



# The Buck Lake Association Inc.

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"To enhance people's enjoyment of Buck Lake now and for future generations"

## *Buck Lake News – July 2010*

Roy Mills, Principal Writer

### President's Message

Many of you will have heard that the beaver dam at the north end of the south basin burst a couple of weeks ago. This dam is about an hour's walk from my place and one of my favourite places to take visitors to enjoy the specialness of Buck Lake. I was not home when the dam burst but I did see the remains when I was home last weekend. And, I have spoken with a number of my neighbours who experienced this event first hand.

Carolyn Giles, who lives on Sea Point right across the lake, was able to capture the scene as the dam burst. Her husband Paul rode his ATV to the dam and took a picture of the water gushing through the culvert out of the pond and into the lake. Craig Boston was also on the scene taking a series of photos of the damage done by the force of the water.

You get a good sense of the damage to the Rideau Trail from the picture with Paul standing in the midst of a number of uprooted trees. We owe a debt of thanks to members of the Rideau Trail Association who took their chain saws to the scene and cleared the trail. It is passable again thanks to their hard work. It is hard to imagine, as suggested by Ralph Boston in his article that the beaver can re-establish this dam but it has happened before and could well happen again.



The forces of nature are not to be taken lightly. This was another occasion to take notice and marvel!



## Annual General Meeting Report

Approximately 75 members and guests attended the Annual General Meeting of the BLA on Saturday July 10<sup>th</sup> at Perth Road Public School. The meeting was chaired by our President Tricia Waldron and all Directors were in attendance. We welcomed Mayor Gary Davison as well as Councilors Ron Vandewal, David Hahn and Allan McPhail who all made brief presentations to the members.

Complete minutes and copies of all reports presented at the AGM will be filed on the Buck Lake website in August after review at the next Board of Directors meeting. A brief summary of our agenda items follows:

### **Do You Want to Keep the Cottage in the Family?**

Free hour long seminars addressing how to deal with the family, tax and legal issues are being given in your area this summer. Go to [www.geoffreyparker.ca](http://www.geoffreyparker.ca)

#### **Guests:**

- Mayor Davison thanked the BLA for its involvement in the community and concern for safety at the Causeway. New parking signs are in place and a public meeting on future plans for the Perth Road improvements is planned for July 22<sup>nd</sup>. He also reported that an announcement regarding broadband/high speed internet service in Eastern Ontario was expected in the near future. This is a joint effort of 11 towns and smaller municipalities in our area.
- Councilors Vandewal and Hahn both addressed waste management issues. Waste management services will be available throughout all of South Frontenac as of September 2010 but many details are still to be worked out. Access and linkage questions from private lanes and islands to the program will take considerable effort. They asked for our patience and cooperation.
- Councilor McPhail thanked the BLA for its stewardship of the lake and commitment to public issues in the Township.

- As this is an election year...all four guests confirmed that they would be standing for re-election this fall.

### **BLA Business:**

- The minutes of the AGM held July 4th 2009 were presented and approved by the members.
- President Tricia reported on the work of the BLA throughout the last year...Boat Operator Courses, CPR training courses, shoal marking, Friends of the Lake/lake planning committee, social events and our newsletter etc.
- Secretary-Treasurer Cheryl Savery presented financial reports for 2009 and June 30<sup>th</sup> 2010.
- Director Ralph Wirsig reported that 108 memberships for 2010 were in hand and a number were processed at the AGM. We hope to surpass our record number of 161 before year-end.
- Director Stephen Roughton reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. An election is required by Constitution due to term limits and retirements. Maxine Lemieux and Stephen himself are leaving the Board and current Directors Crawford MacIntyre and Roy Mills are standing for re-election. The Committee nominated that Maureen McLennan and Ross Trudel for election to the Board for a two- year term. No nominations were received from the floor and an election motion was passed by the members present. Our Board of Directors for 2010-2011 is complete with 12 members. At the first Board meeting in August executive positions will be determined and reported to members through the newsletter and the website.
- Director Wayne Myles reported to members on the work of the Friends of the Lake. Detailed reports have been published in the Buck Lake News over the last year as well.
- Friends of the Lake member Barbra Rose Perry introduced our Guest Speaker – Reg Genge, who has just completed a water quality report on the lake. He spoke in some detail of his findings and answered questions from the members. Visit the website and follow the links to access the summary of Genge Report.

### **Other Business:**

- Member Ron Matthey reported that the July 3<sup>rd</sup> Boatilla raised over \$13,000 for Easter Seals summer camp programs.

## **Buck Lake Beaver Tale by Ralph Boston**

When my family and I came to Buck Lake in the mid-1960's, there were few beaver along the Rideau Trail from the Opinicon Road to Bedford Mills. At that time, locals told me that in the 1940's, there were no beaver here and no deer south of Hwy #17.

I now surmise that there were two reasons for this. Firstly, there had been a huge forest

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fire at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A farmer in the Battersea area burned a stump row fence in the late fall of 1904. With the arrival of winter, he thought the fire had burned out. Instead, in late March winds fanned embers into fire. When discovered, it was an unstoppable forest fire. It burned all the way out to the south shore of Buck Lake.

There are still signs of huge burnt pine stumps that can be seen along the Rideau Trail from the end of Billy Green Road to the Bedford/Storrington Township line. This fire, plus several smaller ones, burned off the forest hummus down to the bedrock. Years later, there was good blueberry picking. Then, undergrowth with lots of juniper took over. Trees sprang up. Many of the trees were poplars, especially in moist areas. This allowed beaver and other small animals to return.

The second reason for the absence of beaver was that, during the depression and until the end of World War II, subsistence farms and others living off the land needed hunting and trapping to survive. This put heavy pressure on the recovering mammal populations.

By the mid-1960's, beaver and other small mammals were re-established in the back lands of the south basin of Buck Lake. Neglected beaver dams and deserted beaver houses were reconstructed. Populations burgeoned. By the late 1980's, beaver were becoming a real nuisance. Shooting and trapping beaver became accepted and even encouraged by the Ministry of Natural Resources. One winter, on my property alone, 32 beaver were trapped. The next winter, only nine were trapped.

Several years later, even fewer were caught and we noticed something interesting about the pelts. They were riddled with defects. A parasite worm had infested the beaver and drilled holes all through the fat layer between flesh and hide. The parasites chewed lines in the hides weakening them and destroying any commercial value. The reason for the parasites seems to have been related to over population. Food sources were depleted. Animal vigor declined and allowed parasitic invasion. With fewer beaver, dam maintenance and building was reduced to sites with good food resources. Neglected dams tended to decay and weaken.

In the 45 years we have lived on Buck Lake, the beaver dams at and beyond the culvert at the north end of the south basin have failed at least three times. The most recent of these was about two weeks ago.

Each time, a huge tsunami (up to 9' high) has roared out into Buck Lake. The Rideau Trail has been washed out and cluttered with trees, logs, rocks and other debris. The long pond just back of the culvert has dropped overnight some 3' or more. Before long, much of the pond has gone dry.

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The immediate effect of emptying the pond is a strong swamp smell. Also, there is a lot of floating debris pushed over to the shore of Sea Point. The size of that debris has been estimated as 50' wide and 250' long. Water quality would have been degraded briefly but unlikely for more than a few days. The outpouring of water brought all sorts of aquatic life, all of it common to the lake. The fish love this outpouring of food. A few days later, the drying pond muck seems to hatch an extra lot of mosquitoes. If the pattern of other dam failures follows for this one, all sorts of vegetation will emerge. By fall, grass and other growth will be lush.

If beaver are successful and rebuild all the failed dams, rain water collection will begin to fill the ponds. Ducks and other migrating birds will settle again. Deer will move in and pond life will start to normalize. After two or three winters, the ponds will be back and healthier than before.

Meanwhile, Buck Lakers should beware of the homeless beaver. They will come to cottage sites looking for a happier home, less work and better food supplies!

## Coming Events

### **Buck Lake Association Annual Picnic &BBQ**

**Saturday August 21<sup>st</sup> 2010 - 4:00 p.m. till  
dusk**

**Harris Park in Perth Road Village**

- **Burgers (beef and veggie), Sausage and lots of salads**
- **Children's activities and live music – fellowship and fun**
- **Bring your own refreshments and lawn chairs...cold drinks will be available**
- **The cost is \$5.00/person –Children under 7 are free**
- **Plan to attend and have a great visit with your Buck Lake neighbours**

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### **August Fish Fry at Perth Road United Church**

**Friday August 13<sup>th</sup> 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.**

### **Buck Lake Rider Cup Golf Tournament**

**Sunday September 12<sup>th</sup> at Rideau Lakes Golf Course in Westport**

- **The entry fee is \$50 for a round of golf and a great meal.**

- Each player is asked to bring a gift valued at \$15 for the tournament awards. Contact Marilyn O'Connor at (613) 353-1708 or Sandra Rider at (613) 353-6051 to register.

## Help out Ontario's Turtles – Become a Turtle Watcher

(Reprint from FOCA – courtesy of Stephen Roughton)

Have you ever seen a group of painted turtles sunning themselves on a log, or maybe a dinosaur-like snapping turtle swimming beneath your dock? While you may not think much of these wildlife sightings, seeing turtles in their natural environment is becoming more and more difficult and should be considered a special treat.

At the present time only the painted turtle is considered to be a common species. The wood, spotted turtle, stinkpot, spiny soft-shell, map, Blanding's, and snapping turtles are all considered to be at risk. Development, habitat loss, and road mortality have taken their toll on turtle populations across the province and have made it more and more difficult to catch a glimpse of these interesting and shy creatures. In addition to this, their long life span (snapping turtles can live to be up to 90 years old!) and multitude of predators (e.g., skunks, raccoons, foxes) make for a life filled with challenges.

Cottagers are a lucky group; living on the water provides lots of opportunity to see these animals flourishing in their natural environment. While different species of turtle have different favourite places, from spongy bogs, to secluded marshes, to fast moving rivers, all turtles can be found in or around the water. As summer comes closer these animals will find their way out of the deep water ponds where they spend the winter and will begin moving to ideal their summer locations, maybe even to your lake.

If you are lucky enough to see a turtle this summer, the Adopt-A-Pond Wetland Conservation Programme wants to hear about it. Through the Ontario Turtle Tally, adults and children can report their turtle sightings on-line and become part of a fun and easy monitoring program. The data reported to Ontario Turtle Tally allows biologists across the province to better understand turtle distributions and identify hotspots of road mortality. By reporting your turtle sightings you are making a significant contribution to the conservation of local species at risk and are ensuring that the turtles in your community are being recognized and represented.

When you see turtles this summer, make note of where you are, what species of turtle it is, what it is doing, and, if possible, take a picture. To submit your sighting simply visit the Adopt-A-Pond Website and click on Ontario Turtle Tally. This program is a great opportunity to take a closer look at the turtles on your lake and to get involved in an exciting summer activity. If you are interested receiving an Ontario Turtle Tally or

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**[Boatilla Report – 2010](#)**

Thanks are extended to the Buck Lake Community from the Boatilla Organizing Committee for your generosity and participation in 2010 event. Over \$13,000 was raised this year bringing the six- year total raised to over \$50,000. Great work for a good cause!



## Boating Safety

Everyone on the lake is aware of recent events regarding boating safety. We have had a boating fatality on the lake for the first time in recent memory. Every few days brings more news of swimming and boating tragedies. New regulations are in place that require everyone operating a powered water craft to obtain and carry a PCOC when operating a boat in Canada. The reality is that we have to be responsible for ourselves and our families on the water. The Marine Unit of the OPP that serves our lake also serves every other lake in this part of eastern Ontario. They have two crews to cover hundreds of waterways. Enforcement of regulations is certainly important but personal responsibility and education will save more lives than the Marine Unit. So far this year, the OPP Marine Units have investigated 10 fatal boating incidents, logged 2,760 patrol hours and checked 10,820 vessels. Almost 400 alcohol related charges have been laid and 461 federal marine charges related to operator certification/safety equipment on board. Over and over the answer is personal responsibility...make sure all persons in your boat have properly fitting life jackets/PFD'S and insist that they wear them. Be sure that children wear properly fitting jackets to ensure their safety in the water. Don't overload your boat and have all the required safety equipment on board and check it regularly.

The BLA has made a special effort this year to enhance the marking of navigational hazards around the lake. Those big red balls are the first dozen and more are on the way. Most members have a good knowledge of the lake but still can tell stories of rocks that jumped up and destroyed a new prop. We don't want to pollute the lake with those red markers but we have a few more tight places on our list. We have a GPS flag on all the markers currently in place including a few of the original markers still in use. We plan to produce a map with all the shoal markers identified and make it available on the website. We still are in need of volunteers to maintain/adopt a marker near you home or cottage. Contact us at [info@bucklake.ca](mailto:info@bucklake.ca).



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## Passages...

We are saddened to note the passing of **Jean Smith** on July 12<sup>th</sup>...mother, grandmother and great-grandmother to the Smith Family of Buck Lake. Known by many Buck Lakers; you could not be in Jean's company for more than 15 seconds and not have a smile on your face. Our sincere condolences to Sally and Rick and all their family members on Jean's passing and we know the community will rally to support and nurture them in this difficult time.





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