BRUCE PENINSULA TOURIST ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Spring Dinner Meeting held at the Sauble Lodge May 8, 2008.

Present: Dave Peebles, Evan LeBlanc, Lynne & Gord Wright, Mark & Cathy Young, Anne Weir, Jeff Corner, Bill & Nancy Strang, Barb Grison, Ina Toxopeus, Chris Hughes, Danielle Paterson, Mel & Marg Rinehart, Jeff & Sheila Buckingham, Richard & Marilyn Husak, Ron & Jan McNeil, Jessika Husak, Eleanor Lippert, June Manewell, Jan McKerlie, Rob Thorburn, Denise Vogan and Frank Stolp.

Thanks are extended to Anne Weir and Denise Vogan for manning the reception table and collecting money, Parks Canada, Rob Thorburn, Chris Hughes and the chambers for the draw prizes.

Jeff Corner suggested that to streamline our meetings that all reports and discussion papers be e-mailed to Bill Strang for distribution to all Directors before each monthly meeting.

Chris Hughes discussed Bill S-215 dealing with the preservation of historic Lighthouses.

Rob Thorburn brought us up to date on the development of the Georgian Bay Coastal Route and our new Icon for Destination marketing. Discussion of this route has even entered the schools. The web site was awarded the Best Tourism Web Site Award.

Tourism is growing in Ontario even though it is declining across Canada. There is job growth in Tourism – mainly declines elsewhere – 300,000 + jobs - $20 billion in GDP, $17 billion in spending, $9 billion in tax revenue. Our industry is very competitive world wide and we need to keep Ontario Tourists home while attracting others from around the world.

There are 7 Destination Marketing Regions. We have the Niagara Escarpment, the 30,000 islands, and 2 UNESCO BIOSPHERE PRESERVES. Georgian Bay can compete effectively on a world wide scale.

Three clusters of DMO’s make up the Circle Route. The Clusters must work to develop their own specialties and in concert to promote the region.

Five product packages are being developed – motorcycles, RV’s, Lighthouses and Marine Heritage, scenic vista tours and outdoor adventure tours.

For our ICON to flourish the local communities must believe in it and live it.

Sheila Buckingham reported for Parks Canada that June 19, 20 and 21 will be the kick off for the Year of the Light. We hope this will include a dinner cruise on the Chi-Cheemaun joined by yachts. A banner will be placed on Flower Pot Island and there will be tours to Cove Island.