

A Huge Thank You to Friends of Blue Mountain!

by [Parkview News Online](#)

[May 17, 2025](#)



By John Moore, Columnist

Recently I had the great privilege of attending an awe-inspiring event at Maskwa Aquatic Club situated on beautiful Kearney Lake. This took place on April 27th and was hosted by the highly regarded Friends of Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes volunteer based environmental advocacy group. The main reason for this gathering was to give thanks to the many volunteers who have helped and supported Friends over the past few years.

We are so very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of volunteers in our midst who are fighting to protect and promote BMBCL. Dedicated Friends Chair Mary Ann McGrath warmly greeted everyone and thanked all the volunteers and community leaders for their unfailing help and support. She jokingly said they will keep

pestering and cajoling the elected representatives at all levels of government in a good way to make them appreciate just how important it is to maintain and keep our wilderness areas safe and protected. In the audience were at least 4 Councillors, including Janet Steele, Kathryn Morse, Jean St. Annand and Nancy Hartling. They are all fully engaged in making sure our environment is not going to be sacrificed just for the sake of development.

There were several discussions regarding improving transit for HRM in which public consultations will soon be taking place. There were discussions on the rapid population growth of HRM and how we are already at our projected population of more than 500,000 which wasn't supposed to be reached until 2031. There was talk about a new entrance to the BMBCL Park by the Medical Centre at Bayers Lake . Suggestions were made to have a trail made to the transmission lines which are a runway to the summit of Blue Mountain. One Councillor acknowledged some residents aren't happy with this new entrance, but it remains to be seen as it may actually be a great addition to the Park.

Other immediate concerns, as one Councillor suggested, sidewalks need to be installed along Larry Utecht from the new Bedford West High School down to Brookline so students can walk safely to places like Chicken Little for lunch. It's currently a safety hazard for both pedestrians and motorists.

The overall concern Councillors had was how to manage this unprecedented growth HRM is experiencing. A comment was made about all the new apartment buildings going up and how it seemed they were everywhere. One Councillor said developers are currently building 4,000 residential units in HRM. That is not nearly enough as we need closer to 8,000 to meet the demand. This makes me realize just how tough a job our elected representatives have to try and manage this rapid growth HRM is experiencing.

A great deal of discussion took place regarding Kearney Lake and the quality of water. One Councillor noted in the latest test results Kearney Lake is suffering. It's well known as a great lake for Maskwa's paddling athletes, probably one of the best anywhere. It is also widely used for swimming, for seadoos, paddle boarders and

recreational paddlers. HRM must do everything in its power to protect this lake. An important initiative will be taking place in the next year or so whereby floating wetlands will be installed along various shorelines to help filter and purify the lake water from being harmed by unwanted contaminants.

Well known environmental steward and founder of North West Trails Wendy McDonald was in attendance, and she was also participating in an I Nature contest at the same time. We were speaking and she suddenly said don't move and took a picture of some insect that had landed on the lapel of my jacket. After the gathering she then went into the wilderness park to find more specimens to complete the contest. That's truly inspirational. Also in attendance were former elected representatives Diana Whalen and Pam Lovelace who are members of Friends of Blue Mountain. Anne Vaughan, who is the nuts and bolts of Friends of Blue Mountain, as one member affectionately described her, helped make this momentous occasion happen. Along with her was dedicated long-time member Mary Ellen Donovan who knows just about everything you need to know about all the inner work of the Blue Mountain Wilderness Park area.

I would suggest now that spring is well under way, you go out and enjoy this beautiful gem of nature we are so fortunate to have in our community. I would also ask that you consider becoming a member of Friends of Blue Mountain and/or becoming a volunteer. I can assure; you won't regret it as you can never go wrong helping our environment. You'll find this experience very rewarding. Thank you, Friends of Blue Mountain, for all you do for our community! God Bless. Happy Mother's Day

Tags: [Friends of Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes](#)[Volunteer](#)