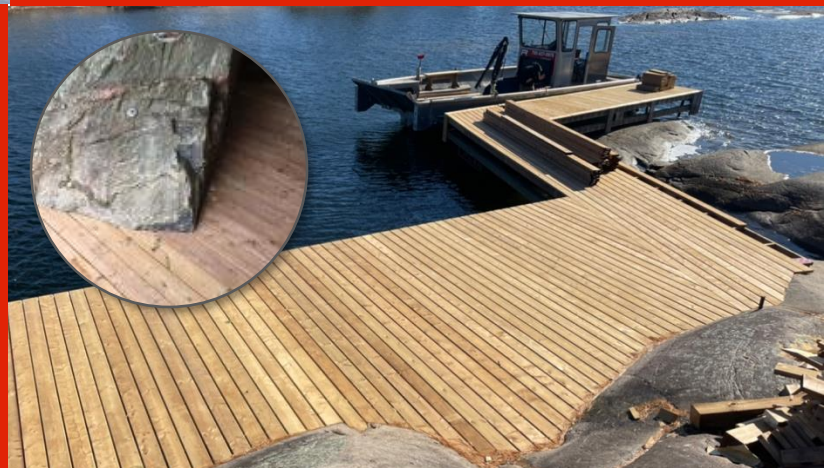
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COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

-- DAN MACLEOD --

AMBULANCE SERVICE

Background Information for Residents of Ward 6

First and foremost, our residents should be assured that the Parry Sound District EMS is fully responsible for meeting provincially mandated response times for emergencies to all its residents no matter where they reside.

Almost all emergency response to residents in Ward 6 were and continue to be served by PSD Parry Sound and Humphrey EMS bases year-round.

The PSDEMS Advisory Board met in October and a proposal to expand Humphrey services was accepted.

EMS management deliberately expanded the Humphrey night shift (two ambulances) to 10 months of the year. The budget for 2025 will include two (2) ambulances on the night shift and one (1) ambulance for two (2) months of the year (slow period) to serve the west side of Parry Sound District out of the Humphrey Station.

This increases the budget by \$150k with a significant response improvement. The Humphrey Base is manned 24/7 along with the Parry Sound EMS Base.

Resident Concerns Regarding Mactier EMS Base Closure

It is important to understand that the Mactier EMS Base within the Muskoka District EMS Services did not have any night shift resources. The PSD EMS bases of Humphrey or Parry Sound responded to all night service calls as well as some daytime emergencies.

The issue of train crossings delaying EMS response has been raised as an impediment to timely response from Humphrey EMS base. The PSD EMS has met and exceeded provincially mandated response to critical emergencies. Critically, 911 Dispatch determines the closest assets to any emergency and utilizes resources like train schedules, OPP and Fire Response resource availability, and many other factors to determine which asset in the field is available to meet or better emergency response time.

DID YOU KNOW?

- In an emergency dial 911, do not go to one of the EMS bases as they are not all staffed 24/7 !!!!
- 95 medics have an average call volume of 7000 calls annually with the busiest months being July and August.
- PSDEMS has 7 stations strategically located across 9,222 square kms to serve the 42,824 residents of Parry Sound District.

WINTER...SHE'S A-COMING!

The frost is on the ground and there is a chill in the air, however I cannot understand what the fuss is about and why all the snowbirds are leaving. I mean more power to you for making the change.

I am hoping for a better winter than this past year, as I did not step off the dock once last year - the dog refused to do it, and if you think I'm going to challenge the intuition of that decision, you're sorely mistaken! In the winter season, there is an unmistakable "freshness" about the place.

For those of you who live here all year round and even those of you who simply visit during the winter, you know well why we like it here at this time of year. The activities include walking through the bush, marvelling at how white the landscape is and how remarkably long it stays white. Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing are good, physically challenging activities, but do remember to take your cell phone, not to take calls, but to log your steps!

Snowmobiling is a favourite pastime of many residents and also provides the chance to explore nature at, what some people say is, "at it 's best" this time of year.

I hope it's obvious to all that those of us who stick around on the lake really look forward to the change in seasons.

You'll have to forgive me if you overhear me bragging next summer about what a great time we had up here during the "off season" the lucky one's get to enjoy!

HEALEY LAKE HISTORY | SECOND EDITION

The original edition was an immense hit with many on the lake, however a few people have been heard to say, "Nobody asked *me* to submit our family history". Well, here is your chance! Please send any submissions, pictures and your comments on the same to my attention. We will work to review, compile and include all suitable stories, and then will be publishing what we hope will turn out to be another best seller!

If there are any question or concerns regarding any of the articles, please contact me.

GET IN TOUCH

As always , if there are any questions or concerns with the above subject matter or any Township issues, please contact me.

You can reach me directly via dmacleod@thearchipelago.ca or +1 647-549-5474.



Dan MacLeod

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HLPOA MEMBERSHIP

-- SHARON TOSSWILL --

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We would like to extend a welcome to all new cottage or property owners on Healey Lake!! We encourage you and your guests to consider joining the **Healey Lake Property Owners Association** – various membership options are available. Membership information is available at:

<https://healeylake.org/community/#membership>

WE'VE GONE DIGITAL!

The Association is no longer mailing out hard copy Membership Renewal Forms other than on an exception basis. We initiated email renewals in March 2022, but some Members were not aware of this change and were waiting to receive mailed information.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Notice of Membership renewals are planned by email for the Spring of 2024. To renew your membership, simply visit www.healeylake.org to complete the online Membership Renewal form.

This ensures we always have your current contact information.

NOTE: If you have moved or changed your email address in the current year, please update your contact information now for next year. We will need your updated contact info in the event our Cottage Watch Volunteers find a problem.

The online Membership Renewal form has been successfully implemented, so there are 3 ways to pay annual dues:

- 1) Pay Pal – available through the website <https://healeylake.org/>
- 2) E-transfer to Treasurer@healeylake.org
Include your 911/lot number in the cover email.
- 3) By cheque / cash and mail to:
HLPOA | PO Box 132
MacTier, ON POC 1H0

If you do not have an email address or would still prefer to receive a hard copy Membership Notice, please contact:

Sharon Tosswill, Membership Coordinator
647-217-6834 or sharon_tosswill@hotmail.com

Sharon Tosswill

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Some of the many benefits your HLPOA Membership Fee work to support include:

- 1) **Annual General Meetings** (AGMs) in May and September to meet other members and exchange views of interest to us all.
- 2) **DockTalk** Three editions of our newsletter yearly.
- 3) **Cottage Watch**: Over the winter, Volunteers will visit your property and alert you to any issues.
- 4) **Webcams**: There are two currently installed on the lake, which are viewable through our website
- 5) **Notifications**: Email blast delivered to your inbox to keep you aware of news & events on the lake
- 6) **Lake Stewardship Program**: Annual Water testing and working on many initiatives to keep Healey Lake safe and flourishing.
- 7) **Annual Regatta**: Scheduled regularly for the Saturday of the August long weekend with games, crafts, food, and a beer tent.
- 8) **Fire & Safety**
 - Provides and maintains 11 fire pumps, (6 seasonal & 5 year-round) on the lake, available to help in an emergency situation.
 - Maintains select courtesy lights and markers to aide boating safety.
 - Link on our Home webpage to the current Fire Rating (Fire Icon in top right corner) or see also <https://www.thearchipelago.on.ca/p/fire-rating>
- 9) **FOCA Membership** (Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association) included with your HLPOA membership. FOCA members may additionally benefit from potential insurance savings. HLPOA is also a member of the Georgian Bay Biosphere.
- 10) **Boat Trailer Parking**: Available free to Members Only located by the two Marinas. In addition, the Association in partnership with the Township, maintains three landings at Fox Back Rd; Pine Bay and Kapikog Bay.
- 11) **Representation**: Advocacy of our member's interests with the Township of the Archipelago.
Dan MacLeod is the Councillor for Ward 6, TOA.
A former President of the HLPOA, Dan is now a voice on Council, advocating for Healey Lake issues such as waste disposal, taxation, roads, fire safety, and working closely with the Association on MNR's management of the Dam.

Stay Connected: Visit www.healeylake.org for the latest news and updates!



On behalf of Wall-2-Wall Painting, I would like to thank Healey Lake Cottagers for being such loyal customers. It has been my pleasure serving you over the years. I look forward to yet another year of meeting wonderful new people and reconnecting with my past clients. Your support and loyalty has been overwhelming and I hope that am able to continue providing you with interior and exterior painting services for years to come. Wall-2-Wall Painting is committed to providing customers with only the highest quality service, delivered through impeccable attention to detail. As proof of my appreciation for your loyalty and support I wish to extend both new and existing clients a 2025 spring pre-booking special.

Please contact me at (905) 830-8900 to prebook your 2025 cottage painting projects.

Thank You for your business & ongoing support. I look forward to serving you in the coming year.

Darlene Jones

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THE DECLINE OF LOONS ON HEALEY LAKE AND THE ROLE OF LOON PLATFORMS IN CONSERVATION EFFORTS

-- MISSY MANDEL --

Loon populations on Healey Lake are in decline due to habitat loss, climate change, and human disturbances. Healey Lake once supported three successful loon pairs, but last year only one pair successfully raised a chick to migration age — a positive outcome for the chick, but a concerning trend for a lake of this size.

Loons require specific conditions for nesting, favouring quiet, secluded areas such as small islands, hummocks, or downed tree trunks. These natural sites provide isolation from predators, like raccoons and foxes, with water as a protective barrier against both land-based predators and human disturbances. The elevated position of these nests also allows loons to keep watch for potential threats, giving them time to escape into the water if necessary. Stable water levels around nesting areas are also essential, as flooding can be disastrous for eggs and chicks during the breeding season.

Unfortunately, increasing human activities on the lake, such as boating, fishing, and other recreational pursuits, create disturbances that threaten loon nesting success. Loons are sensitive to noise and movement, and disturbances near nesting sites can prompt them to abandon their nests, leaving eggs and chicks unprotected. Additionally, climate change, with its fluctuating water levels & rising temperatures, poses significant challenges.

In response, conservation efforts are focusing on artificial loon nesting platforms, which replicate loons' preferred natural habitats, offering the safety, isolation, and stability necessary for breeding. These floating platforms provide stable nesting areas, protecting nests from fluctuating water levels and helping mitigate habitat loss. Placing platforms in areas without human access further reduces disturbances, allowing loons to monitor for threats and protect their young. By recreating small "islands," these artificial platforms offer loons suitable nesting conditions even in challenging environments.



Our lake community, guided by Bird Studies Canada, recently gathered materials and built two such platforms. One has already been installed in an area where a natural nest failed. While a second failed nesting area was identified this summer, it is not suitable for platform installation; however, a team of paddling volunteers will scout for a more suitable location by late summer 2025. Since loons can take several seasons to adopt a new nesting site, even after previous failures, we will continue monitoring progress. Updates will be shared on our Facebook page and in upcoming edition of Dock Talk.

The image above was taken before installing the platform in the secure location, and the cartoon loon was added to provide a sense of scale :)

Missy Mandel



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BUBBLERS | SAFETY & LIABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

-- FOCA CONTRIBUTED --



IMPORTANT SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUBBLERS

With the temperature dropping, our thoughts turn to preparing our cottages for the cold and snow to come. For some, this means closing up the cottage until the spring. For others, it is a time to prepare for life on the lake during the winter. Regardless, we all do our best to prepare our properties to withstand the toughest weather Canada can throw at us. Some property owners have opted to give their waterfront structures a helping hand, through the installation of bubblers.

What Are Bubblers?

For those who are unfamiliar, 'bubblers' are a type of de-icing system, intended to prevent the build-up of ice at or around waterfront structures like docks and boathouses. There are several different types of systems, but generally these devices use air or propellers to create zones of agitated and warmer water to prevent ice from forming. Protecting our cottage properties is understandable and an increasing number of cottagers in Ontario are turning to these devices as part of their winter preparation.

However, if you are a regular bubbler user, or if you are considering installing one at your property, it is important to plan carefully and be sure that you are not contributing to a significant hazard on the lake.

Creating a Hole in the Water

Bubblers are often turned on and left largely unattended by property owners throughout the winter. Without careful planning, management and consideration of the nature of your waterfront area, your bubbler can de-ice a significantly larger portion of the water than is necessary to protect your property. This is especially true in shallow or sheltered areas, or when several bubblers are active near one-another, with multiple property owners inadvertently creating a massive hole in the ice, hundreds of feet in size. These holes in the ice can pose a serious safety risk to winter users of our lakes, especially at night or during storms with poor visibility.

Legal Implications

[Section 263 \(1\) of the Criminal Code of Canada](#) is very clear that those who make or cause to be made an opening in ice are under a legal duty to guard the opening in a manner adequate to prevent persons from falling in by accident, and adequate to warn them that the opening exists. If you fail to perform these duties, the Code states that you may be found guilty of serious offences, up to and including manslaughter.

Risk Management Considerations

If you chose to operate a bubbler to protect your property, please make sure you are taking all steps possible to ensure the safety of all lake users and consider taking these risk management steps:

- Place and angle your devices with care to keep the impacted area as localized as possible;
- Talk to your neighbours to avoid doubling up in an area. It is possible that one bubbler will do the trick.
- Equip your system with a thermostat or timer control. Running 24/7 creates oversized openings.
- Place clear signs near the bubbling area, visible from all directions noting "Danger Open Water".
- Run an amber light to mark the hazard at night and during storms. Do not use a red light, as this can be mistaken for the brake lights of a snowmobile and draw people towards the risk, rather than turn them away.
- Monitor your property. If you cannot be present, have someone check regularly to ensure the system is operating, the effected area is appropriate in size, and that the warning lights and markers remain in place.
- Where possible, a knowledgeable and experienced contractor should be used to configure the system.

Summer or winter, safety on the water is a top priority!

CottageFirst Insurance

FOCA Members benefit from access to CottageFirst Insurance, a group insurance program designed specifically to meet the needs of cottage owners. The CottageFirst team provides knowledgeable and comprehensive guidance and will create a customized insurance solution specific to you. Cottagers benefit from bundling coverage for their home, watercraft, automobiles and more - all with discounting and coverage enhancements unique to FOCA members. Contact our team today!

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THE LAKED CHEF

-- RON HUTZUL --

PORK AND RICOTTA MEATBALLS

Prep Time: 20 Minutes | Cook Time: 15-20 minutes | Serves 4
I nabbed this one from NYT Cooking – then made some updates to create hearty, tender, and super tasty meatballs!

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup/4 ounces whole-milk ricotta
- ½ cup/2 ounces grated Parmesan (Fresh, not canned)
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Italian Mix Seasoning (use any combination of basil, oregano, rosemary, thyme you can find in the cupboard if you need to)
- 4 drops of liquid smoke (I like the one from [Muskoka Gourmet](#))
- 5 dashes of worcestershire sauce (this is also used when making Caesars from scratch)
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup Italian seasoned dry bread crumbs (plain or panko work well too)
- 1 pound ground pork

OPTIONAL

- 1 jar high quality pasta sauce (I use Rao's from Costco)
- ~500g dried pasta (your choice of shape)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 425 degrees. In a large bowl, combine all of the ingredients, using your hands to gently mix.
2. Cover and refrigerate the mixture for 30-60 mins, (the flavours come together and cold mix is easier to form).
3. Shape the meat (with slightly wet hands will help prevent sticking) into 12 equally sized meatballs. Arrange on a parchment lined rimmed baking sheet.
4. Bake until golden and cooked through, (turning at the 10 minute mark), about 15-20 minutes.
5. OPTION: Gently simmer meatballs in pasta sauce (jar is fine for these purposes) while you boil water to prepare your preferred choice of pasta shape.

I serve these over spaghetti (rigatoni shown here), with more grated parmesan, a big basket of garlic toast and a Caesar salad – paired with a big glass of hearty red wine – preferably a Chianti...Cheers!



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