

# TRAIL TALK

Oak Ridges Trail Association Quarterly  
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SPRING 2023

## Board of Directors 2023–2024

Photo Credit: Bob Hughes

Welcome back for another term here are your Board of Directors (left to right)

- Garry Niece
- Weibo Cheng
- Bob Alexander
- Wilma Millage
- Brian Millage
- Lissa Dwyer



Photo Credit: Heather Cooper



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- AGM Lissa Dwyer.....2
- Awards Lifetime & Member of the Year .....3
- Trail Builder Award.....4
- Meet Your New Hike Leader.....5
- Commendation Award .....6
- Discovery Night .....7
- Upcoming ORTA EVENTS.....8

*Building Pathways to an Active Lifestyle*

Thanks very much to all the members who were able to join us on the 27th to celebrate the year that was 2022. There was an excellent turn out at the Ballantrae Community Centre on a lovely spring evening for our first in person event since 2019. What a delight to listen to the joyful sounds of almost 75 people coming together again!

One of the issues that we discussed again is the effective and cost saving solution to vet our financials with a review committee instead of an auditor. We will ask again every year as we did with the request in the past to renew with our prior auditors. Anna Sunn, from our review committee, puts it this way:

Under Ontario's Not-for-Profit-Corporations Act (ONCA), ORTA falls under a new category of non-profits called public benefit corporations. Nonprofits, that are charities, will **always** be a public benefit corporation (PBC). As a PBC, ORTA can waive having either an annual audit or a review engagement as long as gross revenue is less than \$100,000. In order to waive this requirement, an extraordinary resolution must be passed by a special vote, with at least 80% of members present voting in favour (or all members need to agree to it in writing). When a vote requires more than the usual amount of support from your members, it is called an extraordinary resolution and every extraordinary resolution must be voted on once a year.

Thanks for taking this route with us as we continue to manage costs in our new reality.

Of course, the other primary message of the event is that new people are always welcome and much needed to help shoulder the load in many areas. Continued gratitude to all of you who are volunteering their time and energy to contribute to the success of ORTA.



Bob Henderson: [\*Paddling Pathways: Reflections from a Changing Landscape\*](#)

Special thanks to Bob for jumping in at the last minute to join us as our guest speaker.

Bob has been a welcome speaker on several occasions and just as enjoyable.

His latest book is a collection of short stories told by paddlers from across the country. Designed to tell untold stories in unconventional ways, Bob's talk focussed on the writers, their journeys and how their unique perspectives come together to become Paddling Pathways.

I can't wait to hit the hammock with my copy—LD

Kevin’s contributions to ORTA include:

- Board director from 2013—October 2022
- President April 2016—April 2022
- Past president April 2022
- Taught several Hike Ontario Hike Leader courses to our members
- Represented ORTA in an input session organized by Rouge National Urban Park (RNUP) for partners of the park, of which we are one, providing commentary and direction to the Park’s long-range plan.
- 2020 ORTA Commendation Award: – Teaching Hike Ontario Hike Leader Course for four years. Thank you for your leadership and many years of distinguished service.
- Greenbelt Initiative— Kevin has represented ORTA with our involvement with a group of stakeholders such as conservation authorities, municipal governments and other agencies along the length of the moraine to plan and create a lasting moraine trail. The intent of this group is to improve the trail, move more of the trail off road and ensure that the trail will continue to be available to future generations. The group has created an action plan to be implemented over the next several years.



Kevin will be presented with his award at a future date.

**OUTSTANDING MEMBER OF THE YEAR—  
Josie Klostranec**



Josie joined the Oak Ridges Trail Association in January of 2007.

- For over 15 years she participated in several volunteer capacities.
- Josie volunteers as a Trail Captain, in Whitchurch Stouffville, our Porritt Pangman Tract keeping the area

clear of debris including fallen trees, helps build bridges repaints trail markers and keeps the trail well marked.

- In 2012 Josie became a Hike Leader and has led hikes throughout the moraine in all four seasons.

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**HIKE IN JAPAN**

**October 1 to 15, 2023**

- Hike Japan’s Honshu Island - from Tokyo to the slopes of Mt. Fuji, to the northern part of the Japanese Alps, and to Kyoto
- Immerse yourself in ancient customs & culture of Japan
- Stay in ryokans, relax in hot springs (onsens) & wear a yakuta to traditional Japanese dinners
- Have tea with a maiko (an apprentice geisha)
- Led by two of our best guides – Sheila (Canadian) & Ryoko (Japanese)

**GALAPAGOS ADVENTURE**

**North West \* November 5 to 17, 2023**

**South East \* November 11 to 22, 2023**

- ✓ Hike, kayak and snorkel amongst sea lions, iguanas, blue-footed boobies and a huge variety of bird and marine life
- ✓ Exclusive island-to-island tour aboard a private 14-passenger yacht
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- ✓ Visit the Darwin Research Centre

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Wilma Millage, Noel Carey Bob Comfort, Judy Pergau, Judy Carey, Martin Earl, David Smith

**Trail Builder Awards** a maximum of 4 of these are awarded each year to individuals who have made significant contributions to the building and maintenance of the trail.

**David Smith** - Trail Captain in the Porritt Tract and Pangman Springs

**Martin Earle** – Continuing trail improvements in Secord area ‘highest maintenance section of trail’

**Noel and Judy Carey** – Hours of chain sawing and clearing after the 2022 tornado

**Bob and Judy Comfort** – Hours of chain sawing and clearing after 2022 tornado

Photo Credit: Cheryl Fisher

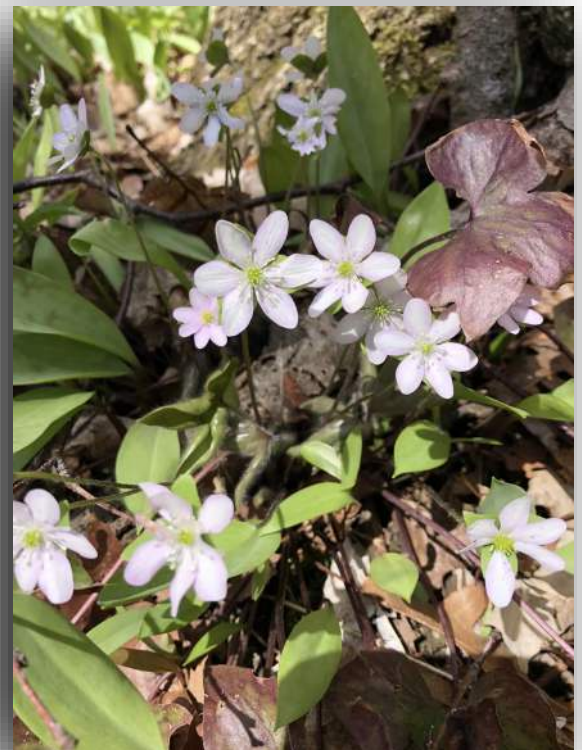
April 29, 2023

A big welcome to our new Hike Leaders who have just completed the Hike Ontario course, run by Brian Millage and myself:

Andy Patterson, Karen Graham, Laura Lind, Nancy Hogue, Peter Chan, Peter Fausten, Scott Cecchin, and Victor Szabo.

Please support them by registering for their hikes!

*Derek Cowbourne – Hike Coordinator*



## Meet Your New Hike Leader Mojgan (Megan) Haghighat

SPRING 2023

My name is **Mojgan** but people found it easier to call me **Megan**. I'm a certified hike leader from Hike Ontario. It was about 2 years ago that I decided to hike the entire Bruce trail plus one additional 54k hike from Fort Erie to Fort George.



Working as a full-time nurse plus lock down due to Covid made this journey more challenging than usual. Proudly, I was able to achieve my goal and finish this 957km of hiking from Fort Erie up to Tobermory in ten months and two weeks and I marked this as one of the biggest/most interesting achievements in my life.

As we all know, hiking is addictive! WHY or HOW?!... because without even noticing, I'm already half way there again to finish the second round of Bruce trail sections!!

But lately, I've been wanting to embark on a new path and so I decided on the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail.

Since then, I tried to gather some helpful information, spoke with some of the great organizers from the association and settled my goal to put a series of E2E's along the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail for a total distance of 280km. This will be a Moderate speed series of hikes and will involve car shuttles.

Soon, you will find the first part of the hikes on the ORTA calendar. I'm very excited about this journey and I invite you all to join the challenge, for one hike or come the whole way with me.

***To walk in nature is to witness a thousand miracles ~ Mary Davis***

Best wishes in your new home Gaye and Robert Spence!

Thank you for your years of dedicated volunteering.

"I am sorry to have to resign from my role as co-captain with John Weston. We are responsible for the section of the Jefferson Forest trail from Old Colony Rd to Bethesda, in Richmond Hill.

I have really enjoyed my time as a working member of ORTA!"

ORTA wishes to thank all of our donors who contribute on various platforms either in addition to their annual membership fee or as a separate contribution to our organization.

Some of the platforms you can use:

Canada Helps / My Tribute / United Way / Benevity / Wild Apricot

If a cheque is still your preference, it can be sent to P.O. Box 28544, Aurora, ON L4G 6S6

You may also ask at your place of employment to see if they have a Gift Giving Program in place.

*In Memory of ORTA member  
Ronald Conrad  
we convey our deepest sympathies  
to Mary and family.*



*A donation  
in Memory of Frank Coniglio  
was received. Thank you!*



Photo Credit: Allen Vodi

**Commendation Awards 2023** a maximum of 6 are awarded each year to Members who have made specific contributions to the management and development of ORTA and its programs.

**Gail Dutchak** – for years of leading hikes

**Carol Fraser** – for years of leading hikes (pictured)

**Cornelius Sommer** – for years of leading hikes

**Caiti McLelland** – Whitchurch Stouffville co-chair, maintenance (pictured)

Pictured below is Craig Barnes, Brian Millage & Bruce Cohen who received their Chainsaw certifications.



Wilma Millage handing out the Commendation awards to: Carol Fraser,



Commendation awards to: Caiti McLelland



Photo Credit for all 2023 AGM and Award pictures in this issue: Bob Hughes.



Use code **OAK RIDGE** and for each tour booked by your club for 2023, we will donate \$25 to the Oakridge Trail Association.

### Banff Hiking

8 Days: August 20, 2023

DOUBLE	SINGLE
\$4,795	\$6,295

### Saguenay Hiking

8 Days: September 3, 2023

DOUBLE	SINGLE
\$4,395	\$5,295

### Bruce Trail South (Niagara)

5 Days: September 4, 2023

DOUBLE	SINGLE
\$1,995	\$2,595

### NEW P.E.I. Hiking

8 Days: September 9, 2023



DOUBLE	SINGLE
\$4,095	\$4,895

### NEW Québec Eastern Townships

7 Days: September 24, 2023

DOUBLE	SINGLE
\$3,795	\$4,595

### NEW Alaska Hiking

13 Days: June 7, 2024

DOUBLE	SINGLE
Join our waitlist	

**PRICE INCLUDES:** Accommodation, meals and highlights as listed on website, all entry fees and passes, local guides and Tour Director. Prices are in Canadian dollars, are per person and include HST.

For more information, contact your local travel professional, call **1-888-716-5523** or visit [deluxehiking.com](http://deluxehiking.com).



## Discover Your World

Join us for this series of speakers on worldwide journeys, fascinating nature stories, adventure treks and other stories on a wide variety of subjects. It is also an opportunity to get together with your ORTA friends to catch up on what is happening in our organization. Come along and bring a friend to enjoy these pleasant evenings.

Presentations take place in the Ballantrae Community Centre, 5592 Aurora Rd.,

Date: Thursday May 25

Time: 7p.m. – 9pm

A \$10 fee covers the hall rental and refreshments.

Lug a mug.

Our Guest Speaker: Steve Shikaze



Steve Shikaze is a professional engineer with over 30 years of experience in academia, government and consulting. His experience has focused on the study of hydrogeology and in addition to his current work with the Oak Ridges Moraine Groundwater Program (ORMGP), he has worked on projects in both North and South America for many clients. Projects include source water protection, groundwater contamination and remediation, lithium brines. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Geological Engineering and a Master's in Hydrogeology, both from the University of Waterloo.

*Upcoming Events*

2023

May 11, Celebrate and Protect the Greenbelt Climatedactionna.org Newmarket (Pg 6)

May 25th, Discovery Night with Steve Shikaze (Pg 7)

May 30, Milliken Mills Connecting with the Land

June 4, Aurora Street Festival

June 17, Markham Music Festival

July 1, Whitchurch Stouffville Strawberry Festival

**Volunteers are needed at:**

**Aurora Street Festival:** contact Lissa Dwyer

[secretary@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:secretary@oakridgestrail.org)

**Markham Music Festival:** contact Caroline Schweitzer

[membership@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:membership@oakridgestrail.org)

**Whitchurch Stouffville Strawberry Festival** contact Scott Heaslip

[ws@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:ws@oakridgestrail.org)




An organization such as ours cannot be successful and persevere unless it has a large cadre of dedicated volunteers. While we have many members who give generously of their time to ORTA, we still need additional support. Volunteering is a way to give back to ORTA and can be very rewarding.

Some events listed on the left still require volunteers. If you have a few hours to spare please email the contact person for that event to arrange time slots.

Thank you for volunteering.

Picture above is from WS Strawberry Festival 2016

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