

MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF COTTAGE OWNERS INC.



Spring 2009

MEMBERSHIP

The 2009 cottage season is coming up fast! So once again it is time to renew your MACO membership for the year. In doing so, your association gives us more power by representing your membership to carry out our mandates: to eliminate school taxes from property tax bills province wide; to safe-guard our water supply and to look into concerns that your association may have. Another advantage of being a member of MACO, is that your association can obtain discounted liability insurance as a part of the cottage association umbrella group plan. This discount is approximately 50% less than what your group would have to pay as an individual group.

Please contact me, Marian Jones, membership director at my email address: madjones@mts.net or any member of our executive who will be able to answer your questions regarding MACO membership. As well, check out our website at www.macoman.com

MACO's membership year is from January 1st to December 31st and is at the rate of \$1 per cottage member of your association. (eg if you have 50 cottages registered with your association, membership fee is \$50. If you have less than 30, membership fee is \$30. Please ensure that MACO is notified of your change of Executive when changes occur so we are able to contact the appropriate people. Thank you to all associations who have been

providing updates when executives change. This has been very helpful.

From MACO'S Annual General Meeting - October 2008

- The cost of mailing newsletters, website development and participating in different groups relating to property tax issues such as the letuspayfair group increase yearly and due to this, we have obtained corporate sponsors and had an advertiser at the AGM.
- Encourage all to have old wells sealed. This will help prevent runoff from contaminating the water table. Talk to your Water Conservation District. This should be done properly and can be done without charge.
- Dr. Salki emphasized the importance of restoring the water cycle/global eco system. Some scientists believe that it is important to use water and keep water in our land rather than having it run or drain off. The water would go from the ground into plants or trees to help cool the atmosphere.

Boaters Tests

The following information is contained at www.BoaterExam.com

"As of September 15th 2009 all boaters will be required to have the Pleasure Craft Operator Card in order to operate a powered watercraft. There is no grandfather clause or age exemption – this law applies to all boaters. Powered Watercraft includes watercraft fitted with any sized motor – even a trolling motor."

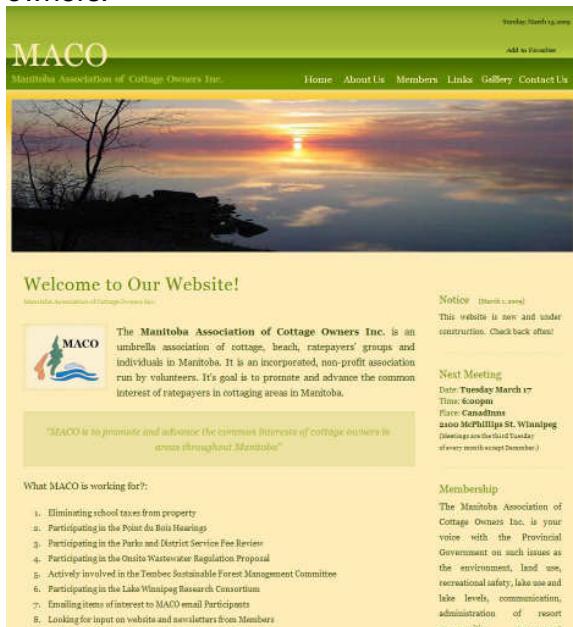
If you need a licence you can go to www.macoman.com and click on boaters exam. Register through this site and a donation will go to MACO.

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Our new Website

By Gus Wruck, Acting Vice President

After several years it was time to update our website. MACO has developed and published a new website, which is located at <http://macoman.com/>. As you can easily see from the picture on the below, it is clean and crisp. The website was designed to operate quickly and easily when using dial up connections. Except for the gallery, pictures have been kept to a minimum. We have attempted to include all of the old information from the old website plus a considerable amount of new information of interest to all cottage owners.



On the Home page we have listed some of our recent activities, membership information plus details about our next meeting. On the About Us menu, there is a listing of the Directors, the President's message and a short history of MACO. On the Members menu there are links to the Issues page, membership information and a link to the minutes page. MACO has developed position papers on a number of issues facing cottage owner's and these are published on the Issues page.

New issues will be added as they are developed.

The Links page contains many of the links from old website and links to many items of interest to cottage owners. The Gallery menu provides photos of many pictures from cottage country. These are pictures that have been contributed by many MACO members. On the contact page we give you the opportunity to make any comments that you wish about the site. We welcome your feed back. We intend to keep the website as current as possible. We wish to provide you with as much relevant information as possible to you the cottage owner in Manitoba.

Please go to the site and enjoy!

School Taxes on All Property Larry Baker

The Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners has been very active in pursuing the removal of education on all properties in Manitoba.

On May 3rd, 2008, MACO held a successful tax rally at the Legislative grounds. Speakers included Adrienne Batra, Canadian Taxpayer's Federation, Rick Borotsik, Finance Critic for the opposition, Ed Arnold, councillor RM Alexander, Dave Crabb, chair M.A.C.O., and Erna Braun, N.D.P. M.L.A..

Media coverage included C.J.O.B., Winnipeg Sun and Global T.V.

M.A.C.O. is also circulating a petition for the removal of education taxes from all properties. Rick Borotsik is reading this petition in the Legislature.

MACO also has printed signs available at a cost of \$4 each to be posted on boulevards, etc., promoting the removal of education taxes from all properties. If you wish a sign, please contact MACO at maco@mts.net

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On September 29th 2008, a group of cottage owners from Lundar Beach/Sugar Point, which included two M.A.C.O. Directors assembled in front of the R. M. of Coldwell office with a reporter from the Interlake Spectator in attendance. This group only paid the municipal portion of their property taxes, refusing to pay the education portion. The cost to the cottage owner is a penalty of 1% per month on the outstanding property taxes. Cheap advertising for a significant article in a newspaper.

MACOs would encourage similar tax revolts as an effective tool in promoting the removal of education taxes from all properties.

Manitoba has the highest education taxes on properties in Canada.

On the letspayfair.com website a comparison of 2006 education taxes was made for different cities for 2006 on homes assessed at \$125,000:

Toronto \$330
Calgary \$600
Saskatoon \$1,051
Montreal \$418
Winnipeg \$1531

An article in the Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy issue # 72, April 17, 2008 noted that 3 Provinces and 2 Territories do not have education taxes on properties; Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Yukon and Nunavut. Nova Scotia subsequently has eliminated education taxes from properties.

In addition Ontario and British Columbia have eliminated locally levied education taxes on properties.

Doug Neal (former president of MACO, now residing in Alberta) advised that Alberta is not based on mill rate. It is a flat tax based on funding for that

division. Everyone in that division pays the same.

Only Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, and the Northwest Territories still levy local education taxes on properties.

In a recent poll in the Winnipeg Sun - "Should school boards have their taxation power taken away?"
93% of respondents voted yes.

Dead Carp on Lake Manitoba

As you may have seen in the Winnipeg Free Press recently, there were a tremendous number of dead carp on Lake Manitoba last year. Live carp that were in distress were caught and sent in for testing. The results a koy herpes virus and it could be worse this summer. It was advised that people shouldn't dump sick goldfish or koy down their toilets or in open water. These fish should be humanely killed.

We have asked Conservation for advice on disposal of these dead fish so as not to attract scavengers such as skunks and raccoons that cause another issue for cottagers. Hopefully we will get a response and will put this information on our new website.

Cottage areas are located all over the province of Manitoba.

(Let us know about yours either history or what is current)

Oak Lake is located about 52km west of Brandon. We have a history of Oak Lake Resort by Poppy Cummings with interesting connections to Louis Riel. Please check it out on our website.
www.macoman.com

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SAVE OUR LAKE –

By SOUL

Our grass roots group is a sub committee of a provincial park based cottage owners association, which has been working hard for the last 3 ½ years. Initiated at our AGM in 2005 it was prompted by the desire to:

- a. show our firm financial support for the LWRC
- b. and to initiate a constructive method of educating our residents about what positive actions they could take to help the Lake to which we are so closely bound.

In the first year with a small core group of workers, we printed and carried through on a widespread dissemination of educational material informing people about the work of the Namao, developing and sourcing a list of phosphate free cleaning products and asking for financial donations to be made directly to the LWRC. We established a distribution network and deliveries made by mail to known cottage groups and by car to all communities around the SW of the basin. Access through the Cottager Magazines' directory was made to all cottage groups on the SE side. Posters were also placed in 80 spots. We were hopeful that this information would be widely shared.

The following year we compiled packages of printed educational information obtained from Conservation, Water Stewardship, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada and hand delivered them to all RM and Community offices, E and W sides, asking them to make this information available to their residents. A list of sources of these free material was included and it was hoped that our contacts would further distribute or make the information available to

their residents. The Winnipeg River communities were also included.

During these two first years we also wrote short articles for the Cottager Magazine and MACOs' newsletter, were interviewed by CBC Noon Hour, Shaw TV, the Manitoba Co-operator and were contacted by a number of others who showed an interest in what we were trying to do. We must acknowledge too, the help of the LWRC staff who were very patient in vetting our composed material.

Year 3, at the suggestion of the LWRC, we concentrated on our own cottage area at Grindstone Park. A Go Greener Grindstone plan was introduced and accepted at our AGM, which embodied an effort to make our community the best example of an informed cottager group dedicated to being good environmental stewards of the land and Lake.

A Water Survey was compiled and distributed in the spring and funding obtained for this project from the Water Stewardship Fund. A handout was prepared with the cooperation of CPAWS and Water Stewardship and was handed out at our annual G Days. By the Fall, the survey results were tabulated, recommendations made and requested information for cottagers' questions were obtained. These were published in our recent March Gazette. The survey had obtained a 38% return rate, which was very acceptable and it indicated that our community was becoming knowledgeable and aware of environmental issues and were eager to do more.

In late summer an opportunity arose to apply for a federal grant for projects on Lake issues within the watershed and basin. At this same time we had also heard via the grapevine that a new sewage lagoon was to be built. Discussions were started between SOUL, the GCOA board and Alex Salki,

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a cottager in our area, about the possibility of linking the new lagoon with a managed wetland for the purpose of reducing our P footprint further. With this project in mind and having had the need for over a year to ask questions about various issues, we finally managed to obtain a meeting with the deputy Minister of Conservation to forewarn him that we as a *Cottage Association* wanted to make an application. He immediately precipitated a meeting with all the appropriate persons, including Conservation, Water Stewardship staff and lagoon engineering firm, in order to answer the many questions that we had. At this meeting we also heard that a natural wetland was already being used as an exit to the Lake for our sewage effluent material, but that it had never ever been tested for suitability. This fact alone was enough to convince us that our project for a new lagoon connected with a managed wetland would be an ideal situation to set up a combined Educational and Scientific study area. It would enable us to continue the progress we had made with environmental actions and perhaps be emulated elsewhere.

In addition the SOUL group is offering two awards at the MSSS in April of this year for projects which address remedial action steps towards the health of the Lake. Inherent, in the award criteria, is also a requirement in which students are asked to orally present their findings to a group of their peers or others, in order to encourage them to spread the message further.

In conclusion we were hoping that by publicizing SOULs' actions to other cottage communities that they too would see what is possible if a common goal was defined. The privacy act has remained a block and deterrent for reaching out directly, so we do not have feedback on whether this has happened, but we remain positive.

Contact with our group can be made through saveourlake@mts.net

Report on the LWRC AGM March 2009.

Mo Tipples. Save Our Lake ,
Grindstone Cottage Owners Association

The meeting convened at 1.15pm with 17 persons including 5 LWRC members in attendance. Al Kristofferson invited Christine Melnick, Minister of Water Stewardship to welcome everyone. She is pleasant and seems genuinely interested in the LWRC and its work. She ensured directors that her support was in place financially....and then left because of pressing business.

Financial Report.

Al K gave an introduction and the financial report was handed out. The bottom line is that they are financially stable with grants from the City, Province and Hydro for the next 2 years. City and Province money for long term, Hydro agreement ends after 2009/2010 season but will be renegotiated. EC funding ends after this FY but will be renegotiated. but with no funds in a contingency fund. Their required refit money is in place and has earned a small interest amount. Refit is due in fall 2010.

The Community Foundations grant they receive of \$82,000, pays for Administration: the part time 'salaries' for Al Kristofferson (Managing Director), Alex Salki (Science Program Coordinator) and Karen Scott (Education and Outreach Coordinator). This will be reduced by 14,000 in 2009/2010. LWRC is forecasting a deficit of approximately \$ 23,000 for end of FY 2008/2009. Equipment for sampling has also been purchased for Karen's school science programs. However they are short \$20,000 in the admin area, which would be spent on further Outreach. He categorically

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stated that they do not actively fundraise as it is not part of their mandate.

Donations had been received from various groups including MACO and a few other cottage associations such as Whiteshell, Loni Beach et al. All 4 RMs from around the S Basin had contributed and I hoped that this was as a result of the Save Our Lakes Challenge. There is no set LWRC member fee.

Suffice to say that with the work that they are trying to accomplish and with the new initiatives which could be forthcoming, donations from groups are still very welcome. These go directly in to the Education and Outreach funds.

Engineers Report

The chief Engineer keeps account of the trips logged, people on board, diesel fuel used, living costs etc. Everything was within budget and surplus diesel fuel was even left over at the season end.

Consumption was less than the previous 2007 year. Major repairs are not required at this time.

Science Report. Alex Salki.

Alex stated that the present mission of the LWRC Science Program was to coordinate Lake Winnipeg related research activities, organize the LWRC Science workshop and foster communication between all LWRC researchers, agencies and stakeholders. As the LWRC currently does not have a stated vision, Alex suggested that LWRC should adopt one. For example the vision of the LWRC is "to facilitate and promote activities that will help restore and sustain Lake Winnipeg".

(Note: this could allow LWRC activities to become more encompassing to include some new initiatives and approaches that he feels are lacking at present)

He then gave a very interesting historical account of Lake Winnipeg

studies prior and subsequent to founding of the LWRC.

Earlier studies had been conducted on the Lake in 1929 & 69 by scientists from the Fisheries Research Board of Canada. In 94 and 96, the Geological Survey of Canada undertook Lake studies and in 1998 Fisheries and Oceans Canada became involved. The number of peer-reviewed scientific publications on Lake Winnipeg, however, pales in comparison to those available for the Great Lakes, a reflection of the lack of scientific attention paid to our Great Lake

After the 1997 Red River Flood, the International Joint Commission tasked scientists from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to determine flooding impacts on the South Basin of Lake Winnipeg and sampling was begun in 1998 and a report was written

The LWRC was formed in December 1998 and support was received from Hydro the Province and DFO to undertake a lake-wide survey in 1999. Algae had been found in the N Basin at levels not seen before. Under agreements with Manitoba Hydro and Manitoba Water Stewardship, the LWRC began to facilitate routine sampling by federal, provincial and university researchers in 2002 and this program has continued to the present.

Environment Canada now has the federal mandate to study Lake Winnipeg and works collaboratively with other research agencies (Water Stewardship, Fisheries and Oceans, U of M, U of W, Miette Environmental). With 20 lake-wide surveys completed since 1999, it is time to start assessing the data and publishing results in peer-review science journals

Research and monitoring of Lake Winnipeg is helping to understand what makes this ecosystem tick. However, without land - based research and

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action to restore Lake Winnipeg's watershed, lake remediation will be difficult if not impossible. Some recent work by LWRC research team members is pointing to the fact that much of the upsurge in nutrients and algal blooms in Lake Winnipeg is linked to climatic factors. In the last 15 years, runoff from the Red River basin has increased due to excessive rainfall and nutrient loads to the Lake have risen.

The publication, (Climatic forcing of a recent trophic surge in a great lake Greg McCullough, Stephen Page, Ray Hesslein, Michael Stainton, Hedy Kling and David Barber recently submitted to Nature is an outcome of LWRC facilitated research.

As the LWRC Science program heads into its second decade and to accommodate changing research priorities, attention will be given to:

- Improve monitoring strategy, focus on research gaps
- Improve communication and integration of lake and watershed research through LWRC organized workshops,
- Strengthen local, national international research linkages,
- Foster and support member-driven projects to reduce nutrient/contaminant loading to lake, improve watershed function and the restore the hydrologic cycle,
- Develop capacity to manage and share data and facilitate scientific publications

Education and Outreach Report. Dr Karen Scott

Karen is a private Consultant who works on environmental issues. Her background is in Biology and Geography. Her main emphasis is on the Education aspect with school children and she works mainly with Grade 6 –12 classes. She is now in contact with 18 schools and is developing various sources of material

for teachers to use mainly in the realm of shorelines and riparian zones.

She includes:

- hands on lake technology
- mixed media resources
- dedicated ship time of half days for groups of max 15
- pre-trip presentations putting the studies in context and linking the class work with the field trip
- proper field logs are maintained, including technical drawings
- a video assignment on the field trip to show their community
- a post trip assignment is being added this year.

Mixed media resources available for schools available online and on DVD are:

Slideshows, Power Point and Videos covering ecosystems, water quality, specimen collection on ship and in class, importance to society and others.

A major link for her educational work will be through Fort Whyte. She is also trying to establish P watershed sampling through River Watch, Prairie R School division and financial help through the Winnipeg Foundation.

Membership input.

Members had been asked to prepare a 5 minute presentation on the work they had been doing for the Lake. Soul was the only member present to do this. My report is attached. I prefaced this by stating that I was disappointed that our group was the only one to do so. The only other members, apart from the existing board, government reps and corporate companies, in attendance were the Manitoba Sailing Association (rep from Silver Harbor) and the Lake Winnipeg Foundation, both new members and they had not prior received the AGM material

I was asked to comment on what I could see being done to improve participation.

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Discussion ensued about the need for better rapport and communications between members and the LWRC.. I on behalf of SOUL gave some opinions. The LWRC are open to suggestions by members, like MACO, about what they can better do. Please discuss this with your board and provide feedback

Elections The meeting had to be postponed for continuation at a later date before the end of April. The Board had come up with criteria suggestions for placing members in certain categories, which were hilited on a screen. These ideas were briefly discussed, but members present were surprised that this had not yet been done and were loathe to make quick comments. Members were not expected to make final decisions on these criteria at the AGM. We only wanted to stimulate discussion amongst those present. As you know, very few LWRC Members were present at the AGM. The LWRC Board has the sole authority to establish these membership criteria but feel that we should give the LWRC Membership an opportunity to contribute. That is why the DRAFT criteria will be mailed out to ALL members so that they can have their input. Following receipt of Member input, the LWRC Board will establish the criteria, send them out to LWRC General Membership with a list of Members by established criteria. Information on the placement of members will therefore be decided by the existing Board and will be sent out to MACO. You will be asked to nominate someone for the Board from your category of membership. Elections will be conducted at the reconvened meeting.

I believe this meeting at least brought those present up to speed with the LWRC and the reports from their staff were interesting and very welcome and suggested that new initiatives were coming through. Al Kristofferson emphasized that the LWRC was still a

work in progress and that they had come along way. Membership support is required in order to effect positive change.

President's Message – Dave Crabb

One of our many projects in 2008 was asking Rural Municipalities to write letters to the Province to remove restrictions on water delivery trucks. Several Municipalities including Lac Du Bonnet, St. Clements and Alexander supported this move on our behalf, which resulted in change.

Partially as a result of our combined lobbying efforts, the Provincial Road Restrictions were re-written and now consider water delivery trucks an "Essential Commodity". Water trucks and sewage trucks can now freely provide service to their customers even during spring restrictions. This enhances rural quality of life.

It is important to support MACO, as we prove again that we can effect change. It may not be easy, but persistence and hard work of the Directors continues to be successful. Membership dues are minimal, but the volunteer efforts are well worth the cost. The MACO Association Insurance package price has been reduced also. MACO is the only province-wide group to represent cottagers. Park boundaries are not a boundary to our help.

Be sure to contact us if there is any way we can be of assistance to you or a group you know of. We will attend General Meetings on request.

See you at the upcoming tax rally again!
We won't quit if you don't.

If you wish an electronic copy of this newsletter to circulate to your members, please contact us a maco@mts.net