

JUNE 2007



# Captain Otty's Log

Newsletter of the Otty Lake Association

President – David Reesor

Editor – Bob Melville

## OTTY LAKE “AFTER THE STORM”



*Photo by Bill Hale all rights reserved*

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*David Reesor*

#### **Reflections on Otty Lake**

My two year term as President of the OLA will come to an end at our AGM July 14<sup>th</sup>. Daphne and I have lived on Otty Lake for only four years but through my involvement with the OLA, I have met many of you who have lived on Otty for 20, 30, 40 years and more!! Of course some of you are new to the lake just like us.

Many of you have helped educate me concerning the history of Otty Lake (and the OLA) as well as the issues that surround Otty. There have been a few who have been negative and some who wish there wasn't an Otty Lake

Association. I appreciate and respect their opinions.

The vast majority of residents are supporters of measures to protect Otty Lake. We have all experienced Milfoil, Zebra Mussels and now the aggravations of Algae. I think they are major contributors to the interest that has been generated towards our “State of Otty Lake and its Watershed” report and the development of a Lake Management Plan (LMP) for Otty Lake. Over the past 2 years, more than 250 residents of Otty Lake have participated in this process.

**AGM Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup>  
Lion's Club Hall, Perth Fairgrounds**

**Displays 8:30 AM to 9:30AM  
Meeting 9:30AM to noon**

At our AGM, we will have copies of the Watershed Report. We will also have the Draft Recommendations for the LMP for review and discussion. Please come and participate and contribute to this process:

Our organization is fueled by the energy of volunteers. We have a Board of 15 Directors and we have 25 Counsellors who communicate and interact with Otty Lake residents.

Three of our Directors will not be continuing on after our AGM this year.

Bob Melville has been a Director and Editor of Captain Otty's Log for the past 2 years. As this edition will be Bob's last, I want to recognize how much we have appreciated his efforts and contributions. We have received so many positive comments about our newsletter.

Margaret Baxter has been a Director and Secretary of the OLA for the past two years. Margaret, thank you for your efforts and participation.

Jack Lynn will be retiring, as a Director, after our AGM. Jack was the person who got me involved with the OLA in 2003. I want to thank Jack for that as well as the contributions he has made to the OLA as Environmental Chair and OLA Director. We have always valued Jack's comments and opinions and we will continue to do so in the future.

Jack, along with Wally Robins, came up with the idea of a Kids Fishing Day for Otty Lake. We will be having our second event on August 25<sup>th</sup>, and Jack is keen to stay involved.

**At our AGM, July 14<sup>th</sup>, we will be having elections which will include filling these 3 Director positions. Please contact me as soon as possible if you are interested in being considered for any of these positions.**

This year was the last for one of our longest serving Counsellors, Herb Robertson. Herb won't admit to how many years he has been involved. We have always enjoyed Herb's dry humour and comments and Herb has kindly arranged to have his son Brian join us as his replacement. Thank you Herb!

I have enjoyed the questions, comments and phone calls that have been part of my time as President of the OLA. I look forward to many more years of working with Otty Lake residents and OLA Board members as together we continue the process of protecting the lake all of us care about so deeply.

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

David Reesor  
613-326-0094  
[davidanddaphnereesor@yahoo.ca](mailto:davidanddaphnereesor@yahoo.ca)

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## **WELCOME SUMMER VISITORS**

Summer is a time to welcome friends and family to the lake.

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## **Don't Invite Bears to your Home or Cottage**

*-from MNR Bear-Wise brochure*

Each summer there are reports of bears in the local area.

MNR has a number of helpful hints in how to avoid these unwanted visitors including:

- If you have garbage collection, put garbage out on the morning of garbage day, and not the night before
- Do not leave pet food outside
- Thoroughly clean outdoor barbecue grills after use
- Fill bird feeders only through the winter months
- Do not put meat, fish or sweet food (including fruit) in your composter
- Keep meat scraps in the freezer until garbage day
- Pick all ripe fruit off trees and remove vegetables and fallen fruit from the ground
- Use electric fencing to protect valuable trees, orchards, vegetable and berry patches.

In an immediate emergency involving a bear, call 911.

To report bear problems call: 1 866 514 – 2327

For more information about bears go to the MNR website at [bears.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://bears.mnr.gov.on.ca)

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## **BE SEPTIC SMART**

*From RVCA's May/June edition of their newsletter Around the Rideau*

Did you know that there are approximately one million septic systems in Ontario? Having a well maintained, properly functioning septic system is very important to rural landowners and Rideau cottagers. Systems need regular care and maintenance and should be pumped every 3-5 years. Spring is a perfect time to get a licensed contractor in to inspect and pump your septic system. Here are

some other good septic dos and don'ts to remember:

### **DO**

- familiarize yourself with the location of your system
- keep an "as built" system diagram in a safe place for reference
- divert surface water away from your leaching bed
- pump out your tank on a regular basis (3-5 years)
- repair leaky plumbing features
- conserve water to reduce the amount of wastewater that must be treated
- replace old toilets with low-flush models
- keep lint out of your septic system by cleaning the lint filter on your washing machine
- keep accurate records of septic system maintenance and service calls

### **DON'T**

- don't flush chemicals, cigarette butts or sanitary products
- don't use a garbage disposal/garburator
- don't plant trees or shrubs too close to the system or leaching bed
- don't use special additives that are touted to enhance the performance of your tank or system
- don't dig without knowing the location of your septic system
- don't drive over your tank or leaching bed
- don't enter a tank – gases and lack of oxygen can be fatal

- don't connect rain gutters, storm drains or allow surface water to drain into a sewage system
- don't leave interior faucets on
- to protect water lines during cold spells – insulate your faucets and plumbing

For further reading about septic system maintenance, check out the article ***It's A Dirty Job But Somebody's Going To Do It*** in the June 2007 Cottage Life magazine. If you don't have access to a paper copy of the magazine, you can check it out on the Cottage Life website at [http://www.cottagelife.com/index.cfm/ci\\_id/1293/la\\_id/1.htm](http://www.cottagelife.com/index.cfm/ci_id/1293/la_id/1.htm)

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## **Summer Building Projects?**

*By Bill Hale – OLA Land Use Committee*

Planning some projects at the lake this summer? Here are some sources for information that can make your planning easier.

If you are landscaping, consult the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority – they have information on Preserving and Restoring Natural Shorelines – this is available from the RVCA website: [http://www.lrconline.com/Extension\\_Notes\\_English/water/water\\_index.html](http://www.lrconline.com/Extension_Notes_English/water/water_index.html) or you can call the Landowner Resource Centre and ask for publications in Ottawa area at (613) 692-2390 or outside the Ottawa area 1-888-571-4636. The information available can help you to create a landscaping plan that will help to improve the water quality and fish habitat of Otty Lake. Naturalize your shoreline by planting some native

species, ground cover and other things. What can you do to enhance your shoreline? You can reduce your maintenance by planting natural vegetation between your main building and the lake with native groundcover and trees. Not only will this natural area look better it will require less maintenance than a lawn and will provide a buffer or natural filter for runoff that will reduce the nutrients getting into the lake. High nutrient levels contribute to the formation of algae blooms in the lake. Nitrogen and phosphorus are the key nutrients and they come primarily from fertilizers, detergents and septic systems.

If your septic system or well needs repairs you may qualify for grant assistance to help finance the project(s). Contact the LandOwner Resource Centre 613-692-2390 or 1-800-387-5304 or [http://www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/rcwp/rvca\\_rcwp.html](http://www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/rcwp/rvca_rcwp.html).

If you're planning on investing in some upgrades inside your home or cottage think about the fixtures and appliances that use water. Fix water leaks, minimize watering outside by planting drought resistant plants, collect and use rainwater where possible. Low flow showerheads, faucet aerators, low-flow toilets as well as new dishwashers and front loading washing machines can all have an impact on the amount of water that you need to pump and the water that your septic system needs to process. Not only do front loading washing machines use less water they also require less detergents and use less energy. Consider reviewing the types of soaps and detergents that you use - non-toxic, biodegradable and phosphate free have a lower impact on the lake. Come to the

Annual General Meeting and get some information on products that really work.

Building renovations or additions may require permits and there are several resources that can be consulted with. At the initial stages if you have not already done so you will want to familiarize with your Township By-Laws to see what requirements you will need to meet or seek relief from. Both Drummond North Elmsley and Tay Valley Township have great websites <http://www.drummondnorthelmsley.com> and <http://www.tayvalleytwp.ca/> If you reside in DNE look for the Services – Building Department section and in TVT the planning and development tab. Depending on what you are planning you may have to have a septic inspection and/or review by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Here are the Township contacts:

**The Township of Drummond/North Elmsley**

Ray Scissons - Building Official  
E-mail: rays@drummondnorthelmsley.com  
Tel.: (613) 267-6500  
310 Port Elmsley Road  
R.R.#5  
Perth, ON K7H 3C7

**Tay Valley Township**

David Sutherland Chief Building Official,  
E-mail: building@tayvalleytwp.ca  
Tel: 613-267-5353 Ext 24  
217 Harper Road  
RR 4  
Perth, ON K7H 3C6

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**A Lake Management Plan for Otty Lake**

*By Karen Hunt*

**Are we there yet?**

The short answer is not quite – but we're getting close.

The longer answer is that the first of our two planning documents have been completed and is now available to the community as *The Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed*. You can find it on the RVCA website at [www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/LMP\\_Program/otty\\_lake.html](http://www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/LMP_Program/otty_lake.html) . There is also a direct link from the Lake Management Page on the OLA website ([www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org)) to the RVCA site.

The intent of *the Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed* is to provide a summary of what is currently known about the Otty Lake Watershed and how that information relates to the issues that are important to the Otty Lake community. This information will be used to make recommendations about land use policy and stewardship action to ensure the long-term health of Otty Lake. These recommendations will be contained in a second document, the *Otty Lake Management Plan*.

We have CDs as well as a limited number of paper copies of the *Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed*. If you would like to have a CD or paper copy of the Report, please contact:

Karen Hunt at [mkhunt@ripnet.com](mailto:mkhunt@ripnet.com)  
613-264-9273 or  
David Reesor at [davidanddaphnereesor@yahoo.ca](mailto:davidanddaphnereesor@yahoo.ca) 613-326-0094 and we will set aside a copy for you.

The draft recommendations for the *Otty Lake Management Plan* are currently being prepared by the Otty Lake Management Committee based on the feedback we have received from the Otty Lake community and the community partners. The recommendations will provide specific, measurable and achievable strategies to address each of the issues of concern as identified by the Otty Lake community. The community and community partners will be invited to review and discuss the draft recommendations before the final Lake Management Plan is prepared. Further information about the Otty Lake Management planning process can be viewed at [www.ottylake.org](http://www.ottylake.org).

Release of the draft recommendations for the Otty Lake Management Plan is targeted for the OLA AGM on July 14. A highlights presentation as well as copies of the draft recommendations will be available.

At the AGM, we will look for members of the community who are interested in participating in working groups to begin to review the draft recommendations and help us identify appropriate action strategies to carry out those recommendations.

During the summer or early fall we will set up meetings with the Townships of Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley and the other community partners to provide an opportunity for them to provide input on the draft recommendations. By the end of the year we hope to have the Otty Lake Management Plan and its recommendations finalized and have begun to work on the implementation of

some of the recommended action strategies.

### **Work to look after the lake is ongoing now!**

In the feedback we received from the draft Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed circulation, you told us that it was important to provide opportunities for community education.

Hopefully many of you were able to attend the **Native Plantings for Shoreline Protection** workshop on Saturday, June 23/07 at the TVT Municipal Bldg. on Harper Rd. This was an opportunity made available through the **2007 FOCA Docktalk program**

**This same Docktalk program is offering free confidential site visits** for a limited number of Lake property owners. See information elsewhere in the newsletter and register soon!

One of the questions that came out of our work on the State of the Lake Report was concerning the **streams entering Otty**. In order to clarify this information an **Otty Lake Stream Survey** was done early in June and will be repeated in August to more accurately identify the permanent and intermittent streams entering Otty Lake.

At the Lake Management Planning Community Meetings held earlier this year there was a strong feeling expressed that we needed to **involve young people in learning more about Otty Lake and how to care for the long term health of the lake**. At the beginning of June we were pleased to welcome Krista Hearty's Grade 10 Ecology Class from PDCI to Otty Lake to sample for the bugs that

live near the shore as a means of learning more about lake water quality. They also collected aquatic plant samples to create identification keys that can be used during the aquatic vegetation survey.

This summer we are fortunate to have the Lanark County Stewardship Rangers returning to Otty Lake to complete work **on an Aquatic Vegetation Survey** for the lake. We will be able to use this information to compare to a survey done some years ago to help us understand more about changes that have occurred.

We welcome the Otty Lake community's participation in the many aspects of the work to understand more about Otty Lake and how we can ensure its long-term sustainability.

For any questions about the Otty Lake Management Planning process – please contact Karen Hunt, Chair, Otty Lake Management Planning Committee at 613(264-9273) or [mkhunt@ripnet.com](mailto:mkhunt@ripnet.com)



*Picture by Krista Johnston*

**PDCI** students skim the bottom of Otty Lake for invertebrates as part of their grade 10 science class. Students learned to identify the samples they collected and about the importance of keeping a lake's shoreline in its natural state. Pictured are Katie McCreight, Quintin Smith, Liam Ryan and Cody Dunham

## **FISH FACTS**

*By Wally Robins*

For those of you who have attended Annual General Meetings over the past few years, you'll know me as the presenter of the Fish Report. The purpose of this article is to overview of two important topics, the health of Otty's fishery and its relationship the overall health of the lake itself and the importance of introducing kids to the joys of casting a line and wetting a hook.

First, I suggest that you read the State of the Watershed Report prepared by Otty's Lake Management Planning Committee led by Karen Hunt. As well as discovering all sorts of interesting facts about the lake we all love, there's a component specific to the fish populations that reside in Otty. (No, there are no maps with "secret spots" contained in the Report.)

My initial message to everyone is this. Even though the bass and panfish populations are in very good shape, and the pike fishery is making slow but steady progress on a long road to recovery, none of us can take for granted that the future of Otty's fishery is guaranteed. Otty is a small ecosystem and, as such, is extremely fragile. It is incumbent on each of us, whether we fish or not, to protect this element of Otty. The health of predator fish like bass and pike is a critical indicator of the overall health of any water system. Over-harvesting of large fish, pollution, and shoreline development that impacts spawning habitat are all within our individual and collective control. Please practice and promote responsible stewardship of this precious resource.

Part of good stewardship and responsible living is building a legacy for the future. As we all know, the future will ultimately rest in the hands of our sons, daughters, grandsons and granddaughters. While not every kid is going to become a fishing fanatic, it's important to introduce children to what the sport has to offer and to what it can teach us. Patience, an appreciation for the natural world, perseverance, and fun are all by-products of spending time with rod and reel in hand. All of these skills are directly transferable to many if not most other domains of life.

On August 25<sup>th</sup>, the Otty Lake Association will hold the second annual Kids' Fishing Derby where FUN is the one and only objective. You'll hear more about this event at the Annual General Meeting. And, of course, if you see me on the water, flag me down and I'll be pleased to fill you in on the Derby. We will also post a notice on our web site.

All my best wishes for a wonderful and safe summer. Please practice catch and release of large fish (bass over 2 pounds) while keeping a few smaller specimens for the frying pan.

WALLY

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## **Water Quality at Otty Lake**

*Murray Hunt*

This year we will again be conducting an extensive program of water quality testing at Otty and McLaren Lakes. If you notice a 14 foot aluminum boat loaded with odd looking gear (and people), stopping near the shoreline and the centre of the lake, it may be OLA volunteers carrying out water quality sampling.

### *E.Coli Monitoring*

Thirty E.Coli. samples will be taken this year to obtain a general understanding of bacterial levels at Otty and McLaren. The E.Coli. values sampled in early June were very low with two somewhat elevated values of 29 and 11 cts/100 mL. These results are well within the norm (100 cts/100 mL) that indicates, on a general basis, that the lake water is safe for swimming and limited household use. However, drinking untreated lake water is not recommended. A complete summary of the 2006 water quality results can be found on the Otty Lake Association's website at <http://www.ottylake.org>

### *Nutrient Loading*

We are continuing our participation with the Lake Partners Program of the Ministry of the Environment estimating nutrient levels in the lake by taking phosphorous samples and measuring water clarity, each month from May to October. Last year the average value of Total Phosphorous at Otty was 13 µg/L through the Lake Partners Program. This indicates that Otty Lake is in a mesotrophic (middle aged) state (10 – 20 µg/L). See the OLA website for historical data.

### *Follow-up to the RVCA Watershed Watch Program*

OLA volunteers will be assisting the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) again this year as they collect samples and conduct measurements of water quality to update their 2002 Watershed Watch program. Phosphorous and nitrogen levels will be sampled at the mid-point of Otty and McLaren as well as at four shallow water sites in Otty, near in-flow streams and the out-flow stream (Jebbs).

Dissolved oxygen/temperature profiles will be measured at the deep points of the lakes. The latter is useful to determine the impact on fish habitat.

#### *Other Programs*

OLA volunteers will again assist the RVCA in invasive species monitoring. Although zebra mussels are already present in Otty, this program is useful to monitor for the possible introduction of other invasive species such as the spiny water flea.

We will also assist the RVCA in their benthic invertebrate monitoring program. This “bug monitoring” can be used as an indicator of lake health as different species of aquatic insects and shellfish have varying tolerance to degraded water quality. The presence and abundance of these different species found near the lake bottom and close to shore, is one measure of the health of a lake.

#### *Additional Information*

For a broader review of historical Otty Lake water quality information, you can access the recently released, **Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed**, at [http://www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/LMP\\_Program/otty\\_lake.html](http://www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/LMP_Program/otty_lake.html)

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#### **TVT MINING CONCERNS COMMITTEE FORMED**

As a continuation of its efforts to change the Mining Act, and in recognition of the ongoing importance of the issues to property owners, the environment and the municipality, Tay Valley Township recently formed a Mining Concerns Committee. Members include Reeve Keith Kerr, Mark Burnham (Chair Mississippi Valley Conservation),

Maureen Towajj (Long Lake), Wendy Hassard (Otty Lake), and Warren Chafe (Black Lake). This committee provides research and input to Council and is active on several current initiatives. If Otty Lake property owners have mining questions or concerns please contact Wendy Hassard at 613 267-5002. Otty Lake has a number of Surface Rights Only properties and is vulnerable to the provisions of the current Mining Act.

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#### **Some spaces still available for Otty Lake Docktalk site visits!**

Barbara King is available to provide a limited number of confidential, non-regulatory landowner site visits on Otty Lake this summer! She will be at the AGM on July 14 to talk about the Docktalk Program and will be booking site visits for August.

Each visit will provide a confidential, one-on-one discussion with advice on water protection issues and solutions that are specific to each landowner's individual property needs. Each landowner will receive an information kit of resource materials and give-aways that include a sample of environmentally friendly soap, native wildflower seeds and/or a FOCA drinking water bottle in a re-useable cloth bag.

The site visits are intended to provide pertinent information on:

- Septic system maintenance
- Wildlife habitat enhancement
- Pollution prevention
- Shoreline naturalization
- Threats from invasive species
- Erosion control and prevention

There is no cost for participating in a Docktalk visit. To book a visit or to find out more about this opportunity, contact Barbara King at:

Home office (613) 273 -8174

E-mail docktalk@foca.on.ca

Website www.foca.on.ca

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### **2007 Pitch –In Campaign**

Congratulations and sincere thanks for the great stewardship effort by many Otty Lake residents during this year's Pitch –In Campaign.

There was participation by residents in many areas of our lake community e.g. Otty Lake North Shore organized through Maple Glen and Burgesswood under Fred Lepine and Tricia Klymko conducted two separate clean-up drives, one with 12 people and a second with 14, collecting a total of 14 trailer loads of debris – they not only cleaned along the Otty Lake North Shore, Otty Lake Side Road, but on their second effort tackled Wildlife Road as well! David and Liz Allcock organized the clean-up along Mile Point Road and Healey Drive area. The clean-up along Rideau Ferry Road from Kerr Road to Elm Grove Road and along Lakewood Lane and Echo Bay Drive was organized by Tressa Oliver. Their group had 4 adults and 5 children and collected 17 bags of garbage! Jack Lynn and David Reesor worked along Three Bay Rd. and the Otty Lake South West Shore Road clean-up was organized by Barb and Gerry Leduc.

Well done everyone!

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### **News From Tay Valley Township**

*Brian Campbell*

***Septic Reinspection Program*** - As part of our budget process we have doubled the number of septic reinspections to be done from 100 to 200 per. year in the municipality.

***Official Plan*** - Council recently did a 5yr review of our official plan as mandated by the gov,t. After two public meetings as well as input from various agencies our planner has reviewed our amendments and forwarded them to the Min. of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval. The next step in the process is the review of our Zoning Bylaws. For info please go to the township web site or contact our planner Mr. Steve Kentz who is in the office each Tuesday.

***Drummond North Elmsley Tay Valley Fire Rescue*** - As a result of the fire service review this is the name of the new fire dept in the two townships. The BBD&E station is in Perth and the South Sherbrooke station is in Maberly. Please remember you do need a burn permit for all open air burning and they are available by calling the BBD&E station at 613-267-2596 or the township offices.

***Native Garden*** - Together with the RVCA the township has planted a native garden at the municipal office. Anyone considering any shoreline planting should visit the site to get examples of various types of plants that are recommended for the shoreline or contact the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Be sure to visit our web site for any township news or information you may require: [www.tayvalleytwp.ca](http://www.tayvalleytwp.ca)  
Brian Campbell  
Councillor (North Burgess Ward)  
Tay Valley Township.