



Hellandgone Lake Ablaze

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - AUTUMN 2013

The first gale of November hit with a vengeance on the first of November, heavy rain, strong winds and forceful wind gusts downed trees and branches causing major power disruptions in the area as well as over much of Ontario. I was putting together my article for this newsletter when we lost power and consequently I lost my article. We were without power for the better part of fourteen hours. Thank goodness for generators and being prepared; all those that reside on the lake kicked in their generators and watched the storm as it raged over and about the lake. Waves were topped with whitecaps that curled, crested and drove a fine spray of water ahead of themselves as they raced in a north-easterly direction running the full length of the lake. The lake appeared angry, and as high as I have ever seen and it is still raining. There is lots of water going over the dam but there is still more water entering the lake. Everywhere you walk in the bush there are rivulets of water heading towards the lake even in place where normally you do not expect to find flowing water. All of this will of course subside and the lake will return to its normal level but in the meantime docks are vulnerable to damage. There are floating logs adrift and these could damage any dock when pushed up against one but they also are a navigation hazard to anyone who may still be out on the water, so please take care and keep an eye out.

All Hallow's eve was a precursor to this huge storm with heavy rains and strong winds. Needless to say there were no hobgoblins at our door. We listened to the rag-

ing weather from the comfort of our living room with a warming fire in the wood stove, relaxing music and an enjoyable glass of wine. As the night progressed the storm intensified and by six in the morning the winds were howling and the rain was being driven horizontally; then the lights flickered on and off a couple of times before extinguishing completely and plunging us into the darkness. Initially storm lanterns were lit and the generator was then started. As the morning progressed and the rain abated I did a cottage watch patrol, along the north shore and found limited damage, mostly branches down, some small trees snapped off and uprooted, a boat partially submerged and a tree leaning against a power line. Attempts have been made to contact the cottage owners who have sustained this damage to notify them of their particular situation. A similar patrol will be conducted around the rest of the lake today and if there was any evident damage we will attempt to contact those individuals. All this water has put a strain on those folks who are attempting to upgrade their cottages. Building has come to almost a standstill with the inclement weather. Hopefully the remainder of November will be warm and dry but history dictates otherwise. Some projects may have to be finished off next year.

This has been an extremely wet fall, the ground is saturated and it has taken a toll on our road system. Archipelago road staff have done a commendable job in maintaining the roads by smoothing out and filling potholes

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Remember these dates!

Next year get a headstart on summer at the
Wine and Cheese Party...Sunday May 18th 2014...2:00pm

Annual General Meeting...Saturday August 16th 2014...10:00am

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A Few 50th Anniversary Photos

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and keeping culverts open to prevent flooding along the roads. Job well done folks! Though we have seen much wet weather there were periods of glorious sunny, warm days. Thanksgiving weekend was one of those periods. The lake was active with people enjoying the holiday, there were kayakers, canoeists, sailors, tubers and water-skiers seen on the lake and the occasional loud squeal was heard from those hearty souls who braved the cooling waters. The autumn colours were past their peak on that weekend but they were glorious this year. It never ceases to amaze me how this landscape can change with the seasons in such a spectacular manner. Each season has its own beauty and needs to be appreciated as it is presented to us.



The last day of Thanksgiving saw the lake quiet down as many boats were taken out for the year and by the following day most people had returned to their homes and had closed the cottage up for another season.

Although this year was not like the wonderful summer of 2012 there were lots of people at their cottages enjoying the lake and its environs. From my perspective there appeared to be a lot more young people on the lake, which is great!

Since our annual meeting in August there has not been much activity that affects our association. There have been some enquiries regarding our fire pumps, lake activities and an enquiry regarding septic tank pump outs for island cottages. Our Kapikog Lake website gives pertinent details regarding activities and a map showing fire pump locations and I would urge you to check it out if you do not remember where the pumps are located. With regard to septic tank pump-out, I was approached by Don Brenner to see if any islanders would require a

septic tank pump out next year and to see if a group of islanders could perhaps coordinate a group rate with a septic service provider. Please call or email me if you are interested and I will let Don know.

On Labourday weekend a disconcerting break and enter occurred at one of the cottages on the lake. There was a theft of personal property and the incident was reported to the OPP. We feel very safe in this lakeside community but when you hear of an incident like this it makes

you reconsider how secure we really are and suggests review of your plans for the protection of your property.

As November rolls into December and the upcoming winter we look forward to freeze up and our sledding activities. With all the water in the swamps it will take some time for the trail systems to be fully functional. Whatever the situation when the sledding season arrives take care, operate your machines safely and be aware of the conditions around you: they will differ this year from last year. Wear your safety equipment, carry all the required documentation and lookout for the other guy!

Have a safe winter and on behalf of the Association Executive I would like to wish every one a Merry Christmas and Happy 2014. Have a safe holiday and we will see you on the lake in the new year.

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Gerry Haarmeyer
Association President
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The Cat Came Back . . . Four Weeks Later

Eve Schmitz-Hertzberg

Sebastian, the cat was a rescue kitten when he came to us in 2010. We tried to keep him as an indoor cat, but he would have none of it. He was a cat with little fear of the terrors of the outdoors and loved being in the fresh air. He would accompany us on walks. He was however not allowed out after dusk. George, my husband, and the neighbours laughed when they heard me calling "Kitty".

As you can see from his picture he has blue points and blue eyes. He is possibly a Ragdoll cat. He is very pretty with one of the nicest temperaments I have experienced in a cat. And as a veterinarian I have met a lot of cats!



The first time he came to the cottage we tried to keep him inside. Well, he went from one door to the other complaining. He seemed to think that if we could go out and enjoy the lake, so should he. He went on strike and refused to eat for three days that weekend. As you can imagine it was not pleasant having such an unhappy cat at the cottage.

On the Labour Day weekend this year the family was at the cottage. Friends also dropped by. It was our daughter, Hannah's birthday and I stayed in to bake a cake when the young people went for a walk. Sebastian was somewhere enjoying the outdoors. We had celebrated with candles on the cake and after the guests left, I started to look for the cat. He was nowhere to be found. We stayed up at the lake for two more nights searching and

calling, but still no signs of the cat. There was no trace of him. I came up on the following Friday and again no cat. I could list all the predators that would love to make a small cat a prey object: fox, coyote, racoon, wolf, weasel, owl, hawk, and likely other animals. We assumed that one of them had killed the cat.

When asked, I would say "The cat went for a long walk and did not come home." Maybe I had some hope that he was still alive.

A friend told me about their cat who had gone missing at the cottage and was found alive six months later having survived the winter. It had been an indoor cat and somehow got outside.

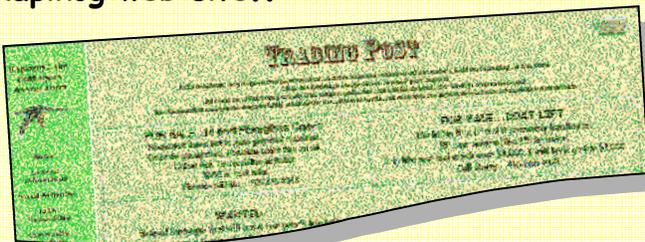
When I heard that story I sent an email with a picture of Sebastian to Gerry Haarmeyer September 26^h. It was nearly four weeks

since Sebastian was last seen. Gerry immediately replied that our cat had been seen at the lake. Joe and Regina had seen him but he ran away from them. Heinz had fed him hotdogs only the day before. I drove to Heinz' cottage, but no cat answered. When I went back to Joes, I called "kitty, kitty". In the distance I could hear an answering meow. The meows became louder as I continued to call. Then suddenly Sebastian came running around the side of the woodpile. He literally threw himself into my arms and started purring.

He was very thin and even dehydrated (despite all the water in the lake). It took him twenty four hours before he would lie on his side and relax. He probably had not really slept for four weeks as he had to be constantly on the alert for danger. He ate nonstop for the next few days. His dish could not be empty. But otherwise he had no signs of injury. Heinz, Joe, Regina, George and I had a glass of homemade wine to celebrate!

Sebastian is not as interested as he used to be in the outdoors. He is also much more jumpy when he hears strange or loud noises. He is however going outside again for short periods, but he stays close to the house. I think he did go for a long walk and somehow became disoriented. He had followed the shore of the lake for over a kilometer likely attracted by the sounds of people who were up at the cottages. There were of course fewer people as it was September. Feral or wild cats are wary of strangers and so that is likely why he would not go to Joe and Heinz. But when he heard my familiar "Kitty" he came running! He is quite happy again to be a domestic cat being catered to by his guardians. We are very happy that this cat story has a happy ending.

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Thanksgiving at the cottage...Those amazing colours...

A walk along the back road...the swishing of the leaves...

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For the Love of Birds and a Good Night's Sleep

Gerry Haarmeyer

We love to see the birds at our feeders throughout the year. It brings us a great amount of satisfaction to watch these colourful avian visitors. From the bright yellow, red and blue, black, white and grey as well as the more subtle brown plumages presented at the feeders there is constant motion by the birds as they compete for their regular handout. The air is filled with their various songs and air battles for a perch at the feeders between the different species as well as among the same species are not uncommon.

Yet, when nightfall comes it is time to bring the feeders in to prevent access to the food by curious, hungry raccoons. We don't mind them so much but our dog Sandie loves to bark at them at all hours of the night when they come for their handout. This of course wakes us up and it may happen a few times each night when the raccoons are really active. So in order to get a good night's sleep we have gotten into the habit of bringing the feeders in at night. This past labour day Anke went out to bring in the feeders and lost her footing on a damp deck at the top of a set of stairs. She tumbled down the stairs and in doing so broke her left ankle. I secured and braced the ankle and leg and called 911. Approximately twenty minutes later the emergency crew arrived and loaded Anke up into an ambulance for a trip to the hospital in Parry Sound.

It was a busy night in emergency and the doctors attended to her as quick as they could; X-rays were taken and the ankle was set in a temporary cast and we were allowed to go home.

We arrived back at the house around 3:30 am and were immediately faced by the stair climbing challenge to get into the house. We got to bed around four in the morning and reflected back on the night's occurrence. Anke said "I just wanted to bring in the feeders so that we would get a good night's sleep". That is how quickly things can change!

Anke has been in a cast until just recently and now faces a few months of physio to get actively mobile again. So my chief ice maker will not be assisting me this winter for the Kapikog Kurling Bonspiel. Both of us are grateful and thankful for the quick actions of the EMO crew and the doctors at the West Parry Sound Health Centre. Their action was quick, decisive and very much appreciated! We are indeed lucky to have such good medical service back off the beaten path.

We are still putting up the bird feeders and taking them in daily to get a good night's sleep because we love the birds but want to discourage the raccoon visitations.

Kayaking on Kapikog Lake

Suzanne Armstrong

It's always a beautiful but sad time when Thanksgiving Day returns each year. We all know that it's time to start closing up the cottage and putting the toys of summer to bed for the winter.

I was very fortunate this summer to spend numerous days at the cottage. There were many early mornings when I would wake up and quietly sneak down to the dock to enjoy the peaceful solitude of a kayak ride. The smooth strokes upon the water can create a sense of calmness and a feeling of peace with nature. While on the water, it's difficult to focus on your worries and much easier to let go, breathe and enjoy the feeling of gliding across the tranquil lake. The water itself is relaxing as the repetitive motion you use to propel yourself through the water is almost like meditation. The mist rises and the sun begins to shine on the water creating diamonds dancing on Kapikog Lake.

Along the shoreline it's not uncommon to see animals scurrying in the bush, turtles on a floating log, or a deer staying perfectly still until you glide by. I can honestly say that one of my greatest pleasures is to hear the call of a loon or to get close enough to watch them actively dive for food.

On the technical side of kayaking, there are many health benefits. Paddling works your arms, shoulders, upper body and core muscles. It also strengthens your legs as you apply pressure in order to propel the kayak forward. Depending on how fast you are paddling, it will also work your heart muscle, elevating its rate for an extended period of time. Sometimes it's difficult to end my journey, and I find myself paddling for several hours. There are many sights and sounds so the time passes quickly. Kayaking provides enjoyment as well as exercise. My last ride of the season was on Thanksgiving Day. It was a cool morning, but the sun was quickly warming the chill in the air. The lake was like glass with red, orange and gold autumn leaves floating on the water like hun-

dreds of tiny colourful boats. The exhilarating smells of pine and fallen leaves mixed with the fresh northern air made me constantly take in deep breaths. Paddling close to the shoreline, I caught the aroma of a fresh pot of coffee brewing and the faint delicious smell of bacon cooking (my apologies to vegetarians). During my ride that morning, I said hello to a gentleman in a red canoe. He said he was new to the lake and it was his last day at the cottage before closing. I'm sure that we both had the same feelings and didn't want this beautiful ride to end. After about two hours, I reluctantly pulled the kayak out of the water for the last time. All my wonderful memories of kayaking on Kapikog Lake 2013 will stay with me until next spring.



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Kapikog Castor Canadensis

Gerry Haarmeyer

With the shortening daylight hours beavers are far more visible each day. You see them cruising the shorelines, sometimes hauling twigs and small trees back to their lodge area to anchor into the mud bottom of the lake preparing their feed bed for their winter food pantry.



At present the iconic beaver "castor canadensis" has free rein of the lake and its shoreline. Adults and their



kits have been known to set up residence in boat houses as well as in their recognizable lodges. Sometimes these

lodges are built along the shoreline, these beaver are referred to as bank beaver, but whatever name is tied to them they are banking their capital (food) for the winter and this capital may be at the expense of the trees on your property. The beaver are trying to survive by ensuring that their winter larder is full; they do not recognize private property; all they know is that their food grows along shorelines and they will harvest what they can. If it's your property, it might be interesting to sit down while the fury is passing, contemplate the pattern of the attack, tooth marks, size and quantity of limbs taken, and marvel at the capabilities of this ancient rodent with limited mobility on land, tiny front paws and mighty teeth.



Their preferred food is aspen but they will take almost anything even softwoods like pine, spruce and cedar have taken a beating over the years along the Kapikog shores. Beaver are part of the lake's fauna but they can cause major damage to your property and may have to be removed by a registered trapper from time to time to keep their numbers under control. Their natural predator is the wolf, another species that we hear sometimes around the lake but seldom see. Both animals add to the lake experience and are part of the wilderness community in which we have chosen to be an interloper.



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