

The Rattler



President's Message

ISSUE #2, 2021

Olympian Feats of the Wilderness Community Watch

In a recent discussion on social media, the following question was posed: If hiking were an Olympic event, what criteria or rules would be used to determine points or a winner? When we encounter a hiker or hike with someone, what is it about their hiking that makes you think "That person is a great hiker!"?

This year has presented some excellent examples of hikers going above and beyond the commonly perceived simple and straightforward exercise of placing one foot in front of the other, and covering ground.

Skilled hikers are excellent observers. In the process of absorbing natural highlights and the terrain around them, good hikers are proficient at spotting high-risk situations and scenarios that don't seem right to them. The Bruce Peninsula Press (June 16, 2021) covered such an example of a rescue initiated by hiker Meghan Kirwin. From the Bruce Trail winding along the Cape Chin cliffs, Meghan observed four men stranded on Georgian Bay. She contacted a friend who was instrumental in saving their lives. Meghan identified a high-risk situation and took the required actions to divert the loss of human life.

On June 15, a hiker reported the remnants of a fire on the trail off of McKague Road. Our Peninsula Bruce Trail Conservancy (PBTC) volunteer and trail maintenance coordinator, Tom Hall, initiated the 911 call and escorted the Lion's Head fire department to the scene. The firefighters proceeded to extinguish the still-smouldering fire pit beside the trail. Information supplied by the observant hiker and swift action from Tom and the fire department averted a fire

event which could have resulted in disastrous repercussions for the nature reserve and conceivably, the surrounding community.

Root and karst fires do not have to be man-made. A few years ago, I recall another Bruce Trail hiking group who had to relinquish their big plans for the day when they encountered smouldering roots caused by a lightning strike. Their day was extended by hiking several kilometers out of the bush to a location with cell service, calling the fire in, waiting for the fire department to arrive, and then hiking the several kilometers back into the bush with the fire department to the trail location. They wrapped up their long day by continuing the hike back to their vehicles.

Less skilled hikers may not have noticed these situations for what they were, or could have opted to pursue the great plans they had for the day and keep walking. These skilled hikers, however, did not. Instead, they chose to participate in creating a better outcome.

(cont'd on page 3)



PBTC President Tamara Wilson explores British Columbia with husband Tim and daughter Jacqueline

Peninsula Bruce Trail Club
 www.pbtc.ca
 pbtcrattler10@gmail.com

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Bruce Trail Conservancy
 P.O. Box 857
 Hamilton, ON
 L8N 3N9
www.bruce-trail.org
info@bruce-trail.org
 Telephone: 800-665-4453
 Telephone: 905-628-8081
 Fax: 905-529-6832

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Newsletter Editors:
 Content: Barbara Reuber
 & Laurie Chan
 Layout: Jan MacKie

Please send us your stories:
 pbtcrattler10@gmail.com

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS

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 Deadline for submissions to next
 Rattler: November 8, 2021

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President's message (cont'd from page 1)

In my casual discussions around what hikers actually bring to the table when it comes to conservation, I often liken hikers to the “Neighbourhood Watch” of the woods. Hiking is the lens through which we observe nature. We reach out — we escalate when we see something, human or in nature, that needs help or addressing.

Marg Glendon, PBTC's outreach coordinator, works with community partners: A Greener Future, Bruce Peninsula National Park, Keep the Bruce Clean & Green, Ontario Parks, and Owen Sound Waste Watchers in a pilot project called Keep the Bruce Trail Clean & Green. This collaborative project will help the PBTC learn more about littering on the Bruce Trail and explore ways to keep the trail clean, especially in high traffic areas. The project relies on trained volunteers who individually pick up litter for data collection along the Bruce Trail. There is also a series of monthly litter pickup events called Enviro-Hikes (see article below). Participating hikers play an integral role in the project's success by volunteering their time, and to date have collected thousands of pieces of litter for analysis. Analysis results are used in next step remediation programs. Though the BTC code requires trail users to “leave no trace” and indeed, the vast majority of users adhere to this protocol, sadly not all of those who use the trails are experienced in core trail use etiquette.

Hikers can positively impact conservation efforts directed at improving local ecologies. On a recent hike at Alice Lake Provincial Park in British Columbia, my family encountered “Wanted” posters for the western toad, a native species at risk (see photo). On another hike at Squamish Provincial Park, we came across posters where park visitors were asked to take part in the reporting of peregrine falcon sightings. In both cases, hikers were asked to upload their observations on iNaturalist or contact the overseeing project field technician. Posters typically included QR codes for inquiring minds to scan and access additional information. Armed with data, park authorities in turn, can implement programs which promote success for species-at-risk. At home the same positive influence can be found in reporting programs for invasive species.



B.C. Parks poster -- asking for help in monitoring a species-at-risk

If hikers know what they are looking for, they are the first ones to contact the appropriate organizations to deal with the offending flora.

In her landmark book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, First Nations writer Robin Wall Kimmerer explains:

“A lot of time you hear people say that the best thing that people can do for nature is to stay away from it and let it be. There are places where that's absolutely true and our people respected that. But we were also given the responsibility to care for the land. What people forget is that means participating — that the natural world relies on us to do good things. You don't show your love and care by putting what you love behind a fence. You have to be involved. You have to contribute to the well-being of the world.” (p. 383)

There is a common thread of altruism that runs through the psyche of dedicated hikers. The age, size, shape, or race of the individual is irrelevant. The love and selfless caring shown to the trail, fellow hikers, and the surrounding natural and human communities identifies each of us in spirit. That feeling of responsibility to care and act propels us forward to embrace Olympian feats in watching over, remediating and contributing to the well-being of our surrounding world.

Tamara Wilson
PBTC President

Conservation Matters

Nature Conservation: the protection and management of the environment and natural resources (*Wikipedia*).

To me this has always suggested two things: first, protecting what we have; and second, gently helping to restore that which Mother Nature intended.

Control of invasive species — both protecting against and removing, where possible, is an important part of conservation. Managing the threat of invasive species is also crucial in order to maintain the trust of our partners on the Peninsula — the Saugeen Ojibway Nation; private land owners; federal and provincial parks — who collectively host 120 kilometres or three-quarters of our trail.

I'm channeling the FBI in introducing the BTC's "**10 Most Un-Wanted**" list. Thanks to BTC ecologists Brian and Adam for their help with this. Each issue of the Rattler will feature one of our 10 most unwanted.

#1 on our list is giant hogweed (see details accompanying this article on page 5). It has been found and treated on our Dyer's Bay property and elsewhere on the Peninsula. If you find this or have other concerns about BTC properties please contact Stewardship Director Mark at mshantz56@gmail.com

Tree Planting Update:

- The Government of Canada has announced funding for planting of two billion trees in order to fight global warming. We will be working with BTC staff in order to apply for 2022. <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/science-and-data/funding-partnerships/funding-opportunities/forest-sector-funding-programs/growing-canadas-forests-program/23308>
- Plans are underway for our annual planting of specimen trees.
- We are waiting for a conservation plan for Cape Chin which will include further planting.
- Finally, thanks to the Gosling Research Institute for Plant Preservation (GRIPP), we have access to a limited stock of disease-resistant elms which we will be planting on the Bruce Trail, including on the Peninsula.

... and a bit of fun news: Canadian tree-planter Antoine Moses plants a record 23,000 trees in one day. Maybe we should invite him to join our club!

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/canadian-tree-planter-smashes-world-record-for-most-trees-planted-in-24-hours-850960501.html>

John Whitworth



Giant Hogweed

(*Heracleum mantegazzianum*)

(Danger)



Giant Hogweed leaves



Giant Hogweed in flower

Photos: Wikipedia

Distinct Physical Features:

- huge plant, grows from 2.5 to 4 metres (8 to 14 feet) high with large, lobed leaves up to 1 metre (3 feet) wide
- stem is thick (5-10 cm in diameter) and hollow often with purplish blotches
- large, umbrella-shaped flowers are white in colour and can be more than 30 centimetres (1 foot) in diameter

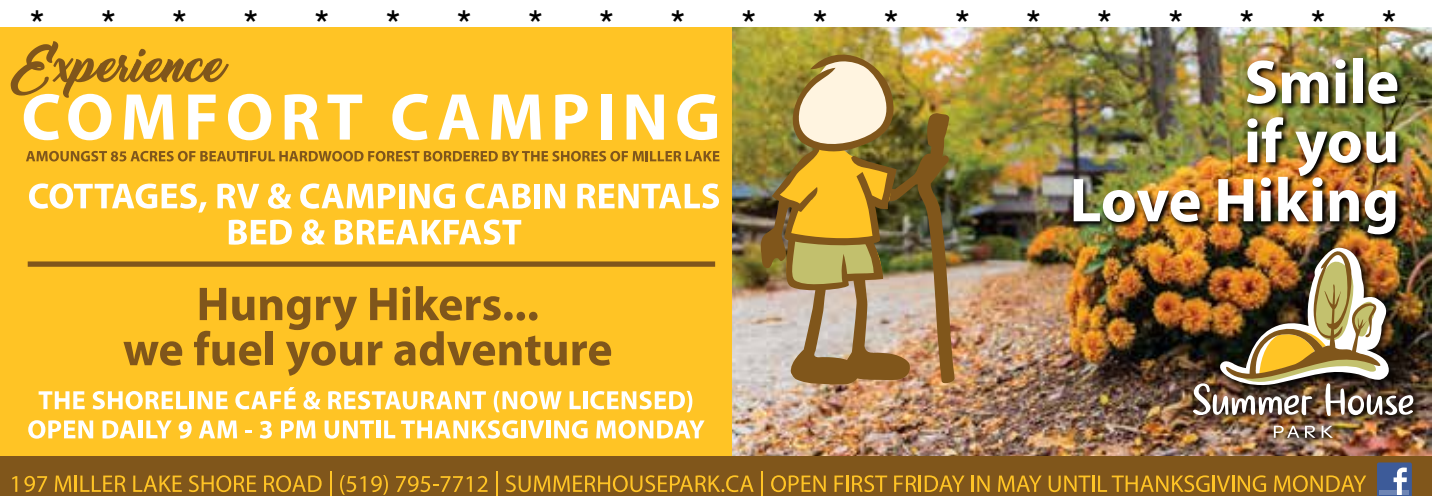
Typical Habitat:

- roadsides, streambanks, ditches, forest edges, trail edges

Species Significance:

A non-native aggressive invasive, Giant Hogweed is a dangerous invader. The sap contains toxins called furocoumarins, which can increase the skin's sensitivity to sunlight and may result in severe burns and blisters and temporary or permanent blindness if it comes in contact with the eye. **DO NOT TOUCH.** Contact BTC land stewardship staff (Adam Brylowski or Brian Popelieri at info@brucetrail.org) immediately if this plant is identified on the property.

* * * * *




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“Keep the Bruce Trail Clean & Green” Community Science Project

This summer, the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club (PBTC) is learning more about litter accumulation on the Bruce Trail access points by utilizing volunteers in a community science project called “Keep the Bruce Trail Clean & Green.”



It is the valuable work of individuals and our partner organizations – A Greener Future, Bruce Peninsula National Park, Bruce Trail Conservancy, Keep the Bruce Clean & Green, Ontario Parks and Owen Sound Waste Watchers – which helped PBTC blaze the path toward this grassroots pilot project. As a partner sharing a common goal, Keep the Bruce Clean & Green approved the project name.

The pilot project has four goals: pick up litter, collect and analyze the litter data, keep cigarette butts out of landfill/water, and strengthen community messaging about trail etiquette. Project partner A Greener Future registers and trains all volunteers as well as Bruce Trail Conservancy trail ambassadors, who will also pick up litter and report data as part of their role. At the end of the summer, the data will be analyzed and the lessons learned will guide the PBTC in its ongoing efforts to “Keep the Bruce Trail Clean & Green.” The PBTC is collecting litter/data at random Bruce Trail locations and at two specific hotspots: Little Cove and the Lion’s Head Nature Reserve.

The PBTC is also offering Enviro-Hikes at each of Little Cove and Lion’s Head Nature Reserve which will be led by Parks Canada and Ontario Parks interpreters, respectively. Participants will pick up litter while learning about our fragile ecosystems along the Bruce Trail. A trained volunteer will accompany the participants, collecting and submitting litter data. See the poster on page 7 for registration details.

The “Keep the Bruce Trail Clean & Green” initiative has captured the interest of Bruce Trail lovers from north to south. As a result, individuals can volunteer to pick up anywhere along the Bruce Trail.

See page 7 for opportunities to join a guided hike for cleanup.

Photo:
Litter ambassadors
Jaime Thibodeau and
Brenda Stewart on
the job at Little Cove





Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY
PENINSULA CLUB

Keep the Bruce Trail Clean & Green

Enviro-Hikes & Litter Pickups



Join us for a free guided hike on the Bruce Trail while helping to keep it clean. Learn about the ecosystems of the Saugeen Peninsula from a Park Interpreter and pick up litter at these popular destinations.

When & Where

Little Cove in Bruce Peninsula National Park

July 17, August 21, & September 18 @ 10 am

Lion's Head Provincial Nature Reserve

July 18, August 22, & September 19 @ 10 am

Length & Cost

Length: 2-hour hike followed by a 30-minute Trash Talk Cafe to discuss findings & observations.

Cost: Free!

Be Prepared

Sturdy footwear is required. Participants are asked to bring a mask, sunscreen, lunch, & water.

Registration

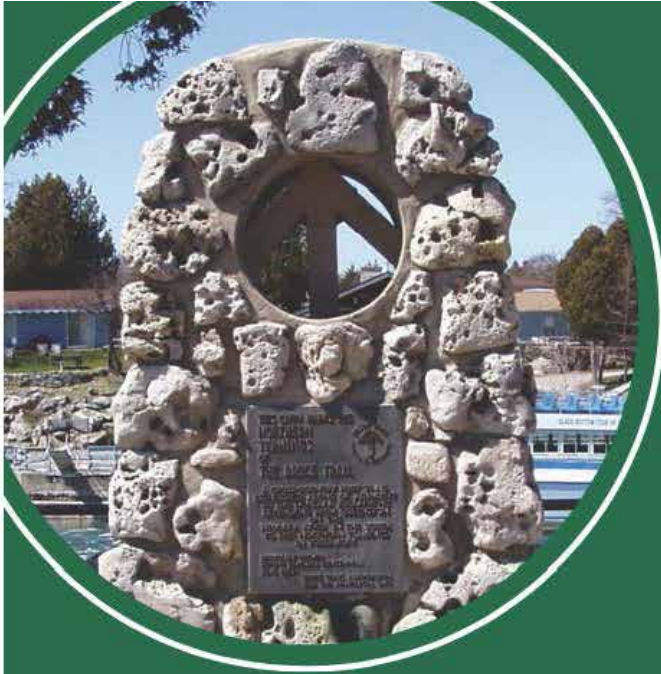
Space is limited. Register at envirohike@gmail.com

Partners: Peninsula Bruce Trail Club, Keep the Bruce Clean & Green, Bruce Peninsula National Park, Ontario Parks, Owen Sound Waste Watchers, A Greener Future



Historic Walking Tour of Tobermory

After your Peninsula hike, linger a little longer in Tobermory. Join us for a walking tour of the Tobermory Harbour with local resident, Hazel Smith. You will learn about village life prior to the era of tourism, from a settler's perspective. You will also learn a few historical facts about the Bruce Trail and the important role Tobermory and the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula played in the early years of trail development. This is a fundraiser for the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club. Registration is required.



**JOIN US FOR A
HISTORIC BRUCE TRAIL
& HARBOUR
WALKING TOUR
IN SUPPORT OF THE
PENINSULA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB**



Pre-Registration Required

Dates: July 15th @ 7 pm
August 19th @ 7 pm
September 16th @ 10 am

Starting Point: Bruce Peninsula National
Park Visitor Centre

Cost: \$10 per person or \$20 per family

For more details visit:
What's Happening @ www.pbtc.ca

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Remembering Our Volunteers

One of the joys of being involved in the Peninsula Club is the opportunity to work with exceptional volunteers. We remember two such volunteers, Michael Piggott and Ivan Smith, who recently passed away.

Michael Piggott was always full of energy and enthusiasm which he applied to his love of the outdoors. He very much believed that the Bruce Trail enhanced life for everyone and the environment. He was one of PBTC's longest serving volunteers; for 30 years, he and his wife Norma were volunteer trail captains for a section of the trail. When he could no longer continue as a trail captain, he continued as a member and donated towards securing the Trail.


Ivan Smith was always a friend to PBTC and BTC. He was a former superintendent of Bruce Peninsula National Park. Along with Don Wilkes, he was instrumental in the creation of the Burnt Point Loop trail at the time when the Visitor Centre was constructed in 2006. He made the conference-meeting room available to the club for meetings and was also supportive of PBTC's annual Hiking Festival. He never discouraged people from exploring, saying "It's your park to explore." In 2010, after retiring as superintendent, he made suggestions for, and participated in, important trail reroutes within the park. He was always approachable, and was an active environmentalist and supporter of PBTC.

Michael and Ivan were friends to many members of the Peninsula Club and will be lovingly remembered and greatly missed.

* * * * *

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Hiking Update

For anyone looking to join an organized hike, we've added the following hikes to the BTC hike calendar:

August 25 – Rural Rocks Side Trail: new member hike

August 28 – Lion's Head Loop

September 19 – Geology Hike: Cape Chin/Otter Lake

September 25 – Otter Lake Loop: new member hike

September 30 – Fall Colour Hike to the Coran

October 3 – Geology Hike: Cape Dundas

October 17 – Geology Hike: McIver Wetland/Crooked Toe Road

Registration is required for all hikes. Hike details and registration information is available on the hike calendar.

PBTC has decided not to offer a Warton to Tobermory end-to-end hike this season.

An end-to-end requires participants to share vehicles for car shuttles. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, we have decided not to take the risk.

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Hiking Snacks to Go!

Whether you are hiking for a day, an end-to-end, or a multi-day trip, having a snack in your backpack is one way to stay prepared! Share your favourite hike snack recipe and tell us your story about what makes it so awesome!

Kids' recipes are welcome, too!
Send to: pbtcoutreach@gmail.com.

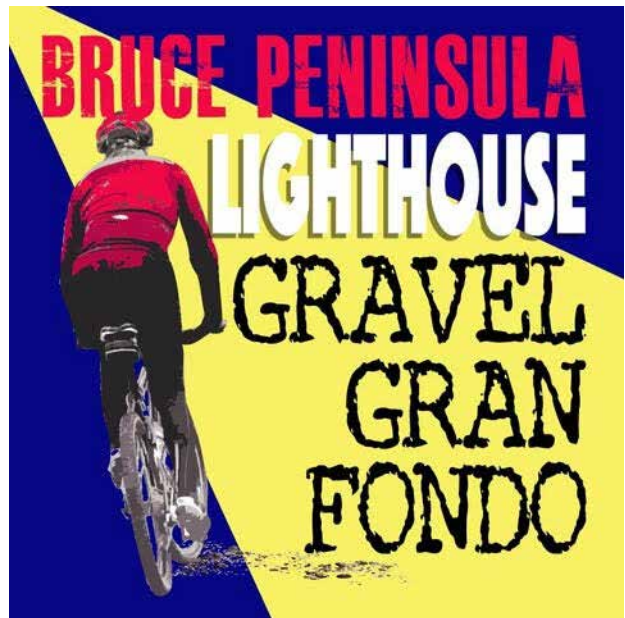


*Many thanks to Sally Raspin
for paintings of fruit*

Bruce Peninsula Gravel Gran Fondo

The Bruce Peninsula Gravel Gran Fondo will be held on Sunday, Oct. 3, 2021. A portion of the race uses the Minhinnick Side Trail of the Bruce Trail and riders will dismount and walk their bikes on this section. Hikers may wish to avoid the Minhinnick Side Trail on the morning of Oct. 3, or if they are hiking they should be prepared to share the trail with participants of the Gran Fondo.

Good luck to those participating in the event!

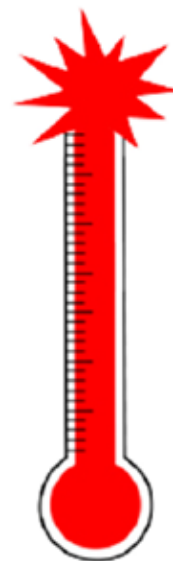


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PBTC Tops 1000 Members

The Peninsula Club has topped 1000 members.
As of July 20, 2021
we are at 1004 members.

Woohoo!!



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An advertisement for Cape Chin Bed & Breakfast. It features a circular image of a blue and white cabin. The text includes the name 'CAPE CHIN BED & BREAKFAST', 'Cabins and Cottage', contact information (519-795-7200, info@capechinbb.ca, www.capechinbb.ca), and the address (314 Cape Chin North Road, Lion's Head, ON N0H 1W0). A note at the bottom says 'Just 0.5 km from the Bruce Trail'.

An advertisement for Mountain Trout Camp. It features a scenic image of a lake with a fish jumping. The text includes the name 'MOUNTAIN TROUT CAMP', 'Welcome to our hidden gem!', contact information (Gillies Lake, 60 Daly's Rd RR#1, Miller Lake, Ontario, N0H 1Z0, Phone: 519-795-7655, camping@mountaintroutcamp.com, www.mountaintroutcamp.com).

Offering seasonal and overnight tent and trailer camping. Potable water, public washrooms and showers available.

Trail Building has Changed

Trail building has certainly changed over the years. The new trail at the MapleCross Reserve (see article and photos on pages 14 & 15) at Cape Chin is now complete, and we're providing an article from the archives (see below) to compare and contrast this recent initiative with some earlier work done on the trail at Cape Chin South. Today, we define an optimum route for a desired trail, then work with BTC conservationists and use GIS technology to establish the actual route of the trail. Work in the past relied on topographical maps, aerial photographs and even a fly-over. One thing, though, hasn't changed — the need to work with the property owner, whether private or public, to select the route and the manual work required to clear the trail!

We hope you enjoy the article.

From the Archives

(from The Peninsula News, vol. 1, issue 4, 1989/90)

(note: Smoky Head is the former name of Smokey Head)

Smoky Head Lookouts

by F.R.S. Binding

I have always been puzzled that over 8 km of the Trail from Whippoorwill Bay to north the Smoky Head rarely gives the hiker a glimpse of the waters of Georgian Bay. Except at the Reed's Dump area, the trail proceeds through a variety of forest environments and provides relatively easy hiking only 100 to 200 m from the scarp edge but not along it. Yet this shore has 50 meter high cliffs and excellent view along most of its length. The obvious solution was to modify the location of the Trail to reach some of the more scenic lookouts. This spring I studied large scale topographical maps and aerial photographs, and then with some possible sites in mind, I persuaded (*sic*) a friend to fly me along the shore in his light plane. Then I followed up with on land exploration. When permission for a reroute was obtained from BTA and MNR officials, Chris Walker and his Brampton High School students were able to come up to build the new Trail and close the unused part of the old one. In spite of the weather being the most hot and humid of the summer, we completed the work in one afternoon and the following morning. Not surprisingly we rewarded ourselves with a lot of good food and much swimming and sea kayaking in cold Georgian Bay.

From the south of (*sic*) the new route is reached by the long hike from Whippoorwill Bay, and from the north where the Trail crosses the old logging road leading off the Cape Chin South cottage road. From this north entry point it is a mere ten minute hike to the first lookout. The Trail previously went directly across maple and birch hardwood forest west of Smoky Head. Now it skirts the edges of this forest and reaches the escarpment of Smoky Head. There we have two back to back scenic lookouts 150 m apart and 172 feet above datum (the average level of the Bay's waters). Both lookouts protrude out from the face of the escarpment providing a view along the edge of the cliffs and the shore below as well as out into the Bay.

The north facing lookout towering above a boulder beach provides views along the shore to Cape Chin, into part of Dyer's Bay and on to Cabot Head. The one facing south allows a glimpse of White Bluff, a view of most of the Bay leading into Lion's Head, all of the Lion's Bay escarpment, the mouths of Barrow and Hope Bays, and the Cape Croker peninsula. Overall you can see the land on which is about 80 km of Peninsula's 140 km Trail.

Trail-Building at MapleCross Nature Reserve at Cape Chin

In mid-June a dedicated group of volunteers cleared the trail at the new MapleCross Nature Reserve at Cape Chin. An impressive and long-awaited new route is now laid out on the escarpment brow of Cape Chin, and is coupled with a new side trail, the Cape Chin Meadows Side Trail. Together, the new trail and side trail create a loop of 8.9 kilometres. The new trail was opened on June 16.

Thanks to the 21 volunteers who formed three crews and completed the clearing. The work involved two days, 37 volunteer-days and a total of 147 person-hours of work. Special thanks to Scott and four of the counsellors from Celtic Camp who helped with the work.

Thanks also go to the donors who made the land acquisition possible.



With the opening of the new trail, the MapleCross Nature Reserve is available to hikers who can take in the spectacular view from Cape Chin.
Enjoy!



Trail Builders



AGM Highlights

The Peninsula Bruce Trail Club 2020 Annual General Meeting was held on May 16 via Zoom webinar. Fifty-seven PBTC members and guests attended the meeting. Thanks to BTC head of-office staff members Jackie Randle, Laura Tuohy, and Meghan Croll for supporting the meeting, and thanks to guest speakers Michael McDonald (CEO, BTC), Mara McHaffie (BTC landowner stewardship coordinator and ecologist) and Nigel Heels, (acting staff sergeant, Grey-Bruce OPP).

This note is a summary of the highlights of the meeting. The minutes with all reports are available on the PBTC website at:

<https://www.pbtc.ca/agmminutes>

Mara McHaffie reviewed the exciting BTC Trail Ambassador Program that will run this summer on the PBTC trails and on two other clubs' trails. There will be two ambassadors walking the trails, engaging with visitors, and assisting with trail maintenance and stewardship projects. At the end of the season, they will produce a final report that includes trail user data, litter data, mapping of invasive species and information on trail "hotspots."

Guest presenter Nigel Heels provided an overview of how the Grey-Bruce OPP respond to a lost or missing person occurrence on the Bruce Peninsula. He described the program, "What 3 Words," which is a mobile app that hikers can download, call up, and use to pass on a key phrase to a 911 emergency dispatcher if they are lost. The app provides location information, enabling the searchers to locate the lost or missing person.

PBTC President John Grandy reviewed significant club achievements over the past year:

- Membership: Increased 30 per cent to 950 members
- Communications: 900 paperless copies of The Rattler; new web and social media coordinators
- Outreach: Work on the municipal Sustainable Tourism Advisory Group; success in obtaining a grant for a new display tent; and ongoing work with multiple community agencies
- Hiking: New conservation-themed badges
- Trail maintenance: Highlight was the new staircase at Barrow Bay Nature Reserve which won the BTC Tom East Award. The project had 325 hours of volunteer work, and it permitted a trail reroute taking 5.3 kilometres of trail off the road. The club wishes to thank Tom Hall, Doug Hill, John Hill, Josh

Hazzard and the team of volunteers that constructed the staircase.

- Trail maintenance: 113 volunteers, 695 hours of project work, 786 volunteer hours
- Forest maintenance: 101 work parties, 434 volunteer hours
- Landowner relations: Ambassador Program (reach out to landowners); ecology consultations, wildlife habitat enhancement and invasive species identification/eradication
- Land stewardship: Weekly work parties, annual monitoring reports, 46 land stewards, 80 properties and 4,656 acres
- Century tree planting replacement is continuing.
- Land securement: Greater than 1000 acres have been secured in three years, including, most recently, the 533-acre MapleCross Nature Reserve at Cape Chin.
- Trail development: Landowner Relations and Trail Development programs are grateful to landowners for the 1.5 kilometre section of trail rerouted away from Little Cove Road.

(cont'd on pg. 17)



The John Appleton Porcupine Award was presented by Tom Hall to the Jackson Cove trio of Brian Taylor, Lynn Jansen and Elaine Powney. The award goes to the PBTC trail maintenance volunteer(s) who persist, focus, and have fortitude to finish a task, despite difficult conditions.



The members approved the 2021-2022 Board of Directors:

Position	Name	Position	Name
President	Tamara Wilson	Landowner Relations	Darci Lombard
Rep. to BTC Board	John Whitworth	Land Stewardship Dir.	Mark Shantz
Past President	John Grandy	Land Stewardship Asst. Dir.	VACANT
Land Securement Dir.	John Whitworth	Hike Director	Barbara Reuber
Vice President	VACANT	Communication team	Barbara Reuber
Treasurer	Ron MacDonald	Indigenous Relations	Janna Chegahno
Secretary	Martha Clendinning	Membership Outreach	Marg Glendon
Archivist	Walter Brewer	Members-at-large	Leah Burns Laura Pisko Jeff Thibodeau Grant Ehrhardt
Trail Maintenance Co-ord.	Tom Hall	Park Advisory Rep.	Owen Glendon
Trail Maintenance Dir.-N.	Owen Glendon	Friends of Park	Ann Miller
Trail Maintenance Dir.-S.	Lloyd Hayward	Social Media	Saabir Sohrab Praveen Sohrab
Trail Development Dir.	John Grandy		
Volunteer Coordinator	VACANT		

The Club's new President, Tamara Wilson, addressed the members and highlighted plans going forward, including a volunteer recognition event and expanded connections with the local community.

