



Ville de / Town of

BARKMERE

Spring/Summer Bulletin

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It was in February 2010 that I met for the first time, officials of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests (MNR). As a newly elected official, I was very excited to take up the torch passed from all our predecessors on City Council and continue our efforts to protect and preserve Bark Lake and its surroundings. My immediate predecessor warned me that it was not easy to discuss with the MNR. Despite this, I was still a little naive as a new Mayor, when I showed up with two councillors at the offices of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MAMROT) of Saint-Jérôme.

So here we are with three very arrogant officials, who tell us that they do not really care about our regulations, our population, both humans and animals. The lands in the domain of the State are theirs, and they do not have to argue with us. Their job is forest "management". And they embark on a technical discussion of the selective cutting of an optimal number of "stems" (I had never before confused a tree with a plant stem, but hey!), and how "environmental" rules applied in the construction of forest roads. All this, under the benevolent gaze of two MAMROT officials, who are supposed to be our allies.

Let's fast-forward through the next 13 years, to May 2023, at the MRC des Laurentides. Much less naive, and more toughened, here I am again facing the successors of the 2010 officials. This time, on truly "municipal" grounds. While they were all men in 2010, these civil servants are all women in 2023. This gives hope for a wind of change! In any case, there is already less male arrogance. We hear the words "working together", in "solution mode", "discuss and find ways to mitigate the disadvantages".

But when I mention that the Town of Barkmere and its residents will oppose logging on its peninsula, the old narrative comes back to the surface. The lands in the domain of the State are theirs, and the law is on their side, and tells them that there must be a cut every 25 years. Too bad for municipalities.

We are not alone. Every month, in the media, one can read, see, or hear about local populations being ignored by MNR officials. Whether it is the Innu of Pessiamit, the ecologists of Péribonka, the activists of the Action Boréale, the cottagers of Barkmere, all are ignored, and the bureaucrats continue to plan and organize cuts. Too bad for residents and woodland caribous.

Lands in the domain of the State, formerly known as "Crown lands", are a relic of feudal times, the management of which was given to the provinces by the British North America Act of 1867. This is the central argument of MNR bureaucrats. But customs (if not laws) have evolved over the past 150 years. Today, these areas of forest are called "public lands." The word "public" in most dictionaries means: "which concerns the people as a whole", or "accessible, open to all".

It is high time that we understand in Quebec that public lands are the lands of the people and that the population elects local governments to take care of the local territory. Civil servants of the MNR are not elected by the local population. And you can't be more "local" than Barkmere.

It is therefore up to us, the taxpayers, and local elected officials of Barkmere, to decide what happens on the territory of Barkmere. And we, the public, no longer accept in 2023, that OUR forests are cut down, OUR territory is destroyed with disproportionate and poorly built roads. We no longer accept being ignored.

Save Diamond Point!

Luc Trépanier
Mayor

There is room on the bus

By: Stephen Lloyd



Our nearly 100-year-old Barkmere project is under siege. If you are a believer in the Barkmere project (and if you are reading this article you probably are) these are pretty dark days.

First, there is the never-ending development of the Laurentians wilderness into urbanized and commercial zones. If you have not done so recently, sneak a peak at google maps in the area around Barkmere's borders. We are really starting to stick out as an island of green in a sea of white. There is not much we can do to influence that trend, but we need to be aware.

Second, there is the provincial government's new (since 2014) bureaucracy set up to manage the forest cuts on public (Crown) lands. This MNRF bureaucratic machine is bound and determined to apply to the Laurentians the same rules that apply in the Lac St-Jean and Abitibi regions. They persist in this approach, even though the territory in the Laurentians is much more occupied, there are many other better uses for our southern hardwood public trees and the remaining Laurentian forests have now almost exhausted their commercial harvesting potential. This bureaucracy also seems to answer to no one.

Finally, there are the folks who are using our public forests to "get out and explore" with their vehicles and machines. The exploration instinct for many of these people is also coupled with a desire to subjugate and emerge victorious over the wilderness, as part of some sort of personal growth challenge. Fair enough; not everyone sees the world the same way, and far better that they are getting outside, rather than staying indoors and watching Netflix all day or playing video games in the basement. But they are having a seriously negative impact on the forest...

Our Barkmere project is thus subject to some of the biggest challenges it has ever faced.

But now is not the time to give up on our project. We can still work hard to protect our Barkmere territory. Our efforts to date have worked. See for example the excellent article in this Bulletin on the Lake quality, by Councillor Chadwick. That success did not happen by itself.

The founders of our Barkmere project saw fit to equip us with one particularly powerful tool: an official Town of Barkmere. That municipal platform gives us much more legal leverage as well as credibility. We need to use it wisely, and we will.

As well, our instincts to save as much wilderness as possible tap into a greater trend. We have allies out there – people who are working to save ecological corridors throughout the Laurentians in order to allow the wolves to roam and the biodiversity of the region to survive.

Finally, our ace in the hole is our community. We really have a community. We are not a bunch of individuals, blogging away on our keyboards about the injustice of it all.

But we need to build on this community. As we rise to this challenge, we need lots of team-mates, fresh ideas and new energy. We need lots of people on this bus. The way forward is not 100% clear, but we will find it together, because we share a common goal.

So please reach out to your neighbours. In person. Nothing great was ever accomplished by sharing emails. Or by sending out “drive-by suggestions” to others. There are many people new to the Barkmere community who do not appreciate just how important (and fragile) our little project is. Please tell them. They will see that it comes from your heart.

Get them on the bus.

Renew your BLPA membership right now. Find a way to get involved. This is the time.

There is lots of room on this bus. It will be fun and invigorating riding together. And it is way better than staying home and watching Netflix or playing video games in the basement!

Looking forward to our discussions this summer.

*Stephen Lloyd,
Councillor*

Environment Matters

By: Jake Chadwick



Summer 2022 Water Quality results

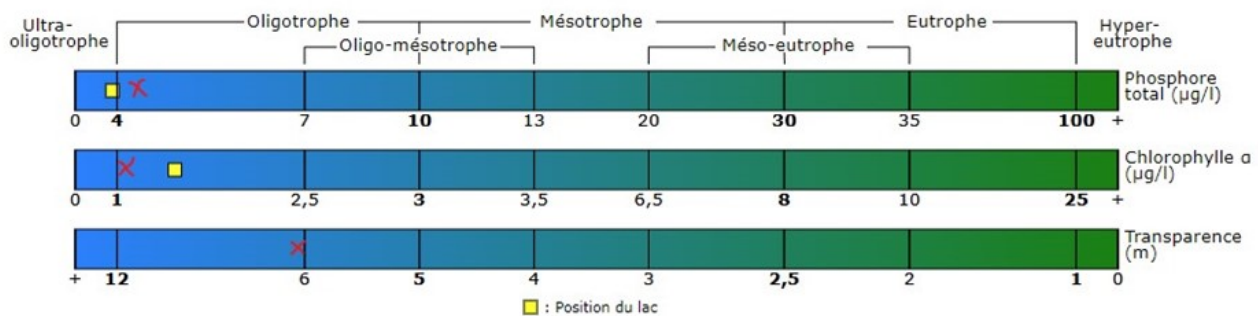
As usual, with the BLPA we participated in the annual RSVL (Réseau Surveillance Volontaire des Lacs) program of the Ministry of the Environment, the fight against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks.

The following table highlights the results from the RSVL water quality testing program. We have superimposed with a red **x** the results from 2021 for comparative purposes.

Données physicochimiques - Été 2022

Date	Phosphore total (µg/l)	Chlorophylle a (µg/l)	Carbone organique dissous (mg/l)
2022-06-19	3,3	1,7	6,6
2022-07-19	4,4	1,6	6,7
2022-08-14	3	1,2	4,1
Moyenne estivale	3,6	1,5	5,8

Classement du niveau trophique - Été 2022



The total phosphorus average result of 3.6 µg/l was lower than our 2021 result of 4.4 µg/l but higher than the 2020 result of 3.1 µg/l. You can see the variation even within one summer's three testing dates so variation year over year is expected. Hovering between 3 and 4 µg/l level keeps the lake at the ultra-oligotrophic state on this measure.

The table below highlights some comparative 2022 levels of average total phosphorus of neighbouring lakes. (Source: RSVL)

Lake	Average Total Phosphorus ($\mu\text{g/l}$)
Bark Lake	3.6
Lac Manitou	4.0
Lac Tremblant	4.1
Lac Nomingue	6.3
Lac Munich	6.6
Lac Rond	9.1
Beaven Lake	11.0
Lac Maskinongé	19.0

As indicated in the table presented above, Bark Lake exhibits notably lower phosphorus levels compared to the majority of lakes in our area. Less nutrients, like phosphorus, means less development of undesirable plant life in the lake that contributes to aging.

In 2022, the average concentration of chlorophyll a, measuring 1.5 $\mu\text{g/l}$, exceeded the 2021 reading of 1.1 $\mu\text{g/l}$, albeit remaining at a very low level. This finding substantiates an environment characterized by minimal biomass of suspended microscopic algae.

Regrettably, the RSVL did not record our transparency data for 2022. However, the average reading at the usual testing site during the summer of 2022 was 6.1 meters, identical to the result obtained in 2021.

Taken together, the 2022 RSVL water quality test results confirm that the lake continues to exist in an oligotrophic state, signifying its early stage in the lifecycle—a highly favorable condition.

In conjunction with the RSVL's water quality assessment, the CCE conducted additional tests throughout the summer. Total phosphorus levels were measured at three specific locations along the primary inlet tributary, namely at the confluence with the lake, upstream at the former bridge site, and further upstream at the source. These results aligned with previous years' findings, with the site nearest to the lake measuring 11.4 $\mu\text{g/l}$, the old bridge site measuring 11.2 $\mu\text{g/l}$, and the highest point measuring 11.6 $\mu\text{g/l}$. These outcomes validate our existing knowledge that phosphorus input from tributaries consistently exceeds the lake's average levels. We will persist in monitoring the main tributaries to promptly detect elevated results that may be attributable to upstream activities.

Moreover, pH levels in the lake were assessed in July 2022, with the average result recorded at 7.2, consistent with historical data. This pH level remains reassuring as it falls outside the range of preference of zebra mussels, a troublesome invasive species. Lastly, fecal coliform levels were measured at various locations on the lake, consistently registering below 2 UFC/100ml, denoting a minimal presence and aligning with previous years' observations. These and other findings will be included in the Water Quality Update for the L'Action project report of 2021 and published on the Town's official website.

Milfoil and the CEAP Programme

Thankfully we will have the support of Anne Létourneau and Sylvain Miller once again this summer to patrol the inlet area of the lake and remove any milfoil plants found. We are hopeful that progress has been made from the work done over the last few years, particularly further upstream in the inlet tributary area. We also hope for further progress in shoreline patrols under the Community Environmental Action Patrol (CEAP) during the summer of 2022. We plan a blitz during the weekend of July 22 -23 so mark your calendars! That said, don't delay in checking your shoreline and submitting your report online ([here](#)). As always, please avoid the inlet area east of the small island and absolutely do not enter the inlet stream area until we are sure we have the area under control. Your cooperation is vital.

Saving the Diamond Point Peninsula

Your CCE will be active in supporting the fight to have the planned forestry cut on the Diamond Point peninsula cancelled. This is the only outcome that will ensure that the area is not destroyed by the current practices of the Ministry-supported logging contractors. This is a fight that all citizens have a stake in and we count on strong community support.

Protected Area Project

Another priority for your CCE this summer will be to continue work on establishing a protected zone that will include most public lands within the municipality and, importantly, the area behind the inlet. As announced at recent council meetings, we have the support of important partners, the Town of Montcalm and Écocorridors Laurentiens, and have received funding of \$119,000 over three years for the project from Société Pour La Nature et Les Parcs du Canada (SNAP Quebec). Activities will include further ecological and descriptive characterization of the planned areas, meeting with various stakeholders of the project and developing the detailed application.

*Jake Chadwick,
Councillor*

An Update from the Landing Committee

By: Kim Lamoureux



You will notice as soon as you arrive at the landing that the old 7-door boathouse has been replaced with a new dock system with 16 mooring spaces.

The 6-hour dock will be accessible once again after the addition of the new docks.

Accessibility;

A portion of the newly installed docks will be accessible to individuals with mobility challenges with the incorporation of ramps and handrails. The design complements the existing docks and meets functional requirements. Durable materials have been chosen to ensure low maintenance and weathering. There is still some work to be accomplished but things are moving forward.

The shelter is in the process of being renovated too. New shingles on the roof, a fresh coat of stain, and a new balcony should be completed soon.

During this upcoming summer, the administration will be studying some options for accommodating overflow parking spaces for the handful of weekends when there's a lack of spaces.



THE LANDING - CIRCA 1938

*Kim Lamoureux,
Councillor*

Fire and ice

By: Marc Frédette



Robert Frost's poem makes a great title for this article. I invite you to read it but let's keep a positive spirit.

The Town has set aside amounts from the accumulated surplus for potential needs. We have established two main buckets. These provide the Town with assurance and flexibility while reducing the volatility of our property tax burden.

One bucket to cover potential legal expenses to protect our lake and its beautiful wilderness that make this community so strong.

The other bucket is for environmental purposes. We have seen heavy rain, high winds, ice storms, forest fires and tornados among other events.

More specifically, this bucket provides the Town with financial flexibility to do the following:

1. Shoreline protection against erosion (plants, education etc.)
2. Study to assess environmental impact.
3. More maintenance and repairs for the Town's infrastructure.
4. Better drainage at the landing.
5. Closure and erosion mitigation of forestry roads.
6. Prevent and take out new invasive plants and species.
7. Improved boat cleaning at the landing.
8. Citizen safety during emergencies such as forest fires, electric outage, and flooding.
9. Increase the dam height.
10. Maintenance of fire pumps around the lake.

The Town bought a generator that makes the community center a place to go in the event of emergency for all citizens and more likely permanent residents.

Most of the climate events we don't control such as flooding and tornados. However, forest fires are something each of us should be careful with.

Couple years ago, some of us witnessed big planes on Bark Lake filling up water to extinguish the forest fire near Duncan Road. It could have been disastrous!

According to the Quebec annual report, 82% of forest fires are the result of human activities especially recreational fires while lightening represents only 14%. Please have a look at the board at the entrance of the Town which indicates if it is safe to make a fire. A more practical way is to download the app on your phone from the government and set it up for Barkmere. It is called SOPFEU. It will let you know if it is wise to make a recreational fire or not. Here are the links.

<https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/sopfeu/id964524738>

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ca.skex.sopfeu&hl=en_CA&gl=US

Looking forward to seeing you at the lake and have a wonderful and safe summer!

*Marc Frédette,
Councillor*

Another season begins

By: Marie-Hélène Lemarbre



Another season begins with its adventures and challenges. When I look at the other lakes in the Laurentians that have developed without realizing all the impacts that human use could have on their precious lakes, I think we are lucky to have such a beautiful place. Our community has been aware of these impacts for almost 100 years and has worked hard to limit them. This territory has been protected by its citizens for all this time and I am very proud that as a community, this is what we continue to do. As my colleagues also say, we cannot take anything for granted and we must persevere in the preservation of our lake and its surroundings.

The richness of our lake is its incredible water quality, its preserved natural aspect, the sounds of its loons, its frogs, its owls, etc. as a soundtrack, the starry sky as a backdrop(?) at night and its strong community ready to keep it that way. We have to realize that there aren't many places like ours anymore and that's what makes it so unique and beautiful.

I am, compared to my colleagues, a young Barklaker, like probably many of you. I don't know everything about this place yet, but I can tell you that it goes straight to the heart and that it pushes us to participate in this project that is Barkmere. It is an incredible opportunity to share such a beautiful treasure.

This summer take the time to enjoy this magnificent lake. Take the time to talk to your neighbors who probably have a thousand stories to tell. It will make you fall even more in love with this place. In addition, what we love, we tend to protect.

Have a good summer!

Marie-Hélène Lemarbre,
Councillor

A humorous quiz on a serious topic: navigation

By: Ken Mann



1. Among the following statements, which one is true?

An adequate life jacket is...

- a) one that fits correctly for each individual and is authorized by Transport Canada or la Garde Cotière Canadienne or Pêches et Océans Canada;
- b) one that is uncomfortable;
- c) one that covers your ears.

2. Among these statements which one is false?

- a) Kayaks, paddle boards, canoes and sailboats have the right of way at all times over a power boat;
- b) You need to have a licence to operate boats with engines of 10 horse power and over;
- c) If you don't have your boat operator's licence, it's ok.

3. Among the following statements, which one is false?

Every boat should...

- a) be visible once the sun has gone down;
- b) have a horn in case of fog or when visibility is reduced;
- c) be florescent in color.

4. Among the following statements, which one is false?

Safety equipment that sailboats and motor boats of up to 6 meters in length has to have at all times is...

- a) a life jacket for the boat;
- b) a floating heaving line with a minimum length of 15 metres;
- c) a reboarding device if the freeboard height exceeds half of a metre.

5. What visual signaling device is required when navigating on a lake?

- a) A cell phone;
- b) A match;
- c) A waterproof flashlight.

6. If a boat is coming from the port or the left side of your boat, who has the right of way?

- a) You use sign language to decide who has priority;
- b) The boat coming on your left side has the right of way;
- c) You have the right of way

7. Among the following which one is true?

When the sun goes down and boats turn on their navigation lights,

- a) if you see a red navigation light, the boat is coming from your right side and therefore the boat has the right of way (red means stop);
- b) if you see a green navigation light, the boat is coming from the left side and therefore you have right of way;
- c) all of the above.

8. Among the following statements, which one is false?

A pleasure craft operator must...

- a) minimize the impact of the wake on the shoreline and the docks;
- b) keep a good distance from other water crafts, swimmers and wild life;
- c) knows at least three navigation rules.

Answers :

- 1. a 5. c
- 2. c 6. c
- 3. c 7. c
- 4. a 8. c

It's always good to refresh ourselves on boating safety rules and guidance. You will find all the information you need on the websites of Transport Canada Safe Boating Guide and Nautisme Quebec.

Stay safe and have a great summer.

*Ken Mann,
Councillor*

The Director General's column

By: **Martin Paul Gélinas**



I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone some essential information to spend an enjoyable summer.

Écocentre mobile

First, let me remind you of the dates of the large garbage (mobile ecocentre):

The first Ecocentre will be held on June 16th and 17th, 2023. The second will be held on August 11th and 12th, 2023. The containers will be installed at the Labrosse drop-off (near docks **C** and **D**).

Here are the items that can be deposited in the containers: mattresses, box springs, washing machines, dryers, water heaters, stoves, old furniture, garden furniture and other similar goods.

Here are the items that can NOT be deposited in the containers: recyclable materials, tires, electrical and electronic equipment, household hazardous waste, green waste (leaves, grass), construction, renovation and demolition materials, stone, concrete, asphalt, refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, barbecue, and propane canisters.

These lists are not exhaustive; In case of doubt do not hesitate to inquire with the staff of the administration.

Parking

In recent years, there has been days where the parking can be very crowded. We are evaluating permanent solutions, but in the meantime, here are some suggestions that could help us all take advantage of the available space: try to leave as little space as possible between vehicles and do not leave boat trailers that use a vehicle space. We are aware that parking of adequate space will allow us to maintain the character of our city with the particularities that the founders had already imagined! A good parking and a good marina are elements that best serve our mission as a lake town!

To conclude, we remind you the importance of using the lake with all the required safety and to act with courtesy both for other users and for the owners who are at their property. When travelling, try to travel as far from the shores as possible. When you are ashore you will appreciate this gesture from other citizens.

Courtesy, respect, and good humor! These are the recommendations I propose for a great summer together.

*Martin Paul Gélinas,
Director general*

The Administrative Assistant's column

By: Shanny Larose



It brings me so much joy to see you all of you begin to head back to your cottages after this winter season! The weather has made it even more welcoming for all of us.

For those of you who have not met me yet, I will now be working as the Town's administrative assistant. This is my second time working for the Town as some of you may remember me working the 2014 and 2015 summer season as a landing attendant. I have also been a Barklaker for more than 15 years as we have a family cottage on the lake.

If you have any questions regarding the wharves or your municipal taxes, do not hesitate to contact me at communications@barkmere.ca.

I will be available at the town hall from Monday to Thursday during opening hours to answer any of your questions.

As a reminder, general manager Martin-Paul Gélinas will be working from Monday to Wednesday as well as one Saturday a month. Inspector Marc-André Paquin will be working Thursday to Saturday. Accountant Patricia McMartin will be working every Tuesday.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who took the time to leave comments regarding the forestry cut. It's by standing together, as Barklakers, that we can all make a difference.

I'm wishing you all a safe and happy summer!

*Shanny Larose,
Administrative Assistant*

INFORMATION ON CITY HALL



OPENING HOURS

Mid-May to Mid-October*Monday to Friday:*

8:00AM- 4:30PM

Saturday and Sunday:

8:30AM-4:30PM

Mayor:

819-681-3374, ext. 5100

maire@barkmere.ca

Director General and Treasurer:

819-681-3374, ext. 5101

dg@barkmere.ca

Finances (tax bill):

819-681-3374, ext. 5102

finance@barkmere.ca

Urbanism and infrastructures:

819-681-3374, ext. 5103

inspecteur@barkmere.ca

Communications:

819-681-3374, ext. 5100

communications@barkmere.ca