



DRIFTWORDS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BIG RIDEAU LAKE ASSOCIATION (BRLA)
SERVING THE RIDEAU SINCE 1911 • POONAMALIE TO NARROWS LOCK

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THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Take Notice: I hereby declare the 2005 cottage and boating season officially open (trumpets sound). This past winter dragged on much too long but we have managed to survive. The beautiful warm week of April 11th was an awesome relief for anyone heading up to the lake. We opened up the cottage and did a little raking and the usual clean up. Perfect!

The BRLA has some exciting activities lined up this season with the tireless help of several volunteers and crew. Spring cleaning is underway at Cow Island and the picnic areas are also being spruced up. The volleyball court will soon be ready for individual or team games and tournaments. Please drop by the island. It is your island to be used at your leisure.

Appreciation goes out to Liz Gemmell of Gemmell's Nursery in Smiths Falls for the donation of sod for our loon platforms. Thanks to generous individuals around the lake who adopted the platforms and agree to care for them each year. Make sure you check out Pat Chamberlain's article about our water testing initiatives in this issue. Henry Copestake has been busy looking into clever ways we can save on our taxes and other governmental inquiries. A big hand to Jennifer Trant and David Bearman for hours of work they put in on behalf of the association. Jennifer takes on the role of editor, designer and webmaster. David held a directors' workshop last fall to help mould BRLA's mission to better reflect our modern direction and to develop new strategies for the future of the association. Look for this report and more at our **AGM on Saturday July 9th** at the Portland community hall 10:00 am sharp!

The association is pushing 100 years and the board is looking for new talent to assist in its endeavors and to ensure the success of our future mission. If you know of anyone (ask your kids) who could offer some spare time and input please get in touch with me. We are always seeking fresh faces to lend a helping hand.

Remember to take care on the waterway this season as we all look forward to a safe and relaxing time on Big Rideau Lake.

Bob

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Spring 2005



*Bob Evans, BRLA President
president@brla.on.ca*

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE A REPORT FROM PAT CHAMBERLAIN

The Environmental Committee has been busy on your behalf and I would like to bring you up-to-date on some of the work and events planned for this summer. Do you have an interest in environmental issues? Or questions, or suggestions? We would like to hear from you. Contact us at: environment@brla.on.ca

RIDEAU LAKES WATERSHED PLAN

This is something new to us. You will be hearing a lot about watershed studies, plans and management this year, and in future years as well. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) has completed watershed studies on five of the six major sub-watersheds of the Rideau River and now, in 2005, they will begin to collect data required for the Rideau Lakes Watershed Plan.

A Watershed Plan is the basic guiding tool of watershed management. It is “*a document that describes the actions that should be taken in the watershed to achieve a desired degree of protection and/or restoration of the water and water-dependent natural resources.*” The RVCA website at http://rideauvalley.on.ca/watershed/watershed_planning/index is an excellent resource for more information (and the source of this definition).

The BRLA water testing program will continue and results from all testing agencies will be combined to give a more complete picture of the situation in Big and Lower Rideau Lakes. Check the BRLA Website for the 2004 Water Quality Monitoring Report. It includes details of the testing methods and results.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Zebra Mussels

We continue to receive inquiries about Zebra Mussels and I regret to say that there is nothing new to report. Just re-

member, if you are removing objects with zebra mussels on them, or raking them off a swimming area, be sure to dispose of them well away from the shoreline.

Spiny Water Flea

Unfortunately, it looks as if another invasive species has found its way to the Big Rideau Lake. The Spiny Water Flea was first noticed in Lake Ontario in 1982 and has spread to all the Great Lakes as well as many inland lakes. The concern is that it may alter the waters it inhabits by competing with native zooplankton and fish. To learn more about the Spiny Water Flea and its impacts go to www.invadingspecies.com click on invaders, then invertebrates.

Last summer the BRLA had the opportunity to co-operate with RVCA in testing the waters of our lake. Jeff and Shirley Wimperis took a technician out in their boat to drag for water samples that were then sent off for analysis. Three locations were tested and one

spiny water flea was found in the sample from the Narrows Lock area. One probably means hundreds, if not more, and Jeff and Shirley will be helping to sample again this year.

SHORELINES

Have you ever really looked at the shoreline? Do you know that as much as 90% of the species in the lake pass through the zone from the water's edge to the area of the lake where sunlight no longer penetrates to the lake bottom. This area “acts as the nursery, daycare, and cafeteria for a range of species”. It also offers hiding spots and protected areas for young fish and amphibians to grow. By allowing a mix of plants and trees to grow along the waterfront you can develop a filter for harmful runoff and protect your shoreline from erosion.

Mark **Saturday, July 23rd at 10:00 am** on your calendar. That day, at the Narrows Lock Station, the Big and Upper Rideau Lake Associations are



Testing for Spiny Water Flea in Big Rideau Lake. Summer 2004
Photo: S. Wimperis

RIDEAU LAKES WATERSHED PLAN MEETING JUNE 18, 2005

The RVCA is holding a meeting for members of lake associations at the Portland Community Centre on Sat. June 18th at 10:00 am to discuss the Rideau Lakes Watershed Plan. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about, and have input into, the development of the strategy for the future of the Rideau Lakes area.

A meeting for the general public is scheduled for July 16th (location to be announced).

For further information contact environment@brla.on.ca

sponsoring an event to explore Healthy Shoreline Living. Do you have shoreline problems? Bring your questions: knowledgeable biologists and gardeners will present some solutions for you and will discuss some native plants and flowers that would be suitable for your property.

LOONS AND LOON WATCHERS

What would summer be like without the loons calling? And how can we be sure that our lake will continue to have a healthy population? Some of our members have adopted a nesting platform that replaces natural sites that have been destroyed. Each nest requires about 3 bushels of nesting material and we are very grateful to Gemmell's Nursery for their donation of a roll of sod to help with each nest's spring setup. Other members are Loon Watchers who collect data about the loons in their vicinity. This data is shared with The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey and contributes to national statistics. Record keeping requirements are simple and if you would like to become a Loon

Watcher please contact Janet White at 272-2123. Your involvement will be much appreciated.

FISH CONSERATION PROGRAM

This year the Environmental Committee updated the Bass Of The Hook Brochure and produced a new brochure entitled Lake Trout Conservation Fishing Guide. The committee, working in partnership with MNR and other organizations, wants to ensure that the Big Rideau Lake maintains a healthy population of bass and native lake trout. The brochures contain information on the biology, habitat, fishing regulations and stocking programs.

Brochures have been distributed to various outlets in the area such as bait shops, marinas, Rob's Garage and the Portland Post Office. They will also be available at the three lock stations on the Rideau Lakes, Information Centers and on our web site at <http://www.brla.on.ca>. If you want additional copies for your cottage area please contact Roy Sampson at (613) 272-5383.

SWANS

A recent article in The Review-Mirror described the reintroduction program of Trumpeter Swans that began in Ontario in 1982. Until that time there had been no recorded sightings since 1886. Now they estimate 500 in the province and about 40 in the Rideau Lakes Brockville Area. Swans have been on the Big Rideau for several years now and it is a splendid sight to see them gliding towards you. With a wingspan close to 10 ft. their takeoff is unforgettable.

But. Unfortunately loons and trumpeters don't always get along. Last year a pair of loons was chased from their traditional nesting site by trumpeters and this was very upsetting to the families that had been welcoming "their" loons back each spring. With the development that has occurred on the Big Rideau Lake nesting sites and natural shorelines are at a premium so, sadly, this kind of disruption may occur again.

Another but. When humans start to treat wild animals as pets bad things can happen. Feeding the swans invites them back and they can become very aggressive. One woman reported being chased right to her cottage door: a child could be badly frightened and even injured. These are not the tame swans one often sees in city parks. They are wild birds and should be treated as such.

Enjoy the sight of the Trumpeter Swans but please don't feed them: and keep your distance!

OUR THANKS TO...

Gemmell's Garden Center, on Hwy 15 just north of Smiths Falls. Each year, they outfit our Loon Nesting Platforms' with a large square of fresh sod. This 'new carpeting' helps keep the loons coming back to acceptable nest sites.

DIRECTORS WANTED

The BRLA is growing fast and we need YOU! If you would like to become part of a dynamic team of volunteers and can offer a few hours of your time then please get in touch with us. The Big Rideau Lake Association is looking for individuals who can suggest new ideas and provide creative input to the future of BRLA. It is essential that we frequently look for new directors. Go behind the scenes and help build a better quality of life on The Big Rideau.

Please call Bob Evans at 613 825-2437 or 272-2208 and join the BRLA Board.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE RIDEAU LAKES ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION (RLEF) JAFFRAY WILKINS

Although this has not been our normal practice the RLEF believes you should be brought up to date on our main pre-occupations. This newsletter is a very suitable vehicle for this purpose, hence these few paragraphs.

First: We are pleased to report that our annual donations drive was quite successful both this year and last. Your generosity allowed us to increase our reserve to a total of \$33,500 while earmarking \$8,000 for environmental projects submitted for funding. To ensure we can properly assess requests and to keep track of programs on approval, we now ask that projects be described and that progress be reported periodically. Forms are available for this purpose and should be sent to RLEF Treasurer by your responsible environmental director.

Our policy has been to set aside 20% of the donations as a reserve for unforeseen developments with the remainder for approved current projects. We will review our proportional allocation this spring to see if the allocation for current projects should be increased.

Second: A major and troubling matter has been our desire to reach an agreement with Robert Sneyd that reflects our respective interests in the “Gallagher Property” [in Portland]. To this end a settlement agreement was prepared and submitted to Robert which recognized Robert Sneyd’s title to the property and RLEF and BRLA’s interest in its use,

now and in the future, for environmental purposes.

While Robert Sneyd has been willing to make an oral commitment, he has refused to sign the settlement agreement as proposed by RLEF. He possesses legal title to the property and has encumbered the property to provide operating funds for the Centre for Sustainable Watersheds. We had also proposed in the agreement that office space be provided on the Gallagher property for BRLA and RLEF.

On behalf of the RLEF Board, Alex Macklin, Q.C., a longtime and initial member of the Board, has met several times with Robert Sneyd in an effort to reach agreement, to no avail. I should also mention that our Secretary, Tom Houston also a highly respected lawyer, has spent an enormous amount of time drafting and re-drafting an agreement that we believe would meet our and Robert Sneyd’s interests in the Gallagher property.

This has been a major preoccupation of the RLEF Board for three years. It has been on the agenda of every Board meeting. We have had highly professional legal advice and assistance from the two lawyers on our Board as well as our Treasurer, Ross Walker, F.C.A.

This is the background of our efforts to solve this matter. Several courses of action remain open. Some of them would necessarily involve the expenditure of



RLEF funds which we would prefer avoiding if at all possible. We will try to keep you informed

Third: On another matter, we are approaching AGM time and our long-time Treasurer is retiring. We need a willing replacement with C.A. experience to take his place. Some other Directors have served longer than usual and want to move off the Board. Suggestions for replacements would be welcome.

Finally, with great sadness, I wish to inform you that David Donaldson passed away on May 1. David was a moving force in the establishment of the Upper Rideau Lake Association and in keeping it active and focused in several years as President and Past President. He was also URLA’s representative on the RLEF Board of Directors and, as well a member of the CSW Board. In all these roles he was an active and dedicated member, a valued colleague and a wonderful friend. He will be missed and we offer our sympathy to his wife and family.

Happy summer!

Jaffray Wilkins

BIG RIDEAU LAKE ASSOCIATION - BRLA - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY JULY 9, 2005
10:00 AM
PORTLAND COMMUNITY HALL

OUR THANKS TO...

*Paul Van Luven of Portland.
Paul winterized and re-opened Dry
Dock for us without charge.*

GOVERNMENT AND MARINE AFFAIRS A REPORT FROM HENRY COPESTAKE

BRLA has responded to the Parks Canada call for comments on the *Draft Policies for In-Water and Shoreline Works and Related Activities*, available at: http://www.pc.gc.ca/docs/t/rideau-trent/index_e.asp

These guidelines will affect “installation, repairs & replacements and annual or sporadic maintenance” of all waterfront works, including:

- Docks and Boatlifts
- Boathouses & Boat Ports
- Shoreline Stabilization
- Mooring Buoys, Swimming Buoys, Swimming Rafts and Water Ski Courses

Key parts of the BRLA response, include:

1. Actively Promoting Preservation of the Historic Built Environment
2. Making Allowances for Water Access Property
3. Recognising Differing Lot Sizes
4. Allowing Property-Owners to Place Mooring Buoys
5. Removing the Requirement for Painted Rafts
6. Implementing Policies to Reduce Wake and Speed along the Canal & in the Lakes

For further details, contact GovtAffairs@brla.on.ca The full submission is available on the BRLA Web site at http://www.brla.on.ca/govt/govt_index.htm



Photo: D. Arrand

SHOAL MARKERS

After their long winter's rest, the Shoal markers are in again! Thanks to Lamont Brown and his crew for their services installing the markers on Big Rideau Lake and to Richard Bradley and his team of volunteers for their work with the markers beyond Rocky Narrows.



Photo: J. Trant

WHO GETS THE COTTAGE?

- ☛ Have you started to consider what will happen to your cottage?
- ☛ Do you plan to sell it to provide income throughout your retirement?
- ☛ Do you plan to leave it to your children equally?

There are many options to manage the control and disposition of cottage properties. Most people leave the cottage to their children in their will. As their children start to have growing families, will they all cooperate with the work (fixing the screens, staining the deck), respecting each others time, paying the taxes ... ?

The longer the property has been in your family, the more time it has had to grow in value, and the higher the tax burden will be. Would you want your family to be forced to sell your cottage to pay these taxes? There are many methods of effective tax planning with vacation properties.

To learn more about these methods please drop by the **Estate Planning Session** on Cow Island. **Saturday August 20th, 2005 at 10:30 am** to see Paul Harris, a Financial Security Advisor with Freedom 55 Financial. Paul will be providing an information session on practical and tax issues to help you ensure that your Cottage is left according to your wishes.

RECREATION COMMITTEE COMING EVENTS NOTICES FROM DOUG ARRAND

“CANADA DAY” FIREWORKS

SATURDAY JULY 2, 2005

Join us on the Lake – or a nearby dock – to see the annual Canada Day Fireworks display from Cow Island.

Decorate your boat – dress up in your best Red and White – and help support our unique tradition.

We need your support to keep Fireworks an annual event. Make a generous contribution when approached on the night of the event, or in one of the donation boxes around the lake. You can also mail a cheque to the

BRLA, PO Box 93
Portland, ON
K0G 1V0

Mark it Fireworks!

*Thanks once again to Mike Fraser
for making it all happen.*



BIG RIDEAU LAKE ASSOCIATION - BRLA - COW ISLAND SUMMER CHILDREN'S DAY CAMP

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AT THE PORTLAND GOVERNMENT DOCK

OR REGISTRATION FORMS AVAILABLE

- BRLA OFFICE - 30 COLBORNE STREET
- BRLA WEB SITE - [HTTP://WWW.BRLA.ON.CA](http://www.brla.on.ca)

RETURN YOUR FORM BY JULY 1ST, 2005
TO:

BIG RIDEAU LAKE ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 93
PORTLAND-ON-THE-RIDEAU
ONTARIO, K0G 1V0

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT CHRISTINA HEAGLE
BRLA LEAD COUNSELOR
AT (613) 272 3139



TRANSPORTATION
DEPART AT 8:45 AM - RETURN AT 12:15 PM

“SUMMER SOUNDS”

A FUNDRAISER FOR COW ISLAND
SATURDAY JULY 16TH 2005
2:00 PM ON COW ISLAND
(rain date Sun. July 17th 2:00 P.M.)

Join us for an afternoon of music and fun on Big Rideau Lake. Two wonderfully talented musicians will entertain us with instrumentals and song, while we enjoy refreshments and conversations.

We're looking forward to a pleasant social event for BRLA members and friends.

Be sure to mark the date on your Summer Calendar. The afternoon, including refreshments, is only \$25.00 per couple or \$15.00 per individual.

Proceeds will be earmarked for Cow Island improvements.

*Send your cheque by mail
to :*

**BRLA
PO Box 93
Portland, Ontario
K0G 1V0**

Mark it Summer Sounds.

Transportation from Portland to Cow Island will be available if needed.

BRLA'S ANNUAL REGATTA A REPORT FROM JIM SNEYD

2004

The 2004 Regatta was once again held at Cow Island but this time it was delayed one day due to rain. Even with the rain delay we still had a good turn-out on the Sunday to hold another successful event.

Winners in each category:

- * 5 years of age and under: Alex Dunlop and Jordan Dewar tied (top males), Molly Brenzel (top female).
- * 6 – 7 years of age: Annick Trudeau.
- * 8 – 9 years of age: Brett Friers (top male), Beth Suvelnis (top female).
- * 10 – 11 years of age: Nick Friers and Shane Baxter tied.
- * 12 – 13 years of age: Troy Baxter (top male), Shannon Castledine and Jenna Calan tied (top females).
- * 14 and over: Mike Baxter (top male), Penny Baxter (top female).
- * Family Canoe Race: Sneyd/Friers family.
- * Overall Family Winners: Baxter Family.



2005

This year we will have the **Regatta on Saturday July 30th** with a rain date of Sunday July 31st. Registration starts at 10:00 am, events start at 11:00 am. Participants can pre-register by emailing their name, age and gender to regatta@brla.on.ca.

A BBQ lunch will be served around 12:30 pm. We will have hamburgers, hot dogs, juice, pop and cookies. There will be a fee for lunch, \$5.00 per person or \$15.00 per family.

We need more participants, especially teenagers! Come-on out and have some fun! Let make this year the best yet.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Volunteers are needed to help out with summer recreation programs. If you have some time to offer, to help with the kids, teen or adult programs, please contact Doug Arrand: recreation@brla.on.ca

SAILING INSTRUCTOR NEEDED!

For many years, BRLA has run a popular and successful instructional sailing week from Cow Island. We've volunteers interested in helping organize it again, but need an instructor.

If you are a qualified to teach sailing or know someone who is and could help out this summer, please contact BRLA's Recreation Committee Chair, Doug Arrand at recreation@brla.on.ca



BRLA Corporate Sponsors - Spring 2005 Directory



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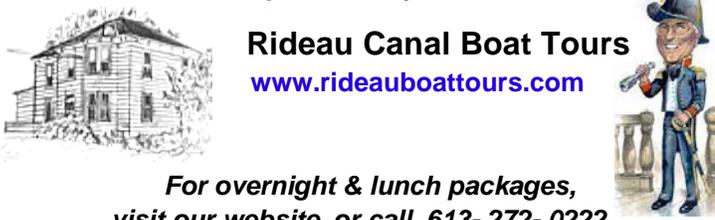
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