



nastawgan published by the wca editor: toni harting · printed by bayweb

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nastawgan is an Anishinabi word meaning 'the way or route'

EDITORIAL

For now, in this last-minute madhouse getting everything ready for paste-up and the printer, just a few words to say a most sincere 'thank you' to Sandy Richardson for teaching me how to run a unique publication, to the paste-up group for pledging me their continuing support and cooperation, to the Board for having so much confidence in me, and to the many WCA members who have promised to send me their fascinating paddling stories for publication in Nastawgan. A more deep-digging editorial, discussing things that stay and things that may go, as well as policy-ideas for the future, will be published in the next issue. I look forward to receiving some great material from you, because you make this very special newsletter.

Toni Harting

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Some things never change. Once again during the spring canoeing season demand has outstripped supply, as large numbers of members signed up for every available spot on our scheduled trips. It is gratifying to see that WCA members, new and old, continue to be an active lot. Particularly popular have been the instructional outings, and thanks are due the organizers of these events.

By the time you read these lines, many of you will have put your (new and improved) expertise to use during the holiday season, and have returned with a story or two to tell. I hope all of you recognize the proper forum for storytelling is all functions of the WCA, and that you will find the time to show up at the annual Fall Meeting in Haliburton in September and at the Fall Party at George Brown College in Toronto in November.

Since this is the first issue of Nastawgan produced under the direction of our new editor, I want to express the appreciation of the Board of Directors to Toni Harting for taking on this responsibility in full knowledge of all the work and anxieties which are associated with it. I want to remind all of you at the same time that to a significant extent the content and quality of the newsletter is going to reflect the active involvement of the members -- what shows up is what we put in.

At recent Board meetings your executive reviewed the financial position of the Association in order to set membership fees for 1986. As you may know, our last increase in membership dues occurred in 1980. In the interval substantial increases have occurred in virtually all sectors of the club's operation. Of particular impact was the decision by the executive to try to improve the appearance of the newsletter by going to a better grade of paper, a move widely applauded, one could add. Meritorious or not, the decision was largely responsible for a projected shortfall. Consequently, the Board decided to increase fees by \$5 for all categories of membership, with the hope that by careful housekeeping we may be able to keep to the new schedule for some time to come.

Herb Pohl

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I was recently reviewing the autumn 1984 edition of Nastawgan and spotted Roger Smith's 'Letter to the Editor' concerning the height, general public knowledge, derivation, and official recognition of the ridge he called "Ishpatena", located west of Maple Mountain.

Lately, I have been researching the history of the Temagami area and, in the course of my work, briefly investigated the origins of place names.

The local MNR office confirmed that 'Ishpatina', as it is also spelled, is the highest point in Ontario, with one summit peaking at 2,275 feet. On the MNR's 'Canoeing in the Temagami District' map, the range is designated 'Ishpatina', which indicates the name has achieved official recognition with the Ontario government. The Ontario Geographic Names Board could provide information.

Craig Macdonald, who I believe is familiar to the Wilderness Canoe Association, has called the entire structure 'Kinaybig Puckwudina', Puckwudina meaning hill. The ancient Algonkian inhabitants coined the ridge 'Ishpudina' which was corrupted to 'Ishpatina' from 'Ishbatina', a word coming from the dialect of a Georgian Bay area band. As I understand it, Spadina Road in Toronto is also a vastly altered version of 'Ishbatina'. I'm sure Mr. Macdonald could provide a more accurate and detailed description of Ishpatina's etymological roots.

On page 34 of Frank G. Speck's Memoir 71, "Myths and Folklore of the Timiskaming Algonquin and Timagami Ojibwa", printed in 1915 as a result of a government anthropological survey he undertook in part with the Temagami Indians on Bear Island in 1913, there is a short portrayal of the band's legend regarding the formation of the ridge: Nenebuc, a trickster giant, shot "a great snake" with his bow and arrow which became this high rocky ridge.

In his letter, Mr. Smith asks "what steps can be taken to educate the public about the existence of this fact?" (that Ishpatina is the highest point in Ontario). One possible approach is to apprise the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, and perhaps the local Tri-town Chambers of Commerce.

Sincerely,

Pam Glenn

