

## Board of Trustees Report—January 2010

*Kathy Gilbert, President, Cottagers' Council*

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The Board of Trustees met Friday, January 29, in Lansing. The board meeting began with a thoughtful discussion of the purpose of a nonprofit corporation board: to use its resources productively to meet the purpose for which the nonprofit was chartered by the state. In other words, it is the board's responsibility to ensure that its mission is being met. And the LLCC mission? *Creating an environment that nurtures Christian growth and Christ-like community.* I believe it is important for us as cottagers to remind ourselves that we are part of that "Christ-like community," and since we are part of the LLCC nonprofit corporation, we too have a responsibility to nurture that environment and support the mission.

Following are pertinent highlights of the board meeting:

- **The Forest Legacy Program** At this point we don't have any news regarding our application. We do know that the national committee met this past week, and we are unsure whether it has finished its work. We expect to hear something in mid-February. And...we've still got our fingers crossed!
- **Development Plan, Phase 1** Plans are moving forward to begin construction of the new lodge donated by two cottagers. The lodge will be constructed with logs in order to keep with the integrity of the current buildings at the camp. Also, the application process for a new program specialist has begun. This position is supported for two years by a donor gift. Please contact Vaughn Maatman, LLCC Executive Director, if you know anyone who would be a good candidate or want more details about the job description.
- **Finances** Things are looking up! With the recent sale of Morningside cottage along with the accrued lease transaction fees mentioned in my last report, the board has been able to pay back all monies (and then some) that it "borrowed" from its reserves to meet last year's budget. The board adopted a conservative budget for 2010 to meet its mission and plans to meet the budget without borrowing from its reserves.
- **Cottagers' Council Dues** In a proactive review of policies, Vaughn looked into the policy previously set before his tenure here regarding keeping the majority of the money for Cottagers' Council dues in the LLCC purview. The reasoning given years ago for doing this centered on the need for Cottagers' Council projects (such as the dumpsters) to have legal cover. After consulting with lawyers, Vaughn determined along with the lawyers that this was not necessary, and Cottagers' Council projects on LLCC property automatically have legal coverage through LLCC. Therefore, dues will continue to be collected by LLCC, but then all monies will be turned over to the treasurer of Cottagers' Council. Vaughn will address this further in the LLCC Newsletter.
- **Cottager Lien Agreements** In recognition of the differing monetary needs of cottagers particularly in these difficult financial times, the board adopted a new loan policy for cottagers to borrow money against cottage equity. Whereas in the past cottagers could only borrow against equity for construction/remodeling purposes, cottagers are now free to borrow up to 80% against equity for any monetary need.
- **Future Actions Affecting New Cottagers** The board plans to appoint a task force to review/update the application process for new lessees.

The next board meeting is set for April 16 at Lake Louise.

## Board of Trustees Report—April 2010

*Kathy Gilbert, President, Cottagers' Council*

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The Board of Trustees met Friday, April 16, at Lake Louise. The board meeting began with a thoughtful discussion of positive board practices that serve to foster an organization's mission. Our discussion stressed the importance of orienting new board members, participating in shared study to increase our knowledge base as well as spiritual growth, and reaching consensus where possible.

Following are pertinent highlights of the board meeting:

- **The Forest Legacy Program** Of the 38 recommended projects, Michigan has been selected for two of them. The number 1 project involves a significant stretch of land bordering Lake Superior. Our Lake Louise project is ranked 34<sup>th</sup> out of the 38 recommended projects. We are slated for partial funding this year **IF** the Forest Legacy Program is funded by the federal government. The budget process in Washington has been slowed by Congress wrangling over other issues, and the budget for the Department of the Interior has not been addressed yet. If we receive the partial funding, only one-half of our proposed conservancy land easement will be involved for this year, and then next year we will resubmit for 2011 funding for the other half of our proposed conservancy easement. If we do not receive any funding this year, we will resubmit the whole project next year.
- **Development Plan, Phase 1** New stringent fire regulations have led to a minor redesign of the lodges causing them to be downsized a bit, but construction plans are moving ahead with Myke Sherman acting as the general contractor. We saw a short video of the formation of the actual logs that will be used to build the first lodge. Construction begins this spring. Vaughn is in the process of conducting interviews from a selected pool of applicants for the Program Development Specialist and expects to have one on board for this summer.
- **Finances** The resurgence of the stock market continues to help our financial picture. Currently we are financially healthy and staying within the 2010 budget. Camp registrations, however, are lagging slightly behind 2009 at this point (as is happening at camps across the state). Vaughn stressed the necessity of getting the word out about our camp whenever and wherever possible to help us increase registrations this year. As you will recall, camp registrations are our largest revenue source.
- **Timber Harvest** The proposed timber harvest for fall 2009 has been postponed until next year due to the harvester postponing the fall harvest to spring and then being caught by the very early spring up north. The early spring resulted in mucky roads that cannot support the weight of logging vehicles.
- **Updated Lessees Application Process** We received the draft of an updated application process that was put together by a task force with representation from the board and cottagers. This updated application process continues to affirm the LLCC mission, vision, and core values. The task force will now take into consideration suggestions made by the board regarding the draft of the application process.

The next board meeting is set for June 18<sup>th</sup> at Lake Louise.

# Board of Trustees Report—June 2010

*Kathy Gilbert, President, Cottagers' Council*

The Board of Trustees met Friday, June 18, at Lake Louise. The board honored two retiring board members, John Ross Thompson and Pat Arvilla. Together they have given over twenty years of volunteer service to the Board of Trustees and Lake Louise Christian Community.

Following are pertinent highlights of the board meeting:

- **The Forest Legacy Program** Kerry Wieber from DNR and Ty Ratliff from the Little Traverse Conservancy met with us to give us an update and to get our approval for our submission (due this July) for the next phase of our project. Congress still has not adopted a budget, so we remain in limbo regarding whether we will receive the recommended partial funding for our project. We are hoping that Congress will make a decision by October, but there is speculation that some members of Congress want to wait until they see the results of the November election. As reported after our last board meeting, if we receive the partial funding, only one-half of our proposed conservancy land easement will be involved for this year, and then we will resubmit for 2011 funding for the other half of our proposed conservancy easement. If we do not receive any funding this year, we will resubmit the whole project next year. (Vaughn will review the two phases of our project in detail at our June Cottagers' Council meeting.)

Kerry and Ty emphasized how helpful it is to have someone in Washington pulling for us. After we research the most effective way for us to further our cause in Washington, we will be notifying you about how you can help us communicate with members of Congress regarding supporting funding of our project.

- **Development Plan, Phase 1** The capital campaign is proceeding, and we are about one quarter of the way towards our goal of 1.1 million dollars. All donations are greatly appreciated and being put to good use. Construction of the first lodge has begun! Drive to the camp and take a look. Footings are in, and shortly we will have a “barn-type raising” to put up the log walls. Interviews for the Program Development Specialist were completed last week, and we can expect an announcement of a new Program Development Specialist shortly.
- **Finances** The up-and-down nature of the stock market changes our financial picture daily, but overall we continue to be financially healthy and staying within the 2010 budget. Camp registrations have leveled off and are now on a similar level to 2009.
- **New Lease Application** We reviewed and approved the final draft of an updated application process that was put together by a task force with representation from the board and cottagers. This updated application process continues to affirm the LLCC mission, vision, and core values and makes very clear to prospective lessees what LLCC is “all about.” The application process includes a completed application form (including responses to a series of questions); a signed Affirmation of the Mission, Vision and Core Values statement; two references; a LLCC Lien Agreement (needed only if a loan is used to purchase or improve the property); and the community buy-in fee (appropriate for new prospective lessees, not for lease transfers). After submitting the above, LLCC will conduct a dinner interview with the prospective lessees (LLCC expense). Once membership is approved, new lessees will be given a copy of Ted Halsted's book, *Spring-Fed Waters: The Story of a Lake in Northern Michigan*.
- **Board Policies** The board approved two new updated policies: the Community Buy-In Fee and the Lake Louise Community Policy on Alcohol Use. Both policies were written with board, cottager, and legal input. The Community Buy-In Fee further defines eligibility for the buy-in fee. The alcohol use policy (see next page) aligns LLCC policy with the guide for alcohol use in the current Methodist Book of Discipline. This policy replaces the previous policy, regardless of when you signed your lease.

The next board meeting is set for August 13<sup>th</sup> at Lake Louise.

**Living in Christ-like Community**  
*Lake Louise Christian Community Policy on Alcohol Use*

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Our goal is to *live within* and *live into* Christ-like community.

Historically, the Methodist Church was a temperance church. At its inception in 1934 our Community adopted an abstinence policy prohibiting the possession or use of alcohol, and this was written into the Community's Residential Property Lease. The modern United Methodist Church and its current Book of Discipline affirms abstinence but also acknowledges "those who choose to consume alcoholic beverages" and encourages "judicious use with deliberate and intentional restraint." We affirm the current Book of Discipline as a reliable guide to one's choice and use of alcoholic beverages in our Community.

Many in our Community choose to abstain from the possession or use of alcohol. We affirm their choice and desire to live in community in this way.

For those who choose to use alcohol, we encourage their "judicious use with deliberate and intentional restraint," according to the laws of the State of Michigan, and within our Community standards of caring for ourselves and our neighbors in Christ-like ways.

## Board of Trustees Report—August 2010

*Kathy Gilbert, President, Cottagers' Council*

The Board of Trustees met Friday, August 13, at Lake Louise. The board welcomed three new members: Kirk Halsted, cottager and business owner (also currently Vice-President of Cottagers' Council), Phil Friedrich, pastor of the Alma United Methodist Church and former Lake Louise staff member, and Mark Johnston, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Chesaning and a former director of Judson Collins camp.

Following are pertinent highlights of the board meeting:

- **The Forest Legacy Program** We are still in a holding pattern. Congress has not made a decision regarding funding the budget. Again, there is speculation that some members of Congress want to wait until they see the results of the November election. It is in our best interests to push for funding of the Forest Legacy Program now to ensure funding this year. If the leadership in Congress changes, we have no guarantee that the monies currently requested for the FLP will be appropriated at the same level as they are right now. Since LLCC is 34<sup>th</sup> on the list, we could be quite vulnerable. If there is no funding this year, the submissions start all over again. Being on the list this year does NOT guarantee that we would necessarily make a list next year. A request for cottager participation in letter writing has been emailed to all cottagers on the Cottagers' Council email list.
- **Development Plan, Phase 1** LLCC was recently given a wonderful gift by a cottager of a cottage and lease interest. We will have the cottage appraised and then put it on the market. Proceeds from the sale of the cottage are earmarked for the Capital Campaign. Construction of the Halsted Lodge is proceeding, and we expect it to be completed late fall for winter use.
- **Finances** We are currently financially healthy though our investments have taken a dip due to the fluctuation in the stock market. Camp registrations are running 6% ahead of last year, and retreat registrations are currently running 10% ahead of last year. Terry Gladstone, Program Development Specialist, is researching several ideas for increasing summer camps as well as retreats.
- **Lease Transfer Policy and Process** We passed a revised version of the new lease transfer policy. A copy of it is posted on the Lake Louise Community website. Cottagers' Council is currently planning to have a program next August for cottagers regarding lease transfer policies and planning for family transitions.
- **Memorial Garden** Royal Synwolt submitted his last report as chair of this committee. There are currently 97 names on the memorial plaque. Royal mentioned the dedicated work of members of the committee and the progress that had been made through the years. The committee is still soliciting biographies and pictures for the names on the plaque. Those should be submitted to Ruth Jameson. The board thanked Royal for his work through the years.
- **Cottager Volunteers** There has been significant volunteer work done by cottagers this year: labor building the Halsted Lodge, giving boat rides to campers, staffing the camp store, assisting camps, the Memorial Garden committee members, chairing 76<sup>th</sup> summer events, etc. The board recognized the wonderful contribution by cottagers to the spirit and health of this community.

The Board of Trustees will not have a business meeting in November, but will instead hold a retreat on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at Lake Louise for its members to look at the progress of the Strategic Plan and establish next steps.

# Board of Trustees Report—November 2010

*Kathy Gilbert, President, Cottagers' Council*

The Board of Trustees met November 6 and 7 at Lake Louise for its annual retreat. The main purpose of the retreat was to review through three separate sessions the Mission Statement and Core Values, Ministry Plan, and the Master Plan and Capital Campaign to determine progress, possible changes in priorities, and perhaps what should be added to keep LLCC on the path to achieving its goals. (All of the documents reviewed are available on the LLCC website.) Many in-depth discussions occurred about several ideas which the board will continue to explore in upcoming board meetings. Stay tuned... Of note to cottagers was the often expressed need by the board to continue to strengthen ties with the cottager community through outreach, recreation, ecological awareness, and spiritual growth, particularly as our cottager community around the lake changes. A short business meeting was held late Monday afternoon.

Following are pertinent highlights of the board meeting:

- **The Forest Legacy Program** We will not receive funding this year as Congress still has not passed a new fiscal budget that would include monies for our submission. Additionally, the State of Michigan Forest Legacy Program committee reshuffled the standings in its submission by pushing another larger project on the Keweenaw Peninsula ahead of ours. Another area of concern is that with the change in Congress, we anticipate that conservation funding will not be a priority. However, we will resubmit our project for 2011 and keep our fingers crossed.
- **Development Plan (Capital Campaign), Phase 1** The Capital Campaign continues to move forward with close to 50% of the monies designated for Phase 1 raised. Halsted Lodge will be completed in time for winter use (see pictures below, taken at the board meeting), ground will be broken in the spring for the McKay Lodge (named for former cottager Orville "Mac" McKay), and plans are underway for the construction of Maryanna's Place, a children's playground named after former cottager Maryanna Baldwin. These projects and others have been made possible by cottager donations and contributions. In addition, Vaughn is working diligently to raise outside funds. Some of the larger projects in Phase 1 will be broken down into smaller segments to encourage interest and contributions. Is there someone that you would like to honor with a gift? Call Vaughn for more details.
- **Finances** Bottom line? We are in good shape right now. The rise in the stock market has helped. Summer camp registrations were up 5% over last summer, and retreat numbers were up around 10%. However, (and this is crucial), to assure long term growth and keep our facilities filled, we recognize the need to increase marketing for our camp and retreat center and reach out to dispel the notion that our facilities are only available for Methodists to use. Our financial security is tied directly to the success of our camp and retreat center.
- **Cottages and Loans** There are now 9 cottages for sale on Lake Louise. To help existing cottagers refinance and to help prospective buyers secure loans, we are in conversation with a local bank that has expressed some interest in financing leased property as some of the larger banks in this current economic crisis are not lending to leased property.

The Board of Trustees will meet next on January 28<sup>th</sup> in Lansing.

*Halsted Lodge sleeps 20 and has two bathrooms (each bathroom has two toilets and two showers), kitchenette, living/meeting area, and a deck overlooking the lake.*

