

Summer is now upon us and with the club closed for the season and many cottagers facing unprecedented challenges in trying to re-establish their summer lives, this will certainly be a memorable summer, but for all the wrong reasons.

Members of the Amis executive has been in regular communication throughout the winter and spring. We are moving forward with our commitments and plans from last year and expanding in other areas. With social distancing in effect, our meeting options are limited. As many of us are experiencing at work, telephone and video conferencing have become the new norm. We do plan to hold an AGM, but it will be in an e-meeting format, with the executive in an outside, social distanced setting and members watching and participating from various locations in Canada and the USA.

Here is an update on the numerous initiatives and activities of Amis.

Mini-Biofilia Environmental Project

This project (named after the comprehensive Biofilia project carried out in 2012) will be carried out this summer. The 2012 Biofilia project took a complete environmental inventory of our lake, its watershed and Lac Laurel - essentially covering our entire municipality. The Mini-Biofilia project will focus on measurements from a small number of the key parameters from the original project to assess how our lake has either progressed or regressed environmentally. It will also reconcile various environmental studies dating back to the early 1970s to give us a 50-year progress report.

The Mini-Biofilia project will be led by Sylvain Miller, a biologist/teacher/scuba diver who has spent many days over the years diving with Jean-Louis Courteau. His life and dive partner Anne Letourneau, a chemist, will be working with him extensively. Some of you may have met them at one of our AGMs or at a Club presentation. They will both be on the lake daily during the last two weeks of July and will be intermittently here throughout the summer. Jean-Louis, who is most familiar with our lake, will be doing some specialized dives as part of the project.

The municipality and your association will jointly fund this study. Much of this summer's data collection is labour intensive and it could not be afforded without volunteer participation. We have three teams of two youths each providing that very valuable labour. They will provide over 180 hours of their time to collect data around the perimeter of the lake. They include Ailsa and Mirren Litchfield, Corinne Hamel, Eileen

and Declan Walsh (Hamilton). A big thank you to all these young people - they are making a difference.

Jean-Louis Courteau and CIEL

Our association has funded Jean-Louis Courteau's efforts on our lake again this year with a \$5,000 grant. He plans to remove milfoil between Myers Island & Latour's during the month of August. He will also be working with Sylvain Miller & Anne Letourneau on the Mini-Biofilia project referred to above.

Jean-Louis also works with the municipality on various environmental, archaeological and biological issues through the CIEL project he founded and has managed over the last years. Some of you will have visited CIEL's museum on the third floor of the Municipal Hall which features artifacts and exhibits from our lake. CIEL has received funding to create virtual tours on-line for the museum as well as in-person audio tours at the exhibit similar to those many of us are familiar with in museums. These tours will be as bilingual as technology and funds allow.

Jean-Louis and his colleagues have produced a series of videos including an underwater prop wash video (Good Boat/Bad Boat), a video tour of a Studebaker sunk in our lake, the famous case of the 500-year-old Huron vase and other underwater environmental, archaeological, biological and social investigations. They are presently working on a video of the archeological dig on Cunninghams' Island - out later this year. To view these productions, visit Jean-Louis' YouTube channel ([here](#)) Some of the videos are also on the official CIEL website ([here](#)). We will be featuring Jean-Louis' work and videos on the Amis du lac website in the coming weeks.

Over the past three years Jean-Louis has observed an algae bloom present at the thermocline (at around 15 ft below the surface level) that was not previously present and has been present in some but not many other lakes he has dived in. This bloom has reduced visibility at 15 ft depth from 30 ft three years ago to, at some times, four feet. He and his scientist colleagues are not sure what has caused this bloom but it is of concern. It is not the same bloom as the surface yellow bloom that smells like dead fish. Some resources will be applied to it in the Mini-Biofilia project above. The good news is that the bloom is less dense this year than in the previous two years.

Loon activities

Last year some emergency "Loon Awareness" signs were manufactured and posted in key locations in response to the tragic death of two baby loons. This year, we created far more formal and informative signs and worked with the municipality in getting them

posted. Attached is a visual of the signs. They are located at the head, foot and club. More locations to come.

Last fall two additional loon nesting platforms were purchased. They offer a safe, natural nesting area for the birds, free of flooding issues related to rising lake levels or big boat waves. This spring, Jean-Louis installed all three (head, middle and foot of the lake) - he was the only one here (besides Bob!) when the lake opened. Monitoring revealed that the platforms do not appear to be in use this year. However, we know it can take a few years before they get utilized.

This spring was cooler and that has an impact on the loon mating. A nasty species of black fly that targets the loons specifically, is a real problem in cooler spring seasons. These flies viciously and relentlessly attack the loons, making it very difficult to mate and protect their eggs. There are other things that can impact the loon mating, some of which are related to water quality. To date we have not had any reports of eggs. As well, by this time of the year we would normally see chicks. We have seen none. Boating traffic has been very light, so we don't suspect that to be a factor.

We will be participating in the national, annual Canadian Loon Survey. Catherine Wensley will be leading this and will likely be looking for volunteers to assist. More to come on that.

Lake Life activities

Last summer we launched the **Lake Life** and **Kids on the Lake** initiatives. Lake Life is a branding exercise, focusing on sustainability; how we can lessen our impact on the lake and what we can do to nurture it. Kids on the Lake is a juniors' initiative, inviting the next generation to build on the Lake Life sustainability concepts and to bring the spirit of Amis du lac into the future.

With the help of Elise Latour and her daughter, Madeline, the creativity and fun ran through the winter. Internet cameras in Green Bay gave us all a chance to meet **Bob** and watch his antics through the spring ice melt. More than \$1,000 was raised for a local food bank (Moisson Laurentides) in the name of Kids on the Lake, Lac-des-seize-iles. Bob will have more adventures this summer – watch for some great stuff to come from Kids on the Lake.

There has been a long discussion on how we can leverage the brand and raise the popularity and interest in Amis and Lake Life. Offering products, like branded shirts, cups, caps, etc. is a natural approach, but we want to do things that better reflect what

Amis is all about. So, the focus will be in unique, sustainable and useful products. Working with Blair Prentice, we developed a simpler logo that can be used on these items. The first item is a long-sleeved t-shirt manufactured in a “green” and sustainable way, printed in Canada. A few samples will be available to gauge interest and feedback, then a wider offering will be made. Other products could include ocean plastic phone cases, reusable bamboo fork, spoon and chopstick sets, and branded hiking sticks made from fallen trees. Ideas will be presented and discussed.

The next steps for Lake Life and Kids on the Lake will be the idea of integrating new practices into our “lake lives.” This will be a multi-faceted approach seeing Kids on the Lake promoting safe boating, recycling and reusing. The Amis website will leverage the Lake Life brand to promote lake-safe cleaning products and practices; provide information on sustainability initiatives like the gradual removal of all 2-stroke (non E-Tec) outboard motors and the detriments of Ethanol gas; updated information on shoreline planting; reusing vs buying new; and the importance of initiatives like the Mini-Biofilia study. There will also be stories about green initiatives on other lakes, new technologies that are fast approaching (e.g. electric outboards and solar power) and wildlife information.

Municipal news

With the Covid-19 crisis the municipal offices closed down over the winter/spring months and are now partially reopened. A new Director General, Simon Leclerc, was appointed last June. Simon would be pleased to hear from any residents that have municipal related issues. He has been very responsive to residents that have approached him with problems or questions.

The municipal council has been discussing the renovation and control of the village parking lot. This summer each lake resident with no road access who needs access to the parking lot will be asked to register for one windshield sticker. Guest stickers will also be available for a second vehicle associated with the primary household. This will give the municipality a count on the number of parking places necessary for lake residents with no road. With those numbers in hand the municipality can plan what capacity is needed for our residents. There are also short-term plans for the first entrance into the lot to be permanently improved and intermediate plans will be developed to organise and control the parking lot. Corina Lupu and Dave Estall (our lake councillors) are continually pushing these plans forward.

Ten new finger docks were installed in October 2019, two at the foot and eight in the village. An additional eight new fingers were installed last in the village in June this year. There are still eight old “tippy” docks at the end of the federal dock which will be

replaced as the fund attributed to docks is replenished via rental fees. If you have mobility issues and have one of these old docks please contact the municipality.

The riparian zone (the first 15 meters back from the shoreline) should not be mowed; trees should not be felled without a permit and should generally be left to nature. Each property has a five-meter wide (in total) right of passage to the lakefront. During the past year warnings have been given and fines assessed for residents who have flagrantly ignored these by-laws (these are MRC guidelines).

Hammonds Bay buoys

We met with municipal DG Simon Leclerc and discussed a number of possibilities with regard to the buoys in Hammonds Bay, which direct traffic away from the milfoil area in the centre of the bay. It was agreed that a simpler, less burdensome approach could be taken. For years we have hoped that the buoys would become a municipal responsibility, just like all other non-personal buoys on the lake. Simon agreed and is taking the lead. A detailed information package was provided to him with our recommendations and concerns. During this challenging time, municipal staff are working remotely, which can impact the timing of initiatives. We are in regular contact with the municipality on these issues, pushing hard to ensure they follow through on their commitments. We will provide updates when possible.

For many years previous Jacques Causse and his friends have been installing and removing the homemade buoys, which took many hours each time often in difficult weather conditions. We know Jacques will be happy to hand off the responsibility to the municipality and we thank him for his many hours and years of work.

Calendars

We will be printing a limited number of calendars this year, due to the possibility of reduced sales because of COVID-19. This year the calendars will be offered at \$20 each. We will be offering calendars via our [new online ordering system](#). They will be \$20 and shipping will be additional. We will also develop a distribution process so folks can pick them up locally, avoiding the shipping cost and carbon footprint. This will have to be in line with COVID-19 rules in Quebec.

Membership

We have created an [online membership process](#) and have streamlined our Interac (e-transfer) payments.

Renewal notifications have gone out for those whose 3-year memberships have expired. More notifications will go out to other expiring memberships.

Amis is always looking for new members. Our priorities and successes come from our membership. If you, or someone you know, would like to become a member, please visit our online membership page [website \(here\)](#).

AGM - due to the change in fiscal year for Amis, we are looking at holding the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September. It will likely be a combination of live (some members of the executive in an outside location) and Zoom open to the public (who have the link to the meeting to be provided in an invitation email).