A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CATARAQUI REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

CAT TALES

Winter 2015 Issue

IN THIS ISSUE

Winter is a busy time of year for the CRCA. We have lots of great winter fun planned and preparations are underway for Maple Madness. Here's what's in this issue of Cat Tales.

- The Cataraqui Source Protection Plan has been approved! Learn how you can help keep your drinking water safe on page 3 and 10
- Creature Feature – learn all about the animal that represents the Conservation Authority on page 2.
- On page 4 find out what's new at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.
- After 30 years the CRCA's Communications Coordinator is retiring. See her message on page 5
- Get outdoors and enjoy winter with us. See pages 6 and 7 for upcoming events and page 10 for school programs.
- 50th Anniversary History Project – Martin Edwards shares his recollections of the start of the CRCA on page 9
- The Cataraqui Conservation Foundation has been busy raising funds. Read about their Forever Green fundraiser and their plans for spring on page 11
- Saying goodbye to an outstanding volunteer on page 12
- Plus news from our conservation areas, Maple Madness and Cat Tales heads to your inbox.

Cataraqui Source Protection Plan approved!

We received some good news recently – the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan was approved by the Ontario Minister of the Environment and Climate Change on November 26, 2014. The plan comes into effect on April 1, 2015.

"I am pleased that our plan has been approved," said John Williamson, Cataraqui Source Protection Committee Chair. "I thank the Source Protection Committee and Authority for their commitment and dedication, as well as the staff at the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority for their professionalism."

"I also thank our partners at the Ministry, the municipalities, and the public for their involvement, which helped to achieve this milestone," added Williamson.

"This science-based plan will protect our sources of drinking water as Justice O'Connor recommended following the Walkerton tragedy."

The plan includes requirements and recommendations to reduce the risk of pollution near municipal drinking water supplies and in regionally sensitive groundwater areas. It builds on other local and provincial initiatives with policies that are appropriate, effective and economical for local communities.

Right to left: Cataraqui Source Protection Committee Chair John Williamson, CRCA Environmental Technician Holly Evans and CRCA Watershed Planning Coordinator Rob McRae are pleased to announce that the Source Protection Plan was approved in November.

The Cataraqui Source Protection Plan and supporting information are available at **www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca.** There are interactive maps of each source protection vulnerable area under the Resources tab. Clicking on one of the maps will open a document that outlines the policies that apply in that specific location for either municipalities or residents.

The plan is focused on protecting the sources of water for the 12 municipal drinking water systems located in the Cataraqui Source Protection Area. It is important to note that the vulnerable areas that have been mapped around these sources account for less than one per cent of the overall Cataraqui area.

The plan also includes policies to help protect the groundwater aquifers that are the source of drinking water for about one-third of local people. Regionally sensitive groundwater aquifers are found in over 90 per cent of the Cataraqui area. This means that we need to be very careful to avoid leaks and spills in our area, as it may be very expensive and/or physically impossible to clean up pollution.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority
P.O. Box 160
Glenburnie, Ontario
K0H 1S0

CANADA POST POSTES CANADA
Postage paid Port payé
Addressed Admail Médiaposte avec adresse
1008536

CREATURE FEATURE:

Osprey *(Pandion haliaetus)*

In previous issues of *Cat Tales* we have been celebrating the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's 50th anniversary. As our anniversary celebrations come to an end we thought it would be fitting to highlight the animal that represents the CRCA, the Osprey.

The following except is from a CRCA brochure produced in 1971 and explains why the Osprey was chosen to be the symbol for the Conservation Authority:

"The Osprey fittingly represents the Cataraqui Authority, its problems and its goals.

A bird of the air, of the land and the water, the Osprey was once common in our Region, but now is rare, its decline due to an indirect effect of a pesticide.

In choosing the Osprey as our symbol, we signify our awareness of the complexity of our environmental problems but we do more. We accept a high standard of conservation, a standard beyond even economic considerations, a standard which insists on saving that which, like the Osprey, has only beauty and a right to its place in the environment"

Fortunately, the pesticide (DDT) that is referred to in the CRCA explanation for choosing the symbol of the Osprey was banned in 1972 (Baughman, 110). With the banning of DDT and other pesticides back in the 1970s, the Osprey populations gradually made a comeback and are considered a conservation success symbol (Vanner, 96). Reports of Osprey sightings and observations are a regular occurrence at many of the Conservation Authority's wetlands and lakes around the watershed.

Ospreys build their nests out of sticks and line them with materials such as bark, sod, grasses, vines and algae.

In some areas, installed Osprey nesting platforms provide suitable nest habitat. Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area has an active nesting platform which can be viewed with binoculars from the Outdoor Centre viewing tower or by canoe or kayak on the reservoir in the warmer months and on the natural skating rink in the winter months. Osprey nesting platforms can also be seen at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and Parrott's Bay Conservation Area.

The key features to look for when identifying an Osprey nest is a large grouping of sticks. Osprey nests can range in size from 2.5 feet in diameter and 3-6 inches deep, usually seen on artificial platforms, to 10-13 feet deep and 3-6 feet in diameter. During nesting season, the male and female work together to keep the nest safe by taking turns crying loudly and flying around to investigate. Once a safe nesting site has been established, the Osprey will continue to nest in the location for years to come.

You cannot mistake the Osprey's distinctive dark brown above and mostly white below plumage on their slender bodies, complete with a white head and dark stripe through a yellow eye. Ospreys fly with a distinct bend in their slender wings that looks like the letter "M" when seen from below (Cornell Lab of Ornithology). Also known as a fish eagle, river hawk or fish hawk, the Osprey is the only exclusively fish-eating raptor in North America (Baughman, 110). An Osprey hunting for fish can put on quite a show. They hover from a height of up to 40 meters and then dive, feet first, into the water using their sharp talons to grasp the fish. For a great video of the amazing fishing abilities of the Osprey visit wn.com/osprey_fishing.

Resources:
Compiled and Edited: Baughman, Mel. (2003) National Geographic Reference Atlas to the Birds of North America.
Cornell Lab of Ornithology http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/osprey/id
Vanner, Michael. (2005). The complete Encyclopedia of North American Birds.

50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION 1964 - 2014

CAT TALES

Cat Tales is published three times per year by the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.

EDITOR: Karla Maki-Esdon & Krista Fazackerley LAYOUT AND PRINTING: Kingston Whig-Standard CONTRIBUTORS: Karen Bach, Holly Evans, Shawn Fairbank, Krista Fazackerley, Stefan Foerster, Rob Gerritsen, Doug Good, Richard Horton, Jason Hynes, Rick Knapton, Stana Luxford Oddie, Karla Maki-Esdon, Rob McRae, Erin Murphy-Mills, Michael Sykes, Sean Watt

Send mail to: Editor c/o Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority P.O. Box 160 Glenburnie ON K0H 1S0
E-mail: kfazackerley@crca.ca Phone: (613) 546-4228 Toll-Free (613 area code): 1-877-956-CRCA (2722)

Member of Conservation ONTARIO Natural Champions

Cataraqui Source Protection Plan approved!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The plan policies focus on:
• promoting responsible decisions about land use and development
• working with homeowners and businesses in the most vulnerable areas to ensure that activities such as fuel storage are being carefully managed
• improving information availability
• recommending changes to municipal operations
• enhancing education and outreach initiative and
• conducting research.

In areas where it has been demonstrated that the drinking water sources are more vulnerable, municipalities must comply with the policies in the source protection plan. In areas that are less vulnerable, decision-makers must have regard to the plan when considering proposals under the *Condominium Act or Planning Act*. All other policies in the plan are well-informed recommendations for consideration by municipalities and others.

The timeline for policy implementation varies from immediately to up to 10 years after plan approval for the research-related work.

The source protection plan was completed under the provisions of the Clean Water Act and its regulations and was funded by the provincial government. This is the eleventh of about 20 plans that will be forthcoming across Ontario.

The plan was developed by the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee – a local, multi-stakeholder group representing municipalities, businesses and community organizations. The Committee based the plan on a series of technical studies that assessed the water sources and identified risks to source water quality. The Committee also consulted extensively with local communities. Progress on the plan was guided by the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority, which is composed of the CRCA board plus a representative of the Township of Frontenac Islands.

The role of CRCA staff is to provide support to the Committee and local communities throughout the assessment, planning, and implementation and monitoring phases of work.

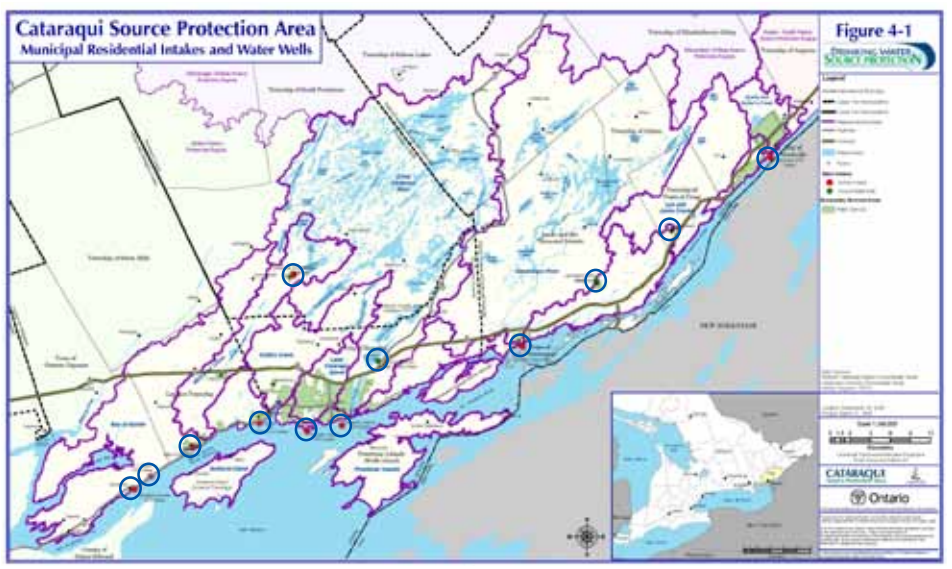
Plan implementation is the next phase of the source protection initiative. This will require a cooperative effort amongst municipalities, local public health units, provincial ministries, the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority, businesses and others. For more information, see article on this page and page 10 in this issue of *Cat Tales*.

Water sources for our cities and towns

Groundwater wellhead protection areas:
• Cana Subdivision – Kingston Mills
• Lansdowne
• Miller Manor – Mallorytown

Surface water intake protection zones:

• A.L. Dafoe (Napanee)
• Sandhurst Shores
• Bath
• Fairfield (Amherstview)
• Kingston – West and Central
• James W. King (Gananoque)
• Brockville
• Sydenham



Plan implementation is ready to go

Now that the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan is approved we are busy getting ready for the effective date. On April 1, 2015, some policies in the plan come into effect while others have longer implementation timelines.

Municipalities, provincial ministries, the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority and other organizations have responsibilities or recommendations in the plan that apply to them. Locally, Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) staff have been working in cooperation with municipalities and local health units to prepare for aspects of source protection policy implementation. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change is leading provincial training and every ministry is making changes to their procedures as necessary to address policies from the plans throughout Ontario.

Source protection is about doing what we should to ensure that our sources of drinking water are not polluted or overused. This first source protection plan for the Cataraqui Source Protection Area includes consideration for all vulnerable areas using a number of different policy types.

The three types of policies that will be effective immediately include:
• prescribed instrument (affects decisions for provincial environmental compliance approvals)
• land use planning (affects *Condominium Act, Planning Act and Building Code decisions*)
• Part IV of the *Clean Water Act* (risk management plans and prohibited activities).

Prescribed instruments refer to uses requiring a certificate of approval under other provincial legislation, such as the *Environmental Protection Act*. For example, this applies to sewage systems and nutrient management plans.

Part IV of the Clean Water Act provides municipalities with new tools to regulate existing and future activities that are significant drinking water threats. These include prohibition, risk management plans and restricted land uses.

CRCA staff are meeting regularly with our municipal colleagues to put local plans of action into motion leading up to the effective date. Working groups have been formed to address immediate implementation needs for the Part IV and land use planning aspects.

In the Cataraqui Source Protection Area there are six vulnerable areas (three wellhead protection areas and three intake protection zones) where Part IV policies apply:
• Cana Subdivision in Kingston Mills – City of Kingston
• Lansdowne – Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands
• Miller Manor in Mallorytown – Township of Front of Yonge
• James W. King in Gananoque – Town of Gananoque and Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands
• Brockville – City of Brockville and Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley
• Sydenham – Township of South Frontenac.

To address the Part IV policies each municipality must establish a risk management office. This means that a person(s) must be appointed under the *Clean Water Act* to fill both risk management official and risk management inspector roles to complete the necessary work. With the exception of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, each vulnerable area has few activities that require special risk management plans. On a regional scale it made sense to consolidate risk management office activities; therefore a regional risk management office was established and will be run by the CRCA for all municipalities except for Leeds and the Thousand Islands where a municipally-run office will be used. The two offices will work together to ensure a consistent approach. Over the last year much progress has been made by the Part IV Working Group to ensure that proper procedures are in place.

The more recently formed Land Use Planning Working Group is collaborating on a common strategy and language to ensure that the intent of all land use planning policies in the source protection plan is addressed. An interesting aspect to this work is the need to develop standardized risk management measures and assessment guidelines to ensure that the regionally sensitive groundwater areas are appropriately protected.

Municipal and local health unit staff, as well as the CRCA will continue efforts this winter to ensure that our communities are ready to implement the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan. The focus will be to:
• make preparations and develop resources
• talk about regional policy implementation for those policies with longer timelines
• showcase innovative implementation throughout Ontario and
• indicate what the future of source protection could hold.

For more information about source protection plan implementation, please contact Holly Evans, CRCA Environmental Technician at **hevans@crca.ca** or (613) 546-4228 ext. 233.

There is still time to arrange for spring tree planting

Interested in planting trees on your property? There is still time to order trees for spring 2015 planting.

The CRCA offers a tree planting program to rural landowners in our watershed on a cost-sharing basis. We deliver reforestation programs in partnership with Trees Ontario and the Ministry of Natural Resources. You must have a minimum of 1 hectare and be willing to sign a 15 year planting agreement with the CRCA to qualify for this program.

Landowners can also order trees with us and do the planting themselves. There is a minimum order of 500 seedlings and individual species can be ordered in multiples of 50. Group orders are welcome. Get together with your neighbours and plant some trees!

To find out more about the tree planting program visit the CRCA website at **www.crca.ca.** Order your trees online! Visit **www.crca.ca/online-services** to fill out our online tree order form.

2014 Trail Improvement Project

This year the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority staff worked together to place over 110 tonnes of gravel and $500 worth of culvert on sections of the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area trail system. As a good portion of the improvements occurred on Trail 5, which runs parallel to a pipeline easement, the majority of funding came from Enbridge Pipelines with additional in-kind contributions from Tans Canada Pipeline and Tackaberry Construction Ltd. The Friends also kicked in $600 worth of gravel and over 100 hours of volunteer sweat equity. The project concluded just in time before the onset of a major winter snowstorm. Discussion is now underway regarding possible future improvements to Trail 1, the Wildlife Area's accessibility and interpretive trail. Thank you to everyone who contributed to yet another successful Mac Johnson Wildlife Area project.

Members from the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area working on Trail 5. To learn more about the Friends and their initiatives visit www.cybertap.com/~macjohnson

On Sept. 21 we celebrated the CRCA's 50th Anniversary at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area with a free Birds of Prey show by the Canadian Raptor Conservancy, Two Nuts In A Food Truck, hikes, canoeing and kayaking, cake and music by Tim Sheffield.

Native Species Tree Nursery

From humble beginnings in 2000 to present day the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area (MJWA) Native Species Tree Nursery continues to grow. This year with funding provided by Royal Bank ($1,000), TD Canada Trust ($2,500), Brockville and Area Community Foundation, BACF($2,000), as well as sales to the public ($1,500) and municipal tree planting projects ($6,500) the tree nursery was able to utilize over $13,500. While most of this money has gone back into the Wildlife Area via the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area a portion was used for expenses from tree planting initiatives. The grant provided by BACF went directly into the construction of a much needed garden shed used for tool and equipment storage but also to stockpile over a 1,000 donated nursery pots which collectively has a significant value. Working together with the Friends group the Royal Bank and TD Canada Trust provided over 100 hours of volunteer time to plant and repot trees. But it has been the Friends of MJWA that have stepped up and made this year a huge success by providing the highest level of volunteer commitment. Work-bee Wednesdays throughout the spring, summer and fall accomplished more work than ever before. As well as a source of revenue, the Friends of MJWA Mother's Day potted tree sale gave the Wildlife Area an opportunity to promote the importance of planting native species. Finally, the Friends have demonstrated their resolve by assisting the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) with a two day tree planting initiative at the now decommissioned Brockville landfill site, part of a naturalization projected that required the use of native species. Next year also promises to be productive and plans are already underway to restock the existing $10,000 inventory to keep up with what appears to be a growing demand for native species trees and shrubs.

Successful Friends of MJWA tree planting project at the decommissioned Brockville landfill site. 60 trees were planted from the Native Species Tree Nursery with volunteer help from TD Canada Trust, City of Brockville staff, CRCA staff and community members.

CRCA Communications Coordinator retires after 30 years of service

Not many people get to write their own departure message, but after 20 years of writing and editing *Cat Tales*, I thought it would be a great way to end my time here.

A lot has changed since I first started work at the CRCA in February 1984. The CRCA had just bought its first computer for flood forecasting. It cost $15,000! Today, everyone uses computers and smartphones to do our work and to stay in contact.

Now you can find almost any information you need on the Internet. It has certainly cut down on the strange phone calls we used to get in the pre-web days. Try identifying a bird, plant, animal or tree over the phone, especially when it's not your area of expertise.

No matter what your area of expertise, most members of the public think that we are all park naturalists. Not so. Many of us have an interest in the natural world – that's probably what interested many of us in working for a conservation authority in the first place.

When I first started work here, I was the only planner at the CRCA. I worked for two different municipalities as a planner before joining the CRCA staff. Before long, more planning and regulations staff were added to the team. Since then a lot of planning staff have come and gone.

One of the great things about working at a small organization is that you can try different things. I also got to try my hand at administration, working closely with the boards and committees, researching and writing policies, helping to develop job descriptions and overseeing a number of projects. These included a pay equity plan, personnel regulations and working on our first Conservation Strategy.

Communications Coordinator Karla Maki-Esdon

In 1994, I changed jobs again to what was then called community relations. Now we call it communications. For the past 20 years, I have been responsible for our communications and education programs and initiatives. That involves a variety of jobs including creating publications, brochures and presentations, overseeing the education programs, organizing public meetings, open houses and special events – generally trying to get the word out about the CRCA on a very small budget.

Technology has made getting the word out a lot easier. A lot of information is available on our websites. We have also added social media like Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest to our list of communication tools. Keeping all of these pages up-to-date can be a bit of a challenge, though.

Digital cameras and e-mail have certainly simplified my job. Now we can e-mail ads, photos and stories to newspapers and magazines and they have it in minutes or even seconds.

If there is a downside to all this communications technology, it's that people have come to expect an immediate response to everything and that's not always possible.

I have worked with a lot of great staff, volunteers, board members and members of the community during my 30 years at the CRCA. I have also worked with some who have not been so much fun to work with. Now it's time to pass the torch on to the next generation.

Cleaning the relief wells at Little Cataraqui Creek Reservoir Dam

The Little Cataraqui Creek Reservoir Dam is an earthen embankment structure, with a steel sheet pile overflow weir, and a low flow valve, located at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Construction of the dam started in the summer of 1970 with the final height of the embankment achieved in August of 1971. The reservoir was filled starting in April of 1972, and during filling, the embankment started to deform. An area of slump gradually developed on the downstream side of the embankment, with longitudinal cracks forming along the crest, and into the upstream riprap.

At the time, field measurements indicated that the crest of the dam had settled about 2 feet. The cause was determined to be excess pore water pressure in the soils below the embankment from local groundwater recharge, rather than from the filling of the reservoir which in turn caused the instability of the embankment. The solution was to install pore water pressure relief wells in the embankment, releasing the pressure inside the embankment and therefore stabilizing the embankment. These wells were installed between October and December 1972.

In the early 1990s, the wells were refurbished, cleaned out, and the horizontal outlet pipes and the pipes to the surface were replaced. At that time, it was recommended that the wells be monitored on a regular basis, and that they be refurbished again in about 20 years' time.

Over the last few years, it appeared that the vertical pipes may have been deforming, indicating potential movement in the embankment again. In addition, the bottom of the wells appeared to be filling with spongy material (indicating potential degradation of the well screens), and one of the wells started experiencing artesian conditions in the fall of 2013 (which could mean a blocked outlet pipe).

Given the time since the last refurbishment, and the existing conditions in the potential movement of the embankment, it was time to look at the wells again to determine what needed to be done to stabilize them and the embankment, if anything, and then implement the work.

The black posts just off of the trail are three of the eight wells located to the west of the dam embankment.

In September 2014, XCG Consultants Ltd. was hired to look into the wells, and any work required to maintain stability of the earthen embankment. They brought in a local well contractor, MacLellan Well Technology, to clean the wells, take measurements, and record a down-hole video to investigate the wells.

The wells themselves were definitely in need of a cleaning, as they were quite biofouled with bacterial growth, resulting in blockages of some of the pipes, and backups in the drainage of water out of the embankment. In addition, there was much buildup of biological material in the bottom of the wells that needed to be removed.

Using a high pressure hose, and clean water, MacLellan blasted the biological materials out of the vertical and horizontal pipes, and re-established the full depths of each of the relief wells to almost their original condition.

Based on the field measurements, and the down-hole video, it does not appear that the embankment has been moving over time ,and that it is not in danger of a catastrophic failure. While the overall report has not been finished, it is expected the recommendations will include continued monitoring of the flow of water from the wells, inspections for any movement of the embankment, and regular (every few years) cleaning of the wells themselves, to maintain flow paths, and keep biological growth to a minimum.

Funding for the project was provided by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry (MNRF) and the City of Kingston, each paying 50 per cent of the cost.

WHAT'S HAP

Enjoy the great outdoors this winter and spring in one of our conservation areas. Visit our website at www.crca.ca to find the conservation area closest to you.

There are special winter activities at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville and winter and spring programs and events at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston.

ENTRY FEES:

Gould Lake and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Areas have a daily entry fee of:

- $5.50 per person for adults and children over 12
- $3.00 per person for children 12 and under
- maximum fee of $14.00 per car.

Annual passes are available for $80.00 per year and provide entry to both of these conservation areas. Buy your pass online at crca.ca/online-services.

Donation boxes are located at our other conservation areas and at our boat ramps. Your donations help to maintain these facilities, so please make a contribution each time you visit.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Conservation Areas

- 7:30 a.m. to dusk daily Little Cataraqui Creek Outdoor Centre
- 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday (other times available by appointment)
- 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends from January 3 to April 5
- 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekends from April 11 to April 26
- Closed Good Friday and Easter Monday
- Closed weekends from May to September except during programs. Available for room rentals.

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

Take Highway 29 north from Brockville to Tincap, turn east on Debruge Road and drive for 2 km to the main entrance. Enjoy 11 km of hiking and cross-country ski trails, a Nature Centre, picnic facilities and a skating rink. For trail and rink conditions please call (613)345-1990.

SATURDAY SKATES
Saturdays in January and February
Starting Sat. January 10
(11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)

The Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and community volunteers will be serving hot chocolate and coffee at the skating shelter on Saturdays in January and February (weather permitting). Come out and enjoy a skate with your family and friends.

WINTER FUN DAY
Saturday, January 31
(10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Enjoy the festivities at our 13th annual Winter Fun Day at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Enjoy dog sled races by the Mush Larose Association-Training Division, skating on the pond, cross-country skiing, free snowshoeing for children, lunch and refreshments. Admission is just $5.00 per car.

FAMILY DAY SKATE
Monday, February 16
(11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Join us for a special day of family activities. Bring out your skates and skis and skate on the pond or ski on the cross-country ski trails. The ice slide will be open. You can bring your lunch or buy something at the barbecue hosted by the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

WORK-BEE WEDNESDAY
Starting in April
(8:30 a.m. to noon)

Calling all volunteers! Starting in April join the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area for Work-Bee Wednesdays. Help out at the tree nursery, brushing or work on the trails. Locations and duties to be determined each week and will be posted on the CRCA's Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/CataraquiRegionCA.

FABULOUS FOSSILS!
Saturday, April 25
(2:00 p.m.)

If you have ever wondered how fossils form, and what kinds of fossils you can find in eastern Ontario, then this is the event for you! Join Mark Badham, curator of the Miller Museum of Geology at Queen's University in Kingston to find out about the many different ways that evidence of past life is preserved. Spend some "hands-on" time with actual slabs of fossils, and learn how to identify the many animals from 450 million years ago that can be found near here.

MOTHER'S DAY TREE SALE
Saturday, May 9
(10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)

Come out and support our annual spring tree sale just in time for Mother's Day. All trees and shrubs are native stock grown at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area nursery. The sale takes place at the Centennial Road (south entrance) parking lot.

LITTLE CATARAQUI CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

Try out a new winter sport! We have great facilities including 13 km of groomed cross-country ski trails, a natural ice rink, warming huts and an Outdoor Centre with lots of great programs for the whole family.

In the early spring, plan a visit to our sugar bush to enjoy the sweet taste of maple syrup. As the snow melts and nature awakens, join us for great spring activities.

WINTER ACTIVITIES

CROSS-COUNTRY SKI LESSONS
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Learn how to ski or improve your technique. Cross-country ski lessons are offered on Saturdays from January 10 to February 28, weather permitting. Register in advance at www.crca.ca/online-services, or on the day of the lesson, at the Outdoor Centre. Cost is $18.00 per person. Group lessons are one-hour in length. Lesson times are 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

EQUIPMENT RENTALS

Cross-country skis, skates and snowshoes are available for rent at the Outdoor Centre. Rentals are available from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All rentals must be returned by 4:00 p.m. Rentals cannot be removed from the property.

ICE RINK RENTAL

Host your own evening skating party! Rink rental includes access to the warming huts. Call Shannon Fleming at (613) 546-4228 ext. 222 for more information or to make a booking.

LITTLE CAT CLASSIC SKI LOPPET
Sunday, January 18

Register for each event 30 minutes before start time. (Registration fee is $5.00 per person or $10.00 per team.) The day's events include:

10:00 a.m. - Cross-Country Ski Loppets, 5km or 10 km.

1:00 p.m. - Family Fun Relay, skate, snowshoe and ski.

This annual winter fun day is hosted by the Canadian Ski Patrol Frontenac Zone. Skis and snowshoes are available to rent at the Outdoor Centre.

OWL HOOT AND COYOTE HOWL
Saturday, January 17
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
(6:00 p.m.)

Bring your family out on a night walk to learn a bit more about owls and coyotes. We will be hooting for owls and howling for coyotes. We will not see these animals, but if we are lucky, they might call back. To ensure we have enough hike leaders for participants registration is required. Registration forms can be found online at www.crca.ca/online-services. Cost is $2 per person plus regular gate fee.

WINTER SPORTS P.A. DAY
Friday, January 30
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Ages 6 to 11Give your child(ren) an opportunity to have a P.A. Day full of winter fun and adventure. We'll be cross-country skiing on the trails and snowshoeing through the fields, forests and wetland areas of Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your lunch, snacks, drinks, and warm and extra clothes. The program will run regardless of the weather. We have alternate plans for interactive games and activities if there is not enough snow.

Cost is $40.00 per child and includes equipment rentals. You must register in advance. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. Online registration is available at www.crca.ca/online-services or pick up a form at the Administration Office or Outdoor Centre. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

SNOWSHOE DEMONSTRATION
Sunday, February 1
(2:00 to 4:00 p.m.)

Come out and try snowshoeing. It's fun and easy to do. No experience necessary. Trailhead staff will provide the snowshoes, a quick lessons and off you go! Remember if you can walk you can snowshoe.

VALENTINE'S EVENING SKATE
Saturday, February 14
(6:00 to 9:00 p.m)

Enjoy a romantic evening skate on Kingston's largest natural ice rink (weather permitting). The rink lights will be on and the fire will be lit in the warming hut. We will also have recorded music at the Outdoor Centre where you can warm up and purchase a hot drink and a snack. Skate rentals will be available at the Outdoor Centre.

FAMILY DAY SKATE
Monday, February 16
(9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Bring the family out for a skate on Kingston's largest natural ice skating rink (weather permitting)! We'll have the fire going in the warming hut by the rink or you can drop by the Outdoor Centre for a cup of hot chocolate or coffee. Skate rentals will also be available at the Outdoor Centre.

SCAT AND TRACKS HIKE
Sunday, February 22
(2:00 p.m.)

Bundle up and get outside to discover what animals have been visiting our trails this winter. Learn how to be a wild animal detective to find out how to read tracks, scats and signs.

STARLIGHT SNOWSHOE HIKE
Saturday, February 28
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
(6:30 p.m.)

Join us for an easy snowshoe trek under the stars. Please register in advance as there is limited space. Registration forms can be found at www.crca.ca/online-services and registration will close on Friday, February 27 at 4:00 p.m.. Cost is $12.00 per person for annual pass holders and $17.50 for non-pass holders (this includes the gate fee and snowshoe rental). Don't forget to bring along your flashlight or headlamp. Hot chocolate and snacks will be available for purchase after the hike at the snack bar.

MAPLE MADNESS
March 14 to 22 (March Break)
March 28 and 29
April 4 and 5

PENING 2015

(9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

March means maple syrup at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Take a tractor-drawn wagon back to our sugar bush to see how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Enjoy pancakes with real maple syrup and buy some maple syrup or sugar to take home.

The sugar bush is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day of the Maple Madness program. Be sure to check out some of our special activities like puppet shows, tree tapping demonstrations, our annual Bake Sale and Olde Thyme Sugar Bush Chores. Check our schedule below for the times and dates for these activities. You'll want to visit us more than once!

PUPPET SHOWS
Saturday, March 14
(11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.)

Take in one of our fun puppet shows geared towards the whole family. Meet some of our new and favourite puppet friends that share with us the secrets of the sugar bush.

FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY
Saturday, March 14
(10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Join Paul Carl for an interactive presentation at our First Nations maple syrup display in the sugar bush. Paul will explain how his ancestors harvested and used sweet water in ceremonies to make maple syrup and sugar.

TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS
Sunday, March 15

Visit our self-guided displays in the sugar bush and learn about sweet water. See how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Be sure to visit our tapping demonstrations from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Learn how to identify a sugar maple tree, measure it and use a brace and bit hand drill to practice your tapping skills on a log.

PUPPET SHOWS
Monday, March 16 to Friday, March 20
(Daily at 10:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 1:45 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.)

Take in one of our fun puppet shows geared towards the whole family. Meet some of our new and favourite puppet friends that share with us the secrets of the sugar bush. There are daily puppet shows from Monday through Friday during the March Break.

TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS
Monday, March 16 to Friday, March 20

Visit our self-guided displays in the sugar bush and learn about sweet water. See how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Be sure to visit our tapping demonstrations from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Learn how to identify a sugar maple tree, measure it and use a brace and bit hand drill to practice your tapping skills on a log.

FOUNDATION BAKE SALE
Saturday, March 21

Pick up some sweet treats at the annual Foundation Bake Sale at the Outdoor Centre.

PUPPET SHOWS & FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY
Saturday, March 21

See Saturday, March 14 for details.

TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS
Sunday, March 22

See Sunday, March 15 for details.

PUPPET SHOWS & FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY
Saturday, March 28

See Saturday, March 14 for details.

OLDE THYME SUGAR BUSH CHORES
Saturday, March 28

Try your hand at some "olde thyme" sugar bush chores today. You can try log sawing, emptying sap buckets and tapping trees.

TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS
Sunday, March 29

See Sunday, March 15 for details.

FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY
Saturday, April 4

See Saturday, March 14 for details.

MAPLE TAFFY DEMONSTRATION
Saturday, April 4

(10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Come back to the sugar bush and see how maple taffy is made. Samples will be available for a donation.

SUGAR BUSH TREASURE HUNT
Sunday, April 5

Visit our sugar bush and experience a treasure hunt that uncovers the mysteries of syrup making and some of the secrets of the sugar bush forest! This treasure hunt is geared towards all ages.

SPRING ACTIVITIES

STAINED GLASS MOSAIC WORKSHOP
Sunday, April 12
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
(1:00 to 4:00 p.m.) Ages 15 and up

Come and spend an afternoon exploring the beauty of stained glass mosaic. Create a colourful mosaic piece inspired by the coming of spring and the wonders that nature has to offer. Lynda MacRae, glass artist and owner of The Glass House, will guide you through the mosaic process as you create a colorful hanging to take home and enjoy. Cost is $35.50 or $30.00 for annual pass holders which includes all materials and gate fee. Registration is required. Register online at www.crca.ca/online-services.

SMUDGING CEREMONY FOR MOTHER EARTH
Saturday, April 18
(2:00 p.m.)

Gather with Paul Carl to cleanse your mind and body and offer good thoughts for Mother Earth. By smudging we allow the smoke to rise into Father Sky and ask that the Eagle take those thoughts to the creator for a healthier Mother Earth and all of our relations on her.

ALL ABOUT BEES
Sunday, April 19
(2:00 p.m.)

Come join Seldom Fools Apiculture and learn about the humble honey bee. We can attribute at least one third of each bite of our food to this little pollinator and the important role they play in our daily lives. In recent years, both the domestic and the wild populations have been declining at an alarming rate and no one knows why. What can you do about it? How can you help? Come learn about the honey bee and its place in our society and our lives.

FROG NIGHT HIKE
Friday, May 1
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
(7:30 p.m.)

Bring everyone in the family out to our annual frog hike. You'll learn about the different frogs that live at Little Cataraqui Creek and go on a short walk to listen for frog calls. To ensure we have enough hike leaders for participants, registration is required. Register online at www.crca.ca/online-services. Cost is $2 per person plus regular gate fee.

INTRODUCTION TO HIKING
Saturday, May 2
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
(9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

The Rideau Trail Club is offering Hike Ontario full day course for new hikers and those interested in tips to make hiking safe and enjoyable. Topics include hike planning, preparation, packing, hiking safety and on-trail procedures, plus an orientation to hiking with a guided group. The day includes a short hike to practice your skills. You will receive a Safe Hiker Manual & Certificate. Cost is $50 for annual pass holders and $55.50 for non-pass holders. For more information or to register contact Peter Burbidge at peterbur@kingston.net or call 613-634-1877.

SPRING FLING P.A. DAY PROGRAM
Friday, May 22
(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Ages 6 to 11

Give your child(ren) a P.A. Day full of spring adventure and fun. We'll be exploring the fields, forests and marshes of the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Activities include searching for salamanders, making friends with frogs, singing with the birds, playing games, and having wonderful experiences in the great outdoors.

Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your own snacks, drinks and lunch as well as suitable outdoor clothes. The program will run regardless of the weather. Cost is $40.00 per child. Advance registration is required. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. Register online at www.crca.ca/online-services. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

FLY CASTING FOR BEGINNERS
Sunday, June 14
(10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

The Kingston and Area Fly Fishing Club is offering a one-day beginners fly casting course. The emphasis will be on casting technique with hands-on instructions. Some time will be spent on topics such as equipment, safety, useful knots and other aspects of fly fishing. The course is limited to 10 participants so register early.

The cost is $25.50 per person (ages 12 and up) or $20.00 for annual pass holders. Necessary equipment will be provided but you may also bring your own. Bring a lunch and wear weather appropriate clothing. A hat is a good idea. Participants under the age of 15 must be accompanied by an adult. Register online at www.crca.ca/online-services.

NATURE EXPLORERS CAMP
Register your children (ages 6 to 11) for our week-long summer day camp during July and August. Registration forms will be available on our website by the end of January www.crca.ca/online-services.

LEMOINE POINT CONSERVATION AREA

SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY
Saturday, April 25
(9:00 a.m. to Noon)

Come out and help the Friends of Lemoine Point give the Conservation Area a good spring cleaning. Volunteers will be in both parking lots handing out gloves and garbage bags to people who want to participate in the clean-up.

SPRING TREE PLANTING
Saturday, May 2
(9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.\)

Our annual spring tree planting will take place at Lemoine Point Conservation Area. Meet at the north parking lot (Coverdale Drive) to help plant trees. Bring your shovel, work gloves and your energy. For more information call Peter at (613) 389-4187 or Rick at (613) 389-3651.

NATIVE PLANT SALE
Saturday, May 23
(9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Buy some trees, shrubs or wildflowers for your home garden. All plants are grown at the Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery. Proceeds from the sale help to support the nursery and the tree stock grown to support local forestry programs.

Improvements to our Conservation Areas in 2014

You may have noticed a lot of work going on in many of our Conservation Areas this year. Here are a few highlights of the work done in 2014.

Parrott's Bay Conservation Area - Trail Improvements

With assistance through the Loyalist Township Roads Department, the 2014 trail project at Parrott's Bay Conservation Area (as part of master plan implementation) has been completed. The work was carried out between Monday November 24 and Wednesday December 3.

The work involved 3 new large culverts being installed to replace the old rusted out and undersized ones crossing the trail in the northeast corner of the property. Gravel was added along a 100 metre part of the trail in this same area to improve the trail, what was an old farm lane, as it crosses through the wetland. Some additional gravel was also placed along a steeper portion of trail 5.

Marshlands Conservation Area – Boardwalk Repairs

There are two narrow pedestrian boardwalks located within the Marshlands Conservation Area. These boardwalks connect three lengths of trail throughout the Little Cataraqui Creek wetland and are the start of the Rideau Trail. Repairs to the boardwalk were carried out by seven members of the Rideau Trail Association over a three day period this fall. Several posts and numerous decking boards were replaced and the ends of the boardwalks were also leveled to make the approaches safer. Several sleepers were also installed as part of the post installation to minimize the effect of the freeze thaw cycle of the swampy ground and the water levels as controlled by Lake Ontario.

Marshland Boardwalk

Lemoine Point Conservation Area – Parking lot Construction

The south parking lot at Lemoine Point Conservation Area incurred extensive damage over the last winter (2013/14). There was extensive heaving in locations causing the tar and chip surface to disintegrate. The affected locations did not level out in the spring and emergency repairs were required and carried out by Cruickshank Construction. The affected areas were excavated and filled with appropriate base material and areas were topped with recycled asphalt. Drainage on one side of the parking lot was also improved through ditching to avoid standing water. The repair will have to last several years until the next full resurfacing of the parking lots on the property.

Cataraqui Trail Improvements

Various improvements were made along the Cataraqui trail in 2014. On behalf of the Cataraqui Trail Management board, the Township of South Frontenac made various improvements through the Village of Sydenham to just beyond Mcgillivray Road. A total of 5 culverts were replaced. This involved at two locations the removal of the wooden box culverts and replacing them with corrugated steel pipe. Extensive scaling of a rock face was also performed to minimize the chances of falling rock. A major rock fall occurred during the last (2013/14) winter.

Through the combined efforts of Rideau Lakes Township, OMYA Canada and Tackaberry Construction we were able to lay down approximately one and a half kilometers of crushed white marble for a new walking surface on part of the trail between Harlem Road and the top end of Polk Crescent in the village of Portland. A special vote of thanks is owed to OMYA Canada who provided approximately 600 tons of the white marble material and had their trucking company Tomlinson's Ltd deliver the material to a staging ground at Kin Park. Many people like to walk from the village down Harlem Road, then the trail to Portland Station Road then back into the village about a four kilometer walk

The numerous volunteers of the Cataraqui Trail Maintenance Committee performed the extensive but normal operation requirements on the Trail including mowing, removal of dead trees and the clearing of culverts amongst others.

Earlier in 2014, an old dug well was uncovered at Portland Station. The well was limestone slab lined, 20 ft. deep and approximately 4 ft. in diameter. It would have served to fill a cistern which would store water for when the steam engines were at the Station. A contractor was retained to properly plug and seal the well to stop the potential of groundwater contamination through the well opening. All work was completed within the guidelines and regulations of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.

Boat Ramp Improvements

Improvements to the Loughborough Lake boat ram were completed in May. The existing concrete abutment was capped and a new shore attachment was added to allow the docks to float more freely. Work was also done at the Henry Street boat ramp in Brockville. Two new 6 feet by 14 feet docks where constructed and were installed by City of Brockville staff.

Plugging and sealing of well at Portland Station.

Henry Street boat ramp in Brockville.

Martin Edwards shared his recollections of the start of the CRCA

The late Dr. Martin Edwards – a founding member of the CRCA.

The late Dr. Martin Edwards shared his memories of the CRCA formation with Michael Sykes, former CRCA Communications and Marketing Assistant, in January 2010. Dr. Edwards was an avid birder and a professor at the Royal Military College in Kingston. He died in 2012.

CRCA: In what capacity did you serve in the CRCA?

Dr. Edwards: I helped to found it. Jim McCowan may have told you how he got the idea for it. He took me and Bob Stewart for a walk along the railway tracks across the Little Cataraqui Creek, way, way back, about 1963 and he said: "what can we do to save this from going up?" After a bit I said, you know after Hurricane Hazel in 1954 they passed the Conservation Authorities Act and Metro Toronto has got one and they are able to do all sorts of things in valley lands. Jim then said: "that's what we've got to do."

He put together a committee and I was on the committee that went around to try and get support from different people to help the formation you needed to get a certain number of municipalities to send delegates, and if more than half of them said they wanted (a conservation authority), then it would go ahead. That's what happened, it went ahead.

Now from about '64 to'65, I went on sabbatical to Stanford University and when I got back, it (the CRCA) had just been formed. Jim said: "I'd really like to get you on the board." He spoke to Syl Apps who was then a provincial member and Syl got an order in council passed and made me a provincial member of the conservation authority starting in 1966. Those were three-year appointments. When I retired, which was 1978, I had been on the (conservation authority board) for 12 years. All that time I was on the executive in one capacity or another.

Education and publicity was the one committee that I got nailed for a couple of times. This wasn't too onerous, making contact with schools and trying to set up a school program.

At one stage Jim said: "we've got to write a little book." This is the little booklet that came out of it, ***Into The Seventies***. I put this together. You can see how ancient it is, it was written in the 1960s, it proposed what we were going to do. It was meant to be a bit of public relations.

Anyway, I did four, three-year terms then I got out of it in 1978. But I helped Jim . . . he was on a provincial thing to try and change the way the provincial funding went for recreation. When you form an organization, you get a study done on the capabilities of the watershed. One of the things they said was that Kingston had potential for recreation. But of course the provincial grants for recreational development were somewhere in the basement.

CRCA: Thinking back to that time period, what did the word conservation mean to you personally?

Dr. Edwards: Well, I initially took Max Nicholson's definition: wise use. But Jim McCowan said: "that's ridiculous, who decides what's wise?" Max Nicholson was an ancient English philosopher/conservationist who was active in the 1930s. We certainly didn't come to the notion of sustainable use until several years later. Sustainable development is development that allows the present generation to get some benefit without removing the possibility of future generations having some benefit also.

In this period, I'd been president of the Kingston Field Naturalists and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. I was president of the Canadian Nature Federation into the 1970s, and a member of the council for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) which is now the World Conservation Union, so I was pretty heavily involved in conservation work.

So I had certainly thought of conservation locally in terms of habitat preservation as a key feature for that, and in terms of world-wide conservation that's a reasonable feature.

CRCA: What were the major influences on the formation of public opinion about the notion of conservation at that time?

Dr. Edwards: Well, there were a couple of them. There were the double negatives that got a lot of publicity. Pollution Probe had these double negatives . . . fight pollution . . . They would say: "don't throw trash away." That only works if everybody follows it, whereas when I was in the Federation of Ontario Naturalists at the same time, we were trying to get people to pick up garbage. You only need a few people to do it and you can have a clean environment. So we were taking the subtle, positive approach, but didn't have the same impact. The ones who said: "fight pollution" and "don't do this and don't do that," they got the press because the essence of drama is conflict.

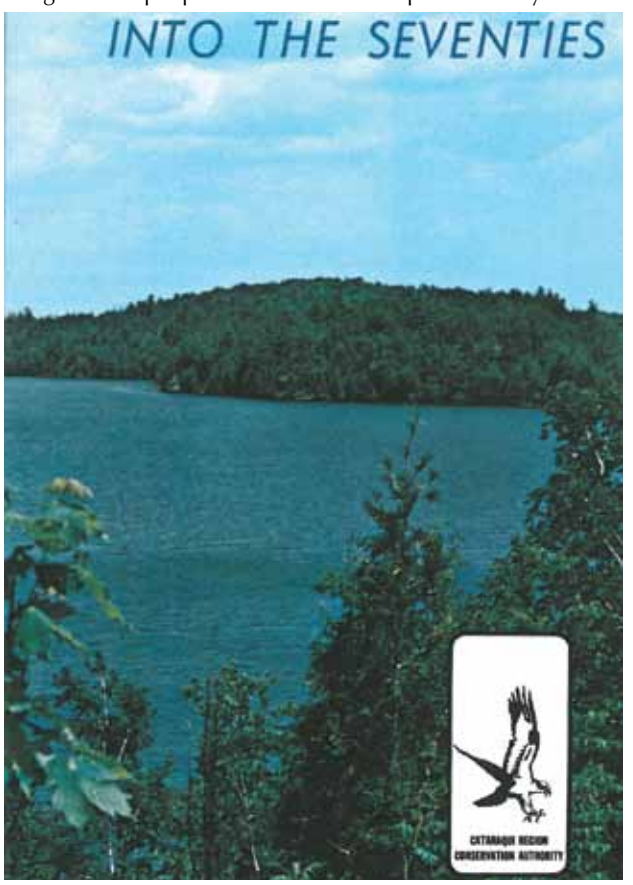
The essence of newspaper reporting for current affairs is they want to report conflict. The notion that something is going really nicely doesn't sell papers. That, I think, had a big effect on it.

Of course (the book) ***Silent Spring*** came out in the 1960s and there was quite a conflict there because as Rachel Carson's book pointed out the effects of long-lasting organo-chlorine pesticides and there was quite a reaction. Those people who wanted to sell pesticides tried to discount everything that she'd written.

There were lot of other things in the press, but I do think that some of the more extreme anti-development things caused people to think a little bit positively about conservation.

The conservation authority suffered from having a positive approach that was not terribly dramatic. But it was the sort of thing that many of us felt that we've got to work that way. We don't need to damn everything.

However, the conservation authority got drawn in on quite a few such things. I got to be chairman of the fill regulations committee which was a really interesting thing to be on. It was possible to try to keep the type of Hurricane Hazel type flood in the Humber Valley from happening in the Kingston area. And there was one little place just west of here where people started building houses right next to a small stream and then they wanted a $500,000 diversion channel built to protect those houses. At that time those houses were worth $50,000 each. There were only four houses. We could have bought those four houses for $200,000 and kept the watershed clear, but . . . oh no! People felt if they built next to the water's edge you had to protect them from the water. The fill regulations were meant to keep people away from putting themselves at risk.



A booklet that discussed the future direction of the CRCA.

It turned out the regulations didn't work as well as they should. On Bath Road, as you go to the Little Cat, a guy started dumping fill illegally in there on the south side toward Squaw Point. We tried to get the stuff removed. I wanted us to just go in, remove it and bill the guy, but our legal advice said: "no, no, we can't do that."

And the railway station here . . . somehow they stuck that in without getting our approval. It's in the floodplain of the Little Cataraqui Creek.

CRCA: What would you say was the local public's view of conservation authorities in general back around 1964?

Dr. Edwards: There were two aspects. One, essentially no knowledge and 'why do we need one here' was the notion. The selling point for it was, our taxes are paying for Toronto to have the Metro Toronto Conservation Authority do all sorts of things. We could be sharing part of that doing good things here. Even if you don't want to have anything done here, your municipality doesn't have to come in on it, but you will lose out. You will still be paying for the ones that are already there. This was the kind of argument that finally went across.

CRCA: What were some of the successes of the CRCA?

Dr. Edwards: People love the walkways, they love the free services and those are used by what, five percent of the population? But they have a strong, positive impact and the boat launching ramps were something really successful. We got essentially no bad feedback about any of the boat launching ramps. It's public access and it's public water so that aspect is there.

Tips to keep your drinking water safe

Drinking water source protection means helping to ensure that our lakes, rivers and groundwater are not contaminated or overused. This is important because water treatment is not always enough and some chemicals are not removed from water, even with a water treatment system. In some cases when pollution cannot be cleaned up, the resulting contamination can ruin a water source forever. It is much easier and less expensive to keep water clean than it is to try and clean it up after it has been polluted.

Everyone can help protect the drinking water supply with a few simple changes in their everyday routines. You can:

- Handle and dispose of waste properly
- Maintain heating oil tanks and fill lines
- Maintain and use septic systems properly
- Maintain wells and upgrade as necessary
- Hire a licensed well contractor to properly plug unused wells
- Avoid or limit the use of chemicals such as fertilizer, pesticides, and road salt

To find out how the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan might affect activities on your property, and to discover more ways you can help protect your drinking water, please refer to the interactive maps and fact sheets at **www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca/interactivemaps.** Further ideas can also be found at: **http://bit.ly/1Azckrg**

Septic systems that are in good working order help reduce the risk of drinking water contamination, both to your water supply and your neighbour's.

Spilled oil can seep into soils and groundwater and flow into the rivers and lakes that supply your drinking water, causing contamination.

2015 Nature Explorers Summer Camp

Based at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, campers get unplugged and experience the great outdoors through our fun, nature-inspired theme weeks, hands-on exploration and outdoor activities. For two days a week, campers get loads of time to swim, play on the beach and explore Gould Lake Conservation Area.

Each day will be filled with outdoor adventures, games and fun. Guided by staff, the campers will experience all the great outdoors has to offer! Campers will come away with a greater awareness and connection to the natural world.

- June 29, 30/July 2, 3* Rockin' Rock Stars – From rocks to stars and everything wild in between!
- July 6 – 10 - Nighttime Navigators –Searching for the mysteries of nature at night!
- July 13 – 17 –Wildlife NSI – Become an expert Nature Scene Investigator!
- July 20 - 24 - Citizen Scientists – Bring Science to your own neighbourhood!
- July 27 - 31 -Outdoor Olympians – Find out about the fastest animals!
- Aug 4 – 7* - Nature's Tricksters – Reveal the funny side of nature!
- Aug 10 - 14 - Adventurous Aerialists– Discover the wonder of what fills our skies!
- Aug 17 – 21 - Water Warriors – Get wet and wild about water!

Fees and Hours of Operation

Nature Explorers Camp is $180.00 per week.

* shortened weeks are: $144.00 (4 day camp).

Monday through Friday. Before and after care is available at the Outdoor Centre from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for an additional charge of $25.00 per week ($20.00 for the short weeks).

Campers enjoy a variety of fun outdoor activities like pond dipping, insect identification and swimming at Gould Lake Conservation Area.

Teachers, book now for winter, Maple Madness and spring school programs

Spaces are still available for our winter and spring programs based at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area Kingston and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville. Our programs are connected to the curriculum and will help to enrich your class's experience with hands-on, outdoor learning. You are encouraged to share the cost of the bus and bring a second class and make a day of it by eating lunch at our Outdoor Centre. You may choose to do the same program(s) or opt for different ones.

In January and February, get your students outdoors to experience winter at its finest. We have excellent snowshoeing at Little Cataraqui Creek and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and cross-country skiing opportunities as well as Kingston's largest natural skating rink at Little Cataraqui Creek. No snow… don't worry, we've got it covered with our famous Instincts for Survival Program or navigate around our trails with our Mapping Tree-sure Hunt, Mapping It Out! or our Orienteering: Map and Compass and Taking a Bearing Program. We even have Kinderscience in Winter for the kinders and Nature in Winter. Our programs are adaptable to any kind of winter weather that Kingston brings us!

In March visit the beautiful sugar bush at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and experience how maple syrup was discovered and made long ago and how it is made today.

From April to June, you and your students have excellent opportunities to discover spring awakenings through adventures in our forests with our *Kinderscience* or *Secrets of Spring programs* or marsh dip-netting by taking part in our *Marsh Mysteries, Habitats and Communities, Biodiversity Bonanza* or *Weltand Conservation programs*.

For a full list of programs and descriptions visit **www.crca.ca/education**

To make a program booking:

Little Cataraqiu Creek Conservation Area – 613-546-4228 ext. 251 or email **educate@crca.ca**

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area – 613-923-1526 or email **edmjwa@gmail.com**

Nature Programs

The CRCA offers Nature Programs for both early learners (ages 2.5 to 5) and home learners (ages 6 to 11) at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

In September 2014, the Early Learners used their senses to experience Fabulous Fall changes with the gentle guidance of Queen Autumn and Jack Frost. The Home Learners learned how to be prepared, read the weather and ended the fall session with a rousing game of the famous predator-prey simulation, *Instincts for Survival*.

We still have spaces available for the nature programs in February 2015 with our Early Learner themes of *Winter Wonderland* and *Sensational Spring* in April 2015. The Home Learners will continue to hone their outdoor skills and play two more adapted games of the Instincts for Survival!

Foundation News

2014 marked another highly successful year for the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation's major fundraising effort, the Forever Green Gala. Thanks to the very generous sponsorship of Lafarge, TransCanada Napanee Generating Station, and the group of Integrated Team Solutions, EllisDon and Johnson Controls, all of the proceeds from the event went directly to support the educational programs and land acquisition efforts of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.

The event was an enormous success in terms of both numbers of people attending and amount of money raised from silent auction and raffle sales thanks to the tireless efforts of volunteers. A special thank you to Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority staff who donate an enormous amount of time assisting Foundation Board members in making sure every detail of the event unfolds without a hitch.

Once again the Senior Staff Mess at RMC provided a lovely venue in which guests were able to mix and mingle as they greeted old friends, and bid on the many beautiful Silent Auction items donated by a wide range of businesses and individuals. Cliff Edwards serenaded guests with his melodic musical presentation as guests enjoyed hot and cold hors d'oeuvres.

As in past years, it was the Board's pleasure to present conservation awards to groups who have proven their commitment to conservation. Ducks Unlimited Canada, Mulberry Waldorf School, and Sustainable Kingston were the worthy recipients this year. In addition, Lynette Mader of Ducks Unlimited made a power point presentation highlighting all of the conservation efforts and partnerships that Ducks Unlimited is engaged in around Kingston. Please keep in mind that we are keen to receive nominations for potential recipients at any time. The nomination form is on our website, **www.cataraquiconservationfoundation.org.**

Recipients of the 2014 Conservation Awards presented at the Forever Green Gala: Ducks Unlimited Canada, Sustainable Kingston, and the Mulberry Waldorf School.

As an additional fundraising effort, the Board launched their on-line, 'un-yard sale' for any individuals wishing to make a contribution to conservation by selling their used items through an organization called Gift-It. Like selling on Kijiji, this web-site allows people to sell their 'stuff', but instead of receiving the proceeds of the sale, they can donate the money to the Conservation Foundation. So, if you are wanting to de-clutter your home or make room for new things, please consider selling your things and donating the money to the Foundation. If yard sales aren't of interest to you, please feel free to donate the Canada Helps on our web-site.

This year the Board is pleased to welcome Terri Barach, Peter McGeer, and Marvin Saunders to our ranks. Through their ideas, contacts, energy, and enthusiasm they have already made a significant contribution to the Board and we look forward to benefitting from their presence in the years to come. If you are interested in making a contribution to conservation by serving on the Foundation Board, please contact us for a conversation.

For 2015 we will once again have delicious baked goods and other goodies for sale at Maple Madness on the second weekend of the event, Saturday March 21. We hope that you will be sure to drop by to see us at the Outdoor Centre when you come to Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area to enjoy a first-hand experience of 'sugaring off'.

In May, we will hold our Annual General Meeting at which time we will gladly welcome new Board members. Keep up with the news on the Foundation web site: **www.cataraquiconservationfoundation.org** . This site will be used in the future to manage our fundraising and contacts, providing new tools to communicate with our "friends of conservation".

Thank you to our Forever Green 2014 Donors and Sponsors

SPONSORS, ADVERTISERS AND OTHER SUPPORTERS

Anne and Robert Cameron
Bernard Altshuller
Blossoms Florist & Boutique
Buffett Taylor
Chris Cannon
Collins Bay Marina
Cruickshank Group
David & Marilyn Shurtleff
Ellis Don
Frances Tackaberry
Glen Supply Lumber Company
Integrated Team Solutions (PCH) Partnership
Jani-King Commercial Cleaning Services
John and Karen Kitney
Johnson Controls Canada
Lafarge
Living Rooms
Mike Spies
Nuisance Wildlife Control Inc.
Secker, Ross & Perry
Shoalts & Zaback Architects Ltd
Sustainable Kingston
TransCanada Pipeline
Wellington Foreign Exchange

AUCTION AND RAFFLE CONTRIBUTORS

AECOM
Aecon
Ambassador Hotel and Conference Centre
Atmosphere – Paul Copland
Avanta Salon and Spa
Bergeron Estate Winery
Beth Bailey
Blossom's Florist and Boutique
Bread and Butter Bakery and Pastries
Brunet Plumbing
Burnham Optical
Canadian Museum of Nature
Capelli's Hair Studio – Joanna Mazzeo
Capital Movers and Storage
Caroline Farrell
Carolyn Hetherington
Cataraqui Conservation Foundation Board Members
Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority
Cataraqui Golf and Country Club
Chic Hair and Esthetics Centre
Classic Custom Framing
Clearwater Design Canoes and Kayaks
Colonnade Golf and Country Club
Cunningham and Poupore
Dave Sexsmith
Days on Front
Dentistry Professional Confederation – Dr. Matt Sawchuck
Domino Theatre
Douglas and Christine Radford
Douglas Snyder
Dr. Carol Murphy
Earthworx Landscape Products
Eileen Potts
Glenburnie Grocery
Janati Yoga
Jeff Scott
Karen Bach
Kingston Brewing Company
Kingston Olive Oil Company
Kingston Yacht Club
Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery
Linda Coulter
LinkLine
Maria Latimer
Marian Ellis
Maritime Travel – Clocktower Plaza
Megalo's Restaurant
Michael Bell
Novel Idea
Pat Frontini
Pyke Farms Landscaping
P'Lovers, The Environmental Store
ResponseIT
Riley's Garden Centre
River Mill Restaurant
Rob McRae
Sahara Body Care
Shirley Hulley
Snip and Clip
South Shore Pottery
Star Therrien
Starlet Boutique
Sunharvest Greenhouses
Sweet Days Bake Shop
Ted Hsu
The Glass House
The Landings Golf Course
Thirty-Three Vines
Tom McAneney
Trailhead
Vera Kettnaker
VIA Rail
Weese Tree Preservation
Wellington Foreign Exchange

CAROL STRONG A.K.A THE BUG LADY: Saying Goodbye to an Outstanding Volunteer

It is with great sadness that we say goodbye to a cherished volunteer who passed away this fall. Carol Strong became a volunteer with the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's Conservation Education programs over a decade ago! Her great sense of humor and willingness to do anything made Carol an outstanding volunteer. She was known to all of us as the Bug Lady for her fondness of insects. With her sleeves rolled up and mud up to her elbows, Carol inspired delight and curiosity for the tiniest and strangest critters during our marsh dipping programs.

Carol was game for anything in any type of weather, heavy rain, no problem; she always had her trusty rubber boots. Snow, sleet you name it, Carol came prepared to help in any way she could always with a big smile on her face! Even though Carol confessed to being directionally challenged, she even dared volunteer to help with our Map and Compass program as long as we promised to not desert her in the forest!

During Maple Madness in March, you would surely find Carol teaching everyone from young children to the elderly about how maple syrup was made long ago and today. If you needed to find Carol on a Sunday in March, you were guaranteed to find her back at the sugar bush.

Carol loved being in nature and with people. Carol took extra time to be not only a volunteer, but to be a friend. She brought magic to the outdoor education programs at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. The magic of her laughter, her dramatic puppet voices and her excitement for all things living will always be remembered. We are so grateful to have been a part of Carol's life.

Enjoy winter in one of our Conservation Areas

Get out and enjoy the winter season at one of our Conservation Areas or join in on one of the many activities coming up at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston. To make sure everyone has an enjoyable visit to our Conservation Areas here are a few quick reminders: walk or snowshoe on designated trails, please walk in the middle section between the machine set ski tracks and not on the tracks, dogs must be kept on a leash and don't forget to poop and scoop.

At Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville, there are 11 km of cross-country ski trails as well as a skating rink and warming hut. Trails and the rink are maintained when weather conditions permit. For trail and ice updates visit **www.crca.ca** or call 613-345-1900. On Saturdays from Jan. 10 to Feb. 28 join the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area for Saturday Skates (weather permitting). You don't want to miss the 13th annual Winter Fun Day Saturday Jan. 31. The very popular dog sled races are back along with cross-country skiing, skating and free snowshoeing for children. Admission is $5 per car. The Friends are also hosting a Family Day skate on Monday, Feb. 16.

Head out on a winter adventure at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston. There are great facilities including 13 km of groomed and track set cross-country ski trails, a natural ice rink, warming huts and an Outdoor Centre with where you can rent equipment and lots of great programs for the whole family. Join CRCA staff and enjoy the outdoors by learning how to ski with Lessons Saturdays from January to February, go for a winter hike on the owl hoot and coyote howl, scat and tracks or starlight snowshoe hikes and enjoy a family skate at our Valentine's evening skate or family day skate. For details on these events and others see What's Happening on pages 6 and 7.

Prevent flooding on your property this winter

Most people are focused on ice and snow removal this time of year, but it is also important to consider how snow removal will affect winter flooding or leak risks on your property. Snow melt and rainfall, especially when the ground is frozen, can cause runoff to area watercourses and along urban roadways. Whether during a mid-winter thaw or typical spring melt, ice and snow can cause blockages in catch basins and culverts and also cause flooding or leaks in your home. Here are some tips and tricks to help keep your basement dry and prevent flooding on your property this winter.

Keep snow away from your home: When you are shovelling your driveway after a snowfall, make sure to shovel the snow away from your home especially near basement windows. This ensures that when the snow melts it will not seep inside you house. It is also a good idea to check your property for obstructions and ground slope that could prevent melting snow and ice from draining away from your house.

Catch basins: Locate and check catch basins on the street to ensure they are not obstructed. Basins clogged with ice and snow can cause localized flooding. Not sure if there is a catch basin near your property? Google Earth street view can help locate these for you, especially if they are buried under snow banks.

Keep your gutters clean: Make sure to check your gutters for leaves and debris. Also make sure that your gutters are guiding the water away from your home so the water does not pool near your foundation. Keeping your gutters clean ensures snow and ice does not accumulate lessening the chance of a leak in your roof or flooding from snow melt.

Check your sump pump: Make sure the water is flowing away from your home and there are no spots in the hose where water can collect and freeze.

Get the next issue of *Cat Tales* delivered to you inbox

With the cost of postage on the rise and more people asking to receive an electronic version of our newsletter we have decided to move *Cat Tales* online. This will be the last print issue delivered by mail and we are working on an email version using Constant Contact. The e-version of the newsletter will be shorter and will come out more frequently than the print version. We will still be posting *Cat Tales* on our website and you can find every issue from fall 2001 to present day at **www.crca.ca/cat-tales-newletter.**

If you would like to receive the e-version of *Cat Tales* please use our web form to sign up at **www.crca.ca/online-service.**

Calling All Maple Lovers!

Mark your calendars, Maple Madness is back at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area this March Break (March 14 to 22) and the weekends of March 28 and 29 and April 4 and 5. Take a tractor-drawn wagon ride back to the sugar bush to see how maple syrup is made and enjoy pancakes with real maple syrup. The sugar bush is open from 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day of the Maple Madness program. Enjoy puppet shows, tree tapping demonstrations, First Nations display, olde thyme sugar bush chores and much more. To view a schedule of events visit **www.crca.ca/maple-madness.**

Maple Madness is also a great time to volunteer in your community or for students to get in their volunteer hours. We are looking for volunteers to help out as sugar bush helpers emptying sap buckets and helping with the evaporator, sugar shack helpers serving pancakes to visitors, parking lot attendants and recycling and composting. For details or to fill out a volunteer form visit **www.crca.ca/get-involved.**