

Newsletter

P.O.Box 183, Pointe au Baril, Ontario P0G 1K0

Volume 3

Our actions affect our water quality

Property values?

Healthy?

Water source?

Tourism/vacationing?

Swimming?

Boating/fishing?

**Let's work together
You must be part of the solution**

OUR STURGEON BAY POINTE AU BARIL ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT	Bob Causton.....(home) 905-824-4352.....(cottage) 705-366-2883
VICE PRESIDENT	Tom Lundy(home) 905-875-3760..... (cottage) 705-366-5617
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DIRECTORS AT LARGE	Cathy Kidston.....(home) 519-836-6897.....(cottage) 705-773-8299
	R. Keith Gardner.... (home) 705-366-2489
	Ruth Ann Muma.....(home) 705-366-2866
	Barb Cochrane.....(home) 705-366-2536

Electronic Version of the Newsletter

The Our Sturgeon Bay Point au Baril Association Newsletter will soon be available on our website www.oursturgeonbay.com. It would result in substantial savings to the Association if members who have access to e-mail would read the Newsletter online instead of receiving a paper copy via regular mail.

Naturally we would continue to print and mail out a newsletter to those who do not have e-mail addresses and to those who prefer paper. Under no circumstances would we release your e-mail address to anyone else. Please send Helen Tedford htedford@vianet.ca an e-mail saying "Add my name to the Association Newsletter e-address list".

When the next Newsletter is published we will send you an e-message indicating that the latest issue is now available on the website.

If you are on our e-mail listing we will also be able to send you more regular updates and information about the Bay Plan and our Association.

Copies of the Bay Plan are available at

- **Pointe au Baril Library,**
- **Desmasdons Marina,**
- **Pointe au Baril Shell Station**
- **www.oursturgeonbay.com**

Phosphate free products

are available in the stores in
Pointe au Baril and in
Parry Sound.
Please, read the labels carefully.

ANATOMY OF AN UNHEALTHY BAY

It recently came to my attention that there continue to be misconceptions about Sturgeon Bay's water quality problems, the causes and the solutions.

What are the symptoms?

- √ Excessive algae growth
- √ Reduced water clarity
- √ Depletion of dissolved oxygen
- √ Toxins from blue-green algae

What is the cause?

- √ Extremely high levels of phosphorus

Other factors (such as low water levels) may exacerbate the symptoms but they do not change the cause (and unfortunately, the return of high water levels will NOT make the Bay healthy again)

Where is the phosphorus coming from?

- √ Human feces
- √ Phosphate-containing cleaning products
- √ Fertilizers
- √ Pet wastes
- √ Sediments on the bottom of the Bay where phosphorus has been accumulating for decades

Although most human feces and phosphate-containing cleaning products may be sent to properly constructed and maintained septic systems, these systems are not designed for phosphorus removal and are not effective for this purpose. Therefore the phosphorous load disposed of in septic systems still makes its way to the bay waters.

What is the cure?

- √ Major reduction in the amount of phosphorus imported into the Sturgeon Bay watershed by residents and visitors and better control of imported phosphorus

Reducing phosphorus release from the Bay sediments and increasing the rate of flushing of the Bay could also be helpful "treatments" but are not "cures". The design of these types of measures and the potential ecological responses are extremely complex. A great deal of care needs to be taken in the development and application of such treatments to ensure that they are effective and do not create new problems.

Prepared by Andrea Bradford, Coordinator, Sturgeon Bay Action Plan Implementation

HIGH NUTRIENT LEVELS IN STURGEON BAY WATER

The following are brief notes of Karl Schiefer's talk at our August 2003 Annual General Meeting. Karl is a marine biologist retained by Archipelago Township and others to study water quality along the eastern shoreline of Georgian Bay.

Most water quality testing in this area has been going on for years and was scaled back this year since things appear to be generally under control. However, in Sturgeon Bay regular water testing only began in 2001 and it was stepped up this year due to the poor water quality: high nutrient levels are causing algae growth and poor water clarity.

Karl explained that, in the wild, nutrients are not imported into an area but rather are continuously recycled. In contrast, we are importing nutrients into the Sturgeon Bay watershed in the form of food, soaps / detergents and fertilizers. These nutrients pass through the soil and find their way into the bay water. Septic systems have little effectiveness in removing them. The lack of significant water flow or "flushing action" in Sturgeon Bay has contributed to the gradual rise in levels of nutrients such as phosphorous and now they are too high.

The phosphorous concentration in Sturgeon Bay were 16 to 23 parts per billion (ppb) in late summer 2002; water clarity was 0.6 to 0.9 metres; the water colour was green; a blue-green surface scum was sometimes observed. By comparison, outside Brignall Banks phosphorous concentrations were typically 5 ppb, water clarity was at least 4 metres, the water was blue with no scum. A phosphorous concentration below 10 ppb is desirable. At concentrations of 10 to 15 ppb, lime-green filamentous algae forms on shoreline objects. Concentrations above 25 ppb are considered extremely high: a blue-green algae scum forms on the surface. Some species of blue-green algae are very poisonous to animals drinking the water, they are less hazardous to humans, but only because we don't tend to drink this water. Dr. Schiefer classifies Sturgeon Bay as hyper-eutrophic.

The excessive algae growth associated with high nutrient levels also causes depletion of oxygen which fish need to survive. Karl described how this oxygen depletion starts deep in the bay water in early summer. Very high nutrient levels at the bottom are caused by the decay of organic matter (algae) deposited there in previous years, further contributing to the high phosphorous concentrations in the bay.

In the summer the small streams feeding Sturgeon Bay from shallow lakes and ponds (eg Sucker and Cranberry Lakes) are themselves high in phosphorous, so they cannot help to dilute the high phosphorous concentrations in the bay.

Karl listed four nutrient-reduction options for Sturgeon Bay. These are:

1. Reduce nutrient inputs to the watershed
2. Reduce phosphorous release from the sediments
3. Biological removal / trophic transfer (e.g. import zebra mussels!)
4. Increase dilution and flushing (a last resort)

Some ways we can reduce nutrient inputs to the watershed are:

- Ensure our septic system is functioning properly
- Don't fertilize
- Use phosphate-free soaps and detergents
- Reduce the use of soaps and detergents (use less soap, cottagers take their laundry home)
- Reduce use of water (so it stays in the septic system longer)

Karl's study of Sturgeon Bay water quality is continuing. He will be reporting his findings / recommendations to the township. He thinks that, with an aggressive nutrient reduction program, we may in time be able to reduce phosphorous concentrations below 15 ppb.

Notes taken by Phil Kidston, water quality committee.

THIS IS A PHOSPHATE FREE ZONE (or is that possible?)

As discussed elsewhere in this newsletter, high phosphorus concentrations in the Bay water are causing the poor water quality. Although there are natural sources of phosphorus, the water quality problem is caused by the phosphorus coming from human sources, namely human faeces and the phosphate rich fertilizers and cleaning products that we use. We can reduce or eliminate our use of phosphates from fertilizers and cleaning products. The Township has a new by-law prohibiting the use of fertilizers. It is up to us to make good choices with respect to what we use for cleaning. According to Karl Shiefer there is a hierarchy of cleaning products.

1) At the top are the phosphate free products that are made of natural materials. These are brands such as **Nature Clean** and **Simply Clean** and products we make ourselves using things like soap flakes, baking soda, washing soda, borax, vinegar, ammonia, lemon juice, mineral oil and lots of elbow grease - they biodegrade quickly and are safe for septic systems.

2) The next level of products are those that are phosphate free, but are made of chemicals. They are not totally biodegradable and may contain harmful chemicals (eg. some may affect the functioning of septic systems) Products that I am aware of are: **Palmolive, Sunlight, Mr. Clean, Lysol, Comet, 2000 Flushes** and all **Home Hardware Products**.

You must read the labels carefully. We need to be using **phosphate free products** and preferably those that are fully **biodegradable**.

**The above lists are only those products that I know of. If you know of others please send the names to me and we will compile a list for the association. Send any product names to kidston@sentex.net. - Use "phosphate free products" in the subject space and then say whether your products go in list 1 or list 2. - If everyone helps a little it shouldn't take long to compile a good list of choices. Thanks.

Cathy Kidston

❖ ❖ ❖ **Thanks, Thanks, Thanks** ❖ ❖ ❖

To PABIA, C.C.Kennedy Co.Ltd., Arts on the Bay, Pointe au Baril Lions Club, and others who have made donations towards the implementation of the "Bay Plan".

**OUR STURGEON BAY POINTE AU BARIL ASSOCIATION
3RD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 2003
HIGHLIGHTS**

1) CALL TO ORDER: 10:05 a.m.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **Motion** that the minutes of the AGM of August 4, 2002 be approved as circulated. **Moved** by Eleanor Duthie, seconded by Barbara Cochrane. **Carried.**

3) FINANCIAL REPORT:

Motion to accept report for the year 2002/2003 as presented. **Moved** by Eleanor Duthie, seconded by Kim Montgomery. **Carried.**

Proposed budget for Fiscal 2004 \$2,000 short. Association to investigate having donations tax deductible.

Motion that the current membership dues be raised to \$70.00 for the 2004/2005 year. **Moved** by Phil Kidston, seconded by Dave Montgomery. **Carried.**

Motion that the appointment of an independent auditor be waived for this fiscal year. **Moved** by Lauralee Kennedy, seconded by Jim Wagler. **Carried.**

4) PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Bob thanked all for their efforts over the past year.

Motion to ratify acts and proceedings of the Board of Directors. **Moved** by John Cochrane, seconded by Walter Guderian. **Carried.**

5) ELECTION OF DIRECTORS (3 positions/2 year terms) The following people agreed to allow their names to stand for election to the Board. Ruth Ann Muma, Tom Lundy and Andrea Bradford. Barbara Cochrane was nominated by Bill Tedford, seconded by Gloria Bradford. Andrea Bradford withdrew her name from the nominations.

Motion to accept, by acclamation the nominees to the Our Sturgeon Bay Pointe au Baril Association Board of Directors. **Moved** by Linda Gibson, seconded by Len Bennett. **Carried.**

6) GUEST SPEAKERS

- **John Cochrane**, councilor, briefed us on the Official Plan for the Township
- **Karl Schiefer**, township biologist gave a lesson on the current situation of our water. (see article elsewhere in this newsletter)
- **Andrea Bradford** reported on the completion of the Bay Plan and the Action Plan arising from it.

Motion to adjourn the meeting. **Moved** by Ruth Ann Muma, seconded by Keith Gardner. **Carried.**

7) ADJOURNMENT: 12:52

WATER LEVELS IN NEED OF ATTENTION

On August 22, I and many others attended a conference called "Threats to Georgian Bay Water Levels – What Can We Do?" held at the C.W.Stockey Center in Parry Sound. At this conference we learned of many threats to our water levels here at the mid point of Georgian Bay.

I learned that 95 percent of the water in the Great Lakes is glacial deposits. I didn't know that the number was that high, but that makes it even more of a finite resource. It just can't be replaced.

The current threats to the levels of the Lakes include climate change, proposed dredging of seaway channels to allow larger freighters into this system, as well as the addition of more water pipelines on the system.

At the mouth of the St. Clair River (American side) the U.S.Army Corps of

Engineers are planning a two million dollar Canadian dredging operation.

This is not the only plan to divert water from the lakes system. The City of Waterloo would like to have a pipeline installed by the year 2035, with an estimated usage of 85 million gallons a day. York Region would like to install a pipeline from Georgian Bay with a flow rate of between 50 and 177 million gallons a day. There's even a plan to divert water to the Missouri River and then on to the American southwest. For the most part it is the areas closest to the Great Lakes that are making proposals for water diversion.

We're the ones who should be most concerned about our water. Conservation, no harm to the environment and improvement should be our catch phrases for the future

Keith Gardner

Pointe Au Baril Corner

Recently our Chamber of Commerce Building was dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Kennedy. The Kennedy family has been very generous in donations and work towards the P.A.B. Chamber of Commerce. This is an honour that is late coming but certainly deserved. Thanks to our little village The Terry Fox Foundation was a success for the second year raising \$2,700.00. Events to remember - Fire Brigade Italian Night Nov. 22.& P.A.B. Winter Whirl Feb.4-7. Hope to see you there!

Ruth Ann Muma

Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (F.O.C.A.)

On Saturday November 8th, 2003 Cathy Kidston (Director) and Tom Lundy (Vice President) represented our association at the F.O.C.A. Annual General Meeting in Leaside, Ontario.

F.O.C.A. annual membership dues were increased by \$0.25 per member; the financial impact to our association is approximately \$16.00 per year. An update by the Strategic Planning Committee identified that 35% of the Cottage Associations in Ontario ranked Environmental Issues – Number 1. Our most daunting task was to decide whom to vote for, with 10 extremely qualified individuals running for 8 Directors positions. We understand that the two individuals who were not elected will most likely be appointed to the Board, as provided under F.O.C.A. by-laws.

In addition to the Business Agenda issues of the Annual General Meeting, there were interesting and informative seminars, as follows:

- 1) Shoreline Development – The Next Generation,
- 2) Docktalk,
- 3) Nuts & Bolts of Your Association: Tips From the “Mechanics” (expert advisors), and
- 4) Dark Skies.

Of particular interest was the presentation by Michael Michalski of Michalski Neilson Associates on Shoreline Development. Michael presented new technologies in phosphorous removal sewage systems from as simple as using special Pre-Cambrian Shield soils which are readily available in our area for the tile or filter beds to a new tertiary sewage system currently being tested in conjunction with the Ontario Municipal Board. Further information will follow as it becomes available to us.

Updates on these issues and all other important F.O.C.A. initiatives are available on their website at www.foca.on.ca

Tom Lundy

Three All Purpose Homemade Cleaners

- 1) Apply a 1:1 solution of vinegar and water. (No rinsing necessary).
- 2) Dissolve 3 Tbl washing soda in 4 cups warm water. Apply and rinse.
- 3) Add 1 tsp. Borax and 2 Tbl vinegar to 2 cups very hot water. Apply and rinse.

Councilors Report - November 2003

John Cochrane Terry Desmasdon

John and Terry have been re-elected by acclamation. We thank you for your confidence.

As you are aware the Blue Green Algae made its annual appearance in September. This year when it arrived the Ministry of the Environment was contacted and as a result the Health Unit became involved as well.

Dr. Carl Schiefer, the water consultant hired by the Township presented an excellent interim report to council and to representatives of Our Sturgeon Bay/Pointe au Baril Association, the Ministry of the Environment and the Health Unit. In his report he identified the causes and he suggested some remedies. His final report will be presented to council in December. Along with Dr. Schiefer's final report we also expect to receive Dr. Doug Joy's report on how our septic systems performed this year. With the combination of these two reports council will need to make some decisions on how to reverse our water

quality problem. We know that remediation will be difficult and costly and will require the support of all the residences on the bay.

The Pointe au Baril Economic Development Committee is close to presenting its final report to council and the community for approval.

Now that the new highway is open to Parry Sound except for the eight kilometer stretch through First Nations land, the Dept. of Highways is moving ahead with planning for the four lane highway north of Parry Sound. Information sessions were held in Pointe au Baril and council had its own information session. The design is in its preliminary stage at this point. The two lane section is presently being held up by the Federal Government which has to give a number of approvals prior to construction starting. Once these approvals are obtained then the process of putting out tenders can begin unless the new provincial government interferes

If you have any questions or concerns please call us.

John Cochrane
705 366 2536
email: drjgc@vianet.ca

Terry Desmasdon
705 366 2144
email: td@vianet.on



*Have a very Merry Christmas and a
Happy Holiday Season*

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Our Sturgeon Bay Pointe-Au-Baril Association

Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. Fees are **\$50.00** per property, which includes one voting membership. Associate membership (non-voting) is available for \$25.00 annually. We look forward to your membership in the Association for 2003/2004.

Name:	
Home Street Address:	
City:	Postal Code:
Telephone Number: ()	
Cottage Address:	
Lot number:	
City: Pointe-au-Baril	Postal Code:
Telephone Number: ()	
Email address:	

Membership dues	
Donation	
Total	

Please complete and return with cheque or money order to:

Our Sturgeon Bay Pointe-au-Baril Association
P.O. Box 183,
Pointe au Baril, Ontario
P0G 1K0