

## A message from the Editor

The FLPOA executive group has decided to once again try publishing the Newsletter twice annually, as used to be the case some years ago. The contents will be different in the May and November issues, with the May newsletter layout remaining much as it has been in the past.

Real success in this will depend on feedback and submissions of articles and photos from the FLPOA membership. As is the case for the FLPOA Web site, the Newsletter can be made more interesting and informative through such joint efforts.

It is not our intent to duplicate in a small way the content of Cottage Life and similar magazines, but rather to reflect specifically the environment and activities pertinent to our own Farren Lake. You will see by the list of contents of this issue that our goals here are quite broad and hopefully touch on the majority of subjects that members find to be of interest.

We hope that after reading this issue of the Newsletter, you will be inspired to provide your own input in either photos or text. Send your contributions to the editor at:

barker@ca.inter.net .

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## 36 years ago

Excerpt from a *Feb., 1969* letter from the Dept. of Lands & Forests to executives of the Farren Lake association:

"During the summer of 1968, Farren Lake was surveyed by our Department. Generally speaking, the lake appears to be quite good.

Several small-mouth bass were captured, one twenty inches long. Other species captured include: perch, rock bass, cisco, common shiner, golden shiner, banded killifish, brown bullhead, bridled shiner, bluegill, yellow bullhead, spot-tail shiner, pumpkin seed, black chin shiner and black nose shiner.

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1968, the oxygen content of the water was good down to the thirty foot level. Below thirty feet the oxygen was negligible; thus the lake does not lend itself to the introduction of a cold water species of fish."

Flora and Fauna around the lake



Local fungi: Scarlet Waxy Cap  
 Hygrophorus coccineus; July to November  
 1 to 2 inch red cap  
 2 to 3 inch stem  
 Deciduous and coniferous woods, also in clearings.

Snails

Many cottagers will have noted a larger than usual number of snails at their shoreline this year. See photo below. These particular snails are possibly genus physella gyrina, a widely distributed fresh-water gastropod. A lack of dissolved oxygen, high water temperature, and high acidity can be toxic to them, and so perhaps a die-off due to high lake temperature this summer accounts for the many shells on our shores, though clams seem to be unaffected.



Bear sightings



The evidence

A pile of bear scat was sighted early June when Gaby Leclair & Jackie Stapledon were walking on Featherston Rd. Then on June 29<sup>th</sup> Jackie & Brian saw the bear crossing through their back yard. It had been on some nearby property, possibly rummaging for garbage.

Jackie Stapledon obligingly took the photo shown above, for the edification of those who might not know exactly what they have found.

To add to the black bear story, on June 9th John Ficner came across a black bear cub on Lane 22. Looking on, at the other side of the road about 25 feet away, was the mother. John reports that it was a BIG bear! There were also reports of three bears being seen in the Bolingbroke area.

The August 24 issue of the Perth Courier had an article stating that in the Lanark highlands alone, there are more than 600 resident black bears.

You can learn more about bear populations, behaviour etc., by accessing this site:

[bears.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://bears.mnr.gov.on.ca) .

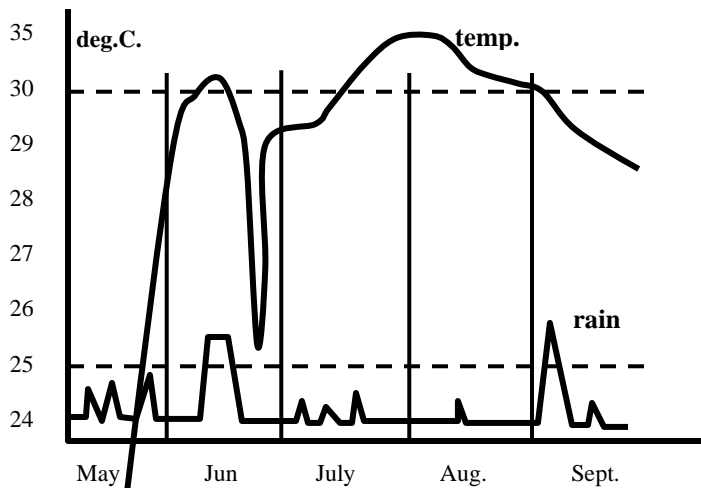
Long hot summer

The summer of 2005 turned out to be one of the hottest and driest in recent memory. Officially, there were 43 days with a peak temperature above 30 C., and on your editor's imperfect calendar record, there were at least 33 such days. This is stated to be twice the normal number of such hot days. There has also been a report that the last 16 years have had above-normal average temperatures in the Ontario-Quebec corridor.

Other than in June, rain was scarce. Statistics show that there was 80% less rain in the summer months than we had in 2004.

One consequence has been a very low water level in August. As of August 26, the water was at least 8 inches below the top log in our dam, with almost no leakage around the edges, and the gauge reading was about 2.8 or slightly less. There is no water going through the natural outlet. Therefore the lake is not being flushed at all. Other lakes such as Christie and Mississippi report very low levels as well, in spite of being fed by rivers. The Ottawa River is low, too.

A graph of this summer's temperatures at Farren Lake is shown below, together with a non-official graph of rain events (no scale).



An odd phenomenon



An odd natural phenomenon occurred near the middle of August at the north end of the lake near the canal to the dam. In an area where the water is about 3 feet deep, a large dome about 40 feet in diameter raised off the lake bed and exposed the debris of the lake bed, about 3 inches above the water's surface. The dome was broken by deep cracks across its surface. Later in the month, the mound sank slightly before the surface, then rose again, doing this several times.

Shown above is a photo of the dome, just breaking the surface of the lake.

One theory is that the low water released the weight above the lake bed, allowing a pocket of marsh gas far below the lake bed to raise the dome in this manner. In this area, the silt and other debris is about 12 feet thick, below which is a layer of sand, then clay.

The RVCA has been queried about this, and the following reply was received...they say the effect is not uncommon in shallow lakes with decaying detritus on the bottom and low water levels.

Township highlights

From the web site:

<http://www.tayvalleytwp.ca/>

- The 2005 total tax requirement of \$2,902,000 is \$185,300 more than last year. This represents a 6.8% increase over 2004.
- A Tourism Kiosk and Ice Cream/Coffee Café in Maberly is open for business.
- waste site winter hours are:
  - Sat. 8 AM - 4 PM
  - Weds. 8 AM - 4 PM
- *Citizens' Mining Advisory Group* contacts:
  - Karen Hunt, [mkhunt@perth.igs.net](mailto:mkhunt@perth.igs.net)
  - Wendy Hassard, [whhassard@sympatico.ca](mailto:whhassard@sympatico.ca)

Gypsy moth trap counts

As an indicator of the efficacy of the gypsy moth traps (Cooper Mill type), here are the counts of moths found in traps at the north end of the lake, averaged over 5 traps and for two recent years:

2004: 25 moths per trap

2005: 20 moths per trap

There are no records for years previous to 2004, but by various qualitative reports it seems the gypsy moth population is slowly decreasing, as indicated by the above figures.

FLPOA executive

Eugenia Flett, our new president, has been on the lake for 30 years in the Bolingbroke area. In the early years, she became actively involved in the Association and served as treasurer. Now almost retired from a busy consulting practice she is happy to be involved again.

Eugenia brings leadership and voluntary board experience to this very important task.

The FLPOA executive group is:

- Eugenia Flett, new President
- David Iley, past President
- Paul Harris, new director
- Gail Graser, director
- Jim Marshall, director
- John Ficner, Web site
- Norm Douglas, Treasurer
- Jackie Stapledon, director
- Martin Hiltz, director
- Ian McKim, director
- Calvin Thompson, director
- Lea Barker, Newsletter

Highlights of most recent meeting:

- O'Brien Lake to join FLPOA as associate member
- next AGM: long weekend, May 2006
- P. Harris to follow up mining issue
- GIS\* demo attended by Jackie & John
- info letter for new cottagers needed.

\*see article in this newsletter

Mining issues

The Citizen's Mining Advisory Group (CMAG) lobbys for changes to the Ontario Mining Act to give landowners greater protection against claim staking. Pending results, FLPOA members with Internet access can look at the Mining Claims map on the [www.claimaps.mndm.gov.on.ca](http://www.claimaps.mndm.gov.on.ca) site and search by township. Here is how to proceed:

- go to the above site, & see Mines & Minerals page; click on "map search"
- click "yes" for disclaimer; map then loads
- select "search by township"
- enter "South Sherbrooke, as it won't recognize Tay Valley (...cont'd)

- click on "go" & wait for map to load (slow)
- use zoom tool, upper left corner, to get down to Farren Lake (about 3 or 4 clicks)
- look for full black dots in various concessions.

Any lots with a *full black dot* are NOT open to claims, as the mineral rights are already owned. But as to who owns these mineral rights, this must be researched at the land registry office in Almonte, if your deed is unclear on the matter.

Any mining activity on the lake could pose a serious threat to water quality, so it would be helpful, once you find out, to inform the association on the ownership of mineral rights on your property: whether they belong to you or a mining company or someone else. This information will help the executive to assess whether a threat, indeed, exists.

#### Lake Management Planning

The Friends of the Tay Watershed Association has received a grant from the Trillium Foundation for development of a Lake Management Planning Program. The program would promote a cooperative approach for lake associations and residents in the Tay River, Mississippi River Watershed and Tay Valley Township, to undertake beneficial and *cost-effective lake management plans*. The form of such a plan remains to be fully developed. Because of the potentially large number of lakes involved, the program will aim at providing collective workshops and information services and guidance, rather than provide direct funds to participating lakes.

We will attempt to provide more information on Lake Management Planning in future newsletters.

#### Watershed Information Exchange (WIX)

Dave Sampson, Geomatics Branch, Centre for Sustainable Watersheds, reports that the Watershed Information Exchange (WIX) is an on-line web mapping application designed for use by water quality monitoring volunteers and professionals.

You can learn more by visiting the Centre for Sustainable Watersheds (CSW) web site at <http://www.watersheds.ca>.

A new version will have many added features: for example if one has a profile of water depth, temperature and dissolved oxygen, the graphing option can connect all three values and produce a Dissolved Oxygen profile. It's not clear how much this might duplicate elements of the CEP (see next article herein) until we have gained more experience.

#### Community Environmental Partnership

Jackie Stapledon & John Ficner recently attended a demo of a Data Management system, also known generically as a Geographic Information System, or GIS. It is called CEP, Community Environmental Partnership. It's a map-based software that will allow Lake Associations to view municipal data (roads, properties, Official Plan, Zoning, etc.), and enable Associations to enter various data sets into the system for viewing. About 260 mB of disk space is needed to load the map and database. The CEP covers a huge area and will be looked at further to see what are the possibilities and desirability for including data for Farren Lake. It is a pilot program at the moment, and FLPOA members wishing to know more about the CEP and how they can contribute to the database should contact Jackie Stapledon at [jstapledon@aol.com](mailto:jstapledon@aol.com).

Several members of the FLPOA executive will be evaluating CEP in the coming months and more will appear in a future newsletter.

The CEP is a township initiative.

Invasive Species

While so far we at Farren Lake have not had to deal with non-plant invasive species, they could be on their way.

The newsletter of the Otty Lake Association (April/04 issue) reports that there have been Zebra mussels found in that lake.

Fortunately for us, Marina Petrovic of the RVCA has stated in a recent e-mail that they "sampled for 2 invasive species -spiny water fleas and zebra mussel veligers on Farren lake this year and none were present."

(A veliger is the free-swimming larva of a mollusc.)

The message to be repeated is, that boaters bringing water craft to Farren from other lakes should always wash the hull before launching the boat into our lake. Whether such diligent action will always be taken is very much open to question.



Photo of the spiny water flea.

RVCA Watershed Watch

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority's activities on Watershed Watch can be accessed on the Web at this site:

www.rideauvalley.on.ca/programs/watch and from there one can view the results of lake testing done in the year 2000. The report, in .pdf format, can be downloaded from the RVCA site.

FLPOA Web site

The website exists to communicate information about the Association to members. Any member is welcome to submit articles of common interest. This could include stories of family reunions, wildlife sightings around the lake, winter activities, and, of course, fish stories. We would like to hear about the ones that got away! And don't forget to include your pictures for the photo gallery. Send your materials to j.ficner@sympatico.ca and visit the site at www.FarrenLake.ca .

Each new issue of this newsletter will be posted on the Web site, complete with colour photos!

Articles and editorial assistance for this issue submitted by:

- J. Stapledon
- L. Barker
- E. Flett
- P. Harris
- J. Ficner
- Marina Petrovic, RCVA



Farren Lake News is a publication of The Farren Lake Property Owners Association Inc. Contributions by members are welcome. Editor - Lea Barker: barker@ca.inter.net