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President's Message

Another summer at Marcus Beach has begun. And what a beginning – an unseasonably warm spring followed by smoke from forest fires in northern Ontario and Quebec. That's a first for most of us! With the recent rain, I think we're all hoping that the fires will soon be extinguished and that we can return to enjoying the fresh air of cottage country. In the meantime, the regional fire ban remains in effect – please keep an eye on the firepit signs.

But overall, I'm happy to say that we've had a very stable year, with no pandemics and no major issues. We're just enjoying the little bit of paradise that's Marcus Beach.

As always though, we have a few items to report. Our last Annual General Meeting (AGM) was conducted by Zoom after most owners requested we do so. It was a successful meeting, with one of the largest participation rates we've ever had. Our plan is to continue to use Zoom as our AGM platform, allowing all owners, regardless of where they live, to participate equally. The added bonus is that it's significantly less expensive than renting hotel space and all the associated travel costs.

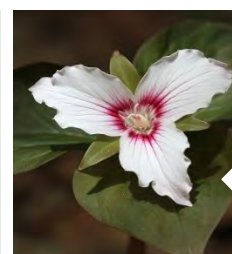
We have no major expenditures planned this year, just a few small items intended to keep our cottages refreshed and lovely. This year, we replaced our living room carpets, installed new pickleball lines on the tennis courts, and are adding some much-needed sand to a few key areas.

Cottage week selection sheets have been emailed out; if you haven't received yours yet, please contact Linda immediately. They are due back on July 13th.

This was Linda Scott's first full year as Property Manager. The role has a hundred tasks to manage in order to Marcus Beach successful. Everything from the visible like managing property maintenance and the physical assets to the many "unseen" tasks like managing the budget or dealing with municipal inspectors. Thank-you Linda!

And with that, I would like to wish you, your family and friends, a very happy and healthy summer at Marcus Beach!

Paul Geukers, President,
Marcus Beach Cottage Owners Association
marcusbeachboard@gmail.com





Cottage News

Itty-Bitty Library

Many of you have already visited our new Itty-Bitty Library that is mounted on the outside wall of the bicycle shed. We hope it will be popular, especially with those owners who enjoy reading a good book on the dock.



In response to a few questions, here are a few suggestions on how to use the library:

- Take any book that catches your fancy. Don't feel you need to return it; if you're not finished when you leave Marcus Beach, take the book home with you and feel free to pass it on to friends when you're done. Or bring it back, particularly if you really enjoyed it. But there's no expectation that books will be returned when taken.
- Drop off any gently used book that you've enjoyed, particularly newer publications. Both adult and children's books are welcome.
- A few "don'ts". Please don't leave any textbooks, manuals, or magazines. And please

don't use the library to clean out your shelves at home of old books that you'd like to get rid of. Unless, of course, they're well-loved ones that you'd like to pass along.

Linda will keep a general eye on the library and clean out books that have been there a very long time, especially if we find there are too many books for the library to comfortably hold. Enjoy!

Cottage Binder

Owners who have been up to Marcus Beach in the last few weeks may have noticed a new cottage binder on their table.

David Lee, supported by the Board, has written a new and improved binder with the goal of reducing the amount of repetition, eliminating information that's no longer useful, and ensuring that the binder can serve as an orientation to new owners.

The first thing you'll notice is that it's much smaller. And that there's no longer a separate duo-tang.

PLEASE take a moment to read it

through. Some sections will be very familiar; others are brand new. The Board is very interested in hearing your feedback on what you think may be missing, or what could be done to make the binder more useful for all. Keep in mind that although new owners and renters will rely heavily on this information to enjoy the cottage, it should be useful to all owners, old and new.

One new feature is a 3D barcode to access the Wifi password. If you've not used this technology before, just use the 'camera' feature on your phone or tablet to focus on the barcode and it will automatically read and enter the password.

Save the Date 2023 AGM

Mark your calendars! The next AGM will be held on **Saturday, April 20th, 2024 from 10am to noon** via Zoom.

Last year we tried for a hybrid in-person / Zoom meeting but there was very little interest in the "in person" portion so the Board has opted to hold the AGM via Zoom only.





Cottage News

MB Landscape

One of the reasons we love Marcus Beach is its rich environment – the lake and shoreline, the forest, the wetlands, and the trees and shrubs throughout the property. So it should be no surprise that over the years, the Board has spent considerable time and focus ensuring that not just our cottages, but also the property remains in good shape.

A bit of history of this work:

When Marcus Beach was first constructed over 18 years ago, the property was younger. Most cottages had low growth between their cottage and the shoreline, and owners could reliably sit on their porches and admire the view of the lake. Grass was low growing and trees were small. We knew there had been some damage to the environment due to construction.

Therefore, in 2009 Marcus Beach retained two local firms (Forest Design Glenside Ecological Services and Forest Design) to restore the property to a more natural state which would be sustainable over the years. At that time, two main areas of concern were identified; areas near docks 1 and 2 had serious erosion issues, and our wetland area was deemed to be in decline.

The Board at the time took immediate steps to mitigate both those issues.

In 2017, the Board engaged the same two firms to provide an updated assessment of the property. They delivered a comprehensive report that focused on key areas of concern:

- Shoreline assessment and stabilization
- Goose management
- Forest cover enhancement
- Invasive species eradication
- Swamp rehabilitation

The study identified high, medium and low priority projects, with the highest priority focused on shoreline erosion and forest management. These recommendations translated into two major projects that the Board conducted the following year. The first greatly expanded erosion control measures (mostly large river rock) along the Marcus Beach shoreline. The second identified trees and shrubs on the property that needed to be removed because they were diseased, damaged, or dying. A total of 160 trees were subsequently removed, providing more air flow in our forest and allowing healthier trees on the property to thrive.

The study recommended that we plant native species on the shoreline to deter geese from entering or nesting on the property, which was done. It also found that our swamp / wetland had recovered since the concerns expressed in 2009, and no actions were required. Two invasive plant species were identified on the property: purple loosestrife and goutweed. The report recommended immediate removal of these species, as removal gets more expensive and complicated as they spread. The strategy for eradication of these species is still underway.

Every year since 2019, one of the authors of the report voluntarily conducts a full walkthrough of our property, helping identify trees that need

to be removed as well as those that should be encouraged to thrive. Our forest has mature trees, some of which are over 100 years old; it's a stable environment with lots of native species, both plant and animal, and is a unique and treasured part of Marcus Beach.

The Board has heard from many owners that they would like an improved view of the lake from their cottage porch. This is being monitored and managed in two ways. Linda's team aggressively trim the alders, those fast-growing bushes that line the shoreline and are very effective in keeping geese away. If there is a tree blocking the view, the plan is to wait until it is tall and healthy enough to prune the lower branches and allow the view to happen through the tree, leaving its canopy intact to provide shade.

The landscape of Marcus Beach is as important as our cottages and the Board takes its management very seriously. If you have any questions or thoughts regarding our environment, please share them with the Board at any time.





Cottage News

Facebook Page

Looking for a pickleball opponent, or someone to volleyball with? Do you want to show off your big fish catch, or share a photo of the cutest grandchild in the world? Maybe you're curious about what other owners charge for rent?

The Marcus Beach Facebook page is now one year old and proving to be an increasingly useful means of connecting members of our community.

As of this writing, there are 127 members representing 83 owner shares (the others are family members who asked to join or spouses with separate FB accounts).

To date, we have had no issues with any of the postings. Users are sharing tips and recommendations of places to visit in the area or including information of general interest.

Sunset photos and deck photos, not surprisingly, are popular posts. But we also see posts asking for sports partners or information about the cottage or area.

About once a week, we receive a request from someone who is clearly not associated with MB in any way, seeking to join the private group. We're not sure why – perhaps some nefarious purpose, or maybe they suspect there is more to MB than is described on our front page.

Interestingly, our page seems to generate interest from people who seem to be from Thailand! But the MB page is "private" – it requires approval to join (done on-line), which helps keep accessibility to the page to just the MB community.

For those wanting to join and see what all the fun is about, simply log in to Facebook, go to the Marcus Beach Cottage Owner's Association page, and answer three questions: your name, whether you are an owner/co-owner or family member of an owner; and your cottage and interval number.

Once we validate the information, you will receive a notice that you are "approved", meaning you can see the site as well as create posts and share photos.

Interestingly, we've had requests

from a few people who say they are good friends of owners. If that were true, we would give their request due consideration, but so far, those people have been unable or unwilling to confirm which owners they are friends with.

And remember, please keep those great photos coming!



Porcupines and Dogs

A quick warning to our dog owners. This spring, porcupines were seen on Joe's Trail, on the section that runs parallel to the road. You might want to use a shorter leash on that section this summer!

Survey Reminder

The annual owners survey will be coming out in mid-July and stay open until the mid September.



When you receive the survey please do take a few moments to fill it out. The survey is an invaluable tool for the Board to get the pulse of what is on owners' minds.





Cottage News

Linda's Report

The summer season is off to a great start; cottages are full and the weather is hot and humid, perfect for boating and hanging out at the beach.

James and Brian have been busy, and the property and the cottages are in good shape. We now have a professional grade lawn mower for the maintenance staff. This is the appropriate type of mower for our property and should be reliable for many years to come.

In addition, it's a much faster machine and will let staff mow the common spaces and lawns much more quickly than before, giving us the capacity to get to other maintenance items.

We changed the lock box key codes this spring, as they had not been changed in a few years. Please send Linda a note if you need a reminder of your new code.

Once again, a huge thanks to the cleaning team, which has gone over and above to keep all the cottages looking brand new. Thanks for all your efforts.

Friendly Reminder

Check-In Time

Please respect your check-in and check-out times. If a renter is at the cottage check-out is **1 hour earlier**.

Porch

Please, no food on the porch—it attracts destructive animals. Drinks, if their original seals are still intact, can be stored there but please, nothing else.



Pickleball is the newest upcoming sport and we have painted new pickleball lines on the tennis court; it is seeing lots of activity.

We have continued with our roofing program. Three cottages had new shingles installed during the April maintenance weeks, the last three with original roofs will be done next spring (April 2024).

A reminder that, as of this writing, there is still a fire ban for Minden County. We keep an eye on the situation and will change the signs at the fire pits the moment that ban is lifted, but for now, unfortunately absolutely no fires at all.

Don't forget to check the lost and found box in your cottage while you're up this summer. You never know what long-lost treasure you might find!

Thanks again to all the owners for making my first year at Marcus Beach a real pleasure.

Resources

There is so much to see and do in Haliburton! Here are a few resources on the Internet to help you:

Highlander Newspaper:

[The Highlander](#)

Tourism site with suggestions:

[My Haliburton Highlands](#)

County of Haliburton official site:

[Haliburton County](#)

Hiking Trails:

[Haliburton Hiking Trails](#)

Dining Suggestions:

[Restaurant Ideas](#)

Garbage and Recycling

[Minden Recycling](#)

Fishing Information

[Zone 15 Regulations](#)

[Ice Fishing Regulations](#)



Cottage News

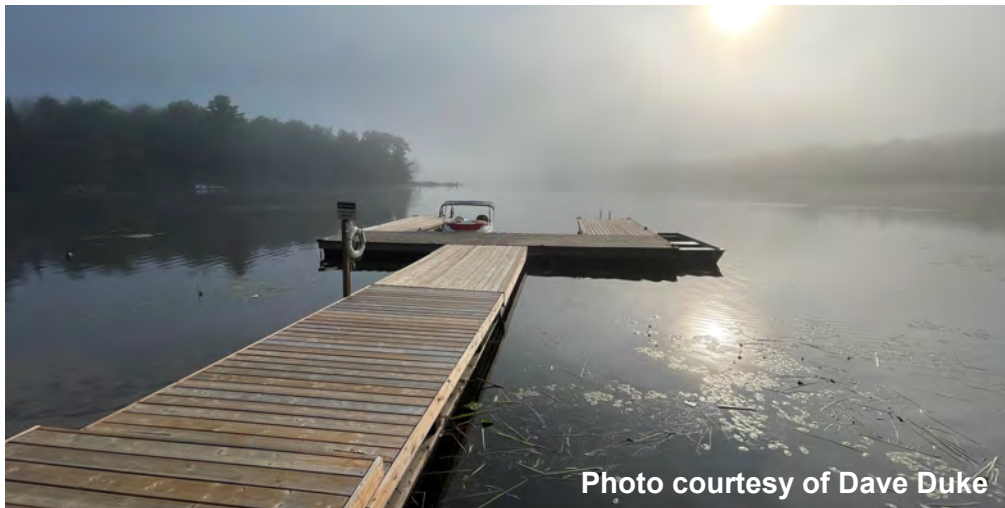


Photo courtesy of Dave Duke

Spring Docks

Some owners who were up in mid-May were a bit confused why two of our docks (#3 and 4) were installed early, but the others (#1 and 2) were delayed. Great question!

Historically, we've relied on friends and neighbours to help tow the docks across the lake from their winter resting grounds (the docks spend winters at various spots around the property.)

This year, we were able to install docks 3 and 4 before boat problems prevented finishing the job.

We quickly learned that no boat rental organization on the lake will allow their boats to tow docks.

In the end, an incredibly helpful owner offered the use of his boat to get the last two docks in, which happened before the end of May – a little later than ideal but well before the summer season.

Linda is evaluating options for the future, knowing that relying on the good will of owners (or friends) is not the ideal solution.

By the way, for new owners – our docks numbers roughly align with cottage numbers. So dock #1 is the dock closest to cottage #1, and then the numbering system follows the shoreline, with dock #4 closest to cottage #19.

Cottage Refresh

The Design Committee has been hard at work and you may notice a few new things at Marcus Beach this summer.

First, you will see that all cottages have had their living room carpets replaced. In many cottages, the older carpets were highly worn and some were dirty beyond our ability to clean.

New carpets were chosen with the help of our Design Committee, which continues to provide advice and suggestions on cottage décor.

Some of the kitchen counters will be replaced starting in the Fall. As we highlighted in our last newsletter the counters will be replaced on an “as needed” basis. If the counter in your cottage is still in good shape it won't be replaced (yet).

The refresh team is beginning to look at window blind solutions. Many of the blinds are still in good shape but some are not—especially those that are on the kitchen and porch doors.

A second picnic table has been added near the popular beach close to Cottage 3.

The fridge and stove replacements are all done—the microwave ovens will be replaced with a stainless steel model as needed.

New Sand

This spring, Linda noticed that some of our recreation areas were looking a bit tired, and she ordered additional sand for the ground.

The large beach, horseshoe pit and tetherball areas will receive some additional attention over the summer. Thanks Linda!

2023/24 Board of Directors

Once again, a huge thanks to all owners who volunteer to help manage Marcus Beach.

This year your board members are:

Paul Geukers (President)
Stewart Dean (Treasurer)
Barbara Metaxas (Secretary)
Bruce Miller (Operations)
David Lee (at Large)
Mary Gingrich (at Large)
Brett Boudreau (at Large)

A special thank you as well to all the owners who help out with the many special projects!