

Lake Ladies reveal second calendar



Susie Kockerscheidt

The Ladies of the Lake launched their new 2009 calendar Saturday, with its theme Drink It, Swim It, Fish It, Love It. The models who pose tastefully nude in the calendar include, from left, Judi Bolton (Drink It), Lynn Gilbank (Swim It), Hilary Van Welter (Fish It) and Wanda Big Canoe (Love It).

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The Ladies of the Lake second fundraising calendar is all about “loving the lake”.

The calendar reflects the theme of last Saturday's launch: “Drink it. Swim it. Fish it. Love it...For this lake to be well again, we first must all love it.”

Co-founder Annabel Slaight paid tribute to the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and its charitable foundation for their dedication to the cause over many years.

"Then came the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition, uniting smaller groups and out of that came what can only be described as an unusual force — a hundred women with their sleeves rolled up," she said.

Then the politicians started to sit up and take notice, beginning with the federal government's commitment to put \$30 million into lake restoration projects and the province's recent initiative of the Lake Simcoe Protection Act.

"Now Campaign Lake Simcoe is nudging all of us along and at last we have a window open to make Lake Simcoe and its watershed, as we all work to fix it, become a place where people and the environment are in sync working together," she said.

Slaight announced the launch later this summer of ourlakesimcoe.com a new interactive website in partnership with with Windfall Ecology Centre and the Ontario Stewardship Council.

She said the next project for the Ladies is to bring more young people into the campaign. The "bleak" findings of their report Whales in Lake Simcoe? released last year showed children know very little about the lake's ecology and urged immediate action.

Barrie MPP Aileen Carroll told the audience "We certainly wouldn't have progressed very far if we hadn't have had the dedication that you've seen before you. The government of Ontario is moving forward to protect Lake Simcoe," she said, referring to the Lake Simcoe Protection Act's introduction last month.

Carroll, the Liberal culture minister, said the province is investing \$20 million for various lake initiatives.

"Lake Simcoe is a critical resource..We listened as a government and we will continue to listen to the people who live around Lake Simcoe as we develop this protection plan."

BrightStar president John Blackburn saw the potential for the Ladies of the Lake early on, Slaughter said, receiving his support, including helping them put together their presentation to the City of Barrie "that knocked everybody's socks off".

As the developer for Crates Landing and the Barrie waterfront, "More than anybody we realize the importance of the success of our business is Lake Simcoe," Blackburn said, adding the company is making every effort to make the new developments as environmentally friendly as possible, including using geothermal heating the cooling systems.

The Ladies of the Lake calendar is \$15 and includes "action cards" with information and environmental tips about Lake Simcoe.

To order a calendar go to www.lakeladies.ca

For more on Campaign Lake Simcoe see www.environmentaldefence.ca