



# Captain Otty's Log

The Newsletter of the Otty Lake Association

October 2016

## President's Message

From Reid Kilburn

A big *Thank You!* to our volunteers! It was a great summer for enjoying the lake with great weather and lots of activity. I thought I would touch on a few of these activities and indirectly express the OLA's gratitude for the many volunteers who make these activities happen:

### Water sampling

Early this spring our Lake Steward and partners once again started the annual process of collecting water and algae samples, and measuring such things as water temperature and water depth, to help our lake community and others such as RVCA and MOECC to better understand our lake.

### Loon survey

The OLA Loon Survey kicked off this year with an increased number of volunteers contributing to a map-based sighting log.

### RVCA's spring fish spawning bed enhancement survey

Up the lake we notice a pontoon boat acting strangely and traveling very close to shore. Excitement is heard over the water and we realize it is our volunteers and their boats helping RVCA with their spring assessment of our fish spawning enhancement program.

### OLA AGM

Many volunteers in areas such as technical support, presentation development including pictures,



Photo: Christine Kilburn

guest speaker's co-ordination, and setting up display tables gather each year to provide an informative update on our lake and things that matter to our community. This year's keynote speaker, Dr. Paula Stewart, spoke on the need to seek opportunities to connect our youth with nature.

### OLA's 200th Anniversary project.

The almost 100 attendees at our AGM were eager to support the launch of the OLA's 200th Anniversary project, namely the "Our Table To Yours" cookbook which was created by a hardworking volunteer team of OLA members and experts from our community. The cookbook was so well received that first printing sold out in just over two months.

### Shoreline Enhancement program

This year's shoreline naturalization program sold approximately 250 trees, shrubs and flowers in support of its expanded program.

### OLA picnic

More than 60 children, parents and grandparents attended the OLA picnic this year. Many volunteers came together to provide games, races, a chance to try a giant slingshot, and to serve BBQ'd hamburgers and hot dogs. Thanks to Maple Glen for hosting.

### Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

The Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement project (Wildlife phase) saw more than 20 volunteers and

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## New Board Elected

### New OLA Board Elected

A new OLA board has been in place since July 9 and has a substantial contingent of returning members. Directors agree to a two year term, which are staggered to encourage continuity.

Kyla Haley had already been participating in OLA activities when she filled a vacancy on the board in November 2015, and was elected to begin a two year term. Newly elected to the board is Michelle Soucy. Michelle and her husband moved from Ajax/Oshawa to a home on Trillium Drive more than two years ago, fulfilling their dream of living on or near a lake. She loves the outdoor living this area offers, and feels it is important that we all take care of our natural resources for future generations. Michelle is proud that this community already has so many wonderful programs in place, and is excited to be part of them.

Reid Kilburn is in his second year as President, backed up by Past President Robert Cosh. Dave

Bell will continue as Treasurer, and Christine Kilburn as Secretary. Other directors completing their two year term but returning for another term: Gail Read, Derek Smith, and Cathy Kari. These directors are completing their two year term: Barb Hicks, Ian McDonald, Wally Robins, Chuck Shenkman, Anne Scotton and Krista Hearty McLean.

The new board will meet for the first time together Saturday, October 29. A complete list of board members, their roles and contact information is available on our website.

### Roger Nuttall Recognized

After many years of dedicated service to the Otty Lake community, Roger Nuttall is retiring from the board of directors. As a director, Roger participated in the Environment Committee, Lake Management Planning Committee and the Lake Plan Action Committee. As our resident naturalist, Roger had a hand in many other projects, including the 2010 and 2012 BioBlitzes, leading nature walks, the 2013 wetland workshop, and teaching us about invasive species. He and his wife Diana assembled lists of trees, shrubs and wildflowers present in the Otty Lake watershed. The younger set will remember Roger for his enthusiastic presence at the OLA family events. When president Reid Kilburn presented Roger with a certificate of appreciation at the July AGM, Roger quipped that he didn't remember doing all those things! While he is stepping down to encourage some younger blood to take over, Roger confirmed he will still be around to provide help were needed. Roger received a well-deserved standing ovation.



*Roger Nuttall accepting certificate from Reid Kilburn*

### President's Message (continued from Page 1)

RVCA staff congregate for a day of Bat and Wood Duck box assembly. Thanks to the efforts of a skilled few, precise kits had already been prepared so productivity was high resulting in more than 25 boxes being assembled by noon.

#### Paddle Power

Otty Lake's own version of paddle power is quickly becoming a community signature event and growing each year. A few community volunteers have worked hard each year to co-ordinate this event and this year over 90 people took part by gathering off Code's Island to celebrate active transportation in our community.

### Carleton University Environmental Studies Field Course

Carleton University's Environmental Studies Field Course visited Otty Lake again in August (24 students and two professors this year). This year the course instructor requested an introduction to the lake featuring a walk along a diverse, natural shoreline. Thanks to the BurgessWood Property Owners' Association for opening their waterfront and guiding the class on a very informative introduction to our lake.

#### Fish Habitat Enhancement

The OLA/RVCA's annual Fish and Wildlife Habitat Enhancement day (Fish Phase) is now in its fourth year. The OLA and

RVCA were fortunate this year in attracting financial support in the form of a grant from TD Friends of the Environment. A big thank-you to the Maple Glen Association for hosting this very successful project again this year.

We are very fortunate to be able to count on the many volunteers that make the above activities a success. Thanks to all of you.

This fall the OLA will be participating in meetings with the OPP and the Lake Networking Group as well as attending Lake Links. Check our website for more information.

*Reid Kilburn*

# Paddle Power August 17th

**P**addle Power 2016 was embraced by sunny skies and a light breeze. Ninety-two participants gathered to celebrate paddling on Otty Lake. The day's event was recorded by a drone flown by Rob Dyke as well as copious photographs from the water by Jason Ball and Ev Dore. Participants of all ages attended with an increased number of youth, the youngest being only six months of age! New and experienced paddlers, (cottagers, residents and visitors) rekindled friendships and built new ones as demonstrated by our lively chatter. The Calgary contingent was especially noteworthy!

Next year will be our 5th Annual Paddle Power and is scheduled for



Saturday, August 12th. Of course this will be Canada's 150th birthday and what better way to celebrate

than to deck ourselves out in a red and white patriotic theme!

*Ian McDonald*

## OLA Family Picnic

**T**he Otty Lake Family Picnic has become a noteworthy social event that brings together three generations of Otty Lake enthusiasts, representing all areas of our community! It was again very well attended with over 60 participants including large numbers of youth of all ages! Field games, relays, our massive sling shot, adult Bocce and suspended doughnuts kept everyone engaged. The very popular face painting had a medieval theme that supported our falconry visit.

Please mark Saturday, July 22, 2017 on your calendar as our Otty Lake social event!

*Gail Read*



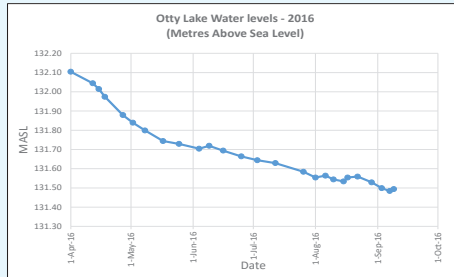
*Gert the Clown, Ginger Hay serving up burgers, Rubber Chicken Race participant.*

# State of the Lake Report on its Way

This October, for the third consecutive year, the OLA board will produce a short “State of the Lake Report”. The reports summarize the condition of our lake and the environmental activities that have been completed on Otty this summer. The 2016 report will include sections on physical and chemical monitoring, loon and cormorant sightings, the Otty fishery, zebra mussels and algae conditions and shoreline planting activities. Nine OLA board members and associates are contributing to the report, which will be posted on the OLA website in late October.

Included here are our observations on water levels and algae.

*Derek Smith*



*Otty Lake Water Levels*

## Algae free since July 10th

This winter was warmer than the previous two years, and Otty was ice free in late January. Triggered by the availability of sunlight, floating algal mats began developing in late April, even though the water temperature was still only 6 C. The pre-

dominant species, Spirogyra, a green filamentous alga, proliferated through May and June. The algal mats died off by July 10th and the algal problem has not reappeared since then. We continue sampling and studying to better understand nature’s cycles and the impacts we are having on the lake.



*Derek Smith showing algae close up at AGM*

## Low Water Levels on Otty Lake This Year

The water level at Otty Lake was very high at ice-out on April 3 this year. The unofficial elevation was 132.10 metres above sea level. This was 22 cm. higher than the maximum level in April 2015.

However, there has been persistent dry weather in our area from April this year to the time of writing this article (September 9). The record at the Drummond Centre Weather Station shows rainfalls exceeding 20 cm on only four days since ice-out. In addition the many warm and sunny days that we have enjoyed this summer have likely led to increased evaporation of lake water. The flow in Jebbs Creek, the outlet from Otty, has been insignificant since June.

The Otty water levels for 2016 are shown in the chart. You will note the consistent decline in the lake level, interrupted occasionally by the few days of some significant rainfall. At this time, the lake level has decreased by 60 cm. since ice-out.

I have some historical records of lake levels kept by Otty Lake residents. Reviewing these records,



*Photo: Heather Hicks*

the lake level in some part of the years 1983, 1997, 2001 and 2005 was less than the current lake level. However, the current lake level will likely continue to decline unless rainfall amounts during the fall revert to normal levels. Meanwhile be cautious of submerged shoals while boating.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) classified the Rideau Watershed as in a “Severe Drought Condition” in mid-August. The RVCA anticipates that this “Severe Drought Condition”

will continue until it is obvious that the situation in the Watershed is recovering. The RVCA noted in particular that wetlands in the upper parts of the Watershed were virtually dry as were tributary streams to the rivers. People drawing water from wells were cautioned to limit water use to reduce the withdrawal of water from aquifers.

The dry hot weather this spring and summer has created a challenging period. Let’s see what the fall and winter seasons bring.

*Murray Hunt*

## Volunteer Bat Box Construction Project

Following the success of the 2015 nesting box construction project, a bat box project was suggested, and the requests for bat boxes started rolling in. Ten wood duck and ten swallow/blue bird boxes were built in 2015 as part of Phase III of the Fish and Wildlife Enhancement project and were installed around Otty Lake.

There has been a significant drop in the number of bats over the past few years, possibly due to disease. Bats consume an amazing number of insects (as much as seven or eight a minute) so it was felt that we could encourage a resurgence in the bat population by building new bat hangouts and reap the side benefit of fewer bugs. It was determined that if we built bat houses from a tested design it would entice bats, young bats especially, who were looking for new accommodation to bunk up in our bat boxes rather than taking up residence in human homes or other structures.

The nesting boxes were a simple design made from kits by volunteers on a blitz day in 2015. Following that approach, the search was on for a simple bat box plan that could be tackled by people with minimal woodworking skills. One of Jennifer Lamoureux's coworkers recommended the website [BigBrown-Bat](#). The site is run by a Kingston secondary school science teacher with a long-time interest in bats. Matt has been conducting bat proofing and bat box building information sessions for years, as well selling his creations. Besides providing lots of fascinating information on bats, his blog provides detailed instructions on building bat boxes for the inexperienced.

Otty Lake resident Richard Hendry modified Matt's plan a little and built a prototype last fall. Armed



*Bat Box Volunteers  
Photo: Christine Kilburn*

with the new dimensions, Richard investigated several potential sources of 1"x10" rough pine lumber, which he procured at McVeigh's Sawmill, near Harper. By shortly after the AGM, organizers had collected more than 20 requests for bat boxes. In the weeks leading up to construction day, the lumber was cut into the appropriate dimensions, marked for drilling with a template, and predrilled for assembly by Richard and his wife Jay. Final assembly of the bat boxes took place July 25, at Reid and Christine Kilburn's place on Loon's Way. Twenty new bat boxes were assembled, along with two more swallow boxes, and five more wood duck houses. Many of the excited participants took them home and installed them that day.

Participants were advised there is no one best location for a bat box, because different species, different sexes and bats at different life stages have different needs. For example, some bats are exclusively tree dwellers and would not use a box. Matt recommends attaching the bat house to a structure with a south or southwest exposure, about ten feet up to keep the bats safe from predators such as cats and squirrels, with sufficient space around it for easy launch and return. Under a roof overhang, or against a tree are possibilities. The bats enter through a

3/4 inch slot on the underside of the box. Despite their relatively small size, the boxes can accommodate up to 30 bats. Bats will not leave a human house to occupy a bat house, but they may take up residence if they are evicted permanently.

Even if you aren't interested in a bat house, take a look at Matt's tips for keeping them out of your house, and for evicting individual bats or colonies if necessary. Take care not to get bitten as bats can carry rabies, and unless you capture the bat, you can't know for sure.

*Barb Hicks with notes from Jay and Richard Hendry*



*The final result!*

### **Beware – Ticks are Still Active.**

Please continue to take precautions against blacklegged ticks when you are in vegetated areas, and check yourself and your pets for ticks when you return home. (See [June newsletter](#).)

Black-legged ticks can be active *any time of year* if the temperature is above freezing, and are sometimes spotted during winter thaws. See more at <http://tickcounter.org/>.

While not all blacklegged ticks carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, a high proportion of Lanark County ticks are carriers, and carriers have been found around Otty Lake.

## Otty Lake Loons are Empty Nesters

The 2016 loon survey has concluded, with the loons beginning to gather in advance of their late fall migration south. From the map created, it was estimated that four or five pairs of loons and one singleton called Otty Lake home this year, though other loons certainly visited. Unfortunately it doesn't appear that any of our pairs were successful in producing young this year. It's possible the water level dropped too much or too quickly to allow consistent access to nesting sites, perhaps eggs were targeted by predators, or there could be another factor at play.

Thank you so much to all the team of lake-goers who emailed sightings! An extra shout-out to Richard and Jay Hendry for their consistent, thorough tours of the lake and detailed reports! We'll be conducting the survey again next year and would love to have more eyes on the lake! [See the map](#) and check out the [June issue of Captain Otty's Log](#) to find out how you can take part!



### Would you recognize a loon in the winter?

After flying south, loons spend much of their time in large groups. They lose the characteristic black and white feathers and pattern that we are used to seeing and become grey and white. The lovely calls that float on the air during warm summer evenings are saved for their time in the north. During their time in the south it is rare for a loon to vocalize.

### National Bird Project

Canadian Geographic wants to [name a national bird](#) for Canada's sesquicentennial, so asked Canadians to vote for their choice. The loon got the most votes! Experts debated the merits of the top choices on September 19: the common loon, whiskey jack, snowy owl, Canada goose and black-capped chickadee. The winner will be announced in their December wildlife issue.

*Kyla Haley*



## LAKE LINKS WORKSHOP

EVERY WATERFRONT MATTERS.  
YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

- Learn the trends in ownership of shoreline properties and what they mean to you.
- Good communication matters.
- How you can make a difference.

### REGISTRATION

To Register, contact Karen Ballentine:  
613-264-1244  
ballentine@watersheds.ca  
[\$20.00 fee includes lunch]

### LOCATION

Perth Civitan Hall  
6787 County Road 43  
Perth, Ontario

OCTOBER 22ND, 2016  
8:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.



## Volunteers Pitch In to Help Largemouth Bass

A little bit of drizzle didn't dampen the enthusiasm of those who gathered for a Fish Enhancement Work Day on Thursday, September 8th. The plan for the day was to install some additional brush bundles, establish some largemouth bass nests, and install some of the bat, swallow and wood duck boxes volunteers had made in late July.

Twenty OLA volunteers and five RVCA staff met at Maple Glen waterfront, and everyone chipped in where needed. Tasks included building brush bundles by tying Christmas trees together with rope and attaching them to concrete blocks, loading stone into pails or carrying supplies to sites where they were needed, or going out on one of the two pontoon boats to drop the brush bundles and stone into the water.

RVCA staff arrived with maps indicating the locations for the largemouth bass nests and brush bundles, taking into account the locations used in previous years for brush bundles for smallmouth bass nests. Wally Robins was able to suggest some additional locations for brush bundles and largemouth bass nests to use up the leftover materials. Over the last three years of the project, 250 smallmouth bass nests have been placed, and it was determined that, in addition to the natural nests, we had reached full capacity for Otty Lake. So this year's focus was on largemouth bass. Largemouth bass are more nomadic and less likely to return to a previous year's nesting site, so their behaviour is a little trickier to predict.

Special thanks to Jim Coward for using his pontoon boat to drop the brush bundles for smallmouth bass and other fish, and to Chris Penney for using his pontoon boat to drop



Photo: Christine Kilburn

rocks and brush bundles for largemouth bass. The use of their boats was crucial to the project, as commercial boat rental greatly increases project costs. Dave Bell took on the important task of collecting the used natural Christmas trees beginning last winter.

After six and a half hours this was the result:

- 9 brush bundles (wood structures installed in shallow weedy bays to provide cover and feeding habitat for fish and wildlife)
- 25 largemouth bass spawning beds (enhanced structure in the form of a small amount of stone to enhance spawning habitat)
- 18 brush bundles supporting largemouth bass beds (largemouth bass rely on wood structures being available in close proximity to spawning locations for feeding and cover habitat)
- 9 nesting boxes installed (1 swallow, 2 wood duck and 6 bat boxes). (See bat box story p5).

Thanks to our Otty Lake neighbours for their volunteer labour: Anne Scotton and Steve Barry, Robert Cosh, Derek Smith, Dave Bell, Wally Robins, Reid and Christine Kilburn, Dave Windholz, Dave Murray (BurgessWood), Dave Murray (Settler's Lane), Jim Coward, Dan O'Connor, Tiger Tanner, Brian Campbell and Chris Penney. Karen and Murray Hunt provided the all-important snacks, and Richard and Jay Hendry dropped by for moral support.

The RVCA team were Adrienne Lewis, Justin Roberts, Rosario Castanon Escobar, and Scott Muldoon, led by Jennifer Lamoureux.

Monitoring will take place in the spring by RVCA staff. In case you missed it, there is a link to some underwater video footage of bass spawning taken during last spring's monitoring on our website's homepage.

*Barb Hicks with notes from Jennifer Lamoureux and Christine Kilburn*

# Around the Lake

## Otty Lake Clothing

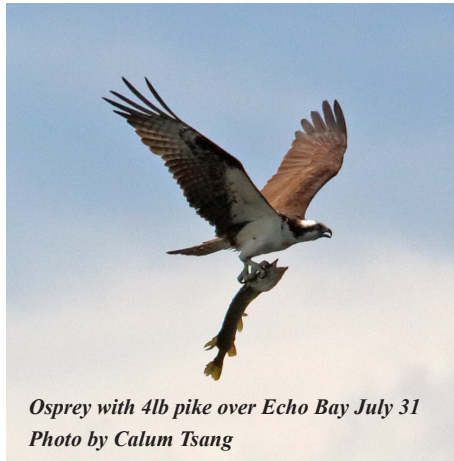
Did you know that you can buy Otty Lake polo shirts, t-shirts, sweatshirts, ball caps and sun visors? A few people took advantage of the table set up at the July AGM to take orders. Shirts are made to order, so you can have your choice of two logos, and a wide variety of sizes and colours for all the shirts. There has recently been a change to the supplier and pricing of the polo shirts (which some might call golf shirts!) Check the [OLA Store page](#) on our website for a description and order form. Thanks to Ginger Hay for looking after this for us. You can reach her at [vhay1954@gmail.com](mailto:vhay1954@gmail.com) or (613) 264-5032.

## Cottage Sharing Agreements

Lawyer Peter Lillico's presentation on Sunday, August 14 was well-received by the 131 participants. Many were interested in hearing more about "keeping the family in the family cottage". The Lake Networking Group (LNG) and FOCA partnered to bring the session to Perth, which was free to OLA members, and other lake associations holding a FOCA membership. This fall, FOCA will release a video recording of the 2016 seminar "Cottage Sharing Agreements" for those who were unable to attend, or who want to review the topic with family members. [Contact the FOCA office](#) to be updated when the new video is released.

## Our Table to Yours

Our memorabilia cookbook sales surpassed our expectations, and we have sold all 250 copies. The committee was gratified that the photos, recipes and historical notes and stories inspired so many favourable comments from the Otty Lake community. It was a great anniversary project for the OLA. Thanks again to all of the contributors, and to our Perth outlets for being so accommodating: Cafe Bean, Images InterAlia, Foodsmiths, the Book Nook and Oliver's Mapleworks stand at the Perth Farmers' Market. Sales were slowing by mid-August, so it is unlikely a reprint will be happening in the near future.



*Osprey with 4lb pike over Echo Bay July 31  
Photo by Calum Tsang*

## Weed Removal Courtesy

If you are cutting or pulling aquatic vegetation in front of your lake property, please be sure to remove them from the water so they don't become someone else's problem. The plants can interfere with swimming and boating, and some can even re-root and reproduce. Any plants removed should be disposed of well above the average high water mark. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry specifies rules for removing native aquatic plants. Otty Lake property owners are entitled to remove aquatic vegetation in front of their property, provided various conditions are met as given on the MNRF website. To preserve fish habitat, hand removal and raking are the preferred methods. Warm-water fish species spawn during spring and early summer, so do not remove aquatic vegetation March 15 to mid-July.

## Managing Your Waterfront Property in a Changing Climate

Effects of climate change have already been observed and are expected to accelerate. A new booklet produced by MNRF and FOCA explains what Ontario shoreline property owners should expect, such as drier soils, increased shoreline erosion, changing ice cover, and more winter rain. These climate changes in turn will affect species distribution, invasive species, extreme weather events and water quality. The booklet is a good start to becoming better informed, more prepared and to making decisions to minimize the impact of the climate changes. [The book is available online as a 20 page flipbook or pdf.](#)

## OLA Membership

If you haven't already paid your \$20 membership, we will gladly accept it "no questions asked". It is never too late to show your support for the OLA! It would be best to mail your fee directly to the OLA mailbox at this point; the address is printed at the end of this newsletter. Thanks to everyone who renewed promptly without prompting – it makes our volunteers jobs so much simpler. As you have probably guessed, our expenses occur year round, not just in the summer season. Special thanks to those of you who finally took the plunge and supplied an accurate email address. This will reduce our newsletter mailing costs and enable us to communicate between newsletters.

## Fast Foliage this Fall

*(From RVCA'S Around the Rideau, September-October 2016)*

Environment Canada reports that after the hot, dry summer the trees may not hold onto their fall foliage for very long. Long-term forecasts say that the weather will be good for watching the autumn display but it won't last as long as in previous years. You can check out how the fall colours are progressing at [www.ontarioparks.com/fallcolour](http://www.ontarioparks.com/fallcolour).

**CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG** is produced by the Otty Lake Association (OLA) three times a year, and is distributed by e-mail or Canada Post to all OLA members. Contributions to the Log are welcome.

**Coordinator:** Barb Hicks

**Layout:** Peter Dillon-Parkin

**Proofing:** Don Beattie

**Distribution:** Robert Cosh, Shari and Don Beattie

To find out more about the OLA, or to see past issues, please see: [www.ottylakeassociation.ca](http://www.ottylakeassociation.ca). Or write to: **The OLA, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6.**