

Lake WahWashKesh

CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

— SPRING 2015 NEWSLETTER —



President's Message

Welcome to spring/summer 2015! After a long, and difficult, winter, it seemed that spring would never arrive. However, as the multitudes of mosquitoes will attest to, spring is finally here. The trillia have flowered making the bush a panorama of colours as spring progressed. Spring ducks are in abundance as life returns to all of nature. The lake peaked this year at just under 8 feet above the dam so there may be some damage to buildings close to the water.

Again this year, the Executive have decided to send out several reports which normally are presented at the AGM. Please retain the AGM Information Package and bring it with you to the **AGM on Saturday, August 1, at 9:30am in Bennett's Barn.** Sending the information out early not only provides greater dissemination of the information (more people read the newsletter than attend the AGM - a situation that can be reversed!) but also saves considerable time at the AGM so we can all get back out to the sunshine and the lake we love.

Work will start up again at the end of June on the section of the WahWashKesh Road that is being relocated.

Please see inside the newsletter

for important articles on various different topics.

On behalf of the Executive, I wish everyone a healthy, happy, and safe 2015 at Lake WahWashKesh!

Don Comrie



This edition of the newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Kathryn Cook

Kathryn passed away suddenly on June 11, 2015. She has been the creator and webmaster of the WWKCA website since 2007.

To honour Kathryn, and to recognize her significant contribution to education and the Association, the Executive, on behalf of the Association, has made a \$200 contribution to the West Parry Sound Health Center Foundation in Kathryn's name.

HELIPAD UPDATE

After several futile attempts to contact the ORNGE representative in 2014, in early 2015 I sent a letter to the president and CEO of ORNGE with a cc to Dr. Hoskin, Minister of Health for Ontario, and another cc to Mr. Norm Miller, MPP for Parry Sound - Muskoka. A

response from ORNGE was almost immediate and I agreed with the ORNGE rep to meet on-site once the snow had left the bush and the roads were completely passable. A meeting was scheduled for May 26

at the proposed helipad site. In attendance was the rep from the OMNR+F (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests), Municipality of Whitestone Fire Chief Bob Whitman, Ken Corbett, Ed Bennett Sr. and Ed Bennett Jr., and me. The rep from ORNGE said that he was very busy and would try to attend but did not. To my surprise, I learned that the next day the ORNGE rep would be in Ardbeg to examine their helipad! With the help of Bob Whitman I was able to learn that the ORNGE rep would be at Ardbeg on Thursday afternoon. I went to the Ardbeg helipad and met the ORNGE rep there. He asked several questions but did not have time to come to examine the proposed site. He did, however,

send me revised minimum requirements for new helipads and suggested we establish a "day landing only" helipad to start with and then get it certified for night landings with lighting afterwards. I forwarded the revised area requirements to Dean Timson of the OMNR+F for his consideration and will talk to him next week.

Don Comrie

POWR MAG

The Association Executive voted to join POWR MAG (Protector of Wetlands and River Magnetawan) late last fall and this will be done shortly. Tim Abbott has agreed to be the representative from the Association and we thank him for taking on this task. We are hoping to influence POWR MAG to do more widespread watershed testing once we have a seat at their table. We will keep you advised.

Don Comrie

2016 CALENDAR

The Association is well on its way to producing the Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association 2016 calendar. We would like to thank all the people who submitted such great photos! It was hard to pick which ones to print. The calendars should be ready for sale by the July 1st long weekend and will be available at Bennett's store and at Don Comrie's cottage (120 WahWashKesh Road

or Paddy's Bay in the Big Lake). Same price as last year, 1 for \$15⁰⁰, 2 for \$25⁰⁰, or 3 for \$35⁰⁰. *Thanks for your support!*

Don Comrie

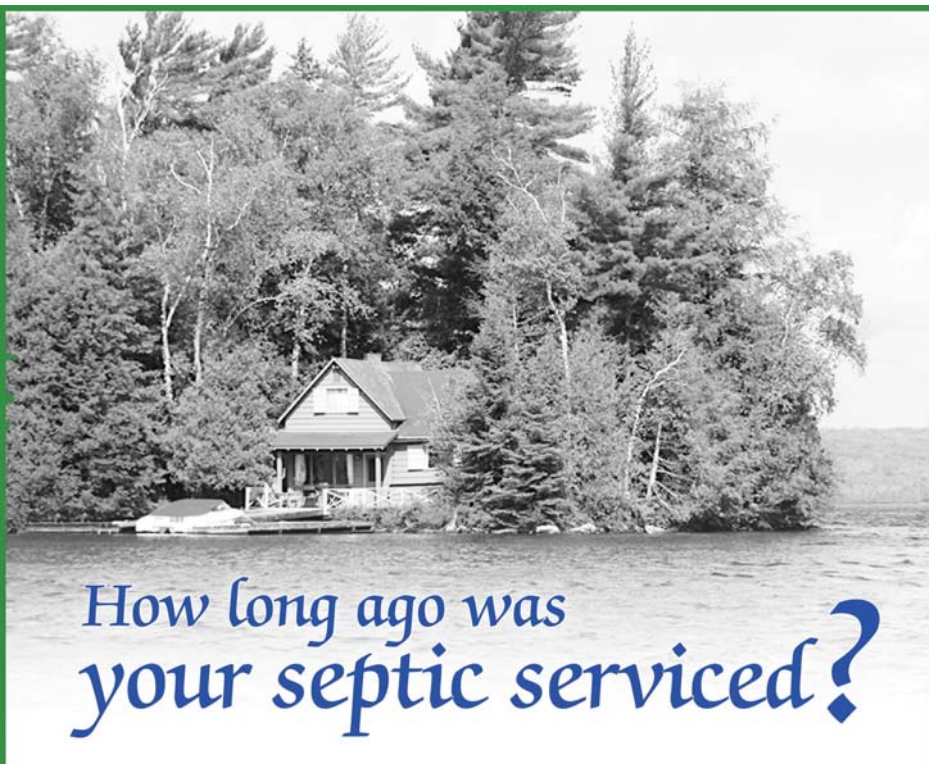
BURSARY

All members are reminded that a \$100 bursary sponsored by the Association is available to one applicant who has finished secondary education and is registered for environmental studies in a post-secondary institution. The applicant must be a member of the Association or the immediate family of a member. The deadline for applications is July 31, 2015. Further information can be obtained by contacting Don Comrie.

Don Comrie

Upcoming Water Quality Sampling in 2015 for WahWashKesh Lake

During summer 2015, water quality monitoring will continue on Wahwashkesh Lake. This year, water quality data is being collected at 7 locations throughout the lake by our volunteers who worked with the Ministry of the Environment Lake Partner Program. Water quality will be measured at 11 sites in our lake using the Yellow Springs Instrument water quality meter in June, July, August, and September. Measurements will be made for the amount of dissolved ions in the water, pH (acidity), oxidation-reduction potential, temperature, and oxygen. This summer, the Executive proposes to collect phosphorus samples throughout our lake. Phosphorus is the limiting nutrient to algal and plant production and protection of lakes in our region usually focuses on phosphorus. These data will permit us to make an assessment of water quality entering Wahwashkesh Lake and also determine if any nutrient loadings are coming from the surrounding land. Major inflows including the Magnetawan River, Farm Creek, and the Whitestone



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River will be sampled. In addition, phosphorus samples will be taken at sites located in the Top Lake, Indian Narrows, and the Big Lake.

Mike Maceina

Exemplary Standing for our Cottage Hospital

Last fall West Parry Sound Health Centre (WPSHC) was awarded 'Accreditation with Exemplary Standing' the highest possible recognition by Accreditation Canada, the national surveying body for health care quality and safety standards. This distinction, according to Accreditation Canada, is reserved for health care "organizations that go beyond the requirements of Accreditation Canada and demonstrate excellence in quality improvement. This is the highest level of accreditation."

A team of three surveyors from across Canada was at WPSHC for four days in October. The surveyors evaluated the health centre against a number of priority processes, and more than 1,900 quality standards. The health centre was successful in meeting every required organizational practice.

Health centre CEO Donald Sanderson stated that he is very proud to be "part of a team so committed to enhancing the health status of the community that together we are privileged to serve. The health centre's commitment to quality, safety and continuous improvement is never ending."

In their remarks, the surveyors noted the support from Foundation donors. With all equipment purchased through donated dollars, donors can also take a bow for the Exemplary Standing. Foundation donors provide the equipment that meets the standard of care.

Lynne Atkinson, Executive Director

West Parry Sound Health Centre Foundation

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SHORELINE VIDEO PROJECT

You may remember that in 1993 then president Wayne Lennox received a grant to have the entire shoreline of the lake recorded in a video. In 2013, 20 years later, the Association tried to find a volunteer to re-video the entire shoreline. With new technology such as cameras that take out the rocking of the boat, this should not be a difficult or time consuming project. The Executive are still looking for a couple of volunteers willing to spend several sunny days in a boat going slowly around the shore. Expenses such as gas and lunch will be covered by the Association. This is an extremely important project since it will give us a permanent record of how the lake has changed over the years. When it is completed, DVD copies will be made available for a minimum cost. If interested, please contact Don Comrie.

Don Comrie

Enclosed with this newsletter an Annual General Meeting Information Package

Please keep this package until
August 1, 2015
and bring it with you
to the AGM in
Bennett's Barn at
9:30 AM.

Again this year, the Executive are sending out several of the reports which previously were presented at the AGM.

This not only increases significantly the dissemination of this information (more people get the newsletter than attend the AGM) but also reduces the amount of time spent in the AGM.

FISH ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Fish Enhancement Committee held a meeting on May 25. Also attending this meeting was Murray Chambers, President of the Whitestone Rod and Gun Club.

A general discussion of the committee's progress over the last couple of years followed with general agreement that the spawning bed work that has been done is now bearing fruit since many people are now catching their limits of pickerel and bass on a regular basis. In the last two years, however, the momentum has slowed since we are trying to find ways to monitor the results of the spawning bed rehabilitation. The OMNR & F (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources & Forests) has been working on developing a monitoring system for all lakes but this is still a work in progress.

To continue this proactive work, the committee is considering joining with the Whitestone Rod & Gun Club. Each organization would have a representative of the other organization as a member.

The Fish Enhancement Committee is in favor of joining with the Whitestone Rod & Gun Club since this move greatly expands our options such as working with other lake associations that have hatcheries. The Whitestone Rod & Gun Club is hoping to involve other lakes in our area with a common agreement on purpose and responsibilities. If several of the lakes in the area have a common goal through this organization, we collectively have a stronger voice when dealing with governments.

Adding our voice to this organization would also have positive insurance implications for our committee since the Whitestone Rod & Gun

Club is a member of OFAH (Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters) and they would cover all future spawning or hatchery work.

I have not discussed this proposed merger with the Executive due to the short time frame until the newsletter is to be published but I see the advantages of joining with the Whitestone Rod & Gun Club.

Don Comrie

TREASURER'S REPORT

Don asked me to write a quick note summarizing some facts and figures on how the year has gone so far. So I explained that we've seen a 90% increase in mass; a 30% increase in length and a 100% increase in "caah" sounds. Don said to me, a little exasperated, "Not about your baby, Mike, about the Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association." I guess any new parent goes through a similar period of single mindedness where the sole purpose of new life is to take care of the little one's needs and track the oh and ahs and tiniest signs of learning.

But it also brings into focus the importance of the work that the Lake WahWashKesh Conservation Association does. If my vision of Courtney Anne sitting on the deck that her parents built 50 years earlier and staring out at the sunset over a clean c l e a r WahWashKesh is to be the reality the association needs to continue to thrive.

I am happy to report that the association is

financially healthy. In 2014, subject to our accountant's review of the books and records, our revenues (\$15,646) ran slightly ahead of our expenses (\$14,023). We ended the year with a cash balance of \$11,624, giving us plenty of flexibility. As Don outlined in his recent letter to members, we are making efforts of reduce the significant printing and postage expenses that the association incurs. This should help with the 2015 expenses.

Thus far in 2015 we have collected well over 80 memberships as well various parking fees, advertising revenue and donations, and the bank account remains in fine shape. The finances are continue to support Mike Maceina's water quality monitoring and other associate activities.

We have made some progress with greater use of paperless transactions including sending this newsletter electronically to many members and some use of paypal. We hope to make electronic payments easier for members as time goes on.

The full financial statements will be presented at the AGM. Until then, I hope everyone is enjoying the summer thus far.

Michael Lewis, Treasure

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Long-Time Cottager Earns U.S. Congressional Medal

Jim Summersides has been a cottager on Lake WahWashKesh for decades. The 90 year old Second World War veteran received a very special honour many years overdue. In February, Mr. Summersides, his wife, and family members, travelled to Washington D.C. to receive this special award.

Photos curtesy SunMedia



Henry Sams and Jim Summersides

Forty-two surviving members of a joint American-Canadian special forces military unit called the Devil's Brigade were honoured with the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal in February — the highest civilian honour the United States Congress can bestow.

In 2013, Congress voted unanimously to award the medal to the joint Canadian-American commando unit. This came about after lobbying by the unit's American members to include their Canadian comrades (about one-third of its members were Canadians). There were a total of 2,400 men who served in the Devil's Brigade, and no one escaped uninjured. Roughly 150 members of the unit remain alive "including 46 Canadians, 21 from Ontario.

The brigade was an elite special service force during the Second World War, and it served as the model for the U.S. Navy SEALs. The force saw heavy action as commandos on the beaches and in the mountains of Italy and France.

The award ceremony took place at Emancipation Hall on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and was attended by dignitaries from Canada, the U.S. and the military.

The Gold Medal was first awarded in 1776 to George Washington. Other recipients included Thomas Edison, Sir Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Neil Armstrong and Peanuts creator Charles Schulz.

Summersides was just 19 years old when he volunteered to join the force from the Canadian Army in Italy in 1943.

Summersides is a member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 613 hall. He also became a regular speaker and organizer of Remembrance Day programs for Niagara area schools.

For more stories about Jim Summersides and the Devil's Brigade:

Welland veteran wins Congressional Gold Medal - By Dan Dakin, Welland Tribune, February 2, 2015
<http://www.stcatharinesstandard.ca/2013/11/22/us-congressional-medal-of-honor-for-welland-vet>

U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor for Welland Vet - By Joe Barkovich, For The Tribune, Nov. 22, 2013
<http://www.wellandtribune.ca/2015/02/02/welland-veteran-wins-congressional-gold-medal>

Fonthill Vet Going to U.S. Gold Medal Ceremony - By Wayne Campbell, For The Voice, January 29, 2015
<http://www.thevoiceofpelham.ca/fonthill-vet-going-u-s-gold-medal-ceremony/>



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Some Featured Forest Pests Parry Sound District – Present and Potential – 2015

There are concerns over a large range of invasive forest pests threatening our local forests including the Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Long-Horned Beetle, Beech Bark Disease, and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. The loss / decline of species such as Elm, Ash, American Beech, American Chestnut, Hemlock, Butternut and potentially Red Oak now will continue to have a significant influence (augmented by climate change, invasive species) on, species-at-risk, biodiversity, wildlife, natural heritage areas, etc. It is all a scary prospect but one thing we have learned over time is that trees are incredibly resilient and much more able to adapt to these changes than we give them credit for. That's something to keep in mind for the future.

Beech Bark Disease

This disease is still having a devastating presence throughout the Archipelago as well as the Baysville area near Huntsville. Adding to the previous findings of Beech Bark Disease (BBD) there is significant scale insect as well as the disease showing up extensively throughout Blackstone/Crane Lake area as well as the Healey Lake area. The epicenter still remains Killbear Provincial Park and Parry Island First Nation. Forested areas to the north of Parry Sound have not yet shown signs of the disease – mainly due to the lack of American Beech as a component of forest stands to the north of Parry Sound except where it appears in smaller isolated blocks and so far, these areas have not been infected.

Oak Wilt

This is not exactly the news that one wants to hear. As the political/jurisdictional boundaries are just imaginary lines that DO NOT stop climatic, ecological and other natural and human generated processes, based on the past experience with other pests and diseases, it will likely be just a matter of time until this comes to Ontario. Please read the information provided in the link below. The more eyes out there watching, the better prepared we will be.

Oak Wilt kills healthy red oaks. White oaks can also be affected but

are more resistant and less vulnerable to mortality from the disease. Once a red oak becomes infected with the Oak Wilt fungus, the tree will die, and there is no treatment to save the infected tree. Once an Oak Wilt infection is confirmed, however, treatments are available to save surrounding oaks and stop the spread of this disease.

What is at risk? All red oaks are susceptible to Oak Wilt. Red oaks are common urban and suburban landscape trees.

The loss of these trees can have a significant negative impact. In the forest, red oaks are also an important producer of acorns for wildlife habitat. Analysing data along with the current average stumpage price for red oak sawlogs, it is estimated that the value of red oak timber in the state of Michigan is approximately 1.6 billion dollars.

The threat: Oak Wilt moves slowly on its own through root systems and travels short distances overland when new spores are moved by beetles from an infected tree to a freshly pruned or injured tree. Oak Wilt can be moved long distances when people move infected firewood from one location to another. Look for red oaks that suddenly drop their leaves in the summer. The disease spreads, killing nearby oaks from one year to the next. Currently, Oak Wilt is generally distributed throughout the Midwest and Texas.

What could happen? Once established, if not treated, Oak Wilt will continue to spread, killing all red oaks in a neighborhood or a forest. *What can you do?* DO NOT prune oak trees during the growing season. If you need to prune oaks, DO NOT prune them between April 15 and July 15. DO NOT move firewood: Oak Wilt is spread by the movement of infected wood.

For more information, check out: http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10366_54559-342619--,00.html

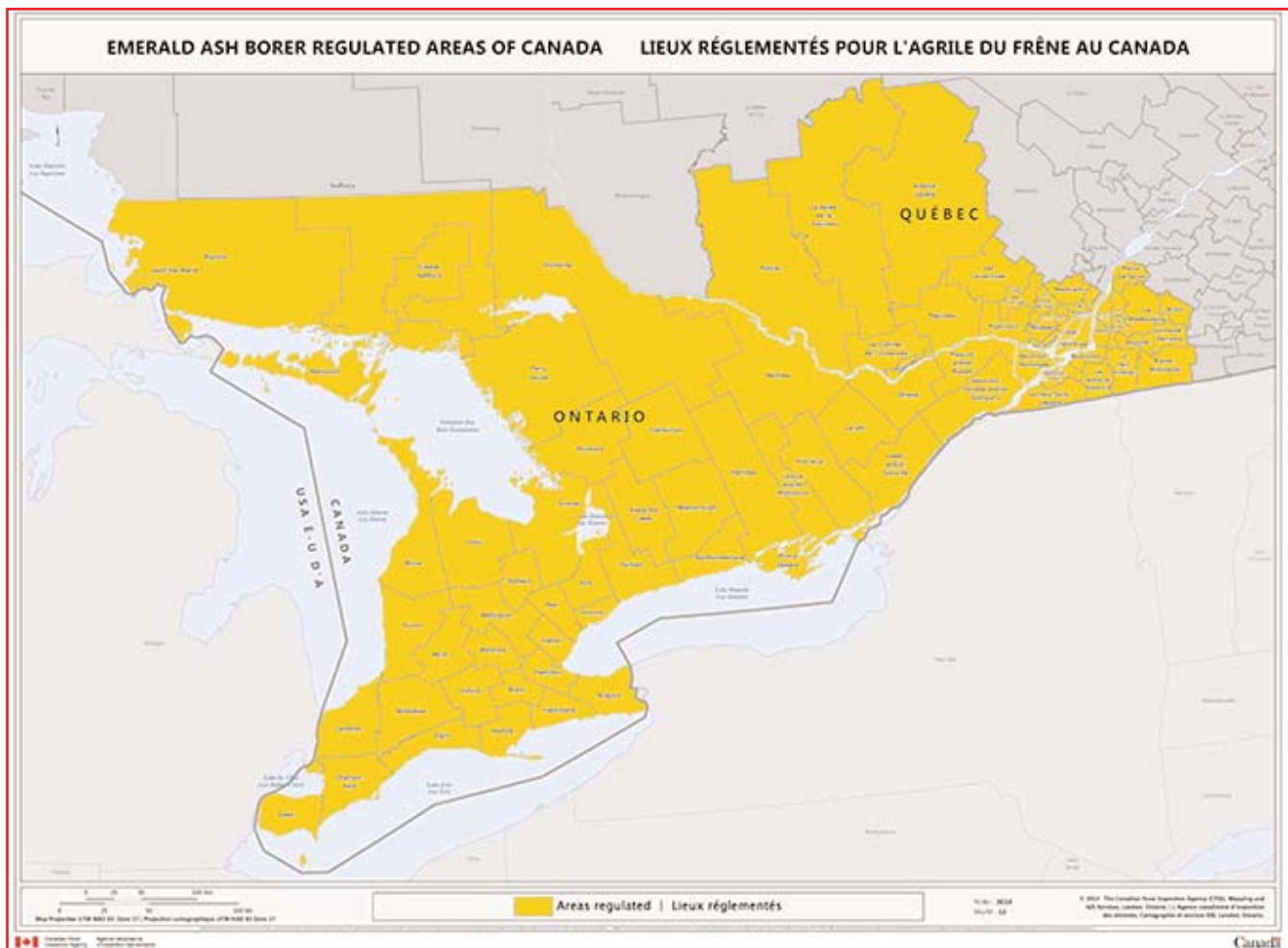
Emerald Ash Borer

The link (below) for “A Visual Guide to Detecting Emerald Ash Borer” contains information to identify trees that have been attacked and damaged by the Emerald Ash Borer. Ideally, it is best to find beetles in an area before they harm or kill trees. Unfortunately, this is not easy, and for now, we can only rely on the visual signs and symptoms as a guide to detect damage by the emerald ash borer.

<http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/pubwarehouse/pdfs/26856.pdf>

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) question: Will the cold winter of 2013-14 affect EAB populations?

- Not likely to affect EAB populations enough to reduce tree mortality rates, EAB populations, or EAB spread
- EAB is cold tolerant to -35C or



more

- Temperature under the bark is not the same as air temp. Solar radiation can warm the bark, and the bark insulates the insect from rapid temperature changes, allowing the insect time to adjust to temperature swings
- Cold temperature reports based on wind chill have no relevance to cold-blooded insects not exposed to the wind

Dutch Elm Disease

This disease, which took over the elms in Ontario in the 1960's is showing up again throughout the area.

How to Identify Symptoms of Dutch Elm Disease

- Symptoms can first be seen in June and early July
- Leaves wilt and curl, turning yellow and brown in the summer
- Branches begin to dieback and

then result in death

- Brown staining can be seen on the side of the tree when bark is peeled back

What You Can Do

- Learn how to properly identify the signs and symptoms of Dutch Elm Disease
- Never transport elm wood or wood products with bark to new areas
- Buy firewood locally when traveling or camping. Never bring unused wood home with you
- If planting elm trees, buy from a local and reliable source.

Control of Dutch Elm Disease usually requires an integrated approach. Preventive pruning of dead branches to remove beetle breeding sites is essential, as is the removal and destruction of infected trees. It is also recommended that decadent trees with significant dieback be removed, even if not diseased. Tree removal also

includes stump pulling or grinding to 10 cm below soil line. All wood from cut elms should be destroyed through burning or burial, as any wood with existing bark will serve as a breeding site for the beetle. In the case of high-value elms, the injection of fungicides through the roots or butt has been shown to be reasonably effective, although it is expensive and possibly damaging to conductive tissue at the injection point (injection should be done by a qualified arborist, and only those fungicides that are currently registered for control of this disease should be used). Diseased trees should be replaced with elm hybrids that show some resistance to the disease or with other species suitable for the local.

Ken Webb

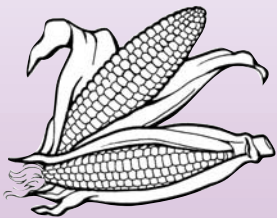
Event Calendar 2015

Annual General Meeting

9:30 am

- Saturday,
August 1st
- Bennett's Barn

**PLEASE
REMEMBER
TO BRING THE
General Meeting
Package**



CORN ROAST

Saturday,
August 15

- 4:00 pm
- Straub's Beach

Early in its term, your current Council decided that the Municipality of Whitestone should have a strategic plan to serve as a framework for our decisions as we seek to make Whitestone a better place to live, work, and play. We therefore set aside several special meetings to consider guiding principles, objectives, and key action items.

A draft of this plan has now been uploaded to the Municipality's website at www.whitestone.ca. It represents the current consensus of Council as to the vision, mission, and core values for our Municipality, and defines a number of high-level objectives organized under seven broad headings.

We are pleased to submit this plan to the Community for your consideration and comment. Are there elements of the plan that resonate with you, or that you feel are unnecessary? Are there things you think we missed, or that could be stated more clearly? We welcome your feedback, which should be forwarded to our CAO/Clerk/Treasurer Tammy Wylie. In addition, I and my colleagues on Council will be happy to discuss it with you.

This version of the Strategic Plan will remain open for consultation and comment until the end of September 2015, after which Council will review the feedback received and make any necessary revisions.

Please note that this Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document – to be reviewed periodically and updated to reflect both changing circumstances and our achievement of its objectives.

Please also note that your Council is already working to prepare detailed implementation plans for some elements – in fact, some tasks have been completed already. Watch for progress reports on implementation of the plan in our Newsletters and on the Municipality's website.

Thank you in advance for your important contributions to the Municipality of Whitestone's strategic planning process.

*George Comrie, Councillor
Municipality of Whitestone*

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Britannia Compendium of Games

www.leevalley.com

Whether you enjoy board and card games or you want to reduce your family's use of electronics the Britannia Compendium of Games contains a good selection of games in one box. There are 10 games in all: checkers (both traditional and Chinese), chess, pick-up sticks, tidlywinks, dominoes, steeplechase and poker dice, snap, muggins. A traditional deck of cards is also included.

Whether you want to revisit some of the games of your childhood or you want to teach your children or grandchildren (not for children under three years as the games contain small parts) these easy-to-learn games, the Britannia Compendium of Games is a fun collection (item#45K22.64).

Bug Off! Spray

www.NorthHillSoap.com

If you don't like bug sprays or lotions that contain harsh chemicals, you might consider Bug Off! Spray from North Hill Soap. While I haven't used it when the bugs are at their worst (or best depending on how you look at it) I have found it effective when I used it at the end of last summer and again during the beginning of "bug season" this year. The bug spray features a "...blend of essential oils in a Grape Seed Oil base".

Touch-Activated Micro Light

www.leevalley.com

This handy touch activated flashlight (item#68K06.88) is small but it has a bright light (the high setting is 16 lumens). You easily turn it on by swiping your thumb to the left which activates the internal sensor to the brightest setting. A second swipe to the left lowers the brightness (saving the bat-

tery) and a third swipe results in an "attention-getting blink setting."

This light features an S-Biner that conveniently attaches it to a key ring or a zipper pull. We have ours attached to a key ring and turn it on when we arrive somewhere in the dark. It's small, lightweight size is easily kept in your pocket as it doesn't add much to a key ring.

It is reported to run for nine hours on the bright (16 lumens) setting and for 64 hours on the minimum brightness setting (2 lumens). The light uses (and which are included) two lithium CR2032 3V batteries.

Soulful Soap

www.soulfulsoap.ca

Recently I tried three soaps from Soulful Soap: Zen Garden, Dharma and Clear Complexion Facial Bar. All three contain coconut oil, palm oil (which is sustainably sourced), vegetable oil, castor oil, organic shea butter and reverse osmosis water. They also all smell nice and the bars are large – approximately 5 ounces. I cut the bars in half and they're still a generous chunk of soap!

Zen Garden is a shea butter soap with a nice blend of lavender, lemongrass and orange essential oils. I really liked Dharma which features cinnamon, patchouli, orange and eucalyptus essential oils and coloured with cinnamon



and tumeric. Every time you use the soap you can enjoy its nice, calming scent.

Hook-Anywhere Clothesline

www.leevalley.com

Electric clothes dryers use lots of energy. You can save considerable money, and help the environment, by using clotheslines. We use clotheslines in spring, summer and fall and we hang washed clothes inside to dry during the winter (which adds moisture to dry, heated air in the house).

This inexpensive Hook-Anywhere Clothesline (item#ET130) is easily

installed (and taken down) and doesn't require special fasteners. This makes the clothesline good for using in temporary situations such as camping, at the cottage or when travelling. The line consists of "polypropylene braided into a weave resembling a ladder, it has a pattern of small openings to help register clothespins and capture coat hangers, so articles don't slide and gather in the middle of the line." The line can be hung between two supports and comes with two galvanized steel hooks. The line itself is 5 metres (16 feet).

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Book Reviews by N. Glenn Perrett

Your Water Footprint

Stephen Leahy
Firefly Books, 2014, 143 pgs
ISBN: 9781770852952

While more people recognize the importance of recycling and trying to reduce the amount of garbage that they produce, most have little knowledge of how their lifestyle impacts the most precious resource – water. In *Your Water Footprint: The Shocking Facts About How Much Water We Use to Make Everyday Products* Stephen Leahy provides some sobering information pertaining to our use of water. According to Leahy “the average American’s ‘water footprint’ – the total amount of direct plus virtual freshwater use – is about 8,000 liters (2,115 gallons) per day.” Leahy also looks at other water-related issues including the impacts of bottled water, the affects of large-scale irrigation on aquifers and “Water-saving Tips”.

When it comes to food consumption vegans and vegetarians are significantly more eco-friendly than those who eat meat and other animal products. To grow an apple requires 125 litres of water. A kilogram of tomatoes requires 214 litres while a kilogram of beef requires an incredible 15,400 litres.

Trying to decide whether to use cloth or disposable diapers? Leahy says that the water footprint of one cloth diaper is 15 litres while a disposable diaper uses 545 litres! If a new couch is in your future you will want to know (or you may not) that a synthetic sofa (3-seater) uses 1,610 litres while a leather couch requires 136,000 litres!

When it comes to our dependence on water, ignorance isn’t bliss. Once we are aware of how our day-to-day living impacts the world’s most precious resource we can start taking responsible actions to reduce our water footprints.

A Seed Needs Sun

Kate Riggs,
illustrated by
Fiammetta Dogi
Creative Editions
2014, 14 pages,
ages 2+
ISBN:
9781568462547

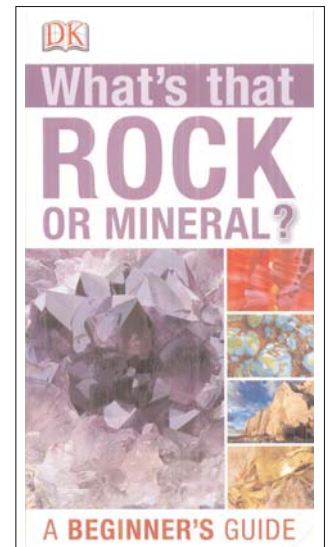
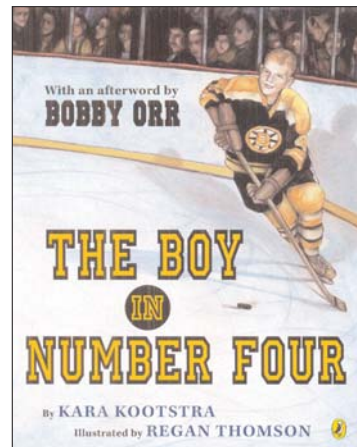
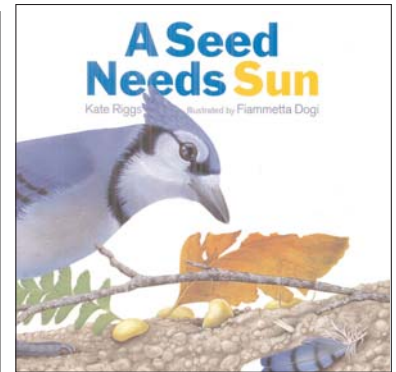
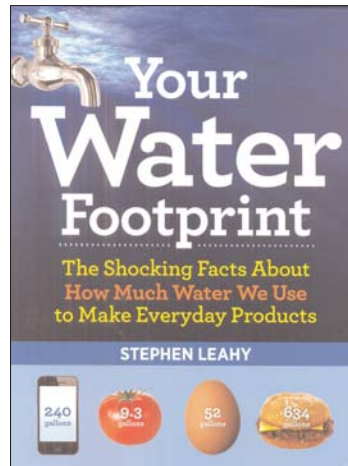
A Seed Needs Sun is a very good nature book for young children that illustrates the growth cycle of a seed. Simple text combined with wonderful, colour illustrations shows how a seed, with the help of a hole, dirt, water, air, light and sun, grows roots, leaves, stems and flowers. Illustrations of plants and animals complement the simple text.

The Chessmen

Peter May, Quercus
2012, 2015, 309 pages
ISBN: 9781623656041

The Chessmen is one of the books that I’ve most looked forward to reading. Last year I read the first two books in the Lewis Trilogy, the *Blackhouse* and *The Lewis Man*, and they were extraordinary mystery novels. And while my expectations of the final book in this trilogy were very high, I wasn’t disappointed. *The Chessmen* is an excellent read.

The stories take place in the Outer Hebrides off the coast of Scotland and Peter May does a fantastic job describing these harsh, beautiful places and the people who live there. *The Chessmen* sees ex-Detective Inspector Fin McLeod working in security for a local landowner on the Isle of Lewis. While visiting with his childhood friend Whistler Macaskill they witness a “bog burst”. This natural phenomenon results in the draining of a loch. At the bottom of the loch is



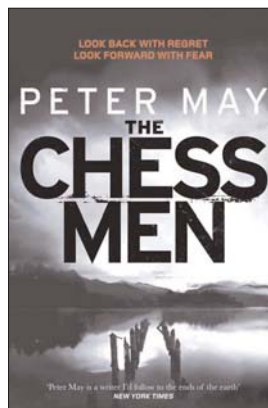
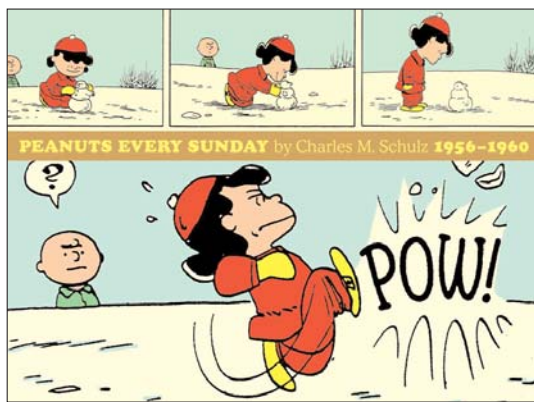
an aircraft and they are pretty sure whose remains they will find inside – Roddy Mackenzie, a friend of theirs who went missing on a flight seventeen years earlier. What Fin doesn’t expect to see is Whistler’s reaction when they pry open the door to the plane. As Fin investigates the case of Roddy, who appears to have been murdered, he learns many things from his past including some that changed the course of his own life.

May’s ability to create interesting characters and describe the harsh environment of the Outer Hebrides is impressive. *The Chessmen* is a wonderful final book in this excellent mystery trilogy. Highly recommended.

The Boy in Number Four

Kara Kootstra,
illustrated by Regan Thomson
Puffin, 2014, 32 pages, ages 3+
ISBN: 9780670067138

Children will enjoy this book about arguably the best hockey player of all time. The rhyming text follows a young Bobby Orr



poles eat, who eats them, how they breathe through their gills, when they grow legs and when they lose their tails. Before you know it the tadpoles

have grown into little frogs called froglets! What the frogs do during the different seasons is also looked at. There is also a glossary at the back. Lots of good photographs show the different stages of tadpoles and frogs.

What's That Rock or Mineral? A Beginner's Guide

Tom Jackson
Dorling Kindersley Limited
2014, 128 pages
ISBN: 9781465415929

If you don't know much about rocks and minerals, but would like to, check out *What's That Rock or Mineral? A Beginner's Guide*. Short sections on what a rock and a mineral are along with identifying rocks and minerals get the reader started. Next are profiles for coarse-grained rocks, medium-grained rocks, fine-grained rocks, and minerals. There are also useful rock and mineral galleries at the back of the book along with a glossary.

Peanuts Every Sunday: 1956 – 1960
Charles M. Schulz
Fantagraphics Books, 2014, 273 pgs
ISBN: 9781606997949

Peanuts Every Sunday: 1956 – 1960 is a wonderful collection of Charles M. Schulz's exceptional Peanuts comic strips in colour from Sunday newspapers in the years from 1956 to 1960! Fans of Peanuts will enjoy the large, colour strips featuring the antics of Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Pig-Pen, Sally, Patty,

Shermy, Violet, Schroeder and of course Snoopy. Charlie Brown is still trying to put together a good baseball team – and kick the football that Lucy is holding. He also has difficulty playing hockey and flying a kite. And then there are all of the wonderful seasonal strips (some of my favourites) featuring the Peanuts gang. There are also significant events occurring during these years including Charlie Brown getting a baby sister – Sally. Reading such large (approximately 13.25" by 9.5") comic strips in colour is a real treat.

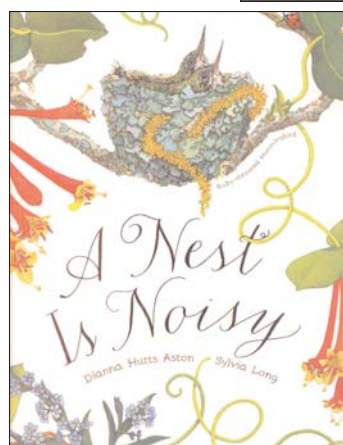
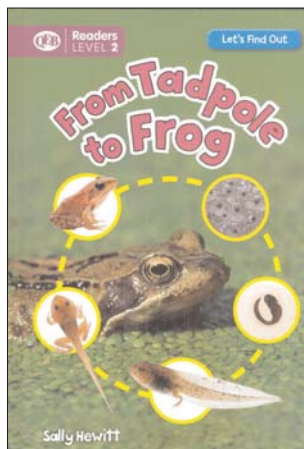
A Nest Is Noisy

Dianna Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long, Chronicle Books
2015, 34 pages, ages 5+
ISBN: 9781452127132

A Nest Is Noisy is a fascinating children's nature book that looks at some of the incredible structures built to protect young animals. Some of the nests featured includes the massive structure built by the bird the Dusky Scrubfowl. Made of decomposing twigs and leaves the nests can measure more than 11 metres in diameter and nearly 5 metres high! In contrast, the nest of the Bee Hummingbird is only about the size of a golf ball. The nest is made of leaves, moss, lichen and bark and is "...usually wrapped in spider's silk" that stretches allowing the nest to expand as the young birds grow.

Other interesting nests include the "living nests" made by Army Ants and the nests constructed by Cave Swiftlets who make their nests entirely of saliva. These nests are prized by some as a food. "Bird's nest soup, made from swiftlet nests, is among the most expensive foods eaten by humans."

Other animals whose nests grace the pages of this book include: Honeybee, American Alligator, Lamprey, American Flamingo, Baya Weaver, Elf Owl, Platypus, Orangutan – and more. And while the nests are quite different, they are all incredible works of art.



and his desire to play professional hockey starting in his home town of Parry Sound and into junior with the Oshawa Generals before joining the Boston Bruins in the NHL. The illustrations produced from old photographs are good – particularly the famous image of Bobby Orr flying through the air after scoring the cup-winning goal against St. Louis. Complementing the story is an afterword by Bobby Orr who tells of the importance of playing hockey, and other sports, simply for the fun of the game.

From Tadpole to Frog

Sally Hewitt
QEB Publishing, 2014,
24 pages, ages 4+
ISBN: 9781609926939

Frogs are amazing animals who play an important role in nature. But they are threatened by things like habitat loss and pollution so learning about them is important. *From Tadpole to Frog* begins with frogspawn (thousands of tiny frogs' eggs) with the author providing the stages of tadpoles turning into frogs. Information includes what the tad-

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