

# TRAIL TALK

Oak Ridges Trail Association Quarterly

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WINTER 2023



Photo Credit: Bob Hughes



Photo Credit: Anna Sunn

## Hike Speeds

Hikers, our hike speed coincides with Hike Ontario's speed ratings. Select the hikes which are most suitable to your ability.

**Slow:** 3 km/hr

**Slow to Moderate:** 3.5 km/hr

**Moderate:** 4 km/hr

**Moderate to Fast:** 4.5 km/hr

**Fast:** 5 km/hr

## Winter Hiking Tips

1. Always wear appropriate footwear! Hiking boots, poles and icers will help to keep you safe during chilly and icy hikes.
2. Dress in layers!
3. Pack some snacks, and be sure to bring water!
4. Enjoy yourself! Breathe in nature, enjoy the gorgeous scenery of our trails. @ortahikes

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*Building Pathways to an Active Lifestyle*

# Annual General Meeting

## Official Notice of the Annual General Meeting

**THURSDAY APRIL 27, 2023  
7:00 pm**

All members of the Oak Ridges Trail Association are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Association to be held at Ballantrae Community Centre 5592 Aurora Rd. Stouffville on April 27th.

We look forward to seeing many supporters, hikers and friends on this occasion. Mark the date in your calendar. Information will be forthcoming on how to put forth a motion for consideration of board membership and how to nominate members for various awards. Please check your emails in the coming weeks for details or visit the website: [AGM 2023](#)

## Congratulations to Josipa Klostranec on your Ontario Volunteer Service Award for 15 years of continuous volunteering with ORTA!



Recently awards were presented virtually from the Province of Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism recognizing volunteers for providing committed and dedicated service to an organization. Adults are recognized by the length of time they've volunteered with one organization, ranging from five to 65 years of continuous service.

Josie is a volunteer extraordinaire with the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA). She joined the organization in January of 2007. For over 15 years now she participated in several volunteer capacities. Josie volunteers as a Trail Captain, in Whitchurch Stouffville, our Porritt Pangman Tract. Josie regularly dedicates her time to keep our trails clear for the many hikers, bikers and walkers that pass through the area. She also repaints the trail markers and ensures that signage is visible so no one gets lost. In 2012 Josie became a Hike Leader completing the Hike Ontario Leader training along with a first aid program. She has been leading guided hikes for the public and members alike throughout the moraine for over 10 years now in all four seasons. Josie understands the importance of getting out in the environment, exercising in the fresh air, for better mental health and fitness and encourages everyone, young or young at heart, to join her.

We are not the only organization that benefits from Josie's dedication. Josie has been faithfully volunteering at the Scott Mission, an organization known for serving the poor and needy of Toronto. She is a hard-working team member in the Operations/Food bank department for the past 12 years and has contributed over 1400 hours of her time to them.

Our sincere congratulations and thanks for the years of service Josie!

Our organization benefits greatly from all of our dedicated hike leaders and volunteers. If you would like to become a hike leader please contact our Hike Co-ordinator, Derek Cowbourne to sign up for the next available course. [hikes@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:hikes@oakridgestrail.org)

To nominate someone for the Ontario Volunteer Service Award, please visit: [Honours and awards: volunteering | ontario.ca](https://honoursandawards.volunteering|ontario.ca)



## Meet Your New Co-Chair for Whitchurch Stouffville—Olivia Petrie



Olivia is a long-time Stouffville resident, an avid hiker, biker, skier, and gardener. She has been in university administration for most of her life which will lend itself well to coordinating future inspections in the Whitchurch Stouffville Chapter. Upon retiring, Olivia is delighted to be learning so much more about the amazing trails in York Region and beyond. Olivia has previously assisted Tracy McNaught with some trail maintenance.

Olivia is looking forward to working with our Trail Captains along with her Co-Chair

Scott Heaslip and Deputy Co-Chair Tracy McNaught

Olivia would like to express a deep thank you to Caiti McClelland for her wonderful leadership of the W-S Chapter and is honoured to have the opportunity to continue and build upon her good work in this role. Olivia is keen to meet many of you out on the trails and looks forward to working with you all to maintain and preserve our wonderful trail system.

### ***DISCOVER YOUR WORLD at Discovery Night—Jan 19th in Ballantrae***

This is your invitation to join us for the Oak Ridges Trail Association's Discovery Night! Enjoy an evening out sharing in interesting worldwide journeys and listening to speakers on a wide variety of subjects. Catch up on 'off trail' socializing. ORTA members and the public are invited to come along and bring a friend and travel mug.

Come see the sights of JORDAN! (photo on back cover) This evening Wilma and Brian Millage will introduce you to the major sights of Jordan from their recent trip to this middle eastern country. How do you describe a region that was the cradle of early civilization - an early crossroads of traders and invaders? Think Romans, Crusaders, Ottomans, Lawrence of Arabia and the cultural and physical remnants/contributions of each. The highlight of course was Petra with its treasury and tombs.

**Cost:** \$10 at the door goes to refreshments and the hall costs.

**Date & Time:** Thursday January 19, 2023 7pm - 9 pm

**Location:** Ballantrae Community Centre, 5592 Aurora Rd. Stouffville

Future Dates for Discovery Night: (once a month Jan—May)

Thurs. Feb 23, Thurs. Mar 30, Thurs. April 27 (AGM), Thurs. May 25

Any questions? please contact Wilma Millage at [publicity@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:publicity@oakridgestrail.org)



## *Anniversary Hike December 5, 2022 - Brian Millage*

Even the past few years of covid restrictions didn't stop us from celebrating our nineteen years of marriage- where did the time go? We often ask that, but when you keep busy and are having fun together and with friends, the time seems to pass quickly. On December 5, two days after our actual date, over thirty ORTA members and friends joined us to celebrate the 19th. Each year we have retraced our steps on the ORTA trail, accompanied by our ORTA friends, starting in North Walker Woods and proceeding to the pond just east of Brock Road in Uxbridge where we pledged our original vows. Why not wait 'til the 20th? One day on an ORTA hike Anna Santarossa, an ORTA hike leader and an Officiant who is thus licenced to perform weddings, offered to help us reaffirm our vows on trail and it started us thinking. With the many upsets of the past few years perhaps we shouldn't put this off. Then came the final straw - at the original ceremony in the woods we served butter tarts and champagne to our guests. Each following year we continued but scaled down the tarts to butter tart squares (for 60 to 70 people it was getting costly ). This year M&M's did not receive a supply of the squares and Wilma said it must be a sign- DO IT NOW. So we bought mini butter tarts instead and accepted Anna's generous offer. This was her second ever forest ceremony. The weather cooperated, we renewed our vows, and we reminisced with our many ORTA friends. We both look forward to celebrating many more years and we look back at that first ORTA HIKE when we met- and haven't stopped talking since. (and yes, I did say I'd follow those legs anywhere..B.)







Many of us have already enjoyed hikes based out of the new Trail Hub facility at 722 Chalk Lake Road, Uxbridge, created from the former Skyloft Ski Club. The ORTA Fall Rendezvous on October 16 featured several hikes of different lengths around the grounds, all enjoying the beautiful fall colours. On any day there's a great opportunity to share lunch catered by Annina's of Goodwood fame.

On a sunny and snowy December 16, Brian & Wilma led us in a different, westerly direction where we explored a beautiful new area on private property west of Concession 7, thanks to the generosity of a local landowner and trail supporter. The terrain is mixed

fields and forest with gently rolling hills. Ultimately, it may connect quite directly to the Walker Woods.

Note that effective Dec. 26/22 there is a \$5/person daily fee for use of the Trail Hub's property for biking, hiking or snowshoeing. Cross country skiing is \$25. Visit [trailhub.ca/](http://trailhub.ca/) for current conditions and more information.

Heather Cooper





As part of ORTA's program to Celebrate Life's Milestones or in Memory of friends or family, gifts were received. We thank you for your kind donations.

In Memory of

***Myrla Kilburn***  
***Member 2002—2022***

In Memory of

***Graham Earle***  
***Celebrating ORTA's 30th anniversary...Anon.***

***"Celebrating Christmas"***  
***Donations were received for the following:***

Elizabeth & George McGaffey  
—  
Bob Comfort & Judy Pergau

A 30 year anniversary donation for ORTA was received.

"Thanks Everyone" Weibo Cheng

"In appreciation of the time and efforts that ORTA, the hike leaders, and the volunteers have been contributing. Thank you for your selflessness!!!" Cindy Ng

Celebrating 30 years with ORTA!

David & Faith Smith  
Members since 2012

A donation was received in celebration of ORTA's 30th Anniversary.

Anonymous via Canada Helps

In Honour of Chitu Shankhla and celebrating 30 years with ORTA! "Thanks for all the great work you do!"

It is with sincere gratitude that we thank our monthly donors and members who contribute above their annual renewal fee. Your ongoing support continues to benefit the trail and will leave a lasting legacy to future generations.

## GUIDED HIKING PROGRAM IS NOW OPENED UP TO PUBLIC HIKERS.



Welcome Public Hikers! At the special Board meeting held Nov. 30th, 2022 it was approved to allow the public to begin joining in on some guided hikes. Some hikes will continue to be members only while others with state "Registration is Open to Public Hikers". Public Hikers are people who wish to attend our hikes but are not a member yet. After attending several hikes they can upgrade to a Family, Single or Lifetime Membership and pay the required fee. Improvements have been implemented to the Wild Apricot system to maintain our collective safety.

- First the person will register on our system as a PUBLIC HIKER. Which means ORTA collects all the information required; name, contact information, etc. Only then will they be able to view the hikes offered to them and proceed to registration of guided hikes.

- Hike leaders will determine if Public Hikers will be allowed on their hikes as is their privilege.
- Guided hikes that allow Public Hikers will denote that in the hike description. You, as a member, will know that the hike is open to the public.
- Hikes that are not open to Public Hikers will not be visible to the Public Hikers.
- Public hikers will register for a hike just as members do now; reading the waivers, agreeing to all the requirements in the registration process.



## Residents enjoy guided fall hike led by Fishers

Thursday, November 24, 2022 THE WEEKLY SENTINEL - 13

King Township has several excellent hiking trails, including a portion of the almost 300-kilometre Oak Ridges Trail.

Recently, a group of 16 hikers, led by Cheryl and Steve Fisher, toured Cold Creek Conservation Authority, a property owned by TRCA and leased to The Township of King.

It has a varied terrain with a perimeter hike of approximately 7 kilometres. It's quite hilly with meadows, a variety of old growth and new growth forest, wetlands, historical interest and famous for its Dog Boardwalk. The Boardwalk unfortunately was in need of replacement after sustaining damage, a few years ago. This Spring the old boardwalk was removed, and now hikers are eagerly waiting for its replacement.

Oak Ridges Trail Association is a not for profit organization. To join a hike you currently have to be a member, and register online for the hikes. Visit [www.oakridgestrail.org](http://www.oakridgestrail.org)

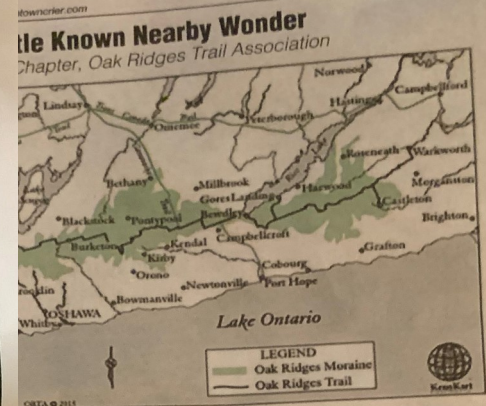
It is \$40 per year, and once a member and you can join as many hikes as you wish.

On Nov. 14, another group hiked the property at Seneca College and Eaton Hall. Hiking with a group is a great way to meet new people, to be outdoors and enjoy nature, and the exercise is good for you too! ORTA has hikes year round and often many days of the week, with varying speeds and distances. You can also find more information on Facebook.



November 2022— "I was recently asked by the King Weekly Sentinel, to write a bit of information about the hiking we recently did at Cold Creek..... it was printed word for word."

Cheryl Fisher



## Chainsaw Operators

Four ORTA members of the Uxbridge team completed a chainsaw course in October, including your truly.

Newest sawyers, Jon McPhee, Bruce Cohen, Craig Barnes and myself, Brian Millage.

We have access to some Stihl battery chainsaws, which are very effective, and we have a good group of certified sawyers now, but will still pass big ones on to the pros at TRCA, CLOCA and York Region, etc.



Brian Millage

## What You Need To Know This Week in Whitby

### Last Chance To Have Your Say: New Skatepark And Pump Track Design

The town is planning to construct a Skatepark and Pump Track at the future Whitby Sports Complex.

November 2022 →

Mike Baker Scugog Chapter Co-Chair was also busy promoting the Trail with his article "**Oak Ridges Trail A Little Known Nearby Wonder**"

This was posted in the Brooklin Town Crier community newspaper.

Did you know that Brooklin is minutes away from one of Ontario's great hiking trails?

The Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA) is a volunteer based charitable hiking organization with a mandate to build and maintain a public hiking trail system on the Oak Ridges Moraine.

As a newly transplanted Brooklinite, I was thrilled to find such an abundance of hiking and walking trails in the Durham region and jumped at the opportunity to get involved with this great group of people who share my love for the outdoors.

The ORTA offers guided hikes of all difficulties and lengths, weekdays and weekends, and opens its trails to individual self-guided hikers. Some of the guided hikes are targeted at families; others are oriented towards adults; others have a strong nature focus.

The ORTA trail spans about 275 km starting in the west at a junction

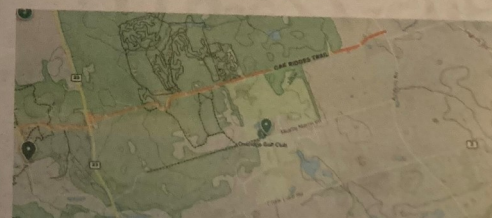
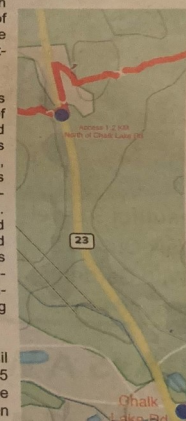
with the Bruce Trail, and extends eastward through Peel, York, and Durham Regions and Northumberland County.

For us in Brooklin, there are several great access points to the trail system at Lake Ridge Rd, Ashburn Rd, and Purple Woods Conservation Area. The Moraine is a special geological feature that provides the region with safe drinking water, healthy ecosystems and provides a beautiful space for recreational use.

So, get out there and get hiking! ORTA memberships are available at nominal cost to those who would like to financially support the organization while volunteers are welcome to help with trail maintenance and stewardship.

I can be reached at [scugog@oakridgestrail.org](mailto:scugog@oakridgestrail.org)

Visit [oakridgestrail.org](http://oakridgestrail.org) for more information including maps, guided hike dates, and volunteer opportunities.





***Good News!! Discovery Night Resumes******Thursday January 19th, 2023******Brian and Wilma Millage present******"JORDAN"***

Yes, we too miss the interesting speakers and topics and the chance to chat with fellow hikers before the presentation. After a two year lapse Discovery Night returns. Each month we will meet at the Ballantrae Community Centre for a discussion about travel, hiking, the environment—so many options.

From January to May we will meet on the last Thursday of the month—with one exception, the January talk will be held on Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023. Join us and bring some friends to learn more about ORTA and our trail program.

Details page 3 of this issue.

**FOR THIS EDITION**

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