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Trail Markings: Fall 2022



GVTA receives tourism relief grant

The Grand Valley Trails Association (GVTA) received a grant of \$52,800 from the Hamilton, Halton, Brant Tourism Relief Fund Program.

"We were incredibly grateful to have been accepted as a recipient of this grant," said GVTA President Annie Côté-Kennedy. "With the money received we are able to improve the trail

in the Carolinian Crest section and develop a comprehensive marketing program geared to promoting hiking and attracting people to the trail.”

The program, which was established to promote tourism in Hamilton, the Regional Municipality of Halton and the County of Brant, is funded by the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, and is administered by the Hamilton, Halton and Brant (HHB) Tourism Association.

“Receiving the grant allowed us to buy trail maintenance equipment and to train more volunteers in the Carolinian Crest Section. An unexpected benefit has been the increased networking and relationship building with the county, the city and other agencies like the Brant Waterways Foundation,” said Jason Thompson, GVTA's VP of trail maintenance.

In addition to the trail enhancements, the funds are being spent to develop and implement a marketing campaign that includes new marketing collateral such as display boards, a brochure and an enhanced social media presence. As well, an advertising and social media campaign is being planned.

Join December 11 festive dinner

Start the holiday season early and join us for a full turkey dinner on Sunday, December 11 at Rockway Golf Club.

Catch up with hiking friends and enjoy guest speaker Nicola Ross, award-winning writer and author of the popular Loops and Latte series. [Register by December 4](#): \$40 for members. Doors open at 5 p.m. and dinner is served at 6 p.m.

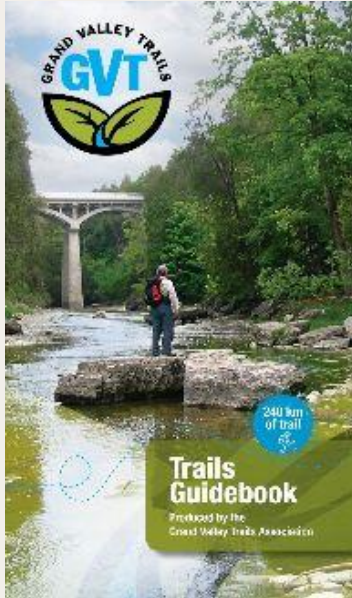


In keeping with the festive theme, we will be collecting non-perishable food items for The Food Bank of Waterloo Region. If you prefer to donate online, visit the [Foodbank](#).

We will have our new updated Guidebook on sale, as well as toques, buffs and badges to help you with your holiday gift shopping.

Looking forward to seeing you in person! **For more details and to purchase your ticket, [click here](#).**

New guidebook on sale



An updated GVTA Guidebook is being released at the end of November. The Guidebook provides detailed descriptions of each section of the footpath, including points of interest, historical notes, flora and fauna, terrain, seasonal conditions, parking and amenities.

A three-person committee, consisting of Jan Hember, Jamie Hember and Annie Côté-Kennedy, has been working on the updates and the 8th edition for the past 11 months.

“The first guidebook was originally driven by Jan and Jamie, and their diligence and countless hours of work on this latest edition made the Guidebook a reality once again,” said GVTA President Annie Côté-Kennedy.

The revised Guidebook is available for purchase on GVTA.on.ca/Store and in-person at various events, including the upcoming Festive Dinner on December 11 at Rockway Golf Course in Kitchener.

Update your Ondago app

Ondago, the online map application, has been updated to include changes made to the Grand Valley Trails Guidebook. If you have already downloaded Ondago, you need to update it to reflect the changes. If you have not downloaded the app, give it a try!

Ondago is considered one of the best hiking apps for Ontario: this free app for Android/ios offers downloadable maps with GPS functionality so you can track where you are on the trail.

Volunteer Spotlight

New hike coordinator Liz Coelho

The GVTA has appointed Liz Coelho as the new hike coordinator. Ms. Coelho replaces Petra Suffling, who stepped down from the position to focus on promoting hikes and activities on Facebook. As the new hike coordinator, Liz is a member of the GVTA board.

“The GVTA Board thanks Petra for her many hours of work in meeting and mentoring our hike leaders,” said Emily Bennett, Director, Membership and Volunteering.

A project manager by trade, Ms. Coelho is an avid hiker, environmentalist and educator. She brings much enthusiasm to the role and looks forward to building and growing the GVTA hiking community.

“I was lucky to meet with Liz on a GVTA hike recently and learned about her hiking adventures and love of the outdoors,” said Ms. Bennett. “Her joy of hiking is evident!”



Upcoming hikes

Guided hikes offered every weekend



Winter will not deter GVTA hike leaders and members from getting out on the trails every weekend. A group of certified hike leaders met earlier this month to review the hiking program and commit to offering one hike per weekend starting in December, with a pause for Christmas and New Years.

Upcoming hikes range in distance and pace from 6-10 kms in length, and will feature lovely sites, sounds and companionship:

- **December 3:** Petra Suffling will lead a 10-km hike from Monarch Woods to Victoria Park in Kitchener
- **December 10:** Joanna Mazur will lead a 10-km hike along Canada Goose and Bruce Trails toward Limehouse Conservation Area
- **December 17:** Didier Thevenard will lead an easy six-km hike around the Huron Natural Area

You will receive a regular bulletin with upcoming hikes. Check out the [hikes calendar](#) regularly to get details and sign-up!

GVTA & Indigenous people

The GVTA recognizes the rich cultural heritage of its trails. As part of this year's Indigenous People Day, the GVTA offered a hike and tour of the Woodland Cultural Centre, formerly the site of Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford. Attendees learned about the local indigenous people, their culture, history, and the land we live, work and play on.



In its Territorial Acknowledgement, the GVTA acknowledges that the Land on which we hike, as settlers, is Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Neutrals. In its statement, the GVTA also respects the Indigenous tradition of acknowledging the territory of another nation. This territory today is called the Haldimand Tract. [Click here](#) to read the association's full Territorial Acknowledgement.

For generations, many indigenous peoples and communities have celebrated their culture and heritage on or near the summer solstice. The Canadian government formally recognized the occasion in 1996 with a proclamation declaring that June 21 of each year is "National Aboriginal Day," which was later renamed National Indigenous Peoples Day.

For more information about how you can support Indigenous peoples of Canada, read the [Truth and Reconciliation of Canada Calls to Action](#).

GVTA seeks marketing director

As a volunteer organization, your support is needed to help the GVTA fulfill its mission of establishing and maintaining footpaths within the Grand River watershed and promoting safe and enjoyable use of Grand Valley trails.

We have one open Board position for Director, Marketing. Our needs for Trail Director and Trail Captains for Towpath (Haldimand County) are still open.

Other volunteer positions available include:

- Cartographer
- Guidebook Coordinator
- Brochure Coordinator
- Social Media Coordinator
- Membership Coordinator

Interested? **Please drop an email with your intent to volunteering@gvta.on.ca. You can also [apply online](#).** If you have friends, colleagues or neighbours with expertise who might be a good fit, please share this opportunity.

Check out GVTA store gift ideas

GVTA has products for sale online that would make good gifts for friends or family. In addition to the Guidebook, baseball caps and t-shirts, there are now toques and GVTA-branded BUFF® neckware. A Buff can be worn many ways, from neck-covering to cap to balaclava. Proceeds from the sale of GVTA merchandise go toward trail maintenance and other association activities. **Visit our [online store](#) now to see the full lineup of merchandise.**

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Please send ideas, suggestions and feedback to president@gvta.on.ca.