

# Captain Otty's Log



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*David Reesor*

The hot topics around Otty these days have been lake management, awards, weather and mining.

Four years of dedicated work by our Lake Management Planning Committee (LMPC), with the participation of hundreds of residents, has resulted in the completion of a Lake Management Plan (LMP) for Otty Lake. The Plan was adopted by the Otty Lake Association membership at our AGM in July, 2008. But our work is not over. What good is a plan without action? As you will read in the newsletter, implementation has begun.

The groundbreaking work done by Chair Karen Hunt and the LMPC has been recognized with two awards for the Otty Lake Association. The first award was presented at the first Tri-Valley Conservation Awards Gala, at the new Rideau Valley Conservation Authority's Conservation Centre in Manotick on October 22nd. Eastern Ontario's Mississippi Valley, Rideau Valley and South Nation Conservation Authorities gave awards for environmental protection activities within their three watersheds. There were eight categories. The Otty Lake Association received first prize in the community groups category for our work in developing and implementing the Lake Management Plan. Karen Hunt and I accepted the award on behalf of our Association.

We learned about the second award at the Seventh Annual Lake Links Workshop in Perth, on October 25. Federation of Ontario Cottage Associations (FOCA) President Karl Fiander announced that the Otty Lake Association will be presented with the prestigious Jerry Strickland Award of Merit for 2008 at FOCA's fall seminar in Toronto, on November 22. The Award announcement reads "Otty Lake has shown that through leadership, networking and developing new partnerships, waterfront communities can achieve their long term goals". We are recognized for the development of the *Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed and The Otty Lake Management Plan*. What a wonderful way to applaud the efforts of Karen Hunt, the LMPC and indeed all of us in the Otty Lake community!



*(Left to right) OLA President David Reesor, OLA Lake Management Chair Karen Hunt, Andrea Klymko of RVCA and OLA Director David Code admire the OLA's first place award for community environmental protection. It was presented at the Tri-County Conservation Awards Gala on October 22.*

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## LAKE NETWORKING GROUP

*Karen Hunt*

Captain Otty's Log sometimes refers to the Lake Networking Group in connection with workshops and other activities. It is time to explain what this group is and how it works.

On January 21, 2004, representatives from seven local lake associations met together for the first time. The purpose was to discuss issues of common interest and concern. They recognized that they could all benefit from each others experience. The word spread about how these associations were supporting each other and their goals. Others joined the group.

Today, representatives from 25 Eastern Ontario lake associations are connected by an email link through which they share information. Many meet three or four times a year. They discuss common issues, plan workshops to meet identified needs of their residents and together seek support for common goals such as lake management planning and public education regarding watershed protection. The lakes represented include Loughborough and Fourteen Island Mink Lake to the south, up through Frontenac to lakes such as Buck and Wolfe, Kennebec, Eagle, Bobs and Crow in the west, down through the Rideau watershed encompassing Farren, Christie, Little Silver and Rainbow, Pike, Black, Adam, Otty, Otter and over into the Mississippi watershed for lakes such as Mississippi, Bennett and Fagan.

Tay Valley Township has supported the Lake Networking Group by providing meeting space at the Burgess Hall. A group of lake representatives meets twice a year with members of the Lanark Detachment of the OPP to discuss issues of safety and security in local lake communities.

The Lake Networking Group remains an informal gathering of lake association representatives united by a common desire to work together and learn from one another. The Otty Lake Association has provided coordination for the group from the beginning.

## NATIVE PLANT WORKSHOP



Philip Fry from the Old Field Garden and Wildflower Nursery in Oxford Station addressed lake residents at a recent native plant workshop. The workshop, designed to teach natural landscaping techniques especially along shorelines, was offered by the OLA working with the Lake Networking Group to residents as part of the implementation of the Lake Management Plan.

## FOCA WANTS YOU

The Otty Lake Association is a member of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association, Inc. (FOCA).

FOCA consults with the officers and directors of its members to identify cottagers' lake issues and interests. It then develops strategies to address those with governments and other organizations. Water quality and property tax are examples of issues that FOCA addresses.

To improve communication directly with cottagers and those living on waterfronts, FOCA wants to contact individual association members directly. The OLA does not give out the names and contact information of our members. If you would like to receive communications directly from FOCA, you can give your name, e-mail address and the name of your association (Otty Lake Association) to FOCA at [info@foca.on.ca](mailto:info@foca.on.ca). FOCA's privacy policy is that all contact information will be confidential.

Following is how you can contact FOCA:

Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association, Inc.  
#201 159 King Street  
Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 2R8  
Phone: 705 749-3622  
Fax: 705 749-6522

For more information about FOCA, visit the website at [www.foca.on.ca](http://www.foca.on.ca)

FOCA is a founding member of Waterfront Ratepayers After Fair Taxation. To learn more about this group, visit the website at [www.wraft.com/home.php](http://www.wraft.com/home.php).

# OTTY LAKE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT DAY



Otty Lake's Family Environment Day, Saturday, August 9 at the Maple Glen Waterfront was a fun community event. We were certainly lucky with the weather and enjoyed glorious sunshine and blue skies! Some 40 people



including 12-15 children attended. It was an opportunity for everyone to have fun together and learn something more about the Otty Lake environment. The Maple Glen Family Association



was generous in making their shoreline available for this event and a number of Maple Glen families dropped in during the course of the morning.

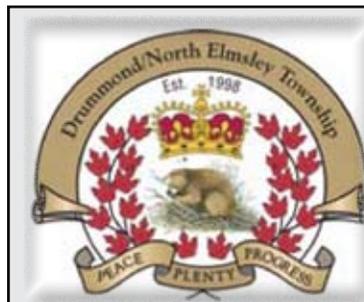
Outdoor educator Andrea Nuttall worked with children and adults along the shoreline to help everyone learn more about what lives along Otty's shores. OLA Director Wally Robins guided the fishing derby portion of the morning. A conservation officer from the Ministry of Natural Resources answered questions about fish and other wildlife observed in our watershed. Rideau Valley Conservation Authority provided information about invasive species and the OPP staff attending had information about personal and marine safety. Chef Dave Bell tended the BBQ and



everyone enjoyed a hotdog lunch.



Bob and Christine Melville, along with their four grandchildren, were among those who attended. They summed up the event well when they e-mailed the OLA to say, "It was a wonderful day for the children as well as the adults. To us it represents what living at Otty is all about: a wonderful life style that is based on enjoying, learning about and protecting the environment for future generations".



## DRUMMOND/NORTH ELMSLEY OFFICIAL PLAN

The Township of Drummond/North Elmsley is currently working on the Five Year Review of the Official Plan. Interested Otty Lake residents can access the Draft Official Plan on the township website [www.drummondnorthelmsley.com](http://www.drummondnorthelmsley.com).

Type "draft official plan" on the upper right corner of the home page. Then click on the search engine. If you have comments, be sure to pass them on to the Township.

## LEAVING THE LAKE?

(The Otty Lake population includes many cottagers and potential snowbirds. With that in mind, Captain Otty asked Crain and Schooley Insurance Brokers Inc. Vice President Jason Schooley and his staff for some tips to increase the security of lake property when the owner is absent. They responded helpfully with the following.)

With the temperature dropping and Norm Wright at Lake 88 talking about bringing in his water pump before it freezes, you come to realize that another cottage season has drawn to a close. Here are a few important fall tips. These simple procedures can save you both time and money:

1. Turn off the water - a standard practice with cottage owners. Remember to drain your water lines completely so they won't burst over the winter months.
2. If you have a wood burning stove make sure it's thoroughly cleaned out and the ashes and any coals disposed of properly. This will prevent potential fire hazards and alleviate any messes when you open in the spring.
3. Secure all windows, doors, sheds and boat houses, etc. Take extra time to ensure that your recreational property is adequately protected against theft or vandalism.
4. Secure any items that will be left outdoors over the winter. Boats, canoes, barbecues, outdoor furniture and picnic tables should be adequately protected from wind, rain, snow and cold temperatures.
5. Take a look around your property for potentially dangerous tree limbs. Take the necessary precautions and trim limbs back that might cause trouble over the

winter.

6. Make sure your property is checked regularly by someone living in the area over the winter months. Be sure to let them know how to get in touch with you if there are any problems.
7. Monitor the amount of snow accumulating on the roof or decks over the winter. Make arrangements to have the snow removed over the winter to prevent collapse of the structure.
8. Remove items from the premises that thieves tend to target; this includes alcohol, valuables and electronics such as televisions, DVD players and stereo systems. If it is too impractical to remove something entirely, then at least remove it from view. If potential thieves can't see anything they'd like to take, chances are they won't. The old saying "out of sight, out of mind" really is true in this case.
9. If you have an oil tank at the cottage, have it inspected by a qualified contractor to avoid oil leaks! This step should be taken every year, regardless of the age of your tank. If you have an oil tank that is no longer being used, have it removed before it ruptures and pollutes the ground and the lake.
10. Remember to inspect your roof and clean the eavestroughs prior to leaving in the fall. This procedure will ensure that you don't have any water damage problems caused by ice damming.
11. Make a checklist for opening and closing your cottage and keep it in a convenient place, for example near your electrical panel.

A little work before you leave the lake can prevent problems from even starting. Your return for spring opening will be more enjoyable and you will be back out on the lake sooner.

You can contact Crain and Schooley  
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for more practical advice or to discuss your insurance needs at 613 267-1194, email at [inquiry@crainschooley.on.ca](mailto:inquiry@crainschooley.on.ca), or visit their website at [www.crainschooley.on.ca](http://www.crainschooley.on.ca).

Captain Otty added two more tips. Put your name and phone number on everything – boats, docks, lawn furniture, etc. Every spring "secure" items have arrived on distant shores with no identification.

If you have been feeding birds and wildlife this fall, tempting them to stay in the area, make sure someone reliable takes over the task in your absence. It may be too late for them to make their own alternate arrangements for winter.

### OTTY LAKE CALENDAR OF BEAUTY 2010

Plans for the 2010 Otty Lake Calendar of Beauty are in full swing. Amateur photographers of all ages are encouraged to gather their best photos of all seasons at the lake and to submit them by June 1, 2009.

Calendar pictures will be selected at the 2009 Annual General Meeting. Orders for the calendar will be taken at the AGM and at other lake events. What a great gift for Otty residents and their visitors.

Photos can be taken anywhere on Otty Lake but the focus must be the lake. Check the OLA website at [www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org) for details on how to submit your photos and to note key deadlines



## LOON PATROL

Bill McLeish

I have been on "loon patrol" for Otty Lake for a few years now, reporting my findings to Bird Studies Canada, an organization which tracks loon and other bird populations. You might want to visit the website at [www.bsc-eoc.org/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/).

My efforts are not, as they say, for the birds! The year to year comparative number of adults and particularly of chicks is a measure of the health of a lake environment. The quality of the water, the quantity of fish and the turbulence from power boats during May and June nesting/hatching season are all factors that affect breeding success and bird populations. From my observations, these are not a problem on Otty.



The best way I have found to reliably get loon numbers is to do a sweep of the lake. This past summer, I observed 10 adults and five chicks one August weekend. There were rumours of an additional chick. The most chicks I have seen in previous years was two, so the trend is positive. Last year there was a higher adult population, including the "gang of eight" partying just west of Code Island. I found it curious since I had heard that loons are rather territorial. They were probably adolescents, still enjoying the single life.

This has been a good job for me.

As in the fields of education and criminology, one must "know your subjects" and I am getting to know loons. In fact, despite my general inability to learn a second language, (even the first language is a challenge), I am practicing "loon". I frequently utter a hysterical cackle to loons as I pass by in my red kayak and plastic hat. Some, the ones no doubt of higher intellect, regard me with disdain, as though dealing with a confirmed "loonatic". But others do respond. Not really understanding their dialect, I am not sure whether the response is a comment on my attire or a warning to leave.

I take no chances, for I have seen the dark side of the loon. On occasion I have ventured within 50 feet of a mother and chick, when suddenly from the depths would arise a fearsome male.

He will typically stick out his chest like Tie Domi in a hockey fight, flap his wings like a politician, thrash about and scream at me. No use in protesting that I have no interest in his mate and mean no harm to his offspring. This display of avian testosterone makes me feel like a journalist covering the Taliban, and hastens my departure.

I would like to say that loons are your friends, but they are not. The lake belongs to them and if you get too close, they will tell you that! They are, however, lenient in letting us trespass, even poach their fish. But their presence on Otty is an indication that we are having some success in maintaining the quality of the environment here. The loons thank you (I think!).



### ADVANCE NOTICE - Shoreline Plantings Spring 2009

Next spring the Otty Lake Association will again make plants available to Otty Lake residents for spring shoreline plantings. We have placed an order through the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority for a variety of shrubs and trees (including dogwoods, highbush cranberry, staghorn sumacs and nannyberry) available from the Ferguson Forest Centre in Kemptville. These are locally grown plants native to this region. The plants will be available at the end of April. If you are interested in obtaining some of these plants, please provide your name and contact information to Karen Hunt at 613 264-9273 or [mkhunt@ripnet.com](mailto:mkhunt@ripnet.com). You will be contacted in mid-winter when our order has been processed and we know specifically which plants we should be receiving and when they will be available.

More information when available will also be posted on the Otty Lake Association website at [www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org).

## MICA MINES HIKE



On Saturday, August 16, Roger Nuttall led a group of 12 very enthusiastic Otty Lake residents on a hike through part of the Mica Mines Conservation Area beginning at the Boy Scout Camp. Roger is an amazing naturalist and hike leader and everyone learned a lot about what you can find in our watershed area. After this great morning hike, the OLA received several requests for future hikes in all seasons.

If you are interested in participating in future similar activities, watch for notices in the newsletter and on the OLA website at [www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org).

### President's Message (Cont'd. from Pg. 1)

Since I was the President of the OLA in 2005 and 2006, I thought it best to review my previous November messages in earlier Captain Otty's Logs (trying not to repeat myself too much). The following caught my eye:

November, 2005

Wow what a summer on Otty Lake!! It was the warmest. It was the driest. It was the sunniest. It was the best. We did have low water levels but we had fewer weeds to deal with as well.

November, 2006

Welcome to fall everyone! We certainly didn't have an Indian summer this year. Instead we have had wet and cold fall weather with rain almost every day. With water levels up, please make sure your docks, boats, rafts and water toys are well back from the shore and secured for the winter. Two years ago we had similar water levels and on stormy days, in November, a wide variety of items were accidentally launched including a pontoon boat!

Now it is November, 2008. I think it is interesting to see how much things change but in the long run, how much they stay the same. This year, we had the awful, wet summer weather and the beautiful fall weather. It is sort of the opposite of both years mentioned above, although you read one year had high water levels and the other low levels. If we were to review the previous 10 years, we would see a summer/fall cycle of wet, dry, hot and cold with high and low water

levels or averages of all of the above. That is the way Mother Nature works and these are the repetitive ups and downs of Otty Lake.

Yes, this summer we had beaver activity on Jebb Creek delaying the lowering of lake levels and we had unprecedented high water levels on Otty.

The RVCA and Millar Brooke Farm management worked together to deal with this issue. At last count, eight beaver had been removed from the Creek and efforts were made to balance the water flow. The other contributor, rain, decreased significantly in the fall and the present lake level is not unusual for October/November.

You may be aware that the Provincial Government has decided to review the Mining Act. More than 20% of Otty Lake property owners do not own their mineral rights. That means those properties can be claimed and subject to explorative excavation and the owners can do little to prevent it. The OLA, Citizen's Mining Advisory Group (CMAG), other lake associations in the Lake Networking Group and many Otty Lake residents have sent letters requesting mineral rights be reconnected to surface rights for all lake properties. We are hopeful common sense will prevail and that the Mining Act will be updated.

Otty Lake residents are indebted to Wendy Hassard for the work she has done with CMAG on behalf of so many of us.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the fall and have a great winter! Our next newsletter will be in the spring.

If you have any questions about the newsletter or Otty Lake, please feel free to phone or email me, David Reesor at 613-326-0094 or [davidanddaphnereesor@yahoo.ca](mailto:davidanddaphnereesor@yahoo.ca)

### VISIT THE OLA WEBSITE

If you have not recently visited [www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org), give it a "browse" or "Google".

The new "Event Calendar" is frequently updated to keep you current about workshops, issues and events of interest to Otty residents.

"Photo Archive" lets you view shots of lake scenery and events.

Send in your own photos with brief information including where, when and who is in the shot. You might even see it on the welcome page. Since many OLA members use dial-up services, pictures are optimized for speedier downloads.

Check out "Lost and Found" if you found someone's dock - or lost yours!

"About the OLA" will explain the organization or just help you find your Area Counsellor.

Got questions about fishing, weeds, water levels? See what various reports and local experts have to say on these and more topics.

The site is being developed to meet your needs. Forward your comments, suggestions and photos with information to Webmaster Rick Stojak at [rickstojak@xplornet.com](mailto:rickstojak@xplornet.com).

## D/NE SEPTIC RE-INSPECTIONS

David Reesor

This summer we saw the first round of inspections for existing septic systems on Otty Lake by the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley.

As Reeve Aubrey Churchill explained at the Otty Lake Association annual general meeting, the 50 oldest systems were slated for inspection in 2008. Within five years, all systems on Otty will be inspected. Reeve Churchill also indicated that Drummond/North Elmsley would cover 25% of the cost and the property owner would pay 75%. Inspections were done by the Health Unit.

The OLA has supported this initiative from the beginning and to demonstrate our commitment, we agreed to have our logo on the documents mailed to lake residents. We know this program is important to the health of Otty Lake. The property owner survey for our Lake Management Plan confirmed overwhelming support of septic re-inspections.

The Health Unit data on the summer program was not available in time for this newsletter. The Otty Lake Association has, however, received comments from lake residents whose properties were involved in the inspections. A few were unhappy about the need for inspection and several were concerned that there was a cost involved. As this was a pilot program specific to Otty Lake, D/NE Council decided it was appropriate to charge individual property owners. The inspection program in Tay Valley Township has been in operation for a number of years and as a result it is much broader in scope. The cost of their program (which includes 1/2 of Otty Lake properties) is 100% covered by the Township's property taxes.

I asked for feedback from a number of residents who had called me previous to the inspection of their systems. In a couple of cases there was some doubt about the need for inspection. One resident indicated that his system was inspected in 1980, was "working well" and it had not been pumped out since. Systems that are not serviced will eventually fail and the cost to the property owner can be as high as \$20,000!

In a number of cases the inspection showed that the tank was full of solids which were being forced into the tile bed. The inspection prevented a financial and possible environmental disaster. In one case the tank was opened and it was full to the top. This was because the water softener was backwashing into the tank (not recommended) and the volume of liquid was overwhelming the tile bed. The softener has since been diverted to a grey water system and the property owner was grateful to have been part of this summer's program.

Hats off to Drummond/North Elmsley and the Health Unit. Otty is the beneficiary of this important initiative.



## HOW TO GET OTTY LAKE NEWS

Dick Atkinson

Captain Otty's LOG, published two or three times a year, is mailed or e-mailed to residents and associates. Besides receiving the LOG electronically, those who provide the OLA with an e-mail address are sent additional time-sensitive information.

When you pay your annual \$20 membership fee, you indicate your preferred mailing option:

1. Receive the LOG and periodic information by e-mail (the recommended option)
2. Receive the LOG by Canada Post and receive periodic information by e-mail
3. Receive the LOG by Canada Post.

An increasing number of people receive e-mail on pocket or cell devices. To meet their needs, a fourth option will be introduced for the spring newsletter:

4. Receive an e-mail advising that the LOG has been posted on the OLA website [www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org). Please consider which of these options best suits you. Remember that the electronic option is environmentally friendly and economical. The LOG is e-mailed in printed document format (pdf) files which require the ACROBAT READER program on your computer to be opened. If you do not already have this program, it is available free from [www.adobe.com/acrobat](http://www.adobe.com/acrobat).

If you have already paid your 2008 membership fee, but would like to change the way that you receive the LOG or would like the additional information, just e-mail us at [ottylake@sympatico.ca](mailto:ottylake@sympatico.ca) or write to Otty Lake Association, Box 20122, Perth, ON, K7H 3M6 and indicate which option (1, 2, 3 or 4) you want.

## OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION BOARD 2008-2009

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