

The Chautauqua Trail Annual Meeting 2017

hosted by the Muskoka Chautauqua

Attending:

Bay View, Michigan	Barbara Pfeil, David & Mary Doidge, Allison Brown Ford
Chautauqua, New York	Vanessa Weinert
Lakeside, Ohio	Bob Brucken, P.A. & Christi Dunfee, Kevin Sibbring, Bill & Nancy Carlson
Monteagle, Tennessee	Pam Maloof
Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania	Cliff & Kathy Snavely
Muskoka, Ontario, Canada	Beverlie Robertson, Doug McIntyre, Graham Booth, Gayle Dempsey, Gary Froude, Andrea Bickle, Glad Bryce
Ocean Park, Maine	Frank & Helen Gwalthney
Waxahachie, Texas	Kirk Hunter, Maureen Moore

Friday, October 13 morning session:

Glad Bryce welcomed us at 8:50 a.m. and introduced Andrea Bickle to talk about some of the things in our welcome bags. Andrea explained the Chautauqua Salute, with the white hankie (Muskoka logo on it). It was a substitute "applause" to a deaf mute speaker at the Chautauqua (CHQ), and has since been a tradition there and has been adopted by other CHQs on the Trail.

Frank Gwalthney welcomed the group at 8:55 a.m. He thanked Muskoka for their efforts on our behalf this year - and we never know what surprises may be in store. For example, the piano ordered for tomorrow's entertainment arrived with no legs! He asked what the housekeeping details were, and Glad said she would elaborate on them at the end of each session. The minutes from last year's meeting in Monteagle were circulated for review. Frank mentioned that Joe Caner (who was unable to join us) is usually our microphone handler, but in this room we don't need a microphone. Frank asked Vanessa for a treasurer's report.

- The annual check to Lakeside for website maintenance has been mailed
- 13 Dues have been collected for this year; \$10 for individuals and \$100 for institutions
- Dues go towards email communications, website design/maintenance

Kathy suggested that each CHQ appoint a representative to be the communications funnel for the Trail. After discussion, Frank asked for each CHQ to tell him who that person would be. Bob Brucken/Gary Froude moved to accept the minutes from the last annual meeting as presented. Kirk commented they were the most complete minutes he'd ever seen, for which Kathy thanked him. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Frank has been in communication with Warren T. Jones from Florida, a retired NASA engineer. He would like to donate a complete set of C.S. Lewis works to any CHQ who would do a program on those books.

Individual Chautauqua Introductions/Reports:

Ocean Park, Maine (OP) – Frank and Helen Gwalthney brought OP booklets to share with everyone. Budget: ½ million dollars. 560 cottages within their bounds; you do not need to be a member of the CHQ to participate in programming. They now have an associate member's category. Budget comes from 20% membership fees, 20% from annual funds. They are getting fewer people participating in worship on Sundays, however the offerings are up. There will be homestays available for next year (their rentals are already full); we'll be meeting July 26-30.

Muskoka, Ontario – Gayle Dempsey was thinking how they started this great adventure 20 years ago, and thanked us for our guidance. She noted the presence of the *Muskoka Magazine* in our welcome bags. They just received a tourism grant, which has been most helpful, and they'll be working on their strategic plan moving forward. Grateful for the support of the province and the Canadian government; they get half of their funding from the Ontario Arts Council and other government funds. While they're grateful for it, it can be unpredictable – so they'll be working on revenue-based funding. They're in pretty good shape financially this year. Glad added that she thinks the community is beginning to recognize the importance of the arts. They had an artists-in-residence program this year, which was well-received; one program - they painted designs on canoe paddles (which we'll see an example of later in the conference). Gayle added that their partnerships and collaborations are really what make their CHQ work. The Marriott's support, for example, can't be replaced; they have year-round programming at the hotel, as well as Gayle's gallery.

Waxahachie, Texas – Kirk Hunter and Maureen Moore reported, thanking Muskoka for their hospitality. Waxahachie located 30 miles southwest of Dallas, Texas. Their auditorium is in a 22-acre park that was their original meeting place. They attended the Network meeting in 1999 and restarted their program in 2000. Kirk and Maureen were involved for several years, retired for a few, and were invited to come back and help with programming once again. Their theme this year was "Celebrating Public Spaces." Jon Schmitz spoke about the formation of the original CHQ and each of our CHQs. Their keynote featured a presentation on the 9/11 Memorial in NYC. They thrive on their partnerships, and offer their program at no charge; they received hotel/motel tax, which is about a third of their funding, with the rest coming from donations. Their annual budget is \$35,000. They had a special meeting in July on the relationships of blacks and whites in the south; the following Monday, they did a presentation especially for school-aged children. They've started a CHQ growth program, based on what they experienced at DeFuniak Springs. They received a state-designated

Chautauqua Waxahachie Day on July 26, as it was their founding day and celebrated with a special program. Maureen expressed a concern that getting volunteers to continue their programming, which we all agreed was an issue. Next year's theme is humor. Frank encouraged us, especially first-timers at this meeting, to network with one another while we were together.

Bay View, Michigan – Barbara Pfeil brought a PowerPoint presentation and materials to share. They have about 100 students in their music training/performance art programs, with thousands attending their programs. Active museum program and a healthy library program. Worship is held in Hall Auditorium; had more than 7,500 attend their 10 services through the season. Their water-based programs, including sailing, are very popular. They added pickleball courts (using tennis courts) this year. The Women's Council offers lodging and programs. Their memorial garden is located on the bluff, overlooking the bay. They have 26 very active committees. Their education programs were attended by some 800 people. Their theme next year is the environment, featuring a week-long lecture series on legal justice and a new specialty lecture on bridges crossing cultural divides. If you want to stay at Bay View, there are two inns and private cottage rentals. Boys and girls camps go through the summer, with 900 attending this year. Gayle said she heard there was a college at one time – Albion College had summer classes there. What is the history of music program? Barbara said there are resources on the table to answer those questions. Dave extended Bay View's offer to host our meeting in 2027.

Chautauqua, New York – Vanessa reported they had a great summer, with historic growth, even with their disappointment in not retaining repeat visitors. The 10:45 a.m. lectures are their primary driver of attendance and are now scheduled through the President's office. The Religious Director has been elevated to a VP position. Their youth program has seen declining numbers, so they're starting a strategic initiative for growth. They've elevated the literary arts programming, with a position to direct these programs. "The Life of the Written Word" is one of their weeks for the coming season. In viewing marketing and external engagement, they're looking at long-term planning outside of the 9-week seasonal program – so they're looking at festivals within the program weeks. Last season, they had a very successful food festival. They're analyzing dynamic pricing at the Athenaeum Hotel for the past five years; they've increased occupancy significantly. They're building a research department so they can collect the kind of data they need to assist them in growth and planning. How can we measure success in a way that is meaningful? They're having a Winter Fest for the first time this year, which will also help the county claim this community as its own. The Food Festival will continue at least the next two years; they've offered a "bulk" price for that, but that doesn't include amphitheater programming. Andrea attended a festival years ago, and that's how she found CHQ the first time, stating the festival format was a great idea to attract new people. They have changed their alcohol policy – now beer, wine AND spirits permitted for the 2018 season. They had open-containers this summer

during the Food Festival, and had no negative repercussions because of it and saw a younger audience during that week. It was week 9 and there are fewer children in that final week. Nancy asked if their cottages were winterized; Vanessa indicated that some are and some aren't. Pam added the new amphitheater is in use. Vanessa says it feels the same by appearance, but backstage is like a palace, which is appropriate for the level of performances they offer. Vanessa said there is no longer the negative energy over the new amphitheater and a new spirit there, she believes.

They've launched online.chq.org, which will have live-streaming, all lectures available, discussion on those presentations, as well as an accompanying application. You have to create a login-in, but there are no fees.

Gayle asked how many live in the community year-round – about 200, Vanessa responded, particularly around holidays. What is the average number of visitors per week? They had 100,000 visitors over the course of this year's season. Off-season, people come for the recreational offerings. Having four-day weekend events for WinterFest this year. There are accommodations available in the off-season. What is the number of their staff? Year-round 100, in the summer 2,500. P.A. asked what the largest cost in turning the season on every year; Vanessa doesn't know. One day ticket: \$100, with \$425-475 for a week-long pass. The cost of housing is something that hurts their accessibility to people: this is the subject of another long-term discussion they're having. Barbara said at Bay View they have 26 permanent staff, with 100 during the season; they don't have a gate (and therefore no gate fee; they've never been gated). During the winter, the streets are not plowed. Kirk said they have 2 employees. Frank said they have 2 employees.

Frank called for a five minute break.

Frank reconvened the meeting, mentioning that Kathie Neu-Organ was planning on attending from Halifax, Nova Scotia but her husband had a last minute appointment arise and expressed her disappointment in not being able to attend.

Mt. Gretna, Pennsylvania – Kathy stated they have no employees, except for a summer intern to help with programming and run the Visitor Information Center and have a budget of \$10,000. They are ungated with 206 households, with a Campmeeting across the street; approximately 18 different groups offer programming between Memorial Day and Labor Day. 2017 was their 125th season, with programs commemorating the event throughout the year: Mt. Gretna Trivia & Dessert (January), Community Skating Party (April), Sweet Treat, with the Jigger Shop unveiling a new sundae for the season (May), a week of "Gretna Days" the last week of July featuring an Old-Fashioned Campmeeting Service/Hymn Sing at the Campmeeting Tabernacle, Mt. Gretna Supper Club with music from "A Time Gone By," the Inaugural Mt. Gretna Photo Scavenger Hunt (thanks to the inspiration by CHQ NY), the

Great Mt. Gretna Pie Bakeoff, a performance by the Hershey Symphony, an Old Tyme Movie Series "Before the Nicholodean: The Early Cinema of Edwin S. Porter and She Done Him Wrong," Perspectives on Yellow Wallpaper: a 1892 Feminist Text, 125th Anniversary Concert by Joe and Sue Martin (Campmeeting), the Colemans, Kauffmans and Chautauquans lecture, and a Victorian Photo Booth. In August, the founders of the Mt. Gretna Outdoor Art Show (Bruce Johnson & Reed Dixon) talked about the origins of the show. The two remaining events: OctoberFest and December's Cookie Exchange & Victorian Parlor games.

Kathy indicated that highlights of the regular season included Chautauqua University for a Day, the lecture series with the Mt. Gretna School of Art, Tuesday's Family & Children's programming, as well as the Book Review series, Gretna Theatre and Gretna Music performances, arts & crafts classes, religious discussion series, Friday evening programming and the annual Mt. Gretna Tour of Homes.

Monteagle, Tennessee - Pam Maloof reported, as Scott Parrish and Gregory Maloof are at a board meeting this weekend; gated 160 cottages. Strong programming this summer based on the environment. Staff of 13 year-round, with an additional 7 in the summer. The only CHQ without a water feature (since the creek often dries up during the summertime). They are run by an interdenominational caucus, Pam responded in answering a question. Their season opens Father's Day through the first week of August. The Edgeworth Inn runs year-round, which is the only public lodging other than cottage rentals, on the property. The University of the South, Sewanne, is located nearby and has a wonderful music festival over the summer months.

Andrea spoke about **Grimsby Chautauqua**, at the request of Gayle and Gary. She's had a tour of the site with John Allan. In 1846, it started as a Methodist campground, 1875 cottages began being built. Programming was offered. 1909 went bankrupt. Although no longer a physical presence, its' spirit has been maintained. She asked John if they could have tours on Sunday, while people are heading south. She had handouts from the *Chautauqua Weekly*, a map from the Gallery to Grimsby, directions and John's email and phone number - contact him directly if you'd like an onsite tour. It's right on Lake Ontario.

Lakeside, Ohio - Kevin Sibbring shared a PowerPoint with us. He mentioned they were in the middle of their capital campaign about the pool at last year's meeting. Lakeside sits on Lake Erie between two cities, with a 3,000-seat Hoover Auditorium, 1,000 houses plus inns, campground and youth housing. "Ohio's Most Beautiful Mile" is their new logo/tagline. They've spent the last 10 years beautifying the grounds; that's what they receive the most compliments on annually. Established 1873, they are on the National Register. Drawing 150,000 during the year, they host a 9-11-week season, including the annual Methodist conferences. 99-year land leases and a 25-member board. Strategic goals, the newest of which is establishing Lakeside as a sustainable community. They started with a community needs

survey in 2015, which pointed out an outstanding need for an outdoor pool, and in 2016, a capital campaign for a healthy, safe water alternative with a wellness emphasis. In 15 months, they went from the first ask to raising \$3.6 million to pay for it all; it has been a marvelous asset. The pool is completely ADA accessible (showed an example of Marky Donithon, who walked for the first time ever in the new pool). Dan Eagen, author of *The Death and Life of the Great Lakes*, spoke there this summer. For the first time, Lakeside is now exercising its political voice, as the world's greatest source of fresh water is now threatened in a major way. Next week, Kevin is heading to Washington, D.C. to meet with legislators as the current presidential administration has gutted water protection efforts. Held an "All Hands on Deck" evening, joining people hand-in-hand to demonstrate their solidarity of purpose. Kevin noted that we probably know there is a disconnect between Lakeside and the outside community, so they've outreached to invite impoverished children to the CHQ for a day, and the program was extremely successful. Dr. Robert Putnam grew up in Lakeside, and talked about the opportunity gap in the U.S. Then they discussed what they could do to address that gap.

They have an affiliation with the Methodist Church, and hosted a Generosity & Stewardship Conference; 90 attended and already committed to next year's meeting.

Their big focus is on master planning, typically the facilities and grounds and aligning that with their strategic plan. How do we keep Lakeside relevant in today's society? The same can be said for the CHQ Trail. They're losing beds in Lakeside. Two community workshops were held with MKSK, an urban planner, thinking through their master plan. This summer there was a new vibe at Lakeside; their endowment has doubled and a spirit of philanthropy is emerging. Questions: how long is the master plan going out? About 15 years, but it is reviewed annually. They've got tennis courts and are building pickleball courts.

He referred to Plains, GA and how the Carters spearheaded restarting their CHQ, in answering a question. Many Trail members attended their first gathering a few years ago. Frank added that the teacher that mentioned the CHQ Movement to the Carters was invited to the White House for tea with Eleanor. She said anyone could be President someday - and Jimmy Carter fulfilled that prophecy. Kirk stated that because we are so connected electronically, we face isolation. CHQ is an experience we can share with others. Chautauquans can have discussions about things we don't agree about - and disagree without being disagreeable, Frank explained.

Frank read our mission statement to close the morning's session....

The Chautauqua Network is a group of organizations and individuals committed to the communication and implementation of the Chautauqua concept of building community by supporting all persons in the development of their full potential intellectually, spiritually,

emotionally and physically. The Chautauqua Network facilitates interaction and communication among its members to further their preservation, growth and development.

Glad said the Cranberry Festival started today; we received in the welcome bag included a \$25 gift certificate for the Cranberry Marsh. She's going to organize carpooling to use the least number of vehicles possible. There's a \$25 voucher for Cottage Cravings, a cute little shop. At the marsh, you can do several activities. Others can get onto shuttle busses going all over the festival; you need a bracelet for that. There was a souvenir button in the bag, too. She suggested we take the shuttle bus to get a layout of the festival. Don't miss the Anne of Green Gables Museum. You can participate in a photo opportunity in waders in a cranberry bog.

The meeting recessed at 11:18 a.m., and the afternoon session commenced at 3:59 p.m. Frank mentioned that herding this group is like herding cats sometimes.

Roundtable discussions:

1) Who are the contact persons for each CHQ, whose responsibilities include getting articles for the newsletter and funneling information between their CHQ and the Trail:

Ocean Park, Jerry Gosselein
Muskoka, Gayle Dempsey
Monteagle, Scott Parrish
Lakeside, Kevin Sibbring
Bay View, Mike Spencer (ED)
Waxahachie, Kirk/Maureen
Mt. Gretna, Kathy Snavely

2) Does your CHQ offer discounts? When/what discount? Your philosophy on that?

- Alison (Bay View) - 18 & under are free for concerts.
- Barbara (Bay View) - Tickets in advance of the season for vespers at a discounted rate.
- Bill (Lakeside) - 12 & under and 90 & older entrance fee discounts.
- Gayle (Muskoka) - Cottage owners assn. members get a discount on programs; discounted tickets for members
- Kathy (Mt. Gretna) - Pennsylvania Dutch like to take advantage of discounts, not give them.
- Kirk (Waxahachie) - They have a nominal membership of \$25 per household. \$120 donation gets their name in the program.
- Helen (Ocean Park) - Had a snafu in their program booklet this season, indicating that the Pines residents (subsidized housing) got discounts - but it caused an issue with non-Pines residents. Frank added that they're not gated. There's a youth membership, which gets them into the rec hall (pitched at their grandparents).

- Bob (Lakeside) – Discounts for purchasing season passes before the end of May; when Bob joined the Lakeside Board 40 years ago, he received two “free” passes as a courtesy for volunteering on the grounds. In effect, they weren’t actually selling any season tickets as a result. That ended three years later. The only ones that are free at this point are the tickets for volunteer firefighters and for the staff.
- Vanessa (New York) – Don’t discount, but dynamically price; early purchases. 30% of tickets are not purchased until the day of purchase. Wednesdays are free for teachers or students of their local school district; retired teachers may also use that. 12 & under are free, as well as 90 & older. Every evening is priced differently based on programming. In the hotel, many packages are available. Groups also receive discounts of 10-20%. They also have a coupon program. Active military is free. At events, half price Saturday tickets. Morning worship services are free. Post office and library passes as well. Vanessa said you need to think about your long term pricing strategy (and not just do it “willy-nilly”).
- Christi (Lakeside) – You can buy a coupon book that offers discounts for season pass holders
- Pam (Monteagle) - Under 3 is free, as well as children/grandchildren of cottage owners; their gate ticket is included in their annual fee. (And yes, 10% of your cottage selling price goes to the assembly.) Morning pass for the morning program and lunch – or the evening lecture.
- Kevin (Lakeside) – 3 mill transfer fee on the sales of cottage (and Bay View gets 4%); Epworth has a sophisticated system. Coupon books, youth groups are deeply discounted. Special event pricing. Group breaks. Military Appreciation Day. Overnight stays and pass packages. Clergy sabbatical rates. Active and retired clergy discounts. Church passes. Shopping/Dining pass good at 35 merchants. Their 24-hour pass is actually a 36-hour pass.

3) In addition to the annual meeting, is there an interest in having another meeting during the year?

What would be the purpose of that meeting, Pam asked? She comes to see her friends. Christi agrees with Pam. PA said he thought it would work in certain areas; like maybe it would work if there was a particular topic or question. Vanessa said we’re incredibly busy people; if there is a clear objective (how could we use our dues monies more effectively, etc.). There is something to be said for getting together annually. Perhaps the Executive Committee needs to meet more often. Bob said the value of the meetings is partly in seeing the facilities of each CHQ; there is no replacing the annual meeting. Frank believes strongly in the importance in seeing one another; it’s good to place a face with a CQ. He does Skype into board meetings in Maine when he’s in New Jersey occasionally. He could see such meetings

for burning issues. Maureen agrees with the burning issue circumstance. Kirk, unless there's a specific objective, it's not useful. He works on committees by conference calls that are limited to an hour. Doug agreed with Kirk. Kathy stated seeing everyone once a year isn't enough for her. Glad says she uses Skype and phone here all the time for meetings; it is technology that you develop comfort with as time goes on. It is important to have a clear objective. Vanessa agreed with Barbara that a good on-boarding process would be good perhaps for some CHQ boards, and perhaps that might extend to new people coming to our meetings. Kirk does a board orientation and new packets for them. Andrea comes to the meetings because she likes the idea exchange, even though she doesn't live in a CHQ now; she wouldn't come to more meetings unless there was a specific meeting topic. If there's a pressing issue, we can use technology for that - on an as-needed basis. Bill said if it doesn't replace this, and not everyone could come, by definition it would need to be for a purpose of a specific subject. To have it, just to have it is no good. Alison stated value is lost when you don't meet face-to-face. Barbara will take away contacts from this meeting; as specific questions comes up, she'll reach out to us. She wouldn't participate in a generic meeting - but something with a specific purpose, yes. Dave agreed with Barbara; he likes the idea of special topics. They're looking at the education pillar and would like to know what other CHQs are doing regarding that line. An annual meeting is likely sufficient. Mary didn't have anything more to add, other than look at the experience you're trying to create or the issue to be addressed. Gayle apologized for the sound check, music from next door. Kevin thinks there isn't a reason to have another identical meeting annually. One thing he thinks we need is a staff oriented function, to share needs and best practices. Kirk added that the sharing of ideas about performers and programs would be most helpful.

Barbara stated she wanted to stress again that if we had everyone's contact information for staff members that would be helpful. Also sharing program ideas. Kevin stated that the benefit of traveling the CHQ Trail is seeing the spirit is the same wherever we go, and the differences between us are relatively minor. PA said perhaps we have resources that we could share with each other. Frank suggested that perhaps it might be helpful for the officers of this group to meet with some CHQ boards.

President Gwalthney closed the meeting for the day at 5:18 p.m. Glad indicated that the weather is not going to be cooperative for us tomorrow. We have a boat rides available, but the weather might not help us.

Saturday, October 14 at 10 a.m. on Wasan Island; attending were:

Bay View	Alison Ford, Barbara Pfeil, Dave and Mary Doidge
New York	Vanessa Weinert
Lakeside	Bill & Nancy Carlson, P.A. & Christi Dunfee, Bob Brucken, Kevin Sibbring

Mt. Gretna	Cliff & Kathy Snavelly
Monteagle	Pam Maloof
Muskoka	Graham Booth, Beverlie Robertston, Diane Adamson-Brdar, Doug McIntyre, Glad Bryce, Gayle Dempsey
Ocean Park	Frank & Helen Gwalthney
Waxahachie	Kirk Hunter, Maureen Moore

We were welcomed to the island by the staff, and Gayle gave us a little history regarding its aboriginal history and its place as an international gathering place. It is immediately next door to the original founding location on an island nearby of the Muskoka CHQ. Kirk asked if we could ring the bowl in the center of the room and have a time of reflection (a tradition here), which we did; this is a rite of Tibetan monks.

Roundtable Discussions – continued

4) Are your demographics changing? If so, how?

5) Do we want to set up a goal so our meetings can be attended by Skype?

6) Has there been any impact of Air BnB on your CHQ?

- Gayle (Muskoka) – Said it’s really too new to know if it’s impacting them.
- Dave (Bay View) – Said he knows there are rentals that take place this way, but he’s unsure of how the rentals are booked.
- Kathy (Mt. Gretna) – Their by-laws state that cottage owners must ask permission of the board before renting their cottages; that has never been enforced and there are issues – but Borough Council is addressing some of these issues through new ordinances.
- Nancy (Lakeside) – They have online cottage rentals. No AirBnBs that she knows of; PA added that he knows of two, one of which has closed down and the other rents to about four groups.
- Kirk (Waxahachie) – Has two in town, and it doesn’t impact them.
- Bob (Lakeside) – Imagines it is probably happening and that the gate staff is unaware, and it might cause problems for them.
- Pam (Monteagle) – Stated the issue is non-existent for them.
- Helen (Ocean Park) – They have their own realty company by which rentals take place; there is only one lodging facility open now. Frank added that’s why they have their own realty company, so they could control who could come in. At one time, there were realtors who were doing rentals only concerned about the income they would generate – which did cause some issues. There is now a Facebook page for cottage owners to use for direct rentals; many of those find they have issues they don’t want to deal with and are turning to the realty company so they don’t have to deal with this stuff.
- Doug (Muskoka) – Rentals are becoming more common because of the taxes in this

area; they can't afford to buy their own, so they rent. He thinks this is a good thing. He had a rental cottage on his property and found the rental company did a good job of taking care of their business. People that try to find their own tenants are the ones who usually have problems. Neighbors usually phone the owner now if they feel the property is being misused or the renters are problematic.

- Glad (Muskoka) – Has two properties; one she called the party cottage, which was an older place and required a good deal of maintenance – so she tore it down a few years ago and built a new place, which her family uses and she also uses Air BnB. She's never had an issue and has good experiences with them. They bring everything they need and they even leave with that plus their garbage. She has found Air BnB screens folks well.
- Alison (Bay View) – They've noticed their Air BnB and VBRO renters don't follow the local rules, so Bay View has created those to deal with the issues that have arisen. Barbara added that their buildings and grounds committees is working on a welcome letter for renters, with a summary of information; she's unsure how much that highlights the CHQ experience. She added that they have a security service that follows up on any issues that are reported. (Lakeside has that too; Ocean Park has members that ride bikes around to check on renters.)
- Vanessa (New York) – They have more renters than not on the grounds at any time. There are a few different channels by which people can rent. They are attempting to streamline and unify the rental experience there. She is an Air BnB superhost herself, and she has never had an issue with their rentals. They also have property management companies on their grounds. They're deciding whether they want to be a property management company or not at this point. As they move to a more year-round model, that could be key, as they will have to be hiring more people. Air BnB is host-driven, and charges a fee. Their biggest growing ticket is for less than a week, so they're trying to catch people for a long weekend at the beginning and end of the season. Nancy asked about the hotel, which Vanessa explained is run as a typical hotel. Vanessa feels throwing them to a labyrinth of where to find lodging is almost cruel.
- Kevin (Lakeside) – Moved into property management about 11 years ago. The board decided they wanted to be involved in order to control quality on the grounds. They have 8 Air BnB properties on the grounds. They got into the property management business as over 40% of beds are being used by renters at any given time. Their 4-day tickets are top-selling. If they have a horrible property rental experience, Lakeside ends up with negative press/opinions about itself. Owners are renting more on their own, but the market is changing more quickly and it's tough to maintain control – and a major change in their culture that's hard to stay on top of. They have jettisoned cottages who don't

keep up with maintenance or cleanliness. LOTS of companies want to be making money at Lakeside. He'd like to change their transfer fee from 3 mills to 1%. PA added that they had a bunch of flippers who came in, flipped and left, which does nothing long-term for the community. They are now a Thursday through Monday organization. Vanessa asked what Lakeside's max occupancy is - and they're not really sure. Vanessa isn't quite sure either, how many rooms they have and how many they can fill and still maintain a high customer experience. Kevin shared they were over 19% higher in attendance this year - and some of the board members weren't too excited about that. Alison stated that they've had at least one person who was a renter who purchased a cottage this year. Frank said Lakeside is interested in how Ocean Park does something in this realm and OP is interested in how Lakeside works their property management. There does seem to be a love/hate relationship with growth by many of our property owners. Frank replies by asking what program they want to get rid of - and they simply need to write a larger check.

David (Bay View) - Said there is something about the growth model that has the potential to diminish the summer program; it's unresolved at this point. Dave said it's come up with their long range planning committee. Pam asked how it impacts owners; he gave an example of their music programs. It was a problem at one time for paying for that program - but now they sell plenty of tickets to cover those expenses by selling to outsiders. They do have some worry about the growing number of outsiders to cottage owners. Alison said affordability and sustainability is their mantra right now. Kevin stated that the CHQ Movement should be growing, because we have something unique to share that people are looking for - but he understands that conflict. Kirk was there in NY for the Ken Burns program and the crowds were nearly impassable; it was difficult finding a seat without spending half a day securing your seat and just sitting there until the program started. Vanessa said they're now discussing smart growth planning as a result of experiences like this. Their amp seating is about 5,000. Barbara said their auditorium seats 1,100; if they anticipate a sell-out crowd, they provide shuttle service. Bob said he knows they need growth; their mission statement addresses that and they recognize they have an obligation to do so. Nancy commented that Lakeside is gated, so they have quiet times. Ocean Park isn't gated, Frank responded, and the neighbors address the noise level on an individual basis - and if it gets contentious, the police are called. Barbara said it's a case-by-case issue at Bay View. Vanessa said they have a lot of drunk teenagers. Nancy lives by a gate at Lakeside and the teens try to come in after the gate is closed. Kathy said there are quiet times, but there isn't really enforcement of those provisions in the by-laws. Kevin indicated their construction ban during the season has been well-embraced. Frank said in his climate you can't do that.

Do we want to set a goal that the facility where we meet have electronic/digital facilities, so we can Skype people in?

That's not hard to do as long as you have Wi-Fi. P.A. said you can rent a Wi-Fi hotspot and take it with you. Kirk said we can announce a Skype time and it's open for the world to watch, if we wish.

Kevin asked how much pressure we are each getting to provide Wi-Fi access within communities. Vanessa has a Wi-Fi map, but there are still issues, as cable companies seem to be price gouging. P.A. says the local government controls that kind of stuff, and it is problematic when the summer folks re-arrive. Vanessa says they are building a customer business center available for their folks to use at the Welcome Center; with a gate pass, use will be free. Alison indicated they're planning something similar. Kevin said their front office staff is overwhelmed with requests for business-related services. Kathy stated their topography and the trees don't allow for this; in fact, there have been complaints about the community fire siren and firefighters can't use pagers because they don't work in the area. Gayle said Muskoka's internet access is pretty good for such a remote, wooded area. Vanessa added that because CHQs are often "islands," looking at Wi-Fi perhaps should be looked at as a public utility, rather than a luxury item. Gayle added their towers often look like pine trees to blend in with the scenery. Vanessa said they always start conversations like this in NY: to what end are we doing this? It is ingrained in everything they do, as it's a part of their holistic vision, which has created a clearer path for their direction.

Changing demographics?

- Kirk (Waxahachie) – Hasn't seen a shift; it's their generation and older. They're looking at how to be attractive to younger people, and have employed that with some of their topics.
- P.A. (Lakeside) – Has 3 permanent residents on their street; he doesn't anticipate his kids taking over his cottage. Doesn't see the cottages staying in families as a continuing tradition. Bill said the prosperity of the people there seems to be increasing; cottages are being expanded. It's challenging with people tearing down some of the older structures. Their cottages have increased in value significantly over the last 10 years.
- Kathy (Mt. Gretna) – Stated that since they are ungated, anyone can purchase homes there; most have no clue it's a CHQ and don't take advantage of the programming. She would be a young person at most of their programs.
- David (Bay View) – Said they did a survey this season and most of the residents are skewed towards the older side of the population; less than 10% of the cottages are for sale at any given time, as owners don't have family to pass it on to or they can't or they can't live by themselves anymore. They do know some

renters do eventually buy cottages. A lot of folks just like renting and it makes financial sense for them.

Gayle (Muskoka) – Stated the community they serve is huge and diverse socio-economically. Programming in general, they serve 4-5% locals, 50% cottagers/tourists and the balance 4% Americans and folks from other provinces. Their audience is mostly seniors.

Kevin (Lakeside) – explained by our nature we were designed to serve the middle class – and we’re now losing that. They feel like they’re being priced out; he likes the notion of the young adults who can’t afford to “come back” to the experience of their youth. Being on the water is an economic force we can’t control. We’re still very “white bread,” but he’s noticed more blended families in the past three years. Theologically, we’re largely Christian – but our programs are diverse. They’re doing more to be inclusive of Hispanics.

Vanessa (New York) - Does lots of analysis of their audiences – and they’ve seen a decline in their Buffalo market. There are some people that follow specific lecturers. Also some declines in their Cleveland and Columbus markets. 11% of guests are among the wealthiest on the country; 2/3 have a graduate degree and many are childless. Urban elite families are well-represented as well. 40% are between age 55-79. They know their demographic information before they step on the grounds, which helps in knowing what will keep them engaged while they are on the property. She purchases third party data, from which she extrapolates information. Kirk wonders how many people choose a week simply because it’s the week available on their calendar. Vanessa said 30% come on a week because that’s what’s available. The lecture platform is the primary reason for which people select when they’re there. They know the key to success is building a personalized experience for each consumer. Families buying multi-week passes are still prolific there; that demographic information drives their program selection. Elevating the food experience is a driver in getting younger people to come.

Barbara (Bay View) – Has seen more dual working couples, often with school age children – staying shorter periods of time and requiring digital access. Alison added that their demographics pretty much reflect national trends. Cottage prices are lower priced right now because of their short season and membership requirements.

Glad (Muskoka) – Said they’re unique as they program inter-generationally.

We closed this session to break for lunch; Kirk ran the pestal around the edge of the bowl in a circle with a brief time of meditation.

Frank reconvened our session at 1:40 p.m. He mentioned that 5-7 years ago, if churches prepared for a capital campaign, they could give their names to an agency and get all kinds of data back from the agency.

(Demographics – continued)

Doug (Muskoka) – Religion was mentioned as a demographic parameter; there is no specific designated religion here. We stress values and spirituality, some of which is because of inclusion of the indigenous peoples here. Gayle said the spiritual connection to nature is really important here: Kevin added that it is to every CHQ. Kevin continued, questioning our use in the four pillars of the word “religion.” So many people 50 and under say they’re not religious, but they are spiritual. Frank suggested we come back to that question.

Frank (Ocean Park) – Demographics are changing, in that more people are retiring to OP. Now have 325 year-round residents. They tear down their old cottages and build something that’s their forever house; two houses in the last year put in elevators. There is still a desire for kids to come. He also wondered about the special needs kids and finding services/ programs for them.

Diane (Muskoka) – There have been books written lately about religion dying in North American society; when you talk about diversity, perhaps a spirituality focus would be more appropriate.

Helen (Ocean Park) – Reiterated the point about people tearing down their cottages that Frank made.

Pam (Monteagle) – About 7 cottages for sale for \$400-\$600,000 – and their children can’t afford them. Very few 8-weekers coming anymore.

Beverlie (Muskoka) – Many are retiring to their cottages here; she is finding people coming all winter long to their coffeehouses, not just September and April. Programs in the elementary schools help develop an audience that is coming along. Gayle added that the Program Canal asked them to focus on mental health and wellness, as an arts group. Kevin stated they’re also focusing on wellness (with the opening of their wellness center in the spring).

Resource Borrowing: Sharing things we’re good at with others

Kathy (Mt. Gretna) – Chautauqua University for a Day (which she described in her 5-minute introduction) and their Fairy Garden.

Frank (Ocean Park) – Took Fairy Garden idea, kids can build their own fairy garden houses with earthy materials; people drop off supplies for the children to use.

Bill (Lakeside) – Christi’s fairy garden has spawned many others, so much so they now have a map for people to find them. Nancy said their CLSC has grown significantly in the past few years, and they now have their own recognition day.

Barbara (Bay View) – Firm believer in benchmarking.

- Helen (Ocean Park) – Let’s Talk about It series, sponsored by the Humanities Council for the past 20 years; they send down all the books and there’s a theme. You’re given 2 weeks to read the book and then meet for a facilitated book discussion.
- Dave (Bay View) – their music program for students is well-known, with a resident professional faculty of 30 people (who work for various colleges across the country). Have 100 students participate in the program every summer for 2-3 weeks. Now have a building to house them. Students perform at least weekly in recitals, and they provide music programs for children’s programming. One student session is just for opera performance. Vanessa asked if they come on fellowships, which Barbara affirmed.
- Maureen (Waxahachie) – Without the sharing from 1999, they would not exist. They have thrived on this information and it’s given them a context for their work. Kirk added that while they have no property, they have still benefitted from our discussions. They deal with all the issues we do with that exception, and seek to apply as much information as they can to their CHQ.
- Beverlie (Muskoka) – As a retired librarian, this sharing of resources is important. They also don’t have property as a component of their CHQ. Have many artists-in-residence programs, along with master’s classes. She pleaded with us to cite our sources when we borrow a program.
- Alison (Bay View) – Suggested we have a section on our website for sharing our best practices (and perhaps failures).
- Gayle (Muskoka) – Being in the Trail is inspiring and they’re most grateful.
- Vanessa (New York) – she likes the idea of benchmarking, so they do annual surveys and create a benchmark. She struggles with figuring out what she should compare her benchmark to. She can share survey methodology she uses. As far as brand building, content development is paramount. They’re in the process of building a greater partnership with a Chautauqua Live series, perhaps with NPR or doing a podcast. For groups that have a strong literary component to their programming, they’re most interested in that. Interfaith dialogues are really important now. (Fairy gardens are BIG there, too.)
- Kevin (Lakeside) – In the CHQ world, plagiarism is embraced. The Memorial Garden at Bay View inspired Lakeside’s. The Plein Air event has been done with many CHQs. Would love to see a staff sharing best practices. They’re talking about doing some kind of a music program, and they have a vacant building to put to use.
- Diane (Muskoka) – Opera Muskoka is in its 8th year, with instrumental and vocal training.
- Dave (Bay View) – Has a wonderful staff for their musical program. Barbara added their staff comes from all over the country. Kevin stated they’ve had a relationship with Oberlin College of Music in the past, and they look forward to bringing that back again. Diane added that one of their graduates sang at CHQ

last year and is now auditioning for the Met. Vanessa talked about doing a simple survey to get basic information with perhaps five questions for each CHQ.

P.A. (Lakeside) – Wants to reiterate the swimming pool and how it’s changed Lakeside. He suggested the term “faith-based” instead of religion or spiritualism. Nancy asked if everyone knew about Lakeside’s God Squad; Chip “collects” the kids during the main service in a musical parade format during the worship service and leads them next door. Chip is the Pied Piper and one of their treasures. Bob added that their first focus is on kids age 5-15, which has brought results – groups of kids running everywhere. They bring their parents and grandparents and resell them every year. Kevin said it’s an emotional connection that they’re building and how they want to nurture that legacy for a lifetime. Vanessa asked if the one-week visitors feel included or not; Kevin replied their #GivingTuesday initiative, and the first four years they’re raising an amazing amount of money for each program. Their new teen center has been wildly successful. The teens called it The Underground; for younger kids, there’s a weekly picnic on Wednesdays that feeds hundreds and it’s a great way for kids to meet other kids. Dave said his grandson has a T-shirt that says “I’m what’s next!” Kevin said they had 1,500 kids participate in their bicycle parade on the Fourth of July.

Frank mentioned that over lunch, his table group asked if you change your program to meet your demographics?

Alison (Bay View) – Said they come up with new programming to stay true to their demographics. Frank asked if there’s a typical week for some activities – no, they keep switching it up.

Beverlie (Muskoka) – Said she’s been in the music business for 56 years; she can get musicians for a reasonable price because she knows what they want. As far as changing, every year is different. She’s able to get musicians who are already in the Toronto area and don’t mind coming two hours north.

Kirk (Waxahachie) – Maureen does most of the programming, so they try to find what’s of interest to people of varying ages. CHQ has sparked many interesting topics for them.

Helen (Ocean Park) – No, hasn’t changed programming. In the off-season, have developed additional programs.

Barbara (Bay View) – The way Bay View is structured, each area has their own program director who works with committees. There are dashboard reports by each program by the week, so there is plenty of data to draw from and conclusions to be drawn from a year-end summary. Vanessa asked what software they’re using; they custom designed their own Excel sheets. Vanessa said PowerBI is part of Microsoft 365 and can link lots of information on one

dashboard. They have a new CRM component as well. Bay View uses Vendini for tickets. Kirk asked for Vanessa to make up an information sheet with this information so others can benefit from it. Barbara says the look at current year, the past year and the next year when comparing figures is important.

Bill (Lakeside) – Their Elvis performer is fab, and he also pulls a huge crowd. Some of their educational programs may be the same for children, but the presenters change. Dave stated that Steve Jobs said they don't know what they want until we show them what they want.

Frank (Ocean Park) – Those there for the whole summer are dinosaurs; does repeat programs but not the same week in the season every year.

Kathy (Mt. Gretna) – Board allows summer programs to do what they want; current leadership would like us to do less programming throughout the season

Pam (Monteagle) – Doesn't really have themed programs, except for Youth Week and Bridge Week. They have a new person doing programming, who did great children's programs this season (including a family scavenger hunt every Thursday).

P.A. (Lakeside) – Programming is just weird. He's seen Elvis every year and people keep coming back. Riders in the Sky gets repeated, too.

Diane (Muskoka) – Opera first night, Stars of Tomorrow and also Master Classes.

Kevin (Lakeside) – A couple of years ago, they began to subscribe to a benchmarking project – they're one of 38 state organizations that finished the program. As they moved into master planning, with their current 58 structures, they realized they're going to be short on facilities. What programs should be preserved, lost, improved and what's new? Should have the recommendations of that report within the week, from their community and program assessment by a non-profit fundraising specialist.

Vanessa (New York) – Two ways to approach it: build for the demographic you want and keep programming for the demographic you have. They use their data to program – for example, they're now offering Chamber Music on Saturdays, their women's club lecture (since Saturday is a switchover days for renters). Now have multiple in-house dance companies to do performances throughout the week. The Food Festival received a 62% increase in attendance from the locals this year. They do audience profiles per work, and now she's trying to figure out how to boost programs like this for other audiences. It's all about figuring out what the drivers of attendance are. We're trying to be mindful and efficient. We need to figure out why people aren't coming back. Always attempting to balance innovation with tradition. Barbara added that their performance art directors do a quick hand raising survey question to collect information before a concert. It's a progressive process, figuring out what information to collect and will be useful takes time.

Gayle (Muskoka) – They’re still young and growing, looking to the other CHQs for direction. Three years ago, they attempted to do a 9-day festival, which was okay. Her kids went to CHQ New York and all of a sudden, they “get CHQ.” She feels they didn’t have the resources to make it happen in a big way, but they managed to pull it off. Started as the Muskoka Lakes Music Festival, with kids 16-23. Funders have criteria that must be met, and it’s usually helpful to have these guidelines; plus they have their partnerships and collaborations, which help developing programs. Still reliant on state and provincial funding; don’t have the availability of big corporate donors. Nancy stated if all their programming is at the level of last night’s singer, it’ll happen.

Glad asked for suggestions for their programming. Kevin suggested creating a space that is theirs. Glad is hoping people will come in the morning as they will see that. Vanessa asked how long in advance they have their programs set – a year, Gayle replied. Vanessa suggested a punch card for performances, which will provide them with upfront revenue/stable subscriptions. Lakeside calls it their password and it includes a certain number of performances. Pam mentioned DeFuniak Springs uses this technique. Ocean Park tried it for one season and discontinued it.

Barbara said this is kind of like an associate membership that Bay View is like. They’re made available in March and sell through the beginning of the season. You can also do some bundling of programs. Kirk added that relational fundraising is important to them, for sponsoring of programs (a list of sponsorship opportunities, whole and half is made available to potentials). Frank stated there might be differences in laws regarding fundraising/ sponsorships in the states vs. Canada.

Alison suggested a boat show, but there are two here already. Nancy suggested using your available resources, perhaps like this lodge. You can’t rent this facility, Gayle said. Vanessa asked who those that follow their programs are; they probably have 10,000 different customers, 5,000 came to one event only. They believe their brand is starting to resonate with people. They haven’t been consistent with membership and haven’t developed a membership campaign. Kevin suggested having a kind of informal strategic planning session of sorts with their regular memberships. Kirk said what they’re doing as a CHQ isn’t unique – it’s happening all over North America. Barbara said if they were consistent in building their membership and build on existing performances, making your members feel special and recognized – it could be that simple. Frank said perhaps last night there could have been a cocktail party after a performance, with an opportunity to meet the performers and your board members. Doug added that beginning with a financial plan and membership strategy should provide a foundation. Frank suggested doing a fundraiser of some sort to begin building a war chest, so they’ve got a backup for when government funding fades. Vanessa stated a CHQ-style retreat might be an experience people seek. Kevin suggested talking to

the Marriott and perhaps there is a marketing level sponsorship of some sort. Vanessa and Pam starting talking about the retreat concept earlier in the day. Kathy guessed they have two entirely different target markets: the tourists and the locals, and perhaps one initiative can help fund something else. DeFuniak Springs has created a terrific relationship with their school district and perhaps that might provide a great entrée into the locals. That's how the U.S. taught people to use safety belts – they taught the children to go home and get their parents committed.

Frank thought that maybe each and every CHQ should plan an off the grid day. He thinks it would be fascinating!

Current officers: Frank (President), Kevin (Vice President), Kathy (Secretary) and Vanessa (Treasurer). Betsy Harvey was another Vice President and has resigned as an officer of the CHQ Trail since she is in Switzerland and doesn't get back very often. There is no limit on the terms. Bill/Pam moved to re-elect the current slate of officers. The motion carried unanimously.

Bob/Pam moved to adjourn at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Snavelly, Secretary

Annual Meeting Schedule at this time:

2017	Muskoka, ON Canada	<i>* Anniversary years</i>
2018	Ocean Park, ME	
2019	Boulder, CO	
2020	Chautauqua Institution, NY	
2021	Chautauqua Wawasee, IN	
2022	Mt. Gretna, PA	
2023	Lakeside, OH	
2024	Ocean Grove, NJ?	
2025	DeFuniak Springs, FL*	
2026	Chautauqua Institution, NY	
2027	Bay View, MI	
2030	Chautauqua Institution, NY	
2031	Ocean Park, ME*	
2074	Chautauqua Institution, NY*	
2076	Lakeside, OH*	