



# The Maple Syrup Rally

**Saturday, April 2nd  
Shawville, Quebec**

**T**hat time of year is nearly upon us, when the snow begins to recede up here and the landscape begins to resemble something other than tundra, or taiga depending on where you might be sitting.

For the past twelve years, members of OVLR have been celebrating the coming of Spring with a gathering at Vern Fairhead's sugarbush in Shawville, Quebec during the maple sap run. The event offers people an excuse to get their Land Rover out from under a snow bank and blow the cobwebs out. For the hardy, it is an opportunity for some early Spring camping. This is the first major event of the season for Land Rover owners around eastern Ontario and western Quebec. Food, tradition and some white laning. Last year more than sixty people came out!

The Maple Syrup Rally is traditionally held at the end of March, beginning of April at the height of the sap run. The sugar maples love freezing nights and warm days. A variation in this pattern can disrupt the sap run and cause last minute changes in the schedule outlined. As this is very weather dependent, an estimate is printed, the actual date not being known until just a few weeks ahead. This year, we expect it to be help on April 2nd, with a "rain" date of April 9th. Remember, Mother Nature determines the date, not us!

Activities? Well there is the traditional brunch of french toast, sausage, and baked beans, all potentially smothered in fresh maple syrup. To make you appreciate your breakfast, attendees are encouraged to take a visit down to the sugarbush, and help in the production process to make part of the brunch, namely the maple syrup. A little sap gathering, some stoking of the fires under the evaporator... There will be an

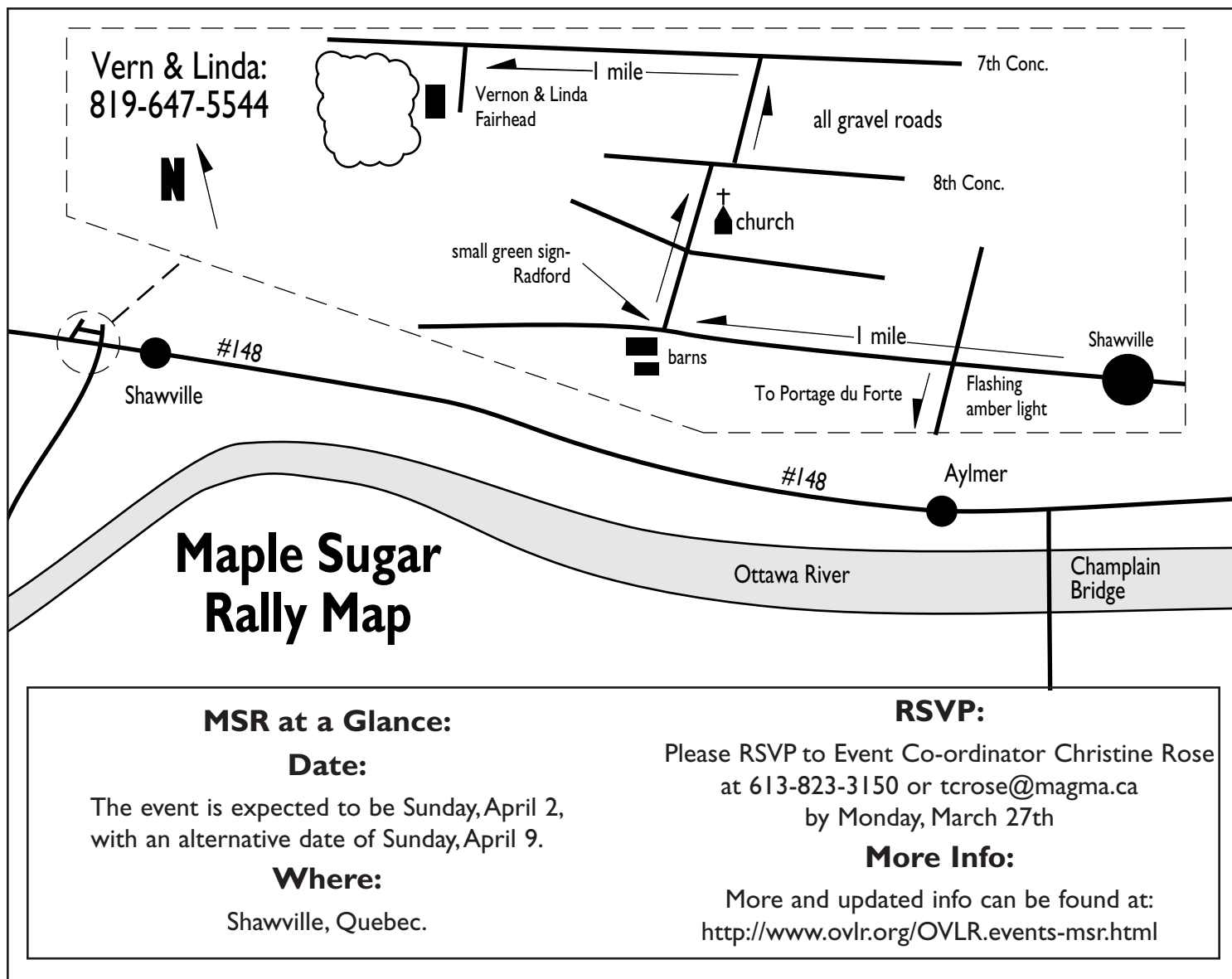
Easter Egg hunt for the children in the late morning. Finally, there will be a little white, or if conditions have turned that way, brown/mud laning around on some abandoned rail beds, around the sugar bush, and such.

As always, there will be lots of fresh maple syrup for sale. Prices are expected to be similar to last year: \$38 for four litres, \$22 for two litres, \$12 for one litre and \$8 for the 540ml can. Bring your cheque book! (Note, this is the real stuff, not that chemically filled artificial stuff usually found in the supermarket)

The organisers need to know how many people can be expected to be attending so the proper amount of food can be purchased. If you are planning on coming, please RSVP to Christine Rose by Monday March 27th via email at [tcrose@magma.ca](mailto:tcrose@magma.ca). For those of you who do not have email, please telephone Chistine at 613-823-3150 to confirm date and attendance. The cost of the rally is \$5 dollars per person. Children under three are free. To drive on the off-road you need to be a member of OVLR and have a valid drivers licence.

Other aspects to consider? In the past, as the event takes place on a Sunday, various members of the club have come up early and done a little Winter camping in the sugarbush. If you are interested in some Winter camping, give Vern a ring at 819-647-5544. There is plenty of wood about, and Vern probably won't mind you using some of the wood by the sugar shack, so long as you help stoke the fire in there a little bit during the day. So, warmth in the evening is available!

Members are also welcome to come up on Saturday to help Vern gather up sap and with the maple syrup production itself and on Sunday, Dave Meadows will be looking to find some volunteers for sausage cooks etcetera.



So, if you have not been to the Rally before, or are unsure of the directions, there will be a convoy of vehicles leaving from the Westgate shopping Centre at 9 AM. (northwest corner of Carling Avenue and Merrivale)

The following directions assume that you can find the north end of Island Park Drive in Ottawa. Crossing the Champlain Bridge you will go straight to the second set of lights where the road ends in a "T". Turn left (west). Follow the upper road (Highway #148) through to Aylmer, past the Canadian Tire, to a set of lights at the park (there is a war memorial in the centre of the park to your right). The town library is across the street on your left) in the centre of town. #148 does a right turn here at these lights. Follow 148 out of Aylmer and proceed to Shawville. You will pass the villages of Lusville, Quyon. Drive through Shawville. About one mile past Shawville, you will look for a side road on the right. The side road is marked with a small green sign that says "Radford" (there are a pair of barns across the road on the left-hand side). Turn right. Go straight, past the church until the road ends. Turn right, then take your first left. You will take the next left at the next concession line. One mile from this turn you will find Vern's farm on the left.

