

FRIENDS OF PETRIE ISLAND
AMIS DE L'ÎLE PETRIE



www.petrieisland.org

Report to the City of Ottawa for the 2011 Summer Season
October 18, 2011

This was the Friends of Petrie Island's fourteenth year of operation and our seventh with the new beach open. The City provided lifeguards and daily maintenance and operated the beach house starting in mid June and closing the 3rd week in August, except for Labour Day weekend in September.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hot summer weather with 18 days above 30 degrees, attendance May through Sept, 264,259
- All Ottawa beaches were closed more frequently probably due to pollution from geese
- High water levels closed the access road in May
- Funds generated included: \$ 7165 in grants, \$ 400 in donations and a value of \$ 17,127 in volunteer labour for a total of \$ 24,692 - see *Summary, tables 3 and 4, appendix A*
- S.P.I.R.I.T. located their day camps and programs in the picnic area and nature centre for the fourth year
- The Friends of Petrie Island completed a sixth year of turtle nesting studies
- Junior nature program was continued in cooperation with S.P.I.R.I.T. and we added a program for ages 7 to 12 and the Boys and Girls Club participated on a weekly basis
- Participated with PIAC, the City and the Consultant (SENES) in the Management plan
- Severe wind storm in August caused a loss of power to the Nature Centre for 3 days, 20 large trees were also blown over taking power lines with them

PARTNERSHIPS

- FOPI continued interactions with City staff and consultants on the Management Plan
- Ottawa Duck Club - Duck counts
- Ottawa Riverkeeper – River Watch
- Turtle S.H.E.L.L. Tortue Turtle Day with presentation from Little Ray's Reptiles
- Sonshine Families (S.P.I.R.I.T) – cooperated in the summer camps, school tours and the Junior Naturalist program which used our materials and the centre
- Ottawa Voyageurs Walking Club - Orleans Royal Canadian Legion

SITE IMPROVEMENTS – FOPI

- Improved the Nature Centre, set up 6 new dioramas
- Majority of work was done on Wednesday mornings; some groups also participated in general cleanups
- We built 4 new picnic tables
- We put a plastic roof over the entrance to the Nature Centre
- We made a new airplane for the playground area and put in a squirrel feeder

OPERATIONS

- Spring cleanup and monitoring of the picnic area and trails was provided by Friends of Petrie Island, using volunteers and students hired with City funding \$7777 along with a Careers Canada grant of \$ 7792.
- Monitoring is important to protect the environment and for public safety and has led to reduced levels of vandalism and damage
- Removed dead trees, branches were used to provide habitat along the trails..
- The City opened the beach washrooms, provided daily garbage collection and beach grooming maintenance, materials and grass cutting
- City provided regular lifeguards from mid-June to the end of August for the two beach areas. The River beaches and the East beach were monitored separately and opened accordingly. The river beaches were closed 22 days and the East beach 34 days due to high E. coli readings but both beaches were only closed 20 days at the same time, see Table 2.
- Geese were considered to be the main factor in the beach closings. The City continued studies with the special fertilizer to discourage geese
- Parking –There was only 2 days all summer when the parking lot was full (350 cars). Many visitors are still confused about parking fees on weekdays. FOPI is concerned about reduced attendance, due to parking charges, especially early mornings. FOPI does not feel fees should be charged when lifeguards are not on duty before 11 a.m. and after 7 p.m., or during prolonged inclement weather. See Appendix C
- Dragging of the sand areas is a concern as it may affect turtle nesting

ATTENDANCE

- Attendance was high in July due to hot weather and special events, 111,220
- Attendance figures are based on car counts multiplied by 2.5 persons in May/June and 3.0 persons in July/August – figures represent person-hours of use
- Figures are found in Table 1 of Appendix A.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Jim Robertson's 4 slide shows continue to be available on our website and are very popular
- Dawn to Dusk 618 viewers, Birds of Petrie 255, Seasons in a Small Wilderness 135, Turtles 303
- A Junior Naturalist program was held during the summer and fall, led by S.P.I.R.I.T. assisted by FOPI staff, participants attended 10 theme days
- FOPI staff initiated a program for 7 to 12 year olds, 6 programs were presented and 6 days with the Boys and Girls Club, and 8 impromptu tours were held
- Opened the centre daily in June, July and August and on weekends in May, and September, more detailed records were collected on Nature centre events and trail use. See Appendix A Table 5
- Theme days were held with nature displays, including a 12th Wildflower Walk and an 11th annual Turtle Day which included a presentation from Little Ray's Reptiles
- We continued to have displays of live animals at the Nature center, using aquariums and containers; they were very popular
- We gave tours to schools, Scout and Guide groups and the Chairman participated in the Jane's Walk tour in early May for the 3rd year, in conjunction with other walks throughout the City

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

- FOPI members continued Turtle counts on Turtle Pond
- of the twenty Butternut trees planted in 2008/09 have survived.
- A sixth turtle nesting study was conducted by FOPI. With some members of the public. Snapping turtle hatchlings were observed in different parts of Steumer park the last week in August and the first week in September.
- Wood duck boxes (Ottawa Duck Club) were again well used
- FOPI continues to participate in the Riverwatch program for Ottawa Riverkeeper on the Ottawa River.
- The largest amount of damage continues to be from beavers felling or damaging mature trees

- FOPI continues to oppose a bridge at Petrie Island
- Geese continued to be a problem this year and the City is trying to come up with solutions
- FOPI attended several Open Houses and added comments on the Management Plan

FUTURE ACTIONS -

The main beach has been in operation for seven years and FOPI has operated and developed the picnic area and trails over the past fourteen years.

Many issues FOPI has championed for several years continue to show little progress:

1. **Signage – many people do not understand the pictorial signs. FOPI has supported the installation of worded signs at various locations but especially on the entrance road at the first bend. THIS HAS BEEN AN ISSUE FOR OVER 6 YEARS!!**
2. **Parking: many people are confused or have problems with the existing system. FOPI questions the value of revenues collected by the City versus the cost of operation as it discourages many people from using the area. There is also a problem with the half hour parking not being incremental. I.e; people have put in \$1.50 and only get credit for a ½ hour....in some cases they have also received a \$35 ticket in addition to paying. Proper signage could resolve some of these issue as well.**
3. **Review of washroom operation – the daily hours it is open and the length of the season are of some concern. It could be improved using partner organizations**
4. **The e coli counts were worse this year resulting in many closures, unfortunately many of the closures were due to geese pollution and the e coli counts were quite high. These issues need to be monitored and improved.**
5. **Shelter – the addition of shelters and other amenities should be addressed in the Master plan**
6. **The increased use of the park area for large special events and the balance required to protect the natural area also needs to be reviewed in the Master Plan. A special study is needed to evaluate the effects of large events during turtle nesting season, mid to late June. Turtles continue to nest and hatch in various parts of Steumer park, hatchlings were discovered in late August and early September of this year.**
7. **The location of large events should be moved from the East Beach to the centre area, the East beach was blocked off to the general public for several days for each of two large events this year. This was recommended last year but not implemented.**
8. **Create twice yearly meetings of Staff and user groups to review operations and make improvements**

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FRIENDS OF PETRIE ISLAND EXECUTIVE

Chair
 Vice-chair
 Secretary
 Treasurer
 Planning
 Members at Large
 Interpretive Program Committee

Al Tweddle*
 Bob Gray
 Paul Le Fort *
 Steve McPhee *
 David Villeneuve, *
 Gil LeBlanc, Doug Drouillard
 Paul Le Fort, Al Tweddle, Bill Bower, Jim Robertson
 Christine Hanrahan, Stephen Darbyshire

Friends of Petrie Island - Financial Statement
Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2011

Bank Balance, 31 December 2010		\$ 8377.83
 Revenue		
Grants HRDC (Careers Canada)	7165	
City of Ottawa	<u>7777</u>	
Subtotal	14,942	14942
Membership	60	
Donations St Francis	50	
Miscellaneous (drinks, donations books)	<u>567</u>	
Subtotal	677	677
Cash GIC	<u>6480</u>	<u>6480</u>
Total Revenue	22099	22099
 Expenditures		
Student Salaries	16,059.18	
Receiver General	<u>1231.57</u>	
Subtotal	17290.75	17290.75
Administration	448	
Administration supplies	104.09	
Interpretation	247	
Bank Charges	18	
Phone	339	
Drinks	28.24	
Board expenses	173.39	
Maintenance Supplies	446.24	
Computer	72.04	
October General Labour	354	
December Honorarium	<u>500</u>	
subtotal	2730	<u>2730</u>
Subtotal expenditures		20020.75
Net Surplus		2078.25
Bank balance as at 31 December 2011		\$ 10456.08

Appendix A - Statistical Information								
TABLE 1	PETRIE ISLAND ATTENDANCE							
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
MAY	6,294	16,165	17,270	21,365	9,010	13,970	38,130	21,330
JUNE	14,436	71,213	52,920	55,411	35,630	46,510	35,559	67,202
JULY	48,137	115,072	93,243	70,160	55,340	72,450	106,280	111,220
AUGUST	57,718	60,063	43,916	61,960	42,100	55,340	59,794	45,297
SEPT	27,304	21,860	12,500	23,760	18,170	29,550	16,848	19,210
TOTAL	153,889	284,377	219,849	232,656	160,250	217,820	256,611	264,259
CANADA DAY		24,000	24,000	18,500	22,000	22,000	22,000	18,000
TABLE 2	BEACH OPERATION							
	Days when E-coli values over 100 in BOLD (this is not the same as the beach closures)							
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
BRITANNIA	4	2	2	2	1	3	5	20
WESTBORO	14	22	22	14	23	13	13	29
MOONEYS B	1	27	12	2	5	11	8	35
PETRIE ISL.	6	17	48	6	19	18	7	26
PETRIE ISL. E. BEACH						7	14	36
SAMPLING DAYS					combined		3	
CITY BEACHES	65	75	75	74	64	67	65	65
PETRIE IS.	65	75	75	74	64	67	65	65
TABLE 3	VOLUNTEER HOURS							
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
WORK	925	721	593	757	597	461	562	603
MONITORS	370	433	343	364	414	349	466	423
ADMINISTRATION	253	260	346	314	474	280	293	396
INTERPRETIVE	567	323	308	590	184	173	154	135
TOTAL	2,115	1,737	1,630	2025	1669	1263	1475	1557
PAID HOURS	780	550	850		980			
TABLE 4	DONATIONS AND GRANTS in Dollars							
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
DONATED MATERIAL	400	400	300	400	700	900	600	400
DONATED LABOR	21,150	17,370	16,300	20,250	16,690	12,630	14,750	17,127
TOTAL DONATED	21,550	17,770	16,600	20,650	17,390	13530	15,350	17,527
TRILLIUM GRANTS	4,900							
H.R.S.S.	2,500	3,000	6,000	5,900	6,200	7,302	7,773	7,165
PARTNERSHIPS with Ottawa Stewardship Council	5,000	7,000				498		
TOTAL GRANTS	12,400	10,000	6,000	5,900	6,200	7,800	7,773	7,165
TOTAL \$ VALUE	33,950	27,770	22,600	26,550	23,950	21,320	23123	24,692