

2017 Year End Newsletter



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SPORTS SHOW SCHEDULE 2018

Ultimate Fishing Show January 11th to the 14th Suburban Showplace Novi, Michigan Booth #1300	NorthEast Ohio Sportsman Show January 18th to the 20th Mt. Hope Event Center Millersburg, Ohio Booth TBA	Huntin Time Expo January 26th to the 28th Delta Plex Arena Grand Rapids, Michigan Booth #394
Columbus Fishing Expo February 9th to the 11th Ohio Expo Center, Bricker Building Columbus, Ohio Booth #241		London Boat Fishing & Outdoor Show February 23rd to the 25th Metroland Media Agriplex & Arena London, Ontario Booth #412
Erie Sport & Travel Expo March 2nd to the 4th Bayfront Convention Center Erie, Pennsylvania Booth #1124	Western New York Sport & Travel Expo March 8th to the 11th Hamburg Fairgrounds Hamburg, New York Booth #201	2017 Toronto Sportsman Show March 14th to the 18th International Centre Mississauga, Ontario Booth #2635



For more information contact your hosts:

Tom & Michel Watson

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Well another season has come to an end and we are already looking forward to a great summer with family and friends both old and new at Kaby Lodge! We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas season and will continue to be blessed in 2018!

We headed in to the lodge to start the 2017 season on the 5th of May and were met by slightly lower than normal water levels and a completely ice-free lake! It was a very pleasant surprise that even though there was still snow in the bush and on the surrounding hills, we did not have to worry about our docks being taken out by the breakup! It ended up being a very rainy and wet start to our season and as such, the water levels quickly returned to normal for spring and, the early season fishing was FANTASTIC! As per usual, many big fish, both walleye and pike were landed at the airplane dock by both our guests and staff members. We are sure you all heard the tales from Adam, Brett and Nick!

There were a ton of big pike caught again and we are pleased to say released by those of you that wish to continue seeing these beautiful fish in the lake. Early season big pike went to Kevin Hutcheson once again with a beautiful 42 1/2 incher and the late season big pike went to a husband and wife team Wendy and Mark Finnegan when they noticed a monster floating slowly in the water near the mouth of the Little Kaby River! It took the 2 of them to land the fish and it came in as the biggest one of the season at 43 1/2 inches. This fish did not make it and they generously donated it to us so that we can have it mounted to hang in the lodge and give it the respect it deserves. There many good walleyes caught as well and the biggest one of the year was a whopping 28 1/2 incher caught by a new guest, Javier Bolanos, that came all the way from Guatemala, along with his 3 sons and joined the Hamilton group. He not only caught this 28 1/2 incher but also caught another one at 26 inches long! Needless to say, a memorable experience for them all to share! Tom Maquire from Ajax, Ontario was very proud to catch and release a nice 27 incher as well. We had many wonderful walleyes caught in the 24 to 28 inch range and would love to thank those of you that took the time to safely release these big fish

back into the waters of Kaby Lake. We were also blessed to have many families with their kids and grandkids once again come and join us at the lodge and it is always a pleasure for Tom and I to see these youngsters experience what we get to! It never ceases to amaze us how kids just live in the moment and love every second of every day. We all need to take a lesson from the children in our lives about how to enjoy life to the fullest and cherish every moment. We totally understand that many of these big fish are "once in a lifetime" fish and truly appreciate it when you choose to live release them back into the lake. These big fish are the breeders in Kaby Lake and it is wonderful to know that their genes will stay with us from season to season! Whitefish fishing was also popular again this year, and Dave Sligh of Holland, MI was the first guest to put one on the board. Adam once again had another great year of whitefish fishing both with his fly rod and spinning rod and for those of you that enjoyed his smoked fish in the dining room along with Tom and I, some big thanks goes out to Adam for once again making sure our Kaby Lodge family was fed! Perch fishing was also great this season with many over 13-inch ones coming in and the biggest of the season actually went to Cindy Hummel, Michel's cousin from Ajax, Ontario at 14 1/2 inches long! Beautiful fish! We are happy to say that we saw many new faces, some from as far away as New Zealand and families come to us to make some wonderful memories, and with all the kids coming to fish, everyone of them lived up to our "most important rule for kids" at camp and out-fished all the adults in their parties! Way to go! Congratulations to all of our guests that made the wall of fame this year and we look forward to seeing many of the same names as well as many new ones on the board for 2018!

Opening was a very wet one with having to use boardwalks on the airplane dock and between Cabin 3 and the dining room, but this helped the spawn and we anticipate great results in the fishery in the upcoming years. With the shortening of the moose season for 2017, we were able to head out on October 6th and head home to our place in Brechin for the winter. They are calling for a very heavy snow load with slightly warmer temperatures all winter

so we expect to see high water levels when we head back in 2018 and hope this means the ice will be off in early May to enable us to get in and get ready to open. I think it is calling for high snow levels in all the snowbelt regions so please pray for snow just south of the lake, but not necessarily where we all live! Lol! We look forward to another great fishing season for this coming year, and think the quality of our fishery will just keep improving. The MNRF was in on the lake over the summer doing some netting and creel census but as of yet, we have not heard any results and at this point in time, we are not anticipating any changes to the 2018 Fishing Regulations regarding allowable limits and sizes.

We are suggesting this year that if it's at all possible, to try to get your fishing licences before arriving at the lodge either online or at one of the local stores that provide this service either in Wawa or White River before you fly in to us. It continues to be possible for all of our guests to purchase their Ontario Outdoor Cards as well as their Fishing Licenses on line at www.ontario.ca/outdoorcard prior to coming to the lodge which will definitely save time upon arrival. You may still purchase both items through the POS (Point of Sale) System that we have at Kaby, but if the satellite system is down, it may take a few minutes to get things completed for you. We want to remind everyone that should your Non-Resident Ontario Outdoor Card expire at the end of 2017 they will not be sending out renewal reminders. As I stated previously, you will have the choice of renewing on line to save time or waiting until you get to the lodge.

White River Air Service once again did an exemplary job taking care of all of you as well as all our staff and freight flights and I know they really appreciate the kind words and comments many of our guests provided to them at the airbase in White River. We will continue to fly with them for the 2018 season and anticipate they will once again have the Otter and at least 2 Beavers to do the flying for us. We had way fewer flight delays this year than ever before, even though those guests that did experience one may not agree. Lol! For those that got stuck in White River, we know that the flight service took the time to try to make hotel arrangements for everyone and this is one of the many reasons we truly appreciate their level of customer service! For those groups that were able to take advantage of the late afternoon flights, based on cabin availability, we will continue to do this in the 2018 season.

Boat Upgrades

We purchased another 4-new guest style Mirrocraft boats again this year and anticipate purchasing another 4 in 2018 which will completely replace our entire fleet! Tom and I are very pleased to have been able to do this since our purchase in 2009 and know from guest's feedback that the boats are much faster and more comfortable for everyone to use. With the increased speed and comfort, it means you can now spend more of your time fishing and less time travelling to and from your favourite fishing holes! We also flew in 2 new guide boats for Adam and us to use and the excitement on their arrival day was very high as they came in slung to the bottom of a helicopter! White River Air and Kaby Lodge certainly know how to get things done!!

Camp Upgrades

Tom spent quite a bit of time working with the new sawmill this season and was able to make some huge 10" x 10" beams that will be replacing all the beams under the cabins as the summer of 2018 progresses. This will mean that there will be some minor adjustments to the cabins as we tackle each one, but we are confident that ultimately everyone will be more than pleased with the results. We also replaced some dock sections and have 2 more to add to the dock in 2018. For those guests that came prior to July, we know you will be very pleased to see that the windows have all been replaced in the dining room with bigger screens and more airflow to make things more comfortable and enjoyable during meal hours. We also replaced the carpet in the dining room with a beautiful vinyl laminate and this has made the room much easier to clean and maintain as well as making it look much bigger & more up to date. We had great feedback regarding all the instant fired water heaters in the cabins and know that everyone appreciates the unlimited hot water especially on those cool days! Once again, we decided to purchase another new Perkins 32kw, diesel, 3 phase generator which replaced the older of our 2 generators we had. We were pleased to say that the arrival of the 2nd golf cart made it much easier for everyone again. We again saw a visit from Public Health this summer and are pleased to let everyone know that they are very pleased with all of the improvements we continue to make in both the kitchen and the guest cabins to ensure your safety and wellbeing while you are at the lodge.

2017 Hunting

The 2017 hunting season was a tough one for not only us at Kaby Lodge but all over the Province of Ontario. With the start of baiting for our bear season only allowed 2 weeks prior to opening, it was extremely difficult to convince the bears to come off their natural food source, blueberries and hit our baits on a regular basis. The rains brought a bumper crop of blueberries in 2017 and we were still seeing blueberries in the early part of September when they are traditionally done by about the 3rd week of August in our area. We have many bears showing up on trail camera, but often they were so full of the berries they did not even eat the bait! We had 2 great bears taken by Brad Crouch and Josh Ervin both of Racine, Ohio with the bears coming in very close in size at about 225 pounds and 235 pounds. Some of our hunters had some equipment issues and others decided to pass as the bears they saw were not in the size range they were hoping for but all in all, it was a good but tough hunt in 2017! Thanks to all of you for your faith in our hunting program at Kaby Lodge! We again had Forever Wild Outdoors Adrenalin Adventures in for another hunt but they were unable to harvest this year so will be putting a great show together for us regarding their fishing trips along with reviewing their other successful hunts at Kaby Lodge in 2018. Be sure to watch the website and our Facebook page for airing dates on the pursuit Channel & let us know what you think. With the shortened moose season in 2017, we had 3 hunters in for the first week of archery and between the 3 of them, they saw a total of 12 moose but were unable to harvest any. Tom and his hunter John saw a MONSTER bull the last night of the hunt but were unable to get close enough to it for a bow shot but John continues to return to us as he has already harvested 3 bulls

at Kaby Lodge and always says his hunt with us is an experience not to be missed regardless of whether he harvests or not! Adam and his hunter Ken got eyes on a nice bull and cows with calves several times, but the bull was usually heading away from them following a cow and could not be convinced that Adam was nicer looking than the cow he was already following! Lol! We brought a new, experienced guide in for our 3rd hunter Don and Dean the guide was able to get Don close enough for a 40-yard shot, but "bull" fever hit and the arrow missed. They continued to hunt hard for the week and kept hearing and getting glimpses of this bull but were unable to seal the deal. This is why it's called "hunting not killing". We are already looking forward to hunting season in 2018!

I attended the annual Tourism Summit in Thunder Bay while Tom was deer hunting with our son in Ohio, and had the opportunity to put forth concerns that we all have regarding our remoteness along with questions and comments regarding proposed changes in regulations for hunting and fishing. We will be sure to keep you all informed if anything comes up and will ask for your support if the need arises to protect what we have at Kaby Lodge and throughout the Province of Ontario. We do want to remind anyone that may have a DUI in the US to start your paperwork procedure at least 6 months PRIOR to your planned crossing. This will ensure that there will be no surprises upon your arrival at the border. If you have any questions regarding this process, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be more than happy to steer you in the right direction. If we require any further assistance dealing with border crossing issues please feel free to contact the NOTO office at 705-472-5552 and they will be more than happy to assist you and answer any questions you may have.

2018 Rates

You will notice again, a slight increase in the cost of your packages for 2018. With the rising cost of fuel as well as all of our other supplies, it was necessary to add a small increase to this year's rates. If you have not already done so, we want to remind all of our guests to be sure they have applied for the HST refund that they are eligible for. If you have any questions as to the process, please give us a call at the office and we will be more than happy to walk you through the process.

We do want to remind everyone to be sure and book your hotels for the evening before your flight into the lodge if you have not already done so as hotel space is more limited in White River. Keep in mind that is still possible to spend the night in Wawa and simply drive the 57 miles to White River the morning of your flight in to Kaby.

We are very proud to say that due to the wonderful staff we have in place each year, we are now becoming known to have a very high level of customer service and the staff we have in place each year take great pride and pleasure in making sure that your trip is a memorable one. Captain Canada, aka Adam along with Boomer, will be returning to us for his 9th season as well as Teen Wolf, aka Brett for his 4th year. These guys do a terrific job on the docks and grounds for us and everyone knows how much Adam loves his guiding trips with you all! Our young Chef Nick will be returning to prepare those wonderful meals we all love and we are very happy to tell you that his fiancé Emily along with their little guy Liam will also be coming back for the 2018 season. Emily

will be working part time for the summer and this way she, Nick and Liam can enjoy the experience of Kaby Lodge together! We also hope to have a few others returning but will wait to see how the winter goes. Regardless, with this great team in place along with a few new faces we shall once again strive to make sure your trip to Kaby Lodge is a good one!

Every year we all face challenges in life and that often includes the loss of loved ones. As I write this letter, we have just heard of the passing of a dear friend and guest Ted Widman of Farmington Hills, Mi just passed away this week. Ted and his fishing partner Bruce Lehmkuhl have come to Kaby Lodge for many years now and we will both miss Ted's willingness to smile and his true enjoyment of his trip with us at the lodge. We shared many a quiet moment discussing fishing, life and the things that are important to all of us. Ted our friend, you will be missed. The Greer family who lost their beloved Patriarch Dick last year honoured us with a very special memorial ceremony while they were there in July. Thank you so much for including us in this as Dick is a friend that we will never forget and will always hold in our hearts.

Family Updates

We were fortunate to have Mom and Dad LeFeuvre, sister-in-law Sheila and Cousins Tom and Cindy come for a terrific visit in August. Fabulous fishing, shorelunches and just spending time together always makes for a wonderful time! The folks are planning on spending 3 months in Florida in the Zephyrhills area once again this winter and with the way the snow is falling here today, we wish we were going with them! Now that we are home for the season, its great having them close by as it gives us the chance to catch up and visit on a more regular basis. So blessed to have them in our lives.

Our kids and grandkids were able to come up for a visit as well. Jess and Hayley along with their twins now 5, Lily and Irelynn came at the end of July for a week and we had a blast! There were some other guests with kids there too and the children all made new friends and hope to see the Kurtz family return in 2018 at the same time. Bre was able to get up for a break in mid August too along with Allah 13, Anica 11, Vaughn 9 and Cassius 8. It was a week of bear baiting and hunting, swimming, fishing and simply relaxing that everyone needed. Brian was unable to get up due to work commitments. The kids will all be busy between hockey, art classes, gymnastics and just day to day life and we are happy to get to share many of these activities with them during the off season. Spending time with those we love is very important and reminds us of what life is all about, especially when we get to spend it in such a beautiful spot like Kaby.

The 2018 season is already shaping up to be another terrific one and we look forward to seeing all of you and meeting some new Kaby family members as well! Stay safe and well and be sure to check out the website and Facebook page for updates and our sport show schedule. If we are in your neck of the woods be sure to come see us and say hello! We would love to see you all! While winter prepares to put its tight grip on the north, we are already looking forward to sharing another great season with great anticipation and hope to see you all there! LET'S GO FISHING!

**Your friends in fishing and hunting!
Tom and Michel, Ember and Riser**