

June 2013



URLA Newsletter

Upper Rideau Lake Association
Box 67, Westport, Ontario, K0G1X0

URLA Mission Statement

'To enlist the interests and active participation of ratepayers in the Upper Rideau Lake area who are concerned about the "environmental condition" of the lake'

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President's Message by Wendy Stewart

After what seemed like an endless winter, especially following last year's early spring, the ice finally went out of Upper Rideau Lake on April 21st, almost a month later than last year. This annual milestone is of interest to many of our lakefront residents so we have included a record of ice-outs in this issue of our newsletter. If anyone has information on the missing 1949 year, please let us know.

2012-13 has been a busy year for the URLA Executive, with special concerns regarding potential changes to the Rideau Canal's hours of operation and fee structure. We are pleased to see the latest announcement from Parks Canada freezing fees at 2008 levels for the next 3 years.

Annually, URLA works on regular programs such as water quality testing with provincial partners, shoreline restoration and hazard buoys. Thanks to Colleen Holmes and her spring shrub distribution, a further 800 shrubs have been planted along our water's edge, which will help prevent erosion and absorb pollutants. Appreciation is extended to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority for supplying the seedlings for this purpose. Thanks as well to George Ingram and his helpers for marking our dangerous shoals again this spring.

Other URLA involvements have included the Township Official Plan review, the Septic Re-inspection Program, the commercial pan fishery on our lake, the impact of solar farms, improvements to North Shore Road, and out-of-season sport fishing.

You can learn more about these issues at our Annual General Meeting, to be held on July 13th, 9:30 a.m. at the North Crosby Recreation Centre. Our special guest speaker this year is the Mayor of Rideau Lakes Township, Ron Holman. Everyone is welcome and memberships will be available at the door. We hope to see you there.

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URLA Annual General Meeting 2013

Saturday July 13th @ 0930
North Crosby Community Hall, Westport

President’s Message -continued

Included in this mailing is a brochure from the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation. This charitable organization helps fund the capital costs of our programs – we encourage you to contribute and please remember to check off the box for Upper Rideau Lake so your donation will be available for work right here on our lake.



Although it hardly seems possible, a decade has passed since I took over the helm of our lake association on my retirement in 2003. This will be my final year as URLA’s president. I would like to thank the many Board members with whom I have had the pleasure to work during this time, for their support and ongoing service to our community. I want to recognize our corporate supporters – The Cove, Westport Village Rental, and Cross Street and Co. Chartered Accountants – for their continuing commitment to our association. And, finally, I would like to say how much I have appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the protection of our lake environment and thank the many residents who have supported my leadership over the past ten years. It will be an honour to continue to participate in the role of Past-President.

Floating Fish!!!!

We have received many reports of unusual numbers of dead pan fish washing up on shorelines and into bays around the lake this spring. One resident tells us he has removed close to 100 lbs. of dead fish.

While we still don’t know the exact cause, rest assured that it has been reported to authorities at the Ministry of Natural Resources and is a concern to all of us.

According to Mike Yee, Manager of Biology and Water Quality at the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, fish kills can be common in spring. Mike advises that “spikes in warm weather can cause sudden changes in water temperature and oxygen depletion in back bay aquatic plant choked areas. If it is mainly sunfish that would point to the likely scenario.”

We recommend that you err on the side of caution and keep pets away from any dead fish.

Please refer to the following guidelines when reporting occurrences, and if possible take pictures:

-your name, address, phone number, (email address)

-an estimate of the number of dead/dying fish

-date and time when fish kill first noticed

-are there any other organisms affected

-species of fish affected

-size of fish affected

-size of area affected

-any possible causes ie: oxygen depletion-sudden temp change

-is it pollution related ie: sewage/road works, accidents that may cause a chemical spill, etc.

This information can be submitted to the MNR’s Joff Cote, District Fisheries Biologist in Kemptville at 613-258-8303.



Sudden changes in water temperature can cause oxygen depletion killing fish.

Upper Rideau Lake Ice Out

This year the ice went out on April 21. It seemed late but did you know that the latest recorded ice out was in 1972-May 2!!! Earlier this spring the Review Mirror published previous ice out dates. In case you missed it here they are:

1945-March 28	1962-April 23	1979-April 16	1996-April 16
1946-March 29	1963-April 14	1980-April 8	1997-April 22
1947-April 23	1964-April 14	1981-April 1	1998-April 8
1948-April 6	1965-April 29	1982-April 21	1999-April 12
1949-	1966-April 13	1983-April 10	2000-March 28
1950-April 22	1967-April 16	1984-April 17	2001-April 18
1951-April 12	1968-April 5	1985-April 14	2002-April 10
1952-April 16	1969-April 17	1986-April 5	2003-April 21
1953-March 27	1970-April 23	1987-April 8	2004-April 13
1954-April 17	1971-April 27	1988-April 7	2005-April 14
1955-April 16	1972-May 2	1989-April 21	2006-April 6
1956-April 28	1973-April 7	1990-April 6	2007-April 9
1957-April 17	1974-April 21	1991-April 10	2008-April 20
1958-April 13	1975-April 25	1992-April 24	2009-April 3
1959-April 23	1976-April 11	1993-April 24	2010-March 30
1960-April 22	1977-April 13	1994-April 23	2011-April 11
1961-April 24	1978-April 28	1995-April 2	2012-March 22

“Let us know if you are aware of the missing date in 1949!!!”



Why Measure Water Quality?

Most lakes have some results/records for their water quality, commonly water clarity and phosphorus levels. Obtaining water samples on a consistent yearly basis and maintaining records are key to noting a trend in water quality.

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, through the Lake Partners Program, provides water analysis and records phosphorus results at no cost to lake associations. Each year volunteers collect water samples from around our lake and send them off for testing.

It is important to look at results covering a number of years to notice trends which could predict changes and lead to warnings about the health of our lake.

Jayne MacDonald, our Vice President, has compiled a report covering multiple years’ results that will be posted to our website when finalized.

Help Protect Our Lake

- Maintain a buffer zone to help reduce effect of “run off”. Roots of living plants intercept and absorb nitrogen & phosphorus.

- Maintain your septic system. Leaking septic systems can allow nutrients and bacteria to leak into our lake.

- Avoid use of fertilizers, cleaners and other products on or near the water, which contain nitrogen or phosphorus.

NEW!! 2013 Hours of Operation for the Rideau Canal		
Dates	Days	Hours
May 17 - June 20	Monday - Thursday	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
	Friday to Sunday, holidays	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
June 21 to Sept. 2	Monday to Thursday	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
	Friday to Sunday, holidays	9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
September 3 - October 14	Monday - Thursday	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
	Friday to Sunday & Thanksgiving	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

URLA

Executive for 20012/13

President -Wendy Stewart
613-484-6228
Vice Pres. –Jayne MacDonald
Past Pres. –George Ingram
Treasurer – Murray Kane
Secretary – Jennifer Davis
Membership- Arlene Wilkins
Lakeshore- Colleen Holmes
Water Quality- Jayne
MacDonald
Public Relations-Carol Thomas
Community Affairs- Anne Carter
Members at Large -Allison Smith
--Marilyn Van Dusen
Web Master- Huw Davis

E-MAIL:

wendystewart@rogers.com
jmacdonald43@cogeco.ca

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.urla.ca

Be Tick Smart! - Information courtesy of Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

The Health Unit website www.healthunit.org (under topic Lyme Disease) has more info & pictures.

Avoid tick bites by:

-walking in the middle of trails, avoiding tall grass and bushes

-wearing a hat, shoes, a long-sleeved shirt and long pants tucked into socks, ***white/light coloured clothing makes ticks more visible

-spraying clothes and shoes with insect repellent containing DEET (follow manufacturer's directions)

-checking yourself for ticks when you come in from outside, including armpits, groin and scalp and having a shower to wash them off (ticks must be attached for more than 24 hours to cause an infection)

Don't Forget...

To look at the **FOCA** (Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association) website for information and benefits available to members of URLA @ www.foca.on.ca

To check out the **Tall Ships 1812 Tour** sailing along the St. Lawrence this year.

Tick Removal Tips:

-never squeeze a tick, try to burn it off or put anything on it

-grasp the tick by the head as close to your skin as possible and pull it straight out gently but firmly. Use tweezers if possible. (Many Vet offices have removal devices)

-thoroughly clean the bite area with soap and water or a disinfectant

-make note of the removal date, keep watch for signs of infection- a red "bulls-eye" rash or fever may occur. Contact your health care provider if you develop symptoms.

Special Thanks to:

The Cove – for hosting our monthly meetings and providing coffee.

Cross Street and Co. Chartered Accountants in Westport – for providing professional assistance in the preparation of our financial statements.

Westport Village Rental – for providing storage space for URLA records and archives.

Internet Kingston – for hosting our web page.

About Our Organization...

URLA is a volunteer, not-for-profit organization comprised of community members surrounding the Upper Rideau Lake. The Association surveys the lake for potential problems, monitors water quality, promotes shoreline maintenance and restoration and also gives a strong voice for its members to the regional bodies governing the lake.

Our membership year runs from July 1st to June 30th. Our membership fee is \$30 per year.

Please take a moment to fill in and return your 2013 membership or register/renew at the AGM.

REMEMBER THE AGM JULY 13TH!

9:30 A.M. COFFEE AND MEMBERSHIP
10:00 MEETING

COMPLIMENTARY BBQ FOLLOWING