

# Celebrating our 2020 volunteers

## 2020 Iroquoia Club Volunteer of the Year Award – Bronwen (Bron) Tregunno

The Volunteer of the Year Award is given to a BTC member who contributed through their volunteer activities to further the interests of the Iroquoia Club BTC.

Bron is a powerhouse in her efforts to expand the Iroquoia's club involvement in the areas of education and publicity. Highlights including her organization and participation in the inaugural George Hamilton Day Celebration hike with the City of Hamilton. She has led a number of historically and natural science focused, educational hikes with guests from various different organizations, giving IBTC exposure to many new people and creating new connections with interested organizations.



She also organized a very successful speaker event at the Dundas Museum with Andrew Camani, author of "100 Hikers – 100 Hikes" during the winter to get people out and engaged in a different way besides hiking.

## 2020 Trail Maintenance Award – Daryl Keays

The Trail Maintenance award is given to an active BTC trail worker in recognition of their contribution over time to improve the trail experience in terms of quality and safety through their hard work, dedication, leadership, dependability, commitment and team work.

The recipient of the 2019/2020 Trail Maintenance award is Daryl Keays. Daryl is the proverbial Ever Ready bunny; he is here, there and everywhere. When not performing his duties as Trail Captain for Section E46A and B, Daryl is assisting hazard tree cutting as an IBTC qualified cutter and Zone E Coordinator. In addition, Daryl is involved with trail audits in the risk management program, has taken a lead role in assisting to update the trail worker's manual plus assisted the keep the TM&D workshop clean and orderly. In his free time? Daryl is also an avid hiker.



## 2020 Friends of the Trail Award – Greg Lenko – The Escarpment Project

This award serves to recognize individuals and community organizations that have made significant contributions to the success of IBTC. **Greg Lenko**, founder of The Escarpment Project has been a true friend of the Bruce Trail for many years.

Growing up in Hamilton he has been hiking along the Escarpment since he was 6 years old. A bit older he started running the Wentworth stairs for exercise, when they were still wood at the time. The Escarpment has always been an important part of his life. It was the Escarpment that brought him back home. In late fall of 2010 while hiking he noticed how much litter and debris was scattered/dumped and



decided to do something about it. He created a short film about the condition of it at Devils Punchbowl and posted it online inviting people to help clean it up. The video went viral and in April of 2011 a group of 75 - 100 people cleaned it up, removing two overflowing dumpster bins and 10 pickup trucks full of garbage. The cleanup has grown larger each year as more sites were added. In its 3rd year it became a not for profit corporation called the Escarpment Project. Since then, annually clean ups take place in escarpment areas from Dundas to Grimsby and have also included areas of Short Hills Park in St Catharines. Greg's efforts have led some volunteers to create their own clean up events such as; Hamilton's Beautiful Alleys clean up and Stewards of the Cootes. Future plans propose expansion further into Niagara as well as North to Orangeville or further. Greg's leadership and energy have certainly earned him the award as a Friend of the Trail.

## 2020 Publicity and Public Education Award – Marian Toth

In retirement [2006] I began hiking and became a member of the BTC, Iroquoia. I joined the weekday hiking group, The Good Companions, for something to do to fill my days, but before I knew it I was hooked, had finished the first 3 sections of the Bruce Trail, and there was no turning back. Between volunteer work with various groups, welcoming grandchildren into the family, and travel, I along with a hiking partner, completed the entire trail in October 2012. I was able to do so due to the terrific end-to-ends run by tremendous volunteers of the various clubs. My hope was to repay their generosity by volunteering for the BTC but I couldn't see a place where I could fit in.



Afterwards, I continued to hike weekly and locally. After a time I found some of that level of hiking too difficult. The original hike leaders I had hiked with were aging and leaving BTC hiking for the same reasons. It was disappointing to have no place to fit into, and sad to see past hike leaders have to leave.

So it was a pleasant surprise to read an article in The Iroquoian about the Education Walks being developed by Bronwen Tregunno. At this point I had become a member of 'Hamilton Aging in

Community', a group of community-minded mature adults and seniors in the Hamilton area who are committed to exploring and initiating approaches to flourish as we age. It seemed that our goals of building connections and developing learning alternatives fit in with those of the Educational Walks. Perhaps, this would be my opportunity to give back and volunteer with the Iroquoia Club.

I contacted Bronwen with my suggestion to join forces and she was open to discussing the possibility of working together. To date, we have held several informative walks, attracting large groups of seniors, some of their children and grandchildren, and people interested in the various topics offered. We have connected with experts within the realms of nature, the environment and local history who have acted as speakers for these sessions.

Through this Iroquoia BTC group, seniors are able to continue to be physically and intellectually active and involved in appreciating and advocating for the natural habits of the area.

### **Hike Award - Holly Sluiter and Vani Rouse**



Holly and Vani saw an opportunity to put their planning skills to the test by creating the Side Trail challenge. Vani created the beautiful badge, which was the second badge she created for the club. 42 people took on the challenge of hiking all of our Clubs side trails in 2019.

### **Junior Appreciation Award - Jillian and Ethan Leaker**

For their motivation and determination to clean up the Bruce Trail. Jillian and Ethan Leaker took it upon themselves to go out on a regular basis to clean up the area around the top of the Glover Mountain Side Trail in upper Stoney Creek. The following is from Jillian:

In the HWCDSB there is a community service commitment of 40 hours required before graduation. I wanted to do something with my hours that would relate to something I am passionate about. I care a lot about the environment and maintaining natural spaces. We are lucky to live really close to the Bruce Trail-the Glover Mountain Access is at the end of our property. It is such a beautiful area and it's a place where people like to gather or walk.

Unfortunately there are often times that litter and waste are left behind. Some people even dump their unwanted garbage there. We've found everything from tires to building supplies to used diapers discarded in heaps at the top of the trail. It is sad to see the trail marred by so much garbage and waste. After talking with my Dad he emailed the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Conservancy and asked if my brother and I could clean the access and trail as part of our community service. We connected with Gloria by email and she was really helpful.

My brother and I were shocked by the amount of garbage we were able to clear over several hours of work. It was a really good feeling to see the bags of contained garbage and to see the area looking so tidy. Over the winter we noticed the area has again become littered with debris and garbage. I am planning an afternoon with my friends once we are able to be out together to do another big clean up. I'm excited that they want to help too and be a part of keeping our area of the trail beautiful. I plan to continue putting in a few hours each week over the summer maintaining it. I really like that I am able to fulfill my community service hours while also being able to do something that is important to me so that others can enjoy the Bruce Trail!

