

The Lac Sir John Newsletter

Summer 2016

From the Editors:

Yet another summer at the lake is drawing to a close and what beautiful weather we have had.

This newsletter is intended to keep you informed about social activities and general information of interest to Lac Sir John residents.

Messages from the president of SIJOLM, Merv Trineer, related to the SIJOLM corporation, will be sent to you separately. The annual AGM of the SIJOLM corporation takes place in October. Be sure to plan to attend.

If you have news related to lake social activities and general information, or something historical to share about the lake community, please send it via email (in either French or English) preferably in MS Word to one of the editors, sanastass@gmail.com or mbowen@videotron.ca.

Susan Anastasopoulos and Mariam Bowen (editors and English version)

Louise Chambers (translator: French version)

SECTIONS appear in the following order:

Recent Social Activities:

- **Corn boil**
- **Sailing club**
- **Lake symposia**
- **Entrance gardening volunteers**

Upcoming Social Activities

- **Dinner club**
- **Restaurant outings**
- **Christmas dinner**

News about residents; new faces; in memoriam

Past memorabilia; stories and legends of Lac Sir John

Interviews with Lac Sir John community newcomers and old-timers (a new feature)

Miscellaneous notices, announcements and information

Observed wildlife at the lake

How safe is our lake to swim in 2016?

Gardening tips

Getting a Building Permit at Lake Sir John

The Lac Sir John Classifieds Bulletin (a new feature)

Recent Social Activities at the Lake:

The **August Corn Boil** took place at Boathouse Beach as usual on Aug. 20. Many lake residents attended with their family and guests. If you missed it, be sure to plan to join us next August for this wonderful chance to meet and mingle with our neighbors. Thanks to the many lake neighbors involved in organizing this event.

This year the Corn Boil was prepared by most of the usual faithful group. Henri Andres mowed the grass at Boathouse Beach and set up the tables which were stored in Libby Barrett's basement. Derek Nicholson provided access to the power supply and drinking water. Merv Trineer organized the placement of the portable toilet. Christ Robitaille, Gillian Barlow's son-in-law, organized the electric wiring, acted as DJ and then presented a fabulous, beautiful fireworks display to round off the evening. Nic Barlow and Gillian erected the shelters for the food tables and her granddaughter, Victoria, chalked the "Horserace" course on the grass. Gillian conducted the raffle and provided table supplies. The raffle tables were stocked by people donating as they arrived. Debbie Barlow manned the corn boil and animated the horse races; her enthusiasm adding to the fun. Oksanna Pohlod emailed out the announcements.

Help is always needed for this event, so would be welcomed if offered; please call Debbie Barlow [514-267-8033](tel:514-267-8033) or Gillian Barlow, [450 562 9613](tel:450-562-9613) if you are willing to assist in any way for next year.

The Lac Sir John Sailing Club

Sir John's Lake Sunfish Racing Championship began in 1967. For the last 50 years, sailors have competed for this annual trophy, while fans and supporters cheered them on from the shores of our beautiful lake. So far this year we have had 15 races since our first Sunday of the season, July 3rd. We have only been rained out only one Sunday and we have two more race days before our season ends. We have had a maximum of 5 sailors so far this season – last year we made it to seven. And we are expecting 2 – 3 new sailors to join the competition next season. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Chris Vroom, Commodore, at (450) 562-6556 to learn how easy it is to try out a Sunfish. We are always looking for new sailors!

The 50th Annual Lac Sir John Sailing Party!

Come join us to celebrate this long standing event that has provided sailors and spectators alike, fun and amusement on Sundays from July through Labour Day for 50 consecutive years.

Races start every Sunday at 2:00 PM and continue to 4:00 PM weather permitting.

This year's party will be hosted by Janet Donald and Chris Vroom on

Sunday, September 4, 2016

5 PM – 7 PM

1724 chemin du Lac Sir John

Food and refreshments will be served.

Please **RSVP** by Thursday, Sept. 3rd so that we can plan accordingly.

NB: For this very special 50th anniversary celebration, the annual monetary contribution will be waived.



The **Lac Sir John Symposia**. This discussion group meets during the summer months at various members' houses. Our symposia themes cover a wide range of interesting topics. A few readings and discussion focus questions may be sent in advance. Then the discussion commences at Happy Hour, accompanied by wine, ouzo, etc. and nibbles. Traditionally, it has been followed by a potluck dinner where the main theme plus other topics are discussed. Symposia topics this summer focused around the currently critical issue of "**Democracy, Autocracy and Radicalism**". All are welcome! If you would like to participate in 2017, please contact Susan Anastasopoulos at sanastass@gmail.com.

The **Entrances' Gardening Group**. Now that the landscaping of the three entrances has been completed, many thanks to our volunteers, Helene Parenteau and Joanne Michel who have beautifully planted Entrance One, Terry Brew and Gillian Barlow who have beautified Entrance Two and Miep de Groot, Oksanna Pohlod, Janet Donald and Kathy Cole who have weeded and planted Entrance Three. We always welcome volunteers to participate in our gardening group that attempts to maintain the attractiveness of our entrances. If you would be willing to

volunteer, please contact Susan Anastasopoulos at sanastass@gmail.com. She will then put you in contact with the others.

Upcoming Social Activities at the Lake:

The **Lac Sir John Dinner Club** is inviting new members to try out this activity. The dinner club is also open to all and a great opportunity to get to know more of your neighbours, as well as dine fantastically. It meets on the last Saturday night of the month (September, October, November, January, March and May). Diners are assigned at random to various houses and a different theme of international cuisine is chosen for each dinner. The host house prepares the main course and coffee. Others bring either hors d'oeuvres or the salad or the dessert, as well as a bottle of wine.

If you would like to try out the dinner club, please contact Oksanna Pohlod oksannap@hotmail.com by mid-September.

Restaurant outings: This year the Dinner Club organizers will also attempt to organize several restaurant dinners for all members of the Lake Sir John community: a December Christmas Dinner, a dinner in late February and another in late April. We need volunteers to take responsibility for each of these restaurant outings including choosing the restaurant and making the necessary arrangements as well as writing the announcement for lake residents and receiving their reservation requests by email. Please contact Oksanna Pohlod or Susan Anastasopoulos if you would be willing to help arrange for one of the restaurant dinners.

The annual Lake Sir John Christmas Dinner

Everyone in the lake community is invited to join together in our winter celebration – our annual Christmas dinner party to be held in December. Family members and guests are welcome. Watch for the announcement of the place and time, which have not yet been determined.

The Dec. 2015 **Lac Sir John Christmas Dinner** was held at the quaint, rustic Au Pied de la Chute restaurant just off route 329. Participants enjoyed lots of holiday cheer and great food.

The Lachute Garden Club

Six or seven of us Lac Sir John gardeners are now members of the Lachute Garden Club, which meets on the third Wednesday of the month. We maintain the flower garden at La Residence; have luncheons, outings, guest speakers, etc. Would you be interested in this activity? Contact Susan Anastasopoulos and she will put you in contact with the organizer.

News about residents

Rose Hamlin is home from a long stay at the Lachute hospital and we wish her a speedy recovery.

Gaetan and Sylvie Danduran will be reconstructing their home after having suffered a serious fire this spring.

Doug Dempster and Christene Boutilier have just completed a wonderful new addition to their lake house.

Several of our long-time residents are now living in Lachute's seniors residence, Le Medallion Dor, but also occasionally spend time at their Lac Sir John houses: Ross and Lorraine Preville and Shirley Dempster. Others are in La Residence in Lachute: Shawn Grennan and Michael and Patty Frazier.

New Faces at the Lake

We wish to welcome our new neighbours and hope they will soon be joining a number of the lake community activities.

We welcome the Scarsini family as permanent residents in their new house at Entrance One. Sergio, Sophie and their 17 year old daughter Émilie moved into their “dream home” in July and love living at the lake. Many nearby neighbours watched the previous owner Karl as he lovingly built their home over several years and now the Scarsinis are enjoying all the luxurious touches that make their home unique. Sergio is returning to work to teach Spanish at CEGEP after his summer break and Émilie is starting her first year at Vanier College in St. Laurent. And if you're looking for a special vacation in Mexico, Sophie can definitely help you out! We look forward to seeing the family at various lake events and on the trails. (Interview by Mariam Bower)

Greg Arevian has recently become a permanent resident at the lake, commuting to Montreal to work.

Caroline Lapierre and her husband have recently purchased the former LeBlanc/Decarie house near Entrance One.

We may have missed mentioning some new residents. If you have recently moved to the lake in the last two or three years, please send us a brief introductory note about yourselves to the editor for the next newsletter.

If you would like to participate in a small informal welcoming committee for new residents, please contact sanastass@gmail.com

In Memoriam

Our long-time lake resident Crystal Corbeil has recently passed away. She was in La Residence in Lachute her last few years. A number of us remember Crystal as our first friend to welcome us warmly at the lake decades ago.

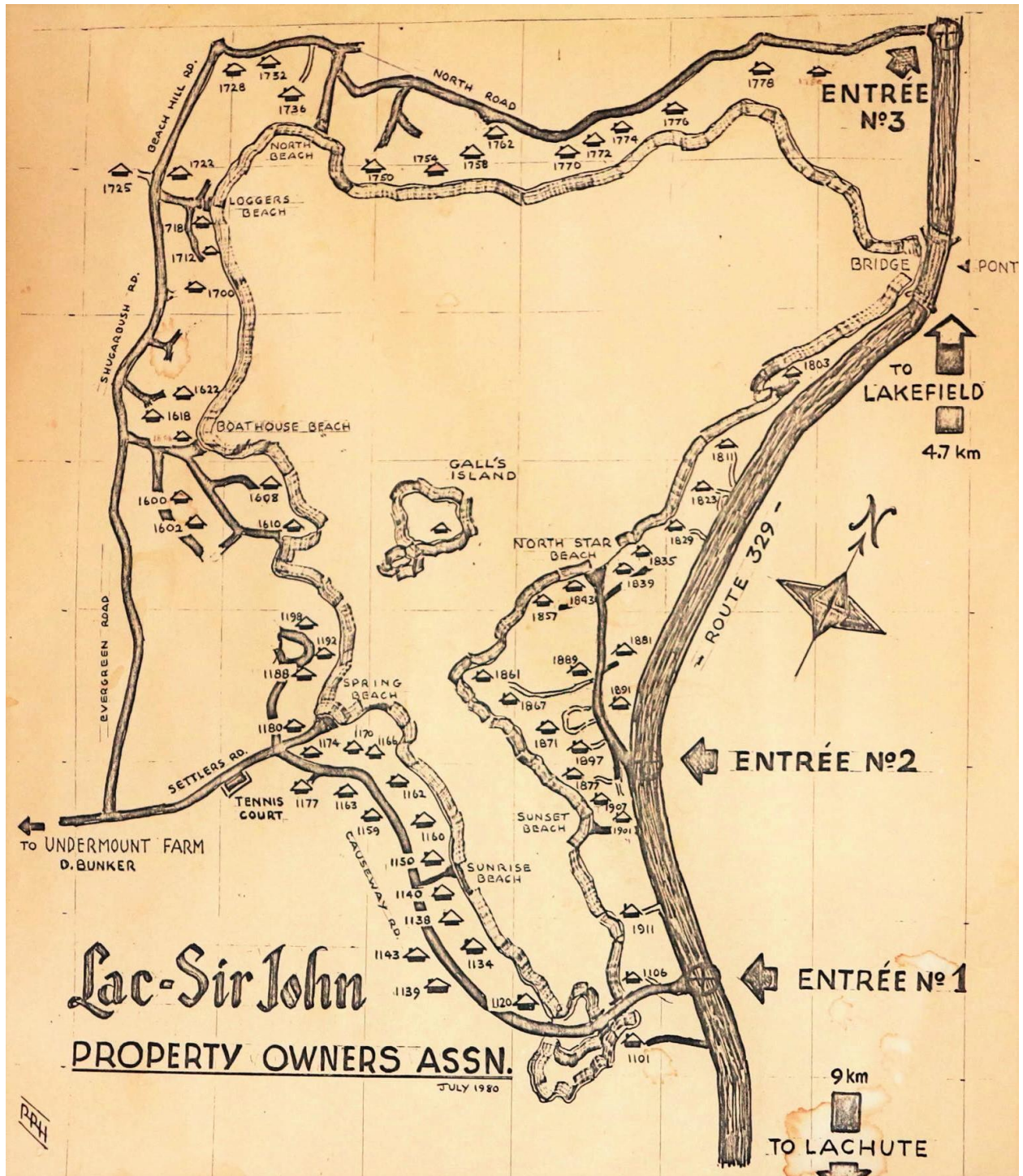
(If we have accidentally omitted anyone, please let us know so we can mention them in the next newsletter.)

Past Memorabilia: Photos, Stories and Miscellaneous Documents from Our Lake Community

As an addition to the newsletter, residents are invited to share memorabilia from our lake community's history. If you have an interesting old document or photo, etc. please send it to the editor by email (sanastass@gmail.com) or (mbowen@videotron.ca) to be included as an attachment to the next newsletter. We welcome you to contribute by sending us a very short (one paragraph) story account of a lake memory or a lake tale (in French or English) that could be of interest to newcomers and/or long-time residents.

Scroll down to see on the next two pages, the 1980 map of the houses at the lake and the residents at that time: (Notice the names given to the roads and the community beaches.)

At least 10 of these early residents' families are still on the lake 36 years later!



Légende

July 1980

Adams B.	1722	Laderoute J.	1139
Andres H.	1602	Leach A.	1101
Arsenault J.	1725	Lighter G.	1162
Aumand E.	1140	Lupien J (1772)	1159
		Lupien M.	1823
Barglow K.	1180	Lusk J.	1732
Belanger Dr L.E.	1618		
Bishop J.	1750	Maddocks M.	1610
Boucher F.	1622	McCarthy R.	1881
Bourgault A.	1120	McTavish J.	1170
Bouskill B.	1160	Meaney D.	1198
Bunker D.	1304	Minkoff M.	1138
Burrows E.	1758	Moll L.	1857
Camp J.	1166	Nicholson J.	1606
Cayford R.	1867	Nicholson P.	1861
Corbell J.	1762		
Cumming R.	1608	Parkes-Raper	1901
		Percy R.	1907
Dakin D.	1829	Petrella H.	1780
De Groot L.	1774	Preville R.	1712
Dempster L.	1150	Probert M.	1600
Donohue G.	1106	Picard S.	1163
Ferguson B.	1889	Regan D.	1778
Flaherty B.	1835	Romer N (1811)	1871
		Roy G.	1188
Gall W (Island)			
Goodwin D.	1700	Sheridan J.	1770
Greig J.	1877	Simpson A.	1736
		Sly G.	1843
Hall J.	1897	Stiles H.	1754
Hall R.	1911	Sturton W.	1177
Hamelin F.	1134	Sweeney C.	1839
Hampton F.	1728		
Hart W.	1891	Trineer M.	1776
Hilton Rev. J.	1143	Tyler R.	1803
Jolicoeur R.	1174	Walberg L.	1192
Knox Dr. S.	1718		

Lake Memories: Interviews with members of the Lac Sir John community.

Mrs. Doris McTavish is a spry 97-year-old who has vivid memories of the 55 years, four generations, which her family has spent at Lake Sir John. She and her eldest daughter Judy reminisced about the early days when their family of six stayed in a rough campsite where “Bunker’s hill” is now located while the building contractor, Hazen Riddell, finished their cottage. It was typical of the handful of lake houses being built, a simple one-floor structure with no interior walls.

John and Kit (Doris) McTavish had visited Sir John’s Lake Club and Estates on the recommendation of a co-worker one afternoon in 1963. They didn’t intend to buy a property, but the idea of an exclusive lakefront community with tennis courts and a clubhouse presented by the developer, Norman Romer, was irresistible.

Mr. Romer was a proper Brit who looked like the commodore of a yacht in his silk ascot. He stirred up the action as the social director, supervising parties and square dances. All building plans had to meet with his approval and he held strict rules to protect the lake, keeping it quiet and free of motorboats. Every winter he organized a Christmas party complete with sleigh rides and a Santa Claus. Mrs. Romer maintained the area’s aesthetics and wouldn’t allow the children to pick any wildflowers. Judy recalls how it was a special treat to walk up the hill to a tuck shop where the property caretaker, M. Lorrain, sold candy and drinks to the kids a few days a week. The clubhouse up at Bunker’s hill was the center of activities and nearby Spring Beach teemed with children. There was a busy day camp (through 1982) where their son Dan, along with Doug Dempster and other teenagers, worked as counsellors. Like other Laurentian communities of that era, there were regular deliveries of bread and dairy products. Judy remembers how the kids would dive for lost items in the lake, finding treasures like old bottles that had fallen through the ice in winter. The two log cottages at Entrance One served as both model home and sales offices as well as another hospitality venue for parties. Years later, Father John bought one of them and held Sunday services for the families in his back garden.

Mrs. McTavish and her family have seen a lot of changes over the decades as cottage owners transitioned from being summer to year-round residents. The tennis court is gone and the clubhouse too, but the lake is as beautiful as ever.

(Mrs. McTavish was recently interviewed by Mariam Bowen. Mariam hopes to interview other lake residents –new and old- for future editions of this newsletter.)

Miscellaneous notices, announcements, and information

The Gore Express and Gore activities:

The mayor of Gore, Scott Pearce, has invited all Lac Sir John residents to participate in the activities held at the Trinity Community Center at 2 Cambria Road, Gore. These include exercise classes for seniors on Mondays and Thursdays 11:00-12:00 (\$2.00 suggested donation). (During

the summer, the exercise classes are held in Wentworth at 10:00.), a free luncheon by the Gore Seniors Network, “Meet and Greet” on the last Monday of each month at 12:30 (\$5.00 suggested donation), classes in dance, Tai Chi, Yoga, Qi Gong, art courses, etc. You can learn about all the Gore activities in their community newspaper, *The Gore Express* published monthly on the Gore municipal website www.cantondegore.qc.ca. You can read all the past monthly editions of *The Gore Express* on this Gore website. This publication is also an excellent source to learn about environmental issues concerning the Laurentian lakes.

The August edition highlighted the inauguration of the Gore Family Trail. It’s main segment includes a spectacular 170-meter wooden boardwalk through the forest that is accessible all year round with maps and signs to help hikers find their way.

Lake Sir John residents can take their dogs to the new Gore Dog Park located in the Municipal Park next to the soccer field.

Do you want to help the birds and save their habitat?

Become a friend of DOA, the Ornithological Development Argenteuil, a new environmental nonprofit organization established in October 2015 with a mission to develop the ornithological nature of the MRC d'Argenteuil. Visit their website for more information about their nesting box network (ANN) and how you can help the organization save bird species and populations. <http://www.DeveloppementOrnithologiqueArgenteuil.org>

Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing:

All Argenteuil residents aged 50 or over are invited to participate in guided excursions of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Every Wednesday at 1:15 when snow conditions are favorable beginning in mid-January. Meet at the “Centre La Randonnee at the Oasis Golf Club, route 327, near Brownsburg.

The above activities and many more are announced in *The Gore Express*.

Posting signs with house numbers:

It is recommended that everyone post a sign at the entrance drive to their house with their civic house number clearly visible. This is important so that emergency vehicles (ambulances, fire trucks, police, etc.) can easily find your house.

Guarding against invasive species:

We all need to be vigilant against invasive species such as the Eurasian water milfoil, an aquatic plant that can completely transform a lake. This plant often enters lakes and rivers on kayaks, boats, paddle boards, paddles, and other water paraphernalia which have previously been in an infested body of water. Before you or your guests put such an item into Lac Sir John, apparently the recommended procedure is to power hose it first and treat the surface with javex. The Lac Louisa Owners Association has produced a video regarding local invasive species. www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMS4ikifall. Please pull out any invasive plants you come across and destroy or dispose of them in the garbage.

Observed wildlife around the lake this summer

A wild life report 2016

Lake residents were treated to a stellar year for wildlife, probably due to extended periods of hot weather resulting from last year's super El Nino in the western Pacific Ocean. . This was a high cycle for tree caterpillars and moths. As Louise Johnson pointed out, the leafy canopy over the trail to the lookout was open to the sky as a result of caterpillars eating the leaves. This of course was good news for many types of birds.

In April Miep Degroot reported a pileated woodpecker.

This spring at the Anastas' the black squirrels, downy woodpeckers, American goldfinch, dark-eyed juncos, chickadees and nuthatches were soon joined by others as the robins arrived along with bay-breasted warblers and common redpolls. Once again this spring, we saw various flocks of Canada geese taking turns resting on the lake on their annual migrations.

This summer Marg Burrows reported a turtle as large as a dinner plate in the lake.

Oksanna Pohlod reports a young buck that sleeps in their front yard and loves their pansies.

Susan and Tasos Anastas report a brilliant red scarlet tanager and his mate near their cottage. This August, the first seagull in their 35 years on the lake was seen on their "duck rock", and the next day there were three.

The lake was again home to a pair of loons, and their haunting calls could be heard at night. Chris Vroom and Ross Cole set out a floating nesting platform to act as a loon nesting site. Loons are sensitive to changes in lake water level as they have poor mobility on land and need to be right on the water. Ross Cole tells us that loons mate for life and return to the same lake year after year. The male arrives first from their wintering on the Atlantic salt water off Massachusetts, and seeks a nesting site immediately after the ice moves out. The female arrives two weeks later. Our platform was a bit late

this year for this pair, so we will see how next year goes. Please do not approach close to this platform in front of Janet Donald's house next spring in the hope that we can support a successful nesting pair of loons.

The lake also hosted a Merganser duck family with 13 (later 11) ducklings that grew throughout the summer. The female is notable for a cinnamon-coloured crest on the back of the head. The family could often be seen resting overnight on various rafts around the lake, or spending afternoons in Little Lake Sir John on the other side of the causeway .

There were multiple sightings of great blue herons, either waiting patiently for fish on the shore along the bay or flying majestically with long flying strokes and legs hanging to the rear.

According to Susan Anastas, beavers were active on the North end of the lake, and there was a beaver lodge on the North shore between the bridge and the Marchand dam. Minks pass by often, and chipmunks and red squirrels are having a good year.

During the hot weather when the lake was calm, great numbers of water striders (genus Gerridae) could be seen. These insects walk on water exploiting the surface tension of water, and can be found either across the entire lake or concentrated into relatively small areas of intense sunlight for mating. Their life cycle is about two months.

It has also been a great year for damsel flies and dragon flies. Janet Donald and Christopher Sweeney, among others, have hummingbird feeders, and they too have had a good year.

This has been a bumper year for frogs and toads. Evenings brought forth the unmistakable deep calls of the bullfrog.

Along with extended periods of high temperature came several violent rainstorms, often with thunder and sometimes with vibrant rainbows. In mid-August, two such storms within three days raised the lake level by ten inches.

Our lake experience is enriched by the wildlife that cohabits with us on our pristine lake basin, and by our sightings of them. No doubt this is an incomplete report. Let Susan Anastas sanastass@gmail.com or Doug Dempster douglas.dempster@hotmail.ca know of any sightings you wish to share.

By Doug Dempster and Susan Anastasopoulos

About our fish: Our lake has both small mouth bass – achigan and pike – brochet. We have heard from our avid fisherman, Clement Boisvert, that he recently spotted an achigan of nearly a meter in length.

How safe is our lake to swim in 2016?

For the second year we have used a simple, cost-effective and reliable water test to determine the quality of our lake water for swimming. We want to know if our water is safe to swim, especially off the seven Sijolm beaches. The bottom line once again is that our lake water is extremely safe for swimming.

The accepted standard for water safety is a count of less than 1000 coliform bacteria and less than 100 E.coli bacteria per 100 millilitres of water. Coliform is a large family of bacteria typically used to measure food and water quality. E-coli is one type. E.coli are fecal bacteria from mammals that are the best indicators of problems such as diarrhea, ear infections or stomach upset that may arise from polluted water. More on recreational water quality can be found at www.hc-sc.ca, and information on the water testing method is at www.bluewaterbiosciences.com.

This year we took 14 water samples on Monday 7 August after a two-week period of 30 degree weather, again testing in a “worst case scenario” at a time of year most favourable to bacterial growth. Samples were collected 30 metres off the shore and from 30 centimetres below the surface. Peter Nicholson and I read the results after a 24 hour incubation period on 8 August.

What did we find? Our average observed results across all 14 sample sites, compared with 2015 results, are shown below:

	Standard	2015	2016
Coliform Count	1000	25	35
E.Coli Count	100	8	5

The highest individual sample E.coli count was 19, compared with 46 last year. Our average E.Coli count continues to be more than ten times lower than the standard, so our water is indeed very safe.

Following suggestions at last year’s annual general meeting, we added tests to answer two additional questions:

- What is the difference in water quality between the water entering and exiting the lake?
- Can we have a more detailed look at Spring Beach that had a relatively high (but still safe) E-coli count last year?

On the first question, samples were taken 30 metres West of the bridge as water enters the lake from the Marchand dam, and 30 metres before the exit through the causeway pipes. In both areas the water is shallow, with some marine plants. From entrance to exit, the coliform count dropped from 39 to 19 and the E-coli from 11 to less than 3. It therefore appears that we are not hurting water quality as water flows through the lake. We will confirm this finding in future years.

On the second question, we took three samples at Spring Beach this year to attempt to determine if any patterns could be found. All three samples had E.coli counts of 3 or less, so the water quality here is excellent this year. Whatever was causing higher count last year is not present this year.

What can you do to contribute to the quality of our swimming water?

- Ensure that your septic tank and field are working well, and have your tank pumped regularly as per municipal regulations.
- Avoid putting cleaning products and dirty water into the lake.
- “Poop and scoop” after your pets near the water line.

As a note of caution, these results are for swimming. The standard for drinking water is zero E.coli. Lake water should be treated before drinking it.

As a final caveat, these results are performed by volunteers and this is only our second year of testing. We will need to continue to monitor trends and should expect year-over-year variances as weather and conditions change. We need to remain vigilant and to maintain our septic systems.

This article was contributed by Doug Dempster and Peter Nicholson

Gardening tips: the advantages of planting hybrids (A feature column from our gardening enthusiast, **Janet Donald** with help from the *National Garden Club’s Handbook – Introduction to Horticulture.*)

Why use hybrids in our gardens?

A hybrid plant is a cross between two or more plant varieties: species or cultivars. The first result of a cross between two parent plants is known as a F1 hybrid, which stands for Familial 1 or first generation. F1 hybrid plants are often stronger and more vigorous than either of the parent plants. A successful hybrid combines the most desirable characteristics of the parent plants, such as color, hardiness, disease resistance, earliness or productivity.

Uniformity

Hybrid ornamental plants are propagated to grow to predictable heights and shapes. This allows us to control for plant landscaping - having different and similar sizes of plants in different places in our gardens.

Variety

Because new hybrid annuals and perennials are produced each year, we can introduce new colors and growth patterns in our gardens. Hybrids often have improved growth habits and longer flowering periods.

Hardiness

Hybrids have been produced to survive hotter or colder weather, thus increasing the range of areas in which they can be grown. For example, in our zone 4 climate, we can now grow plants that previously

could survive only in warmer zones, for example, rhododendrons.

Disease resistance

Many hybrids have been developed to resist or tolerate plant diseases that spread in soil or by insects and other organisms. This means they look better and have a better chance of survival from year to year. For example, newer versions of phlox are more mould and mildew resistant.

Many of the plants in our gardens are hybrids – think of our peonies and hemerocallis (day lilies), for example, - but ask the local botanical store expert for information about your would-be plant's origins and strength.

Getting a Building Permit at Lake Sir John

(For translation purposes I have included an English/French lexicon for some of the technical terms at the end of this article)

If you have considered renovating your lake property, you may have thought about the choice of getting or not getting a building permit. This article will attempt to demystify how building permits are done for Lake Sir John.

Except for a few property owners near Entrance 3, most of Lake Sir John is in the city of Lachute. In 2012 Lachute did a major update to its process for getting a building permit for both new construction and renovations, and homeowners were advised of this in a formal letter. If you live in Gore Township, rules are similar (See www.cantondegore.qc.ca/townplanning.) and you should contact their building inspector Jason Morrison for an appointment via 450-562-2025.

This year we undertook a major renovation and addition to our cottage, and thought it worthwhile to share some of our experience in getting a building permit. The process, while lengthy, is relatively straightforward and is based on principles designed to maintain the value of our properties and the quality of our environment.

More details and contact information can be found at www.ville.lachute.qc.ca/urbanisme. The city planning staff consists of Pascal Joly, Marlene Drouin and Leonard Marchand. We dealt with the last two, and in particular with Leonard Marchand at 450-562-3781, extension 252 and lmarchand@ville.lachute.qc.ca. He is highly experienced with construction in the Laurentians, and we found him helpful, competent and professional. My advice would be to meet with him at the very beginning of your project.

You need a permit if you are planning to change the exterior appearance of the house. You also need to conform to the Placement and Architectural Integration Plan (**PIIA** in French). The heart of this plan is the Specification Grid plus two additional sections, PIIA 013 for lake and forest landscapes and PIIA 014 for mountainous sectors, both of which apply to Lake Sir John.

The **Specification Grid** in the PIIA is highly quantitative, and I will only cover the most salient points. Your buildable area needs to leave undeveloped a minimum of a 10 metre strip along lakefront, 9 metres on the road, with 2.5 metres along the lot line. If your lot is steep (over 30 degrees) at lakeside, the protected lakefront strip is greater than 10 metres. There is a minimum lot size of 3000 square metres unless you have acquired rights, which we had.

We learned that if you are renovating, there are some requirements to keep in mind. If you want to build a structure on posts without a concrete foundation, such as a sunroom, it must be on the side away from the road and be less than 25% of the total building footprint. Any foundation must now be made of poured concrete in forms, not concrete blocks. If you want to increase the number of bedrooms, you will need to have your septic system re-evaluated and likely replaced.

PIIA 013 and 014 are similar, and are designed to ensure harmony with the landscape and minimize the visual impact of the building. Wood siding is preferred over vinyl, aluminum or brick. Tree cutting is to be minimized. You should identify trees that need to be cut in your submission, especially for any in the 10 metre lakefront strip.

Your drawing package is very important as it will be reviewed in depth by the building inspector and planning committee. We had multiple computer-generated views, including 3D perspectives that improved the comprehension of the design.

Once you have your architectural drawings, photos of your current house and lot, your survey as well as your letter of conformity to the applicable PIIA standards, your permit will cost about \$195 and take six weeks to process through the city planning committee and city council. The formal document sent to us by the city lawyer after city council approval comprised two pages of rigorous text. As you cannot start any construction that changes the exterior look until the permit is approved, it is recommended to start early. Getting your design and survey will take time, so you need to allow about six to nine months for the overall planning phase.

By Quebec labour law, your general contractor requires a “**Regie des batiments de Quebec**” (RBQ) registration to demonstrate that he carries the appropriate liability and workplace insurance. Contractors without RBQ registration can face hefty fines if caught at work. If you have a trusted RBQ-registered contractor, there will not normally be on-site inspections by the city inspectors as is normal in other jurisdictions. This places the onus on you and your contractor for quality work.

Once your foundation is poured, you require a second survey to confirm that the actual construction is in accordance with the planning permission.

There is a lot of work before you obtain the single page of a building permit to be posted on the job site. We appreciated the support and responsiveness of the Lachute city planning staff. This planning permission work is ultimately in your interest in maintaining the value of your investment while contributing to a community with a harmonious look and feel. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 613 230 6721 or douglas.dempster@hotmail.ca.

The above article was contributed by Doug Dempster

Lexicon

urbanisme

city planning

aggrandissement

addition

la grille des specifications

specification grid

plan implantation et d'integration architectural (PIIA)

placement and architectural integration plan

secteur batissable

buildable area

droits acquis

acquired rights

paysage

landscape

cadastre

survey

chantier

job site

revetements

siding

THE LAC SIR JOHN CLASSIFIEDS BULLETIN.

Are you looking to BUY, SWAP or SELL at the lake? Do you have SERVICES YOU COULD OFFER your neighbours or HELP WANTED?

LET US KNOW BEFORE SEPTEMBER 18, 2016 AND WE WILL THEN SEND OUT A SPECIAL EDITION CLASSIFIEDS BULLETIN WITH YOUR ITEMS LISTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION.

(mbowen@videotron.ca)



If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter in the future, please notify one of the editors.