

WINTER 2025



## President's Message

Ellen Savoia

As nights become frosty and the leaves fall, my thoughts turn towards giving and being thankful.

The Bruce Trail is fortunate to have many generous donors. Last year the BTC received 11,830 unique donations! That is amazing. Here in Niagara, we have very generous supporters of the trail, like the bequest from the estate of Paul and Mercia Naray.

If you are interested in finding out more about how you can give a gift to the Bruce Trail in your will, check out the article *Bless the Trail with Your Own Legacy* in this issue of the newsletter.

People also give to the Bruce Trail through hundreds of hours of volunteering. NBTC members help by maintaining the trail, being landowner ambassadors, working on an invasive plant pull, organizing and staffing events, to name just a few. To celebrate these volunteers, we are inviting all our volunteers to the annual Volunteer Appreciation Event on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

*Continued Page 2*



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### NIAGARA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB

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## President's Message

From Page One

The Volunteer Appreciation Event will be held at the event room of the St. Catharines Museum and Welland Canal Centre, from 3:00pm-to 6:00pm. The speakers are Adrian Petry, Visitor Services Coordinator for the museum, and Brad Wood, facilitator for the Welland Canal.

We will also be presenting our volunteer awards during this event to recognize those who have gone that extra mile.

NBTC presents three awards annually.

- **NBTC Lifetime Achievement Award:** Awarded to a member(s) who has made a significant volunteer contribution to the organization at the club level over many years.
- **NBTC Volunteer of the Year Award:** Awarded to a member or committee whose volunteerism has gone above and beyond in the year just completed.
- **NBTC Unsung Hero Award:** Awarded to a member(s) who can always be counted on to lend a hand and volunteer at the club level over many years. Current board members not eligible.

Thank you all for being a part of the Bruce Trail. Our club is a fantastic community of people and each of you brings something special.

See you on the trail!

*Ellen*

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#### PHOTO CREDITS:

- Page 1: Karen Couch, Shorthills. October 2025
- Page 2: Karen Couch, Cave Springs
- Page 3: Rick Waters, Trail Maintenance
- Pages 4, 5 & 6: Jim Arcangeletti, Landowner Appreciation
- Page 8: Sheila Massey, Fall Colours, Whimsy & History in the Village
- Page 9 & 10: Margaret Northfield. Three Hikes in Fall, Hiking 101
- Page 10: Maryam Garshabi. Three Hikes in Fall, Niagara Falls Public Library
- Page 10: Michele Altobelli, Three Hikes in Fall, Biodiversity
- Page 11: Sharon Corcoran, How Movement Became My Medicine
- Page 14: Karen Couch, 12-Mile Creek
- Page 15: Karen Couch, Shorthills and 12-Mile Creek



# Trail Maintenance

**RICK WATERS**

DIRECTOR  
TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

October 15 and October 17, NBTC had a work party each day to build two boardwalks along 20-mile creek between Jordan Hollow (Sho'arishon Park) and the stairs up to the Lincoln Historical Museum. These boardwalks are for a new Side Trail (yet to be named) and will open late November to December.

The Ontario Heritage Trust provided the wood for construction and the NBTC supplied the volunteers.

Thanks to Vince who was the lead hand and visionary for the boardwalks. The volunteers were Vince Zvonar, Dan Weber, Mark Crisp, Bruce Hogg, Jacques Boilard, Rhys Beake, Geoff Lillico, Neal Harvey, Bala Tharmalingham, Vince Mayne, Marinus Koole, Rick Waters.

This new trail will be a great addition for the Town of Lincoln and the BTC! ◀



# Landowner Appreciation Celebration 2025

Sam Rutherford

Landowner Relations Director

*The 2025 Landowner Appreciation Celebration held on Sunday September 7th was another resounding success!*



This year's invitations encouraged guests 'to hike on over to our landowners' appreciation celebration' and our Niagara Bruce Trail Club volunteers took this theme to heart. They transformed the beautiful Glen Elgin Room at the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation into a Bruce Trail hiking showcase for our Niagara landowners.

Many thanks to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) for once again allowing us access to this incredible venue. Our landowners represented half of the 140 guests in attendance at the celebration. This provided a wonderful opportunity for our members to say thank you to our landowners for allowing us to hike across their private properties. We owe each of our landowners a huge debt of gratitude for their exceptional community mindedness and generosity in sharing this wonderful resource with others.

Joanne Krupa, NBTC Social Convenor, along with her support team, put together an amazing baked potato bar for this year's food offering. Regular and sweet potatoes presented a tasty base for the many toppings offered so our guests could build their own meals. Delicious desserts were provided by our talented members.

Our Biodiversity Committee set up an information table to provide landowners with the opportunity to learn about the many programs underway to protect and restore the biodiversity along the trail. Volunteer work parties are organized to remove invasive plants along the trail allowing native plants to flourish. Landowners are encouraged to embrace the Bruce Trail Conservancy's Landowner Stewardship program, a voluntary and free program that supports Bruce Trail landowners with environmentally friendly land practices.

Lyndsey Wilkerson, BTC Restoration Project Specialist, was on hand to discuss the program with landowners and she also brought along enough native trees and plants for each landowner to take one home. Short hikes were enjoyed by many who took the opportunity to learn a bit about the biodiversity that the Ball's Falls Conservation Area offers along with great views of the geology present in the Niagara Escarpment.

Michael McDonald, BTC CEO, joined us for the celebration and offered his opening remarks along with heartfelt thanks to our landowners for sharing our vision. The Bruce Trail Conservancy has once again been named one of Canada's Top 100 Charities. It was a great opportunity for our landowners and members to meet Michael in person.

A fun raffle draw was held towards the end of the event with many impressive prizes picked up by the lucky winners. We received several items donated by local businesses as well as beautiful hand-crafted items from some of our talented members. NBTC merchandise was also made available for sale at discounted prices.

A fun afternoon was enjoyed by all!

Many thanks to the planning committee who worked tirelessly over the past several months to put the event together.

*See more on Page 5*

# Landowner Appreciation Celebration 2025

From Page 4

Also, thanks to all our landowner ambassador volunteers for delivering invitations in person and reaching out to the landowners on their individual routes. As always with any activity sponsored by the Niagara Bruce Trail Club, we owe a huge thank you to all our volunteers whose collective efforts supported this amazingly successful celebration for our landowners.

Thanks to Steam Whistle/Beau's, Kacaba Vineyards Winery and Vieni Estates for their generous donations.

Thanks again to the many Niagara landowners who joined us. It was a great pleasure to meet you all and I look forward to our continued partnership in conservation. *Looking forward to next year!* ♡



# Landowner Appreciation Celebration 2025

More Photos!



# NBTC Landowners' Appreciation Event

September 7, 2025

## OUR GENEROUS PRIZE DONORS 2025

*NBTC Members: Ken Martin, Lauren Doig, and Rob Stevens*



*Thank You All!*

## *Naray Bequest to Niagara Bruce Trail Club, and Memories*

Submitted Marinus Koole

NBTC Treasurer

The Niagara Bruce Trail Club recently received a wonderful \$5,000 bequest from the estate of Paul and Mercia Naray.

While we have not yet designated this toward a specific project in Niagara, we wanted to share two memories of this couple's connection to the Niagara Club.

Their nephew and Estate Trustee, Brent shared:

*"Mercia Naray and Paul Naray were husband and wife. They met at Bruce Trail Club hikes and their relationship blossomed into marriage in their later years. Mercia lived into her 101st year and Paul lived well into his 90s. Paul had a side trail at Woodend named after him. They loved hiking the Bruce Trail and attributed their long lives to keeping in shape by walking these trails."*

Trudy Senesi (former NBTC Board member, president, long-time hiker, and volunteer) shared:

*"I am not surprised that Paul would have remembered the NBTC. He was a delightful gentleman who greeted each lady with a kiss on her wrist - truly European! I remember one of our former presidents, Brenda Zadoroznij, saying when it came time to name the side trail in Woodend they named it after Paul - because he was the oldest member of their group at that time. See ... aging does have its rewards!"*

*Paul and Mercia came to Queenston to greet our E2Eers for many years after they had finished their actual hiking. They really seemed to enjoy welcoming the hikers as they touched the cairn. They were such nice people. I can see them in my memory now."* ◀



## *Bless the Trail with Your Own Legacy*

Submitted by Marinus Koole

NBTC Treasurer

*You too can give future generations the joy of discovery on the Trail with a gift in your Will.*

We recognize that the decision to leave a gift in your will to the Bruce Trail Conservancy is a truly special one. Our vision to permanently secure and protect the Bruce Trail is a long-term one and requires a source of dedicated funds. Your gift will ensure that precious Niagara Escarpment land will continue to be protected as it becomes available and that it will be cared for in perpetuity for future generations.

For more information on how you can be a part of this, see the great resources on this page on the BTC Website: [https://brucetrail.org/planned-giving/#Gift\\_in\\_your\\_Will](https://brucetrail.org/planned-giving/#Gift_in_your_Will)

You can also contact our Niagara Treasurer Marinus Koole at [nbtctreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:nbtctreasurer@gmail.com) or Gloria Vidovich at the BTC office. Gloria is the Planned Giving & Donor Relations Officer, [gloria.vidovich@brucetrail.org](mailto:gloria.vidovich@brucetrail.org) or 905-529-6821, ext. 248. ◀



# Fall Colours, Whimsy & History in the Village

Submitted by Sheila Massey

## *What beautiful fall weather we are having!*

I am sure everyone has been taking in the beauty of our special place, the Niagara Region.

Bill Russell leads the Thursday morning hike from Glen Road in Jordan. One week we hike the Jim Rainforth Trail, one week we walk through the Village of Jordan, and the third week we hike to Balls Falls.

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, it was the Village walk. After a short walk on the Bruce Trail, we follow Nineteenth Street which leads us into Jordan. The Village residents and businesses decorated for Fall and Halloween and there were several creative displays of pumpkins and mums, as well as some unique scarecrows.



One of the stops we make is the property of the Lincoln Museum. Behind the Museum we find the Old Jordan School House (built in 1859) and the two-storey Fry House (built in 1815) by Jacob Fry and Elizabeth Wismer from Pennsylvania. Beside the Fry House we find the Haines Cemetery which contains remains of early Pennsylvania German Mennonites with burials as early as the 1840s. Recently the tombstones were removed and refurbished and put back in an upright position.

Also behind the Museum is a replica of a stagecoach - you are welcome to climb the steps and take a seat. Just before you come to the stagecoach, you will see a set of stairs leading down to a pond and the Twenty Mile Creek. Sometimes we have seen hundreds of turtles basking in sunshine on fallen logs which have been downed by the beaver residing in the pond. As you venture along the trail, you can see the beaver lodge, which is steadily getting larger as the result of this industrious beaver. Further along, we witnessed salmon attempting to climb the falls on the Creek. Eventually, we arrive at the Bailey Bridge.



Bill Russell is a wealth of knowledge about the history of the Jordan area and recounts many stories from the past on this hike.



If you would like to hear the many stories Bill has, including the one about the history of Bailey Bridge, please join us on this Thursday hike.

After another short walk on a trail and up a hill, we arrive back in the Village, walk on the Main Street to get to Highway 81, which takes us back to the Bruce Trail. From there, we again hike uphill to Glen Road. On this hike, we could see the progress that has been made at Sho'arishon Park (a Neutral Nation Legacy Site, formerly known as Jordan Hollow).

Sho'arishon Park was designed in collaboration with Indigenous partners to honour and reflect the history, culture, and presence of Indigenous peoples.

The Park officially opened on November 1st of this year. The ceremony commenced at 1:00pm, and there was a free shuttle service from the Village. ◀

# Three Hikes in Fall

Submitted by Margaret Northfield

## HIKING 101

Sixteen enthusiastic people started their hiking journey in October with Hiking 101. Thank you to our dedicated volunteers who make these workshops fun, engaging and full of great information. Special thanks to Diane Marlatt, Ken Martin, Jim Arcangeletti, Diane Wyman, Janet Davey, Jacques Boilard, and Rick Waters.



## NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF & WELLNESS COMMITTEE

The Niagara Falls Public Library staff are fortunate to have Maryam Garshasbi on their Wellness Committee. Maryam is also an NBTC hiker.

For the Wellness Committee's first event, she organized an outing on our trail. Staff and their families showed up for a short introduction to the Bruce Trail and for a wonderful fall hike around Woodend. They even left with the coveted "My First Hike" badge. Thank you to Diane Marlatt and Rick Waters for helping to guide.



## Three Hikes in Fall

Continued from Page 10

### BIODIVERSITY ON THE TRAIL

On a chilly day in October, we were eleven strong pulling buckthorn from our St Paul Preserve property in Niagara Falls. While buckthorn can be a great plant for ornamental purposes, as well as provide windbreaks, it is an invasive species in Ontario. It spreads quickly, outcompeting native plants, degrading wildlife habitats, and can provide habitats for pests and diseases.

The Biodiversity Committee plans several invasive pull parties throughout the year. You don't have to have any special talents to help, just an interest in helping and a pair of garden gloves. We provide training in identifying plants and any special tools that are needed. Our next efforts will be in the spring when we focus on the prolific garlic mustard plant. ◀



#### Photos

Left: A student showing root of a small buckthorn shrub.

Above: Mara McHaffie, BTC ecologist directing the group.

Centre: NBTC Seed Orchard

Below: Volunteers holding extractigators – a tool to pull out roots.



# How Movement Became My Medicine

Submitted by Sharon Corcoran

## How did I get here?

This is a question I constantly ask myself; it grounds me. I moved to the Niagara region, after putting up resistance for quite some time. I quickly found myself focused on giving to my community, but so many things shifted for me when I found out that my papa was terminally ill with cancer.

My mother passed away on May 2, 2013 - more than 12 years ago, and I have never really grieved. Now, I was experiencing anticipatory grief of my father. I wanted to run from it; instead, I ended up walking with it. I needed to find somewhere outside of my own body to help manage the grief I was feeling. My journey didn't begin with the intention of becoming an avid hiker. I wanted to breathe fresh air and to simply move and BE in nature. It was my way of beginning to honour my dad. He always said that his medicine was movement and I guess it was becoming mine too.

My parents were born in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. They met when my father and mother were 19 and 17 respectively, and they had the most beautiful love story and courtship you can imagine, and I remember how fondly they spoke of being in the mountains near La Soufrière volcano and how epic it was to be surrounded by all the greenery and I wanted to experience something in nature that fueled me too. I never knew why I was so drawn to the sound of wolves and coyotes and just wanting to be in the forest, but it was all becoming evident.

Being in the woods started to offer me a space where I could forget about my everyday tasks and it just brought me peace, and without realizing it I was starting to grieve the loss of my mother. It was a surreal feeling and I realized I was becoming a



part of something bigger that would come to have a profound impact on my life and my soul. I knew I belonged here. You see, the woods soothe my soul; I feel free.

Even though I was already hiking, I decided to take the Hiking 101 training. People asked "Why? You are already hiking." I believe in foundations, and, in life, you sometimes must circle back to capture the basics of things you might have missed. This is not a sign of weakness but strength in learning. Along this learning path I met Lauren Doig, Karen Couch, Alan Laver, and Jacques Boilard who have contributed to my love of hiking through their achievements, warmth, patience, and overall welcoming spirit.

What I didn't know about hiking was that it was the gateway to finding peace and to becoming a part of something bigger. I started to feel like I was being held not just by nature but by community.

When I think of my reasons for hiking - legacy and community is my truth. Since joining the club, I have hiked hundreds of kilometres; I have some badges under my belt, and my confidence in my abilities has grown so much, pushing me to do extraordinary things - like hiking Machu Picchu, the Laura Secord Legacy hike and soon the Merritthon - all in honour of my dad who has now been laid to rest with my mother. It is chilling, and I can't explain, but deep down I always knew that my dad would pass when I was hiking. On Thursday May 29, 2025, during a long hike at Cave Spring Conservation, he did - and I felt that, at long last, he had gone to rest with my mother.



The trails have given me space to grieve, space to breathe, a way to contribute to community but most of all they have given me back parts of myself I never even knew I was missing. ◀

## *Invasive Plant Watch - Why does it matter?*

Submitted by Mary-lyn Hopper

We are all aware of the benefits of being in "nature". We take it for granted that we have wonderful natural areas in Niagara with greenery galore.

In healthy ecosystems there is a wide diversity of plant matter forming layers of vegetation, benefitting a wide variety of wildlife. Some of our native insects are only found in association with specific native plants. There are ecosystems along the Niagara trail which contain a wide variety of plants that are characteristic of the Carolinian zone in which it is situated. But have you noticed swatches along the trail where there is a noticeable lack of diversity, where a single plant or tree has bullied in and displaced other vegetation? If not, keep a close eye on what you see at the side of the trail. These plants have often escaped from surrounding properties or have been spread by birds, other wildlife, and human traffic. Originally, they were brought to Canada for legitimate reasons - for decoration, food sources or as hedgerows. In their natural habitat spread was controlled by competing vegetation, insects etc. *The photos provided are not from the Bruce Trail but illustrate these invasions.*

*Did you know that plants which have become invasive along the trail are still sold in nurseries with no information about their detrimental impact?*



Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolan*) and Lily of the Valley

The Biodiversity Committee, with support from Bruce Trail staff, organizes pull parties to remove some of these invasives and reseed with native plants - those that grew in these forested areas before colonization.

As a supporter of the Bruce Trail Conservancy, you can join our pull parties, use the boot stations to prevent transmission of seeds and be a voice in the community in reducing the purchase and sharing of invasive plants.

For more info:

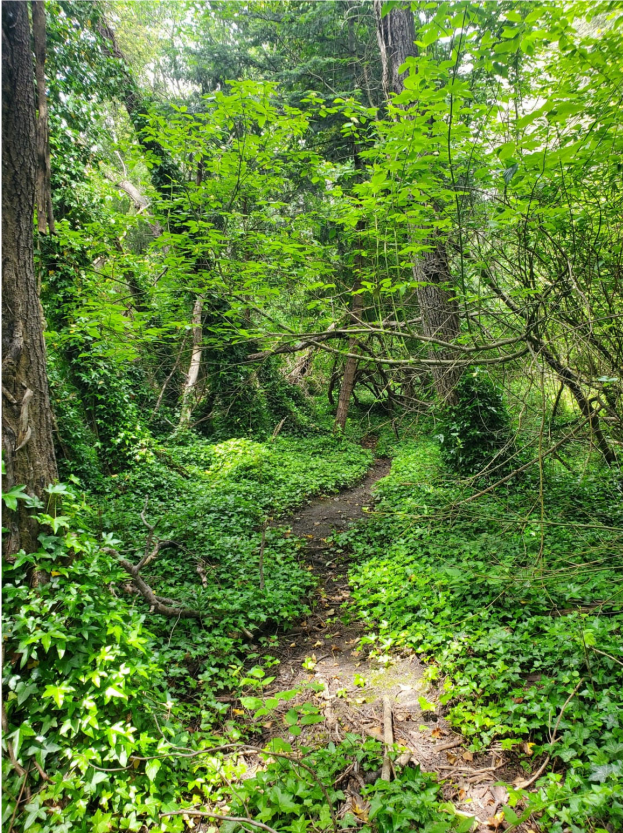
- Grow Me Instead (an online resource for choosing alternatives to common invasives)  
<https://www.ontarioinvasivplants.ca/resources/grow-me-instead/>
- Ontario Invasive Plant Council  
<https://www.ontarioinvasivplants.ca/>
- Canadian Coalition for Native Plant Regulation  
<https://ccipr.ca/>



Orange Daylily - only *Hemerocallis fulva* is invasive.

## Invasive Plant Watch - Why does it matter?

From Page 13



Above: English Ivy  
Below: Greater Celandine





# Bruce Trail CONSERVANCY



## Volunteer Holiday Parties



Join us for one of two Volunteer Holiday Parties as we celebrate the incredible work of our dedicated volunteers. Enjoy refreshments, shop the BTC Store, and meet other volunteers!

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### When & Where

Southern Event:  
**Monday December 1st 4:00-6:00pm**  
at the Shawn & Ed Brewing Company in Dundas, ON.

Northern Event:  
**Monday December 8th 4:00-6:00pm**  
at Stone Tree Golf Course in Owen Sound, ON.



### The BTC Store

We will have a mini BTC Store set up at the events, though supplies will be limited so we recommend ordering online. Choose "in-store pickup" and include "Picking up at Volunteer Holiday Party Dec 1 (or 8)" in the Comments box when making your order.

### Registration

Please register early using the form below as space is limited.  
[brucetrail.org/volunteer-holiday-party-registration](https://brucetrail.org/volunteer-holiday-party-registration)







Use code  
**NIAGARABT**  
 and for each tour booked by  
 your club for 2025, we will donate  
 \$25 to the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

# SNEAK PEAK

## for 2026

MORE DETAILS  
 COMING SOON!

**Portugal Hiking**  
7 Days: Spring

**Hike Saskatchewan**  
10 Days: June 17

**Yukon Hiking**  
12 Days: June 19

**P.E.I. Hiking**  
7 Days: July 5, August 30

**Newfoundland West Hiking**  
7 Days: August 15

**Newfoundland East Hiking**  
7 Days: August 23

Registration  
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# Enjoy Nature


NBTC Volunteers work to preserve & maintain the trail for everyone, forever. You can support the TRAIL by donating at <http://niagarabrucetrail.club/wp/donate/>

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**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 2026 issue is January 31, 2026.

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

**BRUCE TRAIL CONSERVANCY MISSION**  
*Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.*