



Photo courtesy of David Bouskill

Lake Sir John Newsletter

September 2020 Issue.2

FROM THE EDITOR

With autumn just a few short weeks away it is time to recap the activities of the summer albeit this year they were fewer and mostly socially or physically distanced.

Oksanna Pohlod

Lake Sir John Newsletter

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Activities and Events

By

Oksanna Pohlod



Dinner Club in 2019 started off with a Pub Night at Kathy Cole's place. The party was a tremendous success as someone brought a karaoke machine and people ate, sang, and danced to exhaustion.

Unfortunately, the dinner club gatherings came to an abrupt end after January 2020 and all dinners scheduled through May were cancelled.

Considering that the pandemic will be with us for a while, it would be nice to have some social activities to break up the long and dreary winter months. We are looking for a way to hold a modified version of our monthly dinner gatherings which we could adapted to Covid-19 safety procedures.

There have been several suggestions made such as limiting the number of people at each table to four or to no more than six or creating a dining bubble and only holding dinners with these individuals or making a dish and delivering it to another house that is participating in the event. If you have any other suggestions, please contact me at oksannap@hotmail.com or call me at 450-562-0300. All new ideas and new members are most welcome and appreciated.

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Sadly, this year we did not hold a corn boil picnic. By the first week of August, the Quebec government was allowing as many as 250 people to gather outdoors however a survey was sent out to residents around the lake and very few people said they were comfortable attending, preferring to continue to be cautious and staying safe.

There has been a suggestion that we form a bridge club with a small number of players and a way not to exchange cards. Again, if you have any ideas on how to do this and/or want to participate, let Livio Merlo know at livio_merlo@hotmail.com.

Those of you who belong to the Lachute Garden Club know that there has not been a meeting or any outings this year. What a shame as many gardeners have had more time to tend to their gardens and the weather has been mostly favourable. There will be a socially distanced end of season meeting on Meips lawn September 9th at 12:30 PM.

Last June, for the third year running, our resident sailors, Chris Vroom and Doug Dempster held a 90-minute clinic for new sailors as well as those who needed a refresher course. After the workshop one-on-one practice lessons in a boat with one of our experienced sailor were available.

Congratulations to our long time resident and avid fisherman Clement who made a very impressive catch this summer. It was a 24-inch rainbow trout weighing 6 pounds, 6 ounces, I said that he enjoyed several meals from this one.



A word of caution to all residents. Please remember to check the fire safety index to see if outdoor fires are allowed before starting one. Last June there was a brush fire across the road from 1774. Both Gore and Lachute fire trucks arrived in 15 minutes and put out the flames before any housing was threatened. It is not known whether the fire started spontaneously or if it was started by someone but due to the dry conditions it spread very quickly.

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Environment Report 2020

By
Doug Dempster

The big environment news this year was keeping the lake level below the organic material on our shorelines. It was also a hot and dry summer, resulting in less soil erosion into the lake. The water this year was clear and test results superb. Our loons and herons continue to enjoy the lake.

Peter Nicholson and I read the results of the testing of our water at 12 different points on Saturday 25 July. The samples were taken on Friday 24 July in the afternoon when the weather was sunny, calm and 27 degrees Celsius. The water temperature was then about 80 degrees Fahrenheit (26.7 degrees Celsius).

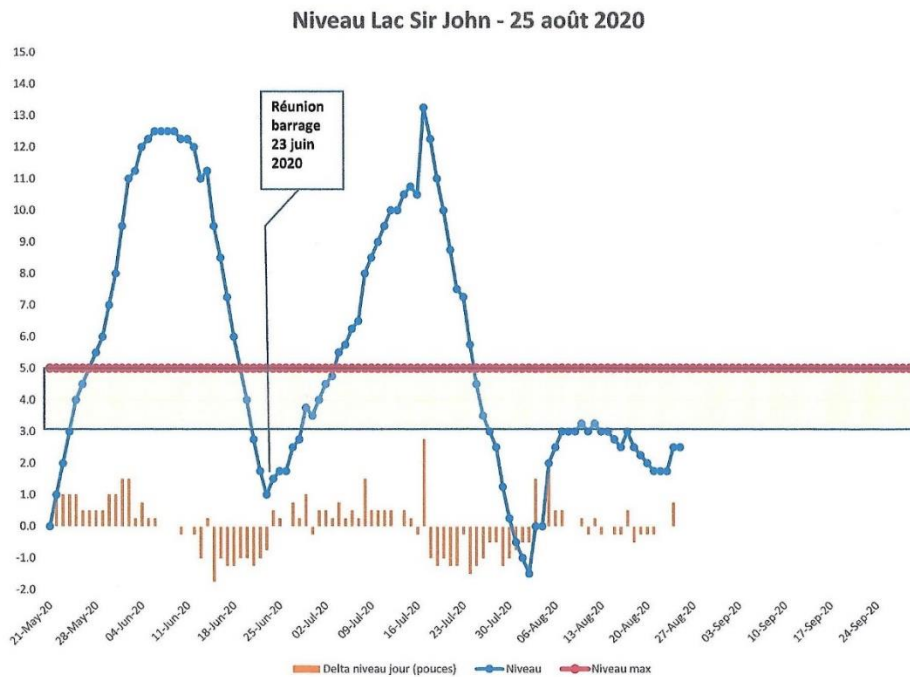
Eleven of the 12 test points had no observable e-coli (technically less than 3). The 12th test point off Northstar Beach (between Sweeney and Brew) showed just one cell positive, or 3 e-coli. Recall that the standard for swimmable water is less than 100 e-coli per 100 ml of water.

This has also been the year where we worked with lake residents South of the causeway and Lachute officials to regulate the water levels. In the late spring there was an incident where someone broke into the Marchand Dam above the lake and opened the valve fully, causing the lake level to rise over an inch a day. This was detected and resolved by Lachute.

On 23 June our president Merv Trineer along with Peter Nicholson met with residents from little Lac Sir John and Lachute's official who controls the flow through the exit weir of the lake. They agreed that a certain bolt on the structure would be established as the maximum lake water level, and it was marked with a green spray paint for future reference.

Our ability to have the same water level on both sides of the causeway was the result of the lowering of two culverts last fall. This improved the flow of water through the causeway and enabled the better control of the water level.

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There was a learning curve with this level regulation process as Lachute had historically been adjusting the output flow only a few times a year. Peter Nicholson tracked the water level daily, under the premise that you cannot manage what you do not measure. Later this summer after some significant swings in both directions, Lachute became more responsive. We began to share our level tracking information with the Lachute officials, and in August the level has become more stable just under the established maximum.

From an environmental perspective we need to avoid high water levels that lap onto organic material the shoreline, causing erosion and drowning the roots of trees near the shoreline. Indeed, our lake water levels are much closer to where they were decades ago. This has had a side benefit of recreating a sandy strip on our Sijolm beaches for our kids and grandkids to play.

Thanks to the many people who worked so hard to deal with our lake water levels.

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Lake Sir John Boat Decals and Boat Washing

By

Susan Anastasopoulos & Mariam Bowen

To protect Lake Sir John from invasive aquatic plants, animal and bacterial life that can spread from one lake to another, all watercraft of Lac Sir John property owners should display a Lac Sir John Boat decal. This applies to all types of watercraft: boats, pedalos, sailboats, fishing boats, canoes, kayaks, paddleboards, etc. This is meant to guarantee that your watercraft has not circulated in any body of water other than Lake Sir John.



Please attach two decals to each boat or canoe – one visible on each side, and one on the top surface of kayaks and paddleboards. Please contact Merv Trineer for additional decals, free of charge; hwymerv@gmail.com, or call 514-482-8608 or 450-562-0372 and leave a clear message with your name, house address and phone number.

If you have a visitor who has brought any watercraft they would like to use in Lake Sir John, it **MUST FIRST BE WASHED**. There are special boat washing stations in the Canton of Gore at 45 Cambria Road and in Ste Adolphe de Howard and Montfort. Smaller items such as paddles, electric motors, floats, sails, toys, fishing gear, etc. must be carefully washed with a solution containing javel water (chlorine bleach), then rinsed thoroughly, preferably with a power hose, and left to dry for at least 5 hours. Wash them at least 30 meters from the lake, stream or ditch. Please consult the Quebec Government guide for other cleaning options.

Invasive species such as the Eurasian Milfoil have spread from one lake to another through the hulls of boats and motors, trailers or live bait used for sport fishing, paddles and fishing gear. About 40 Laurentian lakes were infected with Eurasian Milfoil as of 2019. It is impossible to swim or use a boat in an infected lake and there is no way to get rid of the invasive plant.

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Residents of Lake Sir John are very concerned about protecting the lake's environment from invasive and dangerous species. If you encounter a suspicious boat with no decal, you can explain to the outsider that this is a private lake with no public access; people using watercraft without a decal or guests of a resident should be asked to remove their boat in order to protect the lake from outside invasive or dangerous species. Make note of any identifying information and notify the president of SIJOLM.



Invasive Eurasian Watermilfoil

At the end of this newsletter you can find 3 warning signs you can print and put on car windshields and place on car windshields of suspicious outside vehicles that appear to be here either to boat or use a LSJ beach. **Please note that these WARNINGS are not official documents. They are just an informal suggestion.**

#2 is for cars parked on the highway, for boat use

#3 is for cars parked on our roads, for boat use

"beaches" is for cars parked on our roads to use our beaches.

Reflections on our Changing Lake Community

By

Doug Dempster, Vice-President

As I write this article there are no houses for sale at Lake Sir John. For many years, out of our 75 homes here at the lake, there have normally been five or six houses for sale at any given time. Some houses took years to sell. What is going on and why are people now buying at the lake?

According to our resident realtor Chris Vroom, after the 2007 financial crisis, vacation homes in the US and especially Florida became very affordable for Canadians. As a consequence, the Laurentian market for middle-priced vacation homes languished for a decade. In the last few years Florida property values have

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recovered and our Canadian dollar has returned to its traditional discount against the US dollar. US property is therefore less accessible to Canadians. With Covid, of course, the Canada-US border was closed to non-essential traffic and the attractiveness of Florida for a second home dramatically diminished as the US Covid situation worsened.

With the Covid outbreaks in Montreal and the ability of people to work from home, rural real estate outside of Montreal has become more attractive. Laurentian and Eastern Townships real estate markets have been super active in 2020. The little available housing stock has been snapped up, and Lake Sir John is part of this wider trend.

The attractiveness of Lake Sir John property had been increasing even before Covid. Several of our homes sold in the past two years to full and part-time residents of both languages. I spoke to several of our new residents asking "Why



did you choose to buy here?". There were three main themes in their answers-wide-ranging search, accessibility, and the quietness of our lake.

Almost all new residents looked at many locations across a wide region before selecting their new home here. One individual said they looked at five different lakes. Another said that they

looked all over from Repentigny to Sainte Agathe, and everywhere in between. In general, our new residents did their homework and were deliberate in their choice.

For many the accessibility of the lake to their work or primary residence was important. A retired couple from NDG in Montreal liked the one-hour drive. An emergency room nurse in St Jerome needed to be within a 30-minute drive radius which permitted her to be at home while on call rather than at the hospital. A

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new resident with his home in Oka also liked the short drive, as did a couple who worked out of Mirabel and St Eustache.

Without exception our new residents were drawn by our non-motorized lake and the quiet, pristine environment. One family became enamoured of sailing and acquired a Sunfish sailboat. Many like boating and have a paddle board or kayak. One couple that bought this summer are having their first child this fall, and see this as a wonderful environment to raise a family. A professional family with teen-aged children recognized the lake as a place for togetherness in their otherwise busy lives.

I have also been struck by the number of people who chose to shelter or self-quarantine here at the lake during the Covid pandemic. There were people from multiple generations and with differing personal circumstances. They appreciated the help of neighbours, food and pharmacy delivery from Lachute stores, and the ability to walk in nature along our roads. This was another demonstration of the value of their home to some of our residents.

This summer has seen vastly increased paddle board and kayak activity, especially on weekends. These human-powered platforms are not only fun but exercise muscles and balance. Our lake is the right size for this type of vessel, and our waves do not normally get too high. We need a way to celebrate our use of these new types of boats at Lake Sir John.

In many ways Covid has confirmed the value of our community to both long-standing and new residents, and to the wider real estate market. One less positive aspect of our new attractiveness, however, has been the number of non-residents arriving on our roads seeking to put a boat in to fish or to find a beach to swim. We have had multiple reports of trespassers throughout the spring and summer and recognize the level of concern of our residents. We are in the process of developing intervention protocols and are deploying privacy signs at entrances, beaches and parking spots.

I think our residents have always known the value of their piece of paradise here at Lake Sir John. It is great that the real estate market has also finally recognized this value as well. We are being joined by a new generation of enthusiastic buyers, many of whom are adding the joyous sound of children to our lake. Our community is the richer for its new members. We are seeing a wonderful rebirth.

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New residents

The residents of Lake-Sir-John would like to extend a warm welcome our new neighbours who have recently purchased a property on the lake. They are:

Carl Nappert & Bernadette Sarazin
Melanie Samson & Olivier Dumoulin
Jonathan Drover & Heather George
Bob & Fran Breault
Christine Corbeil & Patrice Mazure
Philippe Laurent & Catherine Blais
Sylvie Duceppe & Marc Perrault
Daniel Menard & Josee Davidson
Lynda Parsons
Sophie Graton & Vincent Paul
Benjamin Painchaud & Judy Campbell

Sir John's Lake Sunfish Racing Championship Party 2020

By
Chris Vroom



Sir John's Lake Sunfish Racing Championship Party for 2020 was a huge SUCCESS due to the planning by Commodore Christopher Sweeney and his family who hosted a most enjoyable outdoor event attended by some 25 lake participants sporting masks and keeping the required 2 m. distance due to COVID 19. Delicious food and drink was carefully presented and served with all the current special precautions.

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The winner of the Champagne Cup Race was Clovis Dumoulin with his crew Jean Marc Larrue. The trophy for the 55th consecutive season was won by Christopher Vroom.

Rabbits and enlightened farm animal presentations entertained the

entourage, delivered by, Dominique and Christopher's lovely children, Olivia and Alexia.



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Fibre Cable Coming to Argenteuil

By

Doug Dempster, Vice-President

Lake Sir John faces an exciting new opportunity as a new fibre optic cable network rolls out here in the fall of 2021. Currently our lake is only served by fibre cable in the area of Entrance 3, and parts of the lake have no internet or only through microwave offered by Groupe-Acces Communications.

Fibre Argenteuil has a six-phase rollout plan that has started in the western part of Argenteuil. It aims to provide service to 4000 residences that are currently not served. Highway 329 and Lake Sir John in particular are in phase 5 scheduled for the fall of 2021. This new network will provide standard service at 50 megabits and premium at 100 megabits for \$52 and \$68 a month respectively.

The one-time connection fee that will bring fibre cable from the pole to the home will cost \$60 for a normal installation. Seasonal service rates will be available for those who use their homes for only part of the year. There are also various packages that combine landline, television and Internet services.

Fibre Argenteuil has received support from the federal and Quebec governments as part of a plan to improve internet access in rural areas.

More information on service offerings is available at fibreargenteuil.ca. There is a detailed map with the six phases of the rollout at Argenteuil.qc.ca. It shows that all sides of the lake will be connected with fibre cable.

Groupe-Acces Communications has also announced speed upgrade connections for its Laurentian customers in the near future.

Many of our residents have had very limited or no access to the Internet while at the lake. This is about to change in a dramatic way, enhancing the ability to work from home and to enjoy a full range of on-line streaming of news and entertainment.

I can recall as a child the arrival of a telephone party line at our cottage in 1963. Our house had one long ring, and we felt this new connection was pretty amazing! We have only had good cell phone coverage here at the lake since about 2014 with the erection of new tower to the North of the lake. And now Lake Sir John is about to take the next leap forward and join the fibre optic digital age.

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In Memorium

It is with a heavy heart that I mention the tragic passing of my partner Greg Arevian. Greg purchased the home at 1180 Lac Sir John in 2009 and resided here full time for the past several years. He truly loved and had planned to retire and enjoy his paradise by the lake in a few years. Sadly, he died unexpectedly of a massif heart attack at the young age of 57 in early January . His loss is immeasurable. Patricia Rohay

Lost & Found

Ce printemps, un pédalo a échoué sur rive de Sylvie et Marc Presque 1782, Entrée 3. Il est un peu brisé mais il fonctionne quand même.

For Sale

1. Lowrey Virtual Organ and bench with music, \$2000.00 or best offer. Will deliver from Rigaud. Contact Marilyn Adams at quebec44@gmail.com or all Israel Boaz 514-816-3397.
2. Dining room table and china cabinet. Will accept a decent offer. Contact Marilyn Adams at quebec44@gmail.com

Until next time, I urge you to be careful and stay safe.

#2

AVERTISSEMENT!

Le lac Sir John est un lac privé. Afin de protéger l'environnement du lac, tout bateau ou motomarine extérieur (ne portant pas l'autocollant du lac Sir John) est interdit d'entrer dans le lac par l'organisation des propriétaires du lac Sir John. De plus, l'utilisation des plages du lac Sir John est strictement réservée aux propriétaires et à leurs invités seulement.

WARNING!

Lake Sir John is a private lake. In order to protect the lake environment, any outside boat or watercraft (not displaying the Lake Sir John decal) is prohibited from entering the lake by the Lake Sir John property owners' organization. Also, use of the Lake Sir John beaches is strictly restricted to only property owners and their house guests.

AVERTISSEMENT!

Le lac Sir John est un lac privé et cette route est privée. Le remorquage est à vos frais. Afin de protéger l'environnement du lac, tout bateau ou motomarine extérieur (ne portant pas l'autocollant du lac Sir John) est interdit d'entrer dans le lac par l'organisation des propriétaires du lac Sir John. De plus, l'utilisation des plages du lac Sir John est strictement réservée aux propriétaires et à leurs invités seulement.

WARNING!

Lake Sir John is a private lake and this road is private. Towing is at your expense. In order to protect the lake environment, any outside boat or watercraft (not displaying the Lake Sir John decal) is prohibited from entering the lake by the Lake Sir John property owners' organization. Also, use of the Lake Sir John beaches is strictly restricted to only property owners and their house guests.

plages/beaches

AVERTISSEMENT!

Ceci est une propriété privée. Vous êtes TRESPASSANT.
Le lac Sir John est un lac privé et cette route est privée. Le remorquage est à vos frais. L'utilisation des plages du lac Sir John est strictement réservée aux propriétaires et à leurs invités. De plus, pour protéger l'environnement du lac, tout bateau ou motomarine extérieur (ne portant pas l'autocollant du lac Sir John) est interdit d'entrer dans le lac par l'organisation des propriétaires du lac Sir John.

WARNING!

This is PRIVATE property. You are TRESPASSING.
Lake Sir John is a private lake and this road is private. Towing is at your expense. The use of Lake Sir John beaches is strictly restricted to property owners and their house guests. Furthermore, to protect the lake environment, any outside boat or watercraft (not displaying the Lake Sir John decal) is prohibited from entering the lake by the Lake Sir John property owners' organization.