



2015

Fort Frances Sportsmen's Club

Year in Review



Edited by Henry Miller
Typed by Lauren Miller

www.ffsportsmensclub.com



FORT FRANCES SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

2015 - YEAR IN REVIEW

The Club's membership has remained steady for several years. At the end of the year we had 312 members.

The Board of Directors

President - Ben Wiersema

Vice President - Brad Houghton

Secretary - Jesse Adair

Treasurer - Bill James

Committee

Archery – Ben Wiersema

Big and Small Game - Chris Bonner-Vickers and Rob Dokuchie

Facebook - Mike Veniot

Fish - Richard Boileau

Membership – Rob Dokuchie

OFAH Lottery – Richard Boileau

Property, Handguns, and Ranges - Willie Anderson, Chris Bonner-Vickers, and Allan Socholotuk

Publicity – Henry Miller (Primary), all Directors (Secondary)

Seeding – Ben Wiersema

Skeet – Brad Houghton

Website - Crystal Gray

Youth Conservation and Education - Henry Miller

OFAH Lottery Tickets

Submitted by Richard Boileau

The price of the tickets increased from \$2.00 to \$3.00 which resulted in fewer ticket sales. However, this decline in ticket sales was offset by the increase in price. The number of tickets sold in 2015 was 64 books earning the Club \$560.00, whereas the 90 books sold in 2014 brought in \$540.00.

The funds raised helped fund the Bluebird Project.

Junior Education and Conservation

The Club sponsored three field trips in 2015.

1. Mrs. Gibson's Gr. 4 class from Robert Moore was taken to Rocky Inlet. Besides snowshoeing, the class noted the various habitats in that area and observed signs (tracks, holes in trees) of wildlife there.
2. Mrs. Bonner-Vickers' Gr. 8 class from J. W. Walker was taken to Sportsmen's Club property. Pupils learned about winter ecology. They participated in fire and quinzhee building. These survival skills may be useful some winter when a snowmobile breaks down or they become lost while hunting. The snow structure illustrates how good an insulator snow can be.
3. Grade 8 classes from J. W. Walker were taken on a tree planting trip north of Devlin. The youth planted 600 container stock jack pine trees. Over the 25 years the club has sponsored this program, 311,000 trees have been planted.

Note: There were no trips in the fall due to ongoing negotiations between the Board and teachers' union.

Thanks to Bob and Gwen Dimit of Dimit Bus Lines for their donation to youth conservation and to Vic Alberts for driving the bus and waiving his salary.

Several classes constructed birdhouses. These birdhouses add to the number of possible nesting sites for many birds, including bluebirds. Thanks to the many parents who come to the classrooms to help the pupils construct the birdhouses.

All the parts were cut out at the Sister Kennedy workshop by Henry Miller and Bob Holmes. Henry Miller gave the pupils instructions on how to put them together.

Classes involved were Gr. 6-8 Donald Young (23 birdhouses), Gr. 3 and 4 Robert Moore (13 and 19), Gr. K-6 SCAP (53), and Kindergarten J. W. Walker (17).

Bluebird Project

Over the past 22 years bluebird populations have been steadily increasing. 2015 was the worst year yet because of the cold, wet weather in May and June. Only 66 bluebirds and 166 tree swallows were fledged from our 254 birdhouses.

Thanks to Leanne Donaldson, Margaret Kreger, and Tony Elders for reporting the results of the boxes they monitored. Visit our website for more details.

Donations and Community Involvement

The Club has donated to several organizations doing conservation work.

1. We pledged \$2000 to the Stewardship Council for busing classes for tree planting, only one group took advantage of this pledge.

2. The Club sponsored a sign which was placed at the entrance to Cranberry Peat Bog Interpretive Trail. This sign welcomes visitors to the trail.
3. Again the Club donated to the Sister Kennedy Seniors' Workshop where we cut out parts for the bird houses.
4. A donation was made to the Junior Stewardship Rangers for the pine marten box building project.
5. Our \$2000 bursary for students graduating from high school and continuing on to higher education was awarded to Kurt McGuire and Ashton Dokuchie.
6. Bob and Gwen Dimit and Vic Alberts were given gift certificates for their contribution to youth conservation.

Awards

The Bud Cyr Conservation Trophy was awarded to Vic Alberts for his many years of conservation work. Besides his efforts putting cobble in spawning beds, cleaning streams, sitting on committees and working on the Board of Directors for several years, he volunteers to drive school buses taking classes on field trips. As well, he now joins in helping teachers with outdoor lessons.

The Henry Miller Conservation Plaque was awarded to the Sturgeon Creek Alternative Program (SCAP) for building 53 bird houses. The teachers reported the results of occupancy by interviewing pupils that had put them up for birds.

A special award of appreciation was given to Bob and Gwen Dimit for supporting youth conservation projects by providing free busing.

Skeet Report

Submitted by Ted Brockie

At the request of Henry Miller, I am providing a few lines from the perspective of a shooter. First, and very much the most, a very hearty, "Thank you," to Len Noonan in keeping the grounds top-rate. Thank you, Leonard!

Brad Houghton has sourced clay targets very well, such that we are not in a bind of the good graces of this or that person. Brad was also instructor for the new-comers course that went well. In International Falls, Eric Norstand has 33 trap and skeet shooters from the high school. Thus, it seems we might be finally growing both state side and here, which is good for our club as we had a dozen, at best, regular shooters. Perfect scores of 25 were down this year which paved the way for American, Chip Derlickson, to outshoot the locals in the Labour Day shoot off.

The Dave Forrester trophy for high overall shooter went to Len Noonan. The R. J. "Bob" Kennedy Award went to Joel Morris for "most improved, good sportsman."

The target throwers are on borrowed time. A refurbished one is about \$2500. When that day comes I hope the deep history of the skeet club continues.

Seeding

2015 saw 39 kilometers of roadside seeding. Ben Wiersema and Blaire Beadow spent a couple of days seeding the Turtle Rd., Trout Rd., Start Rd., Garner Rd., and Bearpaw Rd. The Club realized \$1429 from this project. The 2016 seeding project remains questionable.

Property, Handguns, and Ranges

Submitted by William Anderson, Range Officer

In the spring we had an Authorization to Transport course. We had about a dozen people take the course with everyone doing well - all passed. Due to changes in firearms legislation the Club made it mandatory for anyone using a handgun on the range to take the handgun safety course. If someone moves here and can provide proof of taking the course at their home club, they must demonstrate to our instructors their proficiency before being allowed to use the range. This is the same policy as in Kenora, Dryden, and Sioux Lookout.

The ranges were inspected and approved. First aid kits have been positioned on each of our ranges. Some upgrades have been done. Signs have been repainted and on the rifle range the berms were cleaned off and built up.

The CBSA has been using the handgun range as have made several improvements.

Richard Boileau was accepted as a member of the Rainy-Namakan Lakes Rule Curves advisory group to advise the International Joint Commission on water levels.