



Captain Otty's Log

The Newsletter of the Otty Lake Association February 2014

President's Message

Happy New Year!

Like me, you are looking forward to a couple of months of winter activities to burn off all that turkey, gravy, and shortbreads.

While surfing the web, why not visit the Otty Lake site at www.ottylakeassociation.ca. Thanks as always to webmaster Rick Stojak for maintaining our site. Nice work Rick, and thanks to all you contributors!

Thanks also to the OLA Board and other volunteers who plan, organize and carry out OLA activities throughout the year for the benefit of our shoreline community.

We have lots planned for 2014. Read in this newsletter about the follow-up to the 2013 Shoreline Survey and about the Lake Management Plan survey, which delivered the message that water quality, and algae and aquatic plants, are your top priorities. We plan a continuation of our Shoreline Planting Program, the Pitch-In clean-up program, and many others, including giving you the chance to be one of five properties qualifying for free shoreline restoration work, courtesy of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Following the success of our 2013 event, we plan to have a mid-summer Otty Lake picnic, open to members and non-members alike, with lots of fun for all ages. If you have some



December Sunrise - Rick Stojak

ideas for activities, or would like to help, please contact us.

Please remember to renew your OLA membership dues promptly to continue the great work of the OLA, and please encourage your neighbours to join us. Your membership dues fund increased water quality monitoring, fish habitat enhancement, subsidized shoreline plants and educational activities. You can save \$5 by paying your 2014 OLA dues before 1 April 2014. Pay later and it costs \$20. A form is on the back page or on the website.

We are always looking for interesting stories and photos to publish in this newsletter, so why not try your hand at writing an article? Topics could range from family history on the lake, to experiences with local wildlife, or even a combination of the two. Need help? Just email your ideas to the Log Editor, Barb Hicks, at:

dhicks11@cogeco.ca, who will happily assist you.

If you have ideas for OLA plans, activities or priorities, or wish to get involved, visit the website, 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.

Please note: Our 2014 AGM will be on July 12, at a new-to-us location, the Perth Legion. Mark it in your calendar!

Have a great 2014 on the lake!

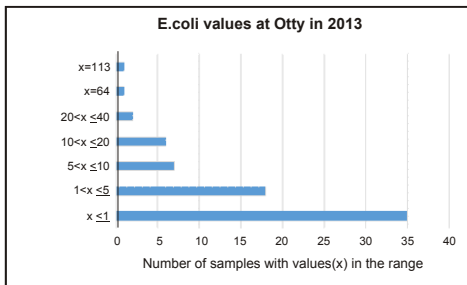
Robert Cosh, President OLA

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Otty Lake Water Quality Testing

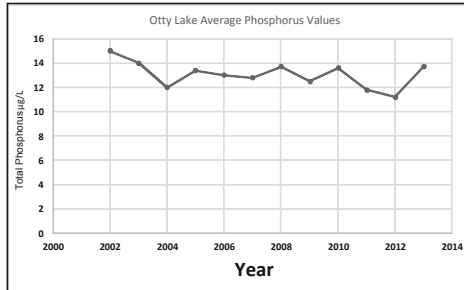
The year 2013 was the second year of an expanded OLA water quality sampling program. Additional *E. coli* sites were monitored and the frequency of sampling was increased. As well, some sampling for the nutrients phosphorus and nitrogen were taken by the OLA to supplement our participation in the phosphorus sampling of the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) Lake Partner Program. In addition, OLA volunteers assisted the RVCA in their water quality sampling program at Otty and McLaren Lakes. The OLA expenditures for water quality sampling in 2013 were \$1,164.



E. coli Sampling

A total of 71 *E. coli* samples were taken in 2013. The results were generally good, well within the provincial standard for swimming. However, a somewhat elevated value of an *E. coli* sample taken in Carson's Bay on July 11 led to a follow-up on July 19 where one of the two samples taken had a value of 113 cfu/100 mL, exceeding the provincial standard for swimming of 100 cfu/100 mL. Extensive follow-up sampling at Carson's Bay for the remainder of the summer showed a few moderately elevated values, but no additional exceedances. The OLA will continue to monitor this area this coming summer, in addition to sampling at the regular *E. coli* testing sites.

This was the first exceedence of the provincial standard for swimming at Otty in ten years. A chart showing the range of values of *E. coli* at Otty through the 2013 OLA sampling program is included. Although the majority of these values are very low, drinking untreated lake water is never recommended.



Nutrient Loading at Otty Lake

A key indicator of the condition of a water body is the determination of the level of the nutrients, phosphorus and nitrogen, in the lake. Of the two, the phosphorus level is regarded as the controlling nutrient that is typical of Ontario lakes of the size of Otty. The OLA participates in the MOE Lake Partners Program with phosphorus samples taken six times annually from May to October. The average of the 2013 values of Total Phosphorus was 13.7 µg/L. This is slightly higher than the two previous years, but still typical of values over the past decade. Please see the chart for a comparison with other years.

The additional phosphorus sampling conducted by the OLA and the RVCA included shoreline sites particularly at inlet streams entering Otty. Among the shoreline sites sampled it was noted that the nitrogen values at the site on Mud Lake (upstream of the Little Otty), exceeded the provincial objective. This site is located at the outlet of the stream flowing from McLaren Lake.

Our Sampling Plan for 2014

We will be continuing our augmented sampling program this year. In addition to the expanded *E. coli* sampling, we will undertake additional sampling for nutrients at various shoreline locations, particularly in bays and near streams entering the lake. The objective is to have a better understanding of the conditions that may be linked to the development of the profuse blooms of green algae evident at Otty in the last several years.

Murray Hunt

- "cfu/100 mL" refers to "colony forming units per 100 milliliters".
- "µg/L" refers to "micrograms per liter".

Planning to go out on the ice?



Make safety your first priority, and still have lots of fun. Stay warm and dry. Avoid wet patches. They may look like surface melt, but they may also indicate areas where spring water has melted the ice from underneath.

Cap'n Otty suggests that we stay close to shore and avoid all wet patches in winter, and of course, stay out of the water except in summer!

Bass Spawning Habitat Enhancement

October 2013 was a milestone for the Otty Lake bass fishery. For the first time, work was done to augment current spawning areas for smallmouth bass. The goal of this work is to rebuild a sustainable bass population in Otty.

With funding provided by the Otty Lake Association and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, a group of volunteers from RVCA and the Otty Lake community dedicated two days to building 92 new spawning beds in Otty. Five tons of washed rock and gravel was used to create spawning nests. Additionally, over 50 small trees of roughly 5-6 feet in height were submerged in the lake in 15-25 feet of water. This wood structure was anchored adjacent to spawning areas to create resting and feeding areas for post-spawn, female smallmouth bass. This new structure will also increase the survival rate of bass fry during the first few weeks of their lives when they are extremely vulnerable to predation. Other sub-surface residents, like crawfish and invertebrates, will benefit from underwater wood. It should be noted that this project is the single largest of its kind in Eastern Ontario and has received critical acclaim to date.

The initial phase of this project involved two separate scouting tours of the lake in May and June. Existing spawning areas were identified and prioritized for enhancement using a combination of scientific sound criteria. Jennifer Lamoureux, a Fish and Habitat Enhancement Biologist, and Adrienne Lewis, a technician from RVCA, were guided by myself during this preliminary stage. Joff Cote, the District Fisheries Manager from the Kemptville office of MNR, was also involved. A geospatial map was developed to guide follow-up project work.

During the spring of 2014 extensive monitoring by both visual observation and underwater cameras will be conducted to assess the usage of new nest sites and sunken wood structures.



An extension of this initiative is planned for September 2014. Additional nesting sites would be created and branches affixed to the shore (with the owner's permission) to provide fish and wildlife habitat. Costs were kept down last year thanks to some RVCA funding and volunteer time by their staff. So up there is an opportunity for other Otty Lake residents to help! The group would especially appreciate the use of a pontoon boat



to transport materials and to serve as a work platform, to avoid rental costs. Some volunteer labour for the day would be absolutely necessary. The work would take place over two weekdays in September, as more volunteers would be available, and the weather potentially better. More details will be in the next newsletter. Contact Wally Robins at: Wally.Robins@rogers.com if you would like to know more.

Wally Robins

Area Counsellors Needed

There are still a few gaps on our area counsellors list. Area Counsellors represent the residents who live or cottage in the 25 areas of the lake. They maintain communication, deliver the Summer Information Packages, ensure contact information is up to date, and relay concerns to the OLA Board.

Area 7A: Open – Mile Point Road and Kerr Road

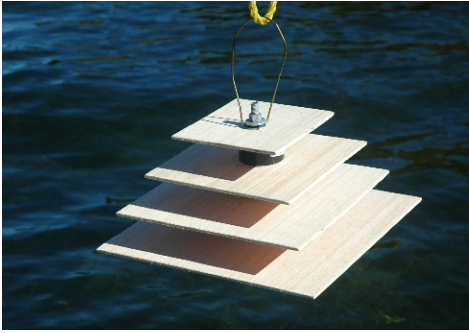
Area 8B: Carol Handleman is doing this as well as 8C and 9A so would be happy for someone else to take it on. 8B Close to Camp Shomria.

Area 9B: open

Maple Glen: Dave Bell would welcome a replacement.

Please contact [Phil Anderson](mailto:Phil.Anderson@rogers.com), Counsellor Co-ordinator, at anderpg13@hotmail.com or (613) 264-0072, if you can help. It is not absolutely necessary that you live in that area, but it would be more convenient if you were nearby.

Zebra Mussels 101



Here are some basic ideas about Zebra Mussels that may be of interest.

1) Zebra Mussels were introduced to Otty Lake around the year 2002. Otty lake water has ideal conditions for the proliferation of Zebra Mussels; an alkaline pH, lots of dissolved calcium, temperatures in the 10-25 degree range, and low water velocities.

2) One female Zebra Mussel can produce as many as a million eggs in a breeding season. Fertilized eggs turn into microscopic floating mussels (called veligers) which gradually develop a calcium based shell, get heavier and then affix themselves onto hard surfaces. Zebra mussels live for 4 or 5 years.

3) One adult Zebra Mussel can filter a liter of water a day. Zebra

Mussels do not change the species composition of algae in the water column. They filter out all types of algae equally, as well as any other type of floating organic material in the water. This permits sunlight to reach deeper levels of the water column, a condition that promotes aquatic plant growth.

4) It is estimated that there are enough zebra mussels in Lake Erie to filter the entire lake in one week!

5) Zebra Mussels have changed the water quality of Otty Lake significantly. Zebra Mussels excrete reactive nutrients and may be a major source of reactive phosphate in the lake, thereby accelerating weed and floating algal growth. The amount of phosphorus that mussels excrete has not been quantified.

6) The only way to safely reduce the mussel population known to date is to physically remove them. The use of toxic substances will have dramatic negative side effects on the lake ecosystem. There are few predators that bother to eat them. However, there are many scientists working on solutions to the mussel problem.

Research includes looking for a male hormone that will cause females to release their eggs prematurely, thereby disrupting their reproductive cycles. Hopefully, a control mechanism will be found soon.

7) One important fact! If we could significantly reduce the amount of phosphorus entering Otty Lake, the lake would show a marked improvement in water quality in as quickly as a year or two.

8) People around Otty vary in their opinions as to whether there are more or fewer mussels last summer than in previous years. We intend to do an experiment next summer. We have designed a zebra mussel sampler (see photo), which we will put in the lake in areas where mussels have colonized in the past, and count the number of mussels that grow per square metre. Monitoring is an important first step in understanding and reducing the mussel population. If you would like to help, please e-mail the Lake Research Group at:

dsmith@dpsint.com.

Derek Smith, M.Sc

April is Time to Pitch-In!

Pitch-In Week around Otty Lake is officially ...Otty Lake is officially April 20-26, 2014. Let's get rid of other people's garbage so carelessly tossed on our highways and byways around our lake. If you need garbage bags I will have them. Please call me at (613) 706-3562 or e-mail: lizofthelake44@gmail.com and let me know which road you would like to clean up.

Elizabeth Allcock

OLA Past-President Presents at Conservation Symposium

On November 21, 2013, Karen Hunt, past-President of the Otty Lake Association, was one of three speakers on a panel entitled "Stewards in Action - Bridges to the Waterfront Community." The panel was hosted by Terry Rees of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Associations (FOCA), as part of the 20th annual A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium, held in Alliston, Ontario. Karen's presentation, "Stronger Together – The Lake Networking Group",

described the many benefits of this association that represents 25 lakes in Eastern Ontario. It can be viewed on the [symposium's website](#).



Karen Hunt

Otty Lake Property Owners' Survey

Sincere thanks to all members of the Otty Lake community who took the time to provide input for the Otty Lake Management Plan (OLMP) – Five Year Review process, by responding to the survey distributed last fall.

Approximately 500 surveys were distributed and to this point 206 have been returned. This is a 41 % return - a very good response rate for a survey. Thank you for continuing to be part of the Otty Lake Management Planning process. As it has been from the onset, the OLMP is a community process.

Water quality, aquatic vegetation and algae, and fish and wildlife habitat were identified as the top 2013 priority issues by Otty Lake residents (please see full report included as an insert with the

newsletter and posted on the website.) From your input, we realize that the community believes that there is a strong correlation between many of the issues e.g. shoreline protection and water quality, shoreline protection and boating and development, water quality, and aquatic vegetation and algae. There was also a strong recognition that it is the responsibility of all members of the community to play their part in making Otty a healthy lake. We need to continue to work together!

All comments received from Otty Lake residents through the survey responses have been posted on the Otty Lake Association website. Check www.ottylakeassociation.ca and look under the “OL Mgmt Plan” tab.

The suggestions provided by the community for each of the issues will be incorporated into the “Still to be Done” section of the OLMP Five Year Review document. The document will be ready for discussion and approval by the membership at the AGM on July 12, 2014. The completed document will also be circulated to our community partners, such as the Townships of Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, as we recognize the importance of continuing to work closely with these groups.

As we move forward, the Otty Lake Association will use your input to identify and prioritize initiatives needed to help look after Otty Lake. Your support will be needed to carry them out.

Septic Re-inspections 2013

In 2013 both Drummond/North Elmsley (D/NE) and Tay Valley Township had Discretionary Septic Re-inspection Programs in place. This was a change from the former voluntary programs. The Discretionary Programs gave the townships the authority to require a re-inspection take place rather than only request it.

As a result, in 2013, most re-inspections were completed for Otty Lake. In total, there were 28 systems inspected. Systems requiring remedial work were 65% of the total inspected and several septic systems were replaced. There remain 8 systems to be inspected in D/NE. These will be dealt with by the Health Unit in 2014.

It has taken a number of years to complete this important program and the commitment of Tay Valley Township and Drummond/North Elmsley is greatly appreciated. Otty Lake says thank you!!

David Reesor

Septic No-Nos

Most Otty Lake septic systems have been re-inspected, but it is up to us all to keep them functioning well. Human waste, toilet paper and grey water (from washing) are all that belong in your septic system. Everything else is a no-no! Here's a reminder of what not to put into your septic system:

- Cigarette butts
- Fats, oils & grease
- Cat box litter
- Hair
- Dental floss
- Tampons or sanitary napkins
- Diapers or baby wipes
- Paper towels or facial tissue
- Condoms
- Coffee grounds, egg shells & other kitchen waste
- Excessive bleach
- Nail polish remover
- Kitty litter
- Caustic drain or toilet bowl cleaners, any harsh cleaners
- Antibacterial products
- Septic cleaners, starters or enhancers

It should go without saying that the following toxics are bad news. Never let these enter your septic system:

- Plastics
- Gasoline, oil or antifreeze
- Varnishes, paints & solvents
- Photographic solutions
- Pesticides
- Prescription drugs

Make sure your guests or tenants of your property know these rules too.

There are many other actions you can take to keep your septic system healthy both outside your home and by reducing your water use inside your home. Some good sources of information include: The Otty Lake Shoreline Handbook pp 25-33, the [Health Unit](#), and [CMHC About Your House: Your Septic System Fact Sheet](#).

Love Your Lake Shoreline Survey Reports Available Soon!

Last June and early July, all Otty Lake shoreline properties were surveyed through the Love Your Lake Program, a program that was available through the Centre for Sustainable Watersheds (CSW) in partnership with the Canadian Wildlife Federation. The Otty Lake Association (OLA) provided water transportation for the surveyors and funding support. The data (which included observations about shoreline buffers, erosion, vegetation, docks, boat-houses, stairs, decks and wildlife habitat) was collected by a staff person from CSW. **The intent of the Love Your Lake Program is to provide shoreline property owners with information so that they can look for stewardship opportunities on their shoreline through which they can help protect the health of their lake.**

The individual confidential, reports for Otty Lake shoreline property owners are being prepared by the Canadian Wildlife Federation based on the data collected. We are hopeful that Otty Lake property owners will have the reports in hand before this newsletter reaches you. We suggest that you add the reports to your Otty Lake Shoreline Handbook.



The positive things that you have done along your shoreline to improve lake water quality are identified in your report, and constructive recommendations are included for restoring or protecting your property to improve shoreline health.

If after reviewing your Love Your Lake Shoreline Report, you feel that there is work that could be done to improve your shoreline area, we have two follow-up opportunities for you. To obtain some inexpensive, locally grown native shrubs and wildflowers to plant on your property, see the “Maintaining a Healthy Shoreline Buffer” story on page 7. To apply for one of five free shoreline naturalization projects, see the inset.

Otty Lake property owners do love their lake. The shoreline survey reports provide another tool to help each of us do our part to keep Otty healthy for the future.

Would you like some professional help—at no cost?

The Love Your Lake Program has received some funding from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) which allows it to offer **five FREE Shoreline Naturalization projects** (complete with site visit -consultation, planting plan, plants, planting help and associated resources) on Otty and also for two other local lakes.

If, you feel that your property would benefit from some shoreline naturalization, please contact Karen Hunt at mkhunt@ripnet.com before March 15, 2014. Please include a brief description (three or four sentences) on why your property should be selected.

We understand from CSW that all planting must be completed by the fall of 2014. So properties for the program will be chosen this winter/spring, site visits will take place over the summer. and planting will occur in the summer/fall 2014.

Municipal Updates

OLA Asks D/NE to Reconsider Internet Voting Option

Property owners on Otty Lake are encouraged to vote in their respective local municipalities when municipal elections take place across Ontario on October 27, 2014. Tay Valley Otty Lake residents will once again have the option of traditional or internet voting, which makes it easier for seasonal residents to participate from their home communities. Drummond North Elmsley (D/NE) residents do not have this choice. In

November 2013, the possibility of adding an internet voting option for D/NE residents was raised once again during the D/NE 2014 draft budget discussions. However, council was concerned about the potential cost and so the funds allocated for internet voting in the 2014 Municipal Election were removed from the proposed 2014 budget.

The Otty Lake Association responded by submitting a letter, dated December 2, 2013, to Reeve Aubrey Churchill and councillors commenting that the decision not to offer an internet voting option will

“significantly reduce the accessibility for the one hundred and thirty one (131) D/NE seasonal Otty Lake property owners to vote in the Municipal Election next October as many of them have their permanent residence at some distance from Otty Lake.” In addition, a strong Otty Lake Association delegation led by OLA President and D/NE resident Robert Cosh attended the December 17, 2013 D/NE Committee of the Whole meeting to speak to the OLA position. Through Lake Networking Group contacts, a copy

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Maintaining a Healthy Shoreline Buffer

Shoreline buffers reduce nutrients and sediment entering the lake. Enhance your shoreline buffer through the 2014 Shoreline Planting Program. Both shrubs and wildflowers are available this year.

Shrubs for Shoreline Planting

For 2014, through the RVCA's Shoreline Naturalization Program, we have ordered hardy native plants grown at the Ferguson Forest Centre in Kemptville. We will have a limited number of one-gallon pots of sweet gale, red osier dogwood, pussy willow and highbush cranberry bushes. The OLA will subsidize 50% of the cost of shrubs for members of the Otty Lake community. The cost to members will therefore be \$3 per shrub.

Wildflowers for Shoreline Planting

We will also again have wildflowers grown by Philip Fry at the Old Field Wildflower Nursery in Oxford Station. On Philip Fry's recommendation we have ordered monarda, purple coneflower and Foxglove penstemon. These plants should do well along the shoreline (but not "with their feet wet" as required by several of last year's plants). As with the



Cardinal flowers: Photo by Christine Kempster, Little Otty

shrubs, the OLA will subsidize 50% of the cost of wildflowers for members of the Otty Lake community. The cost per pot of wildflowers to members will be \$4 per plant.

Ordering and Pickup

Plant requests will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. You can order up to five wildflowers and 15 shrubs through this initiative. To order shrubs or wildflowers, please contact Karen Hunt at: mkhunt@ripnet.com or (613) 264-9273. More information about the plants in the 2014 shoreline planting

program will be posted on the OLA website: (www.ottylakeassociation.ca). Members of the community will be able to pick-up their plants at Otty Lake on Saturday, July 5.

Plant Swap New for 2014

We are going to establish a Plant Swap on the OLA website. Members of the Otty Lake community will be encouraged to list plants "available for sharing" or "wished for", and exchanges can then take place at the convenience of the participants. Watch for more details.

Dates For Your Diary

Here are dates you may want to record on your beautiful new Otty Lake Watershed 2014 calendar:

Sat. Mar 15	Application deadline for free shoreline naturalization project
March	Place your order for shrubs and wildflowers, as supply is limited
April 20 -26	Pitch-In 2014
May-June	Summer information package distribution by counsellors
Sat. May 31	Deadline for July newsletter submissions
Sat. July 5	Shoreline shrub and wildflower pickup day
Sat. July 12	Annual General Meeting, Perth Legion
Sat. July 19	Paddle Power
Sat. July 26	Family Picnic
September	Fish spawning enhancement work days (TBD)
Mon. Oct. 27	Municipal Election
Sat. Oct. 25	Lake Links Workshop

Municipal Updates

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of the OLA letter was also provided to the Mississippi and Rideau Lakes associations, who also have seasonal residents affected by this decision.

Despite the lobbying and support from Elmsley Ward Councillors Peter Wagland and Ray Scissons, the Otty Lake Association was unable to convince the D/NE Council to reconsider their decision and on October 27, 2014 D/NE residents will still only be able to vote in the traditional way at a polling station in Drummond/North Elmsley.

Input to Tay Valley Official Plan Sought

As you heard at the OLA AGM last summer, Tay Valley Township (TVT) is in the process of a Five Year Review of its Official Plan and has invited members of the community, lake associations and other community groups to provide input.

What's Happened Already?

TVT hosted an Official Plan Review Open House last August 13. As well, in October, Noelle Reeve, TVT Planner, discussed the Official Plan Review with representatives of the Tay Valley Township lake associations, including the OLA.

Issue papers on 22 issues related to the OP Review are posted on the TVT website, www.tayvalleytp.ca. A number of these issue papers are of significance to lake communities such as waterfront buffers, climate change, wetlands, significant woodlands, dark skies, development on narrow water channels, and backlot/second tier development.

The Otty Lake Association Board of Directors has established a committee to review the issue papers and provide input to Tay Valley Township. We urge Otty Lake Tay Valley residents to participate in the upcoming

community meetings and be part of the Official Plan review process.

Note: During the TVT Official Plan review process, the Otty Lake Association plans to request that the updated Tay Valley Township Official Plan include recognition of the Otty Lake Management Plan. This recognition is already included in the Drummond/North Elmsley Official Plan (revised 2012).

What Happens Next?

Outreach to citizen groups is planned for January-February 2014, and the plan will be drafted in March-April and presented to Council. Another open house will take place in the spring to discuss the draft, and by the early fall, 2014 the updated Official Plan should be approved by Lanark County. Where bylaws are required to implement aspects of the plan, more public consultation will take place, with the bylaws coming into effect by the summer of 2015.



Otty Lake Association 2014 Membership Renewal

Membership is for the calendar year and costs \$20. Pay just \$15 if you renew or take out a new membership by April 1, 2014. **Mail the form and cheque to the Otty Lake Association, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6.** Please complete the following so we can keep our records up to date.

Name(s) _____

Lake Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Prov/State: _____ Postal/Zip Code _____

Check your delivery preference for Captain Otty's Log Newsletter:

- Canada Post email Log by Canada Post, e-mail updates
 Call me about volunteering for the OLA.

Thanks for your support!

CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG is produced by the Otty Lake Association (OLA) three times a year.

Coordinator: Barb Hicks

Distribution: Robert Cosh, Rick Stojak, Shari Beattie

The Log is distributed by e-mail or Canada Post to all Otty Lake cottagers and residents. Contributions to the Log are welcome. To find out more about the OLA, or to see past issues, please see:

www.ottylakeassociation.ca,
or write to the **OLA, Box 20122, Perth Mews Mall, Perth, ON K7H 3M6.**