

Otty Lake Association

Annual General Meeting (AGM) Minutes

Sunday, July 9th, 2017, 2 – 4 pm
The Perth Legion

Special Presentation – Prior to the start of the meeting, at the end of the displays, Reid thanked 10 year old Tommy Ball for sharing his Invasive Species display with those in attendance. In appreciation, Reid presented Tommy with an OLA Naturalist T-shirt.

Welcome – At 2 pm, Reid welcomed everyone to the AGM. He pointed out that this year we switched from our usual Sat morning AGM to Sunday afternoon in support of our Perth venues, who are concentrating on the business of weddings. Before moving into the agenda, Reid honoured and acknowledged with respect and care that we are meeting today on the unceded traditional lands of the Algonquin people.

There were approximated 130 people in attendance, excluding presenters and displayers.

Reid called the meeting to order.

July 9, 2016 AGM Minutes – Motion (Christine Kilburn/Gail Read) – Approve minutes as distributed. **CARRIED**

Agenda – Motion (Wally Robins/Michelle Soucy) – Approve agenda as distributed. **CARRIED**

Financial Report Presentation – Dave Bell thanked Ross Hollingsworth for once again reviewing the financial results.

2016 Financials - Dave highlighted a number of facts:

- Office Operations high compared to 2017 Budget. This is because we are reducing our Newsletter mailing costs by encouraging recipients to receive them via e-mail, thus significantly cutting mailing costs. In 2015, mailing costs were \$2,700, 2016 \$800, 2017 Budget \$500.
- Water testing is constant at around \$1,000 – he congratulated Murray Hunt and Derek Smith on the awesome job they do.

Motion (Dave Bell/Wally Robins) - approve 2016 Income Statement **CARRIED**

Budget - Office Operations are down big time thanks to Barb Hicks' work on the OLA website. Rental expenses are reflected on different expense lines in 2017 vs 2016 in order to better align with CRA requirements. Anne Scotton pointed out that our expenses are minimal thanks to the fact that the work is done by volunteers. Thanks to them all.

Motion (Dave Bell/Mark Semple) - approve 2017 Budget as distributed. **CARRIED**

Introduction of Board Members – Reid presented our Board members. All except Cathy Kari were present.

- Robert Cosh – Past President
- Dave Bell – VP Finance & Treasurer
- Cathy Kari – Vice-President
- Christine Kilburn – Secretary

- Barb Hicks – Board Director & Coordinator – Captain Otty’s Log & Webmaster
- Derek Smith – Board Director & Water Quality
- Gail Read – Board Director, Counsellors’ & BBQ Coordinator
- Ian McDonald – Board Director & Manager - Lake Activities Projects
- Wally Robins – Board Director & Fish Reporter
- Kyla Haley – Board Director & Loon Survey
- Michelle Soucy – Board Director & OLA Clothing Sales
- Anne Scotton, Krista Hearty McLean, Chuck Shenkman – Board Directors & AGM

Reid also introduced our Lake Steward, Murray Hunt.

Reid thanked Krista and Chuck for their 2 years as Directors. Their terms end today.

Elections – Robert Cosh, as immediate past president, is responsible for nominations of Board members and elections. He pointed out that Reid has completed his 2 year term and has accepted the nomination to renew for a second term. He asked if there was anyone in the audience who wished to run as President. There were none. **MOTION** (Robert Cosh/Derek Smith) that Reid be elected by acclamation as President for the 2017 to 2019 term. Robert advised everyone that as long as Reid is president, Robert will continue as immediate past president.

Robert listed the Directors who have completed a one year term and are willing to continue for their second term:

- Kyla Haley
- Cathy Kari
- Christine Kilburn
- Gail Read
- Derek Smith
- Michelle Soucy

He then listed the directors who have completed their 2 year term and are willing to continue for 2 more years:

- Dave Bell
- Barb Hicks
- Ian McDonald
- Wally Robins
- Anne Scotton

We have 2 openings for directors, and we have 2 individuals willing to fill those positions. Their bios are in your packages. Robert asked if there was anyone in the audience interested in becoming a Board member. There were none. **Motion** (Krista Hearty McLean/Chuck Shenkman) that David Bromley and Monika Siegmund Savage be new Directors by acclamation.

Lanark County Legacy Cottage Awards – Reid reminded those in attendance that the OLA supported the Lanark County Legacy Cottage initiative to recognize those who have had cottages in the same family for over 50 years. We are delighted that 30 owners applied in our 2 townships. From Tay Valley Township, Reeve Keith Kerr, Planner Noelle Reeve, Councillors Jean Dickinson and Greg Hallam were present. Keith presented the plaques for both townships with assistance from Noelle. Board member Anne Scotton called out the names of the recipients. She also advised those present that other owners could still apply until August 14th.

Water Quality – Reid thanked Murray Hunt – Lake Steward and Board member Derek Smith for all their work in this area. Water quality is the number one concern of the Board and our membership. Murray and Derek continue to build one of the largest water quality data sets of any lake in Eastern Ontario.

- Murray Hunt presented us with findings from the water quality sampling of Otty Lake. He recognized Richard and Jay Hendry for their assistance. The parameters he discussed were:

- Bacteria – 50 e-coli samples are collected per year. This is the “safe for swimming” indicator. The provincial swimming standard is less than 100 cfu/100 ml. We have only had one exceedance in 2016.
- Nutrient sampling – nutrients are essential to support a living lake; without nutrients, there would be no fish, an essential part of the food chain. Too many nutrients create algal blooms. It’s a balance. The OLA and RVCA measure phosphorous and nitrogen. According to MOECC, the provincial objective for phosphorous level is 20 micrograms/litre. On Otty we average 14.
- Water clarity.
- Dissolved oxygen/temperature profiles are done by RVCA. Dissolved oxygen is measured at the deep point in Otty and McLaren at 1 m intervals in depth. Dissolved oxygen and water temperatures at various depths support different species of fish.
- Calcium determines conditions which support zebra mussels. Unfortunately we have sufficient to support them.
- Lake water levels – were high on April 9 leading to large outflow in Jebbs Creek. They were also high mid May. Levels have also been increasing since the beginning of July. The levels are 30 cm higher than last year at this time of year and about 20 cm higher than the average over the last few decades.
- Jebbs Creek lake outflow – flow in Jebbs Creek combined with water levels tells us what’s happening to the water in the lake.
- Ice-in and ice-out dates – help us understand the lake.
- water temperature – helps us understand the lake.
- pH and conductivity are measured by RVCA

- Derek Smith – acknowledged Murray’s excellent work, his commitment, diligence, professionalism, personal contribution of funding for many years, since 2004. Because of his efforts, we have an excellent database.

The lake water is warm – 23 degrees today in the middle. Our lake is highly developed – over 400 homes. It is a mesotrophic lake – enriched by nutrients, phosphorous. It takes very little fertilizer to create algal growth. For 4 years, Derek has created the State of the Lake Report thanks to the work of about 12 people. It has been sent to other organizations. It will be created again in Oct. If anyone wants to assist, they are welcome. Or if anyone would like to make a cash contribution, we will take that too. Derek has a dream to have a meteorological station on the lake. Derek also wanted to thank Tommy – Derek is 70, Murray 74. Tommy represents the next generation – bravo!

Loon Survey – Reid discussed the map which Kyla updates related to loon sightings on the lake. There have been 13 sightings to date, including a nesting pair.

Gray Ratsnakes – Reid informed the audience that our Fish & Wildlife Enhancement Committee met this winter and came up with 4 recommendations for enhancement/conservation projects. One suggestion was to build ratsnake nests. Your Board decided we should first survey how many ratsnakes we have around the lake. When you see one, please take a photo, estimate size of snake and send an e-mail to wildlife@ottylakeassociation.ca.

To educate us today about the grey ratsnake, Reid introduced our guest Tobi Kieseewalter – Senior Natural Heritage Education Leader at Murphy's Point Provincial Park. His job is to encourage a connection between the natural resources of the park and its visitors. A large part of the job involves running the interpretive programs at the park. One of his mandates is education, and to pass on positive messaging about snakes. He is here today to convince us that they are nothing to worry about, and in fact they are something really unique, can be cute and special.

Tobi Kieseewalter thanked us for the opportunity to be with us today. For the last 21 years driving down ElmGrove Lake he has been thinking he would like to come talk to us, and now he has that opportunity. We're welcome to come to Murphy's Point, tour the mine, and take part in the educational programs. Every afternoon at 2 they bring out a snake.

Since the mid 1990's gray ratsnakes have been monitored in this area. Tobi shared the story of Steve the gray ratsnake with us – a snake who has been captured around their maintenance shed 9 times over the years. He convinced us that snakes do have their own personalities and that individuals can develop relationships with them.

Tobi informed us about the microchipping process employed with snakes in the Murphy's Point area. Microchipping only identifies the snakes when captured, but doesn't help to track the snakes' movements. Gray ratsnakes live up to 30 years. There was concern that the snakes might be stressed every time they are captured, so they hired an ecologist. She advised them that the data collected during capture is definitely valuable.

It was decided to implant transmitters the size of AA batteries with a long antenna into 6 snakes. This requires the snakes to be anaesthetized. Tobi recognized the Smiths Falls vet clinic for all their assistance with this process, and their generosity in volunteering their time and covering the cost (about \$2,000/snake). It is a delicate procedure. For example, it took Steve 2 hours to wake up. Someone was there with him the whole time, since you have to breathe for the snakes. Thanks to the transmitter, they were able to identify that Steve spent 60 of 70 days in the Park's maintenance building. The staff adopted Steve. Anyone can take part in the Adopt-a-snake program for \$35. Steve also spent time in a big pine tree, where the forest meets an open rocky clearing. This is edge habitat where snakes can bask in the sun, and find shade for protection and to cool down. They found Steve shared his hibernation site with another snake Tim. They entered their hibernation site in September. If their body temperature reaches zero they die. Steve was below the frost line.

The studies created maps of the 6 snake ranges.

Unfortunately Steve was hit by a truck in 2015 since he has to cross 2 roads to get to the maintenance building. People had gotten very attached to him and were saddened by this. The other 5 snakes have been recaptured, the transmitters removed, and are happily continuing.

Tobi wants to make sure gray ratsnakes don't become extinct. They are unique individuals. Reid thanked Tobi for taking the time to educate us and gave him an OLA cookbook.

Wildlife projects – Reid Introduced the members of the Fish and Wildlife Enhancement committee – Jennifer Lamoureux (RVCA)/Adrienne Lewis (RVCA)/Wally Robins/Chris Penney.

Other ideas for future projects were osprey nests, tree protection from beavers, wildflower planting for pollinators or bee houses. Reid thanked Derek Smith for donating a Bee House to the OLA. Tommy Ball drew the door prize for the bee house. Mark Semple was the winner.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat – Reid introduced **Jennifer Lamoureux** who is the Aquatic Fish Biologist with RVCA. She is a familiar face around the OLA. He thanked her and RVCA. Jennifer realized this is her 4th presentation. So many Otty Lake people have been engaged in the work around the lake. It all started with fish – projects every year from 2013 to 2016. We started with habitat for smallmouth bass and in 2016 we added largemouth bass. In 2015 and 2016 we built bird and bat boxes. Lots of folks took part.

Jennifer recognized our funding partners – OLA, RVCA, TD Friends of the Environment, Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program, EcoAction Program Environment Canada – and all the volunteer time. She thanked Richard and Jay Hendry for all their time. 253 bass nests have been installed, 133 cornerstones, 335 brush bundles, 1145 volunteer hours on fish. 17 wood duck, 15 swallow and 26 bat boxes have been built and installed. One bat box is definitely occupied. We also have wood duck boxes being used. It takes a couple of years for the boxes to become noticed and used.

Every spring monitoring of fish habitat is done – 2014 – 41% occupied, 2015 43%, 2016 55%, 2017 36%. This year they could not see beds due to depths and wave energy – in 2016 they couldn't see 48, in 2017 it was 131 primarily due to high water levels. She thinks 36% is conservative due to water levels.

Reid thanked Jennifer and gave her an OLA calendar.

Shoreline Planting – Reid reminded everyone that the OLA has sponsored annual shoreline planting. This year we offered 150 maple trees to residents around the lake – sold out. Thanks to everyone who participated.

Ontario lakes, Climate Change & an uncertain future - Reid introduced our guest speaker **Dr Shelley Ball**. Her bio is on your chair. She is a biologist, educator, photographer, environmental story teller. She has taken students on trips to places like Costa Rica, Utah and Colorado. She is the founder of Biosphere Environmental Education. In Dec 2016 she was one of 76 women who travelled to Antarctica on the Homeward Bound Women in Science Leadership Expedition, an initiative focused on elevating the role of women in science and increasing the influence of women on policy and decision making to build a sustainable future for our planet.

Dr Ball thanked us for the amazing opportunity of speaking to us. She has fond memories of life at the cottage since she grew up at her family's Buck Lake cottage. She appreciates the value of lake organizations and is blown away by what our lake association does. It's great that we are monitoring our lake. Climate change has a big impact on our lakes. ***The best way to predict the future is to create it – Abraham Lincoln.***

Dr Ball showed us a graph of CO2 concentration over the earth's history. CO2 levels have fluctuated, corresponding to glaciation. 280 parts per million was the highest. Now we are at over 440 parts per million. This increase has occurred in the past few hundred years, coinciding with the start of the industrial revolution.

Air temperature and precipitation directly impact our lakes and there is plenty of data about the physical, chemical, biological effects.

Shifts in hydrology, landscape weathering & erosion affect our watersheds. Drought or heavy rain years can upset the stability of the chemical and biological balance, soil properties and vegetation, thus indirectly affecting our lakes. We should keep our lake ecosystem in mind.

Due to greater ice free periods, lake thermal stratification lasts longer, so lower levels of water are less oxygenated for longer periods of time causing oxygen not to reach the bottom of lakes.

Impacts of Climate Change (CC)-

- increased primary productivity
- possibly increased eutrophication
- lack of mixing, effect on oxygen levels
- change in species (native species might disappear, invasive species move in)
- interactive effects with other human-induced stressors.

Impacts of CC on a broader Scale

- water as a commodity
- climate refugees
- food insecurity & inequality
- more extreme and variable weather
- loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services (functions and benefits we get from what nature does). Benefits of pollination is in hundreds of billions of dollars. Grocery store would be pretty sparse if we didn't have pollinators
- rising sea level – country in South Pacific has purchased land in Fiji to move their 10,000 people in next 10 years when the islands disappear.
- human health risks – ticks. Great condition here for ticks, they've moved north.
- quality of life – standard of life

What can we do about CC?

- Mitigation – stop it from happening **OR**
- Adaptation – it happens and we adapt to it

Shift to a low-carbon energy future

- production & use of fossil fuels accounts for 80% of Canada's Green House Gases (GHG)
- Canada has the 3rd highest per capita production of GHGs
- Only 6% of this energy use is explained by climate and geography. Other factors include our lifestyle and the fact that Canada produces energy – rich in natural resources, processing minerals, etc.

Is CC only doom and gloom? NO!!

- political issue
- look at science behind CC

Tackling CC

- Reduce energy consumption
- Increase energy efficiency; can reduce by 30% e.g. commercial transport, appliances
- Shift to low or no-carbon fuels. Eliminate coal and oil. Utilize the power of technology.
- shift to a low-carbon energy future (solar, wind, geothermal, tidal and wave, small modular nuclear, etc)
- major shifts in personal and long-haul commercial transportation(e.g. electric cars)
- greening heavy industry – they produce lots of GHG
- electrification of cities, implementation of smart grids, changes to energy governance. Energy governance is going to change – no more large power companies. Communities produce their own power.
- creation of green cities and green buildings
- carbon pricing – purpose is to move us off carbon based fuels. We don't like high taxes but if we benefit, i.e. we reduce the amount of carbon produced, then it's a good thing.
- educate about climate change, and change our behaviours.

There is zero evidence that our standard of living will decrease if we fight CC.

If we don't shift and adapt, our standard of living will definitely decrease.

The shift of sustainability – tiny behavioural changes will make a big difference

- drive less or drive cleaner
- use/consume less; use your super-powers as a consumer (it does matter!)
- adjust indoor heating & cooling
- save on your hydro bill, increase your energy efficiency
- wash laundry only in cold water
- buy locally, especially food
- recycle (even better, consume less)
- invest in/support/buy renewable energy. Invest in green bonds.

Think both locally and globally. What we do in Perth affects Antarctica. Antarctica is 15,000 km. away. Research stations there are watching the effects of climate change at 5 times the rate of the rest of the world.

Education – use science, not listening to politics. Learn a little bit and share it with our family and friends. Engage them and get them interested.

Dr Ball created Biosphere 8 years ago to inspire others to take action, to educate youth and adults to become environmental leaders toward sustainability. She hopes to connect people to nature and inspire them to care about it and to protect it.

Reid thanked Dr Ball and presented her with an OLA cookbook.

Door Prizes

Reid raffled off:

- a door prize from TVT – won by David Bromley
- OLA cookbook – Janet Coward
- OLA calendar – won by David Reesor
- Dr Ball's canvas print of Arctic poppy in Greenland – won by Barb Leduc

Q&A – Richard Hendry informed those present that Elsie Farmer, who is 100 and 7 months, was present. She lives on the lake year round.

Reid thanked all the presenters for making our AGM a success, and all for attending.

Adjournment – Reid adjourned the meeting at 4:20