

President's End of Year Message

As we look forward to saying goodbye to 2020, I hope this message finds you all well, and ready to stay safely hunkered down for a few more months. Who knows, with the vaccine coming we might even begin to hope for the possibility of a 2021 BALA GALA!

For those of us that live on the lake full time, it hasn't been a bad place to hibernate for the past nine months. We've still been able to take our lakeside walks, albeit there and back as opposed to walking around the lake, while socializing with our neighbors distancing across the road. During the summer months we all shared on-the-water socializing, and I noticed a hugely increased pontoon parade at cocktail time. For Jill and me, it's always fun puttering slowly around the lake and waving to all our neighbors. A wonderful tradition of Big Alum. It's always good to see folks in person and be seen in person. It's so reassuring during these tough times.

This summer the lake was particularly busy with boaters from the surrounding towns getting out on the water and enjoying the outdoors. The weekends proved to be quite busy, but actually added a festive air to summer. We did have some problems with visiting boaters using the island as a toilet area. I am planning on getting with Matt Kibbe, the Chair of our Boating Committee, and having some signs made up asking guests to refrain from this activity, and to use the porta potty at the public landing. Matt and I will check the island in the spring and clean up whatever debris (toilet paper, etc.) that hasn't disintegrated. It has also come to my attention that fishermen are using adjacent private property on both sides of the landing for the same purpose. It seems the State only has funding for a porta potty from Memorial Day through Labor Day. At our last Board meeting we discussed the possibility of BALA providing the porta potty through the winter months. Of course, this will need to be approved by the State and by the membership before spending those funds, so we shall see.

We are moving forward with the various projects you approved at the last general Membership Meeting. The north end drainage project is now underway, and we expect it to be completed in the early spring. Tom Clark, Chair of our Watershed Drainage Committee, is in the process of establishing a maintenance program for all the drainage areas around the lake. With the help of volunteers and some funding from BALA, we hope to keep the various drainage sites on Mt. Dan Rd., Paradise Lane, the north end, and the south end free of debris and draining filtered water into the lake. The south end drainage, by the Italian Club, will be our next project. With the completion of the south end drainage site, Tom feels we will have all the major watershed runoff areas under control. Water filtered of fertilizers, road soil, and road salts can't help but improve the quality of the lake's water. Of note, we had no green algae blooms this past summer, despite the warm temperatures, as we have seen for the past several summers. Nice!

We are also moving ahead with the conversion of BALA to a 501 C3. Jeff Buchanan, our newly elected Vice President, is spearheading this project. His research has shown that most lake associations in the area are 501 C3's. Now that our accounting meets GAAP standards, there is no reason not to proceed in this direction. Of course, there are still some hurdles to be

overcome in this endeavor, but in the end the Board feels it will be worth the effort. There may be charitable tax benefits to those members that so graciously donate to our cause, as well as other organizational benefits. Jeff will do more research and we will make a presentation to the membership at one of the Membership Meetings this summer.

I'm told by the voices of authority, that there are no longer any properties for sale on the Lake. With the sale of Joel and Christine Casaubon's house to Geoffrey and Jennifer Hunt, the sale of Jim Copeland's property, to the east of the Italian Club, to Steve and Meaghan Tardanico, and Steve Conrad's family home to Kathy and Paul Harrington's son Tim, the last of the unsold properties have new owners. Welcome one and all. I know you will love living on Big Alum. The guys in the morning ski gang have already skied with Tim this past summer, and he hasn't forgotten how to ski one bit from his days growing up on the lake!

I would also like to welcome two new Board Members At Large to our BOD: Lisa Dalberth and Dave Bellerose. I appointed them because of their wealth of business and sales experience, and I know they will be a welcome addition to the Board. They both have accepted the positions and the Board has ratified these appointments. I look forward to working with the two of you on future projects.

Mari Roy, our new Membership Committee Chair, put out a wonderful holiday greeting message to all our members. I too want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happier New Year! I also want to second Mari's "thank you for your support" to all our members. It is through your generous donations to BALA that we are able to fund projects like the ones mentioned above, support the lake community through various social events, and work as one to keep the lake clean and beautiful for everyone to enjoy. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I'm looking forward to seeing you all on the water this May. Stay safe!

Sincerely,

Chuck Roy
President BALA