

OUR MISSION: Make the Muskoka lakes safer and quieter to ensure the sustainable enjoyment of a treasured shared resource



Summer 2016 Newsletter

Getting the Word Out

Chair's Message

Safe Quiet Lakes has made great strides this year in our various activities to promote safe, courteous and respectful boating behaviour on our lakes. This issue of our newsletter covers some highlights such as our new video, summary of our very successful Quiet Campaign joint media program with the OPP, Social Media initiatives, ERIN Research's commitment to support us again next year polling cottagers on important boating issues, and some feedback we've received from key stakeholders.

We are making progress in raising public awareness of our key messages. As a measure of our reach, we handed out over 12,500 boaters code cards to individuals and through police spot checks. All our work made possible by a talented and dedicated Board and volunteers, and by our supporting partners.

We appreciate your feedback on our efforts.

Frances Carmichael
Chair, Safe Quiet Lakes



2016 Board Members: (from left) Lawton Osler, Al Manchee, Frances Carmichael, Pat Pape, Karen Dalton, Greg Wilkinson, Jane Evans, Nancy Cohen. (missing) Ken Buchanan, Ross Halloran, Claude Leblanc, Craig Reith, Linda Stockton, Caroline Brooks.

2016 Quiet Campaign Video

A joint media campaign between Safe Quiet Lakes and the Ontario Provincial Police

One of our most important communications initiatives this year was production of a short 3.5 minute video that provides an overview of what our organization is about, and how we are working with the OPP to make our lakes safer and quieter.

We hope you enjoy this video and encourage you to send the link to friends. We are always interested in feedback and recommendations for improving our communications products.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=6N63q8KebdE

For more about the video and to view it [click here](#)



What People are Saying About Us

The Safe Quiet Lakes *Quiet Campaign* was launched Sat May 21. OPP and many key stakeholders have reacted very favourably to results so far.

ion See more letters and editorials at muskokaregion.com

LETTERS

Be safe, be quiet and engage your muffler while boating

If you have lived in the Muskoka community for any length of time you are among the most fortunate people who love the natural beauty of the lakes of Muskoka. This natural beauty is just one of the many reasons why the Muskoka lakes community has become such a cherished cottage and vacation destination. The increasing boat traffic threatens the region. The growth in the size, power and number of boats has created safety and excessive noise issues that cottagers want to address.

Cottagers have formed Safe Quiet Lakes (SQL), which is a regional advocacy group that works in co-operation with the OPP and other local partners to respond to responsible boating and water access in all lakes. Each year the SQL runs a summer long public awareness campaign to educate lake users and promote a voluntary boating code of conduct.

This year's SQL education campaign is highlighting the issue of excessive noise created by some powerboats, including those that can now choose to operate with their muffler systems engaged. The campaign is reminder to boaters that it is not only inconsistent with the culture of the lakes but also against the law to operate a boat without a muffler on certain lakes.

If a few boat owners continue to operate without considering the impact of noise caused by disengaging their mufflers they risk

ruining the enjoyment of the vast majority of cottagers who treasure Muskoka's quiet and peaceful atmosphere.

A survey conducted by Safe Quiet Lakes confirm that the majority of cottage owners and residents in the Muskoka region place a high value on silence and are unhappy with excessive noise from some powerboats. In fact, the same surveys indicate that enjoyment of the lakes for paddlers, sailors and powerboat owners is directly correlated to perceptions of safety and quiet.

Throughout the summer long campaign, Safe Quiet Lakes and the OPP will be educating boat owners to be aware of the different types of boats and the different types of noise found in the wide variety of vessels throughout Muskoka and the regulations that govern them.

During the campaign volunteers from Safe Quiet Lakes and officers from the OPP Marine Unit will be working with boat operators to educate them on the ways to operate their vessels safely and respectfully. The OPP will be enforcement agents and will want the public to be able to identify what meets regulation and what is prohibited under the Canada Shipping Act. More information on the Safe Quiet Lakes campaign and how to operate your boat quietly and respectfully can be found at safequietlakes.ca.

Paul Coffey, Muskoka cottager, former NHL player

In July, a by-line story by former NHL star **Paul Coffey** was published in local papers. It was a powerful endorsement of our message and was picked up widely by local outlets of the [Metroland North media chain](#).

Frances.

[Video] Very well done and I hope it gets a lot of play on social media.

I'm no expert but I get the sense Safe Quiet Lakes is reaching critical mass and making a significant impact. There will always be rebels and challenges but your efforts are gaining traction. Having the OPP handing out your literature is huge.

Lakes and waterways are cottage country's primary public parks. We all need to treat them as such.

Bruce Gibbon, Mayor of Seguin Township

Bracebridge OPP has been pleased to collaborate on the Quiet Campaign this summer, with Safe Quiet Lakes. Both organizations share the same goal of educating boaters on safe, responsible and respectful boating behaviour. The campaign collaboration is an excellent example of community mobilization and engagement for the benefit of the public.

**Inspector Ed Medved, Detachment Commander
Bracebridge Detachment**

Frances:

Hi Frances,

Thank you for spearheading this initiative with the OPP and sharing the video with me.

I sincerely believe your efforts are making a difference on the water.

Sincerely

Don Furniss, Mayor or Township of Muskoka Lakes

I thought the SQL presentation and especially the video you launched were one of the highlights of the meeting and received a very enthusiastic response – congrats for all your hard work on the this organization and ongoing efforts – people I heard from really appreciate the sustained and broad reaching approach to what can be a frustrating and challenging issue.

Thanks,

Cecil Hayhoe, Director of Lake Joseph North Association

The Quiet Campaign has generated substantial positive media coverage with stories appearing in local radio, television and newspapers outlets (Barrie, Orillia, Bracebridge, Huntsville, Parry Sound). For more about the campaign and links to some of the coverage [click here](#).



A Summer in the 'Field'

Our Summer Students visit marinas, shows and Lake Association AGM's throughout the summer to talk to boaters and cottagers.

This was John Joseph Mitchell's third summer as Outreach Coordinator. Before he left for his 4th year at University of Western Ontario, he gave us some insight on his experience. [Read more ...](#)

ERIN Research – Summer 2017

In 2017, we will again partner with [ERIN Research](#), a nationally recognized leader in the field, who generously provides us with pro bono support. We will consult with stakeholder groups between now and the spring of 2017 to design the survey and our approach in order to maximize participation and we hope to exceed the 2300 responses we had in 2013. [Read more ...](#)

**Don't be grumpy like a bear.
Let's get social!**

See an Infraction?

Driving an unmuffled boat with pipes venting exhaust above the waterline directly from the engine with no muffler, or bypassing the muffler, is illegal on Muskoka area lakes.

Outboard and inboard/outboard engines comply with the law when they exhaust through the propeller hub under water.

Loud isn't illegal, but muffler bypassing on our lakes



is. If you feel a boat is violating the law you can report it to the OPP. Try to report the registration number and location.

OPP number for noise complaints:

1-888-310-1122



Please take the time to like our page on Facebook, or follow us on Instagram and Twitter.

We look forward to interacting with you over social media - it's a great way to discuss your concerns about boat safety and noise, give us feedback on our initiatives and share your love of Muskoka with us.



Add Your Support to the Quiet Campaign

Safe Quiet Lakes received many new donations after our Boaters Always Care letter was sent to just over 800 Muskoka area residents in late July with a request to make a donation using the new donation form or through the online payment option. We've added a new website home page banner "Add Your Support to the Quiet Campaign" with a direct link to the donate page.

Over the past five years we have been building support from individuals and organizations such as yourself across our community. With your support we can make this year's outreach and education the most successful in our history.

Please support our efforts with a gift of \$25 to \$500 online at <http://safequiet.ca/donate-now> or by mailing a cheque with the donation form to: Safe Quiet Lakes, P.O. Box 358, Rosseau, ON, P0C 1J0.

As a thank you, we will send you the **Safe Quiet Lakes** Boater's Code and one decal for your boat or personal watercraft to show your support for our shared goals. For a gift of \$100 or more, you will also be recognized as a Supporter.

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