



# Hike Ontario Annual Report 2006-2007



**hike ontario**  
experience it...one step at a time

**[www.hikeontario.com](http://www.hikeontario.com)**  
An Alliance of Ontario's Hiking & Walking Organizations

# Message from the Chair

## Our Goal

Hike Ontario seeks to maintain and develop its unique position as the number one source of province wide information and resources about hiking, walking and pedestrian based trail development and management in Ontario.

## Core Purpose

To encourage walking, hiking and pedestrian trail development in Ontario.

Ontario offers rich, diverse and attractive opportunities for exploring our province by foot and Hike Ontario is the only provincial, non-profit organization working on behalf of all pedestrian based trail interests.

Without question, the strength of Hike Ontario is found in its people. Run by a volunteer Board of Directors and supported by 26 appointed member club representatives, Hike Ontario is an alliance that promotes mutual benefit and gain. For its part, Hike Ontario supports the tremendous work of our member clubs through the provision of programs and services that have universal scope and local consideration. Our member clubs, do their part by providing hikers and walkers with the trails to hike and experiences unparalleled.

We all have a role to play in building a better future. At Hike Ontario, we are wholly dedicated to making a difference for the hikers and walkers of Ontario. We play a vital role in supporting critical projects across province that will protect and enhance Ontario's network of pedestrian based trails and footpaths.

As President of the Board of Directors, I invite you to work with us as we strive, individually and collectively, to be champions for change and to make the premier destination for hiking and walking.

Most importantly, I strongly encourage you to support Ontario's trails through membership in your local trail organization.

Terri LeRoux, President

## Board of Directors

*Hike Ontario is governed by a board of directors that meets four times per year at various locations across Ontario. Our board consists of approx. 35 people.*

*80% of the board members are appointed to represent their member club (i.e. the Bruce Trail) with the remaining members being elected at our Annual General Meetings.*

### Executive Committee 2006 -2007

Terri LeRoux	President
Tim Wood	Vice President
Todd Bardes	Past President
Ron Knight	Treasurer
Harold Sellers	Ontario Trails Council Representative
David Francis	Hike Canada Representative
Virginia Johnson	Hike Canada Representative
Deanna Rando	Hike Canada Representative

### Standing & Ad-Hoc Committees 2006-2007

Certification & Awards	David Francis
Communications	Terri LeRoux
Government Relations & Public Policy	Bill Wilson
Fund Development	Todd Bardes
Insurance	Harold Sellers
Membership	Henry Graupner
Risk Management	Tim Wood
Volunteer of the Year Selection	Tom Friesen
Young Hikers Program	Lynda Morris

*Please refer to page # for names of our club appointed representatives.*





# COMPASS 2010

## *Navigating the Future of Hike Ontario*

With the publication of COMPASS 2010, Hike Ontario has articulated its collective vision to strengthen and build new partnerships, to seek opportunities and to promote initiatives that translate our vision, values and strategies into action.

This document represents a roadmap for the future. Our evolution as an organization will be guided by the framework that this document provides. By describing the benefits we can collectively work toward, and the outcomes that we are seeking to accomplish, this document provides a management framework that we can all commit to.

In sync with current trends in Ontario such as the Ontario Trails Strategy and Active 2010, COMPASS 2010, provides our organization with a measurable blueprint for action.

Our priorities as a provincial alliance of hiking clubs and trail management agencies and the emphasis that we place on our critical objectives may shift over time in response to many factors, both internal to and external from the organization itself. Yet, establishing an agreed-upon course of action is the first step to achieving our goals, individually and collectively. We invite you to work with Hike Ontario to support our efforts.

Hike Ontario board members have a shared responsibility of ensuring the implementation of our strategic plan and that all the work we undertake is within the scope of our identified priorities:

### Serving More People

Hike Ontario's vision is to be a voice for all Ontarians; reaching more people with our important programs and services.

Our goals include: Review of Individual Membership Program; Enhancing our ability to be a resource for hiking related information; Engaging more youth and Broadening our Outreach and Communication methodologies.

### Delivering Service Excellence

Ensuring optimum delivery of relevant, timely services is necessary for Hike Ontario to define its role as a provincial reference.

Our goals include: Expand upon existing Risk Management Program; Delivery of a Sustainable and Affordable Insurance / Liability Program; Expand upon existing Hike Leader Certification Program and; Enhance Long Distance Awards Program.

### Strengthening the Hiking & Walking Community

The promotion, advocacy and support of the hiking and walking community can do much to strengthen its presence and role in Ontario and Hike Ontario is committed to facilitating this through our voice and programs.

Our goals include: To better advocate our position on trail related issues; To enhance our relationship with our Member Clubs and; to make a strong investment and commitment to establishing new partnerships.

### Developing Effective Organizational Systems

The development of effective organizational supports and systems allow for the effective management of our goals, allowing us to appropriately achieve all of our important objectives.

Our goals include: To streamline accounting and bookkeeping methodologies; to streamline administrative functions and; to embrace a modern governance model.

### Achieving Sustainability

Sustainability is a necessity for all pedestrian based trails in Ontario and Hike Ontario as an advocate for these, needs to have sustainability itself.

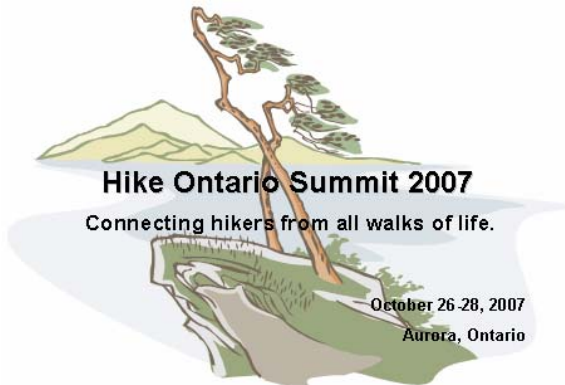
Our goals include: Secure sustainable funding sources; Develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy; Expand our volunteer contingent and; strive towards reintroduction of paid staff.

### COMPASS 2010 is

- Hike Ontario's Strategic Plan
- An update to our 2003 Business Plan
- A shared commitment to our vision
- In sync with current trends in Ontario such as the Ontario Trails Strategy and Active 2010
- Our blueprint for action
- Measurable



# Serving More People



## ANNUAL HIKE ONTARIO SUMMIT

Held annually in October, our Summit is a weekend long event that features timely workshops, presentations, award presentations, guest speakers, and a full schedule of invigorating hikes. The 2007 Summit was held at the Howard Johnson's Hotel in Aurora, Ontario and co-hosted by the Oak Ridges Trail Association.

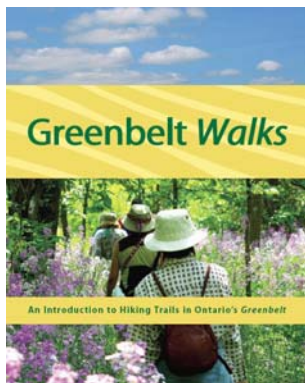
### Key presentations included:

**Best Practices for Increasing Hiking & Walking on Ontario's Trails:** Hike Ontario presents the key findings from its recently published Ministry of Health Promotion funded document outlining key strategies and case studies for increasing hiking and walking in Ontario.

**The Future of Ontario's Footpaths and Hiking Trails:** Exploring the trends, issues, demographics and the Ontario Trails Strategy and the influence they have on the future of Ontario's footpaths.

**Safe Trails Forum:** Presenting an overview of Environmental Risks & Hazards, Human Induced & Influenced Risks Liability & Insurance and our new Safe Hikers Program.

**Why Trails? The Value of Ontario's Trail System:** Three significant and entertaining trail subjects are presented including the Role of Trails in Environmental Education, the Natural & Cultural Heritage of Ontario's Trails and Engaging Tomorrow's Hikers, Today. (Sustainability, Tourism and Health).



## GREENBELT WALKS

With the help of the LCBO and the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation, Hike Ontario is pleased to present the Greenbelt Walks hiking brochure and map in which Ontarians are encouraged to step out and explore our living countryside.

The easy-to-use, colourful Greenbelt Walks brochure outlines the Bruce Trail, Trans Canada Trail and Oak Ridges Trail. The free map will be distributed at more than 225 LCBO stores throughout the Greenbelt area, as well as at local festivals, tourism businesses, hiking organizations and wineries.

## ONTARIO HIKING WEEK

Every year in late September, Hike Ontario sponsors Ontario Hiking Week, encouraging people of all ages to get out and hike the many trails of this beautiful province. Ontario Hiking Week demonstrates the many faces of hiking and walking - as a recreational activity that's low impact, affordable to all, and promotes environmental sustainability and ecological awareness.



## TRAILS OPEN ONTARIO

The Ontario Heritage Trust has modeled this new program after its very successful **Doors Open Ontario** program as a means to promote trail use and education, support natural heritage conservation and stewardship, and encourage physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. Commencing on June 2, 2007 - International Trails Day - trail organizations in locations around the province held special events to raise awareness and provide widespread access to their trail systems. Five Hike Ontario member clubs, Bruce Trail, Elora Cataract Trailway, Rideau Trail, Oak Ridges Trail and the Voyageur Trail participated in this inaugural event.



# Delivering Service Excellence

## HIKE LEADER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Hike Ontario has developed standards and training programs for Hike Leaders that are used by our member clubs, community colleges, universities, activity clubs and outdoor training organizations for course delivery. Currently, Hike Ontario offers Standard Hike Leader, Youth Hike Leader and Wilderness Day Hike Leader certification courses.

In 2007, we delivered 10 Standard Hike Leader Courses. These courses were delivered in Caledon, London, Temagami, Tobermory, Wasaga Beach, King City, Sir Sandford Fleming College and one at the local high school in Lindsay.

We additionally held a GPS workshop at the Bruce Trail Annual General Meeting at the Mono Centre in September.

Launched in the fall season, we are especially proud of our new Safe Hiker Program and thank Deanna Rando for all of her assistance in the development of the course.

The Certification and Awards Committee would like to thank the member clubs for their ongoing support of the certification program by hosting and promoting the benefits of this program. More certified hike leaders mean that a club can hold more hikes which will encourage increased visibility and club membership.



## LONG DISTANCE AWARDS PROGRAM

Hike Ontario has a mandate to encourage hiking for all ages and all athletic levels throughout Ontario. Our Long Distance Hiker Awards celebrate dedicated hikers who have logged long distances on multiple Ontario trails. Hike Ontario offers three long distance hiking awards; the Red Pine Award for 550 kms, the Trillium Award for 900 kms and the Tamarack Award for 1500 kms. Applications for the Awards are available from the Hike Ontario website.



## YOUNG HIKERS PROGRAM

The Young Hikers Program aspires to introduce youth to the joys and benefits of hiking, through a variety of mediums such as Activity Resource Kit, Provincial Youth Advisory Committee, Youth Hike Leader Certification, Youth Risk Management Training and youth volunteer opportunities

In 2007 Hike Ontario received funding from the Ministry of Health Promotions, Trails for Life Program in support of the Young Hikers Program.

The three key deliverables of the funded program will be the development of a Provincial Youth Advisory Council, an Activity Resource Kit for Youth Service Providers and a Young Hikers section on our website. We anticipate that these core components of the program will be completed by Summer 2008.

# Delivering Service Excellence

## INSURANCE

The Hike Ontario liability insurance program offers Commercial General Liability insurance coverage with a limit of \$5,000,000. The program broker is Main Newson Insurance and the underwriter is ING Canada. By bringing a number of our member associations together we realize cost savings and also save each association having to find and administer their own liability insurance policy.

Eighteen clubs and associations are now members of the insurance program. Friends of the Trail inc., which uses the Lower Trent Trail (old rail bed) in the Region of Quinte joined this past summer and the Thames Valley Trail Association rejoined.

The program is operated on a breakeven or slight positive financial basis. This year, following a couple of years when costs exceeded revenues, we have balanced the budget.

Earlier this year, our broker asked for copies of the waiver forms used by all clubs who lead hikes. Although the insurance underwriter has not yet made the use of waivers mandatory, they wanted to ensure their use and acceptable content. All clubs needing to do so, supplied waivers by the deadline and the broker reports no concerns or comments were received back from the underwriter, indicating that they were satisfied.

At the same time, we were asked if any clubs conduct club-sponsored outings outside of Canada. Only one does - although a couple others have non-sanctioned trips to the US. The Thunder Bay Hiking Association makes several trips to Minnesota each year. Again the underwriter decided they had no concern with this small number of trips outside the country. Any association considering out-of-country activities should check with me before implementing them, to ensure that there are no insurance issues.

Questions, concerns and requests for clarification should be sent to our Insurance Coordinator, Harold Sellers who is happy to communicate with the insurer on your behalf.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The Hike Ontario Risk Management program is dedicated to pursuing and communicating best practices in risk management on trails, while illuminating important trends in the industry to the hiking and walking community.

Hike Ontario is maintaining its commitment to risk management education by including sessions on the theme at our Annual Hike Ontario Summit 2007 - and will be advancing some of the issues brought up at the Safe Trails Forum of 2006. We are presently developing a Safe Hikers program for novice walkers and hikers that will provide much needed awareness around safe hiking and walking practices for new trail enthusiasts young or old.

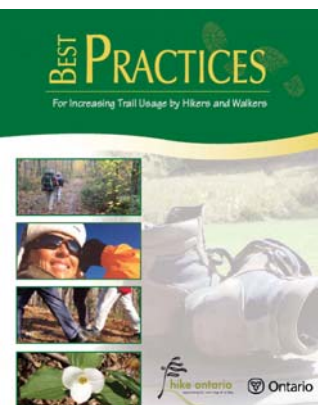
Hike Ontario continues to work closely with our many trail partners in risk management, as we as a trails community work towards contemporary and affective practices in risk management awareness. Our Committee is communicating with and will be working together in the future with partners such as the Ontario Trails Council in establishing useable resources for the trails community in risk management practices.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR INCREASING TRAIL USE BY HIKERS AND WALKERS

In the spring of 2006 Hike Ontario received a grant from the Trails for Life funding program to develop a 'Manual of Best Practices to Increase Trail Use by Hikers and Walkers in Ontario'. Hike Ontario then engaged in researching and collecting data on strategies, methods and opportunities for increasing use of trails by walkers and hikers.

Following consultation with more than 100 trail sector agencies, five best practices emerged. Collaborate; Enhance the Trail Experience; Target Specific Population Groups; Market the Experience and; Evaluate and Modify the Program.

The published manual is now available in both hardcopy and electronic form and is available upon request.





# Strengthening the Hiking & Walking Community

## ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Hike Ontario is an active voice and resource to our government partners in the Ontario trails community. We play a lead role in promoting, educating about and advocating pedestrian trail experiences through an active presence at local, regional, provincial and national trail events. We do this through strategic planning processes, active communications, conference and workshop participation, information distribution, special events and educational campaigns.

In 2007, Committee progress has been made specifically with respect to our Compass 2010 strategic direction *Strengthening the hiking and walking community*.

The committee has been involved with Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) trail plans for properties in Claireville, Palgrave Forest and Wildlife Area, Bolton Tract and Cold Creek- all in the Humber River Watershed. In the interests of maintaining the highest quality and carefree hiking and nature viewing, we have been attempting to speak for pedestrian-only dedicated trails as a standard part of trail plans in addition to shared use trails. In response to our suggestions, the TRCA has included the following 2012 target statement in their just- released Humber River Watershed Report Card entitled Listen To Your River : “An additional 30 kilometres of trails will be built in the watershed by 2012, with 25 percent of these trails designated for hiking only”

Our response to the Ontario Nature (ON) Oct 2006 brief to MNR re ATV regulation was sent stating that Hike Ontario is certainly sympathetic with most , if not all ON recommendations in their paper. At the same time, we are very conscious of maintaining a workable relationship with the rest of the Ontario Trail Council members in order to present a strong front to the Province regarding, for example , somehow lowering high insurance rates.

Following a request for Hike Ontario policies from persons concerned with the MNR process for Kawartha Park planning, Hike Ontario sent its policy on “shared use trails”.

## REPRESENTATION TO ONTARIO TRAILS COUNCIL AND HIKE CANADA

Hike Ontario represents the interests of hikers and walkers on the Ontario Trails Council (OTC) Board of Directors and the through a nominated representative to the Hike Canada En Marche Board of Directors.

### *Ontario Trails Council*

**Trillium Trail Network:** The full 40 page TTN Business Plan was released May 2007 and is the first comprehensive account of how OTC/TNN will operate with the 3 trail sectors. The OTC Board approved the launch of the Gold Program permits this summer. Initially permits will be introduced to Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs and Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance trails. On these trails, permits will be required for ATVs, horseback riding, dog sledding, cycling and Nordic skiing. The major expectations for the Gold Permits are that they will provide sustainable revenues for trail organizations and attract investment by government and sponsors. The Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs reported that their longstanding permit program has provided sustainable funding that has allowed them to attract major investment from the public and private sectors. As Hike Ontario still has many questions on the implementation and operation of the TTN our Government Relations & Advocacy Committee will continue to work with our OTC representative to find these answers.

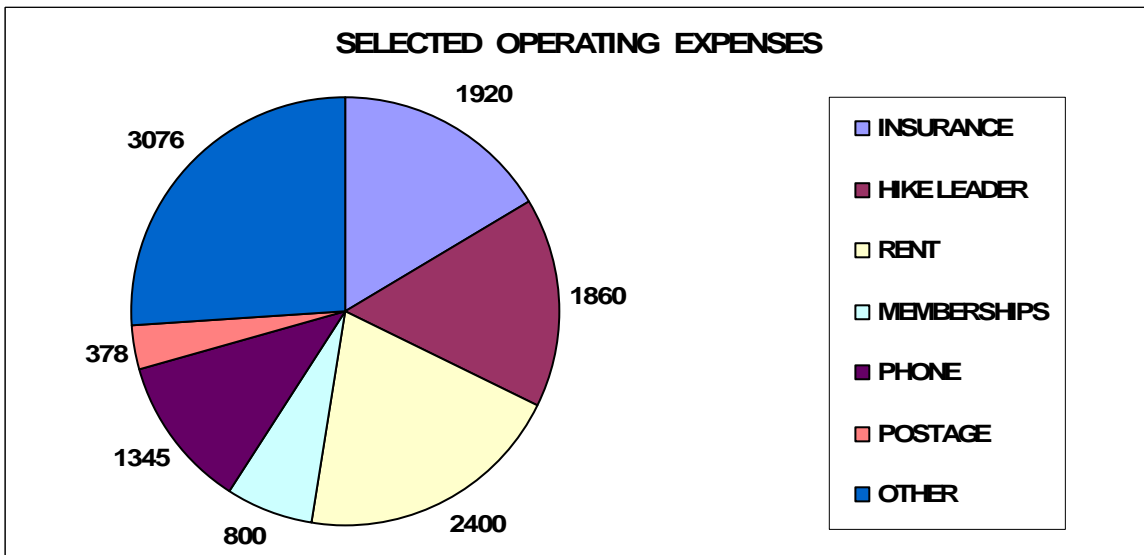
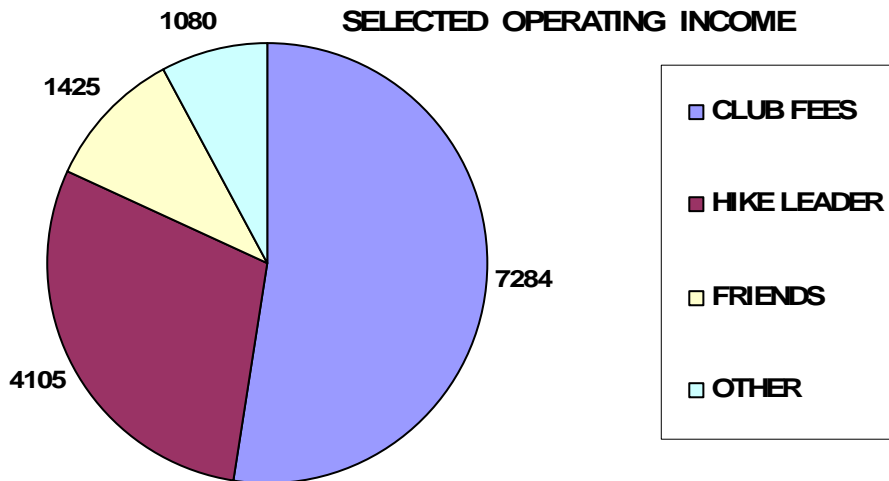
**World Record Walk 2007:** Last year’s Record Breaking Walk was re-branded as the World Record Walk (WRW) with Green Communities Canada as the lead organization, with support from the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion. The OTC has a place on the advisory committee. Held on October 3, 2007 at 12:30 pm, EST. The event was scheduled to coincide with International Walk To School Day. The final results are not yet available.

**Ontario Trails Summit:** The OTC annual meeting was held Niagara Falls on May 15-17, 2007. Two workshops were included in the program: Legal and Liability Issues; and Land Use - accessibility, multi-use, municipal & land management planning, policies for trail groups. For reports from the summit go to: [www.ontariotrails.on.ca/conference2007.htm](http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/conference2007.htm) or [www.ontariotrails.on.ca/about-the-otc/otc-news-events/](http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/about-the-otc/otc-news-events/)

### *Hike Canada En Marche*

We continue to represent Ontario’s hiking and walking trails at the national level. Our representatives attended two Hike Canada meetings in 2007, one in Winnipeg and one in Halifax. Hike Canada still aspires to create a continuous footpath across Canada, and 3000 kms of the National Hiking Trail are completed to date. There are gaps in the Ontario section. Hike Canada is looking at re-branding with a new logo, new website and are always looking for sustainable funding.

# Achieving Sustainability



Donations of \$5,878 were received into the Trust Fund and \$7,000 was transferred to the operating fund, leaving a balance as at June 30, 2007 in the Trust Fund in the amount of \$10,886.

Our operating incomes totaled \$67,784 with expenses coming in at \$60,515 for a surplus of \$7,269 for the year. If we exclude the Club insurance program, the Trust transfer and the Grant programs, what is left are the normal incomes and expenses of Hike Ontario.

The two pie charts shown in this report break out our revenues of \$13,894 and expenses of \$11,779 for a net surplus of \$2,115 for the year from normal operations (excluding the Club insurance program).

The Club insurance program received \$34,871 in fees, Costs were \$34,260 for the current year, \$1,457 for last year and \$1,000 to administer the program, leaving a net deficit of \$1,846. The admin cost was donated back to Hike Ontario Trust Fund, leaving a real deficit of \$846 for the current year.

We have received \$45,000 in grants for the Best Practices and Young Hikers projects and as of June 30, 2007 had spent \$10,809 on these projects. The balance of these funds will be spent next year. \$3,500 of the donations above were for these projects with more to be raised next year for our portion of the total project costs.

Our operating bank balance at June 30, 2007 was \$53,232 of which \$34,191 is reserved for grant payments and \$6,036 for accounts payable, leaving \$13,005 for future operations.

We had BDO Dunwoody compile financial statements from our records instead of doing an expensive audit. There are copies of these more detailed reports available, for those who wish to receive one.

*Submitted by Ron Knight, Treasurer*

# Partnerships & Members

Hike Ontario's member clubs and associations fall into three categories:

**Hiking Clubs:** are predominantly urban and offer organized events and excursions to member trails, rail trails, Conservation Authority, Ontario Parks or municipal trails. Membership varies but can be quite large.

**Trail Building Clubs:** are associations who build and maintain recreational hiking trails in various parts of the province. They provide the full range of trail management services, including trail development, maps and guidebooks, maintenance, landowner relations, events, membership and newsletters, as well as promotion and publicity for their particular trails. There are approximately 3500 km of such trails in the province

**Affiliate Members:** are corporations, government agencies and organizations other than non-profit hiking or trail building organizations (commercial or non-profit) that support our mission, vision and values.

## Member Clubs

Avon Trail  
 Bighead River Heritage Association  
 Bruce Trail Association  
 Durham Outdoors Club  
 Elgin Hiking Trail Club  
 Elora Cataract Trailway Association  
 Friends of the Trail, Quinte  
 Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association  
 Grand Valley Trails Association  
 Guelph Hiking Trail Club  
 Herring Belles Ladies Cross Country Skiing  
 Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association  
 Huronia Trails & Greenways  
 Lost River Walks  
 Maitland Trail Association  
 Nastawgan Trails Inc.  
 North Simcoe Rail Trail  
 Oak Ridges Trail Association  
 Outing Club of East York  
 Palmerston Trail Association  
 Rideau Trail Association  
 Street to Trail Association  
 Thames Valley Trail Association  
 Thunder Bay Hiking Association  
 Voyageur Trail Association  
 Wellesley Trails Association  
 4 Day Evening Walk Committee

## Club Representative

Shirley Gotts  
 Ron Knight  
 Peter Leeney  
 Mary Perkins  
 Sandra Van DerVeen  
 Tom Skimson  
 Maria Luja  
 Terry Kirk  
 Kathy Rose  
 Mike Curtis  
 Celine Wade  
 Jerry Gorman  
 Deena Brooks  
 Helen Mills  
 Wendy Hoernig  
 Les Wilcox  
 Frieda Baldwin  
 Stan Butcher  
 vacant  
 Barbara Burrows  
 Ron Hunt  
 Paul Mackle  
 Tom Friesen  
 Peter Summers  
 Patrick Capper  
 Jamie McDermid  
 Peter Van Dyk

## Contact

519-273-6199  
[bigheadriver.org](http://bigheadriver.org)  
[brucetrail.org](http://brucetrail.org)  
[durhamoutdoorsclub.ca](http://durhamoutdoorsclub.ca)  
[elginhikingtrail.org](http://elginhikingtrail.org)  
[trailway.org](http://trailway.org)  
[friendsofthetrail.ca](http://friendsofthetrail.ca)  
[Ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca](http://Ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca)  
[gvta.on.ca](http://gvta.on.ca)  
[guelphhiking.com](http://guelphhiking.com)  
 416-489-1433  
[humbertrail.org](http://humbertrail.org)  
[simcoecountytrails.net](http://simcoecountytrails.net)  
[lostrivers.com](http://lostrivers.com)  
[maitlandtrail.cjb.net](http://maitlandtrail.cjb.net)  
[nastawgantrails.com](http://nastawgantrails.com)  
[simcoecountytrails.net](http://simcoecountytrails.net)  
[oakridgestrail.org](http://oakridgestrail.org)  
[outingclubofeast york.org](http://outingclubofeast york.org)  
 519-343-3711  
[rideautrail.org](http://rideautrail.org)  
[street-to-trail.org](http://street-to-trail.org)  
[thamesvalleytrail.org](http://thamesvalleytrail.org)  
[tbha.ca](http://tbha.ca)  
[voyageurtrail.ca](http://voyageurtrail.ca)  
 519-656-2670  
 905-634-3998

## Affiliate Members



## Partners



## VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Each year, countless Ontarians volunteer their time, energy, creative and professional talents to enhance Ontario's hiking and walking opportunities. These individuals devote endless hours to serve on committees, champion important issues and causes, coordinate events and/or donate their business expertise and resources to further the positive growth and development of Ontario's pedestrian based trail network.

Annually, Hike Ontario recognizes four individuals who have contributed significantly to the success of a club program or project in one or more of the following areas: Advocacy, Marketing, Public Relations, Governance, Trail Development, Events, Risk Management, Land Securement or Landowner Relations, Fundraising and/or Hike Leadership.

### RECIPIENTS OF THE 2007 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS ARE:

**Frieda Baldwin**, Huronia Trails & Greenways

**Patrick Capper**, Voyageur and Maitland Trail

**Virginia Johnson**, Hike Ontario Office Coordinator

**Nick Kuret**, Grand Valley Trails Association



**hike ontario**  
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