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Signs of Spring

With the snow gone, the first wildflowers beginning to bloom, and the calendar saying that it is officially spring, it can't be long now until the warmer weather is truly on its way.

For those of us who love to snowshoe and ski, it was another wonderful winter of scenic outdoor adventures on the trails. At the Algoma Highlands Conservancy (AHC), we welcomed new board members and staff, auctioned art, worked towards securing funding for future projects, and promoted the AHC locally.



J. Cross



L. Pitt

So far this spring, we have been busy with our education program and launching the summer outdoor recreation and environmental field research seasons.

To help you enjoy your visit to the AHC, our comprehensive Trail Map brochure can now be picked up in person, or downloaded from our web site, and our enthusiastic staff can recommend the perfect outing.

Once again, we encourage you to get involved in the AHC whether it be by making an annual donation, getting out on our trails, or reading on to find out more about us!



J. Cross

Spring on the forest floor includes (Top) Carolina Spring Beauties and (Middle) Trout Lilies. Above: Spring arrives in the tree tops.

New Board Members and Staff

We are happy to announce the addition of Bob Beggs and Jillian Wilson to the AHC's volunteer Board of Directors. Bob brings experience in finance and management, while Jillian has a wealth of knowledge in governance and policy. They have both already made notable contributions and we are looking forward to having them on our team in the months to come.

Other big changes to the Board this winter included Doug Pitt and Gaylen Byker, our past President and Vice-President, taking a well-deserved break from the AHC Board's Executive, with Lisa Venier and Kristin Arend stepping up as the new President and Vice-President. We thank all of the Board Members for their dedicated volunteer service and recognize the passion and effort that they bring to the AHC.

Thanks to a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we also recently welcomed a new Staff Member, Environmental Education Coordinator, Cynthia Marcinkowski. Cynthia has already been hard at work liaising within the community and is always looking for suggestions for programming that will appeal to local users and educational groups. She can be contacted at the AHC office by telephone 705-649-5751 or email cynthia.ahc.edu@gmail.com.



Left to Right: Bob Beggs, Jillian Wilson and Cynthia Marcinkowski

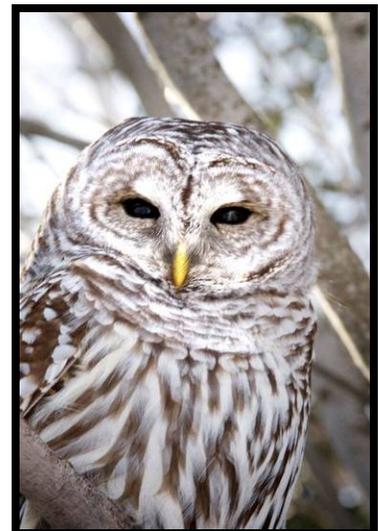
Silent Art Auction – Fundraising with Flair!

During the short and cold days of the early winter, bidding in the AHC's Silent Art Auction began, with competition heating up in the final hours on December 30th. When the dust settled, the lucky winners took home beautiful works of nature-inspired art, generously donated by talented Canadian and American artists.

The event was a success due to the hard work of organizer, and senior Lake Superior State University student, Carla Marcellus, who undertook the ambitious project for the Conservancy. AHC Board Members and Staff also helped behind the scenes and support for the auction was given by the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre and Stokely Creek Lodge who provided venues to display and auction the art.

Right: Some of the 45 works of art donated for the Silent Art Auction.

Top: Chippewa Falls, Algoma – Tom Marshall
Middle: Tree Frog – Michelle Nadeau
Bottom: Barred Owl – Tammy Figehe



Environmental Research Update

Following-up on last year's research activities, Executive Director, Jennifer Cross has continued to extend the AHC's commitment to Environmental Research, under the capable direction of Natural Resources Canada Researcher and Board Member, Dean Thompson.

She spent the winter months analyzing bio-acoustic monitoring data and has now identified Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*), a bird species at risk, among the 1050 hours of recordings that she collected last season.

Ongoing funding from partners Hydro One, Great Lakes Power Transmission and Algoma Power Inc., as well as support from Corridors for Life, will allow the AHC research crew and partners to get back out in the field this spring and summer.

Upcoming research projects include: additional bio-acoustic monitoring, ongoing maintenance of habitat-enhancing demonstration plots, analysis of trees treated last fall with an alternative fungal bio-herbicide, increased creek bank stabilization, regular water quality monitoring in Stokely Creek, and a new initiative designed to help protect a threatened turtle species – the Wood Turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*).

Right: Lower Stokely falls in springtime.



Above: Canada Warbler

Right: Bio-acoustic monitoring device installed to monitor bird species in one of the demonstration research plots.



Out and About

During the month of March, the AHC participated in two community events: "Seedy Saturday" held at Sault College in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and the Bi-national Public Advisory Council's (BPAC) "Environmental Summit" held at Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

The events were highly successful with trail maps distributed, new email list subscribers obtained, and increased awareness about the AHC and its mission, values and property generated - we even managed to get a photo in The Sault Star!



Above: AHC staff members Cynthia Marcinkowski and Carrie Ginou at Seedy Saturday.

Photo: Rachele Labrecque
The Sault Star



Wilderness First Aid

Ever wondered what to do in an emergency if a hospital is hours away? Participants in Wilderness Advanced First Aid found out what actions to take during the 4-day course offered by the AHC this April.

The training was organized as part of the AHC's Environmental Education program, which aims to meet the education needs of the local community, including folks who work and play in remote areas.

Thank you to the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Kinsmen Club of Sault Ste. Marie, Instructor Matt Howell, Wilderness Medical Associates, and all of the course participants who will be bringing their skills to a backcountry location near you!

Bike and Hike @ AHC

Do not delay! The trails have firmed up and we are ready to welcome hikers and bikers for silent sport adventures again this year. Trail use is free of charge in the spring, summer, and fall and "beginner" to "expert" options are available. Please leave your car in the main parking lot (just before the gate) and continue on foot/bike if using the Stokely Creek Lodge access point. Trails can also be accessed from Robertson Lake Road. Contact us (see details on page 5 below) for more information, or to inform us of pressing trail maintenance issues.



Above: Administering first aid in the field.
Below: Envirothon participants learning about aquatic life in Stokely Creek.



Above: Chris clearing leaves off the mountain bike trail. A special thanks Chris Langshaw and Paul McBay for volunteering to help Jennifer Cross prepare the mountain bike trail for the riding season.

Algoma Envirothon

This spring, the Algoma Highlands Conservancy and Stokely Creek Lodge had the privilege of hosting the Algoma District's Envirothon.

This unique team competition is part of a broader education program that encourages high school students to get outdoors and increase their understanding of forests, soils, wildlife, aquatic ecosystems, and human impact on the environment.

Algoma Envirothon is coordinated by the East Algoma Stewardship Council, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Canada, City of Sault Ste. Marie, Sault College, Clean North, Clergue Forest Management, and the Algoma District School Board. Envirothon is a program of the Ontario Forestry Association.

Congratulations to the winning team from W.C. Eaket Secondary School, in Blind River, who moved on to the Ontario Envirothon competition.



Above: The winning Algoma Envirothon team from W.C. Eaket Secondary School.

The AHC Needs Your Support!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed that's the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

While the Algoma Highlands Conservancy continues to take on exciting projects, aligned with its core values, the reality is that we still need your support.

In order to protect the King Mountain property, in 2009, the AHC took on a mortgage, which has only been partially paid off by donations received since then. This loan (currently \$243,000) impacts our activities, as we are challenged to come up with stewardship and operational dollars, that are generally not covered under project-specific funding.

The need to pay off the mortgage and accrued interest is felt keenly by the AHC, as well as the many friends and supporters who have put years of dedication into our mission of protecting the unique beauty and ecological integrity of key areas within the Algoma Region.



Above: Taylor Creek, a freshwater stream located on the King Mountain property.

Donations and Memberships

To donate:

1) PayPal

Donate securely on-line through the AHC's or your own PayPal account. Both Canadian and American credit cards and funds accepted.

To donate online click on the ["Donate"](#) tab on our website.

2) Cheque

Mail a cheque payable to the "Algoma Highlands Conservancy" to either our Canadian or American mailing address. Please include your **name, mailing address, telephone number and email** to ensure that you receive your tax receipt. An email address allows us to contact you promptly and conserves paper!

3) In Person

Visit the AHC Office at the Stokely Clubhouse in Goulais River, ON and drop off your donation directly to our friendly staff.

Tax receipts will be issued for all gifts (donations and memberships).

The AHC is a registered Charity in both Canada and the United States.

We respect donor privacy and will not share/sell contact information.

To become a member:

If you donate annually, why not become an AHC member?

Member benefits:

- 1) Eligible to vote at our Annual General Meeting (16 yrs+).
- 2) Recognition in our Annual Report.
- 3) A tax receipt for the full amount of your membership fee.

To join online click on the ["Membership"](#) tab on our website.

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