



Sand Lake Estates

RR1, Elgin, Ontario K0G 1E0

Newsletter

Summer 2013

Parks Canada and the Rideau Canal

As many of you are likely aware, there have been significant changes in how the Rideau Canal is funded and how Parks Canada now plans to operate it. Last year, the Government of Canada cut the operating budget of Parks Canada by 5%. To achieve that cut, Parks Canada has cut much deeper into their National Historic Sites side than into their National Parks side, including a 20% cut to the operating budget of the Rideau Canal.

The first proposal that Parks Canada made to cut costs was a scheme to reduce the operating season down to just the core boating season (July-August). This proposal completely ignored the regional economic impact this would have within the Rideau Corridor. People, particularly business owners, got very upset (with reason). At a public meeting with local MP Gord Brown last summer (who was getting a lot of heat on the issue), 40 chairs were set out for the expected audience but over 200 people turned up.

It wasn't just the economic issues that people were upset about, it was also the large negative impact these cuts were having on the heritage of the Rideau Canal. In press releases by both Parks Canada and the Government of Canada on the issue, the word "heritage" wasn't once mentioned – instead the Rideau Canal was characterized as simply a recreational waterway. This was a rationale for cuts to the season and user fee cost-recovery of operating the canal.

In the end, Parks Canada was forced to back down a bit: they are maintaining the length of the season but have cut back the hours (2 hours less a day).

Also during the summer, Parks Canada initiated a restructuring of its management, merging the Trent-Severn Waterway and the Rideau Canal into a single operational unit. This was done quickly, without any public consultation, and apparently without much planning since it has created many staffing issues that are still being dealt with.

Then, this past winter, Parks Canada came out with a ludicrous fee proposal which would have scrapped the current pass system in favour of a ticket system (x number of tickets for a one way trip through a lockstation). Their ticket system imposed fee increases of up to 400%. It would have devastated boating numbers on the Rideau and delivered a crippling economic blow to the Rideau Corridor.

After much back and forth, Parks Canada came out with a revised fee structure which would have dropped the increases down to "only" 50 to 100%. Eventually due to the public outcry, the government extended the lockage fee price freeze on canals administered by Parks Canada for

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Date: Sunday, June 30, 2013

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: Cottage of Mike and Si Miles
(230B Walnut Point Road)

Chairs and Coffee* will be provided by Mike and Si

Bring: your annual dues (\$100)

* Any and all donations of other refreshments (juice/water) or edibles (cookies/muffins) will be graciously accepted. Please call Paula Way Quong 613-359-6236 or email: pwayquong@hotmail.com, no later than June 25.

See you there - everyone is welcome!

another 3 years. They now promise proper public consultation on the issue (which has yet to start).

The Rideau Canal is now trying to operate with a 20% cut to its budget. Most heritage interpretation has been removed, including the closures of the Blacksmith's Shop and Sweeney House at Jones Falls. Rideau Canal maintenance, already underfunded, is now going to be much worse. The cuts are also putting the Rideau Canal's status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site at risk.

The core of the problem is the Government of Canada's commitment (or rather lack thereof) to Canadian heritage. Even while they were cutting the budget of Parks Canada, they were adding the financial burden of new National Parks to Parks Canada - 2 new large parks in 2012 plus the expansion of an existing park. Another Park is being transferred to Parks Canada right now and more National Parks are in the works. Parks Canada in some respects had little choice but to gut its National Historic Sites side in order to try to find funds to operate its National Parks.

The issues are many and complex. For more information, please visit www.SaveOurRideau.ca.

- Ken Watson

TICKED OFF

As any dog owner will know, we're seeing an increase in the local tick population. The most common in this area is the deer tick and as the name implies, the main carriers of the tick are deer. The increase in the local White Tailed Deer population and the increased numbers of deer ticks is no coincidence.

Weather also plays a role, the warmer the year, the more the ticks. Ticks come out early in the spring and will survive late into the fall (a hard frost is required to kill them). Their normal modus operandi is to hang onto the tops of long grass or plants and wait for an unsuspecting mammal to pass by so that they can hitch a ride. Once on the mammal they head to a sheltered spot, the upper arm, neck or groin area and take a blood meal.

Ticks come in various sizes, representing stages of their life cycle (all will bite you). The smallest, the nymph, is about the size of a poppy seed, the largest, an adult female, will look like a walking watermelon seed. They bury their head in the host's skin and start to fill up with blood.



Tick Sizes
Nymph (left) and Adult (right)

Unlike a mosquito, it takes that tick a few days to get fully engorged with blood. This is an advantage for us when it comes to the main problem with deer ticks – Lyme disease. This is a disease that requires both deer ticks and deer to survive and we have both.

Lyme disease can be a debilitating disease for humans and may be hard to detect, although it is easy to treat with antibiotics if caught early. The symptoms vary and may include fever, headache, fatigue, depression, and a characteristic circular skin rash. The rash is a clear give-away – a bulls-eye pattern rash that can appear from a few days to a month after the initial bite. But not everyone develops the rash (about 80% do but 20% don't).

There is good news for both humans and dogs. For humans the good news is that it takes the tick from 24 to 48 hours to actually transmit Lyme disease to a host, so removing a tick early is your best defence. That is easily done with any number of tick removal tools (if you have a dog, you likely have some of these) or a pair of tweezers. The trick is to very gently pull or pry the tick away from the skin, taking care not to leave the head lodged in the skin. Gentle but firm pulling will force the tick to let go. Then swab the affected area with rubbing alcohol to remove any tick-borne bacteria and apply a topical antibiotic (i.e. Polysporin) to prevent possible infection.

Tick prevention is quite straight forward - similar to mosquito bite prevention. Mosquito repellent containing the active ingredient DEET will also work on ticks. Covering up (long pants, socks, long sleeves) when venturing into tick country also works. The problem for us is that "tick country"

SAND LAKE ESTATES

Our 2012 AGM was held on Sunday, July 1, at the Elgin Municipal Complex. Several reports were presented including the finances of the association and road maintenance. Concern was raised about the delays in resurfacing Highway 15 between Seeleys Bay and Youngs Hill Rd. – it was recommended that the association write a letter to the Ministry of Transport to find out the reasons for the delay in this much-needed work.

The slate of 7 directors elected at the AGM was:

Reid Barter, John Lewis, Mike Miles, Peter O'Neill, Stewart Touzel, Paula Way-Quong, John Zeigler

These directors chose the 2012 Executive which consisted of:

President: Paula Way-Quong (604-985-7086)

Vice-President: John Lewis (416-540-4032)

Treasurer: Peter O'Neill (613-822-9993)

Secretary: Stewart Touzel (613-359-9940)

Dues

2013 dues are \$100 and can be paid at the AGM, or by mailing your cheque and the enclosed annual dues form to Sand Lake Estates, RR1, Elgin, ON K0G 1E0. Questions about your dues can be directed to our Treasurer, Peter O'Neill.

2013 AGM

A reminder that our 2013 AGM is on Sunday, June 30 at 10:30 am. It will be held the residence of Mike and Si Miles (230B Walnut Point Road). Chairs and coffee will be provided. The AGM is the best venue to chat with the directors and ask any questions you might have about our association.

PROXY VOTING

Members should be reminded that the SLE by-laws (by-law 1 para 5a) allow a designate to be appointed by a member under a very specific process: the member must write a notification to the board of directors and the designate must be a family member older than 18 (spouse, son, daughter, daughter-in-law, son-in-law).

Ticked Off contiued ...

includes our properties – so we or our pets can pick up a tick almost anywhere on Sand Lake Estates.

The good news for dog owners is that Lyme disease is normally a minor infection for a dog – once infected a dog will build up antibodies to prevent future infections. Ticks are most often found in the neck area of a dog – one theory for that is that dogs will chew off ticks they feel biting them, but they can't do this on their necks. Removal of a tick on a dog is the same as with humans, gently pull or pry the tick out of the skin and swab the area with rubbing alcohol.

2012 FINANCIAL REPORT

Income

Dues	4,700.00
Road Grant	797.00
Interest	1.00
Total	5,498.00

Expenses

Taxes	1,224.62
Winter Patrol	500.00
FOCA	198.75
Insurance	1,026.00
Roads	1,838.77
Newsletter	0
Other	60.00
Total	4,848.14

Reconciliation

1 January 2012 - Opening Balance	5,066.75
31 December 2012 - Closing Balance	5,511.81

Opening Balance	5,066.75
Add Deposits	<u>5,293.20</u>
	10,359.95
Minus Expenses	<u>(4,848.14)</u>
	\$5,511.81

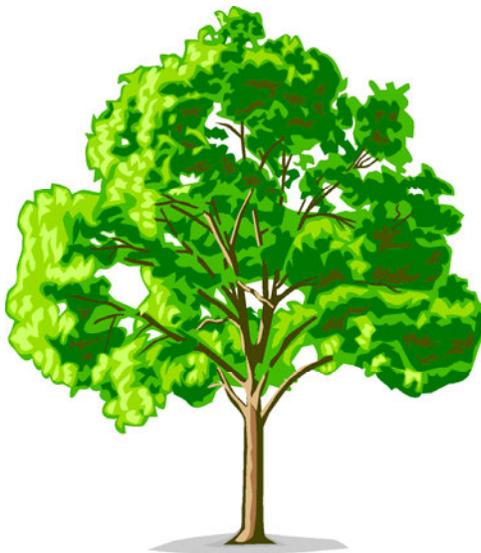
BMO Term Investment	4,264.73
(contingency fund)	

TREES

There has been a lot of tree damage with the recurring winds of late. We want to remind members and their guests that the backlands are not a managed forest.

If people are strolling through the woods they are reminded to be vigilant for partially fallen trees or other hazards. Strolling the backlands is done at your own risk.

For trees that fall or partially fall on the road allowance, residents are asked to contact i) the road superintendent or ii) Ontario Hydro (if trees are or will interfere with hydro lines) so that an assessment can be made to ensure no one is hurt dealing with tricky removals. If the need arises, the Road Superintendent will utilize a professional arborist.



ROAD MAINTENANCE

Over half of your annual dues is used for the summer maintenance of SLE roads. Our volunteer Road Superintendent is John Ziegler who does a magnificent job - **thanks John!**

Thanks too, to Bernie Stene and his wonder tractor. Bernie has been doing a great job of touching up any problem areas on our roads and keeping them looking great. Thanks as well to other volunteers who keep the front "lawns" mown and the sides of the roads brushed out.

John worked hard this year to get us a good deal on the costs (sharing the float charges for the grader with other people in the area). John was also instrumental in arranging with Tackaberry Construction for fill/surfacing of a number of private driveways (paid of course by the property owners, not SLEI) at the same time the grader was here.

Our roads continue to be in great shape due to this yearly work.

Winter Ploughing

Sand Lake Estates does not do (or pay for) any winter maintenance/clearing of the roads. Private individuals are paying for all winter sanding and ploughing. Winter ploughing costs are shared on a volunteer basis. Contact John Ziegler for Pine Ridge/ Eden roads or Julian Hawryszko for Walnut Point Road if you would like to contribute to the ploughing of the main access roads.

Those wishing to have their driveways ploughed should contact our contractor, Terry French, of French's Trucking, directly at: 613-272-2465.

THANKS VINCE

At the 2012 AGM it was reported that Vince Watters has resigned from his job of doing Winter Watch for SLEI properties.

Vince has been doing winter property checks for SLEI for more than 40 years. In a letter written to SLEI, Vince indicated that his services are no longer needed because of the number of year round residents now living here, the number of cottage owners who come regularly on weekends, and the fact that the roads are now kept open all year.

SLEI has sent a letter of thanks to Vince, his wife Elaine, and daughter Alexandra, thanking them all for the yeoman service to our association that they have provided.

KEEP IT CLEAN

Garbage pickup by the Township during the summer (starting after Victoria Day and going to Thanksgiving) is at the end of **your driveway** (NOT at the end of the main roads) every Monday (or Tuesday if Monday is a holiday). It is your responsibility to clean up any spills of your garbage in a timely manner. To ensure that spills don't happen in the first place, regular garbage should be placed in a "critter proof" container. Organic material should be composted (as opposed to being put in your garbage).

If placing garbage out at the front of our main roads during the off-season, please put in an animal proof container, do not leave garbage in plastic bags which will get ripped open by local wildlife. Please note that the large containers on the roads are privately owned and not for public use.

Garbage must be placed in a clear bag and have a Township bag tag attached. A bag without a valid bag tag will not be picked up. Tags can be purchased at Gordanier Grocery in Elgin. Recycling is free and must be in a clear blue bag. Fibres and paper may be bundled but must be tightly tied (or it won't be picked up). There is a limit of 2 bags of garbage and 5 bags of recycling per week and each bag must weigh less than 40 pounds.

Details about the Township's waste collection policy, including a full list of how to sort your recyclables, can be found on the Township website at: www.twprideaulakes.on.ca

Please ensure that **all users** of your cottage (i.e. guests or renters) are aware of the rules.

WATER QUALITY

Your association's Lake Steward, Ken Watson, participates in the Ontario Ministry of the Environment's Lake Partner Program. This involves taking weekly water clarity readings using a secchi disk, taking weekly water temperature readings and taking six water samples a year that are measured for phosphorus content.

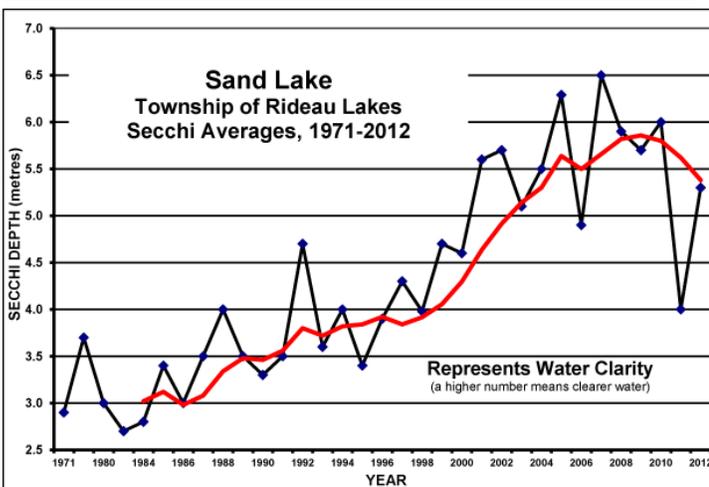
In 2012, the average secchi clarity reading was 5.3 metres, up from year's 4.0. The average phosphorus content of our lake (6 samples) in 2012 was 12.1 ug/L, down from 15.3 the year before.

The large dip in 2011 was likely an adjustment to new (lower) levels of zebra mussels. The 2012 number are more consistent with long term averages.

The chart below shows the secchi (clarity) readings since 1971 - the red line is a moving average trend line, showing the steady increase in water clarity of our lake. Year by year it can be up or down but the overall long-term trend is in the right direction.

Historic water clarity and phosphorus results for Sand Lake and other lakes in our area can be found by going to:

www.rideau-info.com/canal/ecology/water-quality.html



OUR LOONS

You'll note a number of artificial loon nesting platforms on Sand Lake. We do ask that you and your guests avoid approaching any of these during nesting season, mid-May to mid-June. This can disrupt the nesting loon, sometimes to the point of nest abandonment.



We also ask boaters to please be aware of the small loon chicks, especially during July and August. Also please make any visitors or renters aware of the fact that loon chicks are in the area and that they are very vulnerable to being run over by a boat or PWC. They are hard to spot in the water and too young to be able to avoid boats. It is up to you to avoid them.

Although the loons in Rancier Bay failed to hatch any chicks in 2012, they did hatch 2 chicks on June 9 of this year. Our fingers are crossed that these little chicks will survive until they can fly south in late fall.

ICE IN - ICE OUT

Our past winter was fairly typical. Sand Lake froze over on December 24, 2012 and the ice was gone from the lake on April 12, 2013.

BOATING INFORMATION

The following is our annual review of some of key boating information items:

- Everyone who operates a powered pleasure boat must have a Pleasure Craft Operator's Card.
- No one under the age of 16 may operate a personal water craft (PWC).
- No one under the age of 12, and not directly supervised by a person 16 years of age or older, may operate a vessel with more than a 10 HP engine.
- No one between the age of 12 and 16, and not directly supervised by a person 16 years of age or older, may operate a vessel with more than a 40 HP engine.
- Make sure you have all safety equipment required for your boat, which includes items such as a buoyant heaving line, a watertight flashlight (with batteries loaded) and a manual sound-signaling device.
- A personal flotation device of appropriate size must be available for each person on board (i.e. if you have children in a boat, you must have child-size PFDs.)
- For most boats (including canoes/kayaks), consuming alcohol on board is against the law. And, just like a car, you have to be sober to operate a boat.
- If you are a tow boat for a water-skier, tuber, etc., you must have at least 2 people and 3 seats in the boat. There must be a driver, an observer and a spare seat for each person being towed.
- While refueling, all occupants of the boat must be ashore, all engines must be off, all open flames must be extinguished. Portable fuel tanks must be filled ashore.

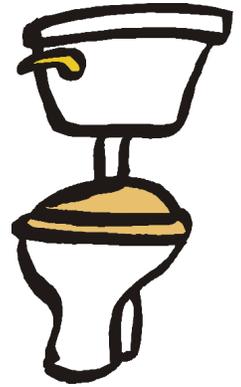
For more information visit the Office of Boating Safety website at: www.boatingsafety.gc.ca



SEPTIC SYSTEMS

This is your yearly reminder to take stock of your septic system - is it working as it should? Have you had it pumped out recently?

An improperly working septic system will allow the release of harmful bacteria such as E. coli (fecal bacteria) into our lake. It can even contaminate groundwater (i.e. your well or your neighbour's well).



Follow these six steps to keep a healthy system:

- Step 1 – Do** have your septic tank pumped out every three years
- Step 2 – Don't** overload your septic system with water
- Step 3 – Don't** give your septic system indigestion
- Step 4 – Don't** drive or park cars or heavy machinery on the septic bed
- Step 5 – Don't** plant trees or shrubs on or near the septic bed
- Step 6 – Do** let your system grow with the family and usage – know its capacity

Does your septic tank need to be pumped out this year?

- If you didn't know you had a septic system,
 - If it hasn't been pumped out in the last 3 years,
 - If you can't remember when it was last pumped out,
- then you should have it pumped this year. Two local contractors who do this work are Bryan's Septic Service in Westport (613-273-3078) and Hogan's Septic Service of Seeleys Bay (613-387-3432 or 1-800-395-1375).

BE CONSIDERATE OF YOUR NEIGHBOURS

There has been an increasing tendency in recent years to set off fireworks at various times during the summer. It's not something people would do at home, but for some reason some people find it acceptable to do so at the cottage. Loud bangs at 11 pm not only disturb your human neighbours but also our wildlife neighbours, particularly since sound carries much farther over water than it does land.

Not only is it inconsiderate, it is illegal in the Township of Rideau Lakes to set off fireworks without a permit (By-Law 2007-108). The best thing if you wish to enjoy a fireworks display is to go and take in one of the sanctioned displays in the region, such as the display in Portland on June 29 this year. It would also be appreciated if you could pass this information on to guests, renters or "the kids" who may be using the cottage. Your neighbours (human, web-footed and four-footed) will thank you.



SLEI TAXES

Our Treasurer, Peter O'Neill, is doing battle on our behalf with MPAC over large increases in assessment on a couple of properties owned by Sand Lake Estates Inc. The properties in question are our two "waterfront" properties, one on Walnut Point Road and one on Pine Ridge Road. The valuation for these was increased by 232%.

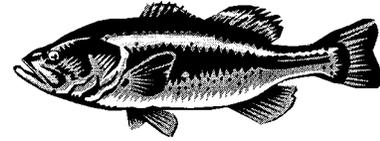


This is not a new issue, we battled high increases in assessment on these and the other SLEI properties back in the late 1990s. We won a partial victory at the time based on several arguments including that some of the SLEI properties do not meet the township's minimum requirements for building lots, that the increases did not reflect local market value increases on similar properties, and that we have an association by-law which would require a 3/4 majority of SLEI members to sell or lease any part of these properties.

Peter has presented an excellent case on our behalf to MPAC and if there is any justice in the assessment system, we should win again. However Peter points out that our case will likely not be adjudicated until September and that SLEI will therefore have to pay taxes this year based on the increased assessment. If we win, the adjustment would show up on next year's taxes. If we don't win, we could see SLEI property taxes double next year.

Peter will have all the details about this issue at the AGM.

BASS FISHING



A reminder to all that the bass fishing season does **not start until the third Saturday of June** (moved up one week from last year).

The problem with pre-season poaching of bass is that if the bass are pulled off their nests, other predatory fish (sunfish, etc.) will swoop in and eat the bass eggs or fry. This means that even catch and release fishing is damaging to bass stocks.

It is illegal to fish for or take bass before the **third Saturday in June** or after December 15th.

This means that it is against the law to do any type of fishing which potentially targets bass:

- Casting in areas that are less than 6 ft in depth.
- Using bass lures and live bait.

This includes catch-and-release.

If you see a poacher, report the license number of the boat to MNR at **1-877-TIPS-MNR** (1-800-847-7667).

OLD STONE MILL

The Old Stone Mill in Delta will feature a special display during July and August titled **Mill, River and Flour**. Admission is free.

Freshly baked bread is also available every Saturday morning with milling demonstrations taking place every second Saturday. For more info see: www.deltamill.org

COMING EVENTS

For more details on events see: www.twprideaulakes.on.ca/rec-events.html

June 22	Westport Heritage Festival
June 23	Queen's University Biological Station Open House, noon to 3 p.m. - on Opinicon Lake
June 29	Canada Day Fireworks - at dusk on Big Rideau Lake near Portland (good viewing from Hanna Park in Portland)
June 29 - July 1	Rideau Lakes Garden and Studio Tour (look for brochures in Elgin)
June 30	Sand Lake Estates AGM – 10:30 a.m. at 230B Walnut Point Road
July 13	Elgin Days - includes a BBQ and a parade
July 25-28	Delta Fair
July 27	Chaffeys Lock Craft Market

Comments about the newsletter can be directed to the editor, Ken Watson, at rideauken@gmail.com