

October 2010

Captain Otty's Log

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From My Dock to Yours

by Karen Hunt, OLA President

Wow! What a summer for members of the Otty Lake community! I hope that you are heading into the fall renewed and refreshed after spending time in your special place at Otty Lake.

Board and Counsellors' Meeting, August 26th

We heard from many of you through your Area Counsellors who brought questions and comments to share with the OLA Board, which will guide the board in planning this fall. It was great to hear how positive so many of you have been about the Otty Lake Shoreline Handbook, which we hope will be a useful resource for you and your family for years to come. A special thank-you to the Area Counsellors who spent many hours delivering the handbooks to you.

There have been **OLA Board changes** recently. Director Joanne Oatway left the Board for health reasons. We thank Joanne for the energy and enthusiasm she brought to the Board over the past year and want her to know that she is in our thoughts. As you will read elsewhere in the Log, Chris Harrison was appointed to fill this Director position until the next AGM. Robert Cosh has been appointed Vice President, and Phil Anderson Chair of the Membership Committee and Coordinator of the Area Counsellors. Robert filled the Vice President position left open



Loons Photo by Rick Stojak

when Don Beattie stepped down as Vice President.

Attention Otty Lake Road Associations!

Interested in carrying out a project that will help you and your neighbours preserve your special part of Otty Lake? The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority's Shoreline Naturalization Program can provide resources and technical support to help your road association and its members carry out shoreline naturalization efforts. The program can provide interested members one-on-one site visits that offer site-specific recommendations and support - anything from simple, cost-effective advice on how to re-establish a shoreline buffer, to providing technical and financial assistance (75% of project costs) for planting native shrubs and trees.

Working with your road association, the program can help coordinate a volunteer community-planting event in the spring 2011 that will help neighbours naturalize the

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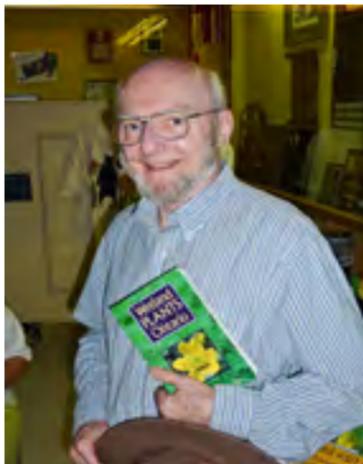
shoreline as a community. For more information about the Shoreline Naturalization Program's community project support or to learn more about how the incentive grant can help you naturalize your shoreline, contact Andrea Klymko, 613.692.3571 ext 1173 or email andrea.klymko@rvca.ca

Otty Lake Association AGM, July 10, 2010

We were fortunate to have excellent AGM displays, including Mary Vandenhoff with books and nature-related items from the Nature Lover's Bookshop in Lanark, and Diane McKay from FoodSmiths with environmentally friendly cleaning products. Eric Kohlsmith (Mississippi-Rideau Septic System Office) and Shawn Merriman (Drummond/North Elmsley CBO) answered questions on septic systems, and Emily Conger displayed information from the Adirondack Conservation Association (and later was our guest speaker). OPP Constable Byron Newell answered marine patrol questions and Barb Hicks fielded questions on the Well Aware program and other focuses of REAL (Rideau Environmental Action League). Many thanks to all these people who offered opportunities for Otty Lake residents to become better informed. Thank you too to the OLA members who provided information on membership, water quality and the BioBlitz, and offered OLA memorabilia and great coffee and muffins too!

OLA Constitution

The AGM Business Meeting included revision of the OLA Constitution, last amended in 2003. Thank you to Director Linda Church and her committee for preparing the revisions. The revised Constitution is at www.ottylakeassociation.ca. If you need a paper copy, please write the OLA at Box 20122, Perth, Ont. K7H 3M6. At the AGM I was asked to write a



Peter Nelson clutching his copy of Wetland Plants of Ontario

comment about Article 4, Item 6, which provided constitutional recognition of the 2007 agreement between the OLA and the BurgessWood Property Owners Association (BWPOA) through which the BWPOA could, on behalf of their members, annually pay for 20 memberships in the OLA. It was agreed in 2007 that these 20 memberships would provide the BWPOA with 20 votes at an OLA AGM or Special Meeting through which they could represent their members. Individual property owners in BurgessWood can, like all members of the Otty Lake community (as recognized in Article 1 under Constituency of the Otty Lake Association), buy individual



Beatrice Schrieffer & Barb Hicks (Rideau Environmental Action League) at the AGM

OLA memberships which entitle these individual owners to two votes per membership, the same as other OLA members. Few BurgessWood property owners hold individual memberships in the Otty Lake Association (seven in 2010).

There are 70 residential properties in BurgessWood. Although no lots are on the lake, the members of the BWPOA own 4000 feet of Otty Lake shoreline in common. The Executive of the BWPOA felt that it was important to encourage BurgessWood participation and support for OLA programs. The OLA Board welcomed this support.

To avoid the potential that this block vote could ever allow the BWPOA unfair voting power it was agreed that if the number of votes exercised at an Otty Lake Association AGM or Special Meeting by the BurgessWood property owners with individual OLA memberships ever exceeds 70 (the number of properties in BurgessWood), the BurgessWood block vote will not be counted.

Through the years BurgessWood residents have been active members of the OLA Board and committees, and we look forward to continued participation from them.

October 25th is Municipal Election Day No all-candidates meetings are currently scheduled, so I encourage you to contact your candidates and let them know about the issues that are important to you. And please vote!

In closing, a Native American saying suggests *"We do not inherit this Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children"*. The Otty Lake Management Plan gives the OLA and the Otty Lake community a plan through which we can work together with our partners to protect the health and sustainability of Otty Lake and its watershed for those who come after us. It is important that we walk and work together to make sure we fulfill that responsibility.

**THE LOON REPORT:
THEY'VE MOVED SOUTH**

by Bill McLeish

It is fascinating how little jobs like being Loon-Enumerator on behalf of the Otty Lake Association can take on new forms and meaning. This year my eldest grandson turned 12, and was eligible to obtain his Boater's License for small craft. He has been the instigator in many of our loon counting exercises this year, and (of course) has piloted me around the lake in our aluminum can powered by the old Evinrude 9.9, while I desperately tried to multitask, search for loons and hold onto my plastic hat. All I had to do was pay for the gasoline! Oh yes, and count the loons.

During our AGM in July, I recounted the experience in the past and earlier this year that the loons seemed to proliferate at the NORTH end of the lake. Even loons seem to be able to make a fool of me, since, of the total of 10 adults and 4 chicks spotted at the latest survey, fully 7 adults and 3 chicks were in the south end of the lake, and 4 adults were in Little Otty which I have never observed before. The maximum I observed this year was 12 adults back in Aug 15, and we've counted 5 chicks, although a report has come in from an OLA member that 6 chicks were spotted in the lake. So 12 adults and 6 chicks seems an appropriate count to report to Bird Canada. Quite consistently we have observed a nesting pair and one chick down in the south end of the lake, a nesting pair and 2 chicks around Hazard Island, and a nesting pair and one chick up near Echo Bay. The numbers on the lake are as high or higher than past years. Loons are discriminating lodgers, so our water must be passably clean, and Otty must provide them with secure and quiet breeding locations and sufficient food. This year, life seems to be good if you're a loon, which suggests that we are still providing a reasonable habitat for ourselves. Now we can worry about WINTER!

LOON LORE

by Wally Robins

Of the thousands of known birds on our planet, loons are one of the oldest species. Various species of loons are found around the world today. Depending on the type of loon, an adult bird may weigh as little as three pounds or up to 14 pounds with wing spans ranging from 42 to 58 inches.

The loon is categorized as a diver and is one of the most efficient predators in nature. Their vision is superb both above and below the water. They are perfectly constructed sub-surface hunters with heavier bones than most birds and have an ability to swim in speed bursts without sacrificing agility. By simply using a foot as a rudder, a



Juvenile exercising its "rudder"
Photo: Ralph Buttrum

loon can turn on a dime and give nine cents change underwater. Although not particularly agile when airborne, loons are speed demons with a top end of 75 miles per hour, much faster than most waterfowl.

The diet of a loon is boring - it is fish for breakfast, lunch, dinner and between-meal snacks. While able to dive to extraordinary depths, loons feed in the upper third of the water column. In Otty Lake, this equates to the top 10 to 30 feet of the lake. Loons aren't picky eaters. If it has fins, scales and gills, it's table fare.

Loons nest for approximately 30 days with both parents sharing incubation duties. Every change in nest-sitting

responsibilities involves turning the eggs. Normally, loons produce two eggs annually. During the nesting period, these territorial birds ratchet up their vigilance and become fierce protectors of their land and water turf.

We've all seen young loons hitching a ride on Mom or Dad's back. Here's why. Young chicks, like the young of all species, require a great deal of rest. As well, chicks do not develop adult feathers until about 6 weeks of age and are easily chilled since down doesn't insulate as well as full plumage. Finally, chicks are much safer from predation when riding on a parent bird.

Loon chicks and adult birds are part of the food chain and make tasty meals for their natural predators. During the nesting seasons, loon eggs, newly hatched chicks and even adult birds are

food for foxes, mink, skunks and raccoons. Crows, hawks and gulls feed on loon eggs and chicks. Turtles and larger fish will wolf down swimming chicks.

One of the greatest causes of loon mortality is other loons. When adult loons fight, it's not a schoolyard scrap.

Fights are often to the death. Loons use their bills as a weapon, surfacing beneath an opponent and spearing it in the chest.

The greatest threat to loons is man. While not hunted, loon populations are susceptible to pollution, particularly acid rain and the use of sprayed and other chemicals.

Being an apex predator, the accumulation of pollutants in their food source affects the birds' ability to reproduce or to lay healthy eggs. The optimum way we can continue to enjoy Otty's loon community is to avoid using pesticides and other contaminants that ultimately end up in the water.



Ferocious Pirate Isaac Haworth

PIRATES ATTACK ON OTTY

No it wasn't your imagination. Pirate flags flew, booming cannon fire echoed through the smoke, and the attack was on at the first Otty Lake Pirates Day.

When the invading pirates arrived, they were greeted by a fearsome OLA crew decked out in swords, eye-patches, bandanas and lots of tattoos. If they weren't sufficiently vicious, more eye-patches and tattoos were provided by Diana Nuttall. Lists of hidden booty were handed out then the search was on for treasures. Roger Nuttall showed which Otty Lakes plants can be eaten by marooned pirates and what tree smells like bubblegum. Scary invasive species like zebra mussels and round goby were captured and identified by Kaitlin Brady and Ashley Alberto of RVCA. Kelsey and Adrienne Lewis used their fish trap successfully then showed the pirates why Stinkpot turtles got their name. Yuk! Did you know they smelled like gasoline?

All pirates search for treasure and sure enough a treasure chest was found containing 'gold' coins, gems and minerals from Otty

Lake, including Perthite (rarer than gold and diamonds).

Several pirates fished but the sharks were safe. Jeff Bendig from MNR told the pirates they need not fear killer sharks and giant squid on Otty but biting sunfish were another matter.

Pirates repelled attacks by invading marauders, using rubber swords and water pistols. The first attack by the bloodthirsty Coshes was mounted by canoe, followed by the Takach/Sinclair family. These fearless invaders anchored their pirate-flagged galleon off-shore and fired their cannon at the beach making a lot of noise and smoke and scaring the bejeez out of some gentler souls. The family stormed ashore in their fearsome landing craft, the SS Minnow.

Many hands were onboard to mount a water bomb attack. The action was so fast, so furious and so wet that no photographs turned out.

A feast of pirate grub, including buccaneer dogs and bounty burgers prepared by galley slave Dave Bell, allowed the pirates to keep their strength up.

A tired but victorious crew armed with treasure hoards stole away making plans for next year's attack.

Thanks to Darlene Bishop the organizer, Karen and Murray Hunt for planning and providing the food and helping to line up displays, Jeff Bendig from MNR, Kaitlin Brady, Kelsey and Adrienne Lewis, and Ashley Alberto from the RVCA, and Roger Nuttall for providing the tarp shelter. Finally, thanks to all the OLA members who photographed, helped set up and take down the event, made goodies and those who brought their families to make this first Pirates Day a success.



Kelsey & Adrienne Lewis - Dressed for Success



Discovering that stinkpot turtles smell like gasoline.



Attacking pirate ship firing cannon



*Roger Nuttall & Lincoln Bishop discover edibles for marooned pirates
Photo: Doug Bell*



Robert Cosh conferring with organizer Darlene Bishop



Marauders Evan, Steve, Alicia, and Susie storm ashore



Oscar Haworth being fitted with eye patch by Shari Beattie



Lincoln Bishop with skull tattoo



Buccaneers Dave Bell & Karen Hunt with pirate feast

RESULTS FROM OTTY LAKE LONG-FORM CENSUS

By Shari and Don Beattie

After discussing the Prime Minister and the Industry Minister taking leave of their census, your OLA Secretary and Log Editor took leave of their senses. The government decision inspired us to leap into the gap left by the Prime Minister and conduct our own Otty Lake Unofficial Long-form Census. (Opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the OLA's positions.)

For statistical reliability, an unbiased (sort-of) and thorough (sort-of) sampling process was needed. We decided to check out every single cottage and year-round residence by observing it from the water, recording what we saw.

To any of you who spotted two oldies in a geezer (AKA pontoon) boat in early August casing your property, thank you for not calling the police. On the contrary, everyone we saw gave us a friendly wave.

We recorded 440 properties, realizing that we missed some properties not easily seen from the water. We sampled nine categories for each property, with a total of 25 possible values (e.g., types of boats, ribbon of life, number of docks and boathouses), collecting 2573 sample points over a three-day period. Although the raw data would interest any statistician or anyone who enjoys self-flagellation, we felt that a summary would be more digestible in this article.

Otty Lakers love to see the lake from their boats. We counted 620 of them! Although some people feel on long weekends in the summer that jetskis are everywhere, in fact we found that they are the least popular boats (20 counted), compared to 261 outboards, inboard/outboards and runabouts, and 217 canoes and kayaks. We had believed that pontoon boats were everywhere, but only 96 pontoon boats were observed. Sailing enthusiasts have some recruitment to do: we saw only 26 sailcraft.

Most properties have docks. The overwhelming preference among Otty Lakers is for docks on posts. Post docks accounted for 332 docks, augmented by 64 floating docks and 14 cribs. 46 properties included boathouses, though some were clearly disused.

Most Otty Lake residents are concerned about protecting the lake from runoff generated by manicured lawns extending to the water's edge, and hardened shorelines that prevent vegetation from absorbing pollutants such as phosphorus. We counted 90 properties that threatened the lake in this way though many were starting to add a ribbon of life. At the other end of the spectrum 145 properties were left largely natural, and 198 properties were developed (e.g., lawns) but had a ribbon of life.

We Otty Lakers are a moderately patriotic bunch, flying 60 Canadian flags. In addition, several pirate flags were observed, probably left over from OLA Pirates Day.

We recommend doing your own census. Cruising slowly around the lake gave us the opportunity to see the striking variety that our lake offers.

PLEASE RESERVE SATURDAY 30 OCTOBER TO ATTEND LAKE LINKS 2010!

Each year since 2002, the Lake Links workshop has given an opportunity for members of lake associations to get together, hear experts speak about current issues that concern lake associations, and build relationships with other groups that share the same concerns.

This year the focus is networking and information sharing, using the results of a survey of lake associations. Speakers will also highlight what's new this year: lake monitoring protocols, emerald ash borers, Fisheries 101 workshop, Eastern Ontario Algae Partnership Project, and septic re-inspection programs. Two major presentations will round out the day: Glenn Tunnock (Tunnock Consulting) on lake management planning partnerships and Kathy Coulthart-Dewey (Tay Valley Township) on a case study of the lake planning partnership in Tay Valley.

If you'd like to learn more about lake projects, successes and challenges, Lake Links 2010 is the place to be!

Saturday 30 October 2010
8:30 am -3:00 pm
Civitan Hall, Hwy 43, Perth

To pre-register please call 613-272-5136 or e-mail info@watersheds.ca. Cost \$12.00, including refreshments and light lunch.

UPDATE: INCREASING THE INVOLVEMENT OF SEASONAL RESIDENTS IN THE OLA

At our June Board meeting we discussed the need to attract more seasonal residents to the OLA Board. Although seasonal and full-time residents have many attitudes, ideas, and concerns about Otty Lake in common, they do have some different priorities and outlooks. The Board would like to do anything we can to find ways to encourage and attract seasonal residents who have the time to commit to supporting Board activities. This support may include joining the Board as a director, but also encompasses helping out with activities such as the implementation of the Lake Management Plan, the Otty Lake calendars, the Shoreline Handbook, and Pirates Day.

At our 21 July Board meeting we welcomed Chris Harrison to the OLA Board of Directors. This is a Board appointment until next year's AGM when Chris will stand for election. Chris is a long-term seasonal resident along the Otty South-West shore and immediate Past President of that road association. Currently he is the Area Counsellor for Area 1B. We are fortunate that he feels that he has time in his life at this point to lend his skills to the OLA Board of Directors. Thanks Chris, and welcome on board.

Wally Robins (wally.robins@rogers.com) and Anne Scotton (ascotton@sympatico.ca) are Board members who are seasonal residents. Could you please take a moment to share with them any further ideas you may have about how to encourage more involvement by seasonal residents? The Board values your ideas, and plans to act on them

WATER QUALITY REPORT

by Murray Hunt

Algae at Otty - 2010

As you likely noticed there were extensive algae blooms on the lake from mid-May to mid-July. Samples were sent for testing and two species of green algae were identified. Due to the presence of algae in a large number of local lakes in 2009, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) established an arrangement this year to facilitate the submission and identification of algae samples through the Parks Canada office in Cornwall.

There are many different species of green algae, none of which is toxic. The two species identified in the samples taken at Otty were Spirogyra and Mougeotia, closely related forms of filamentous green algae. These species are relatively common in freshwater and usually form on the bottom at shallow depths in the presence of sources of nutrients on a lake or stream bottom. The algae will then rise in the water under certain conditions such as warm temperatures, ample sunlight and no wind. Obviously we had this combination of conditions at various times in the late spring and early summer at Otty. These same species of algae were also found on a number of other lakes in the Rideau system this year.

Bacteria Sampling

E.Coli. samples were taken again this summer to obtain a general understanding of bacterial levels at Otty and McLaren Lakes. The values are summarized below:

14 samples of 1 or less cts/100 mL

8 samples between 2 and 5 cts/100 mL

4 samples between 5 and 20 cts/100 mL

4 samples between 21 and 40 cts/100 mL

These results are within the provincial standard for swimming (100 cts/100 mL). They indicate, on a general basis, that the lake water is safe for swimming and limited household use. However, drinking untreated lake water is not recommended. Please see the OLA website for the results of other recent years.

Other Sampling

The Lake Association is currently conducting several programs on water quality monitoring in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment and the RVCA from May to October. These include, among others, sampling for phosphorous and nitrogen (indicators of nutrient loading) and the measurement of dissolved oxygen/temperature profiles. As well, sampling for invasive species and macroinvertebrate benthic monitoring is being undertaken by the RVCA with the assistance of the OLA. The results of that sampling will be reported in the next newsletter.

OTTY LAKE RESIDENT WINS YUKON RIVER QUEST CANOE RACE

If you see a canoeist travelling at high speed on Otty Lake, it's likely to be Gaetan Plourde. Gaetan, 36, of BurgessWood, won first place in the open canoe category in the 740-km Yukon River Quest race in June. He covered the distance in 52 hours 35 minutes. The route led through wilderness from Whitehorse to Dawson City, back country in which racers were entirely responsible for themselves and their own safety.

For more details please see Andrew Snooks's article in the 2 September issue of the Perth Courier. Congratulations, Gaetan!

OLA COMMUNITY AWARD

We all know people who can always be counted on to go the extra step. In the Otty Lake Association there are many dedicated volunteers who fill that role. One exceptional couple, Roger and Diana Nuttall have always been ready to roll up their sleeves to help, whether leading nature walks, hosting the BioBlitz, pitching shelters, applying tattoos at Pirates Day or sharing their abundant knowledge. At the Board and Counsellors' meeting in August, Roger and Diana Nuttall received the OLA Community Award for their years of volunteer service to Otty Lake. As a Boy Scout leader at the camp on Otty, Roger has taught young people the values of respecting their environment and protecting our



lake. Diana has been cottaging on the lake since the 1940s, then the couple moved here in 1992, building their own home. Their property is a prime example of environmental diversity which they willingly share.

When asked which activity gave them the most pleasure and satisfaction, they agreed that creating the list of Otty Lake watershed trees, shrubs, and wildflowers for the Otty Lake Management Plan was their top choice. They were able to draw on their years of observations to create the list, but found that the hard part was hunting down the Latin names for the plants they knew by their common names. In May 2010, their list was enhanced by additions made by volunteers at BioBlitz, and it is hoped that each year new additions will be made.

Congratulations to Roger and Diana!

GET THE LATEST NEWS FROM YOUR OLA WEBSITE

Rick Stojak, our Webmaster, keeps the site up-to-date with items that arise between issues of the Log. Please visit the site to find information about:

- photos of life at the lake and events, including Pirates Day 2010
- water levels and water quality measurements
- Otty Lake Management Plan
- contact information for OLA board members and counsellors
- minutes of annual general meetings
- OLA constitution (new version, 2010)
- archive copies of Captain Otty's Log (highly recommended)

Here's the link: <http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca>

MEMBERSHIP!

Please support your association by renewing today. Your fee helps pay for the shoreline binder that you received this year, for your yearly information package, Captain Otty's Log, BioBlitz, Pirates Day, and all the other publications and activities that the OLA undertakes. Your membership is also important in giving you a voice with partners such as the townships of Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. You can mail your \$20 membership fee (a bargain) to:
Otty Lake Association
Box 20122, Perth Mews Mall
Perth, ON
K7H 3M6,

or you can give your fee to your area counsellor.