

### 2023 Annual General Meeting

We will gather on Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> at the Rockport Recreation Hall, 115 Escott-Rockport Road in Rockport for our annual meeting. If the weather allows we will meet outside.

The meeting will begin at 9:30 AM with socializing and refreshments. From 10 to 11 AM we will hear about the Biosphere Reserve and A2A (Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative). At 11 AM we will move to a business meeting and election of board members and officers. Join us for all or part of the meeting!

We are looking for new board members! If you are interested in serving on TIARA's board, please contact Michael Bell at [1mikebell1@gmail.com](mailto:1mikebell1@gmail.com) or Pierre Mercier at [pierremercier0122@gmail.com](mailto:pierremercier0122@gmail.com) to let us know and with any questions.

### TIARA's Name Has a New Meaning!

TIARA's board has voted to change the meaning of our beautiful acronym. In our April, 2023 meeting, the board voted unanimously to change it to the **Thousand Islands Alliance of River Advocates**.

Since our founding in 1976, the acronym stood for "Thousand Islands Area Residents Association." But we've come to outgrow that meaning, in several ways.

First, we are not an organization of "residents" only, but rather of all who love and care for the Thousand Islands and the St. Lawrence River, with a special focus on the Canadian side.

Second, there are now several environmental organizations that cover the Canadian side of the River, such as the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust, the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative, and the Thousand Islands Association. What sets TIARA apart is our commitment to engaging the political and planning process, **advocating** for the River in a non-partisan but vigorous way, holding government true to the law.

Third, people sometimes confuse TIARA with the Thousand Islands Association, and the word "association" in our old acronym furthered that confusion.

And fourth, the word "alliance" reflects our collaborative approach, bringing together advocates (including those within government) and organizations up and down the River, from Kingston to Brockville, to protect this environmental "crown," bejeweled by an archipelago of 1864 treed and rocky islands.

Tell your friends and family! Invite them to join this alliance of advocates for protecting these precious jewels. And with proper conservation, we can all enjoy these jewels now and always.

*Michael M. Bell*

### Note from the Archives: Pitchpine Island

Pinehurst cottage, on Pitchpine Island in the Admiralty group, was a beehive of intellectual and artistic activity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Professor A.P. Coleman, a renowned geologist, academic, and artist, and his sister Helena Coleman, a widely published poet, hosted dignitaries, academics, and literary figures on an on-going basis. Names like Marjorie Pickthall, Mazo de la Roche, and Agnes Maule Machar appear in their guest book, as well as the names of international travellers. They also appear to have staged elaborate costume parties.



*Costume party on Pitchpine Island*

The Leeds and the Thousand Islands Archives are currently cataloguing a priceless trove of photos, poems, and documents generously loaned to the Archives to be scanned. This digital collection will soon be available through our website at:

<https://ltiarchives.ca/>

*Pierre Mercier*

### TIARA in Action

We wish our work weren't so necessary! But reckless development that compromises the ecology and heritage of the River continues. Agencies tasked with protecting our shared resources are under huge pressure both from developers and from recent political trends in the Province of Ontario, which resulted in the infamous Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act. (That really is the name of the act!)

In one particularly egregious recent example, the staff of the CRCA (the Cataraqui Regional Conservation Authority) rejected a proposal to fill in a portion of a Provincially Significant Wetland on the River — only to have their objection vetoed by the CRCA's own board, with minimal public notice. In another, Transport Canada ran roughshod over the Official Plan of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands and approved a private helicopter landing pad on Hill Island that razed forested land to the ground.

We have supported the better angels of government through statements, letters, phone calls, and the subtle art of informal discussions with well-placed people. We have also worked with other local environmental organizations to craft strategies and build coalitions for more thoughtful, sustainable, and community-based approaches. As the new meaning of our acronym says, we have worked to build stronger alliances of River advocates.

We're not against development. We're against development that undermines the very reasons why this place is so appealing to so many, and that compromises the ecological heritage that is our duty to protect for generations to come.

*Michael M. Bell*

## TIARA Founders Honored



Dan Shire, Director of Ontario Nature, presents the **Ontario Nature Public Service Award** to Douglas and Blu Mackintosh. Photo by Marnie Ross

## Underused Housing Tax

As you may know, Canada has a new Underused Housing Tax (UHT) that affects non-Canadian landowners, as well as some Canadian owners of residences that are not lived in year-round.

There are a number of exemptions, including one for limited seasonal access and one for a vacation property located in an eligible area of Canada and used by you or your spouse or partner for at least 28 days in the calendar year (much of the Thousand Islands is eligible). **However, even if a property is exempt, the owners must file a form with the Canada Revenue Agency claiming the exemption.** Those forms or the tax payment are due by October 31. Non-Canadian cottage owners will also have to get an individual tax number (ITN), which can take up to 8 weeks.

## Fireflies

It is one of the magical moments of summer – the sight of tiny lights twinkling and drifting through the woods and meadows in the gathering dark or late at night. Most of the time we don't think about fireflies. After all, they don't sting or bite, and they are small and inconspicuous – except when they flash their courtship display on warm nights.

Despite their name, fireflies / lightning bugs are technically neither flies nor bugs, but beetles. And they are not just one kind. There are 25 species reported from Ontario alone. Like many insects, fireflies have 4 life stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult.

The adults are what we see flying and flashing at night, but the larvae also have bioluminescence. Because the larvae live under leaf litter and inside fallen trees, most of us don't notice their faint glow.



*Black Firefly, Ryan Hodnett via Wikimedia Commons*

As valued insects such as bees and butterflies see sharp declines across the world, conservationists have also become concerned about the status of fireflies. Scientists list habitat loss and degradation, light pollution, pesticide use, and climate change as major factors threatening firefly populations. Thus, steps people can take to help these insects include leaving leaf litter and fallen trees and branches undisturbed where possible and minimizing the use of pesticides. Reducing outdoor lighting, especially in summer, can also help adults survive and reproduce.

Two great places to learn more about these fascinating insects are [The Fireflies of Ontario](#) by Stephen Luk, Stephen Marshall, and Marc Branham and the Xerces.org website, especially their publication [Conserving the Jewels of the Night: Guidelines for Protecting Fireflies in the United States and Canada](#).

*Diane Mayerfeld*

## Please renew your membership!

Our membership year runs from May 1 to April 30, so unless you sent in your membership in the past couple of months it is time to renew. The cost is \$40 for individuals and \$50 for a family. You can renew, join, or make an additional donation with PayPal on our website [www.tiaraweb.org](http://www.tiaraweb.org) (click on the Membership & Survey button), or send a cheque to TIARA, 120 Cross Cemetery Road, Lansdowne ON K0E 1L0.

You can also help build TIARA's membership by inviting a neighbor to join! We very much appreciate your support and the extra donations that many have made.

### TIARA

THOUSAND ISLANDS ALLIANCE of RIVER ADVOCATES  
120 Cross Cemetery Road, Lansdowne ON K0E 1L0

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