

# Lobsters on the dock

## *New business increasingly popular in Muskoka*

By Brett Thompson

Those who have craved crustacean feasts at the cottage without the hassle of motoring to town or depleting the local crayfish population have it made this year thanks to an enterprising young entrepreneur.

Bill Hennessey, 23, a P.E.I. native and graduate of University of Western Ontario's Ivey School of Business started Atlantic Ocean Harvest last year.

Lobsters, averaging 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 pounds, are trapped off the coast of P.E.I., shipped overnight and on the dinner table the next day, helping to fulfill a desire for customers who want the freshest seafood possible delivered to their doorstep.

This summer, Hennessey partnered with the Pride Marine Group to provide pickup outlets at marinas on Lake of Bays, Lake Rosseau and Lake Muskoka, and he reports the area as the source of 30 to 40 per cent of his business this summer.

"It's the most concentrated market in all of Canada," says Hennessey.

Customers can order two lobsters or enough for a banquet, shipped in pack-

aging that keeps lobsters alive and kicking until it's time for the pot. The company also ships lobster cooked in Atlantic salt water for authentic taste.

"We recommend if people order live lobsters, they cook them the day they're received," he says. "Once cooked, it will stay fresh five or six days in the fridge." The meat can be left in the shell until it's ready for use.

"Not only is lobster great tasting, but they make for an experience," he says, describing the fun of letting children get a close look at the clawed curiosities. "It's great to cook them in a big pot over a campfire. It's a fun food. Everyone gets into cracking the claws open and the juices start flying."

Hennessey and the Pride group are letting folks in Muskoka sample the experience free of charge this Saturday afternoon from 2 to 6 p.m., when Pride of Rosseau plays host to the last in a series of lobster parties. The first two took place earlier in the summer at Pride of Lake of Bays and Pride of Muskoka.

Pride of Rosseau's Derek Mader says the lobster party coincides with the Chris

Craft Heritage Day, an owner appreciation event for the line of boats favoured and noted for their teak inlays. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to peruse the boats on display while enjoying lobster, as well as steak from the Perfect Steak, another mail-order business. Hennessey has teamed up with for marketing purposes.

"We're very excited about the whole thing," says Mader. "It's different from anything else we've done before." The event is expected to draw as many as 200 people.

"They've been fantastic," says Hennessey of the Pride lobster bashes. "The first two were so successful, we basically ran out of food."

Hennessey runs Atlantic Ocean Harvest out of Toronto, but is spending a few days a week this summer enjoying Muskoka and planning the second annual Balapalooza. The long weekend party, headquartered at the Kee to Bala, is organized by Hennessey to raise funds for Peacebuilders International, a group dedicated to such projects as inner-city conflict resolution. For more information, e-mail [info@HennesseyEvents.ca](mailto:info@HennesseyEvents.ca).