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The North Sounder is the newsletter of The North Sound Cottagers Association Inc.

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THE NORTH SOUNDER

GUEST EDITOR'S COMMENTS -- Helen Wellnhofer

We are all so lucky to be able to spend time each summer on Georgian Bay! Europeans who come to visit cannot believe that ordinary folk like us can own pieces of paradise. We are indeed privileged! This privilege, however comes with obligations which we must all accept in order to maintain the quality of the water and the land for those who follow us. This is stewardship.

There are several levels of stewardship obligations.

The first is personal stewardship by which I mean looking after our own property. We must take care of our waterfront by keeping it natural. Avoid planting near the water or pulling weeds from the water. Other animals depend on those aquatic plants for food or shelter and need natural transitions from water to land. Avoid putting anything toxic into the water. Rinse paint brushes well away from the water and use the new acrylic outdoor paints and stains. Be careful with gas and oil by filling tanks away from the dock and shoreline. I hope that all of us have properly functioning toilets and/or outhouses now. Have you considered buying or building a gray water system for your sink water? Allowing grey water to drain into the Bay is no longer acceptable. Take down trees only when they create a hazard. Loss of trees exposes the thin soil to erosion as it dries out and then is washed away in a heavy downpour, sometimes into the Bay. As you go about your summer life at the cottage think about how you are caring for the land and water. Think Stewardship of your own property!

While you are hiking along the shore near your cottage watch for garbage left behind or washed up. Pack a supermarket bag in your pocket for garbage or come back later to take it away. If people are camping nearby be respectful of their space. If the opportunity arises, talk to them about how special Georgian Bay is, that it is a UNESCO Heritage area and that we are all working together to preserve it for everyone. *Think stewardship of the neighbourhood!!*

While you are out boating watch for smoke from an untended fire which is spreading. Forest fire is a huge danger during the hot dry spells we often have in the summer. Before you have a campfire, check with Carling Township office to see whether there is a fire ban in place. A fire ban affects both campers and cottagers and we must all be vigilant. *Think Stewardship of the land and water!*

Georgian Bay is a UNESCO Heritage area which extends from Port Severn to the North Channel. Anything which affects one area affects us all. Get involved. Support the Georgian Bay Association which has an eye out for environmental problems on the Bay and which has considerable clout. Make a donation to the GBA. Thank Stewardship of the whole Georgian Bay area.

WE ARE ALL STEWARDS OF THE GEORGIAN BAY!!! LET EACH OF US DO WHAT WE CAN. TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

