

June 2012



Captain Otty's Log

Coordinators: Don and Shari Beattie

Distribution: Dick Atkinson, Robert Cosh, Rick Stojak

President's Message

By Robert Cosh,
President OLA

A warm Summer "Hello!" to you all. And to all you cottagers, Welcome Back to the Lake!

OLA Board members and volunteers have continued to work on your behalf attending township council meetings, the Lake Networking Group, Friends of the Tay Watershed, local conservation authorities, the Provincial Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Natural Resources, and participating in various committees. If you have some spare time and are interested in getting involved, send us an email and let us know.

You will have recently received a Summer Information Package. Thanks to the family of Joanne Oatway for making available donations made in her memory, which have funded the printing of the "Solutions for Shoreline Erosion" booklet. The Information Package contains lots of other useful reading material. In particular, note the important updates on ticks and Lyme Disease.

We have several activities planned for 2012. Look for information elsewhere in this newsletter and in future notices concerning the Shoreline Planting Program, a BioBlitz, and many other activities. Again this year we are planning a mid-Summer picnic at Maple Glen, under the heading of "Capt'n Otty Day", with lots of fun for all ages, including a flotilla, games, a nature walk, and BBQ.

In this issue we welcome Derek Smith as a contributor to Captain Otty's Log, with an in-depth article about drinking water and wells. Derek is an environmental geologist



Photo: Rick Stojak

with 41 years of experience in potable water supply, water contamination, solid waste management and related environmental issues. He has carried out consulting assignments in 23 countries. Derek and his wife, Evelyn, moved to Otty Lake last October. He has a keen interest in the limnology of Otty Lake and is a member of the OLA Environment Committee.

Residents continue to tell us that the health of Otty Lake is a high priority. You will be happy to hear that since the last issue of Capt'n Otty's Log, both Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley Townships have implemented mandatory septic re-inspection programs. Besides ensuring a properly functioning septic system, it is recommended that we maintain a vegetated shoreline buffer, to help absorb nutrients which would otherwise end up in the lake as food for algae and Eurasian milfoil. Perhaps if we all exercise due diligence and follow recommended practices, we may help lower nutrient levels in the lake, which in turn may help reduce aquatic vegetation, and enhance the appearance, enjoyment and value of our waterfront properties.

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Notes and Comment

Departed Friends

Two individuals who have, in recent years, worked closely with the OLA Board have passed away.

Ralph Buttrum, who handled layout for Captain Otty's Log for more than five years, passed away from cancer in May at age 68. Ralph was a Renaissance man who, after retirement from Bell Canada, started a new business in photography, video, and layout. He was accurate, fast, and a delight to work with, and the Log benefited from the expertise that he volunteered, his creativity, and his sense of humour.

Joanne Oatway, who was a member of the OLA Board, a valued teacher and community volunteer and a lifelong summer resident of Otty Lake, passed away from cancer in March at age 47. Joanne was a passionate defender of Otty Lake, and inspired the first Pirate Day event. Her kindness and style made her a wide circle of friends, including those who made donations in her memory to the OLA.

Volunteers Needed To Help With Capt'n Otty Day, Saturday 4 August

Chris Harrison is gathering a crew to put together our annual OLA summer event. This year the theme is Capt'n Otty, and includes lots of events for kids, and a flotilla reviewed by none other than Capt'n Otty himself! Volunteers who helped with our previous summer events (the unforgettable Pirate Days) had just as much fun as the kids, so if you can help, please contact Chris at (613)264-1163 [cottage] or (613)258-4598 [home] or chrisc@ripnet.com.

How About Those Colour Photos in the Log!

You can choose to receive the Log either by Canada Post in hard copy, or electronically. Many people like to have the traditional hard copy in their hands, and our readers tell us that often their hard copies are circulated to family and friends.

If you choose the electronic route, you receive each copy by e-mail, and of course, all issues of the Log can be downloaded anytime from the OLA website www.ottylakeassociation.ca. The electronic version gives a different reading experience from the hard copy.

President's Message continued from P.1

We are still accepting submissions for our next calendar, so send us photos of wildlife and human activities on and around the lake. Also, historical photos with captions or a write up are a welcome addition to the web site.

If you have any suggestions or comments on OLA plans, activities or priorities, visit our web site at <http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca/>, click on "contact us", and email us your thoughts. You can direct your email to a particular Board member or to the Board in general.

Thanks to those of who paid your 2012 dues before 1 April, and received a \$5 discount. If you haven't paid yet, please support the work of the OLA by sending your cheque for \$20 to:

Otty Lake Association
Box 20122, Perth Mews Mall
Perth, ON K7H 3M6

Many readers are interested in the photos that accompany articles, but in the print version sent by Canada Post, the photos are black-&-white, and too small to examine closely. We are now publishing the electronic version with higher-resolution colour photos, which can be expanded in your browser so you can get a closer look at the beauties of Otty Lake.

Local Winners of Tri-Valley Conservation Awards

On 18 April the Rideau Valley, Mississippi Valley, and South Nation River conservation authorities chose the winners of winners of the 2011 Tri-Valley Conservation Awards. The awards recognize outstanding voluntary contributions to conservation and environmental health in the three watersheds. This year, finalists in eight categories were involved in projects that included tree planting, water quality protection, shoreline stewardship, conservation education and advocacy, land naturalization and other restorative environmental activities.

The first-place winners in the Municipalities category and Community Groups category were Tay Valley Township and Friends of the Tay Watershed. "There are so many daily conservation activities and practices going on that it is hard to keep track of them all" said Mark Burnham, Mississippi Valley Conservation Foundation Chair and Tay Valley Township Councillor. "The goal here is to shine a light and bring some recognition to the people who are out there doing the right thing all the time. They are real conservation heroes and role models for us all." Congratulations to our local winners!

Hazardous Waste Disposal

You may have been collecting hazardous waste such as paint, oil, solvents, batteries, or fire extinguishers until you can make a trip to a hazardous waste disposal site. For Tay Valley Township residents, the hazardous waste dump is in Middleville, north on Highway 511 from Perth. The dump is open between Victoria Day and Thanksgiving, three days per week. Directions and hours are at <http://tayvalleytwp.ca>, under Resident Services. For Drummond/North Elmsley Township, please see <http://www.drummondnorthelmsley.com> under Waste Management, where you will find disposal instructions for categories of hazardous waste, including fluorescent light bulbs.

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Burning Permits and Fire Bans

In dry periods, if you burn brush or use an incinerator, you might accidentally cause a fire that could destroy homes, trees, and vegetation. The danger is not new: in some areas of Otty Lake, if you dig below the ground surface you can find a black layer left by a forest fire that swept over your land years ago. Both Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley townships issue fire permits that you must obtain before any open-air burning. You can get the permit at either township office or at the fire hall on Sherbrooke St. in Perth. The permits do not lapse, but you must call the fire hall (613-267-2596) every time you plan to burn. If a fire breaks out and you do not have a valid permit you can be held responsible to pay costs incurred by the municipality.

A New Article About Otty History

Anna McLaren was a pioneer at Otty Lake, living in the woods for more than 50 years in the area that is now BurgessWood. A photostory of Anna's life will be posted on the OLA website www.ottylakeassociation.ca. Here is a sample from the story:

"Our story of Anna McLaren opens in the winter of 1937, when a teenager named Grover Lightford, who later bought Mrs. McLaren's land beside Otty Lake to form the BurgessWood subdivision, saw Mrs. McLaren pass his family's cottage on the north shore of Otty Lake. She was a woman of 53 years of age, driving a horse and cutter through the snow. Grover recalls that she was wearing a beaver coat and hat, and was wrapped in a buffalo robe. Grover never forgot his first sight of this remarkable woman, who lived a solitary life in the woods.

So who was Anna McLaren and how did she come to be living at Otty Lake when there were few cottages and no permanent homes on Otty's north shore?"

The article will be posted on 29 June - click on Otty Archives to read it.

Supply limited! - 2012 Shoreline Naturalization Project - Order your plants now!!!

You can help protect the health of Otty Lake! Natural, well-vegetated shorelines are one of the best defences in protecting water quality!

Plant sale facts to know

- Variety of species available but supply of plants is limited – first come, first served
- Plants are all in 1 gallon pots
- Limit of 10 plants per order
- Cost to Otty Lake residents is only \$5.00 per pot (OLA will cover the remaining \$5.00 per pot)
- Pick up day will be Saturday, July 7 at 10 a.m.

Check out the list of shoreline plants below and order yours today!

- Nannyberry
- Red Osier Dogwood
- Gray Dogwood
- Pussy Willow
- Sweet Gale

To order, please contact Karen at mkhunt@ripnet.com or 613 264-9273

OLA Cooking Corner

Rick Stojak, Webmaster extraordinaire, is compiling an Otty Lake recipe book. He has asked that members send him any recipes they can find for preparing zebra mussels. While you're at it, perhaps you could include any good recipes for Eurasian milfoil salad.

Capt'n Otty Day

The OLA's Summer Family Event

Saturday 4 August 10:00 a.m. to approx. 4:00 p.m.

Maple Glen's recreation area

Morning: Events for Your Family

Obstacle course for youngsters

Three-legged races – not just for kids!

Sack races for all ages

Fishing derby: rods & reels supplied by "Big Jim", supervision by our Fishing Expert Wally Robins

Lunch: Burgers, hot dogs, soft drinks, water supplied by OLA

1:00 Flotilla review by Capt'n Otty

Decorate your boat or any floating device! Water cannons welcome! Prize categories (donated by local retail businesses):

- the good
- the bad
- the ugly

3:00 Presentations for All Events

More information? Please contact
Chris Harrison 264-1163 or Darlene Bishop 267-1494



The Otty Lake Association

Invites you to participate in the

2nd Otty Lake BioBlitz

July 17th to July 18th



The Otty Lake Association in partnership with the Community Stewardship Council of Lanark County, Centre for Sustainable Watersheds, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and Scouts Canada is looking for volunteers and participants for the second Otty Lake BioBlitz. Learn and have fun doing it! Come join “experts” and community members to identify as many species of plants and animals as possible in a 24 hour period!



JOIN US: Come participate and learn about the amazing biodiversity right in our own backyard! Expert guided hikes will be offered Tuesday afternoon and evening and Wednesday a.m. Closing BBQ and a final species tally celebration will be held Wednesday afternoon at 1 p.m.



LOCATION: The southwest corner of Otty Lake in Tay Valley Township south of Perth, site of Scouts Canada’s Camp Whispering Pines and the adjacent Mica Mines Conservation Area. This approximately 150 Acre property offers a unique range of habitat including aquatic habitat on Otty Lake, open field, wetland, lowland and upland forest.

WHEN: 1 pm Tuesday July 17th to 1 pm Wednesday July 18th

ACCOMODATION: Overnight camping is available on site. Alternate accommodations are available in Perth Ontario.

DIRECTIONS: (From Perth) Take Rideau Ferry Rd South. Turn right on Elm Grove Rd. right on Long Lake Road and right into Whispering Pines Scout Camp. Parking is available on-site. N44 48.1966' W76 13.9448'



PLEASE BRING: Hiking boots, long pants (black-legged ticks have been found in this area), sunscreen, hat, bug spray, snacks, binoculars. GPS and ID books if you have them.

Admission is FREE!

This event is rain or shine, so be sure to dress appropriately!

For more information or to pre-register contact
Karen
(613) 264- 9273
mkhunt@ripnet.com



2012 Pitch-In Program

By Karen Hunt

Did you notice the spring cleaning that took place along Otty Lake roadsides and shorelines? Many bags and trailer loads of debris were delivered to the townships' landfill sites. Members of the Otty Lake community from all around the lake were out picking up litter and other refuse and making the Otty Lake watershed a cleaner, healthier environment.



Murray & Karen Hunt's grandchildren filling bags with enthusiasm. Photo: Karen Hunt



Eric Hansen with championship Pitch-in collection. Photo: D&E Alock

Members of the Scouts Canada 1st Elmsley Group and the Townships of Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley partnered with the Otty Lake community in this year's cleanup campaign. Sincere thanks to all who were involved in the 2012 Pitch-In.

Thanks To Dick Atkinson

In the annals of the OLA, Dick Atkinson's name has been known since he joined the association about 1982. He has served as a Counsellor, Coordinator of Counsellors, and President.

Dick is best known for his 21 years of work on the mailing list. In 1991, Dick converted the OLA records from a labour-intensive manual system to a computer based system, which simplified newsletter mailing, printing labels, and keeping track of changes in resident data. Dick has continuously modernized the system as requirements changed, e.g., the advent of e-mail.

Dick has decided to retire, and says that he has enjoyed what he has been doing for the OLA, the Board and the counsellors, likening the job to having 400 acquaintances and 40 close friends. He has exemplified the best in volunteerism, working quietly in the background and providing consistency over many years of service.

Thanks, Dick!

Be Septic Savvy a Free Workshop

Saturday August 18
8:30 am - noon

Learn how your septic system works & how to avoid costly repairs

See displays of alternative septic systems

Learn about voluntary & mandatory septic inspections

Presentations:

- Why we care & what's being done: a provincial perspective
- What we've done & what we've learned: a local perspective
- One township's perspective
- Walk through a septic inspection with a septic inspector
- If I need a new septic system, what are my options?

Perth Lions Hall
Halton St., Perth

For more information, contact Allison Playfair at:
aplayfair@mvc.on.ca or 613-259-2421

A Note About Your Drinking Water and Your Well

By Derek Smith, Hydrogeologist
Member, Environment Committee

My well is not a well, it is a 25 metre deep hole in the ground with a piece of a loose piece of steel casing stuck in the rock at the ground surface.

A well is something that is designed and constructed based on geological knowledge. A well has two purposes; a) it should provide adequate quantities of groundwater to the user for a long period and b) it should be sealed in such a way that the groundwater you drink can never become contaminated from surface sources. My well was not sealed when it was drilled. The sealing procedure is called "grouting" and is usually done using cement. The procedure involves drilling a 20cm diameter hole to a depth of at least 6 metres (or deeper depending on how fractured the upper layers of the bedrock is and the depth of soil overburden), inserting 15 cm steel casing and filling the annular space around the casing with cement. The Portland cement needs at least 24 hours to harden, and the well can then be extended below the casing until an aquifer is penetrated and an adequate supply of groundwater is obtained.

So why don't well drillers grout their wells? Because they get paid by the "foot of well depth", and waiting a day for cement to set up ties up their equipment and is not profitable. Speed makes money, but it also makes poorly constructed wells. So my well was drilled in 1983 by a local company and was not cement grouted. I suspect that most of the wells around Otty lake have the same problem. Why is this important to understand that your well is not properly sealed? Because any chemical substance you use around your home and garage has the potential to enter your well through near surface bedrock fractures and contaminate your drinking water supply. These chemicals include: garden and lawn fertilizers, septic tank effluents, pesticides and herbicides, paints and solvents, oils and gasoline.

Let's take gasoline as an example. Say you spill a few gallons of gas by accident when you fill your lawnmower. The split gasoline will move downward through the thin and permeable soils which typify the Otty area and will move downward into rock fracture and into the water table. Gas components float and some of them dissolve in water, and if they enter your well they will contaminate your pump, your pressure tank, and your house plumbing. Most people can smell gasoline in drinking water at a level of 0.25 parts per million. That is 250 parts per billion, a very small concentration, but this is enough to make your drinking water non potable and reduce your property value significantly.

The same process can happen for any chemical such as a lawn fertilizer that you use near your wellhead. And remember that the chemicals you use on your property can eventually be discharged to the lake, as I explained in my last article. Please look at any chemical substance you intend to use on your property and ask yourself these questions. Am I close to my well? Do I want to drink any of this chemical and do I want to add any of this to Otty Lake?

Domestic Heating Oil Spills

Many Otty Lake owners heat their homes and cottages with oil furnaces. Because the furnaces are reliable, homeowners may forget about them, and in particular, may forget the danger of oil leaks from their tanks. Oil leaks can cause obvious problems such as bad smells, and damage to vegetation and building structures. But the most dangerous result of an oil leak is its effect on well water.

Most homeowners on Otty Lake draw their water from wells, so the environmental damage caused by an oil leak can be catastrophic. The oil can percolate through the soil and fractured rock, contaminating your well and your neighbours' wells, and the aquifer that supplies the wells in your area.

To ensure that your tank is unlikely to leak, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) suggests that you have it inspected yearly by a registered contractor, your oil furnace maintainer, or your oil supplier. MOE also suggests that any underground tanks be replaced with above-ground tanks so problems can be seen before environmental damage occurs.

If you have an oil spill or leak, please contact:

Spills Action Centre
Ministry of the Environment
1-800-268-6060 (24-hour).

The Spills Action Centre can also give advice on cleanup procedures.

More information on what you can do to prevent spills in the first place is at

http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/stdprodconsume/groups/lr/@ene/@resources/documents/resource/std01_079367.pdf

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Perth Lions Club, at Perth fairgrounds

Saturday 14 July 2012

8:30 Coffee, displays, and meeting friends and municipal representatives

9:30 Business meeting

Openings exist for positions on the Board of Directors. If you are interested in running for a position, please contact Karen Hunt, Past President (mkhunt@ripnet.com or 613-264-9273).

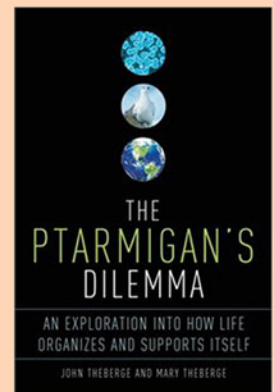
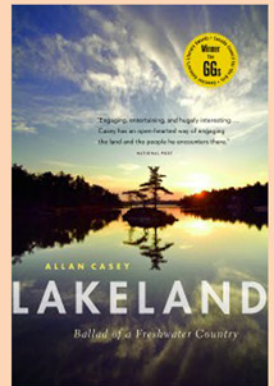
The Reader's Corner

This issue's Reader's Corner includes two non-fiction books suggested by OLA members.

Lakeland: Ballad of a Freshwater Country, by Allan Casey, Graystone Books co-published with the David Suzuki Foundation, winner of the 2010 Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction. "In this wry, sensual, and entertaining journey into the greatest lake country on earth, Allan Casey encounters cottagers, boat captains, marathon swimmers, Aboriginal fishery managers, hermits, and tourists. Through his sharply drawn characters, lively storytelling, and intimate evocation of wild beauty, he celebrates the rich culture and unsung splendor of Canada's lakeland."

The Ptarmigan's Dilemma: An Exploration into How Life Organizes Itself and Supports Itself, by John Theberge and Mary Theberge, McLelland and Stewart, winner of the 2010 Lane Anderson Award. "Drawing on breakthrough research in evolution, genetics, and on their extensive work in the field and lab, wildlife biologists John and Mary Theberge explain for non-scientists the real facts of life. Birds that suddenly grow gall bladders, when their species has none. Moose with antlers so big they encumber their movement through the forest. Butterflies that risk extinction by overwintering en masse. These are just a few stories the Theberges tell in their examination of what the mechanisms of evolution are and how they work. With examples from the very latest discoveries in genetics and ones they have made in their own field work, The Ptarmigan's Dilemma is a ground-breaking explanation of evolution for non-scientists."

Do you have a favourite book for reading at the lake? If so, please let Don Beattie (indigocomms@gmail.com) know about it! We're hoping to list book titles regularly in the Log.

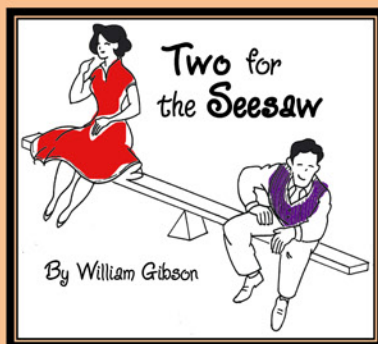


Classic Theatre Festival

MASON THEATRE, Perth

Tickets: 1-877-283-1283

www.classictheatre.ca



July 13 to August 5



August 10 to September 2

Ottawa Valley's Professional Summer Theatre