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RIVER TALK

RIVER SAFETY

ENVIRONMENTAL
AWARENESS

COMMUNITY SUPPORT



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Peter Fitton

President's Message

Canadian Wiarton Wille and American Punxsutawney Phil collaborated on Groundhog Day forecasting an early spring on the river and here it is!

The 2024 spring equinox occurred on March 19 kicking off the spring season amid extraordinary mild temperatures. Watch for the transition from El Nino to La Nina to predict our oncoming spring and summer weather, or just consult with our groundhog prognosticators.

An early bird spring allows opportunity to mobilizing watercraft, fishing gear, and the cottage opening – Click here for a checklist.

March 17 was St. Patrick's Day – symbolized by shamrocks, green beer, and leprechauns (the Celtic belief in fairies who use their magical powers to serve good or evil). Many people believe these fairies put out the TIA rock shoal markers!

In celebration of TIA's 90th year, we have planned a memorable total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024 when the Moon will pass between the Sun and Earth, completely blocking the face of the Sun. The Sky will darken in recognition of TIA's mission of river safety, environmental awareness, and community support. Safety is the number one priority when viewing a total solar eclipse. Be sure you're familiar with when you need to wear specialized eye protection designed for solar viewing by reviewing these safety guidelines.

Everyone please be reminded of our new River Talk column "Then and Now". Reach out to our Editor at thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com to contribute photos, reminiscences and stories handed down from generations – another way to celebrate our heritage on our river.

Our River Community property owners are reminded of the Underused Housing Act (UHT) Act and annual filing deadlines – Click here for Forms and Publications.

SAVE THE DATE! The TIA 2024 AGM will be held on Saturday, July 20 at the Thousand Islands Playhouse. Featured Speaker is Scott MacCrimmon of Hucks Marine talking on The Evolution of Boating ... Past, Present & Future. Check out the Community Bulletin Board in this issue for other events.

If not already done, please be reminded it is time for everyone to renew their 2024 TIA tax deductible membership, or join as new members, online by clicking here. Your support is essential to the sustainability of TIA and its essential rock shoal marking for the safety of our river community.

Time to get out the spring wardrobe!

From the Editor

Allison Burchell-Robinson

March has always been significant for me in that it is both an ending and a beginning. Winter is loosening its tentacles and Spring is creeping forward. It is time to put away the winter playthings and bring out the gardening tools. It is also time to become a member of TIA or continue your membership in an organization that has been around for 90 years. We have had success with the shoal marking program as well as bringing environmental awareness to the forefront and our social media contacts continue to grow. More growth and new projects are projected for the future.

One of our old projects successfully grew into a new one. For years TIA sent out a quarterly newsletter consisting of two or four pages of river happenings accompanied by pictures. Then in 2018 River Talk, an e-newsletter, made its debut with monthly issues. It received a fresh look in 2021 and an even newer look in 2023 when Megan Coleman joined the team as our graphic artist. Megan joined with our Manager, Janet Smith-Staples; Vince Barton, Circulation Director and me, the editor. Joining us are our contributors Peter Fitton, Stuart Arnett, Ken White, Orm Murphy, Alec Turner, Ross Stewart, Dave McWilliam and Annabel Cowan. Guest contributors are always welcome as evidenced by George Ray and Bob Street writing for "Then and Now".

Our audience continues to grow with each issue which is welcome news for the team putting River Talk together. It is a fun project, worthwhile and fulfilling but it is also time consuming and there are costs involved. Without the support from our members and contributors, there would be no River Talk, no Trash Free River Clean Up Days, Turtle Nest Protectors, FLRS (Fishing Line Recycling Stations) and gulp, NO shoal markers. You make it all possible and richly deserve the pat on the back you just received.

Please join with us today either as a new member or a renewal. On the donation page on our website, you will see some new and interesting membership categories. Take a step up this year and help to make our 90th year a truly remarkable one!



Marnie Ross

Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (TIWLT)

Getting Into the Green Scene

“Saving Some Green” is an intentional play on words. Cash and conservation really can go hand in hand. We’ll lay it all out for you in an event on June 22nd.

There are places on this planet where conserving and protecting nature really truly matters. The watershed of the Thousand Islands and these fabulous islands themselves is one of them. There’s nowhere on the continent quite like this – a critical path for migration, vital habitats for a great number of species at risk, millions of dollars annually of the services of nature. No wonder it is a celebrated UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.

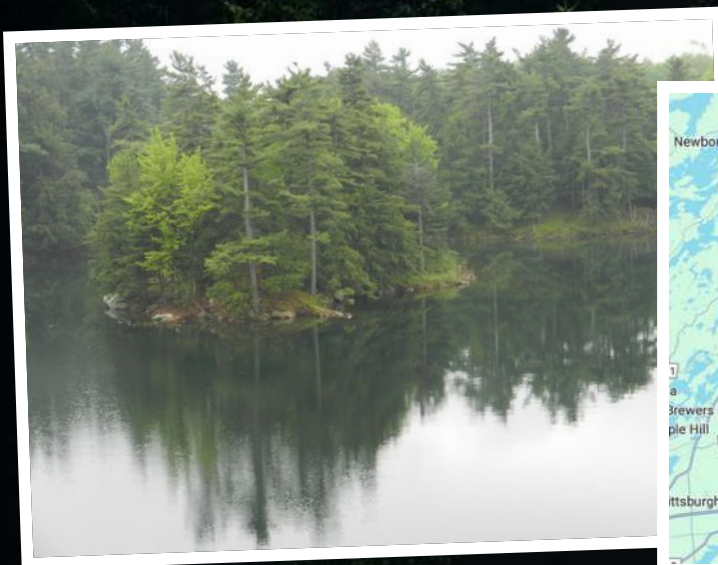
The Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust will host a half day event with several experts on tax benefits, legacy-building and right down to backyard stewardship. It’s you, property as owners, who will make a great difference to the quality of life and land here for the land you love.

Canada and the US are two of 196 countries in the world pledging to protect 30% of their landmass by 2030. But here we’re scarcely to 5%, even combining the areas of Thousand Islands National Park, Charleston Lake Provincial Park, conservation authority lands,

and all land trust properties. And yet while this region is a mere 0.00000015% of Canada, it hosts nearly 20% of the country’s species at risk, and has about 8% of all of the forests of southern Ontario. It’s highly significant in the climate change and biodiversity story of North America, among the greenest and bluest places you can visit. You can ensure it stays intact and healthy.

The June 22nd event will be 9:00 AM until noon, just north of Charleston Lake at a hall in the Holy Trinity Anglican Church just off the Lower Oak Leaf Road. The Charleston Lake Association will co-host. We’ll introduce you to conservation at scales from backyard to back 40. We’ll walk you through larger property scale ways to protect nature to forever conserve the land you love and bring considerable income tax benefits. In the end the entire community wins substantially.

Invite your friends and neighbours. On hand will be experts in law, real estate, accounting and from the federal Ecological Gifts Program. For more detail or reserve seats contact info@tiwlt.ca Further details will be posted to the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust website, tiwlt.ca, closer to the event.



Wildlife Corridor

Identifying Wildlife

Stuart Arnett

Winter seems to be the time that wildlife identification becomes more popular on social media. It could be that tracks can be seen more readily in the snow or that the animal themselves are easier to see due to the lack of summer foliage. Either way when they are far away it is nice to know what animal you are looking at. It is important to know the silhouette shapes of your local wildlife.

Most of the confusion encountered by many, including me, is with the weasel family - Mustelidae or Mustelids. In Ontario, to add to this confusion, we just have too many of them.

So in order of pure size, our Ontario weasels are listed below:

- Wolverine - Habitat is Northwestern Ontario in the Boreal Forest.
- North American Badger - Habitat is Southwestern Ontario.
- Fisher - now becoming quite common in the 1000 Islands area.
- River Otter - very common now in the 1000 Islands and local lakes.
- Pine Marten - Habitat is more northern in the Boreal Forest and coniferous forests.
- Mink - very common
- Weasels : All species are common.
 - Short-tailed Weasel (Stoat or Ermine)
 - Long-tailed Weasel
 - Least Weasel

Sometimes you have only a silhouette to help you determine what you are observing. If you are not certain first take note of its size. Other factors to consider are its environment, the fur colour and thickness, a bushy, long, short or smooth tail. Watch the way the animal moves or runs, the position of its back haunches and its position to the ground. All can help you to decide. Happy wildlife identifying!



Long-tailed Weasel



Fisher



River Otter

Gulo luscus. Glutton or Wolverine.

Water Level Updates:

A Dry February & Plan 2014 Expedited Review 1st Update

Vince Barton, Ken White, Ross Stewart

Dry: "February 2024 ranked among the top 10 driest Februarys on record (1900-2021) for each of the Great Lakes, with less than an inch of precipitation across each basin based on provisional data." - ILOSLR Board. The Lake Ontario basin received only 2.1 cm of precipitation, 35% of February's 6.1 cm average.

Doomed to have a low-water summer? NO, LOTS of spring to go, some of the years wettest. Is a low-water summer possible? Sure - IF we get sustained dry weather for months on end. Take heart, though - a single dry month is not enough to cause drastically low water for the year!

The Board's current 6-month forecast shows fairly average water levels this summer, trending a bit below average. Wetter or drier weather drives levels higher or lower than the 50% line.

Expedited Review Background by Ross Stewart: Last summer at our AGM, TIA announced our formal involvement in the expedited review of Plan 2014 (P2014), the regulation plan that ultimately governs outflows at the Moses-Saunders dam in Cornwall and Massena. These outflows impact levels of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River.

After 2017 & 2019 high-water level events, an expedited review was ordered by both US and Canadian governments (via the IJC) to determine 1) if the current regulation plan (P2014) was meeting its stated objectives, and 2) what improvements (if any) may be required to adapt to significant weather/precipitation (including drought) events.

The expedited review process concludes in early 2025, with recommendations to the IJC for approval. The Great Lakes Adaptive Management committee (GLAM) is tasked with this review and ongoing work. TIA is part of GLAM's Public Advisory Group (PAG), an 18-member public-facing group that represents various geographical areas and interests in both countries.

Beyond the expedited review's end date, ongoing work will continue as new sources of data (i.e. climate change) and modeling techniques improve. TIA will continue its ongoing advocate role, in public consultation, representing the interests of all TIA members & our regional partners.

Significant work undertaken to date:

- 1) Reviewing and refining existing performance indicators to gauge how the regulation plan performs. These are a broad range of indicators that reflect varied interests impacted across the system (recreational boating, shoreline properties, infrastructure, ecosystem, commercial navigation, etc.)
- 2) Develop an integrated modeling framework using large and disparate sets of data (i.e. geospatial, hydrologic attributes, climate models, historical data, etc.) to better assess impacts under various future supply scenarios.
- 3) A strong focus on communications strategies for sharing P2024 expedited review facts.

What's next? Throughout the spring, summer, and fall, TIA's River Talk will share regular plain language updates on work being undertaken as part of our involvement in this important review.

A background image of pink heart-shaped flowers, likely Fritillaria, with green stems and leaves. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, some fully open and some as buds. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting foliage.

Noteworthy

C.P.R. and A.E.D. Training

Orm Murphy

As Spring arrives, we get excited about opening the cottage. The last thing that most of us think about is our health and the possibility of a crisis while we are at the cottage.

A couple of years ago, I had a heart attack while on the island. I had a stabbing pain in my chest which woke me up, and I hoped that it would go away – but it didn't. At daylight I woke Cathy and told her we had to go to the hospital. We boated from the island and drove to the Emergency Department at the Kingston General Hospital. Eventually the surgeon installed a stent in my coronary artery.

My experience illustrates the need for cardiac education and preparedness. Fortunately, my heart attack was relatively mild, but in a more extreme case, the results could have been much more serious.

T.I.A. has initiated a G.P.S. location service which should assist First Responders in locating you. Board member, James Cote, has previously written an article on this initiative. (See August 2023 River Talk, Noteworthy.)

I have contacted a Kingston C.P.R. provider who will assign an instructor to us in Gananoque, or another central location, at a cost of approximately \$100 per student. The training includes approximately six hours of C.P.R. and A.E.D. instruction. The minimum class size is eight students, so I am soliciting interest in the class. If there is substantial interest, then we can organize additional sessions. The instructors will also assist with the sale of an A.E.D. device, if individuals wish to purchase one. The cost is about \$2,000 – cheap insurance if it is going to save your life.

If you are interested please write to us at Thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com. Please include name, how many will attend and possible dates and we will be back in touch.



TIA Community Board

River Talk is introducing the Community Bulletin Board to allow organizations, businesses and persons to post notices, events and meetings relevant to the River Community.

Reminder that the **Underused Housing Tax (UHT)** form must be filed on or before April 30, 2024. For more information, search Underused Housing Tax at www.canada.ca.

Upcoming Cleanups - Save the River

April 22, 2024

Earth Day

South Bay - Wellesley Island

Grasse Point State Park

May 4, 2024

I Love My Parks Day

Minna Anthony Common Nature Center

June 8, 2024

Love Our River Day

Alexandria Bay

SIGN UP TODAY

TIA is looking to hire a summer intern. Click here to see the job description.

TIA's AGM

Save the Date! TIA's AGM will be Saturday, July 20th, 2024, at the Thousand Islands Playhouse.

Breakfast & live tunes featuring Tim Hallman starting at 8:00 am with AGM wrapping up at 11:30 am.

Featured Guest Speaker - Scott MacCrimmon of Hucks Marine & Resort - The Evolution of Boating... Past, Present and Future.



Then & Now



c. 1899

In 1907 Rose & JR Street, dean of the Teacher's college at Syracuse University, purchased a point on Bostwick Island with a natural sand beach near Half Moon Bay & within earshot of RG Graham's cottage, principal of Gananoque High School. The two had worked together 15 years earlier when Street was principal of a high school near Hamilton. Life was intense those first few years on Bostwick as the Streets, along with their three teenage sons, built a significant 3-story, 5-bedroom cottage along with docks, sea-wall, and ice house. River water plumbing was from a wood/tin tank in the attic filled by a hand pump. All tools were manual, cooking was on a wood stove and lights were kerosene. For the sons, entertainment was rowing their St Lawrence skiff onto the "40-Acre" on the stormiest of days, riding the waves (as my father did with me years later) and diving off the cliffs on vacant Hemlock Island. Religion, Methodist, was an important part of their lives. I have Rose's bible, as large and beautiful as church bibles on pulpits today.

1930s & 40s: Life was little changed, but exciting for 6 teenage granddaughter cousins, maintaining boats, sailing, runs to US sundry shop near McCrae point on Grindstone, playing cards, and lots of local boys in a variety of boats

coming to socialize. The new kerosene stove was much more convenient than the old wood stove.

1950s: Electricity arrived in 1950... lights, stove, frig, water pump, power tools... very modern. I was finally allowed to use the 1927 triple-cockpit Chris Craft. Life was good. But it did burn gas, expensive for a teenager at 25 cents/gallon. Telephone arrived in the 1960s... party line.

1970s-2010s: As the extended family grew through the second, third and fourth generations, many special island memories were made. With time and the elements came the challenges of cottage maintenance with diverse ownership.

2017 to today: JR & Rose Street's great-grandson, Chris Street, bought the cottage with partner Gabrielle Kurlander, and they have restored it to a beautiful 1910 cottage with modern facilities. I truly believe that Rose & JR Street, born 164 years ago, before Abraham Lincoln was president, would be proud of their cottage today.

Grandson: Bob Street

In Memory Of

Douglas Mackintosh

**March 7, 1931 -
January 14, 2024**



Douglas Mackintosh died on January 14, 2024, at home, peacefully, with his family around him.

Many remember his stories from his many roles and experiences: as a childhood wartime evacuee from the U.K. to Canada, and later as a soldier, an Olympic downhill skier, a pilot, a boat builder, a diver, an environmental advocate, a Crown Attorney, a problem solver, and a patron of the arts, to name but a few.

From 1962, when he and his wife Blu bought their property near Ivy Lea, the 1000 Islands were central to his life. As a marine contractor, he built much of his equipment himself. He made his crane scow self-propelled, by connecting the crane's track mechanism to turn a pair of paddle wheels. He designed and built his tugboat "Blue Quail" (it took 11 miles of welding, he used to say) and later he developed the low-impact Blue Heron Marina.

As founder of TIARA, Thousand Islands Alliance of River Advocates, he learned about and promoted sound land-use planning to protect the river's health and natural beauty. In 2008, working with the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust, he and Blu placed an environmental easement on their land to protect its wetlands and forests forever. As township councilor (1997 to 2006) he was often the only voice for the islands and waterfront. Ontario Nature chose Douglas and Blu to receive its 2023 Public Service Award.

He played as hard as he worked. He loved time on the river with his three sons and later his five grandchildren, swimming, waterskiing, sailing, windsurfing and snorkeling for treasure around barely submerged shoals.

He had a relentlessly enquiring mind. Never one to jump on a bandwagon, he withheld judgement on issues until he felt he could independently form an opinion. And once that opinion was formed, he was not hesitant about sharing it.

He is remembered by many for his energy, his independence, his engaging ability to connect to others, his strong work ethic, and his love of his family. At his Celebration of Life, one of his sons encouraged everyone to go beyond sadness by recalling joyful and inspiring memories of him instead.

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Admiral Level \$500

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- ❖ Social media mention on **TIA** Social Media
- ❖ Acknowledgement during **TIA**'s Annual General Meeting
- ❖ Your hyperlinked business logo on the **TIA** sponsorship webpage
- ❖ Your hyperlinked business logo in our scrolling banner at the top of all **TIA** webpages
- ❖ Hyperlinked logo in all **TIA** River Talk publications (Our digital newsletter published 8 times per year)
- ❖ Invitation to submit an article about your business for inclusion in **TIA** River Talk

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Our Mission: River Safety - Environmental Awareness - Community Support

Business Sponsorship support helps TIA to fulfill its mission to the river community and its flagship program of maintaining 200 shoal markers essential to the safety of boating and our local and seasonal residents.

www.thousandislandsassociation.com/sponsor



Thousand Islands Association (TIA)

Due to seasonality, varying water levels, vandalism and equipment failure, the Thousand Islands Association (TIA) disclaims any liability for the absence of any of its shoal markers from time to time.

The Thousand Islands Association (TIA) is a not for profit organization that is proactive in addressing safety on the river, promoting environmental preservation and supporting the interests of the Community for the benefit of the 1000 Islands region of the St. Lawrence River.

thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com

P.O. Box 616
Clayton, NY 13624
United States of America

P.O. Box 274
Gananoque, ON K7G 2T8
Canada

RIVER TALK

Editor: Allison Burchell-Robinson
Manager: Janet Smith-Staples
Graphic Design: Megan Coleman
Circulation Director: Vince Barton



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