



John and Thelma Jarvis
Sales Representatives

MAKING THE JOURNEY AS REWARDING AS THE DESTINATION

THE PERFECT STORM on the waterways of muskoka



A contact at the MNR said the flood to our lakes this year was caused by the “perfect storm” of both branches of the Muskoka River having their peak run-off converging at the same time, whereas they are usually staggered. The flood is a combination of the unusually heavy rains we had, combined with the fast snowmelt it created.

The water levels got to more than 70cm above mid-summer conditions and 50cm above average spring conditions. This is the highest they have seen water levels since they started recording about 80 yrs ago.

During flood conditions boaters must remember to not create any wakes close to shore, as so many valuable water craft are in delicate situations inside boathouses, and the

shoreline is in a delicate position. Boat fenders are useless when the water is high. The ships from the Muskoka fleet are also in danger during high water events.

The last record flood was in 2008, and this 2013 flood was several inches higher. Looks like climate change may make flooding a more regular event than we would like it to be. Evaluate your property and your routines to see how you can be better prepared for the next flood.

Consider leaving a key on site at your cottage in a lockbox. During this flood event, we found that many people did not have a way for us, or a friend or neighbour, to access their cottage or their boathouse easily, to check out the water situation and/or raise the boathouse doors. Lockboxes can be purchased inexpensively at hardware stores or Home Depot, and can be attached to the cottage or to a shed or even a tree, if that is your preference. The combination of a lockbox can be changed as many times as you wish, so you can create special codes when you have guests, or contractors arriving when you are not there. You can change the code after they leave.



John and Thelma's Helpful Tips

Seedling Day Reminder

The annual MLA Seedling Day will be held on Saturday May 18th at the Port Carling Community Centre from 9 am until noon. The emphasis is on native plants and shrubs, especially shoreline species to help you to naturalize your shoreline for the health of our lakes. They have a lot of seedlings available in some of the most sought after species, including White Birch, Silver Maple, Balsam Fir, Dogwood and Serviceberry, among others.

Seedling order forms and pricing are available for download at mla.on.ca. Try to submit your order to the MLA office early, to ensure that you can get the best possible selection. The final order deadline is May 1, 2013. Orders can be emailed to info@mla.on.ca, faxed to (705) 765-3203 or mailed to Box 298, Port Carling, ON, P0B 1J0

Rather than planting some of these relatively delicate plants directly into the ground, John and I have found it useful to plant some of the seedlings in pots, so that we can tend to them more carefully and easily, for the first year, until they get a larger root ball. Our seedlings have had a better history of success when we have done this. Tending seedlings is great job for young children, so they learn at an early age to be stewards of the land in Muskoka and to feel pride in taking responsibility for the environment



Muskoka Heritage Foundation Cottage Tour

This year's Muskoka Heritage Foundation Cottage Tour will be taking place on **Lake Rosseau Friday July 19th 2013**. Participants will be travelling by way of the RMS Segwun to visit two magnificent cottages. Don't miss the opportunity to see these grand estates and to support the work of the Muskoka Heritage Foundation. **Tickets will be available to the public by phone around June 8th.** Tickets go fast, so book early.

Muskoka Heritage Foundation 705-645-7393



Succulent Container Gardens in Muskoka

One of the really popular choices right now for container gardens is succulents. They are especially good for cottagers as they don't require a lot of watering.

Succulents are plants that store water in their leaves and stems to help themselves adjust to dry conditions, so they require little maintenance. They often have interesting textures as they may have waxy coatings or hairy leaves or stems to help to conserve moisture. They are shallow rooted to take every advantage of the slightest rainfall. Containers filled with succulents are the height of sophistication, and ease.

Some succulents are best grown alone because they are uniquely beautiful and can command all the attention they need, alone in a pot, well-spaced from other plants. Others look best when mixed with both dark and light leafed varieties. Hens and chickens (*sempervivum*) are a good choice, as they are easy to find and are quite hardy in Muskoka.

Succulents make a wonderful table centre piece on your outdoor dining table, for the entire season. The hot sun will not bother them, they can handle you being away for extended times with no watering, and they are not tall enough to block the view of your guests across the dining table.

You can take cuttings from the succulents that are not as hardy and overwinter them indoors, to be planted outside again the following year.

Turn Your Water Off

Again this winter we have friends who had major damage to their cottage from a malfunctioning refrigerator. It is astounding how much water damage can be done in a short time as the water just continues to pump out onto your floor through a damaged line. Cupboards, furniture, and many other items can be ruined. The floor can be compromised, and the ceiling and other rooms on the lower floor ruined, as well. Remember to always flip the switch, turning your water off, when you leave your cottage.



Spring Cleaning Your Computer

A good annual habit, and an easy thing to do, is to back everything up on your computer, and do a fresh install of your windows program every spring. If you have googleapps and Dropbox as backups, it is all a very simple process. This is a good weekend activity for a rainy cottage day.

This procedure reinforces that your backups are in good shape, protects you against disasters like the dreaded ‘blue screen of death’, and gives your computer a bit of a fresh start each year.



Organic Solution to Sensitive Documents Disposal

Be careful what you throw into the garbage at the cottage. Late last summer we saw a man stopping on the road and going through the garbage of cottagers around the Beaumaris area. You should not throw personal or sensitive documents, or credit card receipts into the garbage. You can burn or shred your sensitive documents, or instead, you can soak sensitive papers in water and then tear them into smaller pieces, before throwing them into your compost.

Junk mail, bills, receipts, magazines and other waste paper can be added to your cottage compost. Paper is an especially good ingredient during the spring and summer months when carbon-rich dried leaves may not be readily available. Shredding this paper first helps it to compost faster, but soaking it and then tearing the soggy mass into large chunks works well too, in the composter, without requiring a shredder.

Snow Birds Need to File the Right Forms

So many Muskoka retirees are making Florida, or some other of the southern states, their winter retreat. The combination of Muskoka and Florida is a pretty special life! However, don't forget that there are implications for you, tax-wise, when you spend extended times in the United States.



The US has a “substantial presence test” which is a weighting formula of the days spent in the US over a three year period. If the total is more than a designated number, then you should be filing a form 8840, ‘Closer Connections Exception Statement for Aliens’ by June 17th 2013. If you spend 4 months anywhere in the United States in a year, you may need to file this closer connections form.

If you have questions, phone or email us and we will send you a short summary, as well as the name of a DBO tax consultant, so that you can decide if you need to file this US tax form or not. Don't get caught making a mistake when it is an out of country tax matter.



Complimentary Seminar for Cottagers

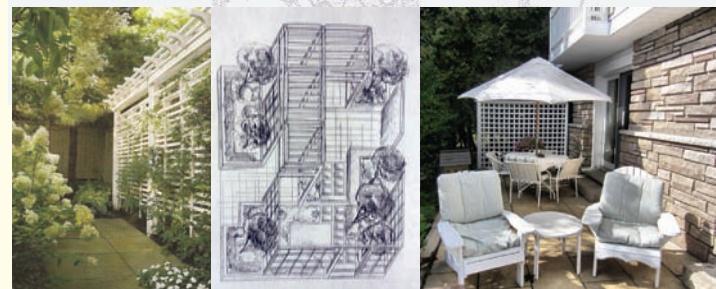
We are sponsoring a complementary seminar for Cottages on Most Requested Topics on Friday July 12 at the Community Centre in Port Carling. Featuring Shawn Gallagher, award winning feature garden designer at the 2013 Canada Blooms Garden Festival, and popular landscape designer in the Muskoka and Toronto areas. Shawn will elaborate on the top 10 trends in 2013 for recreational landscapes in Muskoka.

Shawn will provide you with an inspirational slide show, knowledge of popular trends, info on newest materials, and myriad ideas for your cottage landscape, and your cottage “wish list”.

Shawn's Top 10 for 2013 include:

1. Creating Privacy at Your Cottage
2. Designing Areas for Outdoor Exercise
3. Using Native Plants
4. Incorporating Natural Materials
5. Casual Outdoor Furniture Trends
6. Lighting Trends
7. Inspirational Architectural Features
8. Creating Lakeside/ Roadside Curb Appeal
9. Allowing for Multi Use Space
10. Inspiring Decks, Terraces, Steps, and Paths

Shawn will answer any questions you have and will be available to speak to you personally after the presentation. We only have 50 spots so email us to reserve your seats. Thelma@royallepage.ca



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Thelma and John Jarvis
Sales Representatives

705-765-6855 Port Carling
705-645-5257 Bracebridge
705-645-2110 Home
thelma@royallepage.ca
JohnAndThelma.com



33rd Annual Antique And Classic Boat Show

Summer is not that far away, and plans for the 33rd Annual Antique and Classic Boat Show in Gravenhurst on July 6 are well underway!

The Antique and Classic Boat Show (ACBS)-Toronto will present "The Greatest Race Boat Show in Canadian History", featuring boats that represent the past 100 years of boat racing. Famous Canadian race boats, such as *Miss Supertest III* and *Miss Canada IV* (their fabulous feature boat); have already been committed to participate in this show.

In addition, they expect up to 150 more race boats - many of which have won Championship races all over North America and others that have been racing informally on the Muskoka Lakes and elsewhere since the early 1900s.

The show will feature everything from beautiful antique wooden racers to Sea Fleas, to famous unlimited hydroplanes, outboards, and tunnel hulls. John and I plan to put our Greavette racer in the show for the first time this year

Seeing boats of world class quality, at speed, on the water is such a unique and exciting opportunity. We are so fortunate to spend time so close to a show of this eminence.

This is an Event not to be missed! July 6th Gravenhurst

Just added to the Boat Show weekend festivities is the ACBS-Toronto/Woody Boater Poker Run and Picnic on Friday, July 5. Twenty boats will leave Gravenhurst at 10:30 a.m. and make 3-4 stops along the route to pick up their poker hands. The route ends at Morris Island for a BBQ picnic.

Cost is \$19 per person including lunch. Prizes are courtesy of Woody Boater, with the top prize being the winning boat featured on the header of the story on Saturday during the boat show, along with a framed photo of the event to hang in your cottage, boat house, bathroom, office, etc.

To be part of the fun, contact Chris Bullen at
woodboatfun@rogers.com.



Septic Problems

We rarely think about our septic systems until there is a problem. Last year, several of the cottages we were selling were found to have a septic problem during the home inspection, costing the Sellers a significant amount of money and trouble, at a time they were not anticipating it; as well as holding up a closing.

Twice, the situation was that massive numbers of roots had to be removed from the septic system.

Make sure that whoever regularly checks your septic, opens both sides of the tank when they check it. The Building Department at the Township of Muskoka Lakes said that the thing people generally do not do well enough, and is important to do, is to keep vegetation away from their septic systems. That is how the roots get in and plug the system. A stitch in time saves nine!