



Trail Markings

GVTA newsletter

Earth Day edition, Spring 2020

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Welcome to this first edition of our e-newsletter! The new Trail Markings will replace the paper copy of Trail Markings and the e-newsletter Trail Blazes. As many hiking clubs, we have made the decision to go electronic and discontinue the print version for many reasons. Going electronic means reduced expenses with no printing and mailing costs, less volunteer effort, less paper, more environmentally friendly, more flexible distribution and more current design options. So many benefits all around! Please click "[view this email in your browser](#)" for best results. We recognize it will be an adjustment for some but we hope for your continued support and as always, we welcome your comments. Email us at info@gvta.on.ca.

(If you prefer to print a copy, simply click on the print icon in the top of the email.)

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Message from the Board

by Annie Côté-Kennedy (President) on behalf of the GVTA Board

Communication to members

We've reviewed our communications strategy to members. We want to strike the right balance between keeping you informed and not overwhelming you with unnecessary information. Our plan is to provide you with quarterly updates on club activities, work in progress and important hiking updates via this newsletter. We will continue to provide regular general updates on our website and encourage you to visit the site for up-to-date information. As well, we encourage you to check out our Facebook account.

When activities or events of interest (like the hike leader training program) and emerging information (like trail closings due to unforeseen events) occur in-between the Trail Markings schedule, we'll continue to inform you directly by email.

Earth Day April 22

Every year, we are contacted by various groups wishing to participate in some meaningful way in Earth Day types of activities. This year, we will be offering Trail Maintenance training in the early spring as part of Earth Day events. If you are interested in helping on April 22, please contact Emily Bennett, our director of volunteers at volunteering@gvta.on.ca. More details on the specifics planned for Earth Day will also be published on line.

Hike Program

We currently have a record number of varied hikes planned for the next few months. If you miss having the printed copy of upcoming hikes, know that you can always print from the online calendar or you can create your own PDF document of a group of hikes, to view or print at a later time. Check the bottom of <http://www.gvta.on.ca/HikesEvents.htm> for help on how to do this.

The hike leader training program that was scheduled for March 21 has been well received! All spots were filled in record time and we now have the potential of adding five

more hike leaders to our roster! And more hike leaders equals more hikes! A special shout-out to the current hike leaders for your anticipated help in mentoring the new leaders.

Trail Maintenance

We continue to look for more volunteers to help with trail maintenance. Keeping our trails in tip-top shape remains a priority for the club. If you have time and enjoy outdoor activities, please consider helping with the trail maintenance either on a short-term project or as one of our trail captains overseeing a specific segment of the trail. Contact volunteering@gvta.on.ca.

Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week 2020 is April 19-25. There are countless people working behind the scene who are contributing in various ways to keep the club viable: the folks on the trail cutting trees, fixing bridges, painting blazes; the people updating the website and managing our Facebook account; people creating maps, designing this newsletter, leading hikes, responding to correspondence, and the list goes on. On behalf of the board and all trail users, we thank you! If you are a member and know someone who you think particularly deserves to be recognized, please consider nominating a volunteer. <http://www.gvta.on.ca/Volunteer-Awards.htm>. Volunteer recognition awards are presented at the annual general meeting.

Annual General Meeting

Block the date now for the GVTA's AGM on Tuesday, May 5. Details will be published on gvta.on.ca when they are finalized. We hope to see many of you at the meeting!

Trail Snippet

-by Anita Smith

This edition's featured trail is a section of the Black Walnut Trail found at the end of Bridge Street E. in Kitchener. [Link to map.](#)



“Burple, burble,” gobble, gobble”, and “kee-eeee-arr” are some of the sounds I have heard while traversing this section of the Black Walnut trail. The streams vary from slow trickles to little torrents, depending on recent weather. Turkey tracks are everywhere, and I have seen hens and toms on several outings. Red tailed hawks and even bald eagles can be spotted overhead if you watch carefully.

This section leads you through fields, abandoned apple orchards, over several small streams, and along a forested ridge overlooking the Grand River. You can park on the shoulder of Bridge Street to enter the trail. Be aware that there is a steep drop from the roadway down to the trail. I hug the telephone pole halfway down to slow myself down and regain my footing! Depending on the time of year some parts of the trail pool with large puddles making waterproof footwear a good idea. Along with appropriate shoes you may want to bring a walking stick as there are a few steep inclines, muddy sections and several small footbridges to cross.

This winter a fellow creature made use of our trail. Along with deer and rabbit tracks I was excited to spot what I assumed to be a beaver track but I wasn't certain. Several hundred feet further along the trail I then came across a fresh beaver chew and had my prediction confirmed. How Canadian is that!

Volunteer Profile: Nick Kuret

-by Emily Bennett



Nick is the Trail Director for the Black Walnut section of the GVTA and works with a team of dedicated Trail Captains who take responsibility for their section of the trail. As a Trail Director, Nick trains new volunteers, manages the Landowner agreements and organizes work parties when needed. Nick has also received GVTA's Award of Merit, and Hike Ontario Volunteer Award.

Nick and his family (wife Anita, daughter Jennifer and grand-son Mackenzie) are GVTA members, supporters and avid trail maintenance volunteers. Nick and Anita lead hikes throughout the GVTA and environs. Nick and Anita enjoy trail maintenance so much, they also volunteer for the Bruce Trail Conservancy. Recently I had the pleasure of speaking with Nick and asked him a few questions about his role as a GVTA volunteer:

How did you get started in trail maintenance?

In 1988, I discovered some advertisements for leading hikes near where we live. We enjoyed participating in the hikes and then I contacted the GVTA to see if we might help with trail work. The following spring, the GVTA held a Trail Maintenance training session and a small but mighty group participated. I became a Trail Captain for that section of the trail and still maintain it to this day along with my wife and daughter. In early 2000's

the trail was sectioned into the four sections and soon after I became the Project Manager for Construction Crews for the entire trail. When the Black Walnut Trail Director left, I was asked to step into the role.

What are your best memories of working on the GVTA?

I like taking on a new project and especially, group projects (like building a bridge). I love working with the group during the project and get great satisfaction when the job is completed. The crew makes it easy and it's almost a social event.

What keeps you motivated?

Well, I'm still in good shape and can do most of the work, including dealing with fallen trees. I have great pride in keeping the trail open for hikers all year round. It's great knowing I had a part in keeping them safe & sound on our trails.

Thank-you, Nick, for being a great Trail Captain, Trail Director and Crew Captain!



Interested in becoming a Trail Captain or Trail Director? Send an email to volunteer@gvta.on.ca to let us know. We will be offering Trail Maintenance training in the early Spring as part of Earth Day events.



Hiking Notes

-by Anita Smith

My mother once asked me, "Do you want apple pie or chocolate cake for dessert?" My answer, of course, was "why **or**? I'll have both!" With the huge range of options for hiking with GVTA it is easy to overindulge (and walk off your dessert choices at the same time!)

In the next few weeks you can choose between urban walking or a rural saunter through the countryside!

On Sunday March 29th our hike leader, Didier Thevenard, will guide participants along the full length of our ION rail system. While exploring the fabric of Kitchener-Waterloo, hikers will see a variety of sights including aged industrial neighbourhoods, old city centres, vibrant cores, urban canyons and high-tech parks. The 17km hike will be done largely on sidewalks and city trails at a pace of 4.5km/hour.

On Saturday April 18th hike leaders, Nick and Anita Kuret, will guide hikers on a 10km hike from the end of Powerline Road in Brantford towards Paris, along a scenic section of the trail next to the river. The hike will be done on this section of the Black Walnut Trail at a pace of 3-4 km/hour.

So which hike will you join, an urban adventure or a rural stroll?
I answer again, "why **or**? Both!" See you there!

These are only two of our many upcoming hikes. Please check the [calendar](#) for more information about other hikes.

There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.

-Rachel Carson

Happy Earth Day!