



The Green Door

Citizens Supporting Ontario's Prosperous and Sustainable Future

The Yorklands Green Hub Newsletter

| August 2023 |

No. 26



It's an interesting, relaxing place to walk at Guelph's historic Yorklands.

Climate News Making You Anxious? Walk in Nature, Say Doctors

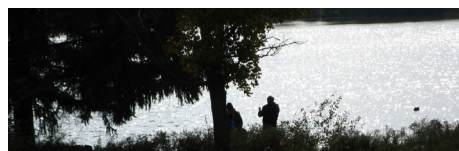
It's been a disturbing summer for climate news. We're going to have to adapt to our changing world as well as work on climate mitigation. Dr. Melissa Lem, President of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE - cape.ca) says they've now added nature as "the fourth pillar of health along with sleep, diet and exercise."

And what better place in Guelph to take a walk on a comfortable paved surface with no traffic (or on a side trail), surrounded by local history, culture and natural heritage, than our Yorklands green space on York Road?

It's a beautiful landscape that offers outdoor enjoyment among meadows, streams, ponds and heritage stone features on a public property.

The Yorklands Green Hub has been working for more than ten years to make part of these former reformatory lands into a public amenity for the future. We encourage you to get to know and savor this special place, and support our effort to create a sustainable environments centre and heritage park. We learn to protect and care for nature when we take time to appreciate it, and these days nature can use our help.

There's even a city bus stop (#4) to leave you right at the entrance, at 785 York Road, west of Victoria. ★



Guelph Friends: Here's Another Chance to "HAVE YOUR SAY" on YGH's Role in Our City's Culture Plan What does a vibrant cultural city look like to you?

The success of our vision of creating a unique urban eco-park and preserving a part of the former Ontario Reformatory lands in the public domain depends to a great extent on sustained public support, interest and input.

YOUR voice is hugely important. Every time you speak out, share your ideas, support the YGH vision, we have a better chance of being included in Guelph's official cultural and heritage designations.

Guelph's current 'Have Your Say' is asking what contributes to our city's vibrant culture. It's closing soon. And it's easy! Here's how.

** Take a short survey.

https://www.haveyoursay.guelph.ca/culture-plan/survey_tools/cpsurvey

** Put a pin in where you see special cultural value (the Yorklands and other places!). Click on the "pin it" link at <https://www.haveyoursay.guelph.ca/culture-plan>

** Create a future vision for Guelph: say what you most appreciate for Guelph's cultural scene in 2030. Here: <https://www.haveyoursay.guelph.ca/culture-plan/brainstormers/create-a-vision>

* Join a conversation cafe (of 3) during the first week of August.

Register at:

https://www.haveyoursay.guelph.ca/culture-plan/survey_tools/conversation-registration

You can refresh your points about the Yorklands Green Hub vision

by visiting our website, including the link to our 2023 AGM presentations at <https://yorklandsgreenhub.ca/ygh-agm-presentations-april-2023/>

Many thanks for being part of the supportive YGH community by sharing in our vision – officially. It’s what makes this work possible. ☆



THANK YOU TO GUELPH SOLAR FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION!

Yorklands Green Hub thanks Guelph Solar for their recent generous donation during our June Walkathon. ☆

We couldn’t thrive without the support of our local businesses.

If you or someone you know would like to make a donation, please email info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca.

THANK YOU!



Noticing Nature families drawing their discoveries in the shade.

Noticing Nature 2023 Brings Families to the Yorklands for Exploring, Learning and Art

It’s a wonderful spot in the city to spend time outdoors in a green space full of flowers, waterways, ponds, shady trees, pathways, fascinating insects and small creatures for those who look closely. It’s even more wonderful when you have talented guides to show you how and where to look, what to look at – and how to think about turning your discoveries into art.

This year marks YGH’s third offering of morning art and nature sessions for young families, on site at Guelph’s Yorklands. It’s one of the many activities we’ve offered over the years to demonstrate what a treasure of a place we have right here in our city for enjoying its cultural and natural heritage in many ways. A place we’re working to keep as part of our city’s heritage for the public into the future.

Noticing Nature programming is made possible thanks to our members and donors. It’s a fun program for children ages 4-11 accompanied by a parent, relative or adult friend.

In past years NN participants have discovered a turtle and a monarch butterfly laying their eggs, and a monarch chrysalis. They’ve (con’t on p. 3)



NOTICING NATURE 2023 (Con't from p. 2)

been introduced to tree identification that highlights the many values of urban trees, including our very important pollinators.

Families can go home after camp and check their own neighbourhoods to see what keystone trees are there, and how they enrich Guelph's habitat to support our diminishing species.



Places are available for upcoming Noticing Nature mornings (two sessions for an adult and child for \$30 or pwy):

- ~ Tue. July 25 + Thurs. July 27
- ~ Tue. Aug. 1 + Thurs. Aug 3
- ~ Tues. Aug. 8 + Thurs. Aug. 10
10 am to noon.

To register, please email info@yorklandsgreenhub.ca with the subject "Noticing Nature 2023." ☆



The Administration Building at the former Ontario Reformatory/Guelph Correction Centre, Guelph, ON

Indigenous Yorklands Connections and National Urban Park Vision

In previous issues of this Green Door newsletter, we have offered background stories on our connection to some Indigenous history at Guelph's former Ontario Reformatory/Guelph Correctional Centre. Since then, we have had excellent presentations at our April 2023 Annual General Meeting that have provided us with new details and photos covering the 30 years prior to the OR's closing.

Arend Nieuwland was director of the Arts Program which included a Native Arts program which he ran for thirty years. Connie Shaw served as the Reformatory chaplain for decades prior to the final closing of the then Guelph Correctional Centre. You can see their presentations on our website by clicking on the "Latest News" scroll bar. Nieuwland describes his creative mentoring of many young men over the years and their

enthusiastic embrace of artistic work. Connie brought us heartening stories, and a photo of the sweat lodge built on site at the OR chapel. (See Green Door #25 and others in our newsletter index list at <https://yorklandsgreenhub.ca/>)

YGH is pursuing connections with individuals and non profit groups to further our relationship with the Mississaugas of the Credit. Expanding our knowledge of the Indigenous past in Guelph could be a significant part of the restoration of the OR site. For example, working with Indigenous partners we could be a link connecting the Wellington County Museum Neutral display with the Crawford Lake Neutral Village reconstruction. For the Yorklands site itself we could introduce visitors to the pre-settlement history of the property, moving to reconciliation projects to address more recent historical reality. So much possibility.

Which leads to our next big idea. Parks Canada has decided to expand its network to add national urban parks to its current roster of 48 protected national parks. Covid pandemic days put a spotlight on a heightened appreciation for city green spaces, their contribution to public health, climate resilience, beautiful



YORKLANDS GREEN HUB
TREE FESTIVAL
CELEBRATING WELCOMING WEEK AND NATIONAL FOREST WEEK
WITH NATURE HIKES, ARTISTS, MUSIC, A SCAVENGER HUNT FOR KIDS AND FUN!
SUN. SEPT 17TH, 1PM TO 3PM
785 YORK RD. EAST OF VICTORIA
GUELPH ONTARIO
TRANSIT: YORK RD. BUS #4
PARKING: ON YORK RD. WEST OF GATE
NO WASHROOMS ON SITE
Please register on eventbrite
YORKLANDS GREEN HUB
Opening green doors to the future

neighbourhoods and urban wildlife protection. Parks Canada's stated goal is to "conserve nature, connect people with nature, and advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples." This meshes closely with core YGH values and goals.

Rouge National Urban Park in Toronto is Canada's first. It boasts nearly 75 square km of green space around waterways, and a wonderful diversity of landscapes and activities. Parks Canada have been working since 2011 to nationalize and nearly double its expanse. In partnership with Canadian cities, they are also planning for more urban parks. (See <https://iucnurbanalliance.org/canada-launches-national-urban-park-programme/>). The City of Windsor is collaborating with them and numerous local partners in exploring a national urban park centred on their Ojibway Prairie Complex.

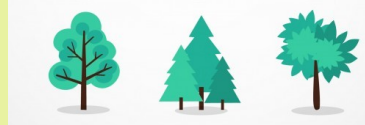
We invite you, as we do, to imagine Guelph's Yorklands as our third national urban park in Ontario: a unique protected natural, built and cultural heritage spot for our city's future.

We have already started the process rolling. It will take public interest, support, partnering and planning to persuade our national parks people to add us as a national urban park candidate. Our park would not be huge like the Rouge. But it is a much loved public space rich in cultural and natural history, as well as having a unique history as an institution.

If you value Guelph's Yorklands - the former Ontario Reformatory lands east of the Eramosa River - we invite you to keep connected, support our membership, and work with us to win national park status for this very special place. ★

Read here how Parks Canada outlines the process for designating new urban national parks:
<https://parks.canada.ca/pun-nup/cnpun-cnnup>

IF YOU LOVE TREES... COME VOLUNTEER TO MAKE OUR SEPTEMBER TREE FESTIVAL FESTIVE!!



YGH is looking for volunteer participants to celebrate our city's trees on Sunday, September 17th. If you're an artist or a performer or a tree expert or a nature educator and you'd like to share your talents with us to make our (no-admission) festival more festive, we'd love to have you join us.

We're also looking for volunteers to help us welcome our participants.

If you'd like to be part of our Tree Festival event, please contact Bernadette at bwycks@yorklandsgreenhub.ca.



Many thanks to our friends at Guelph's **STONE STORE** for their generous contribution to our programming.



Community Walk – The Story of the Stones

Saturday, August 12 – 1 PM

A Midsummer Saturday's afternoon walk at the Yorklands. Immerse yourself in heritage, history and the mystical allure of the site's stone treasures! Walk leader Greg Stojanovski shares tales of Guelph heritage, its limestone and fieldstone, and how they shaped parts of Guelph history. Meet at the gate at 785 York Road – Bus #4.

Register at Eventbrite: [The Story of the Stones Tickets, Sat, 12 Aug 2023 at 1:00 PM | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-story-of-the-stones-tickets-sat-12-aug-2023-at-1-00-pm)

YGH's 2ND ANNUAL TREE FESTIVAL Sunday, September 17 – 1 -3 PM

875 York Road – Yorklands Site

September's walk is part of Guelph/Wellington Local Immigration Partnership's Welcoming Week.

Enjoy a nature walk with ponds, meadows and forest. We'll also be celebrating **National Forest Week** with musicians and local artists, and a treasure hunt for your kids.

Artists, performers and event volunteers please contact Bernadette at bwycks@yorklandsgreenhub.ca.

Register at Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/yorklands-green-hub-tree-festival-tickets-667807087977?aff=oddtcreator>

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