

# BLUEWATER SHORELINE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER - September, 2001

This Newsletter is produced and distributed by the Bluewater Shoreline Residents' Association (BSRA), an umbrella group of residents/beach/cottage/subdivision associations, as a service to the shoreline residents in Hay and Stanley Wards. It is funded by the Member Associations and its Associate Members. For information on membership, please contact the Membership Secretary, **Jim Chapman**, at (519) 235-1644 or (519) 565-5303. BSRA's Postal address is **BSRA, GMB 411, RR 2, Zurich ON**

This issue of the Newsletter is being distributed now to provide notice of the Association's **Annual General Meeting** at **10:00 a.m.** on **Saturday, September 22, 2001** in the **Parish Hall of St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church** at Drysdale, (North of St. Joseph), on Highway 21 opposite Church Road. Our special guest will be John Gillespie, who will provide information about a local environmental study initiative. Other information will also be provided, and discussions will help determine the Association's future activities. Although only the official representatives of paid-up recognized constituent Associations actually vote, Associate Members and Members of constituent Associations are welcome to participate in the discussions. Coffee and soft drinks will be provided. Information of significance to shoreline residents in our area is provided below, some of which updates information given in past Newsletters.

### **NOM 2TO.**

#### **Amending the BSRA Constitution**

At this coming Annual General Meeting, two minor amendments to BSRA's Constitution are being proposed by the Executive Committee. With the resignation of Chuck Box as a Vice President, the Executive Committee discovered that there was no mechanism in place for a replacement. The Committee will therefore be recommending this motion: "that the Constitution be amended by adding to the second sentence under the sub-heading Officers, the following sentence, 'Where an Officer resigns or becomes unable to serve, the Executive Committee may appoint a replacement *pro tempore* until the next Annual General Meeting.'"

This resignation also gave rise to other organizational considerations, and after considerable discussion, the Executive Committee is recommending this motion; "that the Constitution be amended by replacing the words 'two Vice Presidents' in the first sentence under the sub-heading Officers with the words 'a First Vice President and a Second Vice President'." You will note that these are very minor amendments, but it is expected that these amendments will assist the process of governance of BSRA.

#### **Newsletter Distribution**

As noted above, this Newsletter is being distributed to most residences in the Shoreline Community, (for now), to provide information to all Bluewater Shoreline residents, whether they are now a part of BSRA or not. Currently, over 80% of the subdivision associations in the Bluewater Shoreline Community are members of BSRA, and a number of individuals are Associate Members as well. However, the distribution of these Newsletters is dependent on the Members of the BSRA Executive Committee, who distribute them to those listed below, and is certainly dependent on those contact persons listed below who either arrange for distribution or do it themselves. In any case, the Association is indebted to them for seeing to it that the members of the Shoreline Community in Bluewater are informed. We hope that you, too, will express your appreciation to them for their continuing efforts. We are also confident that any concerns you pass along to them will be communicated to the Executive.

<b><u>Association</u></b>	<b><u>Representative</u></b>	<b><u>Association</u></b>	<b><u>Representative</u></b>
Crystal Springs	Ruth Slater	Sunset Cove	Larry Marchand
Wildwood North Margaret Makins		Steepleview	Jean Leng
Glitter Bay	Don Tuckey	Denomme's Lane	Doug Geoffrey
Sideroad 5	Steve Brennan	Green Acres	Joe Rau
Lakewood Beach	Lynn Brownell	Greystone Beach	Bill Fuss
Elmslie Drive	Bob Honeycombe	Northridge	Bruce Bates
North Houston Heights	Bob Campbell	Ducharme Beach	Ross Smith
Houston Heights	Doug Banks	Vista Beach	Werner Heitzman
Pavilion Lakeside	Betty Martin	Coppers Cove	Melodie Northey
Egerton Beach	Ann Kertesz	Antoinette's Lane	Desmond Firlotte
Westdell Beach Jim Chapman	Bluewater Properties	Bill Riesberry	
Snowden Acres N North	Ruth McFarlane	Bachand-Gendron	Doug Kyle
Snowden Acres N South	Ron Maseo	St. Joseph Shores	John Gillespie
Snowden Acres South	Steve Grainger	Bayview	Murray Hodge
Homestead Heights	Glen May	Lakewood Gardens North	Nick Nicholls
Blue Haven	Anne O'Donnell	Lakewood Gardens South	James McGowan
Sunset Estates	Bob Worthy	Sunny Ridge	Albert Schaefer
Rocky Point	Christopher Boyle	Poplar Beach	Linda Whittingham
Durand-Huronview:		Cedar Banks	Keith Locking
Durand St	Cecil Southward	Schade View	Bill Halloran
Durand-Huronview		Ridgeway	Ron Bonham
Durand-Huronview Dr	Judith Walsh	Norman Heights	Andrew Broughton
Crest Beach	Doreen Duffus	Windy Hill	Carl Carew
Crest Beach North	Bob Allen	Talltree Acres	
Shangri-la Beach	Larry & Sharon Graff	Elmwood	Steve Zaranick
LaPorte Beach	David Campbell	Highlands III	Neil Weaver
Drysdale Beach Fred Croke	Highlands II	Katherine Forester	
Michael Court	Lucia Masse	Highlands I	Jim Pilkington

#### **BSRA's Board of Directors**

As is evidenced from the proposed amending motions above, even though most of the hands-on work of benefit to the Members is carried on by the Executive Committee, the **authority** for BSRA's actions lies with the Board of Directors. Many of those listed above are also Members of the Board of Directors, where their associations have paid the membership fee and have been accepted by the Executive Committee as bona fide associations. As well, Associate Members and individual members of member associations may attend General Meetings of the Board of Directors, such as the Annual Meeting, and may ask questions and provide input about concerns. Your presence is welcome.

#### **Action on the Inequity Issue**

As you will recall from the Annual General Meeting of 2000, the Executive Committee was directed to pursue the inequity issue, and particular attention was directed to the inequity in the provision and service of roads, which appears to

Shoreline Residents to be the most obvious difference in service between those living East of Highway 21 and those living West of it. Our Vice President, Bob Campbell, has largely undertaken the responsibility given to the Executive Committee, and has energetically attempted to pursue the issue where possible.

He notes that Shoreline residents currently pay the same rate of municipal tax as other Bluewater residents, whether or not the Municipality provides, from its general revenues, maintenance of roads required to access shoreline residences, that Shoreline residents subsidize other Bluewater residents for the cost of maintaining the assumed roads accessing their residences, and that Shoreline residents have to pay additional moneys beyond their taxes to administer and provide maintenance of unassumed roads accessing their own residences.

It was noticed that prior to 2000, policies and decisions of the former Townships of Stanley and Hay indicated that their Councils were generally reluctant to assume residential access roads West of Highway 21. Concern was also expressed as amalgamation approached about possible changes in availability of road maintenance services with amalgamation. Thus, when the Annual General Meeting directed that there be a follow-up, that same month each of the two Councils was approached with a letter, a presentation was made, and a request was made to each that the matter be dealt with by the Council of Bluewater as soon as possible, and each Council passed a resolution to do so. As a follow-up, BSRA sent a similar request to Bluewater Transition Board and on September 26, the Transition Board approved a resolution, "that the assumption of unassumed roads West of Highway #21 be dealt with by the Council of Bluewater as soon as possible."

During the Municipal Election of 2000, a letter was sent to all candidates for election as well as those acclaimed to Bluewater Council, with questions for the candidates re equity of services, water quality, etc. After the election, a letter was sent congratulating the election winners, and reminding them of the inequity with respect to roads and the issue of road assumption.

With the creation of Bluewater Council as of January 1, 2001, many issues were suddenly found on the Council's plate, and so the Council was given an opportunity to deal with other important issues. However, in April, a BSRA brief on the issue was distributed to members of Council, and in May, a BSRA Presentation to Bluewater Council by BSRA's President and Vice President. In June, at a Special Council meeting, a Committee was established to study the issue. About a week later, the organizational meeting of the Council's "Roads Committee" was held, but without the direct input from BSRA as suggested/requested. Meetings of the Roads Committee were held in July and in August in anticipation that an initial report of the Committee would be ready that month. Meetings of the Committee are now scheduled for September 6 and 12, with a report to Council anticipated for September 17. Thus, an official report should be available by our Annual Meeting.

Meanwhile, the membership has been kept informed about the Executive Committee's efforts to fulfill its mandate through the Newsletter and through distribution of the BSRA brief to Bluewater Council to member association Presidents. In an effort to assist the process, as well as expedite it, the Surveys were prepared, distributed, collected and collated, and some of the results were published in the last Newsletter.

### **BSRA Expectations**

Although it is recognized that Bluewater's share of the taxes it collects is only a small portion, and that the School Board and the County consume most of the taxes paid, nonetheless, in accordance with the mandate given by the Annual Meeting, BSRA expects that inequities with respect to taxation relative to the levels of services can be resolved, and it is expected that a genuine effort will be made to do so. Alternatives to the current and long-time inequalities available to the Bluewater Council include: **a.** providing relative tax relief to those residents West of Highway 21 whose residences are not serviced by municipally-assumed and maintained roads, e.g., through mechanisms such as the imposition of increased area assessment on other ratepayers of Bluewater whose residences are serviced by assumed roads, or a reduction of the tax rate in the underserved area, and **b.** approving a plan to reduce the inequity in road services through the assumption and maintenance of those residential access roads that the residents of a particular shoreline subdivision wish assumed.

To implement the second alternative, roads should be assumed on an "as is" basis, without the necessity of upgrading; therefore, any cost to the municipality should not exceed those maintenance costs presently incurred by the shoreline residents beyond their Bluewater taxes. However, only those access roads that the residents of a particular subdivision wish assumed by the Municipality should be considered. BSRA's Survey has largely answered this latter question, but when a plan of action is in place, appropriate legal steps will need to be taken. If, perchance, no action is taken to remediate the issue, then alternative plans are being considered in case they are needed.

This condensed outline, originally prepared by Bob Campbell, is provided to let the membership know what progress has been made during the year since the Executive Committee was given its mandate, and questions will be welcome at the Annual Meeting.

### **Lake Huron Remains at a Low Level**

For those along the Bluewater Shoreline, the low level of the Lake is not news. However, you may be interested to know that during the month of July, the watershed of Lakes Huron and Michigan received only **45%** of the long-term average precipitation for the area, and it seems as if the August precipitation will be similarly sparse. Thus, next Summer's lake levels are predicted to be about the same as this Summer. While this is a welcome prospect for beach-goers, boaters are concerned about harbour depths and docking facilities. As well, the lower lake levels mean that there is less water depth over some of those large hidden boulders beneath the water surface, and additional care needs to be taken by both swimmers and boaters to avoid accidents.

It should be pointed out, however, that this July's average lake level was 27 cm, (about 11 inches), above the lake level in July of 1964, the lowest monthly average on record since 1918, when records began to be kept. Thus, even lower lake levels are possible next year, although a year with normal rainfall would likely raise the lake level slightly. For more information on lake levels, use <http://chswwww.bur.dfo.ca/danp/tidal.html>, or <http://www.cciw.ca/glimr/>.

Incidentally, for those interested in water quality, as we all are, the International Joint Commission is holding a public forum on Great Lakes Water Quality, and more information can be obtained by visiting [www.ijc.org](http://www.ijc.org) or [www.losl.org](http://www.losl.org). As well, Huron County is about to study the preparation of a County-wide Nutrient Management By-law that will provide common standards throughout Huron County. Bluewater Council has appointed Jim Fergusson, a nominee recommended by BSRA, to represent the interests of the Shoreline Community. Jim is a year-round resident of Bluewater Shoreline, and regularly attends Council and BSRA meetings; and he will be keeping us informed.

### **Help Available for Septic Tank Problems**

As a follow-up to the advice in the last Newsletter to get your septic tank cleaned out before freeze-up if needed, Mayor Bill Dowson has advised that the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority, of which he is also Chairman, is administering funds which, if still available and if authorized, may be used for septic tank repairs, etc. Call the Authority at (519) 235-2610 for more information.



**West Nile Virus Comes to Canada**

Because our Shoreline Community is on the flyway for migrating birds along Lake Huron's shore, we can catch sight of a good variety of species passing by. Next Spring, when the Northern migration is under way, we will be in a good position to see if there are any dead crows or blue jays to be found, as the virus particularly affects these species. These dead birds should be reported to the Health Unit for examination to identify the virus. As you are already aware from news reports, reducing the stagnant pools of water will reduce the number of mosquito-breeding places, using DEET-based repellants, and avoiding becoming a lunch bar for mother mosquitos will help avoid this virus and other diseases for which mosquitos are carriers. By the way, there have also been reports of tick infestations, and you are aware that the deer tick can carry encephalitis. It is not the purpose of this newsletter to scare our residents, but rather to inform, particularly for the sake of our children.

Nutrient Management Study Group  
Encouraging participation  
Dogs