



# The Green Door

Citizens Supporting Ontario's Prosperous and Sustainable Future

The Yorklands Green Hub Newsletter | September 2020 | No. 17

## YGH Quest Confronts an About-Face

Recent information from the Ministry of Infrastructure Ontario came as a shock to us. For seven years the Yorklands Green Hub has set our sights on acquiring Parcel 2, a 70-acre section of the Guelph Correctional Centre lands. We have been working as a citizens' group to secure this portion of the former GCC property with one of its buildings, the former Superintendent's house.

We envision retrofitting the house as our green hub headquarters within publicly accessible land. It would provide an ideal space for amenities such as classrooms, workshop spaces, washrooms and a cafe, surrounded by greenhouses and raised-bed gardens. Our goal is the creation of an eco-park where we will inspire, educate and engage the public in stewardship to strengthen urban resilience.

### One-Parcel Sale: One Buyer

But now, the most recent announcement from the Ontario government states that the entire property, including all the buildings (over 25), will be sold as a single entity to a single purchaser. Details



*The lush late-summer meadows and waterways of the Yorklands.*

about this – and our future plans – were sent to all members in our recent August letter.

With this significant change of direction, we are calling on your expertise to bolster a new strategy for success in partnering, via long term lease, with whomever will own this property in the future. In the meantime we continue, with your membership support, to deliver Yorklands Green Hub programming, and start our fundraising for operational costs.


We thank you all for staying with us on this journey. We encourage you to help increase our memberships with your enthusiasm for this remarkable public asset that has such great potential to retain east-side park space as a setting for a hub for urban sustainability.

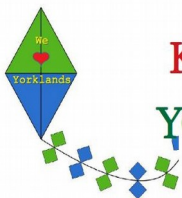
Enjoy and share our new videos funded by our Ontario Trillium Fund grant. With your continuing support, we champion this unique heritage landmark as the outdoor public park it has been for over 100 years.

### Public Parks and Green Space Need Your Public Voice

In these Covid-challenged times, our parks have become a vitally important resource for many who know that mental and physical health are strengthened with outdoor engagement. Guelph has limited parkland available, however, and there is pressure to reduce its extent in various parts of the city.

Your input to those who run our city is critical whenever green space is being challenged. Each time park decisions are in the news, please take the opportunity to call, write or email our public officials about the importance of protected green space for today and for future generations. Remember that Guelph has the tap water supply we enjoy today because of elected officials over a century ago who secured Arkell Springs area as a secure water resource that allowed for future growth.

We want to see Yorklands parkland continue to be a Guelph landmark 100 years from now. 



**KITES FOR  
YORKLANDS**

**Families! Households! Classes! Groups!**  
The **YORKLANDS GREEN HUB** invites you to

**GO FLY A KITE !!**

to celebrate the biodiversity of Guelph's  
unique Yorklands heritage parkland

August 1<sup>st</sup> – September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020





*Planting a Polli-Patch increases pollinator habitat in the city.*

## Summer Polli-Patch program connects people and pollinators

In the spring of 2020, amid the new Covid 19 challenges, we were unable to continue with our Ten Tall Trees program in the schools. We had introduced it as part of our effort to nurture pollinators by teaching students about the diversity of urban tree species that support them.

So thanks to a grant from Pollination Guelph, we started a different program. YGH member Kiki Danninger offered her expertise and enthusiastic guidance to help us launch a Polli-patches pilot program. Its purpose was to invite city residents to add to the pollinator-friendly extent of their home gardens. One facet of YGH's urban agriculture pillar is to increase public engagement and understanding of the value of areas of habitat for pollinators throughout the city, to help counter their falling numbers.

Kiki arranged for a set of native perennial plants to be donated to those who enrolled. She delivered the plants to participants' front doors, supervised their sites and gave advice for their care.



*Polli-patch plants delivered right to your door.*

To be successful at attracting pollinators, people need to know which plants are important. Over the summer they learned to care for their patch and see for themselves why they needed to leave part of the soil un-mulched and undisturbed. Kiki provided an information package and links to more resources for each Polli-Patch gardener, to help them learn as they grow.

The program has been so well-received that we hope to repeat it next summer.

Despite the tumultuous pandemic time, our Polli-patch participants showed great enthusiasm for the project. Several children got excited about getting involved. They watched for insects, watered the plants and flowers, and even got creative colouring pages of illustrations of pollinators.

For some participants, challenges included keeping the plants watered, and design ideas. Most of the gardeners expressed a desire to learn more, via a native and pollinator plant sale, seminars and talks, or by using the resources created for the project (websites with vital information, how-tos, and more).

We look forward to what the spring of 2021 will bring! 🌱

## Yorky the Frog Becomes Virtual Site Guide

### Encouraging Exploration and Enjoyment of Yorklands Springtime Nature

When schools and workplaces closed their doors in the spring of 2020 due to the Covid 19 virus, sheltering at home became a new practice. Suddenly, more people and families were turning to urban green spaces as places to escape isolation and embrace outdoor activities for physical and mental well-being.



*Yorky the Frog, our spring tour guide!*



Parents in particular sought places where their children could find connections to nature and opportunities to run and play outdoors. Overnight, Guelph's Yorklands became a wonderful new green destination for many city residents.



**YORKLANDS DISCOVERY WALKS**  
785 York Road ( Hwy. 7), Guelph, ON

**Yorky's  
Little Discoveries  
Challenge !!**

**WEEK #8!** Hi Everyone! Come out and explore Guelph's Yorklands - and enter for a chance at a \$40 value prize!



**Q: Where am I here?**

**And... what's the flower just behind my rock?**

#8

**WIN!** To enter our draw, send us a photo of my discovery taken from this spot. Email us your photo, your name and your answer to my question (between June 15 and 21) to: [noticing@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:noticing@yorklandsgreenhub.ca) Subject: Yorky's Little Discoveries #8. Vouchers for 3 great stores!!

**Please Keep Safe!**  
Be sure to observe 2-metre social distancing outdoors.

Many thanks to **MAGNA** for their generous support as sponsors of this event.

For YGH, group walks and other organized activities were no longer possible. So Yorky the Frog, our little YGH mascot, was dusted off from the Noticing Nature summer program of 2018 and 2019. He was given the job of virtual guide to the Yorklands site.

Yorky posted nine weekly "Little Discoveries" challenges on Facebook for families to enjoy through May and June. He invited people to go on self-guided walks on their own time (with physical distancing reminders), with the lure of a prize if they found his discovery of the week. Many went to 785 York Road and followed Yorky's Little Discoveries clues along the Blue Dot Trail. Our great new Yorklands site map (online) was a big help!

Magna/Polycon Industries generously made a donation to support this summer outdoor activity. Winners of the draw following Yorky's Little Discoveries Challenge received a \$40 gift certificate. They were invited to choose among three of Guelph's select stores: Wild Birds Unlimited, the Bookshelf or Wyndham Art Supply –

to provide them with more nature inspiring-things for their summer pleasure.



Kelly Wilson and daughters (posing with Yorky) were one family of winners. "Yay, the girls are so excited! They would love a gift certificate." They chose Wyndham Art Supply for their prize.



Jason Newberry, Linda Yuval and son David also won in the draw. "David is super excited to have won the draw and would like to get some new books at the Bookshelf," said his dad.

Thanks, Yorky, for stepping in to offer some Covid-time guidance to Yorklands explorers! YGH's real Second Sunday walks resume on Sept. 14 at 2:00 pm (Events p. 4). 🌿

**BE PART OF YGH!**

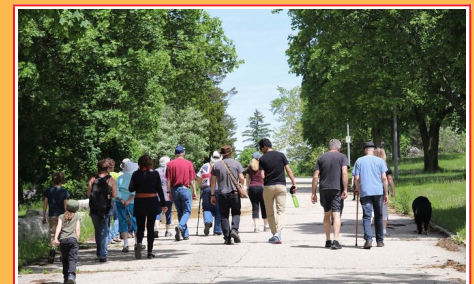
Volunteer opportunities  
exist as board members,  
on our Fundraising  
Committee, and with our  
Ten Tall Trees program with  
the schools in September  
and October.

## Kites for Yorklands Flying in Celebration of Urban Biodiversity at a Wonderful Site

Haven't you always wanted to try your hand at building a kite? Whether you're a parent with kids, a student, an artist, a crafter, retired, or just up for a new and fun challenge, here's a chance to build and fly a nature-themed kite – for a cause! We invite you to be part of a flying celebration of the wonderful biodiversity of Guelph's Yorklands – a place we hope to protect and preserve for the future. We'd like pictures of your kite to make a composite celebratory poster of "Kites for Yorklands."

If you're not a kite aficionado, you might want to buy a simple kite at a dollar store to study the way it's made. To build one, you'll need some simple materials – (con't p. 4).

## W. O. W.



**We're Out Walking!**

Come out for an hour and savor  
the Yorklands in the fall.  
Thursdays at 10:30 am.  
Meet at the entrance,  
785 York Road.  
Please wear a mask.

## KITES (con't from p. 3)



wood or bamboo dowels, plastic or cloth or paper for the body, tape or glue to fasten things together, something for a tail, and string for flying it.

Kites are an art and a sport and a hobby (did you know there's a Guelph kite club?) and an aerodynamic design challenge. There are kite books, demos on YouTube, or here's a link for getting started: <https://www.my-best-kite.com/how-to-build-kites.html>



Once again, we're offering the enticement of a draw: a \$40 gift voucher for individual or household entries, and a separate draw for a \$100 prize for participating groups or classes.

How to enter? Build your kite. Take a picture while you're building it. Take a picture of your finished kite. Then go fly it in your favourite park or outdoor space! Take a picture of it flying.

➔ **PLEASE do NOT fly your kites at the Yorklands, as we must respect the one-mile safe air space around the Guelph Airpark.**

Email your name, team names and 3 pictures to us at [noticing@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:noticing@yorklandsgreenhub.ca) and you'll be in for our draw for prizes. And let us know if we can use your pictures in a "Kites for Yorklands" poster, a virtual "group" of nature kites. (More details, see Events.)

**Covid19: Please wear a mask and respect social distancing when you're out.** ☒

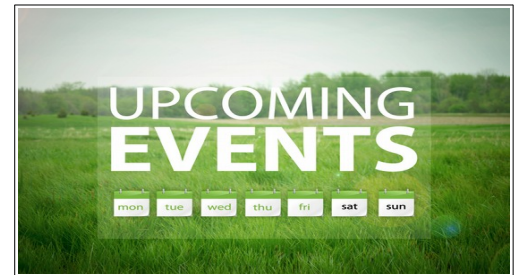
## Volunteer Needed

Trees are a critical part of our biosphere. Could you help deliver our "Ten Tall Trees" program to Grade 5/6 students in mid September and October?

- Each session takes about two hours, at or near the school grounds.
- Students learn to identify several species of trees by their leaf shapes and traits.
- Curriculum-coordinated.
- Mostly outdoors, and fun.
- Each class needs their teacher, our leader and 1 or 2 members who love trees.



Learn more at Green Door Newsletter #15  
<http://yorklandsgreenhub.ca/green-door-15/>  
**Contact us at**  
[info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca)



**Be Covid-smart: Wear a Mask.**

## WOW – WE'RE OUT WALKING

Thursday mornings at 10:30 am. We meet at 785 York Road, and spend an hour at a gentle pace on the Blue Dot Trail (map online).



## SECOND SUNDAY WALKS RESUME

Meet the YGH walk leader at the main entrance, 785 York Road, at 2 pm on September. 13<sup>th</sup>, October 11<sup>th</sup> and November 15<sup>th</sup>.

## KITES FOR YORKLANDS: GO FLY A KITE!!

Make, fly and photograph your nature-themed kite to celebrate the Yorklands and its biodiversity. We'll make a celebratory kite poster with your kite pictures! Deadline September 30, 2020.

**Details at**  
[yorklandsgreenhub.ca/kite-flying-event-at-yorklands/](http://yorklandsgreenhub.ca/kite-flying-event-at-yorklands/)

**"The Green Door" is a publication of the Yorklands Green Hub Promotions Committee. We welcome news, articles and letters. Each must include the author's name and full contact information.**

**We reserve the right to refuse or edit all submissions. Questions or submissions should be directed to a member of the Board of Directors at [info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca](mailto:info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca)**