



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May, 13, 2020      Kenora ON**

## **A May long weekend like no other...**

### **Letter to LOWDSA Members from LOWDSA President & Kenora Mayor Reynard**

Only days away from it and we're anticipating a May long weekend like no other we've ever seen. No sooner are cottages closed up for the season in the fall than we begin looking forward to the May long weekend and another great summer at the lake. The season traditionally opens without fail on that weekend although it rarely looks or feels quite the same from year to year. Lake levels, water temperature, ice-out timing, road construction, winter damage (or lack of) thanks to animal visitors, fire hazards - so many variables that define season opening. Just the same, whatever the differences from previous years, the season always kicks off in a wonderfully, familiar way and we're back at the lake and loving it! To say that this year will be different would be, to put it mildly, a huge understatement.

Making the most of lake time this season is proving to be challenging as we try to navigate the many COVID-19 recommendations and restrictions issued by all levels of government and various health authorities across the country. As we all know, they are currently advising that we stay at home and avoid non-essential travel and, of most relevance to lake-time, that seasonal residents everywhere stay safe at home to avoid stresses on rural health care facilities, essential services and supply chains. No question .... it's the last thing we want to hear with that long weekend teasing us just around the corner. It's also the absolutely last thing Kenora area businesses want to see. Your lake communities are itching to welcome you back as soon as possible, but right now the health infrastructure and local supply chains simply cannot provide the support and services you are accustomed to when you return home to the lake.

We recognize that there are instances where isolating at the lake makes sense and may even be necessary. There are also reasons why you may need to travel to your lake property, to check on ice damage after high water levels at freeze-up or perhaps to satisfy insurance requirements. The decision on whether or not to head your cottage under the present circumstances is a personal one, will be made by everyone for their own reasons and should be respected as such. LOWDSA members, both seasonal and year-round residents have collectively made real and lasting contributions to our community as evidenced when we look at the Lake of the Woods District Hospital, the Museum and most recently the Muse, to name just a few. The economic impact of LOWDSA members measures in the tens of millions annually and is not taken for granted. The majority of Kenora residents appreciate the dollars infused into the local economy by summer residents and the jobs that are a direct outcome of that infusion. So, if you are travelling to your cottage anytime soon, it is with great reluctance that the City of Kenora asks you to resist the temptation or need to visit local businesses - just for the time being until the risk diminishes and it's safe to do so. All those restaurants and stores you've supported so well over the years cannot wait to welcome you back when it's safe for all concerned.

When that big 'welcome back' day will be is beyond predicting and will likely remain so for awhile yet. In the meantime, we'll all continue to wait on continuing changes in emergency orders for Ontario, Manitoba and across other provincial and international borders to set the stage for what is recommended and what is permitted or restricted. In the meantime, we thank you for being mindful of community safety and respectful of best practices for moving about your community at home and at the lake.

*Hardy Bock, LOWDSA President & Mayor Dan Reynard, City of Kenora*

### ***Comments from municipalities and businesses...***

*Kenora Harbourtown BIZ recognizes the importance of our summer residents and the value they bring to our community. Our seasonal residents contribute millions of dollars annually to our community by supporting our local shops, services and restaurants. They are a part of our Kenora family and we look forward to welcoming them as soon as our community gets back to some semblance of 'normal'. Stay safe everyone and we will see you soon!"* **Rob Dokuchie - Chair, Kenora Harbourtown Business Improvement Zone (BIZ)**

Continued on page 2 with comments from the **Kenora & District Chamber of Commerce, Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls & Township of Lake of the Woods**

On behalf of the *Kenora and District Chamber of Commerce* I would like to invite and promote our continued relationship with our neighbours from Manitoba and surrounding area . In this pandemic it is a time when we need to restrain from common activities at the lake and areas of enjoyment as per government policy at this time. When better times are to be enjoyed, all will be welcomed with open arms and our buisnesses so look forward to be able to serve our valued summer residents and guests. Look forward to seeing you soon. **Andy Scribilo - President, Kenora & District Chamber of Commerce**

Seasonal residents and visitors make up an important part of our community. The *Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls* is excited to welcome them back, as soon as COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed and it is safe to do so. **Mayor Norbert Dufresne, Township of Sioux Narrows-Nestor Falls**

We appreciate all that our resident cottage owners and tourist bring to our communities, however during these trying times we ask you to exercise precaution and follow the guidelines set forth by our provincial and federal counterparts to keep our communities safe and COVID Free. **Mayor Colleen Fadden, Lake of the Woods Township**

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