



DRIFTWORDS

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

PRESIDENT'S PEN – PETER COPESTAKE PRESIDENT@BRLA.ON.CA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THE EXECUTIVE

President: president@brla.on.ca
Peter Copestake
Vice President: vp@brla.on.ca
Ed Brigden
Treasurer: treasurer@brla.on.ca
Barbara Keays
Secretary: secretary@brla.on.ca
Melanie Sterling

DIRECTORS

Environment: environment@brla.on.ca
Gordon Southam
Marine Safety: lakesafety@brla.on.ca
Toby Spry
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adamlake@brla.on.ca
Volunteer Needed!

AT LARGE brla@brla.on.ca

Doug Good
Heather Heins
Carol Harris
Ian Shackell
Sue Van Slooten

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Doug Arrand

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July has just whistled by. Even though it was colder than usual, wetter than usual, and windier than usual, our lake remained as beautiful and full of fun and adventure as ever... and what an eventful month we've had. First we had a well-attended AGM at the Portland Community Centre. At that meeting Doug Arrand, our past President and Jennifer Trant, both stepped down from the Board after serving the maximum term of 6 years permitted under our constitution. We all owe both Doug and Jennifer a ton of gratitude for their hard work and leadership of the BRLA over the last 6 years. They have done much to enrich the value of services that our members enjoy in the BRLA. We are fortunate however that both have agreed to continue to lead Committees of the BRLA for the next year. Jennifer will coordinate publishing of DriftWords, and the web site, while Doug has agreed to chair the Cow Island and Recreation Committees on our behalf. We also want to welcome two new individuals to your BRLA Board each with a new two-year mandate. These new Board members are Ian Shackell and Sue Van Slooten. All of the other Board members are the same as last year. There is a write-up about each Board member elsewhere in this addition of DriftWords.



*BRLA's President in full sail aboard Grog.
Photo: Toby Spry*

The BRLA Board has four core objectives it pursues on behalf of its members, through the following committees:

Committee	Chair
Recreation (including Cow Island Camp)	Doug Arrand recreation@brla.on.ca
Environment (Education and Best practices)	Gordon Southam environment@brla.on.ca
Navigation and Water Safety (including Hazard Buoys)	Toby Spry lakesafety@brla.on.ca
Government and Regulatory Liaison	David Bearman govtaffairs@brla.on.ca

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DRIFTWORDS – SUMMER 2009

They will periodically report to you on their own Committee projects and matters arising in future issues of DriftWords.

This year we have also elected to engage a professional manager to manage our accounts and member records. Barb Keays, a Board member and Portland resident has kindly agreed to assume this responsibility. Barb will also hold the office of BRLA Treasurer and Melanie Sterling has agreed to continue to serve as Secretary to the BRLA board. Finally I was elected to serve as BRLA President until the next AGM next summer.

My priorities for the year will be to:

• continue to build the BRLA membership and communicate to members the value proposition associated with BRLA Membership (through DriftWords, road-signage, BRLA Web site, word of mouth communications and feed back between members and all potential members around our lake).

• identify and invest in environmentally-friendly capital projects and maintenance initiatives that improve our Cow Island facilities and the make Cow Island more user-friendly and accessible to our Membership. (See the separate RLEF article in this DriftWords).

• continue to provide or arrange member-supported recreational, social and educational events at Cow island in support of our Recreational goals (Fireworks, day camp, sailing camp, environment camp, summer sounds, educational and informative seminars etc.).

• continue to provide navigation and water safely services including the special BRLA bouyage system around the Lake.

• continue to provide best practices environmental education and demonstration projects for our membership, recreational fishing news, and to provide ongoing water, algae and nutrient testing of our lake water in order to monitor the long term good-health of our Lake. (See our Environmental Committee initiatives).

• continue to provide factual and unbiased monitoring and reporting of governmental and development related initiatives that may affect our Lake and/or Members.

The BRLA is a creature of and for its membership. Your participation is what makes the BRLA work effectively to achieve the membership goals it was created to address. We are in our 98th year as an association, financially sound and solvent and uniquely and wonderfully gifted through our ownership of Cow Island.

I would encourage members first to ensure they pay their modest annual dues as these fund the various core services we provide and the numerous initiatives we undertake on behalf of our members. Next go out and tell you neighbours – who may not already be BRLA members – about the great value of membership and encourage them to join as well. Remember that both members and non-members alike all benefit from many of BRLA's services and projects such as navigation aids and fireworks... just by being on the lake. I would like to make the value proposition even better by making Cow Island even more user friendly and member accessible.

Looking forward to seeing and greeting many of you out on our beautiful lake over the rest of the summer.

SHORELINE SPEED RESTRICTIONS

Did you know that there is a un-posted speed limit of 10km/h(6 mph) within 30 meters(100 feet) from shore?

When boating in the provinces of Ontario, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the inland waters of British Columbia and Nova Scotia, please observe the speed limit. This limit applies on all waters within these provinces except where other limits are posted. These provisions do not apply in rivers less than 100 meters (300 feet) in width, canals and buoyed channels nor in the case of waterskiing, where the tow-boat launches and drops off skiers by heading directly away from or into the shore.



TREASURER'S REPORT: JANUARY - JULY 2009 BARBARA KEAYS - TREASURER@BRLA.ON.CA

Ordinary Income/Expense	Jan - Jul 09	Budget (Jan-Dec 09)	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Income				
Donations				
Environmental	1,028.00	2,000.00	-972.00	51.4%
Fireworks	2,030.25	2,500.00	-469.75	81.21%
Marine & Govt	630.00			
Other donations	934.61	600.00	334.61	155.77%
Recreation	330.00	500.00	-170.00	66.0%
Summersounds	570.00	1,200.00	-630.00	47.5%
Total Donations	5,522.86	6,800.00	-1,277.14	81.22%
Government grants				
Fireworks grants	1,400.00	500.00	900.00	280.0%
Total Government grants	1,400.00	500.00	900.00	280.0%
Investment				
Interest	550.00	1,000.00	-450.00	55.0%
Total Investment	550.00	1,000.00	-450.00	55.0%
Membership				
Corporate	1,690.00	2,000.00	-310.00	84.5%
Dues	13,751.15	16,000.00	-2,248.85	85.95%
Total Membership	15,441.15	18,000.00	-2,558.85	85.78%
Recoveries - prior years	1,650.32			
Revenue				
Day camp	348.00	1,200.00	-852.00	29.0%
Enviro camp	2,065.00			
Sailing program	6,325.00	4,300.00	2,025.00	147.09%
Total Revenue	8,738.00	5,500.00	3,238.00	158.87%
RLEF				
Environmental subsidy	0.00	7,500.00	-7,500.00	0.0%
Total RLEF	0.00	7,500.00	-7,500.00	0.0%
Total Income	33,302.33	39,300.00	-5,997.67	84.74%
Expenses				
Administration				
Advertising	240.00	0.00	240.00	100.0%
AGM	131.64	200.00	-68.36	65.82%
Audit	0.00	1,400.00	-1,400.00	0.0%
Bank charges	340.15	600.00	-259.85	56.69%
Board expenses	100.63	500.00	-399.37	20.13%
Insurance	4,174.20	5,800.00	-1,625.80	71.97%
Office supplies	122.86	1,000.00	-877.14	12.29%
Telephone	728.85	1,300.00	-571.15	56.07%
Total Administration	5,838.33	10,800.00	-4,961.67	54.06%
Communications				
Driftwoods	0.00	800.00	-800.00	0.0%
Internet & website	0.00	500.00	-500.00	0.0%
Total Communications	0.00	1,300.00	-1,300.00	0.0%
Corporate office				
Rent	2,100.00	4,500.00	-2,400.00	46.67%
Total Corporate office	2,100.00	4,500.00	-2,400.00	46.67%
Environmental				
Programs	394.12	3,000.00	-2,605.88	13.14%
Total Environmental	394.12	3,000.00	-2,605.88	13.14%
Fireworks	6,423.31	4,000.00	2,423.31	160.58%
Government Affairs				
Govt. affairs	0.00	100.00	-100.00	0.0%
Shoal markers	4,642.24	4,500.00	142.24	103.16%
Total Government Affairs	4,642.24	4,600.00	42.24	100.92%
Memberships				
Brochures	0.00	500.00	-500.00	0.0%
Renewals	388.42	500.00	-111.58	77.68%
Total Memberships	388.42	1,000.00	-611.58	38.84%
Property				
Cow Island				
Maintenance	687.79	1,000.00	-312.21	68.78%
Realty taxes	1,258.71	2,800.00	-1,541.29	44.95%
Total Cow Island	1,946.50	3,800.00	-1,853.50	51.22%
Total Property	1,946.50	3,800.00	-1,853.50	51.22%
Recreation				
Administration salaries	0.00	1,800.00	-1,800.00	0.0%
Day Camp Expenses	709.48	500.00	209.48	141.9%
Enviro camp expenses	88.34			
Program supplies	0.00	500.00	-500.00	0.0%
Regatta	0.00	300.00	-300.00	0.0%
Sailing program	6,528.94	4,300.00	2,228.94	151.84%
Summer Sounds	377.73	300.00	77.73	125.91%
Total Recreation	7,704.49	7,700.00	4.49	100.06%
Total Expense	29,437.41	40,700.00	-11,262.59	72.33%
Net Ordinary Income	3,864.92	-1,400.00	5,264.92	-276.07%

BRLA SAYS THANKS!

To:

☺ Doug Arrand for completing the painting of the cabin on Cow Island with the help of Amy Shackell

☺ Archives & Museum Informatics (J. Trant and D. Bearman) for a copy of Microsoft Office Professional to run the Membership Database

☺ Mike Fraser - AGAIN - for an amazing Canada Day fireworks display. Next year, do you think you could hold the mosquitoes?

☺ Peter and Joyce Cowan for organizing Summer Sounds and bringing the Bells back to Cow Island

☺ J. Trant for organizing the BOOM sailings program

☺ The Evans Family for another great Regatta!

☺ The MacLeod's for their donation of a hobie cat sailboat for members to use at Cow Island

☺ Toby Spry for the donation of an Albacore sailboat that members can use at Cow Island

☺ Doug Arrand for daily "water taxi service" for EnviroCamp

SUPPORT THE RLEF

Donations to the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation 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 environmental activities.



Give on-line at www.brla.on.ca/rlef

Donations are tax deductible. Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation Registered Charity #13978 9713 RR0001

RIDEAU LAKES ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION (RLEF) REPORT

DAVID BEARMAN - RLEF@BRLA.ON.CA

The first part of the summer is typically a slow period for the RLEF, as it falls between the BRLA AGM (first week of July) and the RLEF AGM (second or third week of August), but this year a lot of planning has taken place in conjunction with the new BRLA President Peter Copestake. A strategic plan adopted several years ago to make Cow Island, the BRLA property in Big Rideau Lake, into a model environmental demonstration project for waterfront property owners to study and emulate has moved forward.

The week of July 20, the first annual “EnviroCamp” (environmental day camp) was held on Cow Island. RLEF, which sponsored the curriculum development phase of this project, was pleased to learn it was a

great success. We hope that the camp will be held in future years to build up understanding and appreciation of the environment among younger lake dwellers. Perhaps an adult version can be developed as a one-day workshop for future years.

The concept of holding several weekend workshops on topics like grey water management including building a leaching pit; providing lighting and security for buildings, docks and path; using solar power; construction of zero-emission buildings using straw bale construction methods; and installing water pumping using wind power generation was developed and will be proposed to the RLEF Board at its coming meeting. If adopted, the RLEF would hold workshops with Ontario-based experts on these environmentally sound practices and at the same time build working demonstration models at Cow Island to enhance the services the BRLA can provide for its members.

Last year several hundred trees and shrubs were planted as part of the Cow Island bioengineering erosion control project; in early fall this year, we will again co-sponsor a weekend native species planting with the BRLA Environment Committee, in line with the recommendations received from the RLEF-funded ecological survey of Cow Island conducted in 2006 (and available on the BRLA Web site). Hopefully other shoreline naturalization projects and workshops will be scheduled for 2010.

SHORELINE EROSION PROTECTION

BILL HASELDINE

Consistent with the BRLA program of erosion abatement and shoreline protection, and although there are numerous references, publications, rules and regulations on the subject, here's a simplified description of effective measures that BRLA members take do themselves.

At the water's edge

The bushes and plants described in the previous issue of DriftWords provide the basis of an effective and good looking and natural waterfront that will soon be accompanied by the natural seeding of wildflowers, plants and grasses (i.e. weeds). Just avoid purple peril, ragweed and poison ivy.

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Shoreline Naturalization Program

Often called the “ribbon of life,” natural shorelines are very important because they keep the water in our streams, rivers, and lakes clean and healthy. Natural shorelines also protect against erosion and provide valuable habitat for fish, birds and other wildlife.

Protecting and maintaining natural shorelines is important to everyone who enjoys swimming, fishing or spending time along healthy streams, rivers or lakes.



What the Program Offers:

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority's **Shoreline Naturalization Program** provides information about the value and benefits of naturally vegetated, healthy shorelines. The program also offers simple, cost-effective advice and hands-on guidance to waterfront property owners interested in enhancing or naturalizing their shoreline.

- You may be eligible for a one-on-one site visit to develop a “shoreline planting plan” that will incorporate your land use needs with the concepts of shoreline naturalization;
- The program provides technical and financial assistance for approved shoreline naturalization projects, including: planning, purchasing of plants and materials, and planting;
- The program provides a 75 percent incentive grant up to a maximum of \$1,000 for approved shoreline naturalization projects.

Who is Eligible?

- Waterfront property owners along wetlands, streams, rivers and lakes within the Rideau Watershed
- Lake associations, river groups or other not-for-profit groups within the Rideau Watershed interested in completing shoreline demonstration sites, offering shrub handout/planting days, or other shoreline projects.

To find out more about the program or to set up a site visit, contact Andrea Klymko, Shoreline Stewardship Technician at 613.692.3571 ext. 1173 or email andrea.klymko@rvca.ca



Remember, it's the plant roots that hold the earth and rocks in place against weather storms, ice, boat wake and wash. All of the suggested bush plantings could start right at the high water line and continue in natural looking random manner upland several feet, to form a protective riparian barrier. Just do not mow or use a weed-eater in this area

A most effective, labour and cost effective method of planting would be to use bare root plants that are obtainable in the springtime. However, these must be planted within a few days of purchase. To plant, use of a heavy metal spike to make a hole to accommodate the bare root. Tuck in the root, fill the hole with a little topsoil and anchor the bush with some rocks to guard against the wind and waves. Now, "hope for a rainy springtime and summer" or water them regularly.

SAILING INTO SUMMER

J. TRANT - SAILING@BRLA.ON.CA

Sailing Camp was again very popular with BRLA members. If it weren't for a last-minute cancellation from another site, we would have been sold out. Instead, we ran with 2 sets of instructors and 23 kids! Congratulations to Laura Barrett, Adriana Bradford, Molly Brenzel, Matthew Brenzel, Riley Campbell, Jack Campbell, Daniel Carson, Emilia Carson, Will Evans, Matthew Evans, Magnus Hambleton, Ben Harris, Luke Harris, David Harris, Andrew Harris, Benjamin Hurst, Ben Powell, Alec Powell, Sierra Schumann, Turner Schumann, Robbie Sterling, Alison Thompson, and Duncan Thompson.

We rely on the Ontario Sailing Association BOOM Program, and learn in late November if and when we will have instructors the next year. Participants are accepted in the following order: 1) returning sailors; 2) siblings of returning sailors; 3) sailors from a previous year's waiting list; 4) open applications. For more details, contact sailing@brla.on.ca



*Sailors in the BOOM program off Cow Island.
Photo: J. Trant*

BRLA MEMBERS EMAIL LIST

BRLA now has an email discussion list is for all Members of the Big Rideau Lake Association. It will be used to send email updates about issues, and as a place for BRLA members to raise questions and concerns.

All BRLA members for whom we have an email address have now had a chance to join the list.

SENDING MAIL TO THE LIST

If you are subscribed, you can send a message to BRLA-Members@brla.on.ca It will then be sent to the ALL other BRLA Members. Please use this address with consideration for others.

The return address on any message to the list must be exactly the same as the address at which you are subscribed or your message will not be forwarded. While this might be a slight inconvenience, it is better than having the list open to 'spam'.

BRLA MEMBERS MESSAGE ARCHIVE

Messages sent to the BRLA Members list are saved and available on the web in a password protected archive at <http://lists.brla.on.ca/mailman/private/brla-members/>

RECEIVING MESSAGES FROM THE LIST

You should receive a copy of messages you send to the list. If you don't please contact webmaster@brla.on.ca. This may be a sign of a problem with the way the list is operating.

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS

To change the address where BRLA Members email is sent, remove the old address, and add a new one by completing the form at <http://lists.brla.on.ca/mailman/listinfo/BRLA-Members>

ADDING YOURSELF TO THE LIST

If you would like to be added to the BRLA Members email list, please complete the form at <http://lists.brla.on.ca/mailman/listinfo/BRLA-Members>

BRLA BOARD: JULY 2009 - JUNE 2010

with thanks to Veronica Parker-Wright

BRLA Board Members serve 2-year, renewable terms, to a maximum of 3 consecutive terms. New members, and the President, are elected at each Annual General Meeting. The Board then elects its officers.

Get to know the people working on your behalf.

THE EXECUTIVE



President: Peter Copestake

email: president@brla.on.ca

Terms: 2008-09

For almost 40 years Peter and his family have been cottaging on Big Rideau, both Cordwood Island and more recently at the north end of Long Island. Peter has enjoyed his frequent “retreats” to the lake in all seasons, to enjoy the peaceful, clean and natural beauty of the place. An ardent environmentalist, with an undergraduate degree in Limnology from Queen’s University, look for the big 1962 vintage mahogany catamaran sailboat on the lake and you’ll find Peter.



Vice President: Ed Brigden

email: vp@brla.on.ca

Terms: 2004-05, 2006-07, 2008-09

Having been introduced to the Rideau Canal System and Portland area in the mid 1970’s. We are located on the north shore of Briton Bay and have spent our time since then either boating or enjoying our summers on the dock, maintaining the cottage, docks, decks and Sharon’s flowers. I became involved with the BRLA initially during the Three Buoys Houseboat Rental days and having served a couple of terms on the board moved on. I was subsequently invited to re-join the Board on two additional occasions and have been on the board approximately 10 to 12 years. My areas of interest are what the BRLA is really all about: water quality, fish habitat, boating safety and shoal markers, recreation and of course the financial stability of our organization.



Treasurer: Barbara Keays

email: treasurer@brla.on.ca

Terms: 2008-09

My husband Harry and I acquired our first home on Big Rideau Lake in 1991, which we used in the summer and on weekends year round. In 2004 we moved to a larger property near Portland and built a new house which we now call “home”. I retired last year from being the Accounting Manager of an Ottawa retirement home for over 18 years. We enjoy our Big Rideau Lake lifestyle far more than a city lifestyle. I hope that BRLA can increase its membership and provide lake-front residents with ideas as to how they can make the lake a better place for all of its residents, especially wildlife.



Secretary: Melanie Sterling

email: secretary@brla.on.ca

Terms: 2007-8, 2009-10

I joined the board in 2007 as secretary and has been pleased to be a part of the volunteer organization. I’ve had been cottaging on the Big Rideau since 1992 and own a cottage on Briton Bay with my husband John. I’m mom to two boys who have been taking part in sailing lessons and daycamp on the lake every summer. I work as a Business Development Associate with a Municipal Software company and am a certified fitness instructor teaching at Goodlife clubs in Ottawa. Our family can be found most weekends at the cottage enjoying the water, boating and taking part in many of the social/recreational activities offered on the lake. I am particularly interested in recreation, the environment and preservation of the lake.



Environment: Gordon Southam

email: environment@brla.on.ca

Term: 2009-10

Born in Ottawa in 1972, I have spent every summer on Rideau Lake with my family. I enjoy the outdoors: hiking, biking, canoeing, and, in winter, all forms skiing. My ongoing projects include walking the Bruce Trail in segments, and through-walking the Rideau Trail if it ever stops raining. I teach social sciences in French at Glebe Collegiate Institute in Ottawa, and look forward to working with the BRLA environment committee.

Lake Safety: Daniel (Toby) Spry

email: lakesafety@brrla.on.ca

Terms: 2007-8, 2009-10



I have been on Big Rideau Lake off and on since 1972. We originally were boaters and kept our 1937 sail boat at Len's Cove on a mooring can. The first cement docks came later. As all boaters know, "footitis" is a contagious disease which forced us to move to the St. Lawrence for a number of years. We returned in 2000 on a cottage hunting expedition. I was educated in the UK and Canada, attending numerous schools and collages. I have experience in management of not-for-profit and commercial businesses as well as extensive travel and overseas service. I have recently retired after a career as the CEO of a leading charitable emergency medical services organization in Ottawa and some other shorter careers including the Canadian Forces, Thompson Newspapers and a pharmacy firm. I am involved with a number of other organizations and boards and am at present a member of the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Director at Large: Doug Good

Terms: 2006-7, 2008-9



Doug is interested in the BRLA's history and its upcoming 100th anniversary.

Director at Large: Heather Heins

Terms: 2007-08, 2009-10



Heather Heins has been a real estate sales representative selling real estate in the Ottawa and Rideau Lakes for the past 23 years. Heather has also has a good knowledge of the construction industry being involved in new home, condominium and renovation projects. She also owned and operated a restaurant on the Big Rideau Lake for 6 years. Heather presently owns a boat rental company in Portland. She has lived on the water year round in the village of Portland for the 13 years. Her interests are to increase memberships and awareness of the activities and the accomplishments of the BRLA.



Director at Large: Carol Harris

Terms: 2008-9

Following retirement from the Ottawa Community Care Access Center (CCAC) in 1996, Carol & her family built a permanent home on the North Shore of Big Rideau Lake, where a large happy face now adorns their swim dock. Carol became an active volunteer in the health care sector and is presently on the board of the South East Community Care Access Center (CCAC) and represents the CCAC sector on the South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) Collaborative Governance Development Team. Carol's interests are in helping to rebuild the BRLA membership, Cow Island and preserving and promoting all that the Big Rideau Lake offers present and future generations.

Director at Large: Ian Shackell

Term: 2009-10



I have been working in the commercial real estate industry in Ottawa for the past 25 years. My wife, Susan and I reside in Manotick and have four children Sarah 18, Army 16, Matthew 14 and Hannah 11.

We built on the north shore of the Big Rideau Lake in 2005 and consider ourselves relatively new to the lake. We have enjoyed the Big Rideau immensely and look forward to many summers of great family fun on the lake and getting to know more people as a result of being involved with BRLA.

Director at Large: Sue Van Slooten

Term: 2009-10



I was born in Hartford, CT., and grew up in rural CT. I have a degrees in Anthropology (86, with a minor in Archaeology) and in Music (94). We moved to Canada in 1994, and got our citizenship 4 years ago. Later I operated Loon Lodge B&B in Lombardy, ON for 6+ years. With the downturn, we closed last year. I live with my husband Bob, and my son Devin, who is 14, along with various pets. I became involved with the BRLA as a good way to become involved in the care and maintenance of the lake. I have always felt strongly that the lake area needs all the support it can get; we the property owners, are the ones who usually notice first when something is wrong. We live on a world-class lake and need to be its spokespeople and guardians.

PROGRAMS



Recreation and Cow Island: Doug Arrand

email: recreation@brla.on.ca
Board Terms: 2003-4, 2005-6, 2007-8

I am a retired secondary school and adult education teacher, who retired in 2000 after having spent 33 years in the profession in Ottawa. I have always been a community volunteer and, after having enjoyed our cottage on this great lake for 26 years which included membership in the BRLA, I made the decision to offer my services as a member of the Cow Island Committee and the Recreation Committee. I did this because I wanted to see the children and members once again enjoy this magnificent island property owned by the BRLA.

COW ISLAND ENVIRO CAMP JULY 2009

REBECCA WHITMAN - REBECCA.WHITMAN@RVCA.CA

The Big Rideau Lake Association in partnership with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority is proud to announce the success of first-ever EnviroCamp on Cow Island. EnviroCamp was run for children aged 6-12 during the week of July 20th to the 24th. Nine campers partook in the exploration of nature activities, allowing individualized instruction and an ideal camper to staff ratio. The camp was led by Rebecca Whitman, a certified outdoor education teacher and the area supervisor of Foley Mountain Conservation Area, and her summer student, Marla Dagnone, a recent graduate from the outdoor education program at Queen's University.

The camp was an instant hit for the campers as they enjoyed the daily water taxi service on Doug Arrand's pontoon boat that shuttled them to the island. Other campers found their own unique way to Cow Island by kayaking, seadooring, or boating from their local cottages on the Big Rideau Lake.

Cow Island provided the perfect setting for a Nature Camp allowing for hands-on and experiential learning, both of which are key elements to learning about and promoting awareness of the lake environment.



Communications: DriftWords (newsletter) and Web Site:

Jennifer Trant

*email: driftwords@brla.on.ca or
webmaster@brla.on.ca*

Board Terms: 2003-4, 2005-6,
2007-8

I joined the BRLA Board in 2003 to help with the Web site, and assumed editing of DriftWords in 2005. Thanks to high-speed wireless Internet, I spend a long summer (May–October) on Grindstone Island with my husband, David Bearman, and our chow, Slate. Together we look after a significant piece of Rideau history and environment, and manage a consulting company that develops digital strategies for cultural heritage organizations and runs international conferences. I'm interested in preserving natural and historical heritage, developing sustainable communities, and using technology effectively to that end.

Through a series of hands-on activities and cooperative games students learned about field and forest habitats, water conservation, shoreline awareness, their impact on the environment, and their role within the food chain. Cow Island provided an excellent area for a habitat, bug, and aquatic investigation, in addition to an unmatched camouflaged area for our predator and prey survival games. During rainy days, the recreation building provided a safe hide-away to become creative, exploring arts and crafts that complimented our outdoor educational nature activities. During our hot days, campers enjoyed an afternoon swim under the supervision of lifeguard, **Amy Shackell** who ran the BRLA Cow Island Day Camp.

(cont. on p. 9)



Kids participating in EnviroCamp on Cow Island.

MARINE SAFETY

TOBY SPRY - LAKESAFETY@BRLA.ON.CA

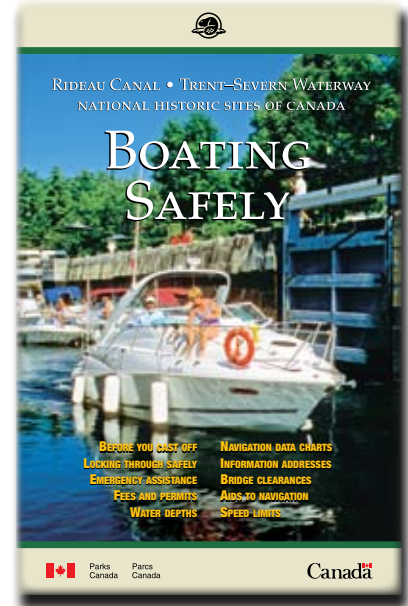
To all boaters, this summer has been fraught with bad weather and numerous comments regarding the buoys, boaters wake, speeding boats close to shore and requests for additional signage. All this to say that the BRLA is trying its best to respond to all these concerns.

We had the buoys deployed prior to the opening of the Rideau Canal and as usual will remove them after the canal closes. There are eight (8) new buoys in the Rideau Ferry area to replace old and damaged ones. Some only have an orange 3" reflective strip around the top, but will be fully decaled for the spring of 2010. We are missing a number of buoys due to damage or they were moved. One or two were not deployed due to discrepancies on the charts. This will be rectified next year.

As to the speeding and wake problem, I have distributed a large number of the Rideau Canal pamphlets reminding boaters that they are required by law to mind their wakes and that just going

slow or being over 30m (100 ft) from shore does not negate their responsibility for and damage to property. Most cottages and boaters respect this and have enjoyable boating and cottage experiences. If you have a problem with a specific boat, please try to get its name or number and pass it on to me, I will contact the authorities and see what can be done. You may also want to contact the OPP Marine Division yourself and lodge a complaint. We are having new speed and wake signs made, but these cannot be put up all over the lake. There is a reminder in the DriftWords about the new distance off a shoreline regulation in effect in Ontario and many other Provinces. I have stopped a few boats that are making dangerous wake near the shore, and Personal Water Craft driving within the 30m (100 ft) offshore distance. Remember that these boaters are not just those who visit the lake for a day or so, a number are lake cottagers.

ALL BOAT USERS are reminded that as of the 15th September you are REQUIRED to have in your possession your Pleasure Boat Operators card when using your boat regardless of age. Young people under the age of 16 are NOT al-



Parks Canada Boating Safely guide available from http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/on/rideau/images/BoatingSafely2008_e.pdf

lowed to operate PWC unaccompanied by a PBO card holder over 16. Fines are in the \$250.00 range and can increase for second offences. You could also have additional fines for not having the required safety and emergency equipment on your boat. Check your marina or online for courses and booklets telling you what you are required to have for various size and type of boats.

COW ISLAND ENVIRO CAMP (CONT. FROM P. 8)

After a successful week of nature activities, our campers and staff celebrated with a good old fashion campfire lunch cookout and a certificate celebration at the end of the day commemorating our triumphs throughout the week.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority enjoyed their partnership with the Big Rideau Lake Association and look forward to further years of promoting awareness and an appreciation of the lake environment to our future leaders. For more information about EnviroCamp, please contact Rebecca Whitman at 613 273-3255 or rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca.



Peter Copestake at the BRLA AGM. Share your photos of BRLA activities in our Flickr group at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/brla/>



Two boys watch a noodle race.



Some of the Evans family from The Pines in the family canoe race.

BRLA REGATTA DRAWS MORE THAN 100 TO COW ISLAND

August 1st was a sunny Saturday on Big Rideau Lake – a rare thing for the summer of 2009 – and that drew about 100 Big Rideau Lake Association Members to Cow Island for the annual BRLA Swim and Canoe Regatta. Organized since the 1950s, this friendly competition for the W.J. Carson Memorial Trophy brings families together for summer fun.

Swim and canoe races for all ages were supplemented by demonstrations of aquatic prowess in the noodle race, the ball race and – a perennial favourite – the Diaper Race. This last involved ‘creative’ wearing of PFDs.

Congratulations to the Thompson family of the North Shore on their winning performance.

Many thanks again to the Evans Family of The Pines who organized the events and the BBQ lunch. It was great to see so many people out on Cow Island, a fantastic resource for BRLA Members to use and enjoy.



The W.J. Carson Memorial Trophy awarded since 1954 at the BRLA Regatta.



The Diaper Race is popular – particularly when Dads model their creatively donned PFDs



Two young islanders swim in a Noodle Race.



Congratulations to the Thompson Family of the North Shore, winners of the 2009 Trophy.

All photos: J. Trant

BIG RIDEAU LAKE PART OF A THREE-YEAR STUDY OF SMALLMOUTH BASS

BY: MARIE-ANGE GRAVEL, CARLETON UNIVERSITY

Researchers from Carleton University have been studying smallmouth bass on Big Rideau Lake since the summer of 2007. Lead researcher Marie-Ange Gravel, a PhD student from the Fish Ecology and Conservation Physiology Laboratory has been asking questions which relate to smallmouth bass reproduction and the influence of predators in many lakes along the Rideau River watershed.

In the spring male smallmouth bass move into shallow waters, create saucer-shaped nests, court and spawn with females, and then care for eggs and the offspring as they develop. This behaviour is referred to as sole-paternal care and is quite common in many fish species. For smallmouth bass, males guard the nests for approximately 4 weeks. During this time, the male fans the nest with his fins to keep the nest clear of debris but also guards the nest from predators such as pumpkinseed and rock bass. Some research has shown that removing a nesting male from his nest during a catch-and-release angling event can sometimes cause catastrophic nest predation. Within a few minutes many of the eggs or juveniles can be eaten by predators when the male is absent.

The lakes in the Rideau River watershed naturally vary in depth, geology and other habitat characteristics which in turn influence the abundance of potential nest predators. This research examined whether these natural differences in nest predation pressure among lakes could influence the nesting behaviour of smallmouth bass. In 2007 and 2008, snorkelers swam the shorelines of five lakes (Big Rideau Lake, Indian Lake, Newboro Lake, Opinicon Lake and Sand Lake) to estimate the number of nest predators and examine the behaviour of nesting smallmouth bass. This research showed that the behaviour of smallmouth bass was influenced by the number of nest predators in proximity to the nest. Males from lakes with high predation pressure spent more time engaged in anti-predator activities such as chases, bites or other aggressive behaviours. These antipredator behaviours should correspond to overall increases in swimming activity and energy costs.



*A smallmouth bass.
Photo Marie-Ange Gravel*

To quantify the energetic cost of predator defense in the spring of 2009, radio-telemetry transmitters with special electromyogram (EMG) sensors were implanted into nesting male bass in two lakes differing in nest predation pressure - Big Rideau Lake as a low predator lake and Opinicon Lake as a high predator lake. In order to implant these transmitters, nesting smallmouth bass were caught by rod and reel and brought into the boat for surgeries while their nest was guarded by a snorkeler. Fish were anesthetized for surgery, and the small EMG transmitter was implanted in the body cavity. Fish were then placed in lake water to recover and were returned to their nest within approximately 15 minutes. Transmitters did not impede the regular swimming and nest-guarding behaviour of smallmouth bass. All the 8 fish that were tagged on Big Rideau Lake successfully guarded their nests until the end of the parental care period. During the one month of data collection nearly one million data points were recorded on the swimming activity of nesting bass. Overall, this type of research will help us to predict the effects of invasive nest predators such as the round goby and also help us better manage our lakes according to natural differences in predation pressure.

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