

# WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

Official member newsletter of the West Carling Association



## *President's Letter*

BY PAM WING

Winter is definitely putting up a fight – it doesn't want to leave even though spring is supposed to be here. Scraping the ice off my car in the city this morning was not much fun. Looking at pictures of our beloved cottage country made me very unhappy with snow everywhere. Snug Harbour Road has been flooded and our little "Trail" is solid ice Yuk!

On a happier note, I was at the Cottage Show a couple of weekends ago and it made me happy to see boats, docks outside furniture and so I am sure it won't be long before we can enjoy the cottage.

This coming season, your West Carling Association is planning a number of events for you and your family. There is an event on July 10th for kids 6-12. It is in conjunction with the Library and is called Animal Tracks and will focus on local animals, how to identify their tracks and make plaster tracks with the kids. Watch for the registration for this. Sounds amazing! Other events will be posted on our website so make sure you check things out.

...continued on page 3

## *In this issue:*

- PRESIDENT'S LETTER
- CHANGING HANDS
- WATER QUALITY
- MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE
- WCA & COMMUNITY EVENTS
- FRANKLIN CHALLENGE
- DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH
- NATIVE PLANT SALE
- IF THE WCA DIDN'T EXIST, WHAT WOULD IT MATTER?
- SPONSORS

## *List of Officers*

Pamela Wing, President (264)  
email: ps\_wing7@hotmail.com  
416-985-1727

Donna Tucker, Membership Committee (263)  
tucker6493@gmail.com  
(416) 239-6493

Dr. Adrian Crowe, Vice President (Middle Is.)  
accrowe@hotmail.com  
Toronto: 416 587-5000

Murray Hogeboom, Treasurer (120)  
mhogeboom@sympatico.ca  
Home: 905 889-3645  
Cell: 416-316-0613

Marc Cooper, Vice-President & GBA Rep (001)  
mcooper@agency59.ca  
Cottage: 705 342-7470  
Cell: 416-419-2055

Nanci Wakeman, Newsletter (255)  
nanci.wakeman@gmail.com  
Cell: 905 399-6706  
Toronto: 905 823-2564

## *List of Directors*

Sheila Tierney (099)  
tierneyes@gmail.com  
Cottage: 705 342-1653  
Home: 905 468-2200  
Cell: 905 351-7134

Carol Hodson (95)  
hqbd42@gmail.com  
(416) 214-1608

Bruce Davidson (I-257)  
dbdavidson@rogers.com  
Cottage: 705 342-1034  
Toronto: 416 932-0030

Christina Caap (365)  
sofiefred@gmail.com  
705 346-4047

Don Clement (Sand Bay)  
don.clement1947@gmail.com  
Cottage: 705 342-9383  
Cell: 905 978-1389

Allison Needham  
allison.needham@rogers.com  
(647) 824-2922

John Rohr (367)  
jandprohr@yahoo.ca  
Cottage: 705 342-7781

Bill Bialkowski (261)  
bialkowski@rogers.com  
Cottage: 705 342-7354  
Home: 905 833-7508

## *cont. President's Letter*

Remember that we do have an Associate membership that allows your spouse and or children to join as long as there is one full membership for each property. There is a focus again this year on increasing our membership so I ask that you speak to your neighbours and friends about becoming members. Also consider volunteering to help with our events or to become a Board member.

Our AGM will be held on Saturday July 27th which is a change from our usual Sunday date at the Carling council Chambers and our Annual Picnic and Regatta will be held on Saturday August 3rd with the rain date on the 4th at the beach in Fitzgerald Bay. This is a fun event and a nice opportunity meet your neighbours. Lots of fun for the kids too. I hope to see you there.

I look forward to having an opportunity to chat with many of you over the summer. As I mentioned there are a number of events being planned which I hope you will attend. We also value your input so please don't hesitate to contact me or any Board member with your suggestions. Enjoy this newsletter and remember to keep checking our website for events!

Here's to a wonderful, summer filled with warm and happy times with family and friends!

## *Changing Hands*

**BY NANJI WAKEMAN**

As of August 2018, Bill Bialkowski has handed over responsibility for the WCA newsletter, after six years of faithful service. For most of those years, Bill was creating a hardcopy version – no mean feat! Laying-out a newsletter that is essentially an 8 1/2 X 10 piece of paper, folded in half to make four pages of the finished product is a rubick's cube of a sort. Every time Bill needed to add one page to an edition, he had to find content for four pages. That meant he often had to beat the bushes to get submissions from WCA members. The cost of printing an edition is based on the number of pages so Bill could not have the WCA paying to print empty pages! You can see what job it was for Bill to fill the pages and create a pleasing and professional looking newsletter.

A big thank-you to Bill for handling this job so admirably and without complaint for so many years.

# *Volunteers Needed for Water Quality Testing In West Carling - How Can I Assist?*

**BY DONNA TUCKER**

Volunteers from West Carling have been involved in water quality testing in our area for many years. The Lake Partner Program (LPP) has historical data collected by Carling residents that consists of calcium and phosphorus levels and water clarity that dates back to 2004. The Program is looking for local volunteers. At present, the only active site of data collection in West Carling is in Long Bay

## **Program Overview**

The LPP is Ontario's volunteer-based, water-quality monitoring program in place since 2002. Each year, more than 600 volunteers monitor total phosphorus and water clarity in almost 550 inland lakes at over 800 sampling locations. Volunteers collect lake water samples and return them, postage paid, to Dorset Environmental Science Centre ([www.desc.ca](http://www.desc.ca)). Total phosphorus and calcium analyses are performed in their water chemistry laboratory.

## **Why are phosphorus and calcium measured?**

In the past, part of the volunteer monitoring that occurred along eastern Georgian Bay included bacteria monitoring. It is now recommended by scientific studies that phosphorus monitoring is a better measure of overall water quality. Phosphorus is the nutrient that controls the growth of algae and most living animal and plant life in the aquatic environment. If it is too high it can result in algal blooms that may affect drinking water, recreational activities like swimming and fishing and shoreline property values. Calcium is measured as all living organisms require calcium to varying degrees. For example, zooplankton, the first link in the food chain are very sensitive to declining calcium levels.

## **Why is the Lake Partner Program important?**

The data are published each January on the LPP website. The data are used to inform environmental research and economic research and decisions related to shore development.

For more information on the Lake Partners Program go to:

<http://desc.ca/programs/LPP>

### **What would my commitment be?**

Calcium and Phosphorus testing is carried out once in the spring around the May long weekend or early June. Water clarity testing using a Secchi Disc is carried out monthly. The LPP provides most of the required equipment, postage and a training video. Volunteers provide some form of watercraft to get to the site, a rope and a weight.

### **Where would I collect the data?**

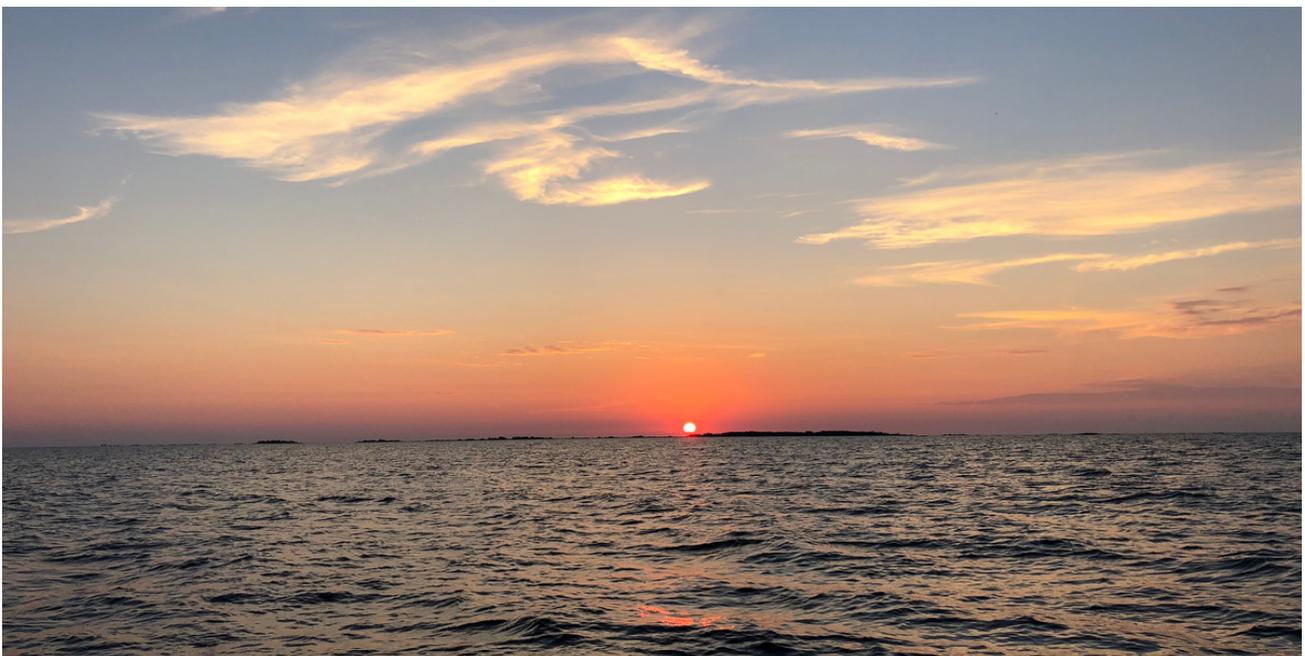
The Program Coordinator for LPP has recommended starting with sites that have existing historical data which include:

- Rose Channel
- Rose Island
- Rennie Bay
- Breezy Point Bay (between Franklin and mainland near Rennie Bay)
- Galna Point (Franklin)
- Little Shebeshekong River
- Shebeshekong Bay a little bit of body text

David Bywater (Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve) has also suggested that sites further off-shore would be useful as well and has suggested that water quality be tested near Bateau Island, the Minks and Twin Sisters.

If you are interested in learning about the water quality in the general area of your property, this is an opportunity to contribute to guarding our beautiful clean water and ensuring enjoyment for many years to come. This is an activity that could be shared with children to teach them about the importance of protecting our environment.

For information about how to volunteer, please contact:  
Donna Tucker at [tucker6493@gmail.com](mailto:tucker6493@gmail.com)



## *Membership Committee Update* BY DONNA TUCKER

We met our target for 2018! We set a goal for a 20% increase over 2017. In 2018 we had 143 members and 4 associate members. The Committee has met three times over the winter and continues to work on strategies to increase our numbers and add more social and educational member benefits including:

- repeating our successful direct mail campaign in the spring
- holding/supporting more social events including:
  - a separate event for children
  - cruise aboard the Island Adventurer or a dinner cruise aboard the Chippewa
  - speaker series
  - AGM with speaker
  - Annual picnic and regatta
- continuing our door-to-door and dock-to-dock visits
- working with local real estate agents to welcome new property owners
- establishing a Summer Book Club
- conducting a survey of our current and prospective members to determine what matters most to them

### **Committee Members:**

Marc Cooper, Adrian Crowe, Carol Hodson, Sheila Tierney & Donna Tucker

We are always looking for members who want to participate in our events or help with the planning and organization. If you are interested in being involved please reach out to any Board Member or send an email to [info@westcarling.com](mailto:info@westcarling.com).



2018 WCA Picnic

## **WCA & Community Events**

*For a full list of events and an up to date details on each event, please visit our website at [www.westcarling.com/events](http://www.westcarling.com/events)*

### **Carling Market**

Carling Community Centre  
Early Bird - Sat May 18  
Sat June 22nd to Aug 31

### **Carling Community Centre Grand Opening**

Sat June 8 - 3 PM to 8 PM

### **Franklin Challenge**

Snug Harbour  
Sun June 23 - 7 AM to 2 PM

### **WCA Pancake Breakfast**

Killbear Marina Restaurant  
Mon July 1 - Time TBD

### **GBBR Children's Event - Animal Tracks**

Co-sponsored by WCA and the Parry Sound Library  
Carling Community Centre  
Wed July 10 - 2 PM to 3 PM

### **WCA Annual General Meeting**

Carling Community Centre  
Sat July 27 - 10 AM to 12 PM

### **WCA Picnic**

Fitzgerald Bay Beach  
Sat Aug 3 - 1 PM to 4 PM

### **WCA - GBBR Family Hike**

Carling Community Centre  
Sat Aug 17 - 10 AM to 11 AM

## Franklin Challenge

**DATE:** June 23, 2019 ~ registration OPEN April 2

**WHERE:** Snug Harbour

**WHAT IS IT?**

White Squall is hosting a paddling fundraiser for Franklin Island and Area Clean Up- partnered with Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve (GBBR) as support partners receiving the funds. Demonstrate your commitment to being a guardian of this unparalleled and fragile environment by joining this fundraising event, getting sponsors and having a fun paddle. This is a 20 km circumnavigation of Franklin Island by paddle-power. A shorter route option of 5-8 kms is available for those not wishing to do the full 20 kms.

**PLAN FOR THE DAY:**

7:00-8:00am- Register at Gilly's Snug Harbour ~ Hot coffee & final instructions

8:30am- Start Paddling

All Day- Gillys Open all day to check in at finish

2:00pm- Wrap up Ceremony @ Gilly's

**This is a Fun Day of Paddling – NOT a Race Folks**

**HOW DO I SIGN UP?**

Register online with a minimum \$50/paddler ~ registration opening spring 2019.

<https://www.whitesquall.com/franklin-challenge/>

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**Sunday, June 23**

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GEORGIAN BAY BIOSPHERE RESERVE

## *Diamonds in the Rough*

BY TOM BETTS

The 30,000 or so rocky islands that define the eastern shore of Georgian Bay can be absolutely stunning in their beauty – the pinks and grays of gneiss and other ancient rocks contrasting with bluer than blue skies and water and greener than green pines sure paints a pretty picture. But these same landscapes can be rugged, unforgiving, and harsh, especially for those things trying to eek out a living there – winter and summer beat down with intense heat and bitter cold, gale force winds blow with regularity, and often there is either too much water or not enough.

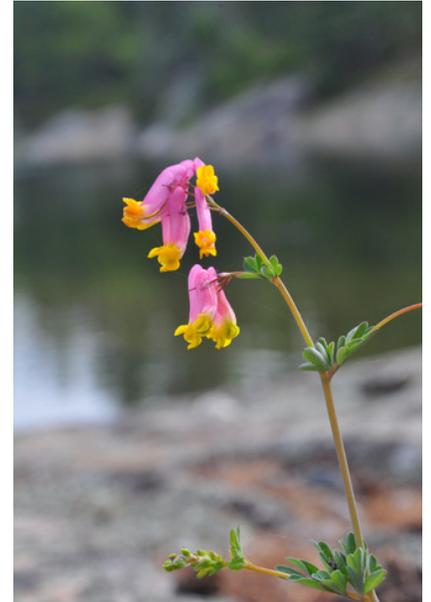
And so it has always fascinated me that the rocky environments of Georgian Bay's islands can support an amazing diversity of wildflowers, and that these plants not only establish themselves in the nooks and crannies of the broken Canadian Shield, but they often seem to thrive there. They are, indeed, diamonds in a rough environment, little gems splashing a lot of colour onto a rocky landscape. But they can easily be overlooked.

For our family, no island stop would be complete without an exploratory wildflower hike, just to see who is in bloom at a particular time. And of course we have our favourites.

Who would come first chronologically in this parade of colour is a difficult question, but certainly the pale corydalis would be near the beginning of the list. It also has one of the longest bloom periods, adding its little touch of colour from May to September. There are not many flowers that combine pink with yellow, but this delicate member of the poppy family does it well. It's drooping, tubular flowers -- pink with a yellow tip -- punctuate stalks of bluish-green, serrated foliage, and they are a delight to find where so much is hard rock and crunchy lichens.

At about the same time, the wild columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) dazzles us with a similar color combination. Often colonizing steep, rocky cliffs where not much else will grow, this early bloomer in the buttercup family displays unusual drooping flowers pairing vivid red and vibrant yellow. The contrast of the red spurs of wild columbine against a backdrop of darker rocks is not soon forgotten. Though columbines in a variety of colors are common in backyard gardens, it is tough to beat the colors of the eastern red wild columbine.

Toward the interior of an island, on a quiet bay where white-throated sparrows and nuthatches fill the morning air with song, we find the stunning Indian paintbrush. Though the actual flowers of this member of the snapdragon family are nondescript and hidden, the colorful scarlet-tipped bracts on a 30 cm stem paint a pretty picture along a forested shoreline.



Pale Corydalis



Indian Paintbrush

And nearby, in the pine woods, another exciting find awaits -- the pink lady's-slipper. On a leafless stalk a large, pink, inflated slipper-like flower hangs like few other flowers do. It is unmistakable. Large and showy orchids, lady's-slippers often multiply into a substantial grouping of plants. A scene such as this can be quite a find. Little wonder the pink lady's-slipper is celebrated as the provincial wildflower of Prince Edward Island, and the state wildflower of New Hampshire.

As spring moves into summer, the islands light up with the several centimetre-high mossy stonecrop. This succulent is an escapee of European gardens, but it is nonetheless quite beautiful as its bright yellow blooms paint themselves into what seems like every available crack or depression in the island rocks. One day there is nothing, and the next, an explosion of colour!

For those with a passion for blue, the frail harebell appears in early to mid-summer, finding a root-hold wherever conditions are just right. These are small plants with thread-like stalks, and the tiny deep blue bell-like flowers can easily be missed. Look closely in the miniature wildflower gardens of the islands, as the blooms of harebell stand a mere 15 cm off the ground.

And nearby one can usually find blue flag, a showy member of the iris family. Blue flags like to have their feet wet and will most often be found at the edge of little temporary pools on the islands or at the edge of the water. They are tall, sturdy plants, and the large violet-blue flowers can be enjoyed throughout much of the summer. Quebec recognizes the blue flag as its provincial flower.

One flower that had me stumped for a while was swamp candles. In a marshy area of a large island, I had noticed first some small, erect plants with strange bulbous "growths" on the stems but no sign of flowers. A year later and a month earlier, the spires were on fire with bright yellow blooms, each with two red spots at the base of each petal. Thanks to the flowers, I now recognize this impressive member of the primrose family, and against a watery background it is a picture-perfect flower.

A larger, sturdier plant but no less beautiful is the swamp milkweed. Like others in the milkweed family, this plant attracts many insects and especially butterflies to its deep pink flowers that top the plant in umbel-like clusters. True to its name, swamp milkweed is often found in damp areas. What a sight it is to discover swamp milkweed on an outer island, its flowers smothered by a few dozen monarchs!



Pink Lady's-Slipper



Mossy Stonecrop



Swamp Milkweed

It has been a long wait for the August blooms of cardinal flower, and there's probably not a cottager anywhere who looks forward to the end of the cottage season. Sadly, to us, that is what cardinal flower signifies. But as if to temper the disappointment we all feel, the scarlet red blooms on meter-high stalks at the water's edge can certainly brighten any day. The beautiful deep red flowers are pollinated chiefly by hummingbirds, who have a selective advantage over insects in probing the tube-shaped blooms.

The amazing wildflowers that brighten the Georgian Bay landscape are easily missed – after all, most are very small, and most do not typically bloom in large patches that stand out to a casual observer. And besides, there are so many other things deserving of attention – the remarkable old-as-time rocks themselves, a myriad of bird species occupying diverse habitats, stunning sunsets and soothing sunrises, and so much more. But sometimes the small steals the show, if we let it, and these diamonds in the rough need no polish.



Cardinal Flower

## Native Plant Sale



PLANT PICK UP:

**Sat. June 1<sup>st</sup>**

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**MAY 16<sup>TH</sup> 2019**

## *If the WCA didn't exist, what would it matter?*

We asked a number of our board members to describe what the West Carling Association means to them, and we did it in an interesting way, we asked "If the WCA didn't exist, what would it matter"? Here are a few of their answers.

### **BY NANJI WAKEMAN & DAMIAN COOPER**

In June 2011, my husband and I purchased our cottage, which we call The Snug, because as a Brit, and lover of a "good pint" the term "The Snug" has a special meaning for Damian and because we are located very near to Snug Harbour. Within a month, a very personable man named Bruce Davidson kayaked up to our dock and encouraged us to join the West Carling Association. We did and what a good decision that has proven to be.

In joining the WCA, and attending the AGM meetings, we have met an extremely interesting, erudite, committed group of people who are all in agreement that Georgian Bay is a treasure over which we must keep watch.

This WCA has helped us in many ways.

We learned things practical and theoretical:

- how to store garbage so as not to attract bears
- the cause of water level fluctuations
- about the GBBR and its educative programs
- which contractors to call when we needed work done
- the politics of Carling Township
- the threats to our paradise over which we must be vigilant

We have experienced:

- wonderful get-togethers and parties
- excellent conversations at the end of a dock
- the best kayaking routes, recommended by fellow WCA members
- the many wonders of Franklin Island
- fascinating rock walks

The result of all of this learning and communing with our new friends and with the natural beauty that is Georgian Bay is a deep, one might say spiritual, appreciation of this very special part of Canada. We consider ourselves truly blessed to be meeting such amazing people, and to be experiencing the wonders of the Bay area at a time in our lives when we have the freedom to do so.

## *If the WCA didn't exist, what would it matter?*

**BY JOE AND DONNA TUCKER**

Our grandchildren ages 12, 9, 7 and 4 are all avid cottagers. I asked them what they like most about being at the cottage. Of course, they mentioned spending time with family, especially their cousins and going for ice cream. They also talked about swimming, kayaking, boating and tubing. They talked about exploring Franklin, the Pancakes and other islands in the area for picnics and "checking out" the rocks.

Treasured activities for them are hunting for berries and "cool" flowers. They mentioned the fun of spotting wildlife nearby. Our four year old grandson said he likes "finding deer poo"! Deer, fish, turtles, snakes, frogs, foxes, mink and the occasional bear (including the one that trespassed into our basement) are all a focus of interest for them. They talked about Snug Harbour Lighthouse as an important part of the area. Honourable mention also went to the West Carling events such our annual picnic and the recent Children's Waterfest held at Fitzgerald Bay Beach.

Similarly, I remember that, as our children were growing up, they took delight in the same things. I also recall their fascination with the local history, shipwreck sites and the boats of all shapes and sizes that came and went.

When I stepped back and thought about what all of this meant, I realized that the signal we received from our children and grandchildren is the importance of preserving the natural environment and the history of Georgian Bay. How would their enjoyment change if there were no longer the symbolic landmarks, the pristine, clear waters of the Bay and the biodiversity of this incomparable environment that we enjoy today?

As a multigenerational family enjoying our cottage we have been "on the Bay" and members of the West Carling Association for over 30 years. Our family enjoys the social events. We benefit from the advocacy work of WCA that includes monitoring Township Council discussions and decisions particularly in relation to waterfront development, taxation and the fate of local landmarks such as Snug Harbour Lighthouse. WCA continues to work with community partners in the areas of invasive species control and water quality monitoring in order to preserve the natural environment to ensure enjoyment for many generations to come. WCA is a group of volunteers working on behalf of our family and yours. I urge you to continue to support its activities and speak with your neighbours about joining.

## *If the WCA didn't exist, what would it matter?*

**BY BILL AND JUDY BIALKOWSKI**

If the West Carling Association (WCA) did not exist, what would it matter? Let's try to answer that in steps.

Georgian Bay - that quintessential slice of Canadian landscape - where the pink granite of the Canadian Shield slides into the blue waters of the Lake Huron, the land of the Wendat and the Iroquois, where Champlain explored, and the Group of Seven painted. Judy and I have fallen in love with this spectacular place.

We have now learned about the fragility of this ecosystem: the drying wetlands, the degraded water quality, the algal blooms, the Phragmites, the dying pine trees. We are also aware of the ever-increasing pressure from the six million people of the GTA, and beyond, some of whom come to kayak, jet ski, camp and fish in this idyllic playground. We welcome them, and hope that they too may experience some of the wonder we have. But we wish they did this responsibly. Our cottage ownership has awakened a sense of responsibility for addressing this. This has happened mainly through our involvement in WCA and the larger GBA, both of which have focussed our attention on a myriad issues in our immediate surroundings which otherwise we would have missed. Our social contacts in WCA functions and meetings with neighbours and friends have strengthened our convictions and commitment.

In attempting to answer the question, we can state the obvious, as cottage owners we all love this place and want it to be forever so. While others come to play here, we must recognize that the kayakers, campers, and weekend boaters, jet skiers cannot be held responsible if they feel no obligation to preserve this place. And therein lies the answer as to why we need WCA. In the main it is the need for stewardship of our fragile environment. Carling Township provides the basic services: roads, snow removal, garbage, fire and policing, but a small rural municipality cannot be expected to have a grand vision for the environment of this magnificent shore. Even though WCA does not have direct representation on council, we can and do bring our concerns and suggestions to council, so that all users of this shore are aware of what needs to be reserved, why and how. This requires signage, posters, to educate, and where need be, bylaws to enforce behaviour and preserve the environment.

In short, WCA and the larger GBA, provide the foundation for understanding how to conduct ourselves without damaging the environment while at the same time enjoying this beautiful place with our friends and neighbours. If WCA did not exist all this would slowly slip away.

## *If the WCA didn't exist, what would it matter?*

**BY MARC COOPER**

This is a complex question for me. I had to ask myself what else might not exist, in my memories, in my heart and in my present and future.

My connection runs deep with the West Carling Association, my grandfather was instrumental in resurrecting the association in the late 70's, my mother took his place on the board in the 90's so it seemed natural that I would join in or around 2010. Watching their dedication as a grew up, even though sometimes it meant missing a shore lunch on the only sunny day all week, was an inspiration to me. I have no doubt that their love for the wind, waves and sunshine was made even more special by being able to share that love with their children and grandchildren.

Not long after joining the board, I started a family of my own, and I know that I want to share this love for West Carling with my grandchildren someday.

Also, not long after joining the WCA Board it became immediately clear to me that we are not alone, people up and down the shores of Georgian Bay and on the islands near and far from it, all love Georgian Bay, in their own way and for their own reasons. And associations like ours have come together to take part in a larger conversation, across municipal lines and at all levels of government, to find common ground to ensure the careful stewardship of the greater Georgian Bay environment, this group is the Georgian Bay Association and I am now your representative on their board serving as the Executive Vice President.

I see first-hand how this group brings like-minded people together, to strengthen their voices, to rally their resources so we can punch above our collective weight. The countless volunteers' hours are just the tip of the iceberg, more than the directors of the GBA board, even more than the directors of the local association boards, this group harnesses the relationships and the powers of its members to share information and rally the troops. On our behalf the GBA has helped guide local governments to adopt responsible development practices and have worked at all levels of government to ensure the careful stewardship of the greater Georgian Bay environment.

I truly believe that it is only through our collective voices that we will be able to share this land, much as it is now, with our grandchildren's grandchildren. If you have not visited the GBA's website lately, I ask that you take a minute and check it out at [www.georgianbay.ca](http://www.georgianbay.ca) and discover how we can all work together as neighbours, WCA members, and as GBA Members.

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1 Parker Lane, Nobel ON, P0G 1G0



Terry & Sarah Gilbert

138 Snug Harbour Rd.  
Nobel, ON P0G 1G0

705.342.5552

[www.gillyssnugharbour.com](http://www.gillyssnugharbour.com)

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