## HOME IN THE HIGHLANDS



OCTOBER 2023

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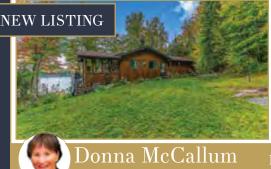


#### Pt LT 2 CON 5 Monmouth \$75,000

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ohn Kidd

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## Featuring NEW LISTING - Salerno Lake





Traditional 3 bdrm family cottage on a private gentle lot with huge decks and dock showing pride of ownership. Cathedral ceilings, screen porch & more... visit www.vinceduchene.ca

Vince Duckene
Broker
vince@vinceduchene.ca
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#### Little Kennisis Lake • \$879.000

Create cherished memories with your loved ones at this, open concept 3 bdrm cottage featuring 110 ft of water frontage and 0.739 acres with north west exposure. The floor to ceiling windows in the living room allow for breathtaking views of the natural shoreline featuring a stunning Canadian Sheild shelf, creating the perfect shallow water, or jump into clean, deep water for of the dock! On top of that you have a full 2 car garage with upper loft.



One of the last lots Kennisis Lake • \$1.100,000 • 196 ft frontage, 2.3 acres, well treed, sunrises Deep water entry, clean clear pristing waters



Kennisis Lake • \$869.000

This Kennisis Lake 3 bdrm cottage boasts a large bright kitchen that flows into the open concept living/dining room boasting oversized windows allowing tons of natural lighting and walkout to the lakeside deck! 109' of southern exposure allows for all day sun and stunning evening skies, featuring a shallow water entry from your secluded beach, the ability to dive right in off the end of the dock, and stunning big lake views! The dry boat house is a rare find in Haliburton, located right at waters edge it is the perfect spot to hold all the water toys!

2.19 ac lot Percy Lake • \$675,000 • 155 ft frontage • SW exp, lot and fr are natural, view

you dream of • Easy to build on, driveway in, just need



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Little Redstone Lake \$649,900

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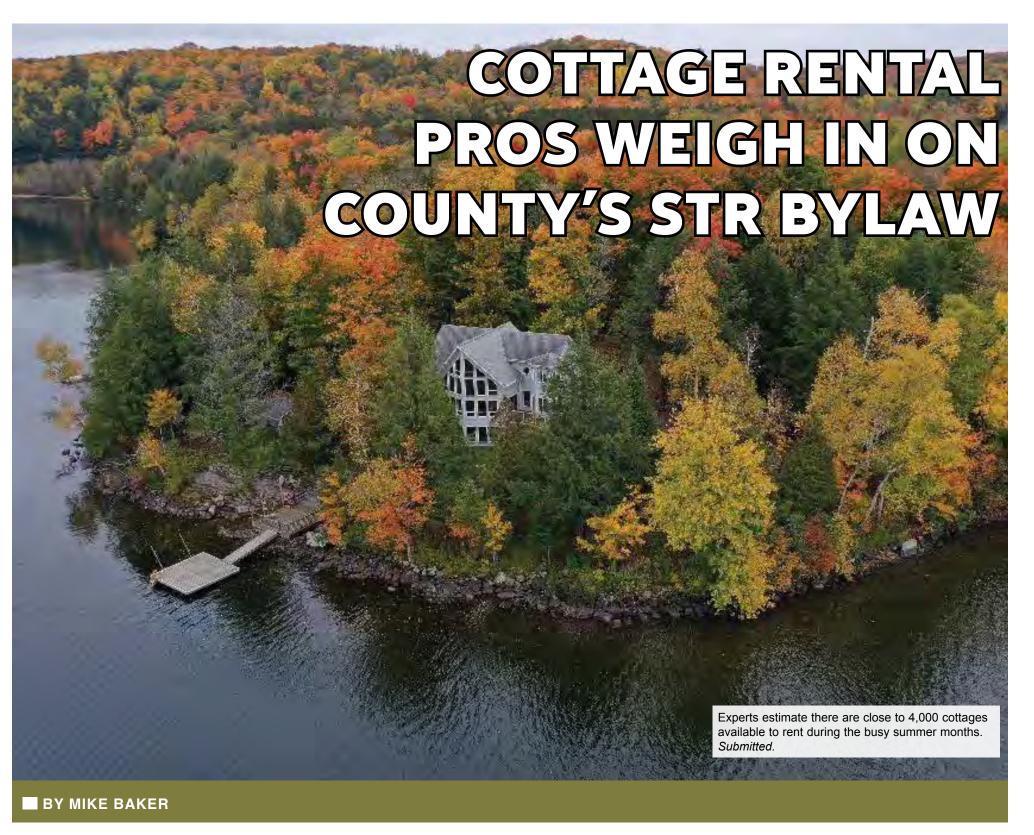
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Having spent several years working in the cottage rental business, Haliburton's J.T. Lowes believes the industry plays a pivotal

role in driving significant tourism dollars to the Highlands.

Owner of All-Season Cottage Rentals, one of a handful of provincially licensed agencies operating in the County, Lowes said he sees first-hand every day how much a healthy, properly run cottage rental industry can benefit the community. He estimates it contributes around \$80 million annually to the local economy.

"Short-term rentals are currently the largest accommodation provider for tourism, by far, in our area," Lowes said, noting his business typically manages around 120 properties. "Having adequate accommodation options for local tourism is essential for a thriving tourist market. As Haliburton County's largest industry, we need to do all we can to support tourism within the County."

On the owner side, Lowes said his team handles all aspects of the rental process, including marketing properties, screening and educating guests, completing rental agreements, facilitating payments, and handling any concerns during a guests' stay.

There's a benefit to using a local agency, Lowes said, rather than listing a property on Airbnb or VRBO.

"Local companies are an invaluable resource to owners and guests alike. As locals in the community, we are intimately familiar with Haliburton County and are a great resource to help direct guests to fun things to do and see in the area," Lowes said. "We are also available and ready to respond to any issue at a moment's notice."

He noted the industry is also one of the County's top employers, driving work for a large network of cleaners, handymen, tradespeople, and property maintenance and landscape companies.

Cheryl McCombe, of Cottage Care Rentals, estimates there are around 4,000 properties available to rent in Haliburton County during the busy summer season. Only a fraction of those is represented by local agencies, she said. "Because we live here, we have an immense vested interest in our County and in our industry. Everything we do, we do thoughtfully and carefully with both the economic and environmentally impacts considered," McCombe said, noting her business manages between 60 and 65 properties year-round. "We deal only with families and older couples – no large groups, no parties. We're all about matching the guest to the cottage and ensuring an enjoyable experience for all, including neighbouring properties. It's really important to us that any rental doesn't impact other people on the lake."

Skye Austen launched Haliburton Cottage Rentals with her brother, Troy, earlier this year. She currently manages 38 properties but is hoping to almost double that number by next summer.

She said there are many benefits of using a local agency, whether you're a cottage owner or a tourist.

"Local agencies often offer personalized service and can tailor rental options to

your specific needs and preferences. They can assist with finding the right cottage, arranging additional services, and addressing any concern promptly," Austen said. "We are also more likely to be well-versed in local regulations, including zoning and rental permits. This can help ensure your rental is compliant with local laws and regulations, reducing the risk of unexpected issues during a stay."

## County bylaw

Haliburton County council has been working on a new bylaw regulating short-term rentals in the Highlands since August 2022. The idea, says planner Steve Stone, is to introduce legislation that will help the four lower-tier townships properly, and consistently, police STRs.

Owners will be required to apply for a license and adhere to municipal codes of conduct, have their property inspected for Ontario Building Code, fire compliance, and septic system performance. They will also be subject to more stringent rules regarding

the number of guests allowed at a site, with bad behaviour and circumventing of the rules leading to the issue of demerit points, fines, and possible suspension of a license.

There has also been talk of introducing a municipal accommodation tax (MAT), like ones in Muskoka and Kawartha Lakes, tagging an additional fee onto any short-term rental.

While Lowes acknowledges the need for a bylaw, he doesn't agree with the approach the County is taking.

"Between the rental licensing requirements, which will impact the number of rental units available and the number of tourists that are able to come up here... I think it's going to devastate tourism in our area," Lowes said. "With the rise of Airbnb and VRBO, opening our industry up to the broader masses, there does need to be some rules. There are a few bad apples. But I don't think everyone needs to be punished just to bring them in line."

When asked if he believed the bylaw would negatively impact tourism in the area, Scott Ovell, the County's director of economic development, said, "STR bylaws are still relatively new, so I have yet to read any definitive data as to whether these bylaws have a negative impact."

Lowes recommended a tiered approach to licensing, with different fees, and rules, applied to owners depending on how often they rent out their properties.

He proposed an introductory license for people that rent up to six weeks of the year, a mid-range for owners who rent between six and 12 weeks of the year, and a higher commercial tier for those running their cottage like a business and renting for more than 12 weeks.

"A lot of people who rent out their cottage do so for a couple weekends, or for a week here or there, to help with their property taxes, or to build a new dock, pay for a new roof, or renovate inside. Most of them, if this bylaw goes through as proposed, are going to say, 'forget about it', the anticipated cost and requirements will be too much for them," Lowes said. "So that's where it could be quite devastating – if enough of those people decide they don't want to rent their properties anymore, that's a huge chunk of our rental inventory that will be disappearing."

He doesn't believe the bylaw will have the desired impact of negating issues with problematic owners, suggesting they will "go underground" and continue renting their properties without securing a license. He said bylaw enforcement would need to be much stronger than is seen today.

McCombe was critical of the proposed introduction of a MAT tax, suggesting it could be the difference in people deciding to visit Haliburton County or other areas, such as Hastings County, that don't have one.

"I think with the economy the way it is, if someone knows they have to pay an extra fee to visit Haliburton County, they're going to take their money somewhere else. We will all lose – not just cottage rental businesses, but all businesses that rely on tourism in the County," McCombe said.

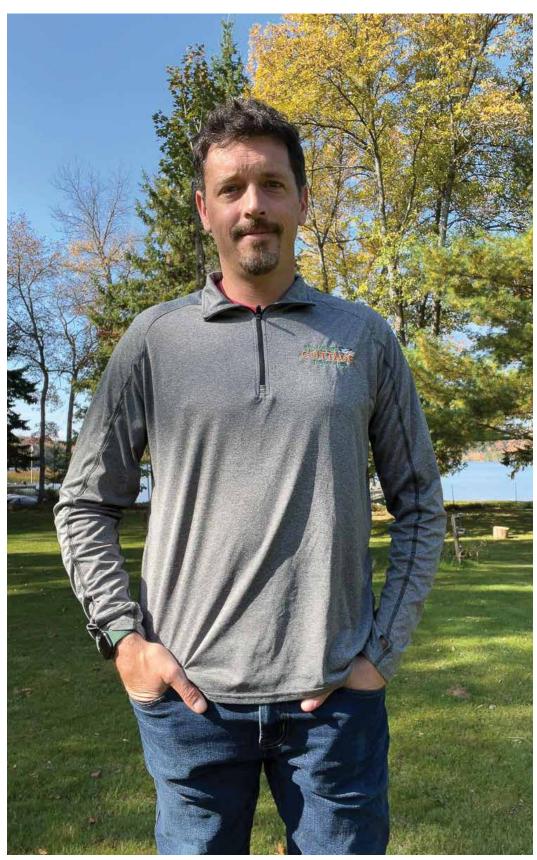
She also suggested a waiver, or reduction in fees, for any cottage owner who rents their property through a recognized, licensed agency.

"Cottage rentals have been around in Haliburton for generations and traditionally has always flown under the radar. Our industry should be recognized as a partner in this, in tourism... if you are renting your cottage through a licensed agency, then you should be celebrated for that. We are already managed and overseen by a much higher level than the municipal level," McCombe said.

"If there needs to be a fee attached, make it the lowest possible fee you can imagine. Don't make it onerous on the owners. Don't target the owners who have been doing things the correct way for years and years – those are not, and should not, be your target," she added.

While it has been suggested limiting the number of short-term rentals could lead to many of these properties being offered up for long-term rent, providing much needed inventory to the Highlands housing supply, Lowes doesn't agree.

"I would say short-term rentals are more of a symptom as opposed to a cause of the long-term housing crisis. The vast majority of STRs in our area have never and will never be part of the long-term housing market. These are cottages that families use themselves and they rent from time to time when they're not up here," Lowes said. "I don't see this bylaw having any effect on our housing crisis."

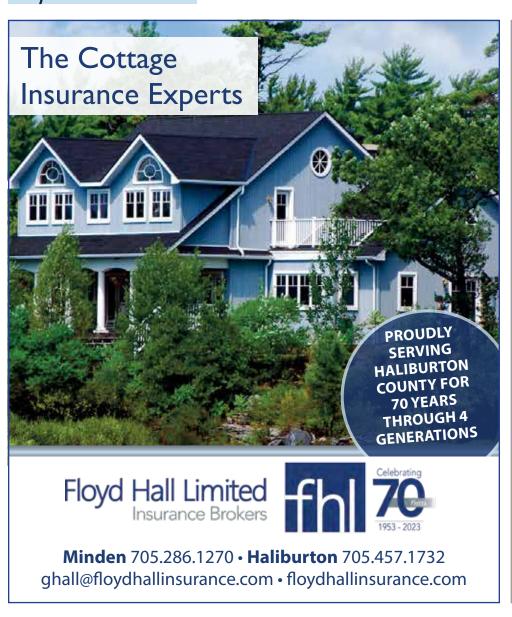


J.T. Lowes of All-Season Cottage Rentals says the new short-term rental bylaw proposed by Haliburton County council will hurt tourism in the Highlands. *Submitted*.

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a Successful Fall Sale







Maintain your home's exterior by raking leaves, cleaning gutters, and adding seasonal decorations like pumpkins or potted mums. A wellkept exterior creates a positive first



to busier schedules for both buyers and sellers, consider offering flexible showing times to accommodate potential buyers' availability. This can make it easier for more people to view your home and potentially receive offers



Ensure your home is in top condition. Replace or repair any leaky roofs, drafty windows, or malfunctioning heating systems, as these issues can be more noticeable and concerning in the colder months.



As daylight hours decrease, ensure your home is well-lit. Turn on all lights for showings, including both indoor and outdoor lighting, to create a warm and inviting atmosphere.



Embrace the season by showcasing your fireplace, cozy textiles, and fall-themed decor. Consider baking or brewing fresh fall scents like apple pie or cinnamon to create a welcoming ambionce.



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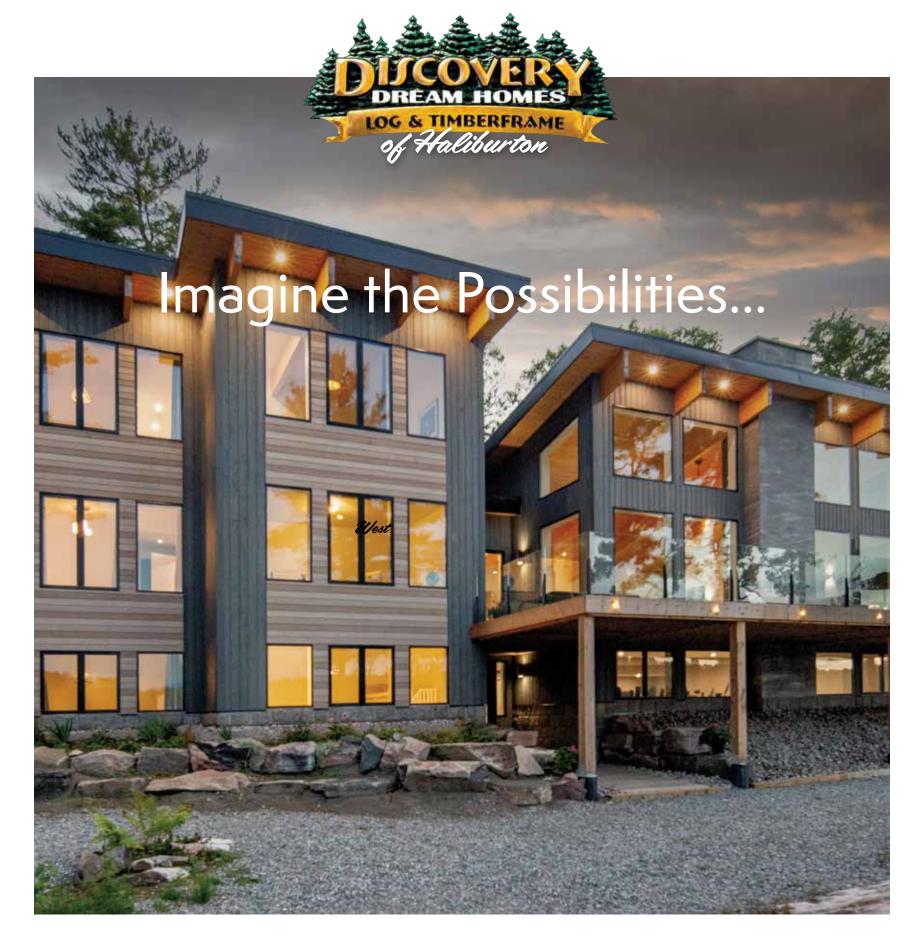


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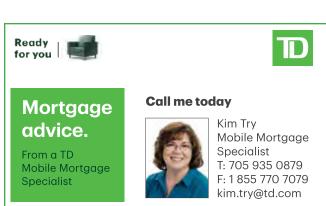
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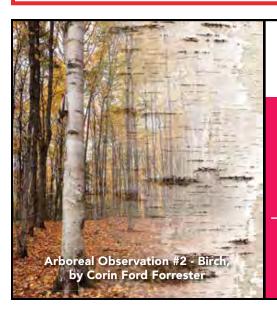




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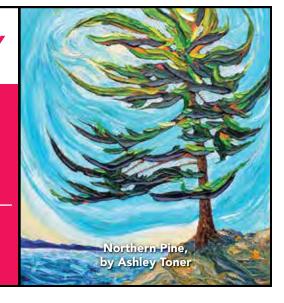




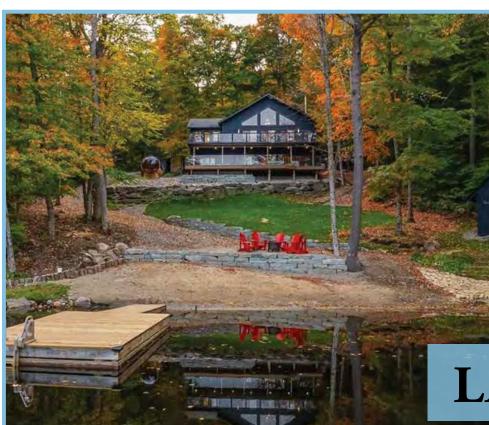
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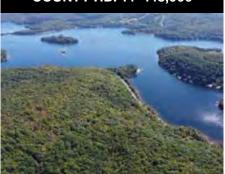
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