



Photo courtesy of Christopher Vroom

# Lake Sir John Newsletter

April 2020 Issue.1

## FROM THE EDITOR

With so many property owners arriving at Lake Sir John early this year and trying to practice social distancing, we think it is important to keep in touch more often. With that in mind, we intend to publish the Lake Sir John newsletter more frequently, this being the first issue of 2020.

Oksanna Pohlod

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## THE COVID-19 VIRUS AND LAKE SIR JOHN

By  
Doug Dempster  
Vice-President

Each of us is now adapting to the Covid pandemic and adjusting our behaviours and activities to these challenging circumstances. This is a fearful time as we shelter in our homes and watch the news of rising number of cases and deaths, yet it is also a time for reaching out within our community.

What does this mean for Lake Sir John? First and foremost, our lake has a significant concentration of retired people who are especially vulnerable to the pneumonia that can arise from the virus. There are both full and part-time residents doing their self-isolation at the lake. There are far worse places to shelter in place, and our roads provide a safe and quiet pathway to get some exercise and fresh air.

Secondly, the Quebec government has asked people not to go to their cottages in order to reduce the potential pressure on local health care hospitals. As April 1st, Argenteuil is one of the low-infection regions in Quebec to which travel is restricted as follows:

“In order to contain the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Québec adopted Ministerial Order 2020-013 today aimed at limiting travel to and from four new regions of Québec, including the MRC d’Argenteuil. As of noon today, checkpoints have been set up around and within the MRC d’Argenteuil.

According to the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux and the Sûreté du Québec, travel should be limited to trips for medical reasons and work when teleworking is not possible. Roadside checkpoints will reduce travel into and out of certain regions and territories that are more vulnerable and help contain the spread of the virus.

In the case of the MRC d’Argenteuil, these control measures are aimed at preserving the low infection rates currently found in the region. To keep these rates as low as possible, the MRC d’Argenteuil reminds the population that it is

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more important than ever to follow self-isolation and social distancing measures and to apply government directives to the letter. This is not the time to relax our efforts!”

To be sure, this is a stressful time for our residents whether at the lake or not. This order can limit normal family support from outside the region due to the travel restrictions. You can help by reaching out to others, by a well-distanced chat on our roads, and by sharing information on how access services in these difficult times.

**Stay home and stay safe.**

## General Information

While staying at home many people are catching up on their reading lists, movies they missed, learning how to have video chats with their families, taking online courses, walking, etc. Do you know that many places such as museums, aquariums, zoos are offering free virtual tours. You can find virtual tours by googling the words “virtual tours” and the name of a place”. Many of these are free. For example, if you’ve wanted to visit the Louvre in Paris click here <https://www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne>.

As you are all aware, we have been asked to curtail our shopping to necessities such as groceries and pharmacy items. For those who do not want to risk going out, the following are alternate options:

1. The IGA in Lachute offers free delivery to all people 65 and over. You can contact them at (450-562-6882 or go to their website [https://www.iga.net/en/find\\_a\\_store/store/8264-iga-s--albert-inc-](https://www.iga.net/en/find_a_store/store/8264-iga-s--albert-inc-)
2. The MAXI will take online orders and place the items in your trunk in their parking lot. You can place an online order at the MAXI then drive to their parking lot for pickup. The webpage is <https://www.maxi.ca/store-locator?type=shoppable>. <https://www.maxi.ca/store-locator?type=shoppable>
3. Brunet Pharmacy 450-562-5271
4. Familiprix 450-562-1350
5. Jean-Coutu 450-450-562-5218

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## Environment Update

By  
Doug Dempster

Spring has started and the ice on the lake will soon be gone. Throughout the winter we have seen blue jays and woodpeckers. Robins and merganser ducks arrived the first week of April to start their families. All of this is wonderful.

Last year we confirmed a record low level of e-coli bacteria and therefore superb swimming water quality. This year we are working on water clarity.

For almost a decade now, organic material in the lake has reduced water clarity and created an organic film on top of rocks in the lake. This correlates to an extended period of high lake water levels and some years of record snowfalls with fast melting. Organic material is natural and does not pose any health risk. It does



however make the water brown.

Organic material comes from one of four sources- the Marchand dam on the other side of the highway 329 bridge, autumn tree leaves, small streams entering the lake and high lake water levels that wash

soil from the shoreline into the lake. It is this last issue that we believe has been the core problem, especially in the spring.

This year we had a relatively normal snowfall and slow snow melting. This has meant limited rush of water from the dam and from the small streams that has minimized the transfer of organic material. This will help water clarity.

The big opportunity this year is to keep the lake level below the soil on the shoreline. You will recall that last October that our President Merv Trineer





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organized the lowering of two culverts on the causeway by 18 inches. This has increased the ability of water to flow through the causeway when water levels are lower.

Last winter the city of Lachute kept the weir at the end of the lake fully open, allowing the water level to stay low, more than a foot below the previous normal winter level. Because of our newly lowered culverts, the effect was felt not only in little Lake Sir John, but on the entire lake. Even with the spring run-off the water level stayed below the soil level and therefore avoided organic material entering the lake.

It is our intent to work with the City of Lachute to regulate the lake water level so that it stays lower than before on the main lake and does not in turn get too low on little Lake Sir John. By so doing our beaches will have a larger sandy area. Lake water will not wash soil from the water's edge. For those with docks, it may mean an adjustment to these new lower levels.

Water clarity is a key component of water quality. Good water clarity will increase your enjoyment of the lake as you swim or boat on the lake. This improvement will enhance the reputation of our pristine environment.

## Activities and Events

By

Oksanna Pohlod

Our Lake Sir John community has always had plenty of events and activities such as the dinner club, the symposia, sailing events and the corn boil to name a few. Unfortunately, this year we will be suspending most of these until it safe to do so again.



This past winter, a number of people from Lake Sir John participated in the Canadian Ski Marathon, which is a two-day event spanning 160 km, from Mont-Tremblant to Lachute. We are very proud of Susan Bishop who completed

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82.1km over a two day period and persevered through the last section with a broken binding.

We thank Merv and Monique for ensuring there was enough drinking water and to Miep and Henry and Sue for all their encouragement.

The Lake Sir John 2019 Christmas party was held at At Douceurs et Gourmanides Espace Gourmand on Chemin du lac chevreuil. Although, the location could only hold a small group, those attending had an enjoyable time. We are happy to be able to support a local business.

A few of our long-time residents spent the last winter at Résidence Le Médaillon D'Or. I have been told they are doing well.

Thank you to Karen Nicholson for posting updates and such beautiful pictures of our lake on the Lac Sir John Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/912142705791741/?ref=share>

If you are wondering when spring will finally arrive, the good news is that it must be soon because this week the male loon has been spotted swimming on the lake.

If you have any news or information you would like to share in the next newsletter, please send an email to me at [oksannap@hotmail.com](mailto:oksannap@hotmail.com) . I would love to hear from you and share your stories or concerns.

These are stressful and challenging times and we need to look out for each other. Call your neighbor and see if they need help with anything or just a friendly conversation. Together we will get through this.

**Stay safe, stay home, save lives**