

## THE POINTE AU BARIL REPORT

By Diane Penfold

As I sit here looking at all the snow, with the temperature hovering around -25c it is difficult to reconcile that winter is on the downside and it is once again time for the PaBIA annual Pointe au Baril report. This winter in Pointe au Baril has seen more snow and colder temperatures than we've had in many years. Having said that, because the snow came so early, ice conditions have been less than ideal. It is always a safe bet to check with someone who is familiar with the ice conditions before venturing out on Georgian Bay. Our volunteers with the Northeast Georgian Bay Snowmobile Association have been kept busy grooming the trails. They do a great job and for avid sledders, riding the trails is a terrific winter pastime. This group sponsors the annual Ducky Race which is held in early to mid April depending on when the ice goes out.

Congratulations to Terry Desmasdon and Greg Andrews, our councilors for Ward 1. Terry has been our elected representative for the past 8 years. Greg is our newly elected representative and we wish him much success in this endeavor. Many thanks to John Cochrane who worked tirelessly on council, in particular on the Water Quality Action Committee. He has agreed to stay on as an ex-official of council's Environment Committee, in particular, the Sturgeon Bay Committee. We welcome back Gary French and Ken Williams, councilors for Ward 3.

Everyone will be happy to know that the road work in Pointe au Baril is almost complete. The roads and sidewalks have been paved at last and the lamp posts should be operational by early spring. This project was a huge undertaking and not without substantial problems, but when all is said and done, it is a change we can all be proud of.

The Pointe au Baril Emergency Response Team has had a very busy 2010 season. Throughout the season they responded to a total of 5 fires, 14 medical calls, and were able to hold 9 training sessions. This past year saw an increase in the number of seasonal volunteers. PABERT is always looking for enthusiastic and dedicated people to join their team. Exciting news for 2011 is the new land based mobile attack unit. This custom built fire fighting machine will allow the team to provide fire protection for Pointe au Baril residents not living on or close to Georgian Bay. The goal is to eventually operate this new piece of equipment year round. Keep the third Saturday in July open as once again the Pointe au Baril Emergency Response Team will be hosting Lobsterfest. Thank you to everyone who supports their efforts. Through your support of fundraising events such as Lobsterfest and your ongoing financial support, PABERT continues to be a growing organization. For more information check out their website at [www.pabert.org](http://www.pabert.org).

The Pointe au Baril Nursing Station celebrated 25 years in operation in August 2010. A lovely afternoon event was held at the Community Centre. Exciting news is that the Nursing Station is planning an addition. With the help of John Lees at the WPSHC, the Pointe au Baril Liaison Group, and the Township of the Archipelago, they applied for a grant known as the Enabling Accessibility Fund. If accepted, this fund would cover 75% of the cost of the renovation, retrofit and addition. Fundraising would be minimal and the work could start as early as this year. Keep your fingers crossed. For hours, NP and MD appointments call 705-366-2376 or 705-366-2377.

The Pointe au Baril Chamber of Commerce Information Centre will be open from mid-April. Hours are 9 – 4 daily, closed Thursdays and Sundays until their summer student begins. Then the hours are 9 – 4 daily, except Wednesdays and Sundays when they are open from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The Chamber of Commerce provides an invaluable service to the area. Of interest is that Family Memberships are only \$20 a year, and for an additional \$10, family members have unlimited access to the Chamber's high speed internet. Also with a family membership, there is free use of the Chamber property for yard sales, arts and craft sales, etc. Please note that the annual Canada Day celebrations, hosted by the Chamber of Commerce, are a 2 day event this year being held on Friday July 1<sup>st</sup> and Saturday July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The times are 9 – 5 both days. Friday there will be many great activities for children and adults, along with the Official Ceremonies and Flag Raising. Fireworks will be at sundown. Saturday will be the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Arts and Crafts Fair as well as the delicious pickerel lunch. For more information about the Chamber and what they have to offer drop by and say hello, or phone 705-366-2331, or visit their website at [www.pointeaubarilchamber.com](http://www.pointeaubarilchamber.com).

The Pointe au Baril Library at the Community Centre is open Monday mornings from 9 – 12. The Librarian is a volunteer position. If anyone would like to donate a few hours working at the library, please call Rosita at 705-366-2680.

The Pointe au Baril Winter Whirl was a huge success again this year. It was held February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. With activities such as broomball, skeet shooting, snowmobile races, children's games, dinner and dance, this event is a highly anticipated winter tradition.

As a note of interest, Pointe au Baril has a very active Seniors Group. They meet at the Community Centre every Monday and among their many activities, twice a year they hold a euchre tournament that draws approximately 100 people from the community and neighboring seniors clubs. The proceeds from these tournaments enables the seniors to make donations within the community to the Nursing Station, the Emergency Response Team, the Ladies Church Group, the Chamber of Commerce, the Winter Whirl Committee, and the Children's Activities Club. Anyone interested in learning more or joining the Seniors Group should call Nancy Ley at 705-366-2885.

There are also a dedicated group of gals that make up the Pointe au Baril Ladies Church Group. They meet at the Community Centre every Wednesday and work on a lovely homemade quilt that is raffled off every year at the rummage sale. These quilts are just beautiful and raffle tickets can be purchased around town. Dates of interest sponsored by the Ladies Church Group are April 10, the Daffodil Tea, October 15, the annual Rummage Sale, and November 17, the Mistletoe Tea, all held at the Community Centre. The proceeds from these events help with the maintenance and upkeep of the Florence Universal Church. Church services will be held every Sunday in July and August.

The Pointe au Baril bottle drive is now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> season. This group of dedicated volunteers collects the empties from the transfer station, sorts them and transports them to Parry Sound. The monies raised are donated to various groups and charities in Pointe au Baril and Parry Sound. To date, this group has raised close to \$20,000.00.

In closing please peruse the Pointe au Baril Calendar of Events in this publication. Have a great summer and stay safe.