

# The Blue Mountain NEWS

June 2019 Edn. 5

Barrett Lands Beaver Ponds

This newsletter is produced by the Friends of Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes Society. It is all about the Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area and the planned regional park for Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Friends of Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes - Mission Statement:

*To support and promote the creation and development of the Blue mountain Birch Cove Lakes regional park, and to encourage the stewardship and appropriate use of the area.*

## FIRST AGM A SUCCESS!

What a great night we had at our AGM on June 12! We added 20 new members, took in a detailed presentation with Q & A, welcomed Min. of Lands & Forestry, Iain Rankin, MLAs Ben Jessom & Rafah Dicostanzo, and saw a total of 73 attending, ...not bad for our first! Our board was elected along with two new board members: Dusan Soudek, Stewardship and Anne Vaughan, Membership. Other groups represented included the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and Halifax NW Trails. A big thanks goes out to our Co-Chairs, to our MC, Mary Ann McGrath and to Anne Vaughan and her welcoming team. Thanks also to Maskwa Aquatic Club for the use of their clubhouse. Now, on to our next!





Hon. Iain Rankin & Irwin Barrett present one of Irwin's superb prints to our door prize winner, Farzana Naz with our AGM MC, Mary Ann McGrath. Congratulations also to the winner of our guided hike, Thea Baltzer.

From the left... Richard Vinson, Communications; Dusan Soudek, Stewardship; Kym Paquette, Treasurer; MLA Rafah Dicostanzo; Co-Chair Diana Whalen; Maskwa Representative, John Moore; & Mark Young, Co-Chair

## NEW HRM BMBCL PROPERTIES ANNOUNCED

Friends was an active participant in this announcement on April 24 where MP Darren Fisher provided details of the federal contribution (\$860,000) c/o the Canada Nature Fund towards two more properties for the HRM regional park. Mayor Savage further described the purchases as the Armco (135 acres) & Barrett lands (200 acres).



Barrett Lands stream - muskrat observed here. Ed.

This brings the acquired total to about 530 acres of additional properties bordering the Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area. We congratulate the federal government and HRM for moving forward with these legacy purchases.

Maps of the HRM purchases can be seen on the [Friend's website](#).



Mayor Savage making the announcement to a full house at Maskwa Aquatic Club.



Co-chair Diana Whalen sharing the podium with MPs Darren Fisher and Andy Fillmore. Geoff Regan was also in attendance.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

To all of our new members... great to have you with us - thank you for signing on and supporting our mission. Friends is now at more than 300 members and that's in just four months! Let's keep building this membership and bring an even stronger voice to making the BMBCL Regional Park a reality. Thank you to all of



you who have so kindly offered to volunteer with the society - we'll be meeting over the summer and will be looking at ways as to how we can best utilize such a broad base of talent.

### Not a member? JOIN Friends!

There's *no charge* for membership, and it's easy to sign up on the web site. Just visit the [JOIN page](#) and, with some basic info and a click, you're on your way. Numbers matter and we're looking to build a solid base of influence. Of course, if you can make a [DONATION](#) as well, that would be very much appreciated.



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## SANDY LAKE - SACKVILLE RIVER REGIONAL PARK COALITION

On the theory that we are all stronger and richer together, Friends is now part of the 23 member strong [Sandy Lake-Sackville River Regional Park Coalition](#). The coalition includes key local resident associations, together with trails, conservation and environmental groups. The 23 member organizations represent approximately 3,000 individuals interested in protecting valuable natural assets around HRM.

The Coalition's objective is to secure an additional 1,000 acres to be added to the existing Sandy Lake/Jacks Lake Regional Park in an effort to maintain the water quality of Bedford's Sandy Lake and the Sackville River. This acreage contains much of the ground water feeding into Sandy Lake and is favoured with some amazing old growth forest. This is all of part of the Sackville River watershed and thus is extremely important ecologically in the future health of the river. Friends recognizes the importance of the retention of this acreage as an important resource and wildlife corridor - now at risk from rapid urbanization.



Sandy Lake, Bedford

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## EVENTS & PRESENTATIONS

The events committee has been busy finalizing details for our 2019 - 2020 program. These will include hikes to Blue Mountain and much more. Please watch for notices over the coming months. Also, we have recently made presentations on the BMBCL to the Halifax Wildlife Assoc., the MSVU Alumni, and the



Halifax Field Naturalists.

**REQUEST:** If you know (or are a member) of a group such as a service club, community organization, homeowner's association etc. that might like to learn more about the BMBCL, [let us know](#) or pass our name along. We'll be pleased to follow up.



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## FOOT PRINTS BUILDS MEMBERSHIP

The Foot Prints event on June 9 at Rockingham Ridge, organized by Halifax NW Trails and Foot Solutions saw the Friends booth along with 10 others at this themed event. We signed 50 new members and took the opportunity to introduce Friends to several other organizations - all with a common interest in enjoying the outdoors.



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## IF IT SWIMS LIKE A DUCK

Board member, Mary Ellen Donovan and Walter N Regan congratulate Friend's duck, Marty Mallard who trained very hard and placed in the top ten at the 6th annual Sackville River Duck Race held on May 11th. His trainer, James Boyer, predicts next year Marty will be a real contender! This event is held in support of The Boys and Girls Club of Sackville, the Sackville Rivers Association and the Acadia Recreation Club.



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## OUR COMMITTEES

As we continue to grow, so does our reach and development of new policy and actions. This is only possible through our committees which include: Communications, Planning, Events, and, soon to be, Membership and Stewardship. As an example of where we're headed, the Planning Committee continues to identify priority issues and assemble data, most notably as related to land holdings and boundaries, with a view to looking at options to be presented to stakeholders. For Communications, one of our priorities is to look at how best to leverage our social media and messaging to engage not only our current membership but especially



those who are new to the BMBCL.

Board members Dale Smith & James Boyer from our Planning Committee meeting with Rotarians.



## CRANE LAKE CAMP CLEAN-UP

Congratulations to all of those who worked so diligently in not-so-pleasant conditions to clean up the well known, Crane Lake camp site in the BMBCL Wilderness Area. Now that we have a board member charged with Stewardship, we will be considering other sites where the practice of "Leave No trace" was all but forgotten. If you are aware of a site that needs some special attention, [let us know](#), and we'll see if we can bring our resources to bear to get it cleaned up.



More than 43 bags of various waste was collected. This superb effort also involved staff from NS Environment, and NS Lands & Forestry who provided the helicopter that made six trips to remove all of the bags. A "well done" goes to Dusan Soudek, now on Friends board of directors, who organized the cleanup and made multi trips to the site.

## MEET A BLUE MOUNTAIN ARTIST!



As an ongoing feature of the NEWS, we continue with a profile of one of the painters who contributed to the Blue Mountain art exhibit, September 2018. In this edition, meet Joy Laking.

For forty-four years Joy has painted Nova Scotia and captured her view of the world on watercolour paper and in oil and acrylics. She is inspired by all of the beauty that is Nova Scotia.

Joy at Hobson Lake



Joy is known for strong compositions and a wide range of tonal values as a constant in all of her paintings. Her watercolours make full use of the white of the paper and her oils and acrylics are full of rich colours.

In addition to her studio paintings, when ever possible Joy paints on location, including the Blue Mountain - Birch Cove Lakes. Joy used to live on Kearney Lake and is passionate about protecting and promoting BMBCL. It is an exhilarating challenge to set out, find a subject and complete an entire painting in four to seven hours. Joy's paintings are loose, spontaneous and depict the tides, the lighting and the moment. Besides painting on location throughout the Maritimes, Joy also paints around the world, most recently in India, Ghana, Italy and Portugal.

To see more of Joys' works please visit [her website](#).



Rocks & Trees on Path to Hobson Lake



Pine at Hobson Lake

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*"There is something bigger than fact: the underlying spirit, all it stands for, the mood, the vastness, the wildness."* Emily Carr

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#### KEY LINKS FOR BMBCL INFORMATION:

- > Friends of BMBCL Society: [Our website](#)
- > Ecology Action Centre: [Historical Timeline](#)



> Halifax Regional Municipality: [Proposed Park](#)

> Halifaxtrails.ca: [Blue Mountain](#)

> Our HRM Alliance: [Call to Action](#)

> N.S. Dept. of Environment: [BMBCL](#)

[Wilderness Area Description](#)



NOTE: We have an active Facebook page with 900 followers, plus Friends is on Instagram and Twitter. Have a look there too for more news!



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**CONTACT US:** If you have requests, ideas, comments, concerns... please let us know c/o [our website](#) or email: [bluemountainbirchcovelakes@gmail.com](mailto:bluemountainbirchcovelakes@gmail.com)

NEWS Ed: Richard Vinson



Ash Lake, Dave Gordon

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