



CAT TALES

Fall 2010 Issue

IN THIS ISSUE...

It's time for back to school, pumpkins and coloured leaves. Yes, it's our fall issue of Cat Tales. Here's what's in store for you.

- Speaking of back to school... the CRCA is ready with great conservation education programs in Brockville and Kingston. See page 10.
- Cycling restrictions at Lemoine Point Conservation Area are popular with some but not with everyone. Why restrict cycling on the trails? Read more on pages 1 and 3.
- Big plans are afoot for the Cataraqui Trail and the TransCanada Trail. Stories on pages 3, 5, 8 and 9.
- We continue to make progress on drinking water source protection. See pages 4, 8 and 12 for the latest updates.
- It's been an average summer for rainfall. See more on page 9.
- The Cataraqui Conservation Foundation makes plans for their fall fundraising gala and other activities. Read all about it on page 11.
- And speaking of activities, don't miss our fall calendar of events on pages 6 and 7.
- Our Friends at Lemoine Point Conservation Area and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area have been busy over the summer. Catch up on their latest news on page 5.
- Sniff. Sniff. What's that smell? Could it be our Creature Feature on page 2?

Protecting Lemoine Point Conservation Area for future generations

Managing multiple uses and protecting the unique natural features of a popular conservation area is never an easy job. No one likes to be told that they need to stay on the trails, or that they can't let their dogs run loose or they can't ride their bikes or horses on certain properties. However, human use of properties always has an impact on the natural environment.

Most of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) properties were purchased to protect unique natural features and to preserve habitat. Lemoine Point Conservation Area was purchased by the CRCA in 1975 because of its long expanse of shoreline and its mature forest. The CRCA board members and staff had the long-term vision to recognize that they needed to act in order to have some remaining public open space along Kingston's waterfront.

This has proven to be a good strategy. Kingston has grown around Lemoine Point Conservation Area and it is now an island of green in an

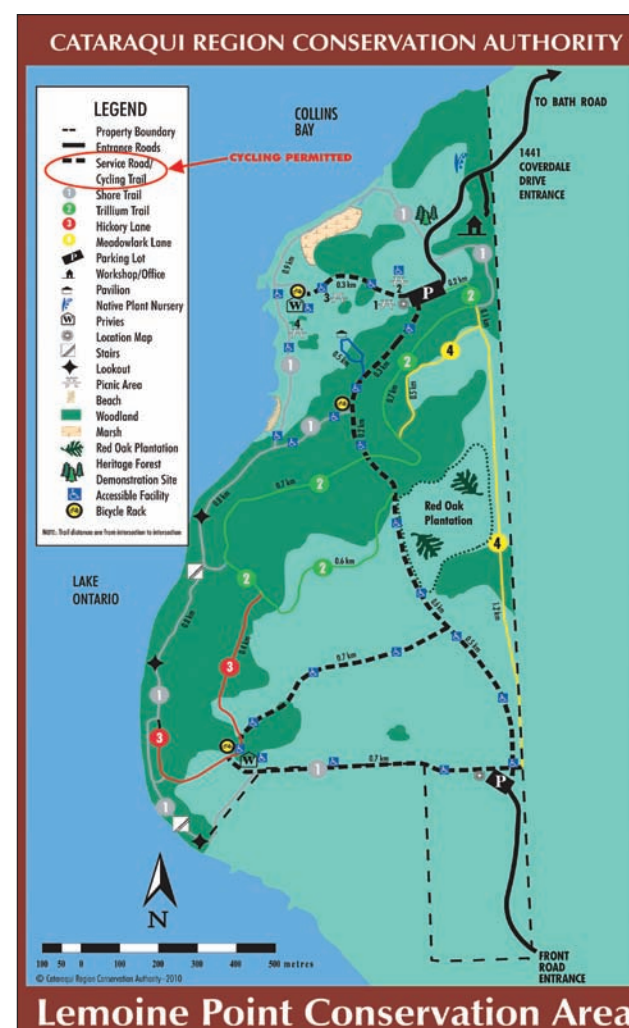
urban environment. Of course, with all of that development there are more people who want use the Conservation Area.

In the mid-1990s, recognizing that the heavy use of Lemoine Point was beginning to take its toll on environment, the CRCA began the process of developing a new master plan. In 1995, the first phase of this master plan was produced.

This began the examination of the future of this property, looking at issues such as the role of Lemoine Point Conservation Area in the community and the surrounding region, the potential to acquire additional land, and existing and future uses of the property.

This led to the development of a waterfront strategy for the entire Kingston bio-region (Bay of Quinte to Gananoque) in 1996 and the second phase of the Lemoine Point Conservation Area Master Plan in 1999. Extensive public consultation was done during the preparation of all three studies.

The master plan makes



Lemoine Point Conservation Area
Cycling at Lemoine Point Conservation Area is permitted on designated trails as shown on this map.

many recommendations including:

- more intensive management of Lemoine

Point's forests, meadows and wetlands and
• reducing human

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**Cataraqui Region
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Creature Feature

Striped Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*)

Mother Nature thoughtfully equips poisonous and otherwise unsafe critters with striking colour patterns that warn of danger. Meet *Mephitis mephitis* whom most probably know as a striped skunk. Its vivid black and white visual cues deter all but the most determined predator (or hapless hound).

And that predatory exception is the great horned owl whose sense of smell is not well developed. Great horned owls are a significant predator of skunks while the rest of the animal kingdom (and wise people) give skunks a wide berth.

Why? In a word, butylmercaptan, a chemical that is a skunk's weapon of choice. It is emitted from glands on either side of the skunk's anus. The effective range is about six

metres but it is accurate for three. Should it reach your eyes, it stings mightily and this may be accompanied by nausea.

Fortunately, most skunks signal their intentions. An angry skunk stamps its front feet, either alternatively or together while hissing or growling. If this fails to intimidate, the animal twists its body into a U-shape, head and tail face to the threat. The tail is raised just before a stinking discharge of butylmercaptan.

In the animal kingdom, only domestic dogs are sufficiently silly to challenge a skunk. There is a plethora of remedies for the inevitable outcome, but the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources recommends the following on the Hinterland Who's Who website at www.hww.ca: 1 litre of hydro-

gen peroxide, 50 millilitres of baking soda and 5 millilitres of dishwashing liquid.

A simple home remedy consists of a mixture of vinegar and detergent. Some maintain that tomato juice works.

Skunks extend professional courtesy to their brethren by not fouling each other. Not surprising, considering this animal can generate an odour that can carry almost one kilometre on the wind.

The average skunk is cat-sized measuring about 55 to 80 cm in length of which 20 to 35 cm is the bushy tail. Weight ranges from 1.9 to 4.2 kg.

Striped skunks sport a white line up the centre of the snout. The top of the head is white and divides into stripes extending down the back on either side of the spine

to meet at the tail. There is considerable variation in the width of the stripes and the amount of white in the tail. Skunks are equipped with powerful claws for ripping apart fallen logs and digging out mouse burrows.

These interesting animals may be observed from safe distances as they venture forth at twilight to forage. They are remarkably tolerant of humans. Skunks are omnivorous and their varied diet consists of: insects including bees, grubs, birds eggs and nestlings, amphibians, reptiles, grains, small mammals, fruit, berries and nuts, and occasionally carrion. The Hinterland Who's Who website

maintains that almost 70 per cent of a skunk's diet benefits people.

Dens are underground nests of leaves and grasses, often in burrows appropriated from other ground dwellers. Some skunks live under buildings.

Come fall, skunks den up for winter although they are not true hibernators. Youngsters often winter with their mothers. Some dens are communal although males occasionally live alone.

Females give birth, usually to five or six blind, helpless young in spring after a gestation period of 62 to 64 days. The mother leads the youngsters out to forage around week six to seven

and the group ventures forth in a nose-to-tail line that, coupled with poor eyesight, can land entire families in trouble.

One CRCA employee rescued a mother skunk who nearsightedly lead her entire brood of five to tumble into a three-foot deep window well of a high school. To rescue the family, he crafted a ladder wrapped in burlap so the animals could use their powerful claws to climb out of their incarceration.

Skunks are slow-moving. This can prove to be fatal when crossing roads. Unfortunately automobiles have no fear of, or respect for, a perambulating skunk's arsenal.

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Member of



An alert striped skunk. Don't stand too close!

Protecting Lemoine Point Conservation Area for future generations

Continued from page 1

impacts on the conservation area.

The recommended actions to reduce human impacts included prohibiting high-impact uses and events, closing and re-routing trails, clarifying the purposes and uses of trails, and concentrating facilities for public use in specific areas.

The 1999 master plan also recommended connections to the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail with a secondary route through Lemoine Point Conservation Area along the existing service road.

A master plan is a document with a 20 year time horizon. The CRCA has been working to implement this plan since it was developed in 1999. Much of the work so far has focused on improving the health of the forest.

The use of bicycles on trails at Lemoine Point Conservation Area has been restricted for reasons of safety and environmental conservation.

"Most of the trails at Lemoine Point were never intended to be used as bicycling trails or even as multi-use trails," notes CRCA General Manager Steve Knechtel. "They

were created for walking or cross-country skiing and are fairly narrow, too narrow to safely accommodate multiple uses."

The main north-south service road through the conservation area and service roads leading to the two bathrooms continue to be maintained for cyclists (see map on page 1). The CRCA is encouraging cyclists to ride to the conservation area, but once there to utilize the bicycle racks and to hike the trails.

The decision to limit cycling is in keeping with the plan for the property that was prepared with

public consultation. The goal, according to Mr. Knechtel, is to minimize trail user conflict.

Cycling restrictions reflect the increasing use of this popular conservation area by both hikers and cyclists.

"This is not a ban on cyclists," insists Mr. Knechtel. "It is an attempt to balance competing uses of a finite resource."

He also points to environmental considerations.

"We have experienced problems with illegal off-trail use resulting in trampled vegetation that should be maintained in

a healthy state as part of the natural world experience that is Lemoine Point," he explains.

To summarize: "The CRCA is balancing the opportunity for quiet contemplation of nature while providing recreational and fitness opportunities and while minimizing conflicts between users and protecting the environment," concludes Mr. Knechtel.

Since the policy was implemented, the CRCA has received a number of e-mails, phone calls and letters, both objecting to and supporting



Many of the trails at Lemoine Point Conservation Area are too narrow to accommodate multiple uses. Widening the trails would have a severe impact on the natural environment.

New parking lot for Marble Rock property

A new parking lot has been constructed to service the Rideau Trail Association's (RTA) trail loops on the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's (CRCA) Marble Rock property, north of Gananoque.

"We've just created a management plan for the property," says the CRCA's Conservation Lands Coordinator Robert Gerritsen.

Lands Planner Jason Hynes wrote the management plan.

"The new plan continues to protect the significant area of open space and natural areas here, and working with our partners to manage wetlands and two dams while providing limited access for area residents and visitors to explore and appreciate this special property," says Mr. Hynes.

The CRCA determined that the area used for parking at the RTA's trailhead was unsafe.

"Unfortunately the entrance that was originally chosen is on a curve in Marble Rock Road and there are safety concerns," says Mr. Gerritsen. "In



A high hoe digs a drainage ditch at the Marble Rock property near Gananoque. The new parking lot is under construction in the background.

consultation with the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, we have identified a new parking lot location about 200 metres west of the existing site and safety will be improved."

The new parking lot measures about 12 by 24 metres on a 45 centimetre-thick granular base. It is outlined by cedar posts bearing reflectors. The lot is located on the north side of Marble Rock Road.

"This parking lot will serve both sides in case the south side is ever developed," says Mr. Gerritsen.

The CRCA property on the road's south side borders the Gananoque River and has been used as a canoe-launching site.

"We hope to get up to 10 vehicles in the new parking lot," says Mr. Gerritsen. "The trail has become quite popular so we expect quite a few vehicles in there."

He adds that the existing trailhead will be shifted adjacent to the parking lot or linked to it by extending the trail.

The project was completed in July.

The CRCA acquired the 240 hectare Marble Rock property in the 1970s. In addition to 1,500 metres of natural shoreline along the Gananoque River, the CRCA protects an area representative of the landscapes and habitats that make the Frontenac Axis region significant.

Local gaps filled in Trans Canada Trail Network

There now is a continuous Trans Canada Trail route through eastern Ontario.

The Trans Canada Trail aims to cross Canada. But this organization doesn't own any trails; it relies on local interests. Within this region, part of the Cataraqui Trail linking Harrowsmith and Smiths Falls is designated as the Trans Canada Trail. The problem was, there was nothing on either side of the designated portion.

Well that changed.

"In 2010 the Trans Canada Trail provided what they call a route designation for a section east of Smiths Falls and for a section of the recently acquired K&P Trail from Harrowsmith to Sharbot Lake that fills in the gap," says Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) General Manager Steve Knechtel.

"We now have a continuous Trans Canada



Cycling is a popular activity along the Cataraqui Trail which is part of the Trans Canada Trail. There is now a continuous Trans Canada Trail across eastern Ontario.

Trail route through eastern Ontario."

Local partners are preparing the route for public use.

The CRCA owns the Cataraqui Trail. This year, 2010, marks the 10th year the trail has been available for hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, horse riding and snowmobiling.

Meanwhile Canada is in the process of constructing the world's longest recreation pathway, the Trans Canada Trail. When completed, it will total more than 17,000 km (10,000 miles) in length. The east-

west route from Saint John's, Newfoundland to Victoria, British Columbia will measure in the vicinity of 10,000 km (6,200 miles).

Travelling by highway is actually about 9,000 km from coast to coast, but the trail makes lots of scenic detours. A second leg of the Trans Canada Trail will run north from Calgary, Alberta through the Yukon to the Arctic Ocean.



Drinking Water Source Protection Update

In our last issue of *Cat Tales* (Spring/Summer 2010), we had just published our Draft Assessment Report and were about to hold three public open houses to provide an opportunity for the public to review our findings. We're pleased to report that we are making progress.

The comment period on the draft report ended on May 20. Since that time, the report has been revised based on the comments that we received, and a new version of the report has been published. The process for our work on this project is set out in the *Clean Water Act, 2006* and its regulations.

Proposed Assessment Report Published!

The Cataraqui Source Protection Committee (SP Committee) published a *Proposed Assessment Report: Cataraqui Source Protection Area* in July. This document is a summary of the technical research that has been conducted about local drinking water sources over the past five years. It will provide a foundation for the upcoming source protection plan.

The report has been published in three volumes: the 220 pages of text in Volume I are supported by almost 150 maps (Volume II) and 12 detailed appendices in Volume III. A summary and the full report are both available on the www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca website. The executive summary is also available in French on the website.

This version of the document reflects the careful consideration by the SP Committee of comments

External comments were received on the draft from Conservation Ontario, the City of Kingston, Loyalist Township, and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment; most of the 125 individual comments were related to the clarity and format of the report, rather than its content. No comments were received on the proposed version that was published this summer.

The Cataraqui Source Protection Authority will consider the report at its September meeting, before submitting it to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment for approval.

Updated Assessment Report Underway

Conservation Authority staff are now working to prepare for the first update to the assessment report. The two purposes of the update are:

1. to add technical findings to the report so that they can be addressed in the upcoming source protection plan, and
2. to improve some of the existing findings where we now have better information.

Public consultation on a draft is planned for winter 2011. Some of the topics on our update list include the following.

- Changes to the extent of intake protection zones and wellhead protection areas to reflect ongoing land development and new technical findings.
- The potential for source water to be affected by pollution from sites that formerly contained factories, gasoline stations, and other uses.
- The movement of pollution to the water treatment plant intakes along Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River during large storms.
- The discharge of salt

from water softeners (outside of sewers and septic systems).

- The movement of certain chemicals along transportation corridors such as highways, railways and shipping lanes.

The last two topics were recently allowed for the Cataraqui area by the Ministry as local types of drinking water threats.

Our Next Step: Source Protection Planning

Work is also underway on the source protection plan for the Cataraqui area. It will outline how best to protect our local sources of drinking water. A proposed source protection plan must be submitted for approval by the Ontario Minister of the Environment no later than August 2012.

In July the provincial government amended Ontario Regulation 287/07 under the *Ontario Clean Water Act, 2006* to set parameters for source protection planning. The plans may only include types of content that are referenced in the regulation. At a minimum, each plan must include mandatory policies to address significant drinking water threats around municipal water treatment plants. Voluntary policies about other drinking water threats are also permitted. Communities may now also develop policies that speak to monitoring climate change and to preventing and responding to spills along transportation corridors near the municipal plants. The rationale of the SP Committee for each policy must be recorded in an explanatory document that will be available to the public. The amended regulation is posted at: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070287_e.htm.



Community roundtables to help develop policies for our source protection plan will be held beginning in early 2011. If you are interested in participating please e-mail roundtables@cataraqueregion.on.ca.

The source protection plans may be similar to the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan, which was released by the provincial government last year as part of a separate initiative. To view that document on the Internet, visit: http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/publications/6932e01_a.pdf and www.ene.gov.on.ca/publications/6932e01_b.pdf.

Roundtables to Start in Early 2011

As previously reported in *Cat Tales*, events called *roundtables* will be held to discuss draft policies for the vulnerable areas. The roundtables will open to the public; however, people who wish to participate will be asked to register in advance and to review a workbook in preparation for the discussion.

Due to the municipal election this fall and the need for additional preparation, the start of the roundtables has been deferred until early 2011. One or more roundtables will be held to discuss sources of municipal drinking water in the following communities:

- Brockville
- Gananoque
- Greater Napanee
- Kingston
- Lansdowne
- Loyalist Township
- Mallorytown
- Sydenham.

Roundtables will also be held to discuss how best to protect the highly vulnerable groundwater aquifers that many people in the rural area use as their drinking water source.

Your enthusiasm and ideas would make a valuable contribution to one of the roundtables – watch the www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca website,

Cat Tales and local newspapers for details!

If you would like to participate at the roundtable(s) in your community, please let us know by sending an e-mail message to roundtables@cataraqueregion.on.ca. We'll add your name to our mailing list for the invitations that will be sent out prior to the event.

Well and septic workshop held in Athens

The CRCA, Township of Athens and the Charleston Lake Environmental Association hosted a well and septic workshop in Athens on Saturday, July 10.

Thirty participants learned how to take care of their well and septic systems and how to protect their drinking water sources. Speakers from Well Aware, MacLellan Water Technology, the Leeds Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit and the CRCA made presentations and answered questions.

The workshop was videotaped by Athens Dis-



Hydrogeologist Angela Gully-Northfield from Well Aware presents information on groundwater and wells at the well and septic workshop held in Athens in July.

trict High School. The video will be available at a later date through the Township of Athens.



made on the April 2010 Draft Assessment Report.

Students join war on invasive species

Nearly 100 students from a Kingston school joined the Friends of Lemoine Point Conservation Area in May to uproot garlic mustard, an invasive plant species.

"We had 52 students and four staff from Grade 7 at Module de l'Acadie on May 20 and 46 students and three staff from Grade 8 on May 21," reports the Friends' Chris Hargreaves, who organized the event with support from the Ontario Biodiversity Education and Awareness Network.

Garlic mustard was introduced into North America by European settlers who grew it as a garden herb. Today it is widespread across Canada. The plant is a threat to most wildlife

native to Ontario. As garlic mustard spreads, biodiversity decreases throughout the invaded areas.

One reason why garlic mustard spreads at Lemoine Point is because the area once was a farm grazed by sheep and cattle. As the animals moved, they compacted the soil creating difficult conditions for native plants, but suitable for garlic mustard.

Soil is loosened as garlic mustard is uprooted allowing native plants to reestablish themselves.

That helps to maintain the variety of wildlife, biodiversity, at the Lemoine Point Conservation Area.

"The students removed 66 extra-large bags of garlic mustard on the



(Left) Chris Hargreaves of the Friends of Lemoine Point organizes the students into groups. (Right) You're never too young to help



Thursday and another 55 bags on Friday," says Mr. Hargreaves.

Staff from Module de l'Acadie were: Mary Jane Jarvis, Cynthia Hatfield, Suzanne Henderson, Genevieve Lesperance, Laurie Bremner and Elisabeth Sorensen.

A description of this event and photos have

been posted on the Ontario Biodiversity and Education Awareness Network website at <http://www.biodiversityeducation.ca/>.

On June 4 a further 40 students from Grade 9, 10 and 11 at the North Addington Education Centre, Cloyne, cleared garlic mustard.

Cross Canada hiker visits Cataraqui area

Hiker Dana Meise passed through the Cataraqui region in June on a multi-year quest to cross Canada on the Trans Canada Trail.

"He has decided that the trail is something that he wants to walk," says the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority General Manager Steve Knechtel. "A forester by trade, Mr. Meise takes summers off and hikes the Trans Canada Trail."

In June he hiked that portion of the Cataraqui Trail that is designated as part of

the Trans Canada Trail. He started his multi-year journey in 2008 on Canada's east coast. At the end of each summer, he returns to his British Columbia home, but picks up his quest from that spot next year, says Mr. Knechtel. He greeted Mr. Meise at Sydenham on the Cataraqui Trail.

"His hope is to eventually cross the country on the Trans Canada Trail to the west coast," adds Mr. Knechtel.

Mr. Meise asks those whom he meets only for

water and a camp site. In exchange for some logistical support from the Trans Canada Trail, Mr. Meise provides reports on trail conditions from the viewpoint of a hiker.

Mr. Knechtel says Mr. Meise was impressed by the beauty of the Cataraqui Trail between Chaffey's Locks and Perth Road village.

"He said he was really blown away by that area," says Mr. Knechtel. "He really enjoyed that section through (Canadian) Shield



Dana Meise on the Cataraqui Trail in June.

country."

Mr. Meise plans to write a book about his adventures. Mr. Meise asks for donations to a brain injuries group. His website is www.thegreathike.com.

Irrigation system installed at Lemoine Point nursery

Following up from our last issue of *Cat Tales*, the Friends of Lemoine Point completed the installation of their irrigation system this summer. Steve Mommertz of Loyalist Irrigation installed a watering system in the cold-frame greenhouse, completing one of the final capital projects for the Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery.

"It's been four years since he put in the first stage, which covered the outdoor beds with a variety of emitters that were customized to suit various plantings," said Jane Murphy of the Friends of Lemoine Point. "One of the best parts of the system, aside from the obvious- no more hand-watering!- is the Rain Bird which senses when there has been enough rainfall and suspends activity at the control board. We can also alter duration of watering to accommodate plants' needs; some are thirstier than others."

"New this year also is a fertilizer injector which Steve put in a few weeks ago. This handy addition puts the appropriate amount of fertilizer into the entire network of emitters. Added nutrients are necessary since most of



(Top) Steve Mommertz of Loyalist Irrigation poses with the Friends' Jane Murphy. (Above) Installation of an irrigation system called for all hands on deck.

our stock is pot-grown and rain and irrigation wash out the elements which plants need for normal growth," added Mrs. Murphy.

The greenhouse system includes a mist table for rooting summer cuttings more reliably. Other emitters cover the tables where stock will overwinter, allowing the plants to go into dormancy well-watered.

There will be an official opening for the cold-frame greenhouse or hoop house and the irrigation system in September. Grants were received from the WalMart-Evergreen Green Fund and the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation to complete this project.

The Friends will also be hosting plant sale days in September. See

pages 6 and 7 for details.



News Briefs from the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

In our last issue of *Cat Tales*, we reported that Starbucks in Brockville was helping to raise funds for the Friends by donating money from the purchase of a cup sleeve during the month of April. We're pleased to report that their efforts raised \$160 for the Friends. Thanks Starbucks!

We would also like to say thank you to the Volunteer Bureau of Leeds and Grenville and Brockville area high schools for their

organization and participation in the Youth Volunteer Day at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area on **May 5**.

High school students participated in a variety of activities including potting tree stock for the Friends' annual tree sale. The CRCA and the Friends treated them to lunch and a wetland education program delivered by Ron Gardiner and Brenda Graham, CRCA education staff.

The Volunteer Bureau contributed \$200 to the Friends in recognition of their contribution to a successful day.

The Friends' tree sale held on **May 8** raised just under \$1200 despite rainy weather. This was about \$200 more than last year. All the trees sold were grown in the nursery at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

Breaking news! The Friends of Mac Johnson

Wildlife Area are hosting a star gazing evening on **Tuesday, September 21** from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m.



Students from Brockville area high schools participated in Youth Volunteer Day at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area on May 5. The event was organized by the Volunteer Bureau of Leeds and Grenville, the CRCA and the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area as part of the Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge.

Celebrate autumn in our conservation areas! Hike or cycle the Cataraqui Trail. Picnic at Lemoine Point Conservation Area. Enjoy a nature hike at Parrott's Bay or Gould Lake Conservation Areas. Come visit the swans at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Participate in a fun and educational fall program at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Visit our website at www.cataraqueiregion.on.ca to find the conservation area closest to you.

Fees

Gould Lake and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Areas have a daily entry fee. The fee is:

- \$5.00 per person for adults and children over 12
- \$3.00 per person for children 12 and under
- maximum fee of \$13.00 per car.

Annual passes are available for \$75.00 per year and provide unlimited access to both of these conservation areas. 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 Conservation Area is closed on Christmas Day

Little Cataraqui Creek Outdoor Centre

- 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday
- 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sundays and holiday Mondays beginning October 3
- Closed Saturdays during the fall except during scheduled programs
- Closed Christmas Day

Lemoine Point Conservation Area

Native Plant Nursery Sale

Saturdays and Sundays, September 18/19 and 25/26

(10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)

Buy trees, shrubs and wildflowers grown from local seed sources at the Friends of Lemoine Point's Native Plant Nursery. Prices range from \$2.00 to \$5.00 for wildflowers and \$5.00 to \$10.00 for trees and shrubs. Proceeds from the sale go to the Friends of Lemoine Point and are put back into the nursery to grow more native plants. For details please visit the CRCA website. The nursery is also open on Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Tree and Shrub Planting

Saturday, October 2 (9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)

Meet at the south parking lot and help to plant trees and shrubs at Lemoine Point Conservation Area. For more information, contact: Larry McCurdy at (613) 389-6427; Jerry Zabel at (613) 389-1323; or,

Rick Knapton at (613) 389-3651.

Mac Johnson Wildlife Area

Wildlife Festival

Saturday, October 2 (11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Admission is \$5 per car. Join the Friends for their annual fall wildlife festival. Observe the waterfowl on the reservoir in a canoe or kayak courtesy of the CRCA. Hike the trails and enjoy the fall colours. Bring the kids out for pond dipping, wildlife games and apple bobbing. Carve a pumpkin. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy or buy something at the Friends' barbecue. All proceeds help to support Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

Cataraqui Trail

Bike and Hike

Saturday, September 25
Collect pledges and cycle or hike and raise money for the Cataraqui Trail. Choose from one of three bicycle trips or one hike.

- 37 km cycle – 10:30 a.m. Perth Road to Chaffey's Locks
- 33 km cycle – 10:30 a.m. Portland (Kin Park) to Chaffey's Locks
- 13 km cycle – 11:00 a.m. Chaffey's Locks area loop
- 5 km hike – 11:00 a.m. Chaffey's Locks to Rideau Canal bridge

Pledge forms are available at the CRCA office, on the CRCA website and on the Cataraqui

Trail website.

If you collect \$25.00 or more in pledges, you will receive a free lunch coupon and a ticket for a prize draw. Lunch will be available at the Chaffey's Locks Community Hall. Washrooms are also located there.

For more information, call (613) 546-4228 ext. 304 and leave a message with your name, address and phone number. Or visit www.rideau-info.com/cattrail/ or www.cataraqueiregion.on.ca. You can also register at the start of the ride/hike. Proceeds from this event help to maintain the Cataraqui Trail.

Wagon Fall Colour Tour

Thursday, October 14 (9:30 a.m. at Perth Road – 12 noon at Chaffey's Locks)

Reserve your spot now for the annual Wagon Fall Colour Tour of the Cataraqui Trail between Perth Road and Chaffey's Locks. Enjoy a scenic fall colour tour from our tractor-drawn wagon with lunch in Chaffey's Locks. Cost is \$50.00 per person. You must reserve by October 1 by calling (613) 546-4228 ext. 221 or toll-free 1-877-956-CRCA ext. 221.

Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area

Kingston, a Birding Paradise

Sunday, October 3 (2:00 p.m.)

Dr. Erwin Batalla will look at the geographic conditions that make



Kingston one of the best places to birdwatch in Ontario. Pictures will be shown of birds that visit this area during fall and winter migration, that over winter on the islands nearby and that are permanent residents of the area.

Fall Colours Weekend

Sunday, October 10 and Monday, October 11 (1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

Come and celebrate Thanksgiving and fall colours at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Catch a wagon ride back to the sugar bush where you can go on a fall colours tour. Last wagon leaves the sugar bush at 3:50 p.m. Take in our energetic, fun puppets as they perform shows at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Enjoy pie and cider from our canteen.

Volunteer for Nature – Fall Trail and Garden Clean-up

Sunday, October 17 (9:00 to 11:00 a.m.)

Free Admission to Volunteers

Come to the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and volunteer for nature by helping to prepare the trails and butterfly gardens for winter. Bring work gloves, safety glasses, pruning shears, garden tools and water bottles labelled with your name on them. We have extra if you need to borrow tools.

The Real Batman

Sunday, October 24 (2:00 p.m.)

Bats are cool! Find out why as bat expert Matt Saunders introduces you to their fascinating world. Seating is limited, so be sure to come early! Matt's one-hour presentation is suitable for ages seven and up. Bat house construction follows. Kits will be available to purchase (while supplies last) after the talk. You can stay and assemble your bat house with us (please bring a hammer) or take it home to build.

Family Nature Exploration P.A. Day

Monday, October 25 (9:30 a.m. to 11:00

a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.)
Learn to connect with nature as you get outdoors with your children. Learn to use your senses as you ramble through fields and forests, playing fun games, tracking and getting close to nature. Sign up for the morning or afternoon session. The cost is \$7.00 per child ages 2.5 to 11. Children must be accompanied by an adult (admitted free). Advance registration is required.

Creatures of the Night Hike

Saturday, October 30 (6:00 p.m.)

Get out for a breath of brisk fall air. Bring your family for a fun sunset walk to learn about the creatures that come out at night at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Meet at the Outdoor Centre.

All About Mink

Sunday, November 7 (2:00 p.m.)

Join Jeff Bowman from Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for an informative session on mink. Find out what mink eat, where they live and how far they travel. The talk is an assessment of the status of mink in Ontario that reveals a long-term decline in mink populations. Five years of research have explored whether mink farms have contributed to declines in wild mink through the interbreeding of escaped domestic mink with wild mink, and through the spread of disease from farms. Hear the study's latest results and an overview of relevant mink natural history in Ontario.

Ski Swap and Open House

Saturday, November 13 and Sunday, November 14

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Free Admission

Get ready for winter by picking up some new or used skates, snowshoes or skis. Vendors include Sepp's Ski Shop, Play it Again Sports, Trailhead and the CRCA.

If you have used equipment you would like to donate, we are accepting donations from Monday, November 8 to Wednesday, November 10 only. Please visit our website for more details about the sale.

You can also get

Forever Green

Saturday, November 6 (6:00 p.m.)

St. Lawrence College

\$125.00 per person (tax receipt for a portion of the ticket price)

Come out to the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation's annual fundraising gala dinner for the CRCA's conservation education and land acquisition programs. Browse through the silent auction tables and participate in the live auction. Pick up some early Christmas presents and help



support conservation. For tickets and information, please call (613) 546-4228 ext. 221.

information about our winter programs at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Sign up for ski lessons or our winter P.A. day program. Check out our rental equipment and our winter schedule of events. This event is sponsored by the Canadian Ski Patrol – Frontenac Zone and the CRCA.

Coyotes: A Timely Talk

Sunday, November 21 (2:00 p.m.)

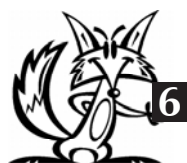
Biologist Monique Charette from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will talk about coyotes. The

talk will cover: historical and current distribution of coyote and wolf populations in Ontario; wolf and coyote biology and behaviour; why bounties are ineffective; and reasons for conflicts between people and coyotes within urban and rural areas.

Tree Trimming Party

Sunday, December 5 (2:00 to 4:00 p.m.)

Come join us to trim our Christmas tree. Make a festive ornament, string popcorn and cranberries or decorate a cookie for \$1.00. You can take your ornament home or leave it on our tree.



CRCA-DUC partnership benefits landowners

A partnership between the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) and Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) yields benefits for landowners who are interested in conservation.

"In the past, the Wetland Care Program was a 50-50 cost share, but now it's based on the project," says the program's contact person, CRCA Resource Technician Kimberly Denison. "If it's in a priority habitat area and a project looks like it's going to benefit waterfowl and conservation in general, it could be more."

It was through the provisions of this stewardship program that Ms. Denison distributed 75 wood duck nest boxes last fall. She

Photo by Cheryl Rider



Enhancing wildlife habitat is one of the key objectives of the Wetland Care Program.

erected 25 of them on CRCA conservation lands. Wood ducks are cavity nesters.

This program is a cost sharing program between the landowner and Ducks Unlimited. The CRCA provides services.

"Our role is that of the facilitator of the program," says Ms. Denison. "We do

the site visits and mapping, ensure the site is suitable, fill out the permits, answer questions and help the landowner."

Projects funded by Ducks Unlimited need to have a wetland component to be eligible. Eligible projects include:

- Wetland creation, restoration or enhancement (meaning creating small ponds for waterfowl, returning drained wetlands to their previous, natural state and enhancing current wetlands).
- Installing wood duck nest boxes (includes poles, predator guard and a wood duck nest box).
- Enhancing buffer zones (areas of adjacent,

undisturbed vegetation surrounding the wetland) that not only provide food, cover and breeding areas for wildlife but also reduce erosion and rapid water fluctuations and improve water quality.

- Native tree and shrub plantings around wetlands.

Livestock fencing and alternative watering systems that will help keep livestock out of the wetland.

"Most projects are undertaken by people who are creating ponds, called pairing ponds," says Ms. Denison.

These are located near a larger wetland. Duck pairs retreat to pairing ponds to cement their bond so a

pairing pond is a sort of a 'honeymoon' destination for ducks. The pair shifts their family back to the large, nearby wetland at an appropriate time after allowing for development of their ducklings.

"When I inspect a property, the pairing pond has to be closer to a larger wetland so the ducks aren't left high and dry," says Ms. Denison.

This program is beneficial for several reasons, explains Ms. Denison. First, it increases duck populations. Another benefit is that it increases vital wetland acreage that has declined in Ontario.

To apply or to learn more, contact Ms. Denison at (613) 546-4228 ext. 288 or email her at kdenison@cataraquiregion.on.ca.

Cataraqui Trail to host two fundraising events this fall

The Cataraqui Trail is hoping to raise some funds and make some new friends this fall.

Fundraising is an essential part of the Cataraqui Trail Management Board's job. It has to generate enough money to pay for the maintenance and operation of the 104-km multi-use trail. Some of this money comes from grant applications (see page 9) but much of their operating funds come from memberships, donations and special events. Here's where you can help.

The Cataraqui Trail's annual **Bike and Hike** fundraiser is being held on **Saturday, September 25** in the Chaffey's Locks area. Collect pledges and cycle or hike to raise money for the Cataraqui Trail. You can choose from a 5 km hike along the trail or a 13, 33 or 37 km cycling route along the trail.

If you collect more than \$25 in pledges, you receive a coupon for a free lunch and a ticket for a prize

draw. Lunch will be available at the Chaffey's Locks Community Hall.

Pledge forms are available on the CRCA website www.cataraquiregion.on.ca or the Cataraqui Trail website www.rideau-info.com/cattrail/. Or you can call (613) 546-4228 ext. 304 and leave a message. A Cataraqui Trail volunteer will return your call.

Just for seniors, the Cataraqui Trail is hosting another **Wagon Fall Colour Tour on Thursday, October 14**. Enjoy a scenic guided tour along the trail between Perth Road and Chaffey's Locks from the comfort of the CRCA's tractor-drawn wagon.

The tour departs from Perth Road at 9:30 a.m. and from Chaffey's Locks at noon. The cost is \$50 per person which includes lunch in Chaffey's Locks.

You must reserve by **October 1** by calling (613) 546-4228 ext. 221 or toll-free 1-877-956-CRCA ext. 221.

Cash available to address drinking water threats

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) is accepting landowners' funding applications that reduce or eliminate risks to municipal drinking water supplies.

"We are addressing drinking water threats," explains the program's CRCA contact, Holly Evans. "We are essentially helping them to do projects that will result in cleaner drinking water."

The money comes from the Ontario Ministry of Environment. The program is called the Drinking Water Stewardship Fund. This support program helps landowners and businesses take action to reduce or eliminate hazards to local municipal drinking water sources.

"It applies to those projects close to drinking water intakes or wells," explains Ms. Evans.

Funding is available for: plugging old wells or maintaining or upgrading existing wells; inspecting or upgrading septic systems; pollution prevention audits for better storage, handling and disposal of materials; runoff and erosion protection and best management practices for agriculture.

Funds are available to undertake a variety of work if your property is near a municipal well or a municipal drinking water intake pipe. Maps of eligible areas are available on the website www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca.

"All projects have to be completed by December 15," explains Ms. Evans. "We try and make the process simple for the landowner. We help them to make sure they get all the proper approvals. We educate them about the environment and water quality."

The process works like this: a landowner applies to Ms. Evans for project

approval. If given, money equivalent to the estimated cost of the approved project is set aside. The landowner collects the money if the project is finished by December 15.

The CRCA evaluates and assigns a priority to each application submitted. This is based on criteria that assign scores to applications based on their potential benefits to a municipal intake or well.

Until September 30, 2010, only high priority projects will be approved. After September, all remaining applications will be considered and funds will be allocated to projects that meet the guidelines until all funds have been committed.

To obtain copies of application forms, guidelines or publications about this program visit the website www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca. For more information or to apply, contact Holly



Grants to reduce potential drinking water threats are available to landowners and businesses located near municipal drinking water facilities such as the Kingston Central Water Intake shown here.

Evans at the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority at (613) 546-4228 ext. 233; toll-free (613 area code) 1-877-956-CRCA (2722) or email hevans@cataraquiregion.on.ca.

If the CRCA succeeds in obtaining more funds from the provincial environment ministry, a new program phase with different project opportunities will roll out in 2011, says Ms. Evans.



The Cataraqui Trail's annual Bike and Hike Fundraiser is being held on Saturday, September 25 in the Chaffey's Locks area. You can cycle or hike and raise money to support the ongoing operation of the trail.



Cataraqui Trail scores two grants for projects

The Cataraqui Trail Management Board (CTMB) is receiving funding support for two projects from the Trans Canada Trail, a non-profit, registered charity whose primary purpose is to raise funds for a recreational trail across Canada.

The Cataraqui Trail is owned by the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA). It is managed by the CTMB.

"The CRCA made application to Trans Canada Trails for two projects on behalf of the CTMB," explains CRCA Conservation Lands Coordinator Robert Gerritsen.

The first project involves lifting an existing culvert, cleaning it, resetting it and resurfacing the surrounding trail in South Elmsley Township. The area is plagued with beaver problems, flooding and washouts.

"The trail there is passable, but not optimum," notes Mr. Gerritsen.

This project is in partnership with the Leeds and Grenville Snowmobile Club. The snowmobilers and the CTMB pick up the cost not covered by the grant.

"The grants are for

20-cent dollars," says Mr. Gerritsen, "the total cost is around \$6,000 so the grant funding is for \$1,200."

For the second project, the CTMB partners with Frontenac County for a feasibility study on the Harrowsmith Trail Hub. There, the Cataraqui Trail and the K&P Trail parallel each other.

"There is a need to provide some facilities within the area," says Mr. Gerritsen. "These might include a parking lot, an information kiosk, interpretive signage and possibly a tourism building and washrooms."

The project's estimated cost is \$9,000 and the Trans Canada Trail grant covers \$1,800 of it.

"This is an ideal location because it's the gateway to the Frontenacs (townships) to the north and to Kingston to the south," says Mr. Gerritsen.

He envisions the project scope to include retaining a landscape architect or other consultant to provide a visioning exercise to determine what facilities are needed. Once the concept is accepted by the partners, detailed drawings

can be created then the plan can be implemented.

The grants were announced by Trans Canada Trail Ontario Executive Director Dan Andrews.

"Some of the earliest trail partners of Trans Canada Trails in Ontario have been conservation authorities," explains Mr. Andrews. "As an on-going supporter of Trans Canada Trail, conservation authorities are continuing to enhance the range of outdoor experiences visitors will have access to and enjoy for years to come."

As the lead representative for the Trans Canada Trail in the province, Trans Canada Trail Ontario works with local and regional trail support groups, like conservation authorities, to build and maintain trails.

Many of the trails managed by conservation authorities are rail-to-trail experiences, and are highly accessible to a range of ages and abilities, due to the even terrain and shallow grades. These trails connect communities to varied landscapes, including agricultural greenbelts and forested settings. They help to promote healthy lifestyles and provide On-



The Cataraqui Trail is a great location for viewing fall colours.

tario residents with access to natural settings.

The Trans Canada Trail is the world's longest trail spanning 22,500 kilometres, the 13 provinces and territories and connects three oceans.

Across the province, Ontario's 36 conservation authorities collectively own and operate close to 400 conservation areas. Of these, more than 200 locations offer trails for hiking, biking, snowshoeing and even skiing. Conservation areas play an important environmental, educational and recreational role in Ontario and contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of the more than 4.5 million Ontarians who visit them each year.

Rainfall is average for this summer

Everyone talks about it, and who hasn't groused about this summer's humidity, but Sean Watt actually does something about the weather. He studies it.

"It's important to know if we are in a drought situation," muses this water resources engineer for the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA). "One of our protocols is to send out news releases in times of drought advising people to conserve water."

As of the end of July, that was not necessary, but the first two weeks of August have seen less rain in places and falling stream flows.

"We're about average for precipitation," says Mr. Watt of summer 2010.

So how do you define a drought?

"Officially it's a set of numbers put together by the Ministry of Natural Resources called the Ontario Low Water Response Program," says Mr. Watt.

It considers such topics as stream flows and rainfall over a period of time and Mr. Watt monitors these on a regular basis.

"Right now we seem to be very close to the average; (stream) flows have fallen below, some well below, in the first



Sean Watt with a weather conditions data sensor.

two weeks of August and rainfall was just slightly less than average in July. August is mixed," he explains.

For the technically minded, streams are monitored by stream gauges. The CRCA maintains stream gauges in Wilton Creek, Millhaven Creek, at Sydenham, in Collins Creek, Little Cataraqui Creek, Lyndhurst Creek, Lyn Creek and Buell's Creek in Brockville.

These devices record water levels and Mr. Watt can remotely download their data via modem. Precipitation is measured by rain and snow gauges. Usually these are located at the stream gauge stations.

Mr. Watt also considers lake levels "to give an idea how wet or dry it is." He also monitors water levels in seven special wells and compares this data to that from previous years.

CRCA records memories of its early years

"One of the deepest impulses in man is the impulse to record – to scratch a drawing on a tusk or keep a diary, to collect sagas and heap cairns," wrote John Jay Chapman. "This instinct as to the enduring value of the past is, one might say, the very basis of civilization."

The idea to gather some of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's early history was suggested by its first chair, Dr. James McCowan.

"... I write to encourage you to think about recording the early history of

CRCA..." Dr. McCowan said in an email in 2009.

The project takes the form of a series of oral histories by some of the early members of the CRCA board of directors and former senior staff. These interviews are more of a social history of the CRCA's early years rather than an exploration of meeting minutes. The interviewees are asked to reflect on public attitudes and values concerning conservation, for instance.

Besides Dr. McCowan, the following have shared their recollections: Dr. Gerry Dyer, Dr. Martin

Edwards, Dr. Stewart Fyfe and David Adlam. All were CRCA board members with the exception of Mr. Adlam who once was the CRCA's resource manager in the 1960s and early 1970s.

"In the early days of the conservation authorities MNR appointed resources managers to look after their management," recalls Mr. Adlam. "As time went on and the conservation authorities matured, then they moved into managing things all on their own."

Today Mr. Adlam and his wife, Betty, live in Kingston. On July 28 he visited Little



CRCA General Manager Steve Knechtel took former Resource Manager David Adlam on a tour of the Little Cataraqui Creek dam.

Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area where CRCA General Manager Steve Knechtel gave him a tour of the reservoir and dam.



The CRCA's first chair Dr. James McCowan (second from left) was given the Citizen Conservation Award in 2010 for his role in helping to establish the CRCA in 1964. He is shown here with his wife Barbara McCowan, Cataraqui Conservation Foundation President Michael Bell (left), and Foundation director Ian Wilson.



A nature centre for Mac Johnson; time will tell

World-renowned Ottawa architect Barry Padolsky is working on a concept for a new nature centre at Brockville's Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

"He's working up a conceptual rendering of the proposed nature centre in its proposed location," explains the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's (CRCA) Watershed Management Coordinator Mara Shaw.

Ms. Shaw has shepherded the project ever since she wrote the master plan for the property in 2006. That plan identified a need for a new nature centre. This need is echoed in two subsequent reports.

"We are looking at upgrading the MJWA nature centre and replacing it with a new one," says Ms. Shaw. "This mainly derives from the realization that the current nature centre is not meeting the needs of the users. It's not flexible enough for the variety of uses we would like it to serve and it lacks the storage space required to store the equipment needed for nature and outdoor education programs."

The architect is working from aerial and ground photos taken at the site. His conceptual plan will be presented to the CRCA board this month for a decision. But a prerequisite has been identified; the property's profile must be raised in the community.

This involves writing a marketing plan.

"People need to know about the stunning Provincially Significant



The Nature Centre at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area is used for school programs, meetings and community events. A new facility is being considered by the CRCA.

cant Wetland surrounding the reservoir, the variety of wildlife and opportunities for encounters with nature before they are excited about supporting a new nature centre," says Ms. Shaw. "People are aware of the Back Pond (a local name for MJWA), but not necessarily aware of the programming going on there, the variety of natural experiences available and the uses of the property, including winter skating and cross-country skiing, fall and spring festivals, miles of hiking trails and gorgeous displays of wetland flowers in the summer. The marketing plan presents the specifics of how we might inform and inspire the public about this gem in their region."

Presented with a marketing plan and the architectural rendering, the CRCA board faces a decision.

"The board will have to evaluate what portion of the project, if any, they want to proceed with and the schedule for doing so," explains Ms. Shaw. "Any new endeavour requires some funding to advance it. The implications of any project that might affect the CRCA's budget are always weighed carefully by the Board."

TransCanada Pipelines grants \$2,500 to CRCA

TransCanada Pipelines has granted \$2,500 to the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority to fund a special project exposes students from urban schools in low-income neighbourhoods to outdoor education.

"We plan to host 240 students from Kingston and Brockville's inner city schools to a free outdoor education experience at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area," says CRCA Communications Coordinator Karla Maki-Esdon who oversees the education program.

The grade 4 students will participate in an education program called *Instincts for*

Survival.

"This simulation game helps students to understand environmental niches, animal adoptions, and predator-prey relationships by role-playing the lives of herbivores, omnivores or carnivores," explains CRCA Education Officer Stana Luxford Oddie. "The game is completed with a discussion of how people and limiting factors, such as disease, impact on natural ecosystems."

The game is complex and multi-faceted. Some participants are designated as sources of food and water for the *animals*.

Participants learn that they must interact to survive and thrive. There is even a des-



An adult volunteer supervises students during the *Instincts for Survival* education program at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

igned *hunter* to represent the human impact on this pretend ecosystem. Someone else acts as disease, inflicting illness and injury at random.

The game plays out in the woods and fields of the conservation area.

"The game teaches children to be aware of

their environment and how they are connected to it," says Ms. Luxford Oddie.

"In playing the animal role, they learn compassion and appreciation for the need for habitat protection."

The event will be scheduled for early November. It will take place in both Kingston and Brockville.

It's back-to-school time!

Elementary and secondary school teachers looking for a way to incorporate nature and the outdoors into their classroom teaching don't need to look any further than the education programs offered by the CRCA.

Curriculum-based education programs for Kindergarten to Grade 12 are offered at both Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston.

There are more than 25 programs to choose from! Information about programs available, grade levels and curricu-

lum links are available on the CRCA website www.cataraquiregion.on.ca.

Education program calendars were also mailed to all schools in the CRCA watershed in late August. If you didn't receive a calendar, please give us a call.

To make a program booking for Mac Johnson Wildlife Area call Ron Gardiner at (613) 342-5824.

To book a program at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area call Stana Luxford Oddie at (613) 546-4228 ext. 251 or toll-free (613 area code) 1-877-956-CRCA ext. 251.



Ron Gardiner teaches a secondary school class at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area as the Trumpeter swans look on.

Nature Explorers Camp a big success



CRCA Resource Technician Kimberly Denison was the guest speaker for Awesome Aquatics week at the Nature Explorers Camp.

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's Nature Explorers Camp was full to capacity again this past summer. There were 168 campers that got to know Little Cataraqui Creek and Gould Lake Conservation Area this summer.

This summer day camp is for six to 11-year-olds. Each session lasts for one week and each week has a theme. This year campers were able to choose from Awesome

Aquatics to Wildlife CSI.

Each week featured outdoor activities and guest speakers at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

Campers learned a lot about nature, the environment and the outdoors during their time with us.

The CRCA would like to thank this year's camp staff and our leaders-in-training who helped make the summer of 2010 a memorable one.



FOUNDATION NEWS

As we ease into a new season, we both look back to recent Foundation achievements and look forward to our November Forever Green gala evening and other future happenings. Let's look at some recent highlights that will help pave the way toward the gala evening and our most important fundraising event of the year.

A new Foundation board

At the Foundation's Annual General Meeting, held May 18, 2010, Cataraqi Conservation Foundation members elected a new board of directors. Those retiring from the board include Barbara Bradfield, Karen Cullum, Lynne Kenney, Cathy McCart, Bill Warwick and Don Workman. Retiring board member Stewart Fyfe was named an honorary director in recognition of his outstanding service to the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation and the Cataraqi Region Conservation Authority.

We welcome the following new members of the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation board of directors: John Allan, Paul Copland, Judith Harrower, Vera Kettner, Mary Moreau and Casey Shea. These new board members join several members continuing from last year.

For a full list of directors, please visit www.cataraqi-region.on.ca.

More about the Foundation board

With each issue of *Cat Tales* we introduce to you one or two members of the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation board.

Vera Kettner spent a good part of her childhood exploring the forest next to her house and has had a passion for nature ever since, a passion she now shares with her young

daughter. After obtaining a Ph.D. in Computer Science from Cornell University and spending a few years as a professor in upstate NY, she moved to Kingston in 2004 to join her husband. Working as the Community Foundation's environmental assistant in 2005/6, Vera became acquainted with many of the area's environmental organizations by launching and coordinating the Green Drinks networking meetings and organizing the first GreenUP! Festival. Vera also volunteered with Kingston's local food movement in its early years and served as environmental editor for the *Independent Voice*.

Conservation awards quote from Loyalist Township reeve

We updated you on the 2010 conservation awards in the last edition of *Foundation News*. The four award winners include James McCowan (citizen award), Loyalist Township (community award), Queen's University Biological Station (education award), and Steve Knechtel (Stewart Fyfe conservation award).

To further celebrate the community award, the Foundation's president Michael Bell recently attended a council meeting of Loyalist Township. Commending the township and its council for its longstanding commitment to conserving environmentally sensitive lands, the Foundation president formally presented the conservation award to the township through its reeve, Clayton McEwen. Bell said he felt the award to Loyalist Township was "long overdue."

Reeve McEwen recounted some of the history concerning the township's protection of environmentally sensitive lands.



Loyalist Township Reeve Clayton McEwen (centre) with former members of council Ian Wilson, left, and Paul Gilmore.

"This whole thing started back maybe 15, 20 years ago with the purchase of Parrott's Bay. And we had guys like (former municipal politicians) Ian Wilson and Jack Kippen, Paul Gilmore, Arnold Adams and Duncan Ashley who were leading the councils of the day. We all saw it as something that if we didn't get the land then, it was going to be gone, and we'd never get another crack at it."

The award was given to Loyalist not only for its purchase of the Parrott's Bay property, but also for the purchase of Big Marsh on Amherst Island, the Bayview Bog and Owl Woods on Amherst Island.

McEwen said through his more than 20 years as an elected municipal official, the environmental initiatives of the various councils have always been supported by the community.

"It's a credit to the whole community. I don't remember hearing anybody complain about the money we set aside for these things. I have to say, that as money gets tighter and tighter, you have to be a bit more careful about how you spend it, but I have not had any residents call and say we shouldn't be doing it," McEwen stated.

Loyalist Township, its council, and its staff serve as a strong role model for environmental protection in the area. We hope that other municipalities will choose a similar path.

Forever Green gala dinner

The Cataraqi Conservation Foundation's major fundraising event of the year is the Forever Green gala dinner, scheduled this year for **Saturday, November 6, 2010**, at Davies Hall, St. Lawrence College, Kingston.

Dinner tickets are \$125 each, and our popular local auctioneer Tim Potter will conduct the live auction. Be sure to put your name in early since this is a popular event. We count on individuals and local businesses to contribute financially toward the dinner, donate an item for the evening's auction, or advertise your business in the Forever Green program. Contact Betty Boone at (613) 353-8704 for more information about the gala dinner.

The Foundation will also reach out to you shortly for assistance in sponsoring students or entire classes for outdoor education programs. Expect a letter within the next month.

Thank you for your continuing support to the Cataraqi Conservation Foundation and the CRCA. Please consider assisting in Foundation activities, whether you can spare an hour a month or a half-day per year. Send an e-mail to foundatn@cataraquiregion.on.ca or call (613) 546-4228 ext. 221 if you are able to spare some time.

Foundation promotes Celebration of Life donations

The Cataraqi Conservation Foundation is encouraging memorial donations to celebrate the lives of departed family members or friends.

"People can give donations in memory of those who had an interest in the environment," explains Lorna Hendry. She is a former Foundation board member who is a clergyman's wife and former teacher who often brought her classes to Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area.

"Because of my background, I've been involved in a lot of funerals over the years," says Ms. Hendry. I realized that more and more people are not having traditional funerals, instead they have celebrations of life."

About five years ago, when Ms. Hendry noted this trend, she produced a donation card. One side is detached and mailed to a grieving family. It informs them that a donation has been made to the Foundation in memory of their late relative or friend.

Next, Ms. Hendry visited area funeral homes, distributing the cards and advising funeral directors of the Foundation's work.

"I told them that if they get people looking for an alternate place and want donations to something environmental that they could use these cards. Funeral directors are more than happy to support families who opt for a celebration of life in an alternate setting that may reflect a loved one who appreciate and supported the work of the Foundation or whose lifestyle reflected the setting offered by the Outdoor Centre atmosphere."

But she takes that one step further, suggesting that the Outdoor Centre at Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area is an ideal rental hall for celebrations of life events.

"The Outdoor Centre is a wonderful place for that kind of celebration," says Ms. Hendry, "and more and more people are doing that, especially folks who don't want a traditional funeral."



The Outdoor Centre at Little Cataraqi Creek Conservation Area is an excellent location for a celebration of life event.



Sydenham Intake Protection Zone Study

[Editor's note: we first reported on the Sydenham Intake Protection Zone Study in the Spring/Summer 2008 issue of Cat Tales. With the study now complete, this article provides an overview of the key findings].

Sydenham is a small community in the heart of the Township of South Frontenac north of Kingston. A municipal water supply for the community was installed in 2006, in response to long-standing problems with the quality of the groundwater. The supply obtains water from Sydenham Lake through an intake pipe about seven metres under the surface. Source protection planning for the supply is being completed with provincial funding under the *Clean Water Act*, 2006.

XCG Consultants Ltd. of Kingston was hired by the Conservation Authority to:

- define intake protection zones (IPZ) around the pipe
- assess the vulnerability of these zones to pollution
- evaluate the quality of the lake water before treatment
- assess activities that could pose a risk to the quality of the source.

Staff from the Township, KFLA Public Health and CRCA provided guidance to XCG during the study.

Three concentric zones were defined (see the

map below):

IPZ 1 is one kilometre in radius, within the watershed that flows to Sydenham Lake, with a setback on land.

IPZ 2 is delineated based on a two hour time-of-travel to the intake. The finding of the modelling was that within the lake, the time-of-travel would be contained (and likely exceeded) within the one kilometre radius of IPZ 1. Storm sewers, ditches and streams are also included in the time-of-travel and they extend IPZ 2 southwards from the intake.

IPZ 3 includes all the water bodies contributing to Sydenham Lake, with a setback on land. IPZ 3 is broken into two parts (3a and 3b) to reflect how close they are to the intake and the character of the landscape. IPZ 3a is on the agricultural limestone plain to the south; IPZ 3b is on the forested

Canadian Shield to the north, further away from the community.

The IPZ 2 was modelled using software from the US Environmental Protection Agency. Existing lake depth and lake outlet flow data were also used. Field studies using in-water sails were completed under three different wind conditions (south, west and northeast) during the fall of 2006. This improved our understanding of the movement of water in Sydenham Lake.

A score representing the vulnerability of each of the three zones to pollution was then assigned. Following provincial technical rules, the characteristics of the area around the intake (e.g. the degree to which rain runs off the land into the water) and the intake itself (e.g. its depth) were assessed. The vulnerability scores are set out of 10, with higher val-

ues representing a greater risk of contamination.

As shown by the different colours on the map below, the final scores at Sydenham are as follows: IPZ 1 = 9, IPZ 2 = 8.1, IPZ 3a = 6.3, and IPZ 3b = 3.6.

The water quality of Sydenham Lake before treatment was evaluated using existing data and new samples. It was found that colour, dissolved organic carbon, hardness, pH, temperature and turbidity were identified as parameters of interest (called *issues*). Dissolved organic carbon was identified as one parameter that might be affected by human activities in the watershed. The others reflect the natural character of the lake.

Existing activities that could pose a risk to the water (called *threats*) were assessed and ranked by XCG and Conservation

Authority staff. A total of 263 existing threats were counted, of which none were ranked significant, 186 were ranked moderate, and the remaining 77 were ranked low. Some of the existing activities of interest in the intake protection zones include septic systems, the use of road salt, the storage of fuel and other chemicals, and the application and storage of manure, fertilizer, and pesticide on farms. The emergence of additional activities in the future was not part of the study but will be considered in our source protection plan for the Cataraqui area.

The draft findings were presented to the public in April 2008 and June 2009. XCG staff indicated that they were confident in the certainty of the findings in their final October 2009 report. This opinion was shared by AECOM,

a company hired by the CRCA to peer review the work.

The Cataraqui Source Protection Committee endorsed the various components of the study at its July and November 2009 meetings. The key findings were later published in the initial Assessment Report: Cataraqui Source Protection Area. They will now be considered by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment as part its approval of that report.

The next step in the source protection work at Sydenham is the development of policies to ensure that the existing threats are addressed and to help prevent new ones from emerging. This process is just beginning – opportunities for the public to get involved over the next two years will be highlighted in *Cat Tales* and on the www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca website.

