



DRIFTWORDS

Serving the Rideau Since 1911 • From Poonamalie to Narrows Lock

Spring -Summer 2004

What's Inside

President's Pen
Treasurer Report
Membership
Environmental Programs
Recreation, Youth and
Children's Programs
Rideau Lakes Environment
Fund (RLEF)



THE BRLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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PRESIDENT'S PEN

Thank you for renewing and becoming a member of our diverse and active lake association for the 2004 season. Membership continues to grow as we expand on new and creative initiatives on your behalf.

During the chilly months, our volunteers have been planning all kinds of exciting programs in many areas of the association. Recently, we've begun to work more closely with local governments and sporting groups like Portland Outdoors and Rideau Lakes Township to foster new and exciting leisure activities.

The recreation committee has loads of fun planned again this year. Our ever popular Regatta on Cow Island, summer day camp, teen dances and fireworks to mention a few are all in high gear. Check our web site for updates later in the season.

Our shoal marker contractor, Lamont Brown, installed our markers in early May. The Big Rideau Lake Association (BRLA) builds and maintains over 104 of these Canadian Coast Guard approved markers throughout the lake each year. Our environmental initiatives are on track too. Water testing, loon platforms and other programs will soon be under way.

Your generous support is very important to the vitality of The Big Rideau Lake Association. Annual donations to the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation (RLEF) and BRLA membership go a long way to make the quality of life in our community outstanding.

I want to personally thank all current and past members and encourage your participation in BRLA. If you have been holding off from renewing your membership, there couldn't be a better time than now. Please become a member.

Bob Evans

Take NOTICE

**The Big Rideau Lake
Association**

Annual General Meeting

Saturday July 10th
10:00am
Portland
Community Hall

All Welcome



TREASURER'S REPORT

On March 31 the BRLA finished our 2003/04 fiscal year with a **balanced operating budget** of slightly less than \$50,000.00. This reflects the scaled back operations of our Association, moving from a staff of over 50 and budget of over \$476,000.00 in 2002/03, to a much smaller scale of operation that depends largely upon the volunteer services of members. Nonetheless, the core services of BRLA have all been maintained. In addition, the recreational programs for children and youth based on Cow Island, a sailing program, and other activities were also added to the menu of BRLA programs in 2003. We owe a debt of gratitude to the hard work of BRLA and RLEF Directors, and their committees that helped deliver our programs.

It is also important to recognize that your membership dues only pay for basic fixed operating costs of our association, as the table below reflects. Based on the 2004 budget, this table demonstrates where membership dollars will be spent:

<u>Fixed Operating Costs</u>	<u>Allocation of \$60. Membership</u>	<u>% of dues</u>
Dry-Dock (taxes, hydro, mortgage)	\$15.24	25.4%
Insurance	\$12.78	21.3%
Communications (Driftwords & Web Page)	\$11.46	19.1%
Shoal markers	\$6.54	10.9%
Cow Island (taxes)	\$4.50	7.5%
Audit	\$3.54	5.9%
Phone	\$3.06	5.1%
Bank fees	\$1.50	2.5%
Total fixed costs funded through member dues	\$58.62	97.70%
Discretionary funds from membership	\$1.38	2.30%
Total membership dues	\$60.00	100%

In fact, other BRLA programs rely almost *completely upon generous additional donations* from our members. The Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation (RLEF) is able to provide charitable tax receipts for contributions towards our environmental programs. Other BRLA programs such as the Canada Day Fireworks and Cow Island children and youth programs must also rely on the generous additional contributions from our members.

I would like to thank the membership for their support in 2003 and would encourage you to participate again in the summer of 2004. We welcome your assistance to recruit new members to our Association, and will rely on your continuing generosity to help maintain BRLA programming. Audited financial statements will be available for the AGM in July, and I will look forward to presenting a more comprehensive report to you at that time.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT



The BRLA is a non-profit organization that depends upon your membership to survive. Collectively, we are able to conduct a variety of programmes. Each member has a vote and is encouraged to run for office. Family members are welcomed and hopefully will take part in as many of the BRLA activities as possible.

It is encouraging to see new membership applications as well as previous members from the past plus last year members renewing their commitment to the BRLA.

As of June 2nd the 2004 membership is 270. Our target is 450 members.

We need every member to promote the BRLA and welcome new members to join. Passing on a membership application to a neighbour or friend would be a significant help. Applications are available on the BRLA WEB site www.brla.on.ca , at Dry Dock or by contacting Doug MacGillivray (613) 822-1135; email dtmacgillivray@sympatico.ca.



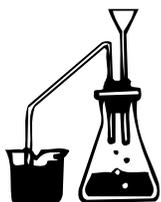
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Let me introduce your committee members: Pat Chamberlain, Noëlle Caloren, Graham Mowat, Roy Sampson, Janet White, Shirley Wimperis. We always welcome your interest. Each area of the lake has its own characteristic features, and we definitely want to hear from you so that we can be aware of shoreline owners' concerns. Speak to us, leave a message at Dry Dock, or E-mail environment@brla.on.ca. We invite you to become a member of the committee. Or, if you have a particular interest in one of our program areas, share your interest and expertise and join a subcommittee.

Fall Survey 2003 Replies from 82 members have helped us plan the 2004 projects and gave us a good sense of what is important to you. The priority order of replies was:

	<u>High</u>	<u>Med.</u>	<u>Low</u>
Water Quality	67	7	0
Loon platforms	49	25	1
Loon Watchers	36	32	8
Fish Lead Free	45	24	7
Boat Launch Signs	33	30	12
Bass Education	38	26	12
Bass Spawning Monitoring	22	34	13

Major issues/problems: 1) boat and seadoo speed and noise 2) fishing matters especially illegal early bass fishing 3) zebra mussels 4) shoreline erosion 5) poor septic systems 6) weeds. The committee heard and will attend to these concerns.



Water Testing: Water quality has been getting better over recent years, partly due to improvements in Westport's sewage treatment. In 2004, testing will continue at the regular deep-water sites, as well as 4 shallow sites and 5 in Portland Bay. In addition we will be measuring total phosphorous, E.coli, and total suspended solids in 5 stormwater outlets in Portland during three rain events. This will follow up previous testing done in 2002. This report and the 2003 Water Testing Report will be available to you in Dry Dock this summer.

Noisy Boats – New Regulations and What You Can Do About It



Many lake residents of the Rideau Lakes have complained about the excessive noise coming from an increasing number of big boats on our lake – usually because they are not equipped with mufflers. Provincial regulations established a year ago – under the Small Vessels Regulations of the Canada Shipping Act – now charge owners of any boats built after Jan 1 1960 which do not divert their exhaust underwater to be equipped with a muffler. Violators will be charged up to \$2,000 in fines and could face court charges.

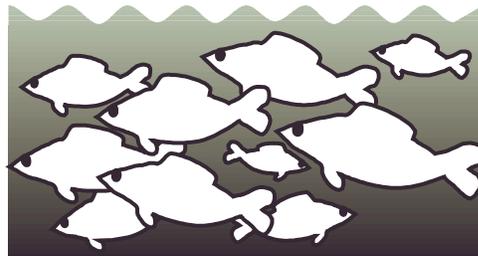
Noisy boats on Big Rideau Lake can be reported to the Ontario Provincial Police, Gananoque detachment, at 613-382-2195.

Provide a description, name and location of the boat in question. With a bit of vigilance we should be able to make our lake life more pleasant for all.



Loon Watchers: Loon Watcher kits for 2004 have all been sent out. If you have not received yours, or if you would like to become a Loon Watcher, please *contact Janet White at 272-2123*, who will be pleased to add you the list. Our data is shared with Canadian Lakes Loon Survey (CLLS) contributing to national statistics. The goal is to preserve loon by increasing our understanding of them and of human impact on them. Volunteers are essential to achieving this goal.

Fishing News: The BRLA continues to promote healthy fish populations on our lake. By now, members should have the Bass Watch and Bass Out of Season brochures. We hope this got you watching for bass spawning sites and remind you that the report form can be mailed in or dropped off at Dry Dock. **We have also installed posters at 11 boat launches** and will continue the Fish Lead Free program at local bait shops. Later on look for our revised Trout Brochure which will help identify native lake trout as opposed to stocked lake trout, and will include guidelines on catch and release.



Living by Water



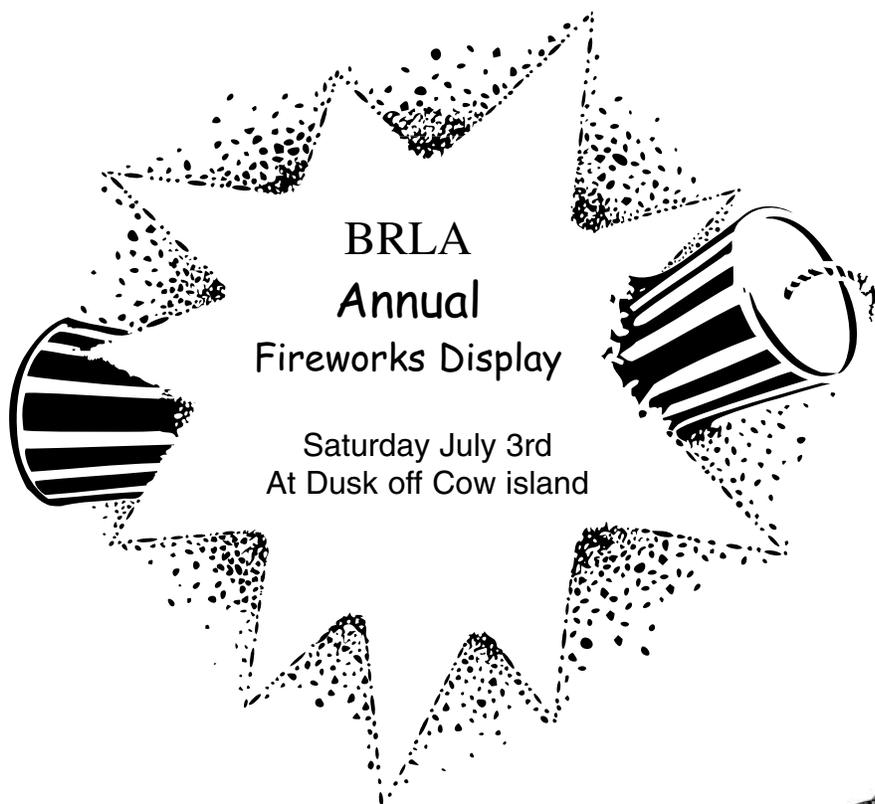
The shoreline is sometimes called the ribbon of life and the Living by Water program shows us how to protect and nurture the incredible variety of plant and animal life that abounds there. In the letter from the EC Committee you were invited to a Shoreline Workshop on Saturday, June 19th. Please remember to register at [BRLA 613-272-3629](mailto:environment@brla.on.ca) or environment@brla.on.ca. Space is limited!

Many useful brochures related to the Living by Water project will be available in Dry Dock as will the book *On the Living Edge: Your Handbook for Waterfront Living*. It contains tips about how to protect your shoreline, the water quality and wildlife habitat. Come in to browse.

Members Support Fireworks!!

Thanks to member donations BRLA has been able to continue the popular **Canada Day Fireworks** at Cow Island. Since membership fees are not able to cover this cost -- an extra \$5 from every BRLA member (added on membership form or sent in separately) -- goes a long way to ensuring this tradition will continue beyond 2004.

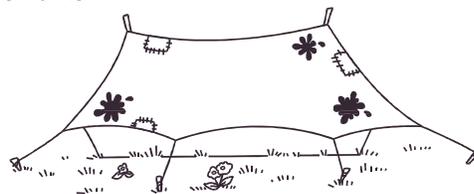
Thanks to Mike Fraser and his able **crew** for organizing this unique event. Come on out to enjoy the fireworks on July 3rd 2004 to Cow Island 9:30 pm!!



RECREATION PROGRAMS – SUMMER 2004

As usual, the BRLA summer gets off to a rip-roaring start with the Annual Fireworks display on Saturday, July 3 at Cow Island, 09:30pm!

The BRLA is also pleased to announce that this year's Recreation Program Coordinator will be Jessica Long from Portland, assisted by Darcy McCarney of Adam Lake. Jessica has just completed her first year at university, while Darcy graduates from high school this June. Jessica and Darcy will be assisted by three other young staff: Sam Foster, Jen Kirk and Katie Leishman.



Again this year, the emphasis is on programs for kids. These programs – Children's Day Camp; Wacky Wednesdays and Teen Friday Nights – are open to all children and teenagers from the lake and surrounding area. Family membership in the BRLA is expected for regular participants, but guests are always welcome. We do depend on donations beyond the basic membership to sustain these programs – mainly to cover the costs of staffing.

The Recreation Programs of the BRLA provide a relaxed and fun atmosphere for our children and young people to enjoy the lake, meet each other and grow up together. We are pleased to have Stephanie Fournier, of Chantry, heading the sub-committee in charge of programs this summer. **If you have any questions regarding programs or activities, please contact Stephanie at (613) 928 289.**

The BRLA operates all of its recreational activities from Cow Island, including the Annual Regatta (July 31 this year). Cow Island is a beautiful locale and an asset which we hope to improve for the future. *Doug Arrand* is leading a sub-committee dedicated to developing the island and preparing a master plan for the future. If you would like to assist Doug in this area, please contact him at (613) 531 0111.

Below you will find more detailed information about each program as well as the Sailing. A special note to parents/guardians: please complete and return the information sheet for your children who will participate in programs this summer. This form can be downloaded from the BRLA website brla.on.ca or from the BRLA Dry Dock office in Portland.

Check your enclosed copy of the Calendar of Events for program details and dates.

Annual Regatta

The BRLA is pleased to sponsor once again the Annual Regatta - scheduled for Saturday July 31. The program commences with registration from 10:30am -11:00am with races - swimming, canoeing, starting at 11:00am.

Presentations of awards will be complete by 3:00pm. Around noon, a barbecue and salad lunch will be served to all participants and spectators.

All the events will take place at Cow Island. Transportation to and from the Govt. dock will be provided as follows: Depart 10:15am, return 3:30pm.

This will be a great day for the entire family. *see you there!*



Did You Know?

Your association was the first to have its shoal markers recognized by the Canadian Coast Guard and they are shown on all official navigational charts.

*The Annual
Regatta*

*July 31st, 2004
on Cow Island*

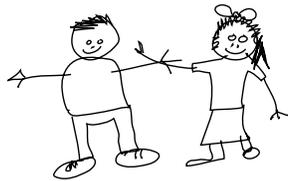
*Registration at 10:30
Regatta begins at 11 AM*

Please bring your own canoe





Children's Day Camp



The BRLA Children's Program commences its 2004 season on Tue. July 6. The program will run three mornings a week - Tue, Thu and Sat - from 09:00 to 12:00. The program is open to all school age children, up to age 11. Transportation will be provided from the Govt. Dock in Portland, departing at 08:45 and returning at 12:15.

Make sure that your kids bring a bathing suit, towel, sun screen, hat, etc. as well as a snack and drink if they wish.

Remember that we try to provide a safe, supervised swimming and sports environment; however, our staff do not necessarily have Life Saving certificates, so we invite parents to participate in the supervision of the swimming if they wish. Also, if you have any special requests (such as the wearing of life jackets) please let our staff know. Forms for this purpose will be available at the BRLA Dry Dock office or can be downloaded from the BRLA website.

This year we have an exciting program led by Darcy McCarney, featuring special Themes on Saturdays and Crafts each Tuesday.

Our staff look forward to welcoming your children and grandchildren this summer. We are sure your kids will have lots of fun! Check the enclosed Calendar of Events for further details on each day's activities.

Sailing Program



Saturday sailing races continue at Cow Island! The weekend series commences Saturday July 10. The program offers a set of three to four races each Saturday afternoon from 2:00pm-4:30pm. The race course is relatively short and affords an opportunity for all skill levels to enjoy themselves and to practice their sailing skills.

Normally, the racing fleet is made up of enthusiastic Laser sailors, but sailboats of all types are welcome! The Annual Sailing Regatta, with fun, sailing and exciting awards, takes place Saturday afternoon, Aug. 21. 2004.

Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation (RLEF)

Individual donations through RLEF's Fall appeal again ensure that \$7,500 is available for Environment Committee projects on Rideau Lake this season. Your giving to RLEF qualify for a charitable tax receipt and 100% of those dollars support valuable environmental work on your lake that would otherwise not be done.

You may forward your donations to:
P.O. Box 159, Portland ON, K0G 1V0.

BRLA has been invited to participate in an Integrated Stormwater Management Study for Land-Restricted Lakeside Villages. Full details will be forthcoming, but **Portland** has been **selected** for the study and we are fortunate to have been included.

DRY-DOCK

Open for business
June, July and August

11:00 am - 4:00 pm
Saturday and Sundays.

Please phone first. 272-3629

*Navigational Charts
Souvenirs • Soaps
BRLA Ware
kids water toys.*

Cheap prices too!!

Please support your store



Wacky Wednesdays

Once again we are repeating the world renowned Wacky Wednesday program for kids from 12 to 16 inclusive. Last year, we had many enthusiastic participants! We are very pleased that Jessica Long will be leading the program again – a program which promises to be better than ever. The first event will be held Wed July 7, from 02:00pm to 4:30pm, at Cow Island: swimming, games and a surprise contest. Bring a bathing suit and towel!

Wacky Wednesdays continue throughout July and August – see the calendar of events for further details.



Teen Friday Evening Program

Last year's Friday night teen program at Cow Island was a great success – especially the theme dances. The first event this year will be a movie night, Friday July 9, followed the next week by a Dance – Disco Night. Friday night events take place from 09:00pm – 12:00pm. All teens are welcome.

There are other teen dance nights and a movie nights on the Calendar. These are teen organized events for teens – promises to be a great way to meet friends and have a good time.

Invasive Species Zebra mussels — if they would only go away! But, alas they are here to stay!. These filter feeders lead to clearer, deeper sunlight penetration and increased algae and weed growth. We expect a cycle pattern as the zebra mussel population grows beyond sustainability, dies out, then starts again.

Other invasive species in the Great Lakes will likely be transported into the Rideau Waterway. So be alert and spread the news about washing boats and equipment before launching in different waters.

Dry-dock Uncertainty



Several years ago, the Dry-dock building on Colborn Street in Portland was purchased with the generous help of many individuals. During that time, the building underwent renovations and was host to numerous government funded environmental programs sponsored by BRLA and its partners. The programs helped finance some of the up keep and running costs of the facility. Last year, the main tenant, Centre for Sustainable Watersheds (CSW) moved into its own building in Portland.

Today, your membership currently contributes 25% to the operating costs to maintain dry-dock and it is costing us too much to keep it open, even with volunteers. We need your ideas.

FACTS: Dry-Dock requires renovations to make it attractive to prospective renters. I.e. paint, carpets, landscaping, hardware etc. If we could somehow afford to maintain Dry-Dock, there are obvious pluses to the place. It is a home where directors meet to discuss day to day operations of your association. We have a handy site where members can stop in and sign up for memberships and make inquiries. The store offers a variety of useful items for sale. If our mortgage was paid off approx. 14K, we could probably keep the building and operate it with volunteers and eventually paid staff.

Please bring your comments to the AGM in July so that we may discuss the future of dry-dock.

WANTED

We require a creative person to layout our newsletters. Driftwords has been known as a recognized leader in design, content and overall easy to read format.

We'll even supply you with a cool iMac computer, training and all the sweetest software you'll need. Including Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer, iMovie, iTunes and



QuarkXpress the awesome page layout program.

If you are interested in this task, please call Bob Evans. (613) 825-2437 or weekends

(613) 272-2208

Tip of the Hat

BRLA extends appreciation and thanks to Rideau Reality for property assessment for Cow Island and Dry-dock. No Fee.

Paul Vanluven for winterizing Dry-dock. Don Wills for donating top soil for our garden at Dry-dock.

Thanks a mill!!



Rideau Township Summer Day Camps and Swimming Lessons

"RIDEAU LAKES DAY CAMP" will run from Sand Lake Park on Sand Lake. Open to boys and girls from 4 to 13 yrs, the cost is \$50/wk which includes bus transportation from local communities.

Registration Day is Saturday, June 12 9:00-11:00am at the Elgin Municipal Complex; 11:30-1:30pm at the Portland Community Hall. Students who are 14+ and interested in participating as a Leader In Training (LIT) can contact the Rideau Lakes Day Camp Coordinator by June 4th by calling the Department of Community and Leisure Services.

The Township is also offering Canadian Red Cross 12-day swimming courses at a range of levels including Bronze Cross, depending on interest. Programs are offered in Portland (July) and Delta (Aug). The Portland program will be run from the public beach, the community hall and at Cow Island (In conjunction with the Big Rideau Lake Association). Minimum age is 4 yrs. Cost is \$150 including transportation.

Registration forms are available at the Township Offices or from the web site at www.twprideaulakes.on.ca

Attention All Cottagers on the Big Rideau without Phone Service

Bell Canada is looking for property owners on Big Rideau who do not have telephone service. For \$1,000 Bell's new Service Improvement Plan will provide a land line for phone service. Bell Canada funds the remainder up to \$24,000 per customer. For more information and to help Bell identify potential users of this service please contact Petrie Consulting jack.petrie@sympatico.ca 613-264-5859

Trumpeter Swans Expanding on Big Rideau

Big Rideau Lake residents have been blessed with Trumpeter Swans for the past several years. Starting with one pair that found their own way here several seasons ago, the numbers have been growing slowly, but steadily. Last November 17 swans gathered on Hudson Bay pre-migration!! During their first mild winters on the Rideau - the swans stayed in open water near Narrows Locks. The flock has now learned to migrate and return early in the season.

Swans, like all of nature's creatures, struggle for survival. Our swans have suffered from predators, lead poisoning, and inter-breeding. The latter

problem should disappear as numbers increase, but in the meantime it has produced genetic disorders causing colour differences, foot disorders, and improper feather development (we have three swans that can't fly).

The Rideau lakes flock is showing signs of expanding their breeding range - a promising sign. If you haven't had the pleasure of seeing Trumpeter Swans in flight, hopefully you will soon - they are spectacular. For more info or to share your sighting news contact BRLA member Irma Aikman 272-2296 irmajohn@perth.igs.net.

Mailing Address:

BRLA

P.O.Box 93, Portland,
Ont. Canada K0G 1V0

Membership: 613-731-2399

Dry Dock: 613-272-3629 seasonal

Email: brla@brla.on.ca

Web Site: www.brla.on.ca

Portland Outdoors is holding its 2nd Annual Summer Biathlon off the shores of Portland and Cow Island this summer. Watch for posters and for more information and to see photos from last summer's event and the winter speedskating challenge check the website www.portlandoutdoors.com or contact Colin Horsfall at Len's Cove Marina. 272-2581

