



DriftWords

Serving the Rideau Since 1915, Poonamalie to Narrows Lock

Spring has officially sprung!



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Day Camp on Cow Island
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BITS FROM BETH



Welcome to **Driftwords Spring 2016** edition. Glad to see the ice is out. See you on the lake soon. I hope you enjoy the latest edition of Driftwords - please submit your ideas for the summer edition. driftwords@bigrideaulakeassociation.com



The President's Pen

Like most of you, I'm sure, our family is so looking forward to getting back to the Big Rideau and out on the water.

As the Committee Chair reports in this issue detail, your Board has been busy this winter with both short and long term plans for Association projects and programs. At all times we are focused on returning to solid ground financially. I thank each Board member for

their commitment and energy.

Highlights to draw your attention to include:

- The revamped website, launched in mid-March. Lyse Prendergast and Caitlin Orbanek have spent countless hours bringing this to life and deserve all our thanks. Please visit the site, www.bigrideaulakeassociation.com and if you haven't already done so, renew your membership directly from the site – it's clean, seamless and fast...and we now accept Visa, MasterCard and Amex!
- The Government Relations Committee has re-engaged with Parks Canada, after years of underfunding and a shortage of personnel made contact almost impossible. Doug Kirkland led a BRLA delegation to meet with Parks Canada senior people in Smiths Falls in early March and I'm confident that that will result in better communications – both ways.
- The Environment Committee has continued its research on the matter of the cormorant population on the lake and will be expanding its study of the current population and impacts on water quality, if any.
- The Board has appointed a new Treasurer, Mr. Rod Howes.
- The summer program of events has now been set and is published on the website and in this issue.
- The AGM has been moved to August this year to make it easier for more members to attend, by avoiding a long weekend when so many members are busy hosting family and friends. We also felt that it makes better sense to transition in a new Board towards the end of the season, rather than in the middle.

Cow Island is a major focus for us this year and we need your input about its future.

The island is now and will continue to be a cash drain of roughly \$4,000 per year.

In 2015, we can account for some 40 member families who used the island at least once for BRLA activities – that's less than 15% of the member families.

The Board believes that to keep the island, we need to make a significant financial investment along with an investment of members' time and energy to make it more welcoming, accessible and safe.

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While we may have the resources to do this, we wonder if we have the support of our members to make those investments. Without that support we have to consider alternatives.

Questions we have to ask and ask you to consider include:

- o If we spruce it up, will the island be used more?
- o What sort of improvements are required to make it a destination for more members?
- o Does the island need electricity?
- o Should we encourage overnight camping?
- o If there is a core group interested in continuing using the island and who would be prepared to bear the costs associated with its renovation and maintenance?
- o If the island was sold, would that mean the end of Day Camp, Sailing Camp, Summer Sounds and fireworks?
- o If so, can we find alternate locations for our Cow Island programmes?
- o And the list goes.....

Please think about this issue and start talking about it with lake neighbours and friends. We expect to make this an important discussion at the AGM so we can move forward – clearly the status quo is not viable!

*Brian Hawkins,
BRLA President*



MEMBERSHIP

By now you should have received, by email, your BRLA membership renewal request for this year. Please let me know if you haven't received your renewal from us. Last year we contacted previous members who joined again and our membership increased from 265 to 310 members. Let's go past 310 this year!

Please reach out to your neighbours, who are not members, and encourage them to join. They can access our website to get the membership application which can be completed and paid for online.

Thank you,
John Callan
Director, Membership



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If you would like to share a special birthday, anniversary, or cottage event in Driftwords, please contact: driftwords@bigrideaulakeassociation.com

LAKE SAFETY

Lake Safety

To all boaters and cottage boaters, this is a reminder that the Shoal Markers will NOT be in position until the Long Weekend in May, or just before. Please exercise caution while out on the lake and check your charts for the shoals and rocks.

The 2016 season is close upon us and it's time to refresh some of your boating skills:

Tips for Navigating No-Wake Zones

The signs read, "10 kph, No Wake," not either/or.

The hard-chine planning hulls most of us operate aren't suited to no-wake situations. The deeper your V, the worse it is. And if you run a stern-drive, the problem is exacerbated because many drives have play in them until you add some revs. None of this is an excuse for throwing a bigger wake than is necessary.

Most boats have two 10 kph speeds. The first, with the throttle clicked just forward of neutral, is called "idling in gear" — so that the engine is turning at around 600 rpm. The second 10 kph speed is the one in which the engine is turning about 1,300 rpm. At this engine speed, there's more thrust. But the boat is squatting, resulting in a bigger wake and no increase in speed.

Observation makes clear the speed that many boaters prefer. It's understandable. When idling in gear, there's little feel at the wheel. The skipper must use a learned touch to keep the boat on course. But add a little rpm and...yeah! You're in control. Problem is, you create a larger wake. You're right to feel like a master of machinery does not subvert the rights of those boat owners tied up in the marina you're passing, the homeowners whose bulkheads you're undermining or the canoeist, kayaker or skiff fishermen trying to enjoy the water without having their world rocked.

This might elicit shrugs, but consider that federal law makes you responsible for your wake. Besides, operating in squat mode is like hanging a sign saying "Amateur" over the side. Might as well dangle your fenders too. The following tips will help you look cool while going slow.

Besides when in posted no-wake zones, slow down whenever you pass within 30 meters of a small boat, the shoreline or a

marina. Distances beyond that allow the wake's waves to spread out and get rounder, disrupting other boats less and causing less erosion.

Slow down in advance. Chopping the throttles as you come abeam of a marina or close aboard to a small boat doesn't alleviate the wake's effect.

When operating at no-wake speed, trim the drive or outboard to a vertical position. Neutral trim allows your boat to proceed with the smallest wake.

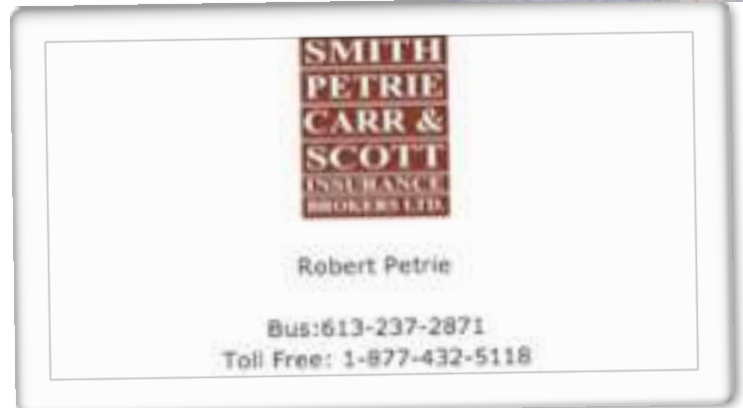
Larger boats can go 15 kph while idling in gear due to their large props. If that's you, alternately shift in and out of gear as you proceed.

Now, I dislike having to slow down for a couple of morons in a livery skiff anchored in the middle of a narrow channel as much as the next guy. But I'd rather do so than have to explain to their widows and kids why I was in such a hurry in the first place.

From Boating Magazine by Kevin Falvey

Toby Spry

Director, Lake Safety



RIDEAU RECIPES

Happy New Year! It is almost time to open the cottage for another season of friends, food and fun by the water. This winter I decided to try out some new dessert recipes that could be great additions to cottage parties. I was looking for something that is super simple, can be made ahead of time, would serve a crowd, and would have fresh fruit to keep it light. I found two AMAZING candidates. Why don't you give them a try and see what you think!

Tres Leches Cake – from The Barefoot Contessa

- 1½ cups all purpose flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature (Make sure they are at room temperature!)
- 1 cup plus 3 Tbsp. sugar, for cake and berry topping
- 2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- ½ cup whole milk
- 1¼ cups heavy cream
- 1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- ½ tsp. almond extract
- 1 Tbsp. Nielsen Massey Vanilla Bean Paste or the seeds scraped from 1 vanilla bean
- Whipped cream
- 5-8 cups mixed sliced strawberries and raspberries

- Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter a 9x13x2 inch baking dish and set aside.
- Place the room temperature eggs, 1 cup of the sugar, and the vanilla extract in the bowl of an electric stand mixer. Fit with the paddle attachment, and beat on medium-high speed for 10 minutes until extra light and fluffy.
- While the eggs and sugar are mixing, sift together the flour, baking powder and salt into a small bowl.
- After 10 minutes of beating time, reduce the speed to low, and add half of the flour mixture. Then, add the whole milk, and finally the rest of the flour mixture. Stir with a rubber spatula to make sure that the batter is mixed completely, and pour the batter into the prepared pan.
- Smooth out the top and bake for 25-30 minutes, until the cake springs back from the centre when touched and a cake tester comes out clean.
- Place on a wire rack to cool in the pan for 30 minutes.



- While the cake cools, whisk together the heavy cream, evaporated milk, sweetened condensed milk, almond extract, and vanilla paste or seeds.
- Poke the cake all over with a bamboo skewer, and then slowly pour the cream mixture over the cake, allowing it to soak in before continuing to pour more of the mixture. Cover the cake and refrigerate for at least 6 hours and up to 5 days before serving.
- To serve, toss the berries with the remaining 3 Tbsp. of sugar. Slice the cake and serve with whipped cream and the sugared berries. Sprinkle with confectioner's sugar to serve.

Poached Pears – from Martha Stewart

- Zest of 1 lemon, cut into thin strips
- 1 cinnamon stick, broken in half
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 3 cups apple cider
- 8 Bosc pears (with stems), peeled, halved and cored
- Lemon sorbet, for serving (optional)

- In a large saucepan, combine lemon zest, cinnamon stick, allspice, ground pepper, apple cider, and 1 cup water.
- Add pears. Cover with waxed paper to prevent discolouring (cut a round to lay on surface of liquid – cut vent hole in centre). Bring to a simmer. Cook, turning pears occasionally, until easily pierced with the tip of a paring knife, but not falling apart, about 20 minutes. Remove pears from liquid; transfer to large bowl.

Kathryn Orbanek.

Redwing Lodge



COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

A New Season, A New Look

We've been busy over the winter season, designing a new and improved web portal for members of the Big Rideau Lake community. We hope this renewed appearance will make it easier for you to find the important information you need, and to share your own piece of this paradise with friends and family. We are committed to maintaining a web presence that serves you and provides what you expect from our association.

We believe the BRLA website should reflect what happens on the Big Rideau year round. You can look to us for up-to-date news about important environmental and social topics, as well as details of what's going on in Portland and other parts of the Rideau Lakes community, not only during the summer months but throughout the year. We want this site to be a true reflection of our members' experiences on the Big Rideau, and we welcome contributions to our online photo gallery. Our life online should reflect our life on

the lake, and we intend our website to feature as many photos and images of our members and our lake as we can.

The new website includes a Members section, available only to BRLA members. (Please refer to the March 21st membership email for the password to this section). While limited in scope at present, it will grow over the next few months to include enhanced content and information, as well as opportunities for members to connect.

Our address on the web is the same but we think you'll see a big difference - www.bigrideaulakeassociation.com. And please, if you have any suggestions or comments (or spot typos or mistakes!), pass them along to us at communications@bigrideaulakeassociation.com.

Lyse Prendergast
Director, Communications



TREASURER'S REPORT

2015

2015 was another trying year for our association as we ended with another revenue shortfall of roughly \$4,000. This is close to our mid-season forecast and is significantly less than 2014. The trend at least is positive.

Thankfully, we continue to have a strong Balance Sheet with the resources required to weather the current revenue shortfall. The auditors currently are reviewing our books as they prepare our 2015 financial statements and tax returns. These will be completed in time to file our tax return before June 30th and to present the final 2015 statements to your approval at our AGM in August.

2016

We begin the current season with optimism, as we continue to target increased revenues and reduced expenses. The 2016 Budget, approved by the Board on March 12th, calls for revenue increases of \$4,800 (10.4%) and expense decreases of \$7,385 (14.5%).

These will be delivered by:

- Fee increase.
- Reduction of Sailing Camp to 1 week
- Heritage Canada's expected support of our Canada Day Fireworks and decrease in fireworks budget, hopefully to be shored up by increased donations.

New Treasurer

This is my final update as Treasurer as Mr. Rod Howes was appointed Treasurer by the Board in its March 12th meeting. Rod and his wife Brenda are owners on Big Rideau Lake and are eager to become more involved with the BRLA in the coming years. I thank Rod personally and on behalf of the membership for his volunteering his time and energy to support our efforts. And I thank you, the membership at large, for your continued support over my term as Treasurer.

*Brian Hawkins,
Past Treasurer*

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BRLA ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE SPRING REPORT

The focus of the BRLA Environment Committee is to be pro-active in protecting the quality of lake water and the environment for the benefit of all residents and future generations. The Committee has had a busy winter, meeting twice to work on moving issue files forward. We also met with the Board of Directors to keep them apprised of all activities.

In the fall we added the president of BRLA [Brian Hawkins] and the Chair of Government Liaison Committee [Doug Kirkland] to the group as members. This helps ensure that BRLA Board perspectives and the key Government Liaison Committee and the Environment Committee are closely linked and involved in all the BRLA environment files.

As well, The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has assigned a person to attend the Environment Committee meetings, acting as a resource for some of the issues we are working on in committee.

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BRLA - Ontario Municipal Board Appeal

The Environment Committee has transferred this issue file to the BRLA Governance Committee. Please refer to that committee report for updates.

Big Rideau Lake Double Crested Cormorant colony

The Board of Directors approved in June 2015 the undertaking of a study of the double crested cormorants on north Owl Island [also known as north Brother Island]. The islands are owned and managed by the Government of Ontario and OMNRF.

Through Driftwords, the general membership was asked at that time if they had any thoughts about cormorants on the lake but very little response was heard.

The 2015 cormorant study ran from June until November and consisted of a preliminary vegetation survey and monthly photographic record being established for the island. Several counts of cormorants were made through the summer nesting period resulting in the highest count of 63 resident birds along with 8 active nests. Allowing for birds that may have been away from the colony at the time of the counts, it is probably realistic to increase the maximum number to something closer to 100 as being the resident population. A BRLA file record was found for a 2010 population estimate of 50 plus cormorants on the island and similarly that count should be increased for birds away. On balance, what this data clearly shows is that the resident colony of cormorants is holding very stable in numbers and not increasing.

Starting in early September each year numerous other cormorants arrive and roost on nearby rocky shoals and in rafts in various other parts of the lake. In 2015, they numbered between 500 and 1000 birds and were identified as transients from some distant colonies and were no doubt on their regular southward fall migration.



Our ongoing search for other information on double crested cormorants has turned up more useful and interesting information to be considered. A concern had been expressed locally about the amount of guano and related residue that is entering the lake from the double crested cormorant colony and the fall migrants. Rideau Valley Conservation Authority's (RVCA) multi-year research on phosphorus levels in multiple locations in Big Rideau Lake indicate that these concerns about water pollution from the colony are not appearing to be validated. While phosphorous is a potent fertilizer of aquatic plants and a significant constituent of guano, the RVCA found the lowest levels of phosphorus [which is good] not far from the cormorant colony and highest levels [which is not so good] in the Lower Rideau.

Another scientific report of note, published in 2015, for another Ontario lake, directly linked through the food chain the suppression of blue green algae concentrations by top level predators such as cormorants and many other birds and larger fish. Such a mechanism has been theorized in 1992 and 2015 in the Township's Capacity Study which delves into the ecology of Big Rideau Lake. Now it has been proven as a natural mechanism in a lake elsewhere in Ontario. Any natural process which reduces blue green algae populations and threats for our lake can only be viewed as a better situation to be in.

The Board of Directors of the BRLA has closely followed local debates on cormorants and concerns about how they might be managed on Big Rideau Lake. Various reports and letter to the Editor comments in the

local press have attributed views and actions to the BRLA Board which are both spurious and factually wrong. The Board encourages BRLA members to communicate directly with the President, Brian Hawkins, to clarify any item that may concern them.

As part of the local and provincial debate on cormorant populations, the President and the Chair of the Environment Committee made a joint presentation to The Township of Rideau Lakes on March 14 where they re-iterated the BRLA Board's position on cormorants established in June 2015. That position is to maintain protections already established in Ontario law for double crested cormorants on public lands and for private property owners to allow time for scientifically based facts to be gathered on our Big Rideau Lake colony. Further, any BRLA positions developed on management needs for cormorants on our lake should be based on as full a consideration as possible for the ecological dynamics at work in the lake and on the island.

This position does not leave property owners without recourse to cormorant incursions onto their property. The existing legal protections for cormorants in Ontario provide ample opportunity for property owners to protect their private property through culls and harassment of cormorants that might come there. Upon request, BRLA can provide any member who wishes clarification on the existing laws and related OMNRF policy.

WANTED: Your views and Your help

* The Chair of the Environment Committee and the Board of Directors welcomes input from the general membership on their views about the double crested cormorant colony currently existing on Big Rideau Lake and our activities in better defining what their role is in the ecology of the lake and island and the food chain and any needed future management. Email may be sent to:
communications@bigrideaulakeassociation.com.

* The BRLA will continue the study of the double crested cormorant colony in 2016. You can be part of that effort. Cormorant counts at the colony and on the lake will be done about every two weeks from May through November. You [and your family] can participate in your boat using the study format provided to you by BRLA. Do one days' survey or several... whatever works for you. Its educational and its easy! Great for the kids!... and to get to better understand the natural history of Big Rideau Lake. For further information on how you can participate please email the project coordinator at: buzzzzz@live.ca.

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Buzz Boles

Director, Environment

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Update on the BRLA OMB Appeal:

The hearing on the BRLA Appeal of the Township of Rideau Lakes, Committee of Adjustment decision began on November 13, 2015 at the Township Council Chambers in Chantry, Ontario. The Hearing was not completed on the one day allotted. The Hearing will re-convene on April 28th and 29th at the same location.

Meeting with Parks Canada- Canals Office- Smiths Falls March 11, 2016

I requested that senior managers from Parks Canada, with responsibility for the management of the Rideau Canal, meet with designated BRLA Board members as a means of re-establishing a discontinued tradition of meeting each year. For a number of reasons, these meetings ceased at some point prior to 2000. Parks Canada underwent a noticeable paring of staff between 2010 and 2015 along with shifting of roles and responsibilities.

On March 11th the BRLA delegation: Mr. Brian Hawkins, President; Mr. Doug Kirkland, Chair of Government Relations Committee and Mr. Peter Hannah, a member of both the Environment and Government Affairs Committees met with Ms. Darlene Upton, Executive Director – Waterways, Mr. John Festarini Assistant Director of Ontario Waterways, and Mr. Colin Clarke, Parks Canada engineer responsible for water management for the Rideau Canal.

The meeting opened with Mr. Clarke explaining the science of managing the water levels throughout the Rideau Canal. His defined direction from Parks Canada regarding water levels is to ensure the supply of sufficient water to enable navigation between the Ottawa River on the north and Lake Ontario on the south during the navigation season. Some of you may be surprised to learn that Parks Canada has no mandate to supply water for hydroelectric plants, municipal water supplies or industrial water usage. Parks Canada's mandate is to maintain water navigation throughout the canal system. As he described his day-to-day duties when the ice is out, it became clear that this water management is a very complicated process and is governed by a thick tome of approximately 200 pages plus another 80 pages of historical charting graphs and figures. We also learned that while Upper Rideau Lake is the high water of the Rideau Canal and moves primarily north from Upper Rideau Lake it is the Big Rideau Lake, including the Lower Rideau from Rocky Narrows to Poonamalie that is the largest single body of water and thus the major reservoir for the northbound system. We raised the point that there were several high water complaints over the past two years, particularly in 2014, of unusually high water levels in the high water fill period between early May and mid June. He has the charts to prove, that although the water levels were high, they did not exceed the tolerance level established over many years. We also learned that in the last few years since 2000, there was a need to keep the water level maintained within one or two cms. on Big Rideau Lake to mid October and the end of the navigation season. Mr. Clarke also provided an explanation why the Big Rideau Lake water levels in the mid- May to mid June period seem to remain high for longer periods than the Ottawa levels. We will provide a layman's guide to the water level mechanisms in a future edition.

We had an opportunity to discuss some planning issues and limited extents to which Parks can speak to provincial or municipal planning actions. This also included the topic many BRLA members come up against referring to heritage structures in water (docks and boathouses). Above the high water mark structures are governed by municipal planning rules. Below the high water mark it is a matter for Parks Canada and to a lesser extent, the province on fisheries and clean water issues. There were no conclusions on these items, only an agreement to have discussions and I do not believe that is a stall. We had a limited time with the staff and many subjects to cover.

Ms. Upton joined us for the concluding portion as we discussed the economic developments along the Canal and a desire to create more visitor experiences, something that is an integral part of Parks Canada's mandated policies.

The meeting was positive and Parks Canada expressed a willingness to continue. A senior Parks Canada representative will be in attendance at our August AGM to met and discuss several issues that may be of direct interest to our members.

The Board of the BRLA greeted this renewal of relationships as a positive step for all our members and looks forward to continuing to work on some of the fine points we just touched on in the meeting.

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS CON'T

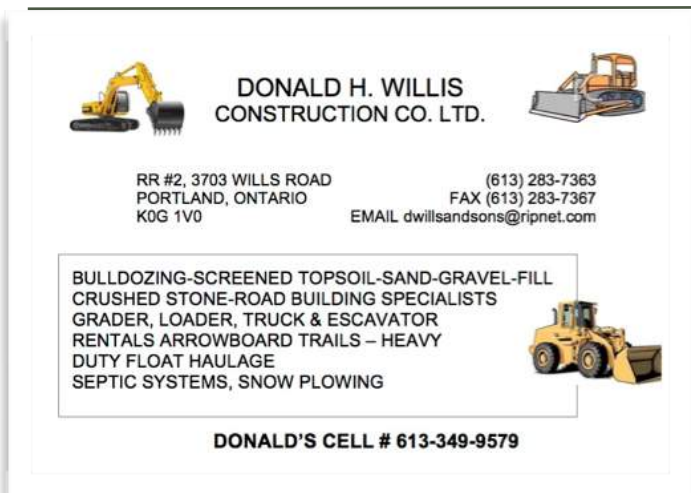
Invitation for members to join the Committee of Government Relations

This committee would enjoy hearing from members who might wish to represent the Tay Valley properties and also a member from the Lower Rideau area. Please contact the President, Mr. Brian Hawkins or myself, Doug Kirkland, at kirkstratinc@sympatico.ca

For additional information or to ask a question related to Government Relations please contact Doug Kirkland at: kirkstratinc@sympatico.ca

Doug Kirkland,

Chair of Government Relations Committee



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TAY VALLEY TOWNSHIP AWARDED GRANT

Tay Valley Township Awarded Grant to Undertake "Age Friendly" Assessment

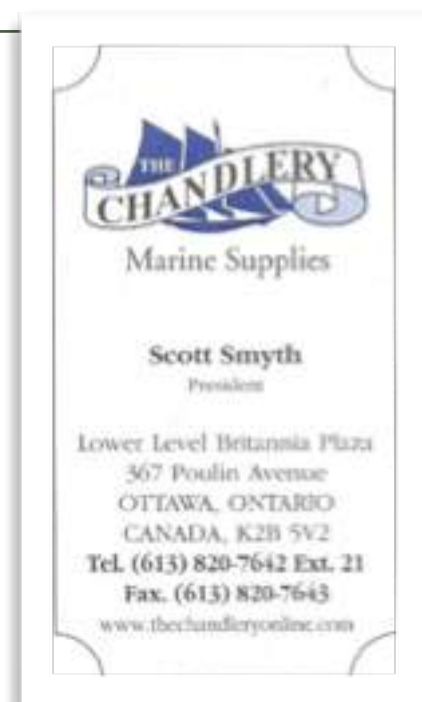
An "Age Friendly Community" is defined by the World Health Organization as one that promotes opportunities for health, participation and security to enhance quality of life as people age.

Tay Valley Township will undertake an Age Friendly Community Needs Assessment and develop an Age Friendly Community Plan. The Needs Assessment will be done through a [survey](#) developed by Tay Valley Township's Age Friendly Working Group based on a model provided by the Senior Secretariat of Ontario.

"The survey is a great way to hear from community members about what is important to them to help them remain in Tay Valley as they age," said Councillor Judy Farrell who chairs the Age Friendly Community Working Group.

The survey can be completed by going onto the Township website <http://www.tayvalleytwp.ca/en/municipal-government/age-friendly-communities-working-group.asp> or direct to Survey Monkey www.surveymonkey.com/r/PP7NDCS.

As the Age Friendly Community Working Group continues with this initiative, please consider becoming involved and learn more about Age Friendly Communities.



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Wanted

Director of Marine Safety

Vice President

Day Camp Counsellor for summer 2016 (paid position) Requires NLS certification

Please email info@bigrideaulakeassociation.com and come join our team.



Calendar of Events - Summer 2016

- July 1 Canada Day Fireworks on Cow Island
- July 2 Fireworks clean-up. Please come and help!
- July 4 Day Camp - month of July
- July 16 Summer Sounds on Cow Island
- July 25-29 Sailing Camp
- August 6 Family Aquatic Regatta on Cow Island
- August 20 BRLA AGM in the Portland Community Hall

Check our our website for more details

Perkins Home Building Centre



2338 Roger Stevens Drive, P.O. Box 100
North Gower, ON

Phone: (613) 489 - 3735

Fax: (613) 489 - 3498

RIDEAU FERRY HARBOUR
www.rideauferryharbour.com

110 Coutts Bay Rd. Box 10 Rideau Ferry, ON K0G 1W0
Tel: 613-264-2628 Fax: 613-264-0274 info@rideauferryharbour.com

RAYMOND MARINE SERVICES INC.
Portland, Ontario 613-272-0412





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Big Rideau Lake Association



Family* Membership Registration - \$75

* Family is defined as up to 2 parents and their children under 21 years of age.

Day Camp	\$
Environment	\$
Fireworks	\$
Lake Safety	\$
Recreation	\$
Summer Sounds (2/\$25)	\$
TOTAL	\$

Please complete all sections of this registration and pay by:

- OPTION 1:** Cheque (payable to BRLA) | Mail this completed Registration and your cheque to:
Big Rideau Lake Association,
PO Box 93, Portland, ON K0G 1V0
- OPTION 2:** Credit Card (VISA only) | Mail this completed Registration including your VISA details to:
Big Rideau Lake Association,
PO Box 93, Portland, ON K0G 1V0

_____ | _____
Visa card # | Expiry

_____ | _____
Name on card | Signature

- OPTION 3:** Online | You can pay by PayPal (or mail a cheque later) by going to www.bigrideaulakeassociation.com, click Membership/New Member Registration and complete the form on-line.

Membership is for a 12 month term starting April 1st each year.

This registration starts April 1, _____
(Insert Year)

New Membership Renewal

ALL APPLICANTS

Family Name

Parent's First Name(s)
(last name if different from Family Name above)

Children's Names

PRIMARY RESIDENCE

Street # _____

Street Name _____

City _____

Province/State _____

Postal Code _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

e-mail _____

COTTAGE RESIDENCE

Street # _____

Street Name _____

City _____

Postal Code _____

Cottage Phone _____

Cottage e-mail _____

Tay Valley / Rideau Lakes / Drummond/North Elmsley
Township (circle one)

BOATER — MARINE RESIDENCE

Boat Name _____

Marina _____

Boat Phone _____

Signature _____

Date _____