

Conservation Matters



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FALL/WINTER 2015

Marnie Ross with contributions by Dave Warner

Do you have a bucket list? I've been thinking for a while that I must be missing something. You see, I don't have a bucket list. I'm not desperate to go to far away places or have a grand adventure skydiving. But at the Ontario Land Trust Alliance Gathering in October, I realized that I do have a list, actually, and it's quite full!

I'm no different than most of the people who live and visit in our beautiful Thousand Islands/FAB region. I love the nature here: the beautiful vistas, the pink granite, blue-green water and deep green pines. In the recent surveys by Township Leeds and the Thousand Islands and the Great Waterway, both residents and visitors overwhelmingly revere our natural heritage and want it to stay the same.

You know it hasn't stayed the same. There are fewer natural shorelines and ridges that nature made. It all happens incrementally. Just a larger dock here, more deck there, squeeze in another couple of waterfront lots, a boat house, gotta have a ...

As a member of TIWLT you have said this area is important to you and we all want it to stay beautiful. We, on the TIWLT board have the pleasure of doing something concrete about it—we work face to face with people, and see the enthusiasm when they donate land; we hear their stories. Not only has that given us a lasting satisfaction but it opens our lives to knowing wonderful people who care very much for their land.

This year we have been especially blessed because we have been able to help 4 families save the land they love—forever. Not many people can say 'forever' but as a member and contributor of TIWLT—you can.



OLD BALDY *Please Help*

This year we have saved most of 'Old Baldy' A.K.A. Indian Head on Charleston Lake, working with the Nature Conservancy to buy all but 8 acres of the 129 acres. We are down to the last \$35,000- those last 8 acres in our campaign that started at \$158,000. We need to get the rest of the funds before late December to save additional appraisal fees. We are working with the NCC, Michael McAdoo of Charleston Lake and the Charleston Lake Association. The **Leeds and Grenville Stewardship Council** has just started a campaign where they will match funds raised up to \$2,500. Thanks LGSC! I've put my \$100 there. How about you, can you help too?



GULL/GRISWOLD ISLAND

We received the gift of Griswold Island very near Mallorytown Landing in the St Lawrence River. The island is a migratory bird colony and we hope to encourage terns to return there. There are also Species at Risk: the Pugnose Shiner and American Eel should call the shoals home. We hope to partner with Queen's University and Dr. Lee Harper who works with terns in New York State.

An additional feature on the island is a falling-down 1890s stone cottage made for hunting by Fredrick Bourne of Singer Castle fame. We are very grateful to the Peach brothers for their generous gift. So far TIWLT has spent about \$4,000 to make this gift a reality.



DOCTOR'S ISLAND

The Kline/Molloy families of Buck Island are donating Doctor's Island to TIWLT. They hope to reduce capital gains on nearby Buck Island in order to sell it at better advantage. The island is almost 2 acres and in a pristine state. You can see several habitats on the island based on which side it faces, the depth of soil, the exposure to sun or wind. There are regenerating Pitch Pines and pockets of many interesting species. It will be spring when the new growth comes before we can complete an exact inventory of what is there. What isn't there are evidence of man, deer or invasive species. Awesome. So far we've spent \$3,500 to make Doctor's Island an EcoGift.



BOSTWICK ISLAND: STREET

Bob and Paula Street and their family created a letter of intent. It states, “With a backdrop of the ever increasing human encroachment and development of Canada’s scenic and ecologically valuable lands, it is the Donor’s intent that this parcel of land, including its adjoining marsh, will be set aside in perpetuity for non-human usage as a nature sanctuary for indigenous plants and animals and that it will be preserved in a forever-wild state as it always has been.”

Bob Street has worked tirelessly to understand and steer this donation to completion. It is very close to being done—hopefully before the year is out. Bob has also helped us approach his neighbours to donate their marsh lots. Bob and Paula and their family have done a lot for future generations and we are grateful for their efforts.

And looking ahead to 2016... There are a few more surprises that we will save for next year because they are still in early stages. The important thing to know is that there is a lot happening. And there should be more. We have friends who transferred ownership to their children and paid a huge capital gains tax when they could have donated a part to a land trust and eliminated their capital gains. We feel badly they didn’t know but perhaps with more of you joining us, we can do that much more in the future.

All of this good work requires money even when the land is a gift. Appraisals for the CRA are about \$3,500 each and there are lawyer’s fees as well. Then there are Base-Line Documentation Reports, Biological Surveys and Monitoring. No one in TIWLT is paid. We are all volunteers. We hope some of you will decide to come help save land with us.

So you know, every amount you can give will be gratefully received. Please let us know if you wish to give to Old Baldy or to the on-going efforts in general conservation of the Thousand Islands Watershed. Please come to a meeting- the first Monday of every other month starting in January. You may save some land Forever.



Our first Donors of an Easement
Dan Shire & Sharon McKillop



Marnie Ross with Laura Kucey,
Ecological Gifts, Environment
Canada at OLTG Gathering, October

TO TIWLT MEMBERS

From Dann Michols, President

It is that time of year again!

The time of year when we ask current, past, and potential members to consider taking out 2016 membership in the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust.

Membership fees are our principal source of operating funds. We need these funds each year to continue our work of preserving land in the watershed for current and future generations.

The TIWLT is a small organization as Ontario land trusts go, run entirely by dedicated volunteers. That said, we are hitting way above our weight in terms of the properties we have been able to preserve in an area known for its beauty and biological diversity. Recently, we concluded environmental easements on several properties and have been the beneficiaries of several important land donations. While volunteers undertake our acquisition and monitoring work, there are still significant legal, appraisal, and communication costs that require the hiring of professionals. It is these activities that are covered by membership fees.

For the last 10 years, our membership fee has been \$40. This year, we must raise it to \$45. We require the increase principally to ensure we cover the cost of mailing out our newsletter. We publish a newsletter two times a year to inform our members of the activities we have undertaken in their name.

And so it is time again to ask you, whether you are a current member, a lapsed member, or an aspiring member, to contribute by purchasing a membership for 2016. Please join us in our important work to preserve for current and future generations environmentally significant aspects of the Thousand Islands watershed.



Beaver Pond atop of Old Baldy, Charleston Lake by Michael McAdoo