

Innocence of Sauble Beach has been lost

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by Dick Waugh

Sandfest at Sauble Beach this year, as it has in the past, was a highlight of the summer season.

A beer tent that accompanied the weekend was not.

Cruiser nights were another highlight for the beach and those who organized this feature are to be commended.

Rock bands blaring out terrible music, if one can call it music, were not.

Not everyone agrees with this concept of "rock the beach" as does Shane Sargent, program director for the events. And not every taxpayer believes that the council of South Bruce Peninsula should have coughed up some \$30,000 in grants for this kind of activity.

In April we wondered if Sauble Beach really wanted bands and beer tents this summer. Or did those who respect the beach hope it would be for sun tanning, fun in the water, castles in the sand?

From that column I received six phone calls endorsing those thoughts. I invited them to send a letter to the editor in support. None did. But, there have been letters since then and they have taken exception to the beer tents and the noise of the rock bands.

However, a letter from a 17-year-old took exception to the remarks made in the column and said that "narrow minded and ignorant remarks about the bands and musicians and their 'giant amplifiers echoing across the resort' was extremely unfair."

Hey, I'm a fan of music but I have my own desires in what I listen to and that doesn't include rock music which could be heard from one end of the beach to the other.

A caller to me said that at his residence in the north end the noise was awful. He too had his music favourites and this stuff wasn't one of those.

Since that time another organization has come on strong for the 24 weeks of summer. It's called Save Sauble Beach. I don't know what their mission statement is, but their logo shows a sad-faced sun sinking in the west, two people wearing gas masks and a crossbones on a pole telling people to use the beach at your own risk.

I can't believe that the chamber of commerce endorses this logo and they should worry about individuals who say in public what "we think is happening to our wonderful beach."

This prize of the tourist industry in Grey-Bruce has gone down from what it was a decade ago.

It has not kept its innocence of a place to do beach things, volleyball, sun bathing, kids frolicking in the water, strolls on the sand watching the sun collapse into the water. Memories of the past.

Now the council of South Bruce Peninsula and the chamber of commerce should worry about the traffic tieup getting to Sauble Beach on major holiday weekends.

Here are some suggestions for the council and the chamber and others, like the Friends of Sauble,

to consider, not for those of Save Sauble Beach, which may have a skull and crossbones on signposts leading toward the resort area.

Traffic improvement: Limit the number of vehicles into the beach. Do as Wasaga Beach does, by advising vehicle owners that the beach is full and no more will be permitted until someone leaves. This could be done by off-duty OPP officers.

No toll roads: What could be more harassing than being in a car for mile upon mile and finally get to the Sauble destination only to find a toll road backup. This is not the way to impress visitors.

Beer tents: These are harmful according to the medical officer of health Dr. Hazel Lynn, who said that beer tents are common "up here" where the alcohol habits are above the Ontario average. Besides, there are plenty of bars and restaurants at the beach with liquor licences which can accommodate those with a thirst.

Music: Some love the rock bands that are supposed to entertain all the visitors. OK with that, but can we have other groups, like jazz or swing, that appeal to the older visitors. My friend asked: How about some children friendly music. Isn't the beach for kids?

Raking the beach: Some like the beach raked. Some do not. Logs on a sandy beach should be a part of the environment. Leave some on the beach for visitors to sit on. What can be more photogenic than tourists sitting on a log that washed in?

Well no one paid attention when I was a fulltime resident of Sauble for the past 25 years so I just left ... I got out of Dodge and will comment no more. Perhaps.

And if any of you people who are thinking of moving take some advice: get a real estate agent. Jim and Chris of McIntee Real Estate saved us innumerable headaches.