



GROUP EFFORTS

THIS'LL LEARN THEM

ONTARIO'S CHARLESTON LAKE ASSOCIATION is facing a familiar problem: increasing cottager complaints about boat speed, noise, and wake. "About 80 per cent of our members' concerns are about boating safety," says Michael McAdoo, who is part of the CLA's environmental directors board. In response, the board formed a committee, chaired by board member John Webster, to address the issue. They launched the Boater Awareness and Safety System this past summer.

The association hopes that BASS will reduce boat speed and noise and promote safe boating through five key educational and awareness elements: traditional media such as newsletters; web-based media on the CLA website and social channels; increased and improved signage around the lake; youth programs, such as a new boating safety module included in the CLA's day camps; and other materials, such as pamphlets. "Our main goal is to see an increased awareness of boating safety," says John. The CLA is also working closely with the community youth in an effort to encourage safe boating practices from an early age. This summer, students handed out the informational pamphlets along the boat launches and encouraged residents to complete a boater survey.

Although the summer has ended, BASS will remain a part of the CLA—at least for the foreseeable future. "People don't always realize that if you drive your boat a certain way, it creates a larger wake," says John. Disruptive noise, swamped boats, and displaced or washed-out loons' nests are just some of the unfortunate consequences of increased boat traffic. "The more people know about boating safety, the more they can shift their behaviour in and around the lake," he says.

BASS is an example of what community organizations can accomplish, says John. "We're just a group of people that have banded together, volunteered our time, and are trying to raise awareness around an important issue."—KARIN SALK

COTTAGE LOGIC

FEED THE NATION

Who knew you could compose a pretty delicious* holiday meal based only on Canada's many lakes with food names?



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