



# DRIFTWORDS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BIG RIDEAU LAKE ASSOCIATION (BRLA)  
SERVING THE RIDEAU SINCE 1911 • POONAMALIE TO NARROWS LOCK  
– WINTER 2009 –

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### FROM THE BOARD ROOM: DOUG ARRAND, BRLA PRESIDENT [PRESIDENT@BRLA.ON.CA](mailto:president@brla.on.ca)

The summer of 2008 will go down as one of the wettest on record. Many members cut short their time spent at the cottage because of the weather. One member who spoke to me told me he had two weeks to holiday at his cottage for which he had been looking forward to for 50 weeks as he put it. He hoped to do some painting of cottage and boathouse and other outdoor work. However, during his 14 days of holidays, it rained on 9 days preventing him from completing much of the planned for improvements. He went home extremely frustrated and unfulfilled from his time on the lake. Variations of that story were shared with me on numerous occasions this past summer.



*Sunset over Big Rideau  
Photo: Doug Arrand*

In the case of BRLA's Day Camp, the staff under the leadership of Lindsay Cameron geared up for what they hoped would be the best summer program planned in past 3 years. The weather however had different plans and as a result we had to cancel the camp on several days due to rain. This resulted in significant reduction in attendance. Some parents called to tell us they were moving back to the city as the children would have more to do in the city than they could on the lake given the nasty weather. For those that did attend we had a great time and we thank Lindsay and her staff for their efforts to create good activities for the children in spite of the weather.

Not all was bad news on BRLA's 2008 Recreation Program front. We had a fabulous sailing school week with a sell out attendance and fairly good weather in early July. This was followed by a (delayed by rain for a week) spectacular fireworks show on July 5. Turnout was great in spite of the delay and compliments numerous from those who watched the show. Thanks to Mike Fraser and his crew for another great show. Our Summer Sounds Social

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### FROM THE BOARD ROOM: (CONT.)

**DOUG ARRAND, BRLA PRESIDENT [PRESIDENT@BRLA.ON.CA](mailto:PRESIDENT@BRLA.ON.CA)**

& Fundraiser program had a wonderful turnout on a spectacularly sunny day. Cliff Edwards and friend provided a truly engaging musical program. Many who attended remembered Cliff when he led the group, "The Bells". Some of our members brought their old LP albums of The Bells' hit songs for Cliff to autograph. Cliff now is the proud owner of a restaurant in Gananoque, Ontario, McNeil's Landing. He donated his time and talent for the event as it was a fund raiser to raise money to improve facilities on Cow Island for our day camp and membership. This was followed by a well organized fun filled Regatta put on by the Evans family group. The weather during the morning and early afternoon contests was perfect and large turnout of competitors was marvelous. The corn on the cob and hot dogs was perfect for such an event.

One of the facilities improved on Cow Island was the Outhouse. We were very fortunate to have Lamont Brown build a new outhouse and install it on the island. The Day camp staff painted it inside and out. We are indebted to Lamont and the folks who contributed to its cost through attending Summer Sounds. Volunteer Don Harris assisted in improvements to the structure of the Cow Island Cabin. He has worked the past two years to make certain the floors of the cabin are level after years of settlement had taken their toll.

One program that was offered but did not get off the ground was the BRLA EnviroCamp scheduled for July. A partnership between BRLA and Rideau Valley Conservation Authority developed the camp. The Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation is contributing funding to get the program started. It is a one week camp staffed by highly qualified staff from RVCA designed to teach the children interesting knowledge about the lake environment and the curriculum is quite exciting for children ages 6 to 12. We will be running the camp in 2009.

Environment Committee members and volunteers planted hundreds of plants in order to combat shoreline erosion on Cow Island. Since many of us suffer the same problem on our own shoreline it is hoped that this program will act as a demonstration of what we can do on our own property.

The Environmental Committee and the Recreation Committees are always looking for more members so please contact us if you are willing to help us with

your time and talent. We have a lot of fun doing the things we do.

Under the leadership of Toby Spry, the Marine Safety Committee has done a great deal to review the condition of the 104 hazard buoys the Association puts out on the lake each year. Many buoys no longer comply with the regulations with respect to their required markings and many are need of repair or replacement. The Committee has a long term plan in place to replace the buoys and is grateful to the Taggart Construction organization for its donation of PVC pipe for the new buoys. In addition, Toby has become highly versed in the Coast Guard regulations that govern the buoys, water and vessel safety requirements and other navigation issues on the lake.

Your Board has represented the membership and its concerns in several shoreline development issues this year in two municipalities. This included opposition to applications for zoning changes that would allow for new or existing shoreline developments that had the potential to damage the environment. We are not opposed to all shoreline development but oppose only those that pose possible degradation to the lake environment. In our submissions we have suggested improvements or suggestions that would allow the development to take place without hurting the environment and in some cases simply opposed the application because to allow the change requested was dead wrong. In every case, these applications were brought to our attention by concerned members who had serious reservations about them. We then did our research and made our position known to municipalities. We won some and lost some. We thank the members for bringing their concerns to our attention.

As you have read, BRLA with financial assistance of the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation, our charity wing, has had a very busy but fruitful year. I want to thank all the volunteers who donated their time and talents and especially the members of the Board for their leadership and dedication. I especially want to thank all the members who have supported the Association and the Foundation by renewing your annual membership and your generous financial donations to both the Foundation and the work of the Association. Without you the Association would not exist. I would also like to issue special appreciation to our corporate sponsors who have been so supportive by purchasing corporate memberships, advertising in DriftWords and providing free services to the BRLA.

I want to wish everyone a safe, active and healthy life during that season that changes the way that we express our passion for and enjoyment of our wonderful Big Rideau and cottage life. If you missed it, Rick Mercer was at Skate the Lake this year. Check out the clips on the CBC web site.



*Cow Island, Big Rideau Lake  
Photo: J. Trant*

## TREASURER'S REPORT: BARBARA KEAYS TREASURER@BRLA.ON.CA

### FOR JANUARY - OCTOBER 2008

Income	Jan - Oct 08	Budget
<b>Donations</b>		
Environmental	1,725.24	2,000.00
Fireworks	2,427.17	3,000.00
Other donations	602.00	500.00
Recreation	456.07	600.00
Summersounds	1,141.00	1,200.00
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>6,351.48</b>	<b>7,300.00</b>
<b>Dry Dock</b>		
Sales	125.00	500.00
<b>Total Dry Dock</b>	<b>125.00</b>	<b>500.00</b>
<b>Government grants</b>		
Fireworks grants	500.00	500.00
<b>Total Government grants</b>	<b>500.00</b>	<b>500.00</b>
<b>Investment</b>		
Interest	812.50	1,000.00
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>812.50</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>
<b>Membership</b>		
Corporate	500.00	2,000.00
Dues	15,599.61	19,500.00
<b>Total Membership</b>	<b>16,099.61</b>	<b>21,500.00</b>
<b>Recoveries</b>	5,478.36	4,300.00
<b>Revenue</b>		
Day camp	1,090.00	1,500.00
Sailing program	4,675.00	4,100.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>5,765.00</b>	<b>5,600.00</b>
<b>RLEF</b>		
Environmental subsidy	0.00	6,000.00
Office rental	2,430.96	2,500.00
<b>Total RLEF</b>	<b>2,430.96</b>	<b>8,500.00</b>
<b>Special projects revenue</b>	550.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>38,112.91</b>	<b>49,200.00</b>

Expense	Jan - Oct 08	Budget
<b>Administration</b>		
AGM	238.01	200.00
Audit	1,296.75	1,500.00
Bank charges	525.99	600.00
Board expenses	159.90	500.00
Insurance	4,149.36	6,000.00
Office supplies	169.67	1,000.00
Telephone	1,149.94	1,200.00
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>7,689.62</b>	<b>11,000.00</b>
<b>Communications</b>		
Driftwoods	214.04	500.00
Internet & website	0.00	500.00
<b>Total Communications</b>	<b>214.04</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>
<b>Corporate office</b>		
Rent	4,901.92	4,900.00
<b>Total Corporate office</b>	<b>4,901.92</b>	<b>4,900.00</b>
<b>Discretionary</b>	0.00	4,000.00
<b>Environmental</b>		
Programs	2,163.34	6,500.00
<b>Total Environmental</b>	<b>2,163.34</b>	<b>6,500.00</b>
<b>Fireworks</b>	6,060.54	6,000.00
<b>Government Affairs</b>		
Govt. affairs	0.00	100.00
Shoal markers	1,300.00	3,000.00
<b>Total Government Affairs</b>	<b>1,300.00</b>	<b>3,100.00</b>
<b>Memberships</b>		
Brochures	0.00	500.00
Renewals	0.00	500.00
<b>Total Memberships</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>
<b>Property</b>		
<b>Cow Island</b>		
Maintenance	2,836.73	1,000.00
Realty taxes	2,517.41	2,800.00
<b>Total Cow Island</b>	<b>5,354.14</b>	<b>3,800.00</b>
<b>Total Property</b>	<b>5,354.14</b>	<b>3,800.00</b>
<b>Recreation</b>		
Administration	800.00	2,300.00
Day Camp		
Expenses	1,241.79	
Program supplies	126.99	700.00
Regatta	466.11	300.00
Sailing prog	4,100.00	4,100.00
Summer /S	4.48	500.00
<b>Total Recreation</b>	<b>6,739.37</b>	<b>7,900.00</b>
<b>Special projects</b>	950.00	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>35,372.97</b>	<b>49,200.00</b>

Note: Some Income, such as RLEF grants, is received in the final quarter of the year. A full Financial Report will be distributed at the Annual General Meeting.

## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

PETER COPESTAKE, ENVIRONMENT@BRLA.ON.CA

The Environment Committee has delegated lead responsibility on various aspects of its activity individual Committee members as follows:

### WATER COLUMN AND PLANKTON ISSUES – PETER COPESTAKE

- Water testing /sampling data management and trend analysis (working with BREF and provincial water testing authorities)
- Focus of core water quality tests for oxygen, phosphates, metals, e-coli etc
- Monitor and assess zooplankton and phytoplankton populations and blooms where cost effectively possible
- To the extent possible, working with Queen's University Biology department, assess and develop trend analysis using past water quality data collected by BRLA

### FLORA AND FAUNA ISSUES – GORDON SOUTHAM

- Conduct periodic investigations and communications about native plant and animal species in and around Big Rideau
- Identify and educate BRLA members about both native and invasive species from time to time

### RECREATIONAL FISHING ISSUES – ROY SAMPSON

- Try to find and recirculate or make available to BRLA members fishing maps and brochures previously published by BRLA
- Identify and educate BRLA members on information available on fish stocks, species counts, and regulatory updates concerning recreational fishing

### SHORELINE AND ISLAND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES – BILL HASELDINE

- Lead the Cow Island shoreline replanting initiative with native species (BRLA Membership planting bee on Sept. 6th)

- Identify and educate BRLA members about best environmental practices for shoreline and island management issues
- Where practical, identify and inventory native plants, shrubs and trees that can be reintroduced to shoreline habitats on Big Rideau lake

### LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES – MICHAEL PETERSON

- Identify and educate BRLA members about legal, regulatory and consumer issues and behaviours affecting Big Rideau lake environment
- Communicate material statutory and regulatory issues to BRLA members on matters affecting the environment

All members agree to try report in Drift Words about an issue in their respective area of responsibility.

There was some discussion about the rip rap proposals for Cow Island . Committee members present agreed that the proposed rip rap remediation proposal was not appropriate or cost effective and that shoreline planting proposals were the best initiative to pursue . To that end BRLA members were invited to attend and participate in a Community tree planting bee at Cow Island on Sept. 6th.

The issue of the growing Colony of destructive Cormorants on the Owl Islands was discussed. It was agreed the Gordon would try to confirm who owns



*Erosion on the shore of Big Rideau Lake  
Photo: J. Trant*

those islands and the owners would be approached to control (and possibly eradicate) the population as the vegetation on the islands, including 100 plus year old white pines, were being rapidly denuded of leaves and would likely die or suffer irreparable damage if the colony continues to persist and grow. The latest count of Cormorants using that island was now substantial (perhaps as many as one hundred birds). The old pines and to the flora on the island is showing considerable stress.

### FISHING ON BIG RIDEAU - ROY SAMPSON

The new fishing brochure received excellent feedback. Members were very pleased to see the two previous brochures combined into one which provided guidelines on the conservation of the fish populations in the Big Rideau Lake. Because of the demand for the brochure there is a need for a second printing for next season.

The committee is also planning to produce new fishing signs for the major boat launches on the Big Rideau. We will be working with MNR to design the posters and to come up with the estimated costs to be included in next year's budget. We will also be consulting with MNR on the future directions for lake trout stocking on the Big Rideau.

### TURTLE WATCHING - PETER COPESTAKE

One of my favourite things to do on a hot, bright sunny afternoon is watch the turtles languishing lazily on logs in the Bay behind our cottage. Big Rideau is the home to many species of Turtles. In fact Parks Canada officials advised us that the soft sandy soil atop the cliffs overlooking our back bay have been the nesting sites for five different species of turtles since time immemorial. It was the sight in spring, of many large turtles slowly but deliberately scaling the cliff face up from the calm water of the bay below, and once reaching the sandy crest methodically digging a nest, laying their eggs and slowly returning to the water's edge that inspired the name of our Big Rideau property ... Turtle Bluff. Believe it or not we've never seen the young ones hatch and scamper back down to the safety of the Bay below, but we know they've hatched because of the scores of tell-tale egg shells that lie empty in and around the now empty nests in the days and weeks following. This coming spring, we plan to try to witness the mass hatching event and hopefully even catch it on film.



*Fishing Big Rideau  
Photo: T. Trant*

On Big Rideau we're extremely lucky to be able to enjoy these magnificent creatures. In many places habitat loss and degradation have had a terrible impact on turtle populations. Across Ontario, turtle populations are declining and some fear may even disappear from the province. The Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) has indicated that six of the eight species of turtles in Ontario are at risk; the Spiny Softshell Turtle, the Wood Turtle, the Spotted turtle, the Stinkpot turtle, the Blanding's turtle and the Map turtle. Only the Painter turtle and the Snapping turtle, both of which are quite plentiful in Big Rideau, are not designated.

Turtles are very slow to mature and very few ever reach adulthood. Studies have shown that saving even a single turtle will benefit the population as a whole. Returning a female to the breeding population allows her to continue to live and breed for many years to perpetuate the species.

Threats to turtles include road mortality, predation by raccoons, skunks and other animals, collection for the pet trade and for food, and pollution. But perhaps the biggest threat to turtles is habitat loss. If you are as lucky as we are and have a turtle nesting site on your property, try to ensure it stays undisturbed and natural. This is one of the reasons why preserving a natural shoreline is so important to the ecological health of our lake.

Recognizing the need to empower communities to protect wetlands, the Adopt-A-Pond Wetland Conservation Programme provides teachers, students and community groups with information, resources and educational opportunities to conserve, restore and create wetland habitats. Adopt-A-Pond also co-ordinates community-based monitoring programs such as the Ontario Turtle Tally. Our family will be participating in the Turtle Tally this year. If you want to have a fun family project at the cottage next year and also participate in Turtle Tally, contact Adopt-A-Pond at <http://www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond>.

Letter to The Editor of DriftWords:

The following is an abridged excerpt from a letter to me from G. F. Liddy, Superintendent, Rideau Canal National Historic Site, concerning Water Lot Leases on the Rideau Canal:

“On the specific issue of the waterlot lease, I have thoroughly reviewed the file and discussed the issues with Parks Canada Legal, policy and realty staff and am guided by the public policy objectives of Parks Canada’s mandate:

On behalf of the people of Canada, Parks Canada protects and presents nationally significant examples of Canada’s natural and cultural heritage, and fosters public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment in ways that ensure their ecological and commemorative integrity for present and future generations

Essentially, this means that the lakes and rivers that comprise the Rideau Canal are for the benefit, use and enjoyment of all Canadians and, except where commercial activity would improve the benefit to the public, the Rideau Canal will not normally grant exclusive possession of a portion of a waterbody that would exclude others from the leased property. In other words, a private waterlog lease will not be issued to Trout island.

Like all other Canadians, you have the right of navigation throughout Big Rideau Lake, which is similar to the public right of passage on a highway. You should be aware that while the right of navigation includes all rights necessary for its full enjoyment, such as the right to pass, to anchor and to moor, and to remain for a reasonable time for loading and unloading, the rights to anchor and to moor do not include the right to ground on the foreshore [the area that lies between the high and low water mark] or to moor at a private dock without the owner’s consent. The right of passage afforded by the right of navigation also does not authorize the doing of acts inconsistent with the rights of the owner of the bed or of other persons except as may be necessary to its exercise.”

Yours truly,

Doreen Ross

**SUPPORT THE  
RIDEAU LAKES  
ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION**



Donations to the RLEF are essential to support the environmental programs of the Big Rideau Lake Association (BRLA). Lake association membership dues do not cover the full costs of our ambitious environmental activities.

Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation Registered Charity #13978 9713 RR0001  
Give on-line at [www.brla.on.ca/rlef](http://www.brla.on.ca/rlef)

## 100TH ANNIVERSARY NEWS

BRLA Board is delighted to announce that D. Jane Moore has volunteered to edit/write a centennial publication to highlight the history of BRLA and its challenges, achievements, and people who made it happen. Jane with help of her husband Bill authored a lovely book, "Rideau Passages" published in 1982, a book that many of us treasure even today. Jane served on the BRLA Board for a time and she and Bill were always huge supporters of the Association and its mission on the lake.

We are very excited at the prospects of what the publication will look like when published for our 2011 Centennial year. We are seeking assistance of all members to send in ideas, photos and family history of their connection to the Big Rideau etc. Maybe you know someone who should be contacted or interviewed. Original material will be returned if fully labelled, but reproductions of photos, documents, etc would be appreciated. We hope to work with the Portland Historical Society who some will recall made a presentation at our July AGM on its mission to gather archival material on the history of Portland and the lake region.

Please send in your name and contact numbers if you and your family are willing to assist us or supply historical material to this project. We need to start collecting material as soon as possible. Contact us at [brla@brla.on.ca](mailto:brla@brla.on.ca).



*Len's Cove Marina in simpler times*

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## LOST PADDLES

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Beth Evans writes: In the rush leaving the island on Regatta day we did not notice that our two new paddles (for the canoe) were missing. Someone should notice that they ended up with two new paddles (I hope so)!

If you've got extra paddles, please contact the BRLA office, and we'll get them back to their rightful owners. Email [brla@brla.on.ca](mailto:brla@brla.on.ca) Thank you!

## SAILING LESSONS SOLD OUT AGAIN!

Once again we're hosting the Ontario Sailing Association BOOM program on Cow Island: June 29-July 3, 2009. Class is limited to 16, and we're full with returning sailors and their siblings.

If you would like to be on a waiting list, please email [sailing@brla.on.ca](mailto:sailing@brla.on.ca)



**BATEMAN PRINT TO BE RAFFLED THIS SUMMER. SEE THE NEXT ISSUE OF DRIFTWORDS FOR DETAILS!**

### COW ISLAND REPORT: DOUG ARRAND COWISLAND@BRLA.ON.CA

The Cow Island rehabilitation program made more progress this past summer. The weather provided a challenge and some planned improvements – such as the long overdue exterior painting – were postponed.

New signage was installed on the island in June 08. The sign welcomes visitors, indicates it is owned by BRLA and that the island is open to all members and guests. The sign also spells out the rules governing use of the island with respect to garbage treatment and open fires, etc. Our goal is to encourage more of our members to use the island for family outings and picnics and at the same time let them know of their responsibilities.

A new outhouse was installed on the island. More work was carried out to raise the cabin's support beams in order to make the floors of the structure level. The beams are now supported every six feet instead of the previous 12 feet and this has removed the beam sag. Two new steel door units have been purchased to replace current exterior doors.

A contract has been issued for an arborist to trim all the mature trees on the island to improve their health and extend their life. This will also improve safety: we do not want any large limbs to come down unexpectedly!

The Cow Island Committee is pleased with the shoreline planting carried out by BRLA's Environmental Committee this season. We think it will be a great help in slowing down the erosion that has been taking place and act as a demonstration to our members of what they can do on their own property to solve a similar problem. It is especially welcomed in light of the Board's decision to not to proceed with installation of rip rap stone on the shoreline where the greatest erosion is occurring.

We were pleased to receive the donation of a lawn tractor that permitted us to keep the lawns cut for our Day Camp Program etc. Unfortunately there was some vandalism and the tractor has been damaged. We are looking for another tractor and would appreciate the donation of a used tractor that is in good repair. We all have to remember that it is costly to barge any piece of equipment off the island and trailer it to a repair centre when it breaks down, hence the condition of the machine is an important concern.

Our Cow Island Committee was pleased to see an increase in the visits to the island in 2008. We wel-



*Rainbow over Cow Island*  
Photo: J. Trant

comed a number of our boating members to the island. They enjoyed the chance to have a swim from our excellent dock with an excellent swim ladder and to let their children run on the island or picnic on our new picnic tables. We were especially pleased to welcome the Len's Cove staff picnic to the island this summer. Len's Cove has been a generous supporter to BRLA over the years and we think it a wonderful way to thank that organization.

Plans for 2009 include a *volunteer work bee day* in which we hope to pick a date and have BRLA member come out to work on the island. We plan to paint the exterior of the cabin and carry out annual clean up of the grounds. We will have some fun, refreshments and get some work done such as paint the exterior of the cabin.

The cabin windows are in very bad state. We are seeking assistance from our business supporters or individual members who may have some ideas or contacts that could lead to the donation of new windows for the cabin. Otherwise the cabin is in relatively good shape structurally speaking. The exterior siding will need to be replaced in the near future as it is showing signs of deterioration but the windows are in far worse shape. If you have any ideas that may help us we would like to hear from you.

The improvements of the past five years have been impressive. We are very aware they would not have been possible without the generous support of our members through their memberships, donations to support the project and attendance at our annual fundraiser, Summer Sounds. The profits from Summer sounds go directly to improving the facilities and the committee urges all members to visit this magnificent island and enjoy it. Think about hosting a family reunion or games day on the island. To reserve a date simply contact D. Arrand through the website or email to [cowisland@brla.on.ca](mailto:cowisland@brla.on.ca)



### MARINE SAFETY – TOBY SPRY LAKESAFETY@BRLA.ON.CA

While the weather was not totally cooperative for a perfect boating season, nor was the downturn in the economy and drastic upturn in gas and diesel prices, 2008 was a good summer for Marine Safety.

The Board reviewed the policy regarding the “Private Navigation” markers which are maintained and provided by the Big Rideau Lake Association. We have decided after reviewing our liability insurance and reviewing the Department of Oceans and Fisheries and the Department of Transport and the Coast Guard Regulations that the deployment and hauling of the markers would have to be on a more rigorous time table. The Big Rideau area, from the Narrows Lock to Rocky Narrows, has for a number of years been looked after by Lamont Brown and his crew. The area from the Rocky Narrows to an area east of Rideau Ferry has been handled by Richard Bradley and a number of dedicated volunteers. After consulting with Richard it was decided to ensure that the markers were in the water prior to the opening of the Canal and hauled in November that we would have one person deal with this.

I have asked that all the volunteers in the Lower Rideau Lake Area continue to be our “eyes on the markers” and continue to contact the Association or me directly if any of our markers are damaged or go astray.

We have also set up an agreement with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority to allow the BRLA to haul and launch the Lower Rideau markers from their property at Rideau Ferry. For this we are much appreciative.

We will also be repairing a number of the markers that have aged and/or have been damaged over the past few years. Through the generous donation by Taggart Construction, we have enough PVC piping for a while. I would remind all that the cost of identification on the markers and the setting and retrieving of the markers is borne by the BRLA member’s through their membership fees and a grant from the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation. Please be sure to join the association.

Hopefully the fair winds, sun and warm weather will be in abundance during the 2009 summer.



*One of BRLA’s many Shoal Markers  
Photo: J. Trant*

### HOW’S YOUR GARBAGE COLLECTION?

The Rideau Lakes Township recently introduced a garbage collection program in the township. Your Board has received various complaints from our members on its shortcomings including its cost for tags, inconvenience and the closing of the township dump on the weekend when many members deposited their garbage and recyclables on their way home from the cottage. Some members have told us that they are actually taking their garbage home with them so their garbage is being handled by another municipality altogether thereby giving a false impression as to cost and success of the program to the municipality where the cottage is located.

This prompted us to raise the following questions to all members regardless of which municipality your property is located in.

Are you satisfied with the garbage services provided by your municipality? If not, please write to us and spell out your concerns. Are there issues that seasonal property owners and cottagers in particular have that are different than the permanent residents? Are properties located on private roads experiencing frustrations with the service?

We would like to take your concerns and recommendations forward to all municipal council members. So please contact us by letter or by emailing us at [president@brla.on.ca](mailto:president@brla.on.ca)

### ANIMAL LIFE ON AND AROUND BIG RIDEAU LAKE – GORDON SOUTHAM ENVIRONMENT@BRLA.ON.CA

Furry and feathered animals of the lake strive to survive, and Big Rideau is the scene of epic battles at mealtime. Spotted around the lake last summer, a great display of wildlife!

A small group of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) live on the islands. They look for saplings and foliage to eat. They have no predators in summer. If you come across a deer swimming, give it space.... in a panic it could drown from exhaustion and stress. A doe and her fawn were spotted swimming a long haul between islands. The young one tried to keep up but tired quickly. The mother swam back, helped the little one on her back, and piggybacked it to safety on the shore.

Racoons (*Procyon lotor*) are champion weight lifters. They can push twelve-pound rocks off a garbage lid to get to the goods. They operate at night and sometimes get in to violent fights... Then, their screams are frightful.

Beavers (*Castor Canadensis*) on a rampage on Big Island – those beech and birch are so tasty! Nocturnal, you are more likely to hear the ka-plunk of their tail in the water, or their gnawing away at softwoods. Chewing is a matter of survival for them, as their teeth never stop growing. If they didn't chew, their jaws would lock open.

Mink (*Neovison vison*) have sharp teeth; eat meat, clams and crayfish

Minks love crayfish. You can see them running along the shoreline, quietly bouncing and sliding through driftwood. They are very good swimmers.

When Fishers (*Martes pennanti*) are small they can be confused with minks – but males can weigh up to 18 lbs and have been not to eat fawns! Some that size have been spotted on the North shore. Beware: your pets may be their next meal! They are fast travel day and night though water, over land and in the tree-tops. Martens are at the

top of the food chain. If animals had super powers, this one would be the coolest.

Cormorants (*Phalacrocoracidae* family, not sure which specie) – a rarity once but are growing fast. Thirty or forty of them are now competing with loons for fish. They have taken over a rocky outcrop of an island, and love the easy branches at the tip of a white pine grove.

There have been reports of big cats on the lake – either lynx (*lynx canadensis*) or bobcats – but the chances of seeing them are very slim – they are very aware of your presence, and stay hidden. They come out at night and dig for turtle eggs.

In winter wolves (*canis lupus*) cross the ice, and roam the woods.

Other beasts about include coyotes, bald eagles, red-tailed hawks, osprey, and more to come! Once the ice is on, the deer are vulnerable!

Most mammals are nocturnal, but you can spot them some of them if you have patience and luck. Birds are best seen in the day. Usually we know of their presence from droppings, footprints, meal leftovers or scratch marks. All animals should be given as much space as possible to reduce their stress. Stop, look and listen: the quieter you are the better your chance of seeing an animal. Be aware of movement in your peripheral vision. Search soft mud for animal tracks. Scan the shorelines but don't forget the skies. Good luck!



*Dock Dwellers on Big Rideau Lake  
Photo: J. Trant*









**Big Rideau Lake Association**  
*in partnership with*  
**Rideau Valley Conservation Authority**



*presents*

# ENVIROECAMP

**JULY 20 – 24, 2009**  
**9:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

-  Our camp is run in a unique natural setting on BRLA's Cow Island on Big Rideau Lake
-  Free ferry service will be provided between Portland and Cow Island
-  Program features hands-on activities related to learning about the natural environment, a variety of fun and games designed to promote awareness of the lake environment.
-  Camp programming is developed and delivered by a certified Teacher / Outdoor Educator
-  Swimming under supervision of a certified Lifeguard
-  Registration is \$175.00

To obtain a registration form or for more information,  
please contact Rebecca Whitman,  
Foley Mountain Conservation Area Supervisor,  
at 613-273-3255 or [rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca](mailto:rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca)

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## SAVE THE DATE BRLA ACTIVITIES THIS SUMMER

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**FIREWORKS**  
**SAT. JUNE 27 AT DUSK**

**SAILING CAMP**  
**MON. JUNE 29 – FRI. JULY 3 [9-4]**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**SAT. JULY 4 AT 10:00 AM**

**ENVIROECAMP**  
**MON. JULY 20 – FRI. JULY 24, 2009**

**SUMMER SOUNDS**  
**SAT. JULY 28 [TENTATIVE]**

**SWIM REGATTA**  
**SAT. AUGUST 1 [10:30 FOR 11:00 AM]**

**COW ISLAND DAY CAMP**  
**[DAILY DURING JULY AND AUGUST]**

**SWIMMING LESSONS**  
**[TO BE ANNOUNCED]**

# BRLA CORPORATE MEMBERS SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES!



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*Show your support for the BRLA  
and reach a community com-  
mitted to Big Rideau Lake.*

*Become a BRLA Corporate Member today!  
See [http://www.brla.on.ca/membership/  
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**BIG RIDEAU LAKE ASSOCIATION**

