

# Playing it safe on our waterways makes sense

Thousands of people will take to the waterways of Ontario this summer in all manner of boats, canoes, dinghies, catamarans, power boats and yachts.

It's great fun and looks easy- if you know what you're doing. **But do you know-**

-that waterways have "rules of the road" too?

-how to steer a canoe without switching your paddle from side to side?

-how to double your chances of survival if you fall into cold water?

-how to help someone whose boat has "turned turtle"?

If you want to join the fun of boating this summer but are not familiar with basic water safety, the wisest thing to do is take a boating course. The Ministry of Natural Resources can help you find a course that suits your boating interests. MNR's Office of Recreational Boating, established in 1984, provides information

about boating regulations and facilities, and promotes boating safety.

MNR staff have investigated the causes of boating accidents and identified the main skills needed to reduce the risks of mishaps on the water.

Then, to insure as many people as possible learn those skills, MNR helps fund water safety programs administered by both the Ontario Division of the Canadian Red Cross and Ontario Safety League.

"The ministry supports these programs for one very good reason- teaching proper boating skills and accident prevention techniques is the best way to make Ontario's waterways safer," said Natural Resources Minister Vincent Kerrio.

The Red Cross has long been involved in the teaching of swimming, water safety and first aid.

In 1973, the society began to develop the **Small Craft Safety Program** which includes instruc-

tion in canoes, rowboats and powered craft.

Statistics show that people operating boats less than six metres (18 feet)- especially those who use their craft as part of some other recreational activity- are most at risk.

To give these people the safe boating message, the Red Cross has nine mobile demonstration teams that tour the province teaching boating skills, risk prevention and survival techniques.

This spring, Natural Resources Minister Vincent Kerrio presented the Red Cross with a cheque for \$43,000 to help fund the mobile teams.

Last summer, more than 1,700 people were certified by these teams in the various courses of the program. The team members visited public beaches, provincial parks, cottage areas and camps, bringing their safety message to more than 42,000 people of all ages.

By going directly to recre-

ational areas, the teams' demonstrations of survival and rescue techniques were doubly effective because participants could practise the skills right away.

Through the team's efforts all across Ontario, people have learned how to choose approved lifejackets, or the new PFDs (Personal Floatation Devices).

PFDs are the new, light, comfortable fitting vests that resemble fishermen's vests. Instead of bulky material around the neck and chest, relatively-thin floatation material is used, allowing full arm movement.

They also learned how those lifejackets keep people afloat so they can assume the **Heat Escape Lessening Position**, commonly called **HELP** by boaters.

**HELP** involves staying still with your elbows in and your knees pulled into your chest to prevent needless loss of body heat and double your survival time.

If you can climb out of the water onto your boat your chances are even better- and you will be more visible.

Short periods of immersion in moderately cool water- even in July or August- can lower your core body temperature enough to cause harm and prevent you from rescuing yourself.

Prolonged exposure to cold water can lead to paralysis, heart failure and other severe effects.

**HELP** is the most important- and the simplest- technique for controlling the effects of severe body heat loss, or hypothermia. **HELP** can often double the time people can survive in the water.

The Ontario Safety League also teaches safe boating skills directly to the public in Ontario's provincial parks, through its **Canoe Safety Program** started 18 years ago in Algonquin Park.

This season, MNR has granted \$14,000 to the league to expand the instruction to several other parks and 13 of the ministry's Junior Ranger camps for young people.

These free one-day clinics include demonstrations by qualified instructors and on-the-water personal instruction, all of which make subsequent canoe trips in the park much more enjoyable because the canoeists have improved their skills and are more aware of the danger.

Safe boating courses stress common sense and simple safety rules. For example, 10 very important rules to keep in mind are:

-listen to the weather reports before setting out in a boat. Be aware of changing weather patterns

-let someone know the route you are taking and the time you plan to return

-for your safety, the Canadian Coast Guard requires that, before you set out in a boat, you have the minimum required safety equipment aboard. For smaller craft, this list includes: an approved lifejacket or PFD for each person; two oars with rowlocks or two paddles; one hand-held bailer or manual pump; some type of horn, whistle or sound signalling device, and the proper lights according to coast guard collision regulations

-wear your lifejacket or PFD- especially if you are a weak swimmer or are venturing out in cold or rough water

-load your boat carefully. Do not exceed the weight limit on the capacity plate attached to your boat. Distribute your load for good balance

-don't stand up in a small boat -if your boat capsizes or you fall out- **STAY WITH YOUR CRAFT**. Assume the **Heat Escape Lessening Position**, or **HELP**, and signal for assistance

-powerboats must stay out of the way of swimmers, divers and self-powered craft such as canoes and sailboats

-don't drink and boat -take a boating course.

For copies of Ontario's Boating Restriction Regulations or the Canadian Coast Guard's Safe Boating Guide, contact the Public Information Centre, Ministry of Natural Resources, Room 1640, 99 Wellesley Street West, Toronto, M7A 1W3, or telephone 416-965-2000.

For detailed information about water safety courses, safety precautions, regulations or other boating matters, contact the Office of Recreational Boating, Ministry of Natural Resources, Room 2352, 99 Wellesley Street West, Toronto, M7A 1W3, telephone 416-965-3238.

## Can you help count loons?

By Michael Egan

The haunting cry of a loon echoing over a still lake. Nothing else evokes such a sense of wilderness in Ontario's cottage country.

But human activity poses an increasing threat to loon populations, as it does to many other wildlife species.

Now evidence is beginning to mount that loons are under siege from yet another danger: acid rain.

Wildlife biologists theorize that, as lakes become increasingly acidic, they become less and less able to support a variety of aquatic life, from micro-organisms through fish, that makes up the food chain on which loons depend.

As lakes slowly die from acid rain, they may also lose their capacity to support loons.

A major co-operative effort, the Ontario Lakes Loon Survey, has been mounted to count, study and save Ontario's loons.

Through the survey and under the guidance of experts, hundreds of volunteers are checking lakes across Ontario for loons and nesting success.

The project was developed with financial support from the Long Point Bird Observatory, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the World Wildlife Fund.

Anyone can participate in the survey; no experience or special expertise is necessary.

Volunteers simply contact the Long Point Bird Observatory, and are given the information they need to collect data about loons.

Cottagers in particular are enthusiastic participants in the program.

They are frequently concerned about saving loons, and are more than willing to do a loon count in their local lake.

"In this way, wildlife biologists can obtain a much broader range of information than they would be able to gather if they had to rely on the efforts of a few field researchers to do a bird count," said Jane McCracken, coordinator of the survey for the

"What the volunteers are doing will help preserve loon populations, and will also ultimately help in the fight against acid rain."

Many cottagers find that participating in the survey is an interesting and enjoyable activity, and one which can be accomplished with a reasonable expenditure of time and energy.

Wildlife experts are enthusiastic about the survey. The program is excellent, and it's working well, according to Don McNical, a biologist with the Ontario Region of the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada.

"As resources are stained, the mix of volunteers and government activity will probably come to play a greater and greater role

in the conservation field.

"It gets more and more Canadians involved in conservation efforts, as opposed to sitting back and letting some agency do all the work," he said.

To find out about participating in the Ontario Lakes Loon Survey, potential volunteers can call the Long Point Bird Observatory at 519-586-2909, or write to:

The Ontario Lakes Loon Survey

Long Point Bird Observatory  
P.O. Box 160  
Port Rowan, Ontario  
NOE 1MO.

Michael Egan is a freelance writer who for many years has enjoyed cottage life in Ontario's Muskoka region.

## Schreiber Recreation

### Swim Program

This year's swim program got off to a very cold, wet start. Hopefully the weather will co-operate for the rest of this session. Registrations are now being accepted for the second session which will begin on Tuesday, August 4.

### Roller Skating

The skates will only be in Schreiber until tomorrow. If you have not enjoyed an evening of roller skating, plan to do it very soon.

### Summer Fun Program

Summer Fun Supervisors have planned a number of special events for the youth of Schreiber. Stop by the public school and see what's happening. Regular schedule is as follows: **Monday to Friday, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Tot Drop In, ages 4-7 years; 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m., Intermediate Drop In, ages 8-12 years; and from 2-4 p.m., Youth Drop In, ages 13-16 years.**

### Tae Kwon Do

In the fall, Joe Thippawong, a black belt holder, will be offering a 10-week course in Tae Kwon-Do. This course is designed for the beginner and is being offered to persons aged 10 years and over.

If at the end of the 10-week course enough interest is shown, a club will be formed. Classes will consist of physical conditioning, self-defence and sports competition. For more information, contact the recreation office at 824-2317.

### Mixed Slow Pitch

It's hard to believe but the season is already half over and the teams are gearing up for the playoff tournament scheduled for August 17-23. Here are last week's standings:

	GP	W	L	T	PTS
Deadheads	9	6	2	1	13
Catch-22	7	6	1	0	12
Texaco	7	5	1	1	11
Bermuda Triangle	10	4	4	2	10
Heinz 57	6	5	1	0	10
Steel Wheels	8	5	3	0	10
Stray Cats	6	4	1	1	9
Top Guns	8	4	3	1	9
Pistols	7	4	3	0	8
Misfits	9	3	5	1	7
A-Team	7	3	4	0	6
Hooters	8	3	5	0	6
B-52s	8	2	5	1	5
Birch's	7	2	5	0	4
Buccaners	9	2	7	0	4

## ONTARIO GOVERNMENT TENDER

### NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

### TENDER NO. 60-87-39

Contractors are invited to submit a bid price for the SUPPLY AND STOCKPILE OF APPROX. 12,000 m<sup>3</sup> total of GRANULAR "A" TYPE II MODIFIED MATERIAL in Fraleigh Pit, 7.4 km South of South Gillis via Hwy. 595 and 4.0 km West Via Road.

Sealed tenders on forms supplied by the Ministry, will be received by the Manager, Administrative Services until 1:30 pm Local Time

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1987**

Specifications, tender forms and envelopes may be obtained in person or by mail from E.G. Reguly, Head, Purchasing and Supply, Walsh at Mountdale Avenue, P.O. Box 1177, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7C 4X9. Telephone (807) 577-6451 Ext. 292.

THE LOWEST OR ANY TENDER NOT NECESSARILY ACCEPTED.



**Ministry of Transportation and Communications**