

Summary of the OLRA Survey June/July 2016

OLRA is 54 years young this year which is quite an accomplishment so we decided to ask:

“What has OLRA meant to you and what should OLRA focus on in the future?”

The following summarizes the 82 responses from the 182 emails sent to members in June and July of 2016 and from the paper copies left at the marina. This 45% response rate is terrific!

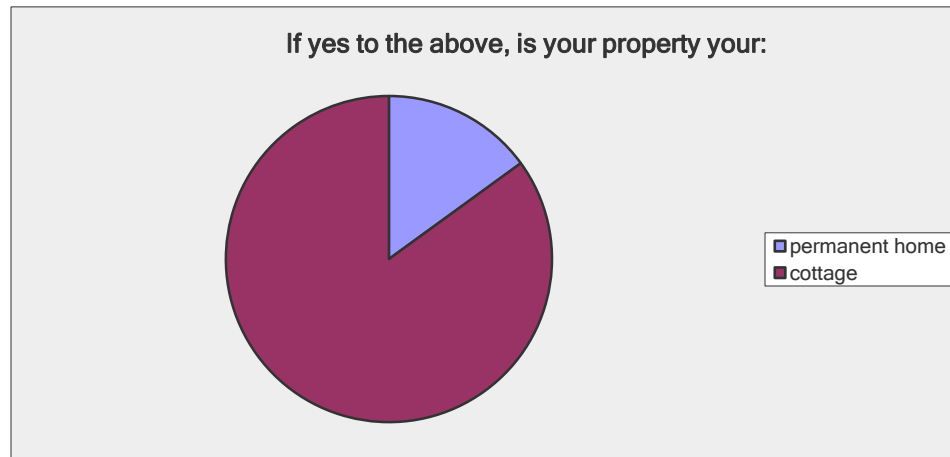
Thank you to all who shared their thoughts and ideas!

Survey Question 1

| Do you or your family own property on Otter Lake (big or Little Otter Lake)? | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 100.0% | 82 |
| No | 0.0% | 0 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 82 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 0 |

Survey Question 2

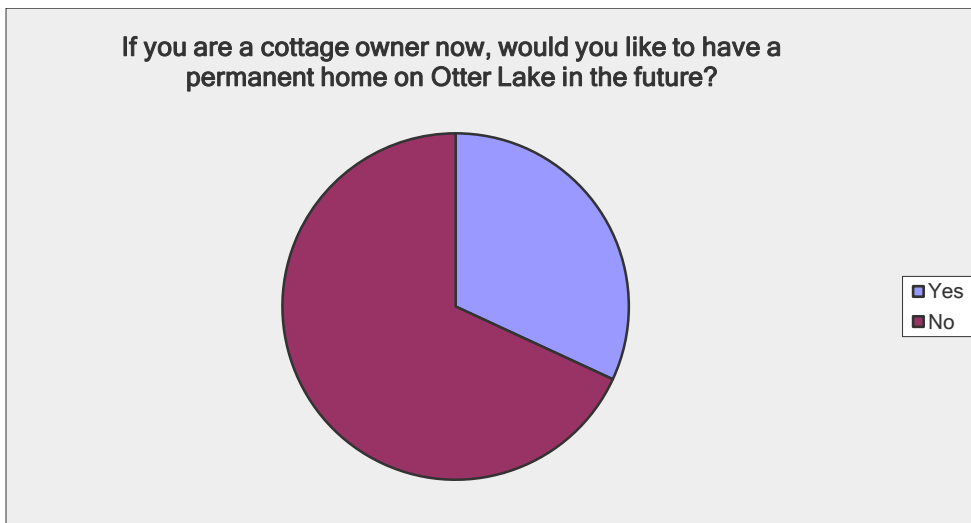
| If yes to the above, is your property your: | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| permanent home | 15.0% | 12 |
| cottage | 85.0% | 69 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 81 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 1 |



Survey Question 3

If you are a cottage owner now, would you like to have a permanent home on Otter Lake in the future?

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 31.9% | 22 |
| No | 68.1% | 48 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 70 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 12 |



Survey Question 4

Are you a current OLRA member?

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 100.0% | 81 |
| No | 0.0% | 0 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 81 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 1 |

Survey Question 5

What has OLRA meant to you in the past?

| Answer Options | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 68 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 66 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 13 |

Provides a link to the property owners and users of the lake and the surrounding community and keeps us informed about issues that affect our lives there.

Great way to understand that is going on on Otter and the area.

Excellent source of information. Keeps me aware of issues concerning the lake. Keeps me in touch with our local government members and their position on topics concerning Seguin Twp.

Good information on the lake conditions, safety tips, and concerns or issues facing the lake community. Awareness of programs appropriate for cottage owners.

Importance of keeping informed about the happenings on the lake, contact info, updates etc we like the newsletter

We like getting to know other people on the lake and we like being brought up to date on issues that concern us when we go to the annual meeting.

an organization that represents us as Owners to ensure the well being and health of our beautiful lake

OLRA provides the latest bulletins on the lake that keep us informed.

A protector of the lake via monitoring council, part of township planning, watching the factory and other potential industry and its impact on OL, inputting on issues that would affect the quality of the lake and people

It keeps us in the know of what is happening on and with the lake.

Interest in environmental and social events.

Communication of important issues Advocate protecting the interests of owners on Otter lake current info about issues that affect Otter Lake and my enjoyment of the property

Participation in making Otter Lake a clean safe lake

A source of history, a voice for opinions that matter to the health of the lake and area, a way to bring the community together.

Very helpful to be informed of the political and environmental issues that affect our lake. information about lake

They provide a voice in Seguin for our lake and are recognised by the township politicians. The stress on protecting our lake's health mean that we can enjoy living here without worrying about the water. Thanks for all you do.

staying connected with what's happening

Helps us learn about the lake and its history and keep up on current issues and developments

Lots of good information on the lake and environment. Contacts!

Helps to keep up with what is going on that could affect the area

Excellent source of information on what is happening on Otter Lake.

A way of being informed about issues and activities in the area and around the lake.

An organized voice on issues that affect Otter Lake and its community

Very good source of information about programs and initiatives on and around the lake.

Preservation of the natural beauty of the lake

Lake trout protection

Source for some information

Great representation, information through the newsletters and meetings

Good information

It allows our family to be aware of issues for the lake and have a voice for municipal changes. no support for dividing family property owned since 1950's on 33 acres with 650 foot frontage, Individual hydro, septic and cottages.

Keeps us up to date on what is happening.

Long standing member - our voice at the Council table,

New to it. Find it surprising that even though I paid for a joint or secondary membership as the secondary member I do not receive any emails now news letters despite provide my email address

source for feedback re lake conditions /environmental concerns / political decisions that affect the lake community /and especially an voice for common interests re lake quality and enjoyment

Not much not sure what we pay for expect news letter and a dinner party once a year.

Guardian of our Environment is most important for Us

information about the lake

At the moment, provides me with information regarding the lake.

Awareness of the lake activities, Government rulings that may affect our enjoyment, etc.

A source of information and a sense of community. And the social aspect is important too ...

knowing your 'neighbours'

stewardship of the lake; community building

A way of keeping up with what is going on around the lake.

A watchdog, protecting the quality of the lake and surrounding area.

information

- good source of information about the lake and local community - provides a sense of community with the annual BBQ and newsletters

preservation of natural environment & watchdog on development

Maintaining the quality of the lake and environment

works for the betterment of the lake keeps members informed

OLRA Used to be an active ratepayers association but for the last 10 or so years there has not been much activity by the board of directors, which is more or less only a tea party.

A source of information for activities and news

Information on the lake and civic activities Photo contest for the visual interest and connection in the winter

It keeps us informed on local issues

keeps me informed of what is going on around Otter

Protector of the environment

We were members about 15 years ago and stopped our membership, 2016 we are back. Proud to be on Otter Lake not sure how OLRA helps us.

Keeps me informed..goes to bat for non seasonal and seasonal residents regarding building....hydro..etc. keeps us in the loop through FOCA..has fun activities so you can meet your neighbour...keeps us up to date on our loons...boating safety (though th boating proficiency is a joke seeing as hardly anybody obeys any of the rules) keeps us informed of water quality etc.

source of info about the lake

Instrumental in keeping lake quality high (weir), fish restock, environmental issues and keeping out excessive development.

I feel that OLRA is looking after the best interests of everyone on the lake in order to maintain the best quality of the lake water and property values as well.

Information link to otter lake community

Good representation. Keeping lake protected.

A community group to discuss issues- an organization aware of issues - voice at council - creates awareness of neighbours

OLRA has looked out for the interests of the Otter Lake property owners and the sustainability of the lake.

Community awareness and understanding

Appreciate how issues are handled

Survey Question 6

If you are not an OLRA member, is there a particular reason why not?

| Answer Options | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 6 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 6 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 76 |

Too lazy this year to join on the internet

Other 5 answers were N/A.

Survey Question 7

Which of these current OLRA initiatives and events matter to you? (select all that apply)

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Water testing through the OLRA Lake Stewardship Program | 93.9% | 77 |
| Having a voice through OLRA on matters effecting you, your property and the lake at Seguin Council and the province. | 91.5% | 75 |
| OLRA newsletters (spring and fall) | 90.2% | 74 |
| Loon Lake Survey through Bird Studies Canada | 79.3% | 65 |
| OLRA Annual General Meeting | 57.3% | 47 |
| OLRA website | 54.9% | 45 |
| Membership in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) (benefits on pg 7 of your spring newsletter) | 51.2% | 42 |
| OLRA annual BBQ | 47.6% | 39 |
| Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve - notice of updates and events | 46.3% | 38 |
| OLRA annual photo contest | 30.5% | 25 |
| Other (please specify) | 7.3% | 6 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 82 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 0 |

Other: (6) comments:

Voice at local council meetings is important.

township bylaws that affect cottagers

education of residents concerning considerate boating

Road maintenance, dust control, gravel applied on a regular basis if you don't have a paved road like the politicians or works people.

More involvement in the local municipal political dialogue

Community closeness

Survey Question 8

Do you feel the current OLRA membership fee structure of \$30 for the initial member and \$5 for each additional member is:

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Too high | 5.0% | 4 |
| Just right | 91.3% | 74 |
| Too low | 3.7% | 3 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 81 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 1 |

Survey Question 9

What new initiative(s) do you think OLRA should undertake in the future?

| Answer Options | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 34 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 34 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 48 |

Themes

- Boating safety Attempt at some control or limits on wake boarding and heavy wake producing craft whose wakes are clobbering docks and shorelines.
- Boating safety regulating(if possible) the size of boats and motors on the lake and the waves they create that affect shore line erosion and Loon nests destructions

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Boating safety Boating safety Boating safety Boating Safety Boating Safety Boating Safety Boating Safety 9</p> | <p>Give information such as fishing regulations on this lake in particular and marine safety within the newsletter, web site and discuss at the AGM. It appears that people/cottagers/residents/guests aren't aware. There are some lake front owners who put out buoys marking territory in front of their places extending their boundaries to an extreme distance to keep boats and other lake recreational craft and people away ... They do not own the lake and it should be pointed out we all share the lake and should respect each other. All of us have issues of lake traffic creating large waves. OLRA shouldn't be directly involved in the issues but could talk about it with recommendations of a good neighbour policy. If there is a problem the parties involved should talk to their neighbours if that doesn't work then call the police. As it stands there presently is a boating safety issue and these buoys are not legally valid.</p> <p>Wake control/water safety</p> <p>Encourage respectful boating, in particular reduce excessive wakes.</p> <p>boat size and wake control</p> <p>monitoring of light pollution on the lake, reckless driving on the lake</p> <p>Education (posters, etc.) and signage to keep wakes and noise down near cottages.</p> <p>education - water safety, fire safety (speakers at AGM)</p> |
| <p>Buildings - new and Maint Buildings - new and Maint 2</p> | <p>Limited further development and new building on this lake which is already way over its population limit quota.</p> <p>Boat house maintenance</p> |
| <p>Environment Environment Environment Environment Environment Environment Environment 7</p> | <p>Living sustainably on the lake. This not only means our impact on the lake directly, but also our impact on the overall environment of our area and the world. We should begin to move towards reducing our GHG footprint. This could lead to providing purchase discount agreements to enhance members heating equipment. Perhaps we could consider a community solar array site with a FIT contract providing a source of income to support other programs, and a community composting site. There are a number of sustainable initiatives we could embark on as a community.</p> <p>Environmental initiatives with children and teens :-)</p> <p>Don't know specifically but activities to safe guard our environment i.e. lake water quality more info on the bio reserve</p> <p>Increasing fish and wildlife to reside near or in the lake.</p> <p>Control of disrupting factors to water quality i.e. species like geese, cormorants, and certain harmful fish types</p> <p>Educate the membership about the ecology of the lake, how to possibly improve it or at least reduce our impact on it at the same time as increasing our enjoyment of being at Otter Lake.</p> |
| <p>Education Education 2</p> | <p>Perhaps notifications on local events. Reminders of ordinances. Fire bans etc.</p> <p>Education - water safety, fire safety, (speakers at AGM)</p> |
| <p>Fish Fish Fish Fish Fish 5</p> | <p>stocking fish in lake</p> <p>Lake trout stocking program and other species stocking programs.</p> <p>Fish creel census</p> <p>Stocking the lake with lake trout.</p> <p>Health of the fish stocks</p> |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Loons / History 1 | 1. Increase efforts to restore loon populations 2. Document more of the history of the lake |
| Membership Drive 1 | encouragement or incentives for non-members to become members, perhaps just more neighbour to neighbour conversations about membership |
| Roads Roads 2 | road improvements lobby to get roads paved - allows for cycling and roller blading |
| Social Social 2 | Host many more social events, fund raisers to enhance Otter, Annual tournaments, fun!!! More actively provide networking and social opportunities for lake residents to meet each other and others in the community |
| None | I can't think of a new initiative |
| None | continue the great work and hope that continued volunteers are as interested and productive as current and past members have been |
| None | Can't think of anything |

| |
|--------------------|
| Survey Question 10 |
|--------------------|

| Would you willing to lead such a new initiative? | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 11.4% | 5 |
| No | 88.6% | 40 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 45 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 37 |

Survey Question 11

If funding is required, how should this new initiative be funded?

| Answer Options | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 32 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 32 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 50 |

Comments on how to fund new initiatives:

believe that laws exist so it is just a matter of greater enforcement. (refers to: Attempt at some control or limits on wake boarding and heavy wake producing craft whose wakes are clobbering docks and shorelines.)

Members

Increase in members fees, but more so getting grants and loans from the municipal and provincial governments.

by assessments to OLRA members

perhaps donations

Fees

dues

??? Not sure....

membership fees

Don't know

Sponsors and private or government.

User fee

Fundraise or increase membership fee

Depends on what is needed and why

best that specific problems be funded as such to help recognize any urgency tho underlying voluntary maintenance as currently offered are helpful too

sell tickets for a draw rise money!

Seek Gov't grants and possibly a surcharge to members.

Through membership fees

no funding required

targetted donations

Keep the status quo

managed within annual budget

Asking

Via education before action.

not sure

with the reserve fund which has \$ 55,000.- in the Bank.

I hope member contributions could combine with an MNR program

the municipality/township. should chip in as they do for the other societies they fund pending membership and number of members

OLRA fees

Reserve membership fund

Through the Environment Fund

Survey Question 12

If the above new initiative required an increase in your OLRA membership fee how much more would you agree to pay?

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| \$5 | 26.0% | 13 |
| \$10 | 24.0% | 12 |
| \$15 | 18.0% | 9 |
| Other (please specify) | 32.0% | 16 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 50 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 32 |

Other Ideas:

\$70. Family membership should be \$100 (includes children under 21), additional memberships for adult children should be \$30 each.

Is it necessary to increase an annual fee to fund a specific initiative, specific appeals for specific initiatives

100

if you raise the fee i will not be a member

Amt. consultate with the project

None

Can;t specify without knowing what it is.

Whatever

The fee is enough...if it can't fit the pay..don't do it

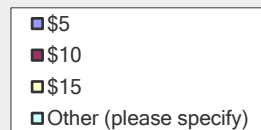
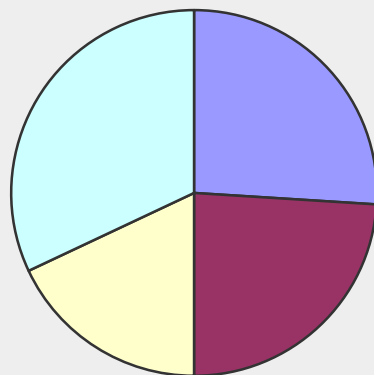
can't comment without knowing what is the new initiative

Have no frame of reference to even guess an amount

It depends on what it is.

not interested in increase

If the above new initiative required an increase in your OLRA membership fee how much more would you agree to pay?



Survey Question 13

| What is of most interest to you as an Otter Lake property owner? (1 is high, 5 is low) | | | | | | | Response Count | % rated as 1) very important and/or 2) important |
|--|--------------------|----|----|----|-------------------|----|----------------|--|
| Answer Options | 1) High Importance | 2) | 3) | 4) | 5) Low importance | | | |
| Maintaining lake property values | 51 | 18 | 10 | 1 | 2 | 82 | 84% | |
| Lake water quality | 81 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 82 | 100% | |
| Ecology of Otter Lake and area | 69 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 80 | 95% | |
| Effects of climate change | 25 | 21 | 23 | 3 | 3 | 75 | 56% | |
| Tips on cottage living | 7 | 18 | 26 | 15 | 10 | 76 | 30% | |
| Getting to know people on the lake | 7 | 26 | 21 | 14 | 7 | 74 | 40% | |
| Safety when boating and swimming | 41 | 22 | 13 | 1 | 2 | 78 | 77% | |
| Up coming events and activities | 17 | 24 | 23 | 7 | 4 | 75 | 50% | |
| Supporting local businesses, groups and services | 17 | 24 | 25 | 8 | 3 | 77 | 52% | |
| <i>answered question</i> | | | | | | 82 | | |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | | | | | 0 | | |

Survey Question 14

| What topics would you like to see reported on in future newsletters? | |
|--|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Count |
| | 21 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 21 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 61 |

Theme

- Boat Safety More stringent reminders that safe/sensible boating means taking responsibility for the damage that wakes cause.
- Gov't / Boat Safety Upcoming events. Ordinance reminders. A member section for sales of boats , cottages for rent, services available etc
- Sustainable Living Sustainable living. This could be a number of topics from solar arrays on your property, energy savings tips, maintaining your power boat to reduce emissions, water use management, and composting, etc.
- History It covers a lot as it is and is very informative. Perhaps some historical items. See also #9.
- Boat Safety Reminders each year about boat safety requirements, fishing season dates, ice fishing ban etc.

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Kids | i think the news letter has relevant topics in it as it is. My only suggestion is somehow involving kids and teens. I don't have an answer, just a suggestion ;) |
| History/Boating | Articles on history of lake or local small business owners whose businesses relate to life on the lake. Promotion of boating etiquette - boaters need to slow down when close to others docks! |
| Water Quality | More information on water quality (including on algae blooms) tracked over time. Information on the importance of proper septic system installation and maintenance. Promotion of shoreline/habitat preservation. |
| History / Issues | Enjoy factual accounts on current issues and lighter "history" type pieces about the Lake and surrounding areas |
| Fish | Fish species study information. |
| Roads | Any new local upcoming projects on our back roads etc |
| Boat Safety | Safety tips for boaters regarding driving too fast near land and noise levels of cottagers. |
| Water / People | water quality; character profiles of people on the lake ? |
| Gov't | government actions that affect Otter Lake |
| Gov't | Municipal and Council Issues that are important to Otter Lake The newsletter is very informative now |
| Issues | Topics of general interest and current information |
| Water Quality | More in depth on water quality Water level |

| |
|--------------------|
| Survey Question 15 |
|--------------------|

| Would you like to volunteer to assist OLRA with: | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| the annual BBQ | 11.8% | 2 |
| the Annual General Meeting | 11.8% | 2 |
| the photo contest | 5.9% | 1 |
| an article for the newsletter | 29.4% | 5 |
| Other (please specify) | 70.6% | 12 |
| | answered question | 17 |
| | skipped question | 65 |

Too old!!!

re-the article - it is draft format now, will submit later

Live in US. Don't feel we can volunteer.

we are too old to become actively but keep up the good work on our behalf. Thank you!

At this time I am too busy to be able to commit. In the future I think I would be VERY interested to help with the photo contest or articles for the newsletter.

currently do so

None of the above

not able

none

At the moment no, as I am never up on a long weekend. However, once I retire, I would like to assist in any way I can.

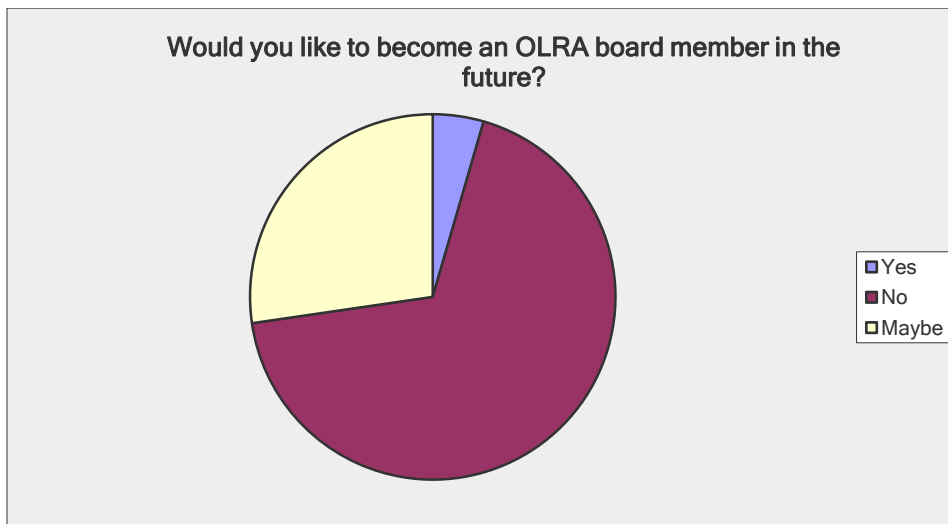
Social Events

Once I retire

Survey Question 16

Would you like to become an OLRA board member in the future?

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 4.5% | 3 |
| No | 68.2% | 45 |
| Maybe | 27.3% | 18 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 66 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 12 |



Survey Question 17

| Do you think the Otter Lake Ratepayers' Association (OLRA) is still a good name for our association? | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes | 91.8% | 69 |
| No | 8.2% | 7 |
| <i>answered question</i> | | 76 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | | 5 |

Survey Question 18

| Do you have suggestions for another name? | |
|---|----------------|
| Answer Options | Response Count |
| | 17 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 17 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 65 |

- OLAA Otter Lake Advocacy Association (or OLA Council, OLA Community, OL Community Partners)
- OLAC
- OLCP
- OLRA no why would you even thing of changing it??? This name is highly respected and known by council and other organizations and citizens.
- OLCT Otter Lake Care Takers
- Wish I could think of one!
- OLRA Otter Lake Residents Association (OLRA)
Otter Lake Residents' Association (OLRA)
- OLPOA Otter lake property owners association
- OLL Otter Lake Leafs
- OLA Nothing to suggest other than removing "Ratepayers" from the name
- Do not change the name!
- No (four times)
- OLCA otter lake cottage association
- Wish the native name was still used.
- OLEA Otter Lake Estates Association

Survey Question 19

Other comments or feedback?

| Answer Options | Response Count |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| | 18 |
| <i>answered question</i> | 18 |
| <i>skipped question</i> | 64 |

We are islanders in mid-lake and heavy wakes have damaged my boat and have often disconnected the hinged ramps to our floating dock. Hence my above comments.

Thank you for your commitment to our community and hard work.

I have not been a member in ORLA for most of my time here on the lake. I regret that I haven't been more involved after finding out what you do. I think we need to

promote the work done and the reasons to join. A promotion campaign should be considered to help drive membership.

I would like to see documentation such a pdf file including a book with the history of OLRA including all the names of the Presidents and executive positions over the years.

All the issues past and present that OLRA was involved in. I suggest a committee archiving the materials held by the secretary and past executive members.

Also including photos people have on the lake with historical relevance and meaning. This would be a worthwhile major undertaking. Perhaps this should be under initiative.

I/we likely have more to say but this is it for now!!!!

Thank you for all the work you do!

Thank you to all the board members. The OLRA is a very important organization to preserve and protect the quality of life on our lake.

I know from experience that being a board member can be time consuming. Thanks to everyone on the board for their hard work

Thanks to all who volunteer time to the Association so we can all continue to enjoy our time at the Lake!

Thanks for asking members what they think and this should be done more consistently on specific issues when possible

Keep up the great work and thank you.

so far great job being done and particularly enjoy feedback through the newsletter and access to FOCA More newsletters.

The board is doing a great job of keeping members (and non-members should they need to know) informed about issues affecting the lake and region. I look forward to receiving the e-version of the Newsletter twice a year.

It used to be black and white...no colour...no glitz...less expensive...what do we need? Perhaps back to the fundamentals, but then it might be boring!

In my opinion, the board is spending far too much on the BBQ. They seem to be spending than the actual revenue. OLRA's most important function is to help preserve the quality of the lake, and safety for those who are on it. Education is the key, although it is difficult at times to get through to some people. You're doing an excellent job. Keep up the good work!

Controlling Water levels are not just the responsibility of 1 board member, any and all lake residents are free to contact MNR and request adjustments to proper water levels to datum levels.

I support the OLRA, but really have no interest in becoming more involved. I think that those who are do a great job.

An interesting AGM this year. Very Informative. Well done!