

# Otterlake News



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## From the President's Desk

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday. Now it is the start of a brand new year. The lake finally completely froze over on January 5th. It had been trying to with all the cold weather in mid December, which was very early for Otter Lake, but it never got complete coverage and then with the winds and mild temperatures over New Years it opened up again, but is now frozen and hopefully will stay that way till some time in March or April. The longer the ice is on the lake the more chance it has to rejuvenate itself.

All of the planning meetings and shows are gearing up now to be ready for another busy summer cottage season. January through to April is when you see all the boat, cottage and fishing shows. Likewise the Lake Association Executives are busy attending meetings and planning for summer events. I attended the first meeting of the new year recently and it was very interesting with a presentation from Terry Rees the Executive Director of FOCA. He spoke of the many issues that FOCA is involved in, focusing on some new items and important upcoming concerns. Something new coming this summer will be the ability for cottagers to obtain cottage insurance through FOCA. It is through the same company that provides FOCA members with Road Insurance packages and the Directors and Officers Insurance for the Lake Associations. The availability of this offer is particularly important to cottage owners who live out of province, out of country, and to some extent those who have a permanent residence in Ontario but not in the same geographic location as their cottage. In these cases it can often be very difficult to get reasonable coverage for your cottage through your "umbrella" homeowners insurance on your principle residence, which is normally the most cost effective route.

Cottage succession is becoming a growing concern for many of us. As a result FOCA

has been setting up seminars for cottagers to attend – it is mainly an information session, open forum where you can ask questions and hear concerns that others in the audience may have. The planning committee was interested in this and will be organizing a seminar to be held in this area sometime in the summer. As soon as I have a date and location we will be posting that information on our website.

Finally Terry was reminding us that once again this fall there will be a provincial election and now is the time to think about it and the impact that decisions made at Queens Park have on our cottage properties from taxes to hydro.

Barb King from the Centre for Sustainable Watershed in Portland was also in attendance and reported on the success they have been having with lakes in completing their shoreline surveys. Otter Lake is on the list of lakes to benefit from this program this year, if the grant comes through.

The next meeting coming up in a few weeks will be the Lake Planning Committee getting together to report on the research gathered thus far for the State of the Lake Report. We will be reporting on progress of this committee in future newsletters. If anyone is interested in working on any of our committees you are always welcome to join at any time. Looking forward to another great summer on Otter Lake.

Marcia Maxwell, President

Voice: 905-829-5645 or 613-627-4808 ext 201; E-mail: [marcia@maxwellenterprises.ca](mailto:marcia@maxwellenterprises.ca)

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## WHY BE AN OLLA MEMBER?

We would like to take a few minutes to highlight some of the many benefits of being an active member of the Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA).

OLLA is an association of property owners from all around Otter Lake. We have grown immensely in size and acceptance since we were first formed in 1992. OLLA's objectives are simple and straightforward - to maintain the health of Otter Lake by working with local and regional governments, existing road associations, and individual landowners with properties on Otter Lake. In order to do this, the Lake Association executive and individual members engage in a variety of projects designed to maintain and improve the quality and health of the Lake for property owners, and for the flora and fauna of the Lake and immediate area.

According to a study conducted by the University of Maine, North American recreational lakes that are managed and protected by a strong lake or cottage association enjoy real estate property values that are 30 to 40% higher than on similar, unmanaged recreational lakes. Where else can you get such a great return for only an annual membership fee of \$30!

The Lake Association has a website and we invite you to visit it at [www.otterlake.cyberus.ca](http://www.otterlake.cyberus.ca). It contains information about Otter Lake, its water quality and our monitoring process, and about your Lake Association. In addition, there are many useful links. We have established our credibility with the Township of Rideau Lakes and, under the leadership of our Lake Steward, we have undertaken numerous projects that have benefited the Lake. The Lake Association continually monitors water levels and water quality by testing for water clarity, bacteria, phosphorous and dissolved oxygen. The results of these tests are published in our Lake Steward's annual report and are posted on our website. The Lake Association holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in July of each year and publishes a newsletter three or four times a year. The newsletter and the minutes of the AGM are available on our website. The greatest challenges are yet to come and our Board of Directors, composed of dedicated volunteers, is still making plans.

We are presently developing a Sustainable Lake Plan which will include a vision for long-term protection and sustainability of the Lake's ecosystem. This plan will ultimately provide many benefits for future generations of Otter Lake residents.

The Otter Lake Landowners' Association is a member of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA), and works closely on lake issues with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA), the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Township of Rideau Lakes.

With your OLLA membership and active participation, the Lake Association will continue its efforts to maintain and improve the sustainability of the Otter Lake environment.

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# Otter Lake Landowners' Association

## Membership Form 2011

For Otter Lake property owners.

This is an invitation to all landowners on Otter Lake to become members, or to renew their membership in the association. Your membership is important and helps to meet the cost of monitoring the water quality with the associated laboratory fees, as well as other quality – related lake issues. It also contributes to maintaining OLLA's membership in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) that looks after cottagers and landowner's interests at Queens Park and the scientific Community. In addition, University Studies in the US have shown that a strong Lake Association enhances and maintains property values.

Our annual membership has remained unchanged for several years, and still is only \$30.-

A small price to help keep Otter Lake a viable resource for generations to come.

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This is a New Membership.....or Renewal (2011).....

Name(s) of Owner(s).....

Mailing address:.....

.....

Road and Cottage number, or civic number.....

Telephone Numbers:  
at the lake:.....Residence.....

Your e-mail address:.....

Amount enclosed: \$ 30.00

Please return to:

Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA)  
#30 - O10, R.R. # 1, Lombardy, ON  
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Thank you for your support in 2011

# Otter Lake Landowners' Association