



## President's Report

LISA ETIENNE

**Wow, what a busy fall!** Many of us attended the Bruce Trail Conservancy's Annual General Meeting where Corrie Kellestine was appointed to a new three-year term on the BTC Board of Directors and our club received two awards. Congratulations to our Trail Maintenance Volunteers and the crew from PCL Construction (photo above) for winning the Philip and Jean Gosling Award for the bridge project in the Louth Conservation Area and to our hikers for earning the Lloyd Smith Walking Stick (see photo on page 2).

Most members of the board attended the annual BTC Working Together Conference in Mono Centre on November 16th where we got a chance to attend

informative workshops and network with the clubs.

Once again, we are lucky to have so many volunteers. They were kept busy with the Steeltown Stomp (September 28), the Merritthon (November 9), Bruce Trail Day at Niagara College (October 6), calendar deliveries to our Landowners, Information Booths at Ball's Falls, and the Senior Information & Living Fair, a presentation to the



*Continued Page 2*



2019-2020

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## NIAGARA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB

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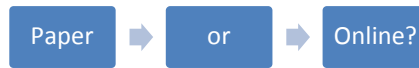
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## NBTC BOARD VACANCY

The Niagara Bruce Trail Club is accepting nominations for **VICE PRESIDENT**. For immediate appointment, for a two-year term, with intent to succeed the President April 30, 2021. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, or wish to apply, please contact [niagarabrucetrailclub@gmail.com](mailto:niagarabrucetrailclub@gmail.com)



If you receive the print copy of The Grapevine and would consider switching to the pdf version sent out by email, please contact [Niagarabrucetrailclub@gmail.com](mailto:Niagarabrucetrailclub@gmail.com)

## *What's the largest puffball you've ever seen?*

Niagara Bruce Trail Club member, Trevor Price, holding the largest puffball mushroom either of us had ever seen. It was along the trail, but we didn't take it with us. (Photo: Ruth Moffatt) ◀



## President's Column

*From Page One*

Welland Boy Scouts, Hike Leader Training, Hiking 101, a special hike for some Graduate Students at Brock, the Landowners Appreciation Potluck Dinner (November 1), not to mention all the usual trail maintenance, hikes, and administrative duties. We certainly have an active club and are fortunate that so many members step forward when asked. The only position that we are currently having difficulty filling is Vice President. Talk to one of the current board members if you are considering this role and would like more information.

*Looking forward to the Annual New Year's Day President's Silly Hat Hike and the post-hike snacks potluck! ◀*



Daljeet & Roma Juneja with the Lloyd Smith Walking Stick

## Exciting things in store with New Winter Hike Schedule!

**ALAN LAVER**

HIKE COORDINATOR

After a mixed summer with hot temperatures and above average precipitation the Fall is now here in earnest and the hiking conditions are first class. Fall conditions can however be somewhat treacherous with leaves covering trip hazards and wet rocks being extremely slippery so I would caution you all to be extra careful.

Lots of exciting things to look forward to in the new Winter Schedule. As well as the night hikes, which will continue during the winter, there is an Iroquoia End to End Hike which has been organized by Lauren Doig, and new hikes which have not featured before. We also have an out-of-town hike at Dufferin Hi-Land. We have a number of new Hike Leaders making their debut in the Winter Schedule, including Larry Lloyd, Paul Rogers and Marion Hanover, and I would encourage you all to come out and give them support.

The flip side to having new leaders is that some of our more seasoned leaders after many years of support are no longer able to continue as Hike Leaders. We thank them immensely for their contribution, wish them well and hope that they may continue to participate on our hikes.

With a reduced number of Hike Leaders, we are looking for volunteers to join the Hike Leading team and become certified Hike Leaders. Margaret Northfield led Hike Leader training in September. There were 12 participants, 4 from the Niagara Club and 8 from other hiking clubs in the region. It was an excellent day with good camaraderie and valuable skills learned by all. Please let me know if you are interested in becoming a Hike Leader. You can call me at 416 303 5613 or E Mail at [alanjlaver@gmail.com](mailto:alanjlaver@gmail.com).

As I mentioned last quarter, some of the longer hikes that are organized, particularly the end to end series hikes, require car pooling in order to be successful. It is important that we all play our part in this and not rely on the same folks week in and week out. It is not always good etiquette to ask for volunteers so take the stress away from the Hike Leaders and offer your services. Don't be frightened to volunteer to take your vehicle to the starting point of the hike and offer to transport your fellow hikers.

Finally, another exciting hiking event is being planned for the Spring. Ruth Moffat is organizing a **Bruce Trail End to End Fundraiser 2020** – Registration opens January 6, 2020.

Are you interested in hiking the entire Bruce Trail in 2020? Join us **March 14-27, April 14-27 & May 2-15** South to North. We will hike approximately 20-25km on each day to complete the 900+km trail. Participants are asked to raise \$500 each for the Bruce Trail Conservancy. If you would like to participate in this event, please confirm by email on **January 6/20** (not before) to [ruthdmoffatt@gmail.com](mailto:ruthdmoffatt@gmail.com). This event is limited to 20 members including 3 hike leaders. On registering, you will then receive a link for the fundraising page, and this will confirm your commitment. If you have any questions prior to this date, please do not hesitate to contact Ruth at [ruthdmoffatt@gmail.com](mailto:ruthdmoffatt@gmail.com).

In closing, we are blessed with these idyllic surroundings and the best that Mother Nature has to offer. Let's look after it, keep it clean and stay safe. ◀



Above: Just west of 30 Rd, by Grimsby, October 27<sup>th</sup>, after a heavy rain. Photos: George Prins.

Below: Just west of 30 Rd. by Grimsby on the Bruce Trail is the box for the Logbook. Feel free to sign it and give hikers encouragement, advice and good humour.

– George Prins, Volunteer Coordinator.





# Hiking for all & all for Hiking

**MARGARET NORTHFIELD**

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

## Welcome New Members

Twenty-five new members signed up on Bruce Trail Day held at Niagara College, Niagara-on-the-Lake on Sunday October 6.



People dropped by to learn about the Conservancy.

Lisa Etienne, President, Niagara Bruce Trail Club, gave a brief presentation about the latest happenings on the trail.

Jessica Santander Guzman, Niagara College, talked about ecosystem restoration. Diane Marlatt then led 51 hikers around the Wetland Ridge side trail and into Woodend.

*Make sure you extend a great NBTC welcome to those new members when you see them on the trail.*

Jessica Santander Guzman,  
Niagara College  
Presenting

Photos:  
D. Marlatt



## Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival

Our Niagara Bruce Trail volunteers were active Thanksgiving weekend answering questions about conservation, the trail and hiking at the annual Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival.



Windy afternoons left a couple of volunteers scrambling to hold the BTC tent down. Ball's Falls Blacksmiths came to the rescue by heating and hammering eight stakes in record time, with special thanks to 93-year-old Leo. (Photo: D. Earle)

Thanks to the weekend's volunteers: Janet Davey, Diane Marlatt, Grace Bagnulo, Karen Strong, Wendy Howick, Mary Timbers, Lisa Etienne, Debbie Earle, Corrie Kellestine, Norma Riddle, Merle Richards, Derek Richards, Judy Gaudier, Lou Gaudier, Rick Waters and Margaret Northfield. ◀

# Niagara Club Presented with the Philip and Jean Gosling Award

## RICK WATERS

TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT



“I was honoured to accept the award on behalf of the club” = Rick Waters

Saturday, September 21st at the BTC Annual General Meeting held in Hamilton, Ontario, the Niagara Club was awarded the **Philip and Jean Gosling Award** for the reroute side trail east of the Louth Conservation Area. **Rick Waters, NBTC Trail Development and Maintenance Director** accepted this distinguished environment award.

The Philip and Jean Gosling Award recognizes projects that improve the environmental quality of the trail, reduces the impact on the environment, or helps hikers get across difficult areas such as streams and wetlands. Boardwalks and bridges often are contenders for this award.

The new trail came about because of a handshake agreement with the landowner immediately east of Louth Conservation Area. The old trail went through a perennial wet area and across a section of open farmer’s field. Hikers had to be careful when crops were planted near and often on the trail. The new section of trail is now part way up the escarpment and in a mature forested area. It is one kilometre long and uses a short section of the Louth Side Trail to connect to the new main trail. Hikers no longer need to deal with mud and water on the trail as the new section has great drainage.

The other feature of this new trail is a bridge over a stream that connects to Fifteen Mile Creek. This bridge was built with the help of a group of volunteers from **PCL Construction** (photo on Page One). The extra labour meant the bridge could be completed in 4-5 hours rather than the couple of days it would normally takes to build such a structure. Most of the material for the bridge was wood repurposed from a boardwalk that was no longer required on the old wet section of the closed trail.



Alan Laver, Vince Zvonar, Jacques Boilard, Chuck Taylor, and Rick Waters during installation of posts to restrict motorized vehicles from going over the pedestrian bridge at the QEW. Four posts and 660 lbs of concrete mix and some heavy slogging.



Completed work on pedestrian bridge at QEW



Below: The chainsaw crew at work over the last few months.



# Steeltown Stomp

WENDY HOWCIK

We had a perfect fall day for the 4th annual Steeltown Stomp, a joint venture of the Niagara and Iroquoia Bruce Trail Clubs, held on September 28<sup>th</sup>. To earn the coveted Steeltown Stomp badge, participants completed a 20-kilometre hike along the Bruce Trail, Chedoke Radial Trail and Escarpment Rail Trail in Hamilton. Along the route, participants climbed up and down 1,867 stairs over 6 staircases built into the Niagara Escarpment.

Altogether, 202 people registered, and 180 hikers and runners participated and completed the challenge - a 100% success rate! This was our first "sellout" since the inception of the event, and \$4,247 was raised to be split between the two clubs. A first for the event was the successful completion of the route by a young sight-impaired man who enjoyed participating with his family. (Photo at right) and our youngest participant, at 12 years old.

Volunteers from the Niagara club - Margaret Northfield, Diane Marlatt and Wendy Howick - joined volunteers from the Iroquoia club - Peter Rumble, Joe Gould, Samar Smith and Leslie Ho, to arrange the route, blaze the trail, provide the refreshments, and man the two checkpoints. The Bruce Trail Conservancy had an adjacent booth to hand out pamphlets and answer questions about the work of the conservancy and member clubs. It was a wonderful collaborative opportunity for the three organizations to showcase a fun activity at a very popular hiking destination. We had many visits from people interested in joining the fun next year or supporting our efforts with donations. ◀



## More from Trail Maintenance and Development



Above: The new boardwalk between Mewburn Rd. and the Screaming Tunnel.  
Photos: Rick Waters

## Merritthon 2019

Rhys Beak, Event Co-ordinator  
57 hikers signed up for the 2019 Merritthon on November 9<sup>th</sup>, with 50 registering on the day of the event. Buses left Port Dalhousie at 7:00am and we started the hike in Port Colborne at 7:50am. The Legion donated Poppies, which were handed out to hikers. A runner was the first participant to finish at 11:38am. The first hikers arrived at 3:20pm and the last clocked in at 5:15pm. Four hikers dropped out part way through. Blazing on the Trail was re-done for this event by Rick Waters, Margaret Northfield and Rhys Beak. Thanks to checkpoint volunteers who greeted hikers and provided refreshments at Merritt Island (Charo Cuervo & Michael Francomb), Allanburg Bridge (Judy & Lou Gaudier), Westchester & Oakdale (Jamie Sabourin & Kathleen Orth), and in Port Dalhousie, Margaret Northfield & Marinus Koole assisted at the end checkpoint, with Margaret providing apple bread and hot apple cider to grateful hikers. ◀

**Photo at right:**  
**Trail Maintenance and Development** - The chainsaw crew removed 18 trees from the trail in the last 3 months.



## EVERETT COLLINS

1934-2019



There are people who inspire, who push you to do more and to enjoy every step of the way. So was our friend Everett Collins. When he was diagnosed with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), he took up new activities. As a hiker, he became a friendly ambassador for Niagara Bruce Trail Club. He was the first hike leader for many of us. In spite of the difficulties of COPD, Everett strove ahead of even the most fit amongst us. He showed the joys of hiking and the importance of persevering through adversity. Everett was a Bruce Trail Conservancy End-to-End, #2278. He earned this distinguished certificate on his 74<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2008!

Everett was an extraordinary volunteer. He kept a section of trail in tip-top shape. He sold tickets, set up tables, and contributed a whole ham to the Landowners Appreciation dinners. He was the Laura Secord event coordinator for several years. He also helped with other event hikes as a checkpoint volunteer. His charm and generous spirit were contagious. We miss him.

*Margaret Northfield*

## *BTC purchased the biggest property in Niagara*

Vince Zvonar, Land Stewardship Director

BTC purchased 50 acres in Niagara section. This purchase has been in the works for over a year but it's finally ours. The property borders Woodend conservation land on the east side; entrance to the property is on Warner Rd. This purchase will allow us to reroute the trail off some of Warner Rd., and we are working on getting the trail off all of Warner Rd.

If you ever wanted to have 50 acres to call "your property", this is your chance. Each of the properties that we own or manage has a Land Steward and I am looking for one for this property. There will be other properties that will need a Land Steward, so if you are interested in this volunteer position please let me know. ◀



Landowners  
Appreciation  
Dinner

## *NBTC says, "Thank you, Landowners!"*

Koosje Stassen, Landowner Relations Volunteer

Each year the Niagara Bruce Trail Club hosts a dinner to recognize and thank our landowners for their kindness in allowing us to cross their property as we hike The Bruce Trail. The Landowners Appreciation Dinner this year, held Friday, November 1st at the Rockway Community Centre, was a great success with approximately one hundred people in attendance. Thank you to all members for their contributions. It takes a team to put this evening together. Thank you to members who organized and delivered BTC calendars and dinner invitations, to members who set up the hall, sold tickets and tended bar. Thank you to the kitchen team. Many landowners expressed how they enjoy and look forward to the dinner each year. Many thanks again to all our landowners. ◀



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## GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

Gift memberships are a great way to introduce a friend or family member to the wonders of the Niagara Escarpment. A one-year membership with the Bruce Trail Conservancy is \$50. You receive a charitable donation tax receipt for the full amount of the gift membership. Your "gifted person" receives a welcome package, a personalized card letting them know of your gift, all the benefits of BTC membership, and any products you purchase for them in the same order as the gift membership. See <https://brucetrail.org/memberships/gift>



**The Grapevine** is the newsletter of the Niagara Bruce Club, one of the nine member clubs of the Bruce Trail Conservancy. The Grapevine appears four times a year.

NBTC Members are invited to submit stories and photos. Copy due date for the Spring 2020 issue is January 31, 2020.

For editorial guidelines and for rates to advertise, contact the Editor at [btcgrapevine@gmail.com](mailto:btcgrapevine@gmail.com)

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*Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.*