



SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

WEST PANACHE CAMPERS' (ESPANOLA) ASSOCIATION INC.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Hosted virtually **January 14, 2024**

Vice President's Report

submitted by Kevin Johnson

Hello to all members of the West Panache Campers Association.

The Executive of our Association has had a busy fall and winter, and we all look forward to perhaps an earlier open on the lake this summer season. Included in this newsletter are reports on several different items of interest to you, and most importantly the state of our main dock in West Bay. See more detailed reports on these in this newsletter.

It is with profound sadness that we mourn the passing last fall of Larry David, who was our current President, and Albert Gouge, a past President. See the notices below. We are grateful for the work and energy that was put into the betterment of our life here on Lake Panache by them. We all extend our deepest condolences to both families.

Continued on p. 2

Executive Committee 2024

President

Ken Goebel

kgoebel418@rogers.com

Vice President

Kevin Johnson

kevin.johnson@bell.net

Treasurer

Marina David

marina.davidwpc@bell.net

Secretary

Angela Frisina

angfrisina@gmail.com

Director

Guy Shank

guys Shank@hotmail.com

Director

Nicholas Siren

nicksiren11@gmail.com

Director

Ryan Snow

ryan.snow52@gmail.com

Member-at-Large

Marc Siren

marcasiren@gmail.com

Lake Steward

Michael Michalski

mfpm39@gmail.com

Fire Marshall

Volunteer Needed

EMERGENCY #'s

FIRE RESPONSE

310-3473 (FIRE)

MNR Espanola

During business

hours

705-869-1330

or

1-888-863-3473

OPP

Daytime

705-862-7676

Mon-Fri

8:00-16:00

24 hr Police

Service

1-888-310-1122

ANY

EMERGENCY

911

Garbage

Disposal

705-869-3867

1653 Bass Lake

Rd Mon-Sat

9:00-3:00

FACEBOOK:

West Bay Panache
Campers

Vice President's Report

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submitted by Kevin Johnson

We are very fortunate that Marina, Larry's wife, is continuing her involvement with the WPCA on the executive and as Treasurer.

Thank you to our many volunteers who worked on various items for all of us over the year and our past Executive including Jim Cree, Marina David, Angela Frisina, Ken Goebel, and Harri Liljalehto for their participation and work.

We held our Annual General Meeting via Zoom call on Jan 14, 2024, where we passed a motion to proceed with funding for the dock repair (see report below).

At the last Board meeting, and by appointment, we are fortunate to have Guy

Shank, Nick Siren, and Ryan Snow join the executive, as well as myself, Marina David, Angela Frisina and Ken Goebel returning. Ken has agreed to be President, Kevin continues as VP, Marina as Treasurer and Angela picks up Secretary. Also, Marc Siren agreed to participate and work with the Executive on several items.

We extend our thanks to all the individuals who step in and keep our association and activities moving forward!

I hope all of you have a happy and safe summer camp season, and I look forward to seeing you on the lake.

2024 and Future Plans: "To Do List"

This coming season is all about keeping initiatives already active going forward, specifically in the areas of maintenance of the main dock/parking, water quality testing (as always by Michael Michalski), engagement with the MNRF on water level management and forestry plans, fire shacks and equipment, our Text Blast initiative to complement traditional emergency support services, the summer picnic jointly with the east Lake Panache Campers Association, membership and ongoing communications via Facebook and our website. **We are still looking for someone to take on the role of Fire Chief.**



Any volunteer help you can give would be greatly appreciated. Feel free to contact anyone on the executive to lend a hand in any of these areas.

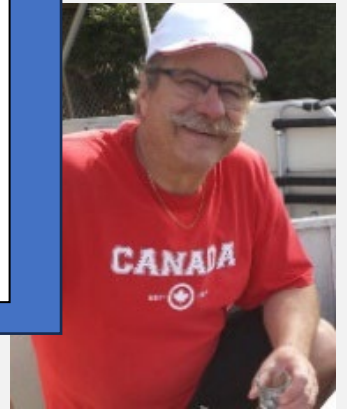
Remembering Past WPCA Presidents



Larry David **WPCA Past President 2019-2023**

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our PAST President, Larry David, who died November 19, 2023. Larry did an amazing job for our organization and will be dearly missed. Larry was instrumental in many of the active initiatives and items you see referenced in this newsletter.

Our condolences to Marina and family.



Albert Gouge **WPCA Past President 2017-2018**

We also mourn the passing of Albert Gouge, who was a former President and a long-time board member for the WPCA who passed away in September 2023. Albert gave many hours and contributed significantly to our association.

Our condolences to Tracey and family.

Thank you to all our volunteers!

| 2023 Accomplishments | Thanks to: |
|---|---|
| Ongoing monitoring and reporting on status of the AED unit | Jim Cree and Bill Hickey |
| Water Quality testing/reporting and Lake Panache Water Study in collaboration with the East Panache Association | Mike Michalski, Water Steward |
| Warranty repair of the cell booster | Kevin Johnson |
| New Fireshack in Walker Dam Basin, at Reis's camp | Espanola Home Hardware, Ken Goebel, Kevin & Lisa Reis |
| Road maintenance | Guy Shank, Chair, Local Roads Board |
| Ditching the main parking lot and road to the lot | Doug Jacklin |
| Helping to level the gravel for drainage. | Charlie Cole |
| Dragging/maintaining Sawdust Bay Road | Charlie Cole and Mike Arthurs |
| Annual Association's Picnic in conjunction with LPCA (East End Association). | LPCA, WPCA and Mountain Cove |

Thank You Harri Liljalehto

Submitted by Charlie Cole

Harri Liljalehto announced he is retiring from serving on the executive after many years of dedicated contributions. Most recently Harri served as the acting Fire Chief, elevating the position by securing many needed pieces of equipment and notably adding an additional Fire Shack on Bradley's camp past the second narrows. His articles in the Newsletters and comments at our annual meetings always provided precautions and valuable tips to safeguard our camps from fire. Were it not for Harri's experience and contacts with the MNR, logging in our cottage areas had the potential to destroy our view scape, water quality and tranquility. Harri always had WPCA interests in mind while ensuring public safety and disturbance caused by logging, road building and hauling

activities were kept to a minimum. His representation at these meetings will be sorely missed. It is also through these MNR contacts that the club was able to procure the additional property in front of the lodge and parking lot. Prior to acting as Fire Chief, Harri served as a valued director for many years. Harri's wealth of experience and years spent on West Bay enabled him to contribute to many areas from pest control, forestry and gravel procurement. Harri spent many hours on Sawdust Bay, Boathouse Road and the main parking lot clearing brush, cutting trees and spreading gravel. Thank You Harri, your dedication has left a lasting impact. While you may be hanging up your official hat, we have no doubt you will be swapping it for a camo one as you head out for more hunting and fishing adventures.

Membership Report

Submitted by Marina David, Treasurer

Our base Membership continues to trend upwards which is great and allows us to continue providing the membership with new and beneficial projects (AED, Cell Booster, Emergency TextBlast, to name a few), along with their maintenance.

2023 WPCA MEMBERSHIP CHART (data is specific to numbers from membership forms)

| | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 | 2020 | 2019 |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|
| Membership | 67 | 59 | 71 | 59 | 49 |
| All Inclusive Membership | 58 | 59 | 50 | 49 | 43 |
| TOTAL MEMBERSHIP | 125 | 118 | 121 | 108 | 92 |
| Dock Usage & Parking | 111 | 94 | 89 | 87 | 91 |
| NM Dock/Parking | 1 | 1 | 3 | | |
| Annual Boat Launch | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| NM Launch Annual | 1 | 1 | 3 | | |
| Summer Trailer Parking | 9 | 5 | 7 | 7 | 14 |
| NM Summer Trailer Parking | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Winter Boat Storage | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| NM Winter Storage | 0 | 0 | 0 | | |
| Boat Launch - Single | 13 | 20 | 19 | 9 | 10 |
| Mirror Tags | 25 | 7 | 15 | 15 | 8 |

While our Membership numbers remain positive, our Dock Box (revenue) took a hit and was down 67%! It would seem the decrease in 2023 funds was directly related to Larry being unavailable to check the vehicles in the parking lot vs payments in the dock box daily. The figure in the table for dock/parking is specific to the purchase of membership tags on our membership forms. Our yearly WPCA costs have increased in the last ten years (from 2013 to 2023): FOCA Membership increased 57.4%; Land Use Permit increased 62.7%; and Association Insurance increased 30.6%.

Membership Dues

With the increased cost of expenses and the need to save for our expensive dock repairs, for the first time, the Board has decided to increase our yearly Membership Fee. **Membership forms and payment are due by April 30th 2024. If you pay by April 30th your membership fee is \$25; after this date, the fee is \$40.** As always and in confidentiality, the Treasurer is available to work out a payment plan should you require it. Contact westbaypanache@gmail.com and in the subject line write CONFIDENTIAL MEMBERSHIP, include your completed membership form and outline your requirements.

Repairs to the Main Dock in West Bay

Submitted by Kevin Johnson, Vice President

The Main Dock in West Bay is owned by our association. As you are aware, it was severely damaged by ice and high water levels in successive springs, so a repair was badly needed. Bob Freeman conducted an assessment of the dock structure in the summer and wrote a report for us that included a recommendation on the repairs required. This fall we issued an RFQ based on this to seven local contractors, and we received three responses and 2 quotes.

We raised a motion at our Annual General Meeting to fund the repairs, and then selected Bill Moroz Carpentry from Birch Island for the job. It was agreed by all that repairs were best done in the winter. This was better to conduct the work, but also so that we did not have to close the dock for repair in the summer months. Work started on Feb 21 and as of this writing, construction is largely done. See photos below.

We are hopeful this can be completed by the end of March and be open and safe for all this coming season. **Any donations towards our association for the dock repair are appreciated -** you can add this to your membership form and payment in the donation section!



West Panache Water Quality Report

Submitted by Michael Michalski, Lake Steward

Sampling as per the protocol of the Province's Lake Partner Program was carried out on five dates during the ice-free season. In addition, water temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles, every metre of depth surface to bottom, were obtained on four dates between July 24th and October 21st.

With respect to the dissolved oxygen and temperature data, there was no dissolved below the thermocline in Peterson Bay and Stoney Bay between the middle of August and early September which was no different than in 2019 and 2022. However, by Thanksgiving weekend, dissolved oxygen in these Bays had recovered; the improvements resulted from the natural fall turnover, with the onset of cooler weather and windy conditions.

Otherwise, deep-water dissolved oxygen in West Bay and Main Lake stations were high throughout the ice-free period (that is, consistently greater than 7.0 milligrams per Litre), confirming excellent habitat for lake trout.

During the August 11th and September 5th sampling runs, I observed very small patches of blue green algae floating on the surface waters of West Bay. These were

not apparent at the other five sampling locations. My sense is that if we had warmer weather in August and September, water bloom conditions might have developed as in the late summer of 2021.

At this point, the Lake Partner Program data for 2022 and 2023 have not yet been posted on the Ministry of Environment's web site; it may be that I will have to visit the Dorset Lab to obtain the relevant information so that my previous reports can be updated. However, based on Secchi disc data collected in 2022 and 2023, there are no changes in water clarity at any of the six sampling sites. Similarly, I anticipate no changes in concentrations of total phosphorus.

I registered and participated in the Federation of Ontario Campers' Association fall seminar on Understanding the Changing State of Our Lakes. The keynote speaker was Dr. John Smolt who is an Aquatic Ecologist and the Canadian Research Chair on Environmental Change. I hope to be able to integrate some of his ideas into our data base which should help with our analysis of factors relating to climate change.



Water Level Management

Submitted by Kevin Johnson, Vice President

The WPCA, Panache Lake Campers Assoc and the 7 Lower Lakes Association have coordinated discussion and made recommendations to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) to attempt to better manage high water levels experienced in the past several springs.

Larry spearheaded this on our behalf and this effort will continue, with the main recommendation being to draw down the water level in Panache through Walker Dam earlier in the winter than has been done in the past number of years. This was the case for many years with pretty good success to manage both Panache spring levels, but also mitigate impacts downstream.

This winter the lake levels are lower and spring runoff will be minimal with the mild winter we have experienced. Downstream from us is Lang Lake, which also has a dam at the exit of the lake. This dam is not performing well and is seeping water that has Lang Lake at an alarming low level. **The ask to the MNR is to reset the logs there to attempt to save as much of the coming spring runoff as possible to raise the level there.** This dam is scheduled for replacement in a few years, however short-term action is needed. The bottom line is **we have established an effective communication link with the MNR on water level management and hopefully this can help for all the lakes and campers in this chain.**

Forestry Plans for Harvest,

Submitted by Kevin Johnson, Vice President

We have been informed that the MNR plan for forestry harvest in the areas north of Lake Panache in the west end, including Stony Bay, has been delayed at least another year. The plan remains in place, and

it is a matter of when this will be started. This was impacted by the Espanola paper mill shutting down, and cutting will be driven by demand from any other local mills for the type of wood available.

Cell Booster at Main Dock-West Bay

Submitted by Kevin Johnson, Vice President

A reminder to all that the **WPCA purchased and installed a cell booster at the Main Dock in West Bay.** This operates independent of your mobile phone or cellular provider and has improved cell service in the area immediately on and around the dock. It failed the previous winter and was sent for repair (under warranty) last summer. It was back in service late in the summer. We unplugged it for the winter, but it will be back in service this summer.



2024 FOCA AGM & Spring Seminar was held on March 2, 2024

Here is the [Event Summary with Slides](#)

Just a reminder that our Association is a member of the **Federation of Ontario Campers Associations (FOCA)**. As WPCA is a member association, all of us, can participate and get information on several topics related to cottagers and the waterways we inhabit. Guidance and tips, relevant laws and legislation, and being stewards to maintain our properties and improve the environment we enjoy are some of the topics FOCA provides information on. Check out their [website](#).

Here is a link to subscribe to FOCA newsletter/elerts, <https://foca.on.ca/news/elerts/> . Please use West Panache Campers Association as the required association name in the form for member access.

Text Blast

Submitted by Ken Goebel, President

Starting in the fall of 2022 the WPCA started working on "mass emergency messaging" system for fire and medical incidents on the lake. This supporting system is called TextBlast which is powered by an app called TextMagic. We started gathering email addresses and cell numbers from our members in early 2023. The members who elected to add their names to the list received a test "TextBlast" this past July 15th. We hope that everyone who signed up received this. We have a 40% participation so far from our WPCA members.

The way this works is when you have a 911 type emergency or fire, you can email wpcatextblast@gmail.com. You must explain your emergency and location. This email goes to three members of the WPCA

board. One of us will then send it out to all the membership that has signed up, asking anyone present on the lake to support that emergency as best as possible until official emergency crews arrive. Please note that **you still must call 911 yourself** in these cases in addition to sending the email. Hopefully, you will never need it, but it is important to have these instructions at your camp and give out to everyone that uses your camp, so they are familiar with the process.

There are currently 45 people signed up. We are looking to have more people involved. Email Ken Goebel at kgoebel418@rogers.com. Please indicate the names, phone numbers and emails of all family members who want to be added.

New Fire Shack

Submitted by Ken Goebel, President

An additional / new fire shack has been erected on the West side of Birch Island near the Walker Dam. It is located on the property of Kevin and Lisa Reis. The structure was donated to WPCA by Home Hardware of Espanola.

WPCA would like to thank Kevin, Lisa and Home Hardware for their generosity, making our lake better and safer.

A water pump for the shack had to be repaired and we just got it back early November. We would also like to acknowledge Guy Shank for getting the pump to and from Garnets. We will be targeting May long weekend 2024 to have it operational.

Link to Map: Lake Panache showing AED/Fire shacks for both East and West end

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ie=UTF8&t=m&oe=UTF8&msa=0&mid=161Uqa5dLR5nV6SRBfVaLS12b2Fs&ll=46.23418877424297%2C-81.53654061550564&z=11>

We maintain three caches of firefighting and emergency equipment.

Fire Equipment and AED: Location #1 (East of Main Dock)

In the red-painted FIRE shack located immediately adjacent to our boat launch in front of the old West Bay Lodge.

Approximate Location: **46 deg. 14' 9.8628" N 81 deg. 34' 42.474" W**

Fire Equipment: Location #2 (One kilometer east of second narrows, around first point at Wayne Bradley's camp (in front of the boathouse, across from Johnson's Island)

In the metal shed with a designated 'FIRE' sign, we have fire pumps, pack pumps, fire hose, shovels, rakes, pails, sleigh and a Stokes basket (stretcher). Anyone can access these tools, as needed for emergency purposes, by breaking the glass window on the key box located beside the door.

Approximate Location: **46 deg. 14' 24.1512" N 81 deg. 31' 44.6484" W**

Fire Equipment: Location #3 (West side of Birch Island, also known as Mead Island and Connie Lou's Island, near the Walker Dam on the property of Kevin and Lisa Reis).

Approximate Location: **46.227401, -81.5001494**

Fire Response

In the case of FIRES around the edge of the lake, Association members are always the "first responders".



- **Get help unless fire is very small**
- **Call MNR 705-869-1330 (during business hours) or 911 or**
- **1-888-863-3473 or**
- **310-FIRE (310-3473)**



The fire danger rating expresses a variety of factors that could increase the threat of an open fire, such as ease of ignition, wind speed, precipitation levels and difficulty of control. There are four levels: Low, Moderate, High, and Extreme.

Fire danger rating and allowable activities

| Activity | Low | Moderate | High | Extreme |
|--------------------------|-----|----------|------|---------|
| Campfires (not bonfires) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ |
| Burning (with a permit) | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |
| Fireworks | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ |

Top Tips for Fire Safety *reference [Canadian Red Cross](#)

- Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas.
 - Test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors every month and replace every 10 years.
 - Replace the batteries two times a year.
 - Talk with family members about a fire escape plan twice a year.
 - Make sure everyone knows the sounds of the alarms, and what to do if they hear them.
- The key to staying safe is to prepare and to have [an emergency plan in place](#).

CELL SERVICE IS SPORADIC THROUGHOUT THE AREA DEPENDING ON YOUR CELL PHONE PROVIDER. YOU MAY FIND A SIGNAL AT THE MAIN DOCK AS WE HAVE INSTALLED A CELL PHONE BOOSTER.