

MISTUSINNE COUNCIL UPDATE #28 – JULY, 2013

1. WHAT'S NEW

- Mistusinne's taxable assessment in 2012 was: 10,666,460
- Mistusinne's taxable assessment in 2013 is: 27,236,160
- That's a **155% increase!**

1.1 TAX NOTICES

ASSESSMENTS - This newsletter is being mailed along with your 2013 tax notice. As we explained in our last newsletter in March, the province has switched to **market based assessments**. Under this new method of property assessment, residential property assessments are based on the sale prices of comparable lakeshore properties. As a result, the market has driven up the assessments on cottage properties such that cottage properties have experienced the largest increase of any property category.

MUNICIPAL TAXES – As we explained at the June 1st public meeting, Council has set the Mistusinne 2013 budget such that the **base tax increased by \$100 per property**. The remaining portion of the municipal tax which is based on a mill rate was set to be revenue neutral for the entire village (but may vary somewhat from cottage to cottage, depending on the effect of the reassessment). We emailed/mailed¹ this budget to you prior to the June 1st meeting. Extra copies are available at the Village office.

SCHOOL TAXES - As you are aware, the law requires the Village to collect the school taxes. There are two factors that have affected your 2013 school taxes:

- 1) The province **cancelled the 15% discount for early payment of school taxes**.²
- 2) Cottage assessments have experienced huge increases. As a result of the letter writing campaign, the province was persuaded to keep school taxes revenue neutral. That means that cottage properties where the assessment was at or below the provincial average assessment increase of 98% will have no changes to their school tax bill.

In Mistusinne, because the assessment increased by 155%, there will be significant increases to school taxes. See example →

1.2 BY-ELECTION

Welcome to Joe Jozsa who was re-elected to Council at the recent by-election. Joe served on Council for the 2006-2009 Council when, as a Community Planner, he led us through the process of establishing our Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw. Joe is also a trained forester and helped us implement our tree planting program. Joe will be sworn in at our next meeting on Sunday, July 21st.

I've provided my own **SCHOOL TAX** figures as an example:

In 2012, the taxable assessment on my cottage was 66,800 and the school tax mill rate for residential was **9.51 mills**. Therefore my 2012 school tax bill was:

\$ 66,850 x .00951	=	540.38
Minus the 15% discount	=	- 95.36
Net 2012 school tax	=	\$ 540.38

In 2013, the new taxable assessment on my cottage is \$153,090. The province has cancelled discounts for early payment. Our lobby letter persuaded the province to reduce the school tax mill rate to **5.03 mills**. Therefore, my 2013 school tax bill will be:

\$ 153,090 x .00503	=	\$ 770.04
Minus the 15% discount	=	0.00
Net 2013 school tax	=	\$ 770.04

"My school taxes will increase by \$ 229.66. Almost half of that increase came from the province's cancellation of the school tax discount."
Lynne Saas

NEW: The agenda for Council meetings will now be posted on the website on the Friday prior to the weekend meeting.

Open the **Council** tab at our website **mistusinne.com**.

¹ We prefer to email our residents. If we don't have your email address, please send it to us!

² Mistusinne will continue to offer the 15% discount on the municipal portion of your taxes.

1.3 STAFF CHANGES

In early June, **Tim Katchuk** resigned from his Maintenance Position in Mistusinne to accept a new year-round position with the Palliser Plains Co-op in Central Butte/Tugaske. We wish Tim well in his new job. Tim and Aline will continue to reside in Mistusinne. You may run into Tim if he is delivering lumber to your cottage.

As part of the staffing transition, Council appointed **Keith Lonsdale** to the position of Maintenance Coordinator for this season. During the month of June, Keith was assisted by **Bernie Volk** who worked part-time and also by many of our able community volunteers such as Gord Corney who helped with watering trees, Leanne Hurlburt and Bernie Volk who volunteered to make and spread wood chips, and Al Saas who mowed grass with his own tractor. Thanks to the dedication of Keith, Bernie and volunteers, maintenance operated smoothly during our transition month.

On July 2nd, **Corey Mews** joined the staff as our new maintenance worker. Corey recently moved to Loreburn, where he has been doing mechanical servicing of farm equipment. Corey originally hailed from NFLD and then gained most of his work experience in Alberta, working as a mechanic and maintenance person, first for a large processing plant and later for a trucking firm. Welcome Corey.

We are also joined by our two student workers, **Max Bumphrey** and **Levi Santha** who, along with Corey, report to Keith. Keith will continue as **Coordinator of the Maintenance Department** for this season. Keith hopes to be able to scale back his hours to part-time, as our new employees are established into a routine. If you have any questions about maintenance matters, please contact Keith by leaving a message at the Maintenance Building (**854-2068**) or on the village cell (**867-3010**).

2. VOLUNTEER WORK BEES

2.1 TREE PLANTING BEES

Our loyal tree planting volunteers gathered on the May long weekend and again a week later, for our 7th two-part annual tree planting bee. They planted approximately 600 trees; many were flowering bushes, intended to beautify our front entry streets.

Thanks to worker bees:

- Keith Lonsdale who coordinated the events,
- Worker bees: Doug and Emily Drever, Joe Jozsa, Mary Kirchengesner, Bernie Volk, Floyd Alexander, Dan Gaucher and Faye Schmaltz, Lyle and Sharon Greiner, Donna Matthews, Linda Reiss, Alice Gaveronski, Ken and Arlene Wuschke, Al Saas, Jane and Gordon Corney, Harry Locke, Reg Ebenal, Brian and Colleen Cowan, Craig and Marilyn Peterson, Ken and Paulette Arcand, Joan Lutz, Polly Orth and Leeanne Hurlburt.
- Lynne and Al Saas who hosted the Planters' Barbeque afterwards, and
- Any other volunteers whose names I may have overlooked.

2.2 SHADE STRUCTURE WORK BEES

Volunteers worked for two days to erect the shade structures at our community gathering place. Thanks to: Ken Arcand who coordinated the work bee, and

- Worker bees: David Achter, Joe Jozsa, Gordon Corney, Andy Baron, Richard and Charlotte Knight, Doug & Emily Drever, Al & Lynne Saas, Lyle Greiner, Bob Cleland, Paulette Arcand, Linda Reiss, Brian Cowan.



Gordon Corney, Ken Arcand, Al Saas and Andy Baron take a break from building our shade structures.

2.3 CANADA DAY WORK BEE

The new shade structures were much appreciated as the sun blazed down on July 1st. Thanks to the volunteers who once again made our 7th Annual Canada Day celebration such a success. Thanks to the following worker bees:

- Craig Peterson who coordinated the committee and leased the sound system,
- Lynne and Al Saas who made the village decorations and constructed the shade structure for the stage,
- Craig and Marilyn Peterson, along with Patricia Carey, who coordinated the parade,
- Jessy Lee Saas, Tessa and Fiona Corney who led the parade and helped throughout,
- Linda Reiss and Hanne Caleval who hosted the ticket booth,
- Alice Gaveronski and David Cawood who led the children's crafts,
- Jane Corney who baked the cupcakes and made the hamburger sauce,
- Ken Arcand, Craig Peterson, Linda Reiss, Len Punter who cooked burgers and dogs,
- Craig Peterson who ran the races and Maggie Punter who took photos,
- Cori Saas, Lynne Saas and Brittney Punter who did the face painting and tattoos,
- Joan Fahlman who led O' Canada and 9-year old Ava Kirchgerner who played the violin during lunch,
- Ronelda and Bob Fortner, Christie Saas, Paulette Arcand, Leeanne Hurlburt, and Sue Punter who worked in the servery,
- Keith and our students who moved the tables,
- The entire committee, and on-the-spot volunteers who set up the night before and cleaned up afterwards.



Canada Day audience escapes the sun's rays under our new shade structures at the Gathering Place.

2.4 SWIM PLATFORM WORK BEE

Ken Arcand and Kevin Engel came to the May 20th Council meeting to volunteer to set up buoys and the swim platforms on the beach. This year they used a new system. The screw-in anchors were installed on the beach in early spring before the water rose to cover them. Ropes attached to floating jugs identified the locations of the anchors after the water had risen to cover them. On July 5th, the water had stabilized enough that Ken and our staff were able to load the platforms on a boat trailer and move them to the water. The platforms were towed to their locations and attached to the ropes. Thanks Ken and Kevin.

Beach users: Please help us ensure that no-one unties the ropes on the buoys and platforms.

2.5 DEFIBRILLATOR CABINET INSTALLED

Thanks to Lloyd Montgomery and Tim Katchuk who installed the cabinet for the new defibrillator on the Office Building. Watch for more EMO information on the *What's New* section of our web site, during upcoming months.



3. BIG FUN WEEKEND COMING UP IN MISTUSINNE

FRIDAY, AUG 16th CONCERT, PUB NIGHT

- **Outdoor Gathering Place** at **7:00 p.m.**
- **Music by Wyatt**, winner of 2 Awards at the 2013 SMA Awards Gala. Visit their web site: wyattmusic.com/website
- Premises licensed by permit. Guests must be age 19 or over. Wine and beer on sale.
- Includes munchies and a desert break.
- Tickets \$20 each, available at the office from Janice **(854-4637)**
- Sponsored by the Playground Committee; all proceeds to the Mistusinne Playground.



SATURDAY, AUG. 17th, FUN GOLF TOURNAMENT

- Morning tournament and evening potluck supper.
- Everyone is encouraged to attend the potluck, **not** just the golfers.
- To register phone Janice at the Village Office **(854-4637)**
- Sponsored by the Fun Day Golf Committee; all proceeds shared among the Elbow Fire Department, the First Responders and the Mistusinne Playground.

4. REMINDERS FROM JANICE

IRRIGATION SYSTEM

- Any water equipment from the point of delivery from the municipal system to the valves is Village equipment and to be ***maintained by Village Staff only***. Anything beyond the valves on the standpipe is the home owners responsibility.
- Valves ***must remain intact*** on the irrigation standpipe and can only be modified, if necessary, by Village maintenance staff. Residents are responsible for any damage that occurs to the ball valves on the standpipe and will be charged for replacement and labour to re-install.
- Please disconnect your (non-galvanized) attachments (hoses, irrigation lines etc) from the irrigation standpipe by ***September 15*** for the irrigation line blow out in the fall.

CPR/AED COURSE

- If you are interested in taking this course this fall through the Village of Mistusinne, please contact Janice. We are looking into hosting another 4 hour training session on the AED in August/September. Also, if you have taken this course elsewhere and wish to be placed on our EMO contact list for people who are qualified to operate the AED, please also call or email Janice with your cell number and email address.

BEACH REMINDERS

- Fireworks are **ONLY** permitted on the beach; please do not set off fireworks in your yard or on the green space. No open fires allowed on the beach.
- No quads or golf carts allowed on the beach during summer south of the boat launch.

QUADS AND GOLF CARTS

- **QUADS** - Please **keep off** our green spaces; help preserve our fragile grass and new trees.
- **GOLF CARTS** - Please stay away from black mulched areas, wood chipped areas, areas marked with an orange stick and **all new tree seedlings**. Golf carts have been observed driving over new trees!
- No-one under 16 is supposed to operate a quad or golf cart unless they have an ATV operator's certificate.

TILLING OFF YOUR PROPERTY

- Did you know that before you roto-till your ditch, you should contact the Village office first to ensure there isn't a drainage issue and to ensure all parking areas/driveways meet our zoning bylaw criteria.

FALL SEPTIC PUMP-OUTS

- When you are closing your cabin for the season and you fill in the form for a last pump-out, please clearly indicate on pump out form "**Final Pump out**". You will thus avoid a second pump-out by the village, in October.
- Fall septic measurements and pump outs **begin October 1**.
- Please do not block access to your septic tank. Septic tanks that we don't have access to (ie under deck) will be pumped out automatically to ensure they are at minimum capacity (unless you've notified us of a "final" fall pump-out has).
- Contact the Village office (854-4637) **by September 15** if you are planning to use your cabin after October 1, so we don't measure & auto-pump. *(Yes we have a list).*

PAYMENT OF TAXES and WATER BILLS

- The 15% discount is available on the municipal portion of your property taxes **if payment is RECEIVED by August 31, 2013**. Taxes MUST be paid by December 31, 2013 to avoid penalty.
- Sorry, the bills for **irrigation water** cannot go out until the Local Government Committee approves our rates. (They are back-logged and short staffed - so we will likely only send those bills near the end of the summer.)
- The Village Office **is not** set up to take debit or credit cards, sorry. Postdated cheques are accepted.

5. A GOOD NEWS STORY

One warm Mistusinne morning this past June, a young Mom came running to Ronelda Fortner, crying that her two-year old boy had wandered away. Ronelda immediately phoned Mayor Saas who first verified that the police had been notified and then began phoning the permanent residents. Within a few minutes, a large cadre of volunteers arrived on the scene and fanned out to search the Village and neighbourhood. After approximately a half-hour, the child was discovered by Bernie Volk, more than a kilometer away, down by the south beach parking lot. When the pajama-clad child was delivered to his Mom's arms she told everyone how impressed she was by the speedy and compassionate response from our citizens!



Thank you Ava, for your lovely violin concert at Canada Day.

6. A NOT-VERY-GOOD NEWS STORY

When one of the election people was delivering fliers door-to-door, she discovered water seeping out under the doorsill at one of the unoccupied cottages. She notified us and we began the process of trying to reach the owner in Alberta. We had no phone numbers but finally got through by email, to obtain permission to break into the locked cottage. Our Maintenance Coordinator, Keith Lonsdale and Ken Sherling broke in to discover a heart-breaking scene. The pump had been left connected and the electrical breaker had been left turned on. When a leak occurred in the plumbing, the pump ran non-stop (from sometime after the May long weekend until the end of June!).

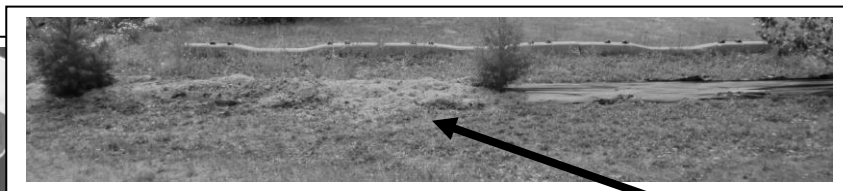
The basement had flooded and the water had reached a couple of feet up on the main floor. Black mold was evident. Keith threw the main breaker and notified the owners, suggesting that they begin with a visit by the building inspector.

I am sure that many of us have had near-catastrophes to our vacant cottages. Here are some **cottage-savvy tips** for all of us to remember:

- Give your phone number (**especially your cell phone number**) to Janice; we cannot help you if we cannot reach you.
- Unplug your pump and/or disconnect your main breaker before you leave.
- If you don't use your cottage regularly, employ a permanent resident to check your cottage periodically, especially over the winter. There are several village folks who do this task. Ask Janice for contact names and numbers.
- Check your insurance policy; it may be invalid if you don't have it checked regularly in your absence.
- Get to know your neighbours; perhaps they will hold your spare key and keep an eye on your cottage.



Right - David Achter and Keith Lonsdale (on the tractor) drill holes for the support poles for the new shade structures at the Mistusinne Gathering Place.



Above - Cottage owners are asked to place their grass cuttings and leaf rakings on the plastic mulch between the trees in the plantations. The cuttings will gradually compost into soil.

Left - Hanne Caleval and Linda Reiss, smiling Canada Day hostesses.

