



# CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG

OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION • FEBRUARY 2020

## President's Message

from  
*Reid Kilburn*



I always look forward to bright winter days on the lake. Recently however, I seem to have been paying more attention to the frequently occurring icy conditions of our access road. Interestingly, our furry friends have the same challenge, in that for some, such as deer, they too need to carefully navigate cottage roads and crusty terrain as they travel in search of food. I couldn't help but think that this could be another indicator of global warming right here on Otty Lake.

I quickly refocus and think about programs we have implemented to counteract the impact of settlement around the lake, such as our shoreline planting project and our fish habitat project. I am happy to share that our shoreline planting project is available again this year. Please see the poster announcing the project elsewhere in this edition of the Log to sign up for this year's program.

Naturally I have chosen one of those sunny winter days to write this article (secretly hoping for inspiration). My mind now drifts outside to our beautiful lake. I am watching the deer and squirrels co-habiting under the bird feeder waiting for their friends the Blue Jays to throw them a few sunflower seeds. I see our friendly porcupine making his daily trek to see his girlfriend on our neighbour's property. Nature and life abound.

My mind then drifts to the educational opportunities that good stewardship of our lake creates for our children, grandchildren and generations to come. I recall our 16-year-old niece and her many visits to Otty. I recall being with her when she saw

her first pollywog, her first porcupine, and her first baby snapping turtle as it made its way from egg to the water's edge knowing that it must find water and vegetation to hide and survive. I remember the "name that tree first competition". I also recall sharing the challenges we now have as a result of the introduction of invasive species.

Suddenly and shockingly, my mind jumps to a rural scene in fire-ravaged Australia. My heart sinks knowing that it will take years, perhaps generations, to re-establish their natural environment and the educational opportunities that ensue.

With a shudder I bring myself back to Otty. We can be thankful that we have not faced a natural disaster but, reality check, we are dealing with the impact of settlement. We can also be thankful that we have a beautiful and healthy lake. However, we need to be diligent and continue to protect and nourish our lake and its watershed.

Another sip of coffee and my mind is back to following that tiny snapping turtle as it makes its precarious way to what it perceives to be a safer place. But is it? For years we have focused on our shoreline and our properties and not so much on below the waterline, albeit the fish habitat project was a major focus in this area. And occasionally we take to sharing our opinions on weeds on social media. But think about it... Nature below the surface of Otty is at risk as well. If there were no safe habitat for that baby turtle, we would have to re-write the mortality tables for snapping turtles in Otty as we watched that species slowly disappear. What if there was no safe habitat for that first pollywog experience? What if there was no safe habitat for those small fish that were a product of the increased number of spawning beds?

I pause for another sip of coffee and ponder whether I have had too



much coffee. I quickly conclude to the contrary. I now slip on my swim mask and sink below Otty's shiny surface (oh yes, I have made the jump to summer in my mind). I am amazed at the variety of habitat and life. I see that pollywog growing feet. I am enthused by the number of small bass and yes I see lots of natural and in some places not so natural vegetation.

I get that in some places around the lake we may need to remove vegetation to be able to navigate or swim off a dock. The Ministry of Natural Resources has guidelines for the removal of weeds. Their guidelines are

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## JEBBS CREEK EMBAYMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Fifteen Otty Lake volunteers assisted the RVCA with planting portion of their Jebbs Creek Embayment Project in October 2018. (See February 2019 Log). The project converted a small area of existing meadow habitat with the Perth Wildlife Reserve to a series of small riverine wetland embayments along the shoreline of Jebbs Creek. Jennifer Lamoureux, Aquatic and Fish Habitat Biologist, has kindly provided this update.



RVCA photos: Submerged finger channels in April. Channels filling in with native vegetation in June.

Year 1 of monitoring has focused on vegetation success monitoring and some water chemistry. In the spring we had a great deal of water move through Jebbs Creek. However, by early August we entered level 1 drought conditions. The April 2019 photo shows all excavated

finger channels nicely submerged with flows from Otty Lake. Once we headed into late spring, (see June photo), the finger channels that were excavated had grown in nicely with native vegetation. It was difficult to see that we had just excavated the channels in the fall of 2018.

This year will mark the second year of effectiveness monitoring which will again focus on vegetation diversity, water chemistry, and fish species utilization in the spring, summer and fall.

Jennifer Lamoureux

## WHY YOU SHOULDN'T BLOW OR RAKE AUTUMN LEAVES INTO OTTY LAKE

How do you get rid of the fall leaves? It seems so easy just to blow them or rake them into the lake and the problem goes away, but is it really a good idea? I did a quick web search and found a number of lake associations and municipalities in the States that recommend against it, some even have laws against it, so maybe we should think twice.

First, consider the nutrient content of leaves: Otty Lake has a problem with nutrient load – why we have so much growth of water plants and algae – and blowing the leaves into the lake fertilizes the water in front of your property. Second, leaf decomposition starts by depleting oxygen, and when that runs out, continues as anaerobic decomposition mediated by bacteria and fungi. The bottom of Otty Lake is typically low in oxygen to start, so leaves are virtually guaranteed to undergo anaerobic decomposition, producing sulfurous

compounds (the source of that rotten egg smell when you disturb the mud) and slimy black ooze. According to some lake associations, their shallow bays have been rapidly filling up by being overloaded with leaves and resultant muck.

OK, what's the alternative? If you have a lawn, mulch your leaves into dime-sized pieces by passing the lawn mower over it – several times if necessary. Even the Scotts Lawn care website recommends it (<https://www.scotts.com/en-us/library/lawn-care-basics/dont-rake-those-leaves-mulch-them-your-lawn>). This will enrich your lawn and you'll have less (if any) need to fertilize it, and mulching typically takes much less time and effort than leaf blowing or raking. The Nature Conservancy of Canada goes one step further and recommends that you don't even mulch the leaves. If you don't have

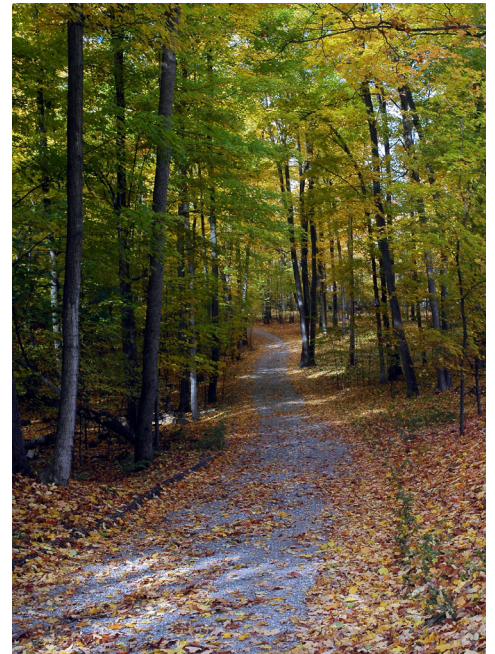


Photo: Derek Smith

a lawn, rake or blow them into the forest or bush. It is natural to have some leaves fall into the lake, the aim is simply to maintain a balance so that most of the nutrients that trees took up via their roots will be returned to the soil and stay out of our lake.

Bruce Smith

## MICROPLASTICS COMING TO A LAKE NEAR YOU

We've been hearing a lot about microplastics appearing just about everywhere in our environment – oceans, arctic ice, fish, air, drinking water, shoreline sediments and more – and it would appear freshwater lakes in Eastern Ontario, such as Otty Lake, are not immune.

A study led by Jean-Pierre (JP) Thonney took 270 samples from nine inland lakes in the Madawaska, Mississippi and Tay River watersheds between June and September 2019. It was determined that artificial materials (including fibres, fragments, and plastic film) were present in more than 90% of samples. [Read more on the study.](#)

Plastic debris enters the environment from a variety of sources, but the pieces less than 5 mm (0.2 inches or about the size of a sesame seed) in length are known as microplastic. Primary microplastics are defined as any solid plastic fragments 5 mm in size or less before entering the environment, such as microfibres from clothing, microbeads and plastic pellets. Secondary microplastics are microplastics that are created from the degradation of larger plastic products through natural weathering processes. Plastic water bottles, fishing nets, and plastic bags are examples of this.

Unfortunately, once microplastics are in the water they are there to stay. They degrade very slowly, can soak up pollutants, and release the additives used in their production. Fish and birds ingest the plastics, and they move their way up the food chain. The effect on human health is not well-understood, but it is concerning.

How these plastics are entering our lakes is not completely clear. We do know that microplastics can be transported long distances through the atmosphere and can be just falling into the lake. A large component of microplastics is the small fibres that are shed from synthetic textiles such as clothing, carpet, and upholstery.



Photo: Lake Ontario Water Keeper

Fibres that come off your clothes in the wash will end up in water systems. Just as municipal waste water systems cannot trap microfibres, nor do septic systems. A portion of the microfibres will settle into the sludge at the bottom of the septic tank and be removed when the tank is pumped out. But the particles in the liquid that is pumped out through the bed are too small to be trapped by gravel and sand, and make their way into groundwater and surface water.

### So what can you do?

Start with the obvious: Reduce your use of plastics wherever possible, especially single use plastics. Recycle whatever plastics you can. Don't litter, especially don't let any plastic waste in the lake (or any other water body). This applies to cigarette butts, too, smokers! Do not release balloons – they eventually fall back to earth. Take a look at anything you are using in the water. If any water toys or pontoons are shedding, maybe it is time to discard them. Microbeads in cosmetics are being banned in many jurisdictions, so while microbeads present in the environment won't go away, soon we will not be adding to that concentration.

Reduce your contribution to microfibres with your clothing choices and care. Choose natural fibres, buy durable well-constructed clothes, and shop second-hand and consignment stores. Wash clothes only when necessary, do full loads, don't wash with hard items, use colder water and slower spin cycles, avoid laundry powders and bleach, and buy a front loading washer next time you

replace yours. When you clean your lint trap, put the lint in the garbage, not down your sink. There are new products out there that can help, like [Guppyfriend](#) laundry washing bags, the [Cora Ball](#) you can throw in your washing machine to trap lint, or [Lint Luv-R](#), a filter for washing machine effluent.

A couple of microplastic sources not often mentioned: Tires and paint. Tire wear contributes to microfibres, so yet another reason to choose a lighterweight vehicle for less tire wear, and to drive less. Paint residues release microplastics, so avoid rinsing a paintbrushes under a tap, and collect residue when sanding painted surfaces.

Until we know the full repercussions of microplastics in lake environments, let's do our best to eliminate the sources we can. There will be no easy way of removing the microplastics that have already accumulated.

### Here are a few useful references if you'd like to find out more.

- Microplastics in freshwater environments presentation from Nanna Brande-Lavridsen of the University of Tennessee: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-01/documents/microplastics-in-freshwater-environment.pdf>
- Tips on what you can do: <https://www.glo-be.be/en/articles/14-tips-prevent-plastic-pollution>
- Microplastics and septic systems: <https://georgianbayforever.org/microfiber-septic-systems/>

Barb Hicks

## LAKE PARTNER PROGRAM SAFE FROM BUDGET CUTS FOR ANOTHER YEAR



Murray Hunt using a secchi disc to assess lake water clarity.

The Lake Partner Program is a volunteer-based water-quality monitoring program for Ontario's inland lakes coordinated by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (OMEC) in partnership with the [Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations \(FOCA\)](#). Each year, more than 600 volunteers monitor water quality in almost 550 inland lakes at over 800 sampling locations.

Otty Lake has participated in the program since it began in 1996. Former Lake Steward Murray Hunt was our designated volunteer from 2004 to 2018, and Derek Smith did the sampling this past year. At the start of the season the volunteers are sent a large box containing separate kits for each month with the bottles and equipment necessary to conduct water clarity measurements and take water samples. Samples for phosphorus are taken six times a year at Otty Lake and once at McLaren Lake. Calcium levels are also determined and Secchi depths recorded. The samples are returned, postage paid, to the Dorset Environmental Science Centre for analysis. The data for all participating lakes is published on the provincial [Lake Partner Program webpage](#); the 2019 data will be available later this month.

Emily Shapiera from FOCA described Lake Partner trends at October's Lake Links; [you can access her presentation here](#). Murray Hunt

explained that the program is really popular with lake associations, because it is free, easy, and there are no barriers to participation. The result is a great collection of data that a lake association can use to monitor water quality and compare itself to other lakes.

FOCA reported in its April 2019 analysis of the province's 2019 budget that the program was safe for 2019 but was considered vulnerable to elimination for 2020. FOCA began campaigning to ensure the program would continue. FOCA's Executive Director and Vice President of the Board of Directors met with program partners at the MECP, Emily Shapiera was contracted to raise awareness of the program, and FOCA members were encouraged to write letters to their MPs.

In mid-December, FOCA received news that the program would continue in a letter from the Assistant Deputy Minister of MECP, which stated:

*"The Lake Partner Program collects important water quality information from hundreds of lakes across the province, raises awareness of environmental stewardship and promotes citizen science. Without the work and support of FOCA, its members and dedicated volunteers, the ministry would not be able to collect the type and breadth of water quality information needed to understand and protect the health of our inland waters. As such, I am pleased to inform you that the ministry intends to continue its collaboration with FOCA and financially supporting this relationship."*

Proof that it frequently pays to speak up!



Presidents message continued

specific and for good reason. Every time we remove "weeds" from the lake, no matter what process, we tend to be indiscriminate and remove natural vegetation along with invasive species and arguably invertebrates and other tiny life forms important to the life cycle of our lake. And the pollywogs and fish have to move on!

As we exercise our stewardship of Otty we need to be mindful of all aspects that make up a truly wonderful, healthy, natural experience. Greta Thunberg, Time Magazine's Person of the Year spoke to the United Nations about how older generations, in her opinion, have failed her generation. I would like to think that we have not totally failed when it comes to stewardship on Otty Lake. We have seen small improvements in water quality, our chemical and physical limnology measurements continue as do our other stewardship programs. Your OLA is always in search of ideas that will improve the quality of life for all, both above and below the water. If you have any ideas on how we can do better, please share.

As a wiser person than me once said, we didn't inherit the land (and water), we borrowed it from our children.

I love our lake. Now off for another coffee on this beautiful winter day on Otty.

Reid

# SHORELINE PLANTING PROGRAM IS BACK FOR 2020!

The Otty Lake Association is pleased to announce that the ever popular Shoreline Planting Project will be again offered to our residents. Thanks to our partners at the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA), we are able to offer a large discount on a number of trees and shrubs this year. The following species will be available for preorder:

## Trees:

White Birch (1 gallon pot)  
Tamarack (1 gallon pot)  
Sugar Maple (1 gallon pot)

## Shrubs:

Highbush Cranberry (1 gallon pot)  
Black Elderberry (5" fibre pot)  
Nannyberry (1 gallon pot)



*Highbush Cranberry*

To pre-order please contact Eileen Johnston at (613) 264-2910 or [613johnston@gmail.com](mailto:613johnston@gmail.com). Please pay cash at pickup, and bring exact change if you can. Quantities are limited, so place your order by April 5, 2020. An order form will be available on our website and will be sent to our email list shortly.

**Pickup day will be  
Saturday, June 13  
at 183 Mile Point Road.**

## 2019-2020 Board Members

- President - Krista Hearty McLean
- Past President - Reid Kilburn
- Recording & Board Secretary - Jacquie Mallory
- Treasurer - Christine Kilburn
- Communications Secretary - Monika Savage
- Lake Activities Projects - Ian McDonald
- Loon Surveys - Kyla Haley
- Log Coordinator & Webmaster - Barb Hicks
- Director - Rachel Roth
- Director - Anne Scotton
- Director - Robert Cosh
- Director - Cathy Kari
- Director - Linda Cuthbertson
- Director - Kirsten Brouse
- Director - Kevin Terrion

If you would like to get in touch with any of these Board Members, please send an e-mail to [ola@ottylakeassociation.ca](mailto:ola@ottylakeassociation.ca) identifying who it is you would like to reach and it will be redirected.

## IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR



### Otty Lake Association

### 2020 Membership Form—Please note new rate!

Your prompt renewal would be much appreciated, as our expenses occur year round.

Return to:  
Otty Lake Association  
Box 20122, Perth ON  
K7H 3M6

- By Cheque. Return the completed form and a \$25 cheque (payable to the OLA) via your Area Counsellor or Canada Post.
- By E-Transfer. The e-mail address to use is [financial@ottylakeassociation.ca](mailto:financial@ottylakeassociation.ca) for the security question, enter "nearest town". The answer to the question is "PerthON". If you are a new member, please provide your contact information in the comments. If you are renewing, please provide any changes to your contact information in the comments.

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City : \_\_\_\_\_ Prov/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email delivery of your Captain Otty's Log newsletter helps keep our costs down. We do not share our email list with other organizations, and you can unsubscribe at any time. Please check:

- I am receiving OLA emails.    
  Please add me to the email list    
  Send Log by Canada Post  
 Call me about volunteering for the OLA.

*Thanks for your support!*

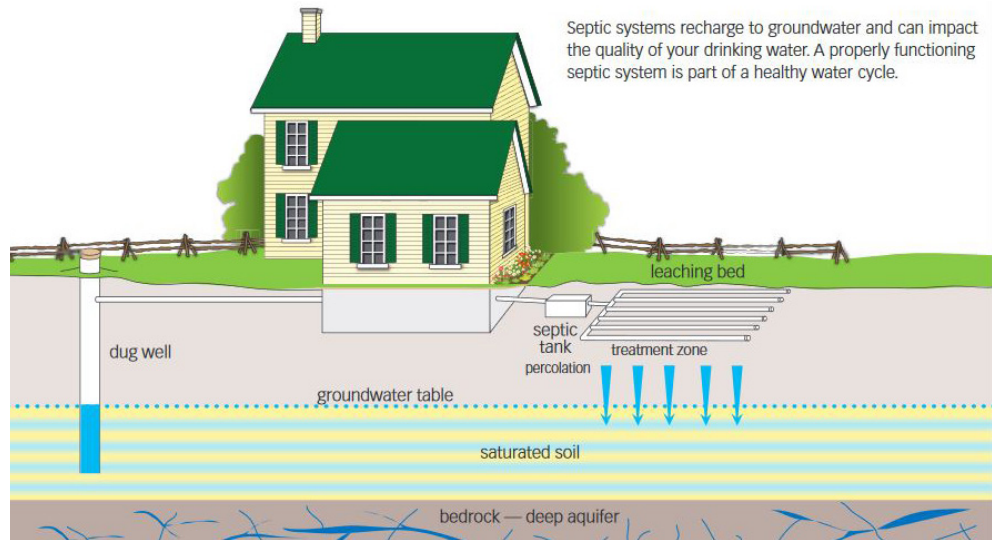
## SEPTIC REINSPECTIONS SAFEGUARD WATER QUALITY

If you have recently built, or done a major renovation on your residence, you will have been in contact with the Mississippi Rideau Septic System Office (MRSSO). The MRSSO issues permits for and inspects sewage systems for properties within the Mississippi and Rideau Valley watersheds. It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure that their sewage system is working properly, not only for their health, but also that of the surrounding community and environment.

The Mississippi and Rideau Valley Conservation Authorities also offer a Septic System Re-inspection program to interested municipalities through the Mississippi Rideau Septic System Office. This re-inspection program gives property owners the confidence that their system is operating properly — avoiding contamination of surface and groundwater. Under the Ontario Building Code, the municipalities can choose to run a voluntary septic system re-inspection program or a discretionary program with mandatory inspections. Property owners under the mandatory component are required to participate in the program when their property has been identified, whereas property owners under the voluntary component can choose whether or not to participate.

In Tay Valley and Drummond/North Elmsley townships the municipalities choose a mandatory program on a lake only if it can be determined that the lake community is supportive of the concept. As a result, Otty Lake properties that fall in Tay Valley and Drummond North/Elmsley townships have mandatory septic system re-inspection programs. The municipalities have the authority to require that a re-inspection take place on systems older than nine years. Once all the systems are inspected, they will be re-inspected on a ten year cycle.

Tay Valley Township led the way in 2000 with a pilot visual inspection program on Christie Lake which expanded to include all waterbodies in its jurisdiction, then added an internal inspection of the tank com-



ponent. Up until late 2011, property owner participation was voluntary. In 2012 a pilot mandatory inspection program was initiated for Otty and six other lakes in Tay Valley: Adam Lake, Bennett Lake, Bob's Lake, Darren Lake, Long Lake and Pike Lake. By 2015 all of the qualifying properties had been inspected. The other lakes in Tay Valley have voluntary septic re-inspection programs.

To read about the results of the [Tay Valley 2019 inspection program](#), see the minutes of the January 28, 2020 Tay Valley Township Meeting, pages 33 to 38.

Drummond/North Elmsley (D/NE) Township and the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Health Unit established a voluntary septic re-inspection program for Otty Lake shoreline properties in 2008. In 2009, the MRSSO began to conduct the D/NE re-inspections, and the D/NE Township Septic System Re-inspection Program became mandatory in 2012. All properties over 10 years old were inspected by the end of 2014, a total of 139 properties in DNE. If a faulty system was found, it was dealt with by the Health Unit. The Health Unit will be supplying to the township a list of properties that require a mandatory inspection. These properties will have septic systems that are at least ten years old and that have been installed either due to a system failure or re-development of a property.

The commitment of Tay Valley Drummond/North Elmsley to the mandatory septic re-inspection program is greatly appreciated. Not all lakes have this! The water quality of Otty Lake benefits from having this safeguard in place.

*Barb Hicks*



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  
Proofing: Don Beattie  
Distribution: Christine Kilburn, Shari and Don Beattie  
Layout and Design: David Bromley

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.

## Christmas Bird Count.

The results of the 2019 Rideau Ferry Christmas Bird Count (CBC) are available online. Apparently the weather was pretty awful on December 14, 2019 yet 46 species were tallied, comprising some 5724 individuals. Two new species observed were Lesser Black-backed and Iceland Gulls. If you are looking at the tally, note that Section 1 takes in the north and northeastern parts of Otty, and the south and western Shore are within Section 2. Read the [Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists summary](#), which includes a link to the actual tally.

## Backyard Bird Count.

Coming up February 14-17, 2020 is the 23rd annual [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) (GBBC), a free and fun event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings. You can participate from your backyard or anywhere in the world!



Photo: Rick Stojak

## State of the Lake.

In case you missed our email notice, our annual State of the Lake report is now available, covering 2019 conditions and activities. The report was a collaborative effort compiled by Murray Hunt. A few highlights: The year began with higher than usual water levels that declined steadily to mid-October. Bacteria testing indicates the water is safe for swimming. There was a significant growth of aquatic vegetation in shallow bays, however there were no large algal blooms around the lake. No new in-

vasive species were noted, and it was great to see three loon chicks. [Read the full report.](#)

## Radon Kits Available Through Health Unit.

Radon test kits are now available through the [Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit](#) for just \$20. The meter included needs to be left in place for three months and then sent to a lab for results. The kits are available at the Brockville and Smiths Falls offices. This area of Ontario has higher than average radon levels, and several residences on Otty Lake have been found to be over the 200 becquerels per cubic meter (Bq/m<sup>3</sup>) limit. It is worth testing your home as radon has been found to be the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. Remediation is in the \$2000 - \$3000 range, and should be addressed by a certified professional. The OLA organized a radon information session last April 1, and the Health Unit held several this past November during Radon Awareness Month. [REAL](#), a local non-profit, has several meters it can lend for two week periods, but there is a waiting list.

## Security Cameras.

If you've been considering security cameras for your lakefront residence, [read these tips](#) regarding their placement. Besides the cottage itself you may want to point a camera to the laneway so you can see arrivals, and have a camera aimed at boats or other stored valuables so you can have evidence in case of theft. Some illuminators may be necessary to get usable footage at night.

## Shift Happens.

The Shift Happens Perth environmental film series organized by [Biosphere Environmental Education](#) continues. The remaining documentaries are "The Last Ocean" March 14, "Racing Extinction" April 4 and "A Plastic Ocean" May 9. Each film is followed by a mixer with local experts in the theatre lobby. In addition, "Racing

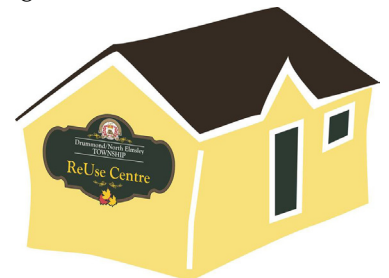


Photo: Mary Brown

Extinction" will be followed by a panel discussion. The first two films were "Food Waste" (November) and "Chasing Ice" (February). Tickets are \$15 and are available at the Studio Theatre office or online at [ticketsplease.ca](#) (a service charge will be applied to the ticket price.)

## D/NE Reuse Store and Tay Re-Use Centre.

D/NE residents are likely aware of the Reuse Store at the Code Road landfill site. But did you know that while only D/NE resident can donate materials to the store, anyone is welcome to shop there? Even Tay Valley residents! All items on display are free, so you can't beat the prices. The store is open the same hours as the landfill site: Monday, Tuesday and Friday 10 – 5; and Saturdays 10 – 1 (November to April) and 9 – 3 (May to October). The address is 745 Code Rd, not far off Hwy. 7, about 10 km from Perth. Tay Valley Township has its own Re-Use Centre at the Glen Tay Waste Site, 156 Muttons Road operated by volunteers during waste site hours. Hours are Wednesday and Saturday 8 – 4 during the winter, and additionally Monday 8 – 4 and Sunday 10 – 6 from the Victoria Day weekend until the Thanksgiving weekend. The Centre is strictly for Tay Valley residents, and reselling of the free items is discouraged.



## COTTAGE MICE COOKIES



This recipe from [Cottage Life Magazine](#) was featured online recently. It would make a fun little project for the kids or grandkids some wintery afternoon. This dough is done in a frying pan and no baking is required.

- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 1/2 cups chopped pitted dates
- 1 1/4 cups crisp rice cereal
- 1/2 cup desiccated coconut
- 1/2 cup chopped candied cherries
- 1/2 cup chopped almonds
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2/3 cup desiccated coconut

### For decoration:

licorice whips, sliced almonds, and small round candies.

In a large greased frying pan, mix eggs, brown sugar, and dates. Cook over medium heat, stirring often until thick (8–10 minutes). Remove from heat.

1. Stir in cereal, 1/2 cup (125 ml) coconut, cherries, chopped almonds, and vanilla. Chill about 30 minutes, until mixture is easy to shape.
2. Form into 1" (2.5 cm) balls. Pinch one end of each ball to make the nose of the mouse. Roll in coconut.

3. Decorate the mice: Make a hole with a skewer at the rounded end of each mouse and insert a piece of licorice whip for the tail, squeezing mixture lightly around licorice to hold it in place. At the other end, insert 2 sliced almonds for ears and small round candies for eyes.
4. Store mice in an airtight container in a cool place. (They will keep for at least a month.) Makes about 40 small mice, but bigger might be better if your decorative bits are large.

### Comments:

- Butter or lightly oil your hands to keep the mixture from sticking as you shape the mice
- Improve with whatever decorative bits you have on hand. Peanuts or slivered almonds make good ears for smaller mice. We used leftover gingerbread house kit materials for eyes, but chocolate chips or half raisins work too. We used thin apricot slices for tails. You could also cut up fruit bark or use chow mein noodles.
- If you like the mice idea but not this particular flavour, you can make [chocolate mice](#) or paler, [almond flavoured](#) ones.

## PITCH-IN 2020

It is that time of year when we like to think of Spring, when the snow has gone and we can see all the garbage that has accumulated along the roads of our Lake. Pitch-In 2020 is April 19-26, when the snow has gone and the verges are drier. Those who so generously volunteered to clean up the roads around Otty last year and would like to do it again, please e-mail me at [lizofthelake44@gmail.com](mailto:lizofthelake44@gmail.com), so the same road does not get done twice. Or I will e-mail you if you forget. Thank you.

*Elizabeth Allcock*



*Photo: Cynthia Struthers*

## LOOKING WAY AHEAD

A few 2020 dates to note:  
Sun. Jul. 12 – OLA AGM  
Sat. Aug. 15 – PaddlePower & Family Picnic 2020  
Sat. Oct. 24 – Lake Links