

Winter 2020 Update



AMIS du LAC
FRIENDS of the LAKE

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season - some of you were able to make it to the lake were able to enjoy the winter on ice.

There is lots of news since our last general communication in the spring of 2019.

We had some good news in the budget passed in early December by the municipal council. We had submitted three projects for budget approval - all were approved. Funding came from contributions made mostly by lakers who were unable to physically help during the landslide cleanup in 2014. The projects are:

- **An ecological data trend analysis for 16 Iles.** This project managed by Sylvain Miller - a biologist/diver friend of Jean-Louis Courteau - will look at historical scientific data going back as far as 1971 and chart the progress/regress of our lake ecologically over the years. In particular it will look at the Biofilia Report (an exhaustive study of our lake and its catchment area) done 10 years ago to show us directly how we've done in key areas over 10 years and make recommendations for remedial action if necessary. We will be looking for volunteers, mostly from the youth of the lake, to collect and record data during this project. More on that later..... The cost of the project is \$10,000 - one half funded by Friends, the other by the municipality through donated funds.
- **A proper buoy and signage system for the Hammond's Bay/village marina area to control milfoil.** For years we have tried with buoys to direct traffic around the dense milfoil build up in Hammonds Bay while we looked for some solution to the problem. The buoy system has been a homemade and although it was crude it did largely stop boat traffic from cutting milfoil that would spread to other areas of the lake. It now appears that there is no solution that will eradicate the weed so we have been designing a more permanent buoy and signage system that will be more effective, look better and be easier to install and remove after the season.
- **Baby Loon and No Wake signage in North (Village) Area.** It appears that every year we have a loon pair nesting in the village/marina area. Most of you will know that late last June we lost twin loon chicks to boat traffic. The two long weekends in late June 2019 provided us with wonderful weather. This meant lots of boat traffic during the first several weeks of a loon chick's life. They are almost impossible to see in the water at that time even if you're looking for them. If you're unaware of their presence then it's a crapshoot. This spring we'll be installing signage warning of loon young in the marina area along with more prominent no wake signage (to protect the shoreline, loons, property, and ensure safety). We are also considering a physical "Loon Patrol" for peak times during the two early holiday weekends. We'll be looking for volunteers.
- The budget for the above two projects (milfoil, loon/no wake) is \$7,000 - again coming from the funds donated primarily by lakers after the landslide

Jean-Louis Courteau - the diver friend of our lake - had a busy season on our lake in 2019.

He cleaned the milfoil in the area around Prentice's Island as well as over towards the shoal just south of the Club. This is a very high traffic area and having it clean of milfoil will benefit us all in slowing the spread of milfoil cut by boat traffic. Friends/Amis volunteers did provide some protection for him around this area. He also made a start on the area from Myers Island over to Latour's - another high traffic area. In 2020 he'll continue that milfoil cleanup although it is a larger and more dangerous job. Even with diver warning buoys last summer boats at high speed were coming very close.

He recleaned the Big Bay shoal (an easy project as it was just removing the plants left after the big cleaning in 2018). This fall, as in the fall of 2018, there was a 10 fold increase in trout eggs compared to the count before the milfoil clean up. Another project for 2020 is the clean up of Kerr's shoal - another trout spawning ground.

Last July he brought a team of 10 archaeologists to Cooks/Cunninghams Island for the day to look for signs of a Huron native encampment (he had found a 600 year old Huron vase some years ago in several feet of water just off the island). They found no sign of the Huron on the island, but to quote one archaeologist digging and sifting through the dirt while sitting on a bucket "I could be sitting on evidence of the Hurons right now and we'll never know because we don't have the time to look everywhere".

CIEL and Jean-Louis will be premiering a film on the archaeological dig on the island next June at the Municipal Hall. Invited are scientists, journalists, politicians and all of you. More on that at a later date

He's also been busy on a series of videos. He and his colleague Richard Lahaie (a professional videographer) have created a YouTube channel for CIEL with 6 videos currently on it many of which prominently feature 16 lles - there are more to come. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDlpSISU4C6i7ZdfaJWcoTA>
They're beautifully produced - have a look.

Loons, loons and more loons...

Most of you will have noticed the loon nesting platform we installed between Kuzik Island and Vaillancourt Island - thanks for staying away increasing the chance of success. Although it didn't attract a loon couple this past year we were encouraged that at the end of the summer an adult loon was seen investigating it and hopping up on it. Evidence is that it sometimes takes several years for a successful nesting - the loons have to acclimatize to them. We are installing two more platforms in the spring of 2020 in areas where loons have been known to nest. Please respect the nests by avoiding getting near them in the spring.

Municipality Update

The toilet project in the village is going ahead. There is some consideration being given to moving its construction to the beach area. We are hoping that the council chooses this option rather than impacting the already overcrowded parking lot.

The municipality hired a new director general Simon Leclerc this past summer. Simon comes with experience from a community that has a distinct similarity to ours in that it has a summer cottage community and a community of full time residents

Lake Life and Sustainability Initiatives

Last summer we introduced "Lake Life" as a youth brand. The goal was to appeal to the younger crowd, getting them involved and aware of the efforts of Amis du lac. Blair Prentice designed a beautiful logo for us. Stickers were made and provided to the youth who became members. We received 19 youth memberships during this campaign. We plan to continue next summer with some engaging activities, geared towards the youth. They include:

- assisting in the water testing for the data gathering mentioned above,
- Loon monitoring and awareness of chicks,
- Boat safety and driving behaviour,
- Advocacy for environmental awareness and sustainability.

Lake Life isn't just for kids - we hope to use the branding for other purposes. We plan to sell the stickers to members and include for free with new memberships. A broader "Lake Life" marketing campaign will happen with branded products that are sustainable and environmentally friendly. Also, we will be promoting basic communications to assist lakers, of all ages, to lessen their impact on the environment around the lake. This will include facilitating the purchase of "lake-friendly" cleaning products (yes, there is a difference between eco-friendly and lake-friendly). With the Station moving to a co-op model, we may be able to influence the products they sell. Cost vs. convenience vs. quality will be the deciding factor.

That's it for now. Enjoy the rest of your winter - the days are getting longer and the sun is shining on the lake as I write this.

Michael Hyde
President
Amis du Lac