

Niagara Escarpment **ViEWS**

SPRING 2018 (MARCH, APRIL, MAY)

CELEBRATING
OUR
10th ANNIVERSARY
THROUGH 2018!

ANNUAL SPECIAL ISSUE ON GARDENS!

CALEDON'S PRIVATE GARDENS

HOW to **HELP**
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for L.M. Montgomery

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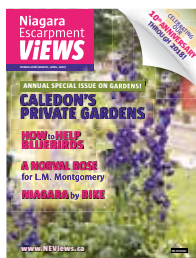
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Niagara Escarpment **Views**



Spring 2018

(March, April, May)

ON THE COVER:
LUPINS IN A CALEDON GARDEN
Photo by Mike Davis

FEATURES



16 Bluebirds of Happiness

Written by Gloria Hildebrandt



24 Defying the Heat in Caledon Gardens

Photos by Mike Davis Written by Gloria Hildebrandt



34 Cycle Tour Through Pelham

Written & photographed by Helen Powers



42 Children's Garden of the Senses

Written & photographed by Rosaleen Egan

DEPARTMENTS

- 5 View From the Editor's Desk:
Beauty For All Senses
- 6 Readers & Viewers
- 8 Events Along the Rock
- 12 Gazette
- 14 Worth the Visit:
Old Vintage Cranks

- 32 Featured View:
**Bruce Peninsula
National Park**
Photo by Mike Davis



- 50 Road Trip: **Creemore**
- 51 Eat & Stay Along
the Niagara Escarpment

- 59 Coming Events
- 60 Subscription Form
- 61 Spotlight on Performance
& Theatre in our Communities
- 63 Map of Where to Get Copies
of *Niagara Escarpment Views*

COLUMNS

- 56 View of Land Conservation:
**Our LaCloche
Mountain Legacy**
By Bob Barnett
- 58 The Gift of Land:
Chorus Frogs
By Gloria Hildebrandt

All editorial photography by Mike Davis except where noted.



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Conservation
Halton Award, 2014
to Mike Davis in
Media/Blogger
Category

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Beauty For All Senses



people out and expect them to get any photos of Bluebirds at all, let alone excellent shots of males, females, young and nestlings. For this feature we turned to the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society. They keep an active Facebook page with the most charming photos. Their followers came through for us in a big way, overwhelming us with gorgeous photos of Bluebirds of all ages and both sexes. The shame was that we couldn't

use all that were offered! Thanks to their skill and generosity, we have produced a wonderful piece that we hope will help Bluebirds thrive.

Gardens Special Issue

The Bluebird feature is not the only beauty in this issue. Spring is our annual special issue on gardens, and this time we show you some highlights of Caledon Horticultural Society's 2017 garden tour. We even managed to meet and photograph some of the property owners and gardeners, all so dedicated to creating art through plantings.

In addition, Rosaleen Egan followed her nose and eyes to the Children's Garden of the Senses, which is a renovation of the existing Lucy Maud Montgomery Heritage Garden in Norval. To learn more about this destination garden that's worth visiting, immerse yourself in Rosaleen's lavish feature.

Cycle Niagara

If touring the countryside is more your thing, Helen Powers reveals a route you can enjoy by bike, motorcycle or car. She took the route through Pelham and brought back the most luscious photos of Niagara in springtime. Whatever wheels you use, pack a picnic and head out to revel in all the fragrances this spring in Niagara.

Free Tickets to Canada Blooms

Niagara Escarpment Views is again a partner sponsor of Canada Blooms, the annual herald of spring in the form of an exhibition of garden installations, landscaping and outdoor living.

This year we have 20 pairs of tickets to give away, valued at \$20 per ticket!

First chance at tickets will go to subscribers of *Niagara Escarpment Views*. Email me at editor@NEViews.ca or call or text 647.680.2834

with your name and phone number. We'll enter you in the draw for free tickets.

If you aren't yet a subscriber, you can become one by using the form on page 60 in this issue or on our website at www.NEViews.ca/subscribe-now. Let us know you're interested in the tickets and we'll give you a chance.

Let us know by March 2, when we'll notify the ticket winners. You will be able to pick up the tickets at the Canada Blooms office, Salon 107.

Gloria

Gloria Hildebrandt

P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.

Subscribers can
**WIN A PAIR OF
FREE TICKETS
TO CANADA BLOOMS**
valued at \$20 each!

This magazine is known for beautiful photography, and not just on each centre spread, which since the beginning has presented an impressive landscape from somewhere on or near the Niagara Escarpment. We have had people tell us they collect and display the centre pages from each issue.

We also give our photographic features all the space they deserve, too. The comments we hear most often are how beautiful, spectacular or amazing our photos are. Mike Davis does a lot of our photography but we are also pleased to publish the good work of professional photographers and freelancers. We especially value seasonal, original photography which can require doing the work up to a year in advance.

There are times however, when we can't assign anyone to get the photos we want. This was the case with our feature on Ontario Eastern Bluebirds. You just can't send

Let us know what you think!

Write us at editor@NEViews.ca or
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More Online!

Keep in touch with Escarpment news between issues at our website. We have unique content not seen in the magazine, and you can leave comments in response. See www.NEViews.ca.



Niagara Escarpment Views is on Facebook as:
www.facebook.com/N.E.Views



We have just received your 10th anniversary edition of NEV !! Congratulations to you both! We always enjoy your magazine and look forward to receiving it. What a huge undertaking for just 2 people and to think you have shaped this magazine into something truly memorable is something to be so very proud of! Well done !!

Isabel and John Cruise,
Limehouse

I wish you a happy 10th anniversary. I hope you like the magazine for this issue. It's incredible 10 years have gone by since I was at your opening for the magazine at your place. So congratulations.

Ian Patel,
Prodigy Graphics, Vaughan

I am one of "those people." The ones that write that they are sending in their subscriptions because they are tired of missing issues. I usually get the summer & fall ones when I'm vacationing in the Bruce, but miss the winter ones and sometime, the spring ones. Keep up the great work.

Mary Jane Bajdo, Etobicoke

We are huge fans of the magazine.

Clare Johnston, Fergus

I thought you might enjoy hearing this...my husband, who never waxes enthusiastically about anything that doesn't have a tail and two wings (retired airline pilot/glider pilot/tow pilot) came up to me this morning with your magazine and said "I JUST LOVE THIS MAGAZINE"...and pointed to the article on John Muir, encouraging me to connect with Dufferin Museum and suggesting they get copies...as John Muir travelled through our area at one time...and I have bought the book by Anthony McMichael on climate change which was reviewed in your magazine. It will be for our winter's reading ahead. I'm more than happy to support your magazine with my advertising dollars for my Bed & Breakfast.

Sandy Small Proudfoot,
The Farmer's Walk, Mono

I loved the 10th anniversary edition. I love that your magazine allows me to enjoy and learn about my own backyard AND places that I haven't been yet that are close enough to visit. I am MOTIVATED to visit more Escarpment places! Congrats to you and Gloria on your publishing success. It isn't an easy business to start, maintain or grow!

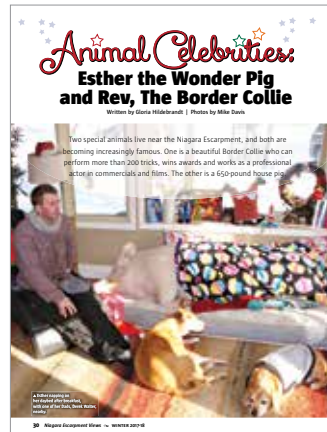
Lois Fraser, Georgetown

Thanks for a great read, I got the latest issue and read it cover to cover!

Sue Sibley, Limehouse

I thank you and your team for all of your help and amazing support. We believe you have a beautiful magazine with terrific articles.

Jennifer McBride,
Peel Hardware & Supply, Caledon



I got the magazine and read my article- it is wonderfully done, i did not expect it to be that big! Thank you so very much for taking the time out to come and meet with us. Beautiful pictures too!

Maddisen Phelan,
owner of Rev, the Border Collie
Georgetown



Picture on page 9 states the ship is in lock 7. The ship is in lock 3.

Susan Gibson,
via www.NEViews.ca

Editor's note: We stand corrected! This is indeed Lock 3.

Working with *Niagara Escarpment Views* has been a great asset for us. People sometimes think it is our in-house magazine.....so, many thanks for the news and all the good work!!

Bob Barnett,
Escarpment Biosphere
Conservancy

I was so thrilled to win two tickets to The Royal Winter Fair, from *Niagara Escarpment Views*. My sister and I had a wonderful day and evening at The Royal last Friday. It was the 95th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. We had great seats for the evening event of the horse show. How spectacular that was, such beautiful horses from Welsh ponies, Hackneys, Arab and carriage horses. This was especially special for me, as I am from England and a horse rider in my youth. I am enclosing some photos for you and your readers, so you can see the lovely costumes, colours and coaches. Thank you again for this special day.... Love your magazine...

Diana J Barker, Hamilton

We really enjoyed the Fair and especially the Horse Show with the diversity of competition. Thanks again.

Chris and Bonnie Spence,
St. Catharines



It's a wonderful review and I've received many comments about it from across Ontario during my book tour.

Mark Zelinski, author of
Heart of Turtle Island:
The Niagara Escarpment and
Canada's Royal Garden



We loved the feature you did on our tour. This year will be our 25th anniversary.

Nancy McKibbin Gray,
Carnegie Gallery
Annual Garden Tour

I live in a senior building & found your beautiful magazine in the laundry room. I am getting a subscription for myself & one for my brother & his wife.

Allison Webber,
Hamilton

We actually had an enquiry for a group trip from St. Catharines for *Fiddler [on the Roof]* so we know that the ad is being read along the Escarpment!

Mark & Nanci Llewellyn,
Globe Productions

Let us know what you think!

Write us at editor@NEViews.ca or

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EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



▲ Carriages with four horses being judged at the 95th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and Horse Show which ran from Nov. 3 to 12 in Toronto.



◀ On Nov. 17, Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) held a ground breaking for an office expansion to its Forestry Operations Centre. The centre houses CVC's nursery and naturalization programs, plus invasive species, reforestation and forest management teams. From left: CVC's deputy CAO and director of watershed transformation Mike Puddister, CVC vice chair and mayor of Township of Amaranth Don MacIver, Erin councillor John Brennan (back), mayor of Town of Caledon Allan Thompson, Caledon councillor Johanna Downey and CVC CAO Deborah Martin-Downs. Photo submitted.

► Singer-songwriter Sarah Harmer performed "Escarpment Blues" and participated in the Nov. 16 meeting of Tyandaga Environmental Coalition in Burlington. Of concern was the Meridian Brick intention to quarry shale in Carolinian forest containing at least three endangered species on 35 acres of natural heritage land in the Greerbelt system. Also speaking at the meeting were from left, Roger Goulet of Protecting Escarpment Rural Land, David Donnelly, environmental lawyer, Gordon Miller, former Environmental Commissioner of Ontario and Lynda Lukasik of Environment Hamilton.



EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



▲ Erin unveiled its shop windows on Nov. 17 during the annual Christmas Window Wonderland.



► Niagara Falls became an illuminated wonderland during the annual OPG Festival of Lights from Nov. 18 to Jan. 31.



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■ EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



◀ Williams Mill hosted Joy of Art Night Market in Glen Williams on Nov. 23.

▼ Members of Parliament Pam Damoff and Karina Gould, and Andrew Balahura of Halton Region joined John Gerrard in Habitat for Humanity's Halton-Mississauga's Burlington ReStore on Dec. 15 to announce a national housing strategy. Photo submitted.



◀ At Glen Eden On Dec. 22, Jayme Leslie of Georgetown, in orange, was declared the one millionth visitor to Conservation Halton in one calendar year.



EVENTS ALONG THE ROCK ■

Photos by Mike Davis except where noted.



▲ Kyle Horner of Wild Ontario, together with volunteers, presented four different birds of prey to the Halton/North Peel Naturalists Club on Jan. 9. This Great Horned Owl, Einstein, is one of the non-releasable birds used for education by the Guelph-based organization.

▼ Her Honour the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, on Jan. 14 helped celebrate a preview of a photographic exhibit at Lakeview Water Treatment Plant, Mississauga. The exhibit, called Morphology, displays photographs of a wetland that is being built on municipal landfill at the shoreline of Lake Ontario. The intention is to create a new conservation area that will attract fish and birds while allowing the public access to the waterfront. Morphology will open to the public in March.





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Kirk MacGregor, World-Class Caver

Written & photographed
by Mike Davis

Kirk MacGregor, long-time president of Toronto Caving Group (TCG) commemorated its 50th anniversary by repeating a trip to the very cave where the group had been founded on June 3, 1967. On this trip, the group did not make it into the cave. Kirk had felt ill on the hike and was unable to continue. It was later discovered that he had suffered a mild heart attack at that time.

I knew Kirk since 1985, when I went on a beginner caving trip that the TCG ran at Rattlesnake Point/Mount Nemo on the Niagara Escarpment in Milton. Kirk was recognized as an expert caver in almost all aspects of spelunking including rope climbing, multi-day underground expeditions and exploring in many places of the world. He was an extraordinarily good trip leader. He would go at the pace of the slowest in the group, but could out-cave nearly anyone, meaning he could endure the toughest conditions,

mud-filled corridors, spiky rocks, tight, twisty passages. Although rather awkward socially above ground, he was totally dependable and your best friend below ground, conveying good judgement and minimizing mistakes through his extensive experience.

He had a tremendous respect for the fragility of cave systems where a slight touch would destroy them forever, and a respect for the inherent dangers, where slowing down or stopping the trip prevented injury. Once the TCG was on live television on a segment for Breakfast Television, and Kirk was leading reporter Steve Anthony in a crevasse cave at Rattlesnake Point. Kirk was pointing out a delicate formation called Flowstone. Steve wanted to handle it, but Kirk yelled "Don't touch that!" which may have been awkward, but was proper cave conservation etiquette.

Kirk was an innovator with caving gear, creating much of his own safety equipment. I recall going to Bridge Day in West Virginia, where one day a year cavers can lower



▼ Kirk MacGregor, left, president of Toronto Caving Group, on a June 3, 2017 day trip to Hope Bay Cave located near Lion's Head on the Bruce Peninsula.

a rope from the bridge and rappel/climb the roughly 800 feet. Kirk showed his homemade, rather unorthodox seat harness at a pre-event mandatory inspection. The inspector stared in shock at the ball of webbing with strange stitching and said "What the hell is this!" He looked up, saw it was Kirk, knew he was totally competent and let him through. Kirk showed his skill at unconventional rappelling

by going down the entire length of rope head first!

Kirk was the driving force behind TCG and president for most of the time. He spent countless hours organizing trips and meetings, logging equipment and facts, testing lights and batteries and GPS accuracy.

Kirk died suddenly on Dec 5, 2017 of a heart attack. He was 71. He will be missed both above and below ground.

Leaders in protecting and preserving Greenbelt lands



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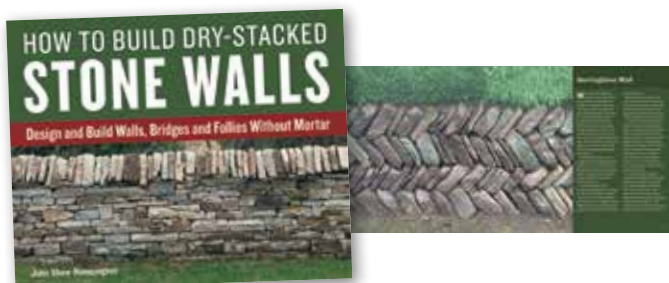
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Books for Outdoors



GROW WHAT YOU LOVE By Emily Murphy

Filled with "garden porn" photography, this lovely how-to book not only shares how to grow edibles, but includes recipes to use your harvest in appetizing ways. Guaranteed to get gardeners itching to plant new varieties.



HOW TO BUILD DRY-STACKED STONE WALLS By John Shaw-Rimmington

A book as impressive as dry-stone walls themselves. Full of photos of completed walls, bridges and follies, as well as detailed instructions for building everything from foundations to batters to top copes. The text is so clear and encouraging, you might even think you can do this yourself.



HOW TO RAISE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR KIDS By Carol Pasternak

Everything you ever wanted to know about the Monarch Butterfly and more! Are you aware that males have a black spot on each hind wing? And that in early summer, Monarchs mate when they're three days old? Helpful photographs on each page show what to look for. Not just for kids.

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■ WORTH THE VISIT

Old Vintage Cranks

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► Look for this sign on the building around the corner at 49 Willow St.



▲ Kozi sidecars available to be attached to motorbikes.

Getting Political: Questions for the Provincial Candidates

The Niagara Escarpment runs through part of southern Ontario but its western and eastern portions extend into the United States. The Canadian part of the Escarpment is the responsibility of Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, which means our provincial political representatives should be concerned about this natural wonder. The biggest part of the Escarpment, from Niagara Falls to Tobermory, has been designated a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, which surely must make it of interest to our federal politicians as well.

The provincial election will be on **June 7, 2018**. For complete information about election procedures, see www.elections.on.ca

We invited some community groups and each major political party to suggest a question to ask your candidates before you make a final decision about how to vote. Their questions are below, arranged in alphabetical order according to the name of the organization. Please note that these questions were submitted before the resignation of Progressive Conservative Party leader Patrick Brown.

What are you prepared to do to ensure the Niagara Escarpment's natural and life-sustaining features are ensured for the enjoyment of the next Seven Generations living here in Ontario? **Robert Patrick, Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment** www.niagaraescarpment.org

What steps will your government make to meet Ontario's Biodiversity Initiative (part of the 193-country International Agreement) to protect 17 per cent of Ontario's land by 2020? We are currently at 4.41 per cent in southern Ontario where most of the rare and endangered species are located. **Robert Barnett, Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy** www.escarpment.ca

What would your party do to protect rural communities being threatened by the adverse social and environmental impacts of aggregate pits and quarries, and how would you level the playing field for communities forced to defend themselves from these threats? **Graham Flint, Gravel Watch Ontario** www.GravelWatch.org

Will your party say, categorically, that it will not allow fracking in Ontario? Yes or no. **Green Party of Ontario** www.gpo.ca

What are you/is your party going to do to permanently lower my hydro bill? **New Democratic Party of Ontario** www.ontariondp.ca

What is the position of each political party on the importance of protecting and preserving land within the Greenbelt from sprawl and development? **Ontario Liberal Party** www.ontarioliberal.ca

What does your Party commit to doing to restore the declining trust in the Ontario government, and what specific changes will your Party implement to make life better for families? **Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario** www.ontariopc.com

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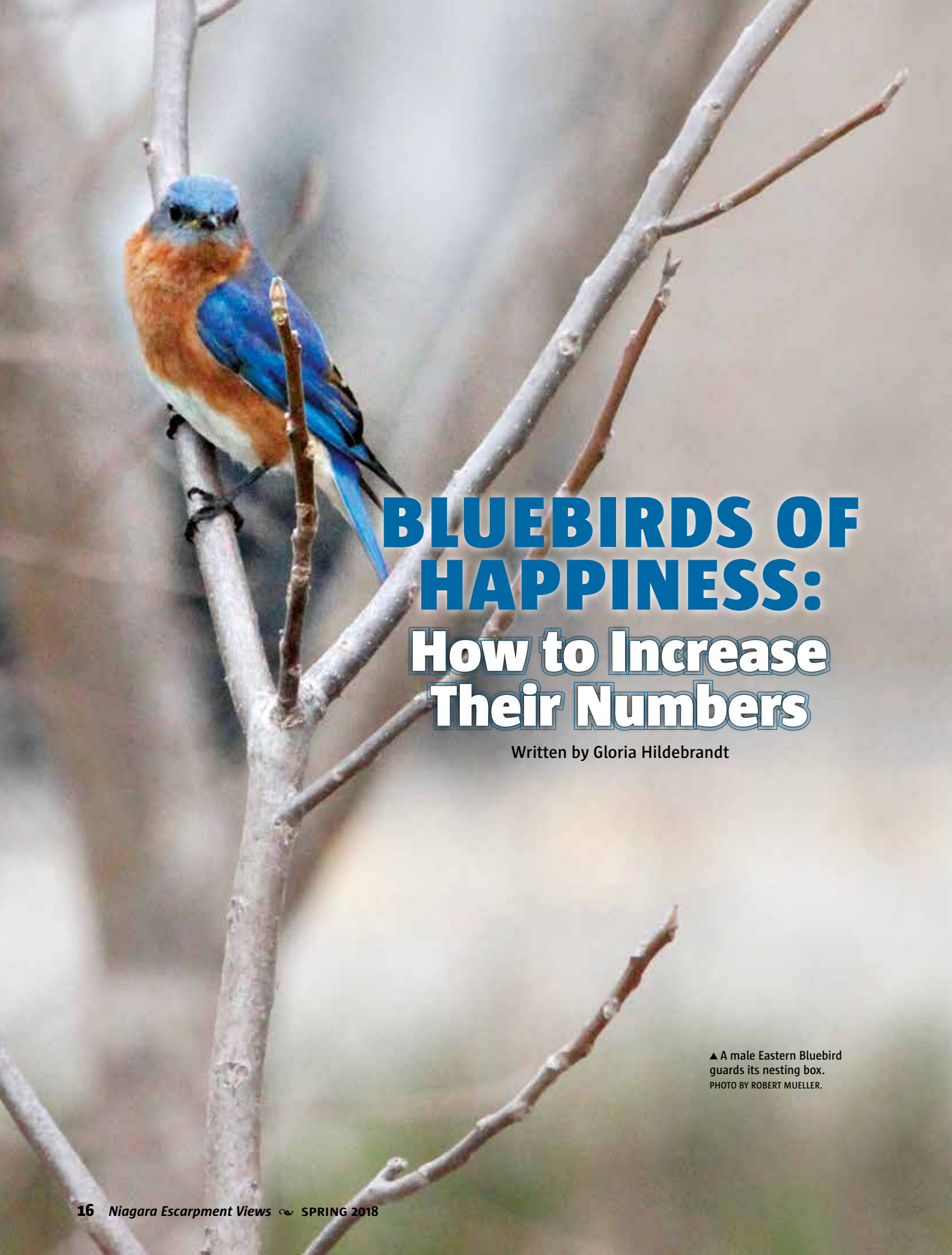
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A male Eastern Bluebird is perched on a thin, bare branch. The bird has a bright blue head and back, a rusty-orange breast, and a white belly. It is facing left, looking towards the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus mix of light and dark tones, suggesting a natural habitat.

BLUEBIRDS OF HAPPINESS:

How to Increase Their Numbers

Written by Gloria Hildebrandt

▲ A male Eastern Bluebird
guards its nesting box.
PHOTO BY ROBERT MUELLER.

Eastern Bluebirds are one of the most beautiful birds in Ontario and can be found all along the Niagara Escarpment and even further north, up to Moosonee. At one time their numbers were declining, but proper nest box programs have helped the population recover. What's vital to know however, is that improper nest boxes do more harm than good, and Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society (OEBS) wants you to remove them if you're not prepared to manage them properly.





▲ Female Eastern Bluebird with her first-fledged chick of 2015.
PHOTO BY PATTY GALE.

◀ Young fledglings in Burlington. PHOTO BY OEBS MEMBER BARBARA CANNEY.



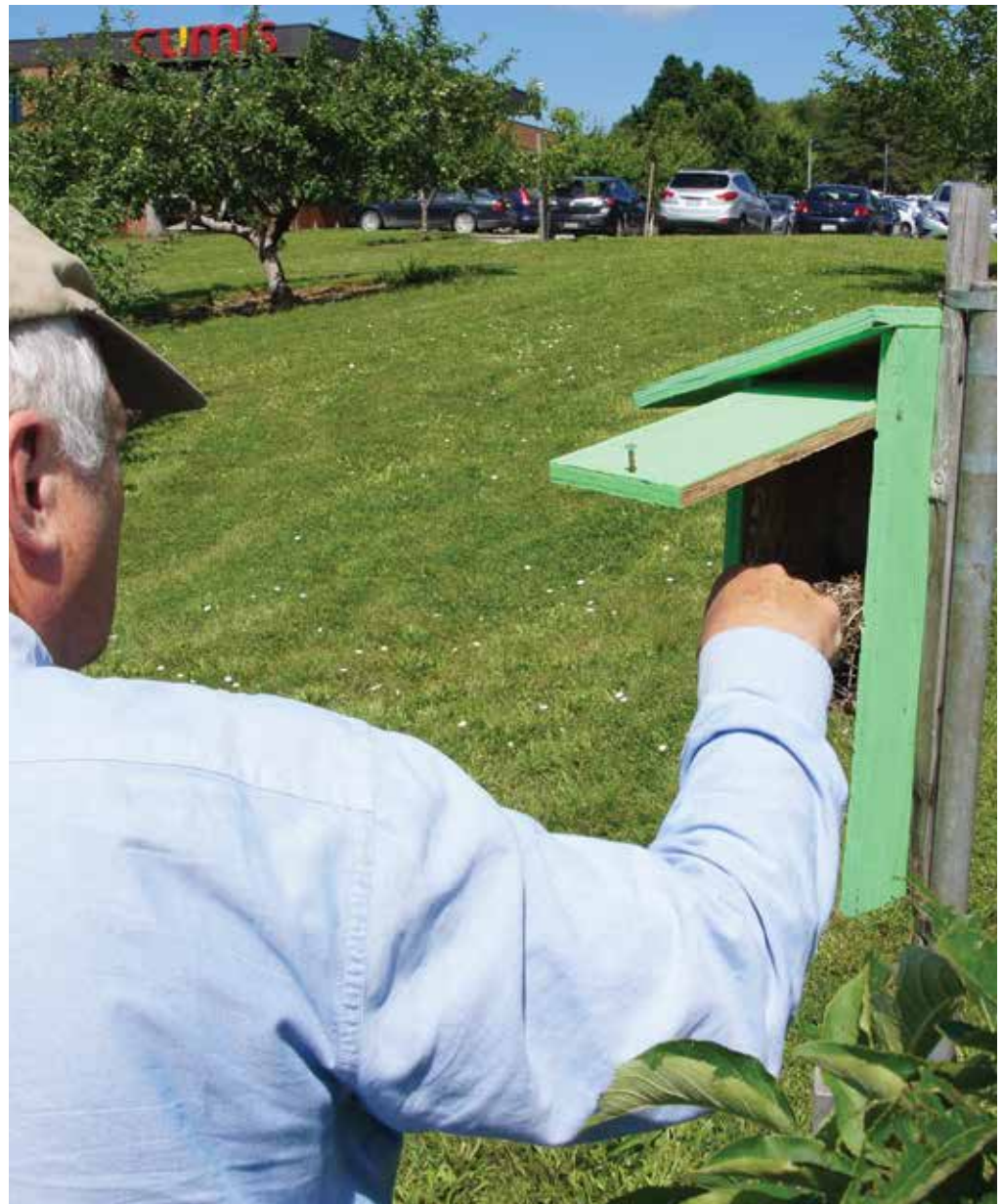
Bill Read, a former employee of Canadian Wildlife Service,

where he managed Bluebirds, founded OEBS 30 years ago. He is the current president and actively manages almost 400 nest boxes on his own.

"OEBS will not endorse any box on a tree or fence post," Bill declares.

The reasons are clearly stated in the OEBS brochure: "Bluebird trails with boxes

located on fence posts can have a negative effect on bluebird populations. Raccoons, after finding food in a box (a female bluebird or young), will visit other boxes in the area and predate those as well. It is up to you to stop this from happening. Since natural cavities are located on a random basis, only that one nest would be lost. If you are not able to protect your boxes, you should consider removing them in order to



► Bill Read, president and founder of Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society, cleans out nesting boxes at Cumis Insurance Co. in Burlington. There are 11 boxes on the Cumis property. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

help the bluebird population. Unmanaged poorly located boxes continue to hurt the bluebird population.”

There is another, more difficult part of a proper bluebird nest program. House Sparrows will destroy bluebird eggs and kill both young and adults in a nest box, and so must never be permitted to rear their young on a bluebird nest box trail. They must be humanely killed or relocated at least 50 km away.

“If you cannot bring yourself to remove these alien predators,” the OEBS continues, “please remove your boxes as you are not helping the bluebird population.”

“I catch the sparrows and wring their necks,” says Bill. “Surgical dislocation is humane killing.”

Helping bluebirds reproduce is more involved than it would seem. Bill gets specific when he adds “People build far too many boxes and

don’t know what to do with them. The easiest thing is building the boxes but that’s only five per cent of it. The rest is locating boxes, monitoring them and recording what is in the nest box. We record egg totals, young that have hatched and how many fledged.”

Proper Nest Boxes

If you are able to do all that is necessary to manage a nest box program, OEBS and its website oebs.ca has

plenty of information about the correct ways to build and install boxes, including construction notes, nest box plans and cutting patterns.

“We do not recommend ventilation in any boxes,” says Bill. “In May we can get bitterly cold weather. The biggest factor affecting bluebird survival success is weather. The cold in May really kills them. Face the boxes to the south.” Box location and installation is the next step.

“The important thing is putting boxes on metal poles with predator protection,” Bill warns. “Not on fences, not on trees. Those are just predator highways.” The OEBS website has a “hall of shame” with photos of improperly constructed or installed nest boxes that are worth studying.

Car grease smeared on the poles protects against dangers like raccoons which will devour the birds and eggs, and ants which can make nests inside the boxes and bite the birds. There are snakes that can get through the grease, and two species have protected status in Ontario, which means that they must not be harmed and must be allowed to take the bluebirds. They are Black Rat Snakes and Eastern Fox Snakes. There are special baffles that can be installed on the poles to prevent them from reaching the nest boxes.

OEBS has solutions and options to deal with other threats, including House Wrens, which as a protected migratory bird must not be interfered with, Deer Mice and woodpeckers, which can all hinder successful breeding by bluebirds.

Bluebird Behaviour

The bluebird nesting season is from April to August. A nest which has had bluebirds fledge will be flattened and fecal matter will be completely removed. If bluebird pairs mate successfully and rear young, they will remain together.

“After bluebirds fledge, parents feed them for about a week,” says Bill. “They like low grass where they can pick insects off the grass.” They can be fed mealworms from a feeder, especially when they’re nesting. Their main food in winter is Sumac trees.



► Adult male Eastern Bluebird singing.
PHOTO BY ED MCASKILL.

Bluebirds will return to the same site year after year, even reusing the same boxes. Bill knows this from his thorough records and the banded birds which return.

“Not everyone can band,” explains Bill. “You have to have a banding permit. I personally have banded about 8,000 bluebirds over 40 years. I band adult bluebirds and their young, and recapture previously banded adults as part of a study to look into reproductive success and longevity.” Bluebirds have a short lifespan, on average about two years.

“The longest bird for me is seven years,” Bill continues. “I have had three seven-year-

old birds. Last year [2016] all three nested successfully.”

Tree Swallows

Like bluebirds, Tree Swallows are cavity dwellers that will nest in birdboxes, but they aren’t a problem for bluebirds. Putting up twin boxes is a good idea, so one is available for each species.

“I like to have Tree Swallows and bluebirds together,” says Bill. “They make good neighbours. They provide protection for bluebirds by harassing predators.”

Tree Swallow don’t remove fecal matter in the last two days before fledging, so this signals when the swallows are about to leave the nest.

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▲ Male Eastern Bluebird.
PHOTO BY ROBERT MUELLER.

► Bill Read with his car full of
bluebird nesting box supplies.
PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

◀ Male Eastern Bluebird in
Campbellville.
PHOTO BY OEBS MEMBER KAREN ROOT.

They can live twice as long
as bluebirds, about 3.6
years, according to Bill.

"I've had over 300 Tree
Swallows killed by House
Sparrows," he says. "They're
both competing for a spot."
Last summer, Bill estimated



► A properly greased pole supports this approved nest box which was successfully used by Eastern Bluebirds.
PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.





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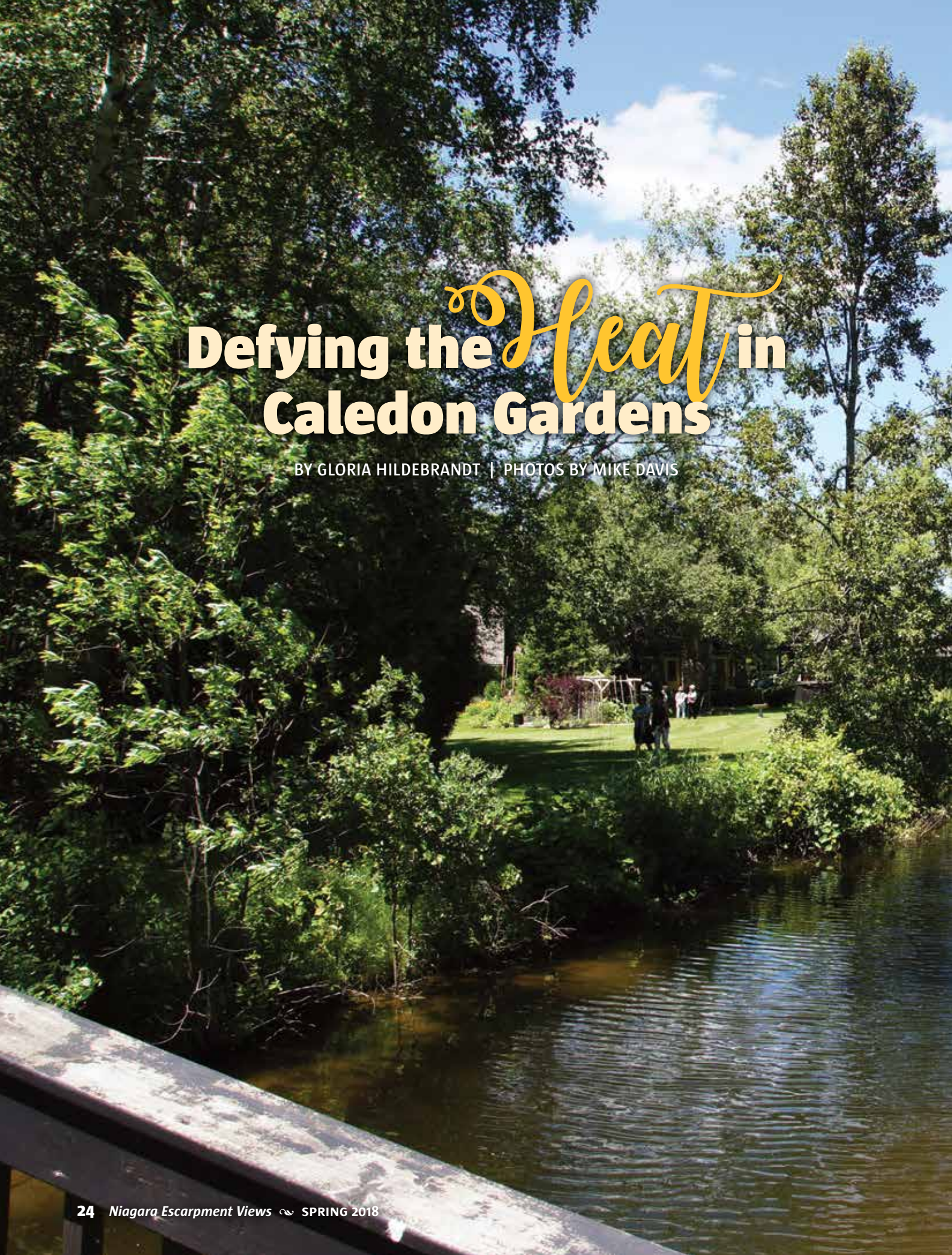
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that he was going to have 400 bluebirds and 1,400 Tree Swallows fledge successfully. Those interested in becoming more involved in Eastern Bluebird nesting programs can join OEBS

for \$15 for an annual family membership.
Contact Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society through www.oeps.ca, Facebook or 519.582.4382 **NEV**



Defying the *Heat* in Caledon Gardens

BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT | PHOTOS BY MIKE DAVIS



▼ View to the house and gardens from the arched bridge over the narrow part of the pond on Paul and Debby Ross's Caledon country property.

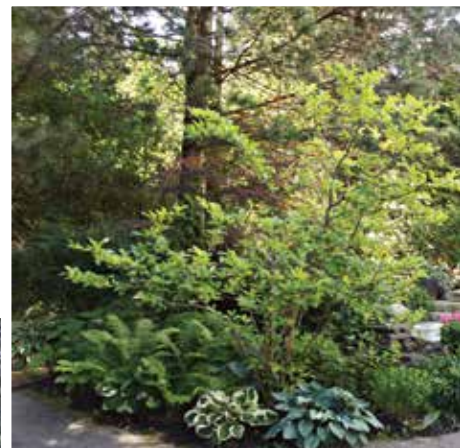
Hot and sunny weather makes for a challenging garden tour. There's a lot of walking and photography is difficult. Harsh light causes glare and strong contrasts. The best days to photograph gardens are overcast, lightly rainy days. Plants love the moisture and seem to pick up visibly. People however, tend not to want to tour gardens when wet. Yet rain or shine, the Caledon Horticultural Society held its tour last year on July 8 and here are our favourite photos from the eight lovely gardens on offer. There was a good mix of country and suburban locations, providing inspiration and the stuff of dreams for everyone.



◀ Helen Reid's manicured front garden includes an inviting seating area.

▲ Drystone walls along the driveway at Larchfield Farm on Heart Lake Road show the power of repetition of form and colour.

► A lush garden frames the front of Kathi Jablonski and Ian Amos's house. Behind, the five-acre forested property includes a large pond, perennial gardens and a long arbour covered in grapevines.



◀ Flowers, shrubs and mature trees frame the swimming pool at the back of Christine and Fred Webster's house. A gazebo beckons from the edge of the lawn.



▲ It's easy to be impressed by flowers. This neat vegetable plot at the rear of this Castlewood Court property features lettuces, tomatoes, beans on stakes, kale, zucchini and potatoes.



► Paul and Debby Ross's irrigated vegetable garden is beautiful and productive.





▲ Sue and Frank Gooderson's fishpond is just steps from their house and garden.



▲ Sweet Williams are a favourite in this Autumn Drive garden. Maria, the owner, scatters seeds around almost every large tree.



▲ Richly planted horse troughs brighten the terrace at the side of the large old farmhouse at Larchfield Farm.



▼ Dark blue Delphiniums stand tall in this Autumn Drive garden.







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◀ Debby and Paul Ross in the Clematis-framed arbour entrance to their vegetable plot.

► Christine Webster's front garden is lush with Stella D'Oro Daylilies, Heuchera, Salvia, Alliums, Peonies, Hydrangea, Irises and more.

SOME OF THE *Garden Owners*



◀ In her meticulously tidy garden, Helen Reid does all the work herself.

► Kathi Jablonski and Ian Amos have only been in their property for a couple of years, but have added about 50 plants and many small animal sculptures to the gardens.



▲ Frank and Sue Gooderson spent 12 years creating their gardens from scratch, including the fishpond, Japanese-style bridge, waterfall and stream, gazebo and arbour.



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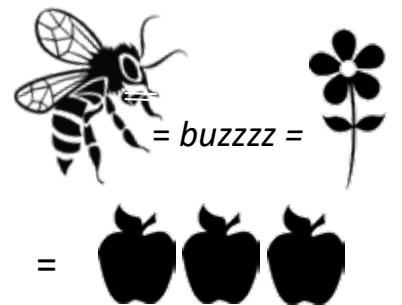
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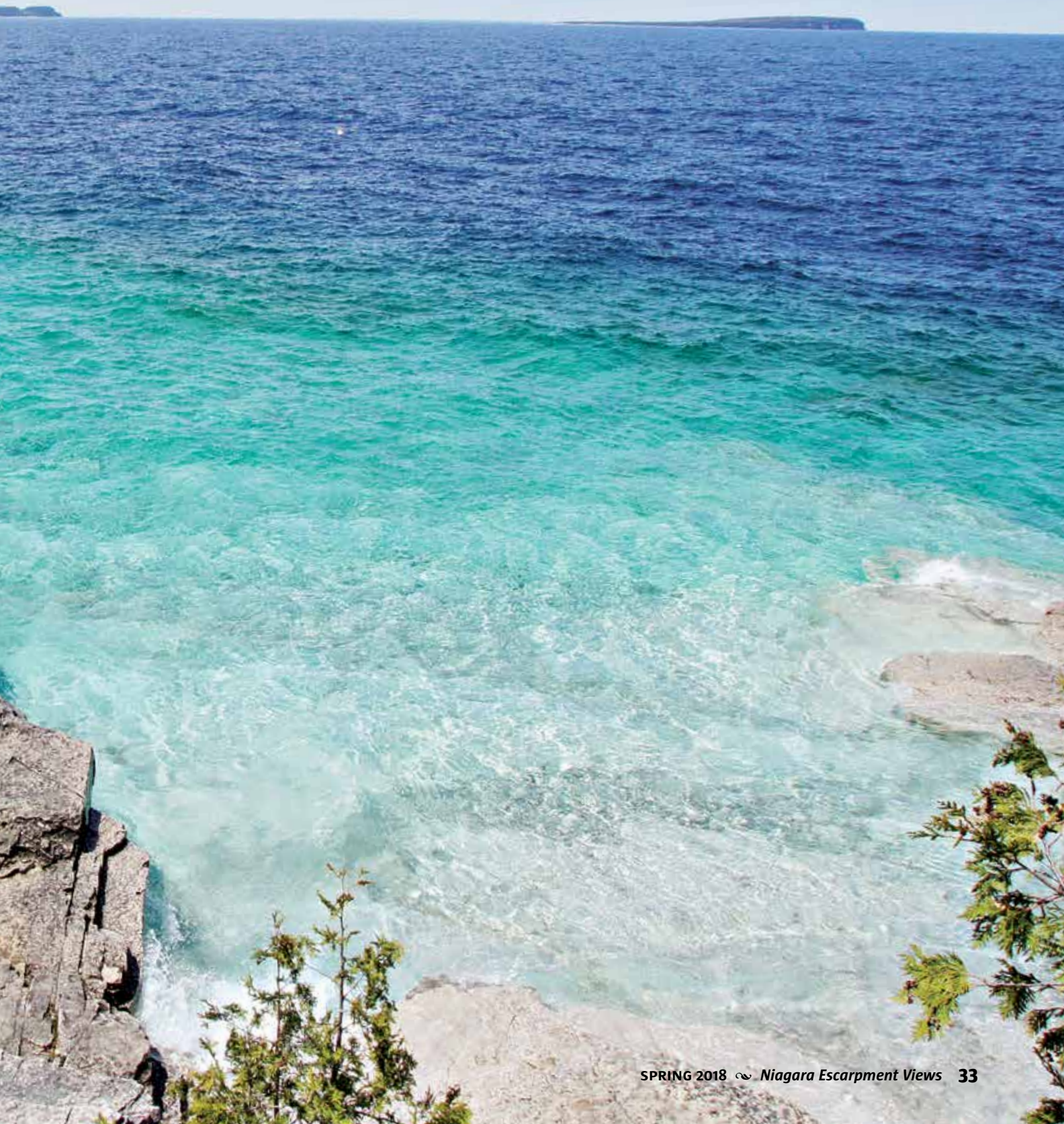


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Bruce Peninsula National Park

PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

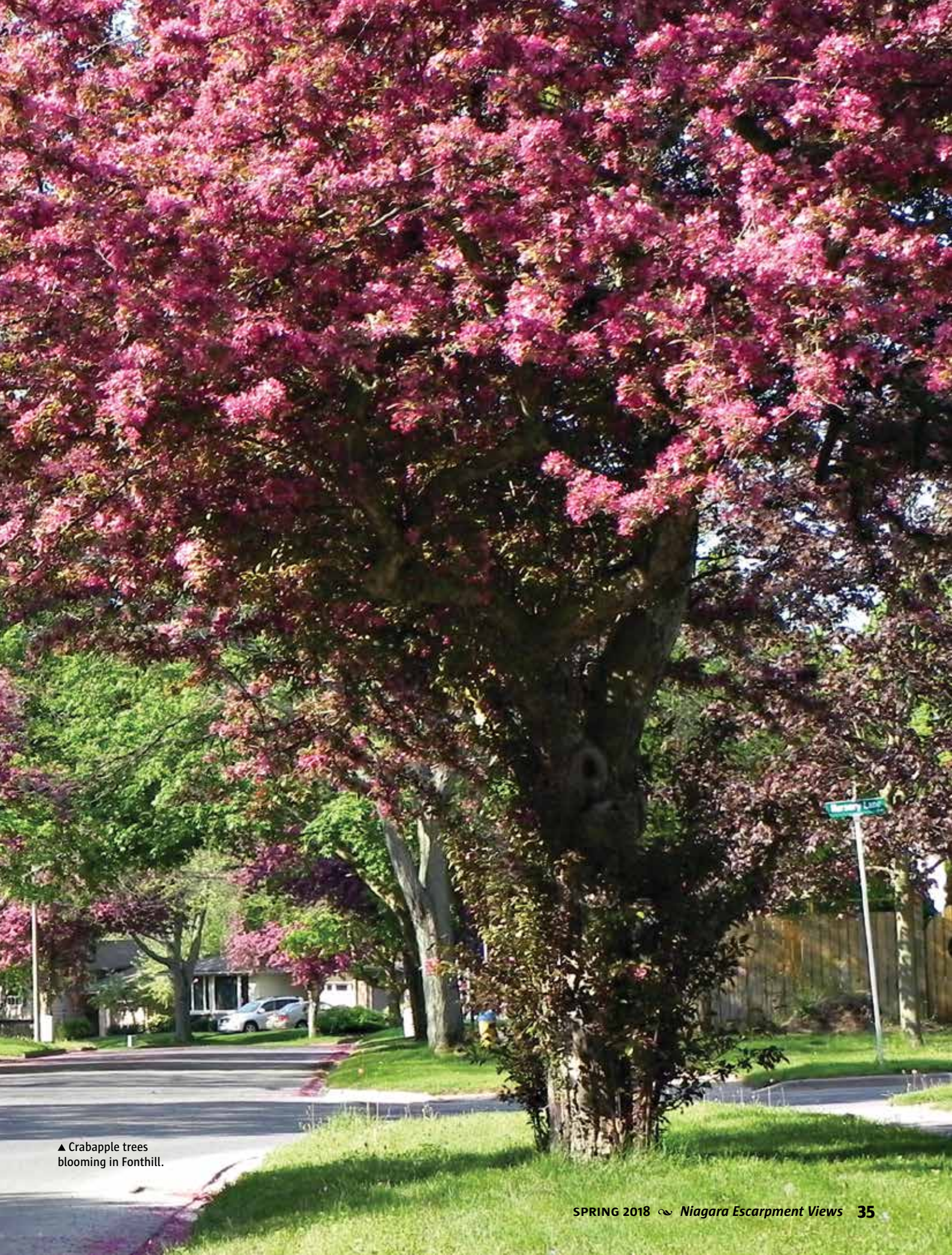




Cycle Tour Through Pelham

WORDS & PHOTOS BY HELEN POWERS

Niagara Region has an abundance of interesting places to see and increasingly, visitors are exploring the area on two wheels rather than four. With the growing popularity of cycling tourism, a local organization has established a network of ways to reach your destination. Their route through the Town of Pelham has much to offer and because it sits on top of the Niagara Escarpment, there is no need to pedal up that significant slope!



▲ Crabapple trees
blooming in Fonthill.

▼ Cycling makes it easier to stop and enjoy views like this one from Lookout Point. Toronto and Niagara Falls can be seen on clear days.



On a dreary January day, I was inspired by the beautiful landscapes on the Niagara Cycling Tourism Centre's website to ride the 34-km Pelham route in the spring. Unfortunately, a series of events shelved my cycling adventure. I did manage to drive the route when the orchards were in bloom and all that beauty made me determined to pedal through Pelham later in the year.

To help plan a cycling visit,

the Centre's website provides helpful information on bike rentals, shuttle services, repair companies, and accommodations that cater to cyclists. Venture Niagara, an organization that supports economic development activity, is behind this extensive online resource.

"People have a strong desire to come to Niagara for cycling because the area is so flat," says Susan Morin, business development manager with Venture Niagara. "It is a great

opportunity for first-time cyclist holidays and an entry point for people who are new to this type of vacation. Often tourists will plan a three or four-day ride for their holiday."

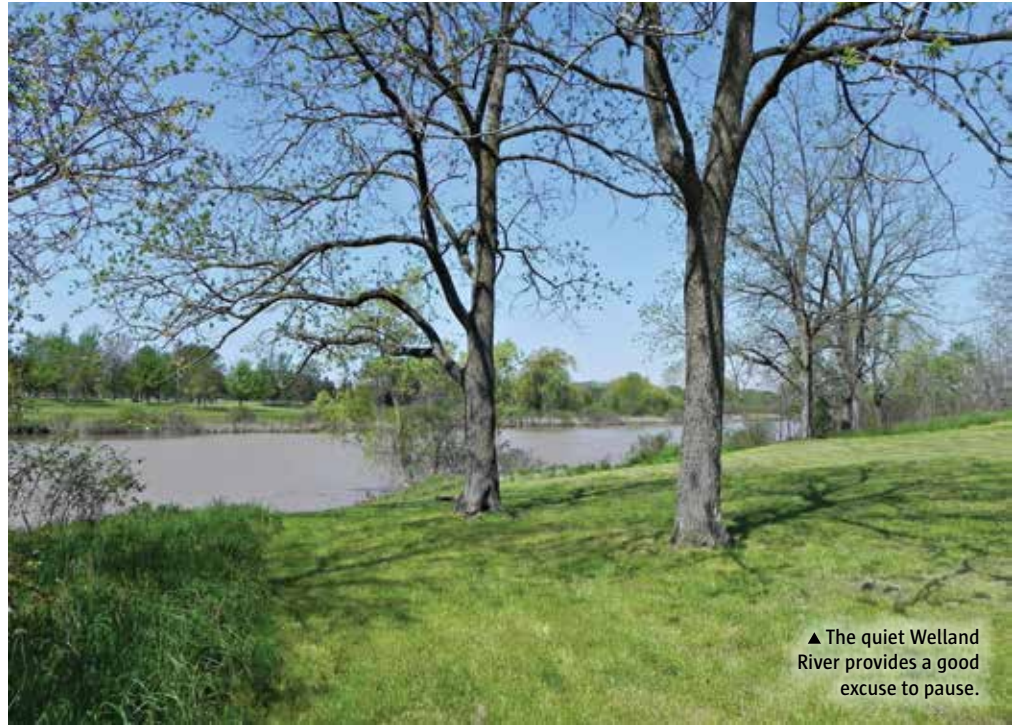
Many business owners are eager to join the bike-friendly business network, a program that Morin helps to implement. It began as a pilot project in 2014 with four municipalities that were designated as "bike friendly" by the Share the Road Cycling Coalition. There are now 64 active business

members in the region who display a window decal that certifies a minimum provision of drinking water, a device-charging station, washrooms, and bike parking.

"More local businesses are getting on board with cycling tourism," says Morin, "and there is a growing interest in qualifying for the certification."

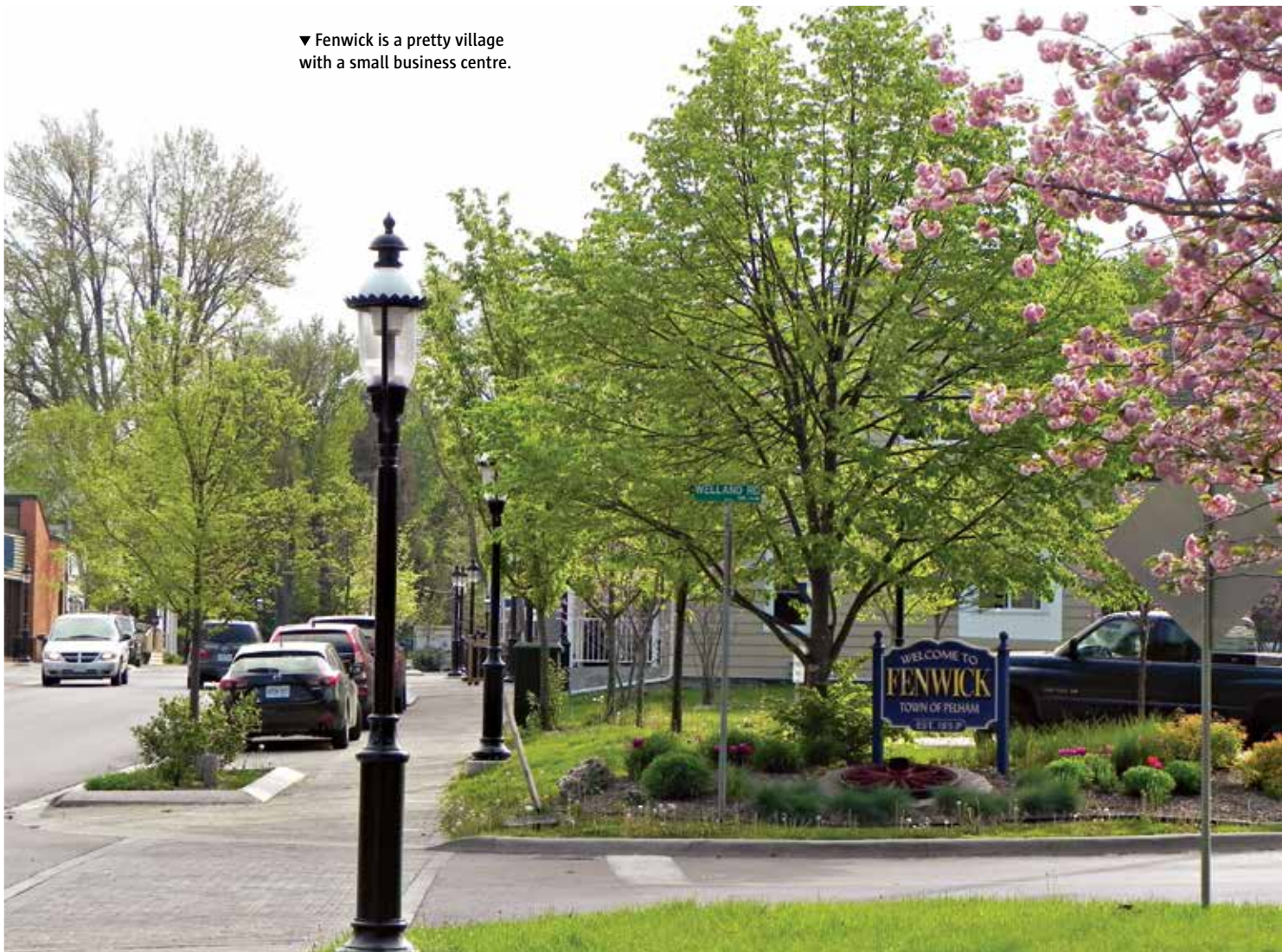
Five Villages

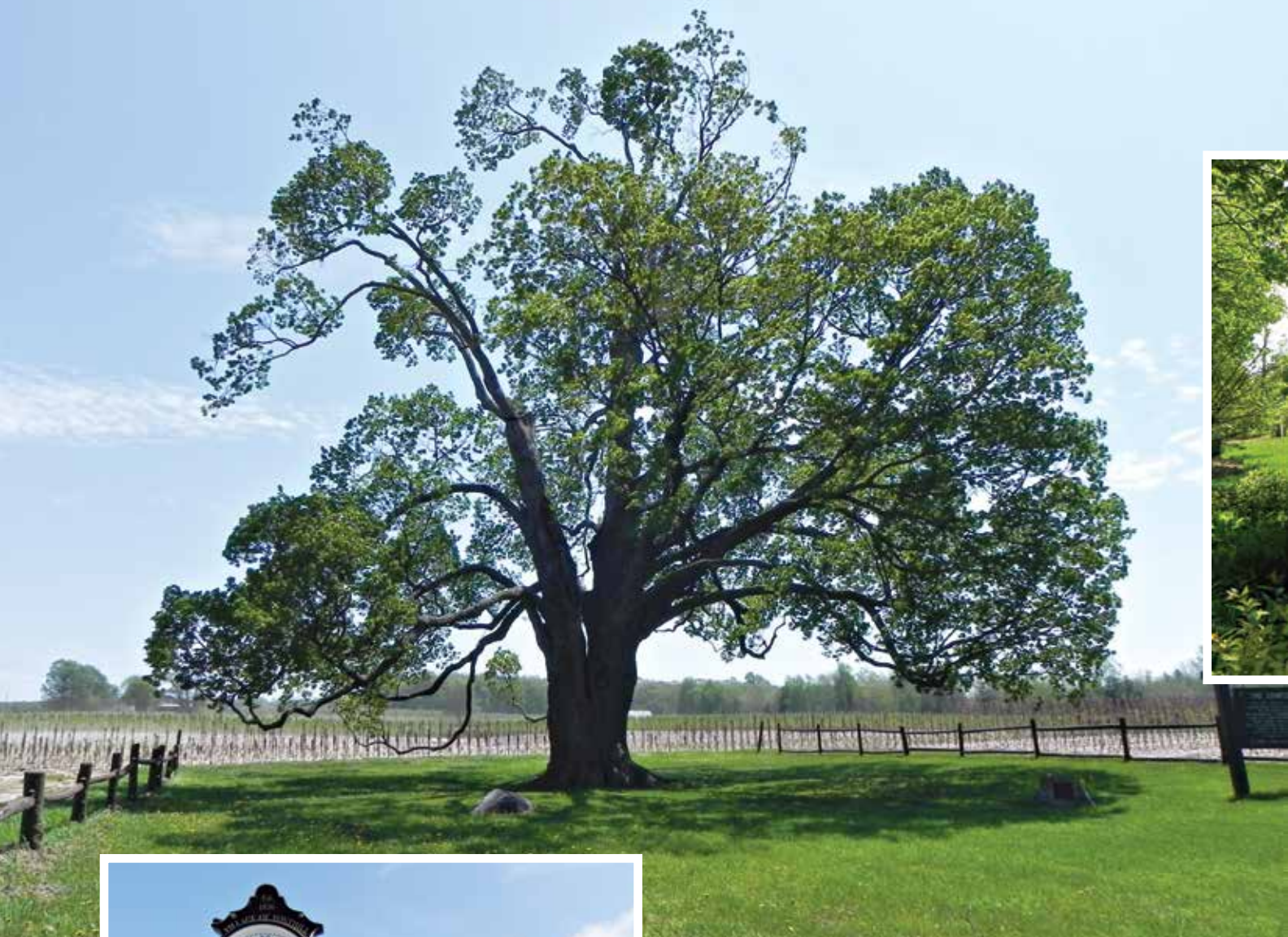
Located between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, the Town of Pelham is made up of five



▲ The quiet Welland River provides a good excuse to pause.

▼ Fenwick is a pretty village with a small business centre.





◀ The shops of Fonthill, the largest village in Pelham, draw more vehicle traffic.

▲ This famous Sugar Maple is more than 500 years old and was named after the Comfort family.



historic settlements: Fonthill, Fenwick, North Pelham, Effingham, and Ridgeville. Given that the route is a complete loop, cyclists can begin wherever they like, however the Centre mentions that Harold Black Park in the south end of Fonthill is a good spot to begin.

If you choose to cycle the loop clockwise and head south, flat rural roads lead away from Fonthill down to the Welland River. Historically this was a busy commercial waterway but now it is rather quiet

with recreational boating. A heritage monument across from O'Reilly's bridge explains the succession of bridges built here since the original wooden construction in the 1840s. Cycling further west along River Road, there are parks and trails that offer good picnic stops and resting places.

The route then turns north through many farming properties to the pretty village of Fenwick which has a small centre of businesses, lovely older homes, and graceful trees framing the streets.



▲ In addition to the Comfort Maple, North Pelham is known for one of the oldest churches in the area, First Presbyterian Church.

► Cyclists welcome here.



Continuing north and then east brings cyclists to North Pelham and a natural feature that pre-dates Canada itself. The Comfort Maple is estimated to be over 500 years old and is thought to be the country's oldest Sugar Maple. Huge branches reach over a small plot of land managed by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) who monitors its health very closely. The land was given to NPCA by the Comfort family who acquired the land

in 1816 from Laura Secord's family. Although beautiful, this is not a good starting point for the cycle route due to a small parking area and a rather narrow driveway.

A short ride east brings you to one of the oldest churches in the area. The First Presbyterian Church of North Pelham was established in 1828 and their first pastor was paid in bushels of wheat for a year of employment. Across the street, a large and lovely orchard borders the church cemetery, whose families



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are commemorated in the names of several local roads.

Although the Pelham route is mostly flat, the next section on Tice Road is an exception. The map has warnings of several short and steep hills with narrow sight lines over a distance of a few km. On the plus side, there is an abundance of blooming lilacs along the roadside so, as you carefully trudge up hills, the aroma of flowers will be lovely.

At the east end of Tice Road is the highest point of

land in the region, located at Lookout Point Country Club. With an elevation of 252 m, on a clear day you can see the skyline of Toronto to the north and Niagara Falls to the east.

The route then returns to Fonthill, the largest town in Pelham and the busiest in terms of road traffic. Cyclists are led through new and old neighbourhoods on the way to the town centre which features many shops. Next, a quiet section of parkland trail leads to a subdivision of

gentle hills and colourful crab apple blooms that create a lush canopy overhead and drifts of flowers along the road. Soon after, the loop is complete at nearby Harold Black Park.

Break Up The Route

As an average cyclist who is neither terribly fast or slow, my drive of the route left me confident I could handle the terrain. My bicycle is a hybrid of road and mountain bikes, light in weight with ample gears to handle slopes.





▲ With cool weather and orchards in bloom, spring is a great season to cycle.

◀ The fragrance of lilacs rewards your pedalling through North Pelham.

However I decided that doing 34 km in one day would be too much for me. When I return to visit Pelham on two wheels, I will break the route into two parts; perhaps one loop along the north half to visit the village centres, and one loop along the less habited south half.

I am positive I will not be cycling the Greater Niagara Circle route which runs east of Pelham. At over 140 km long, this is definitely out of my league. To help more ambitious cyclists with that large distance, a very popular ferry service called Bridge-it has been running from May to October across the Welland Canal and it saves a great deal of time.

Three years ago, Susan Morin helped a cycling tour company, Vélo Québec, with their "Grand Tour Desjardins", a six-day ride with over 1,700 cyclists. During their trip, she chatted with the visitors and

received overwhelmingly positive feedback about cycling in Niagara.

"So many people spoke about coming back again, some with more members of their families, because they enjoyed it so much," she says.

The Niagara Cycling Tourism Centre outlines many routes with a diversity of distances, terrain and features to choose from. Because cycling uses up calories, this is an excellent excuse to indulge in delicious meals and treats along the way. When cycling you see things up close, feel less like a tourist, and appreciate the local history, culture, and beauty.

*Helen Powers is a writer from Hamilton who spends a lot of time outdoors and enjoys exploring new places. Her last story for Niagara Escarpment Views was "City of Waterfalls," Autumn 2015. **NEV***

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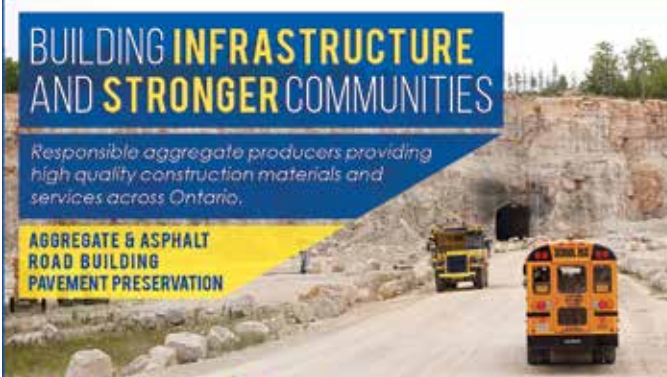
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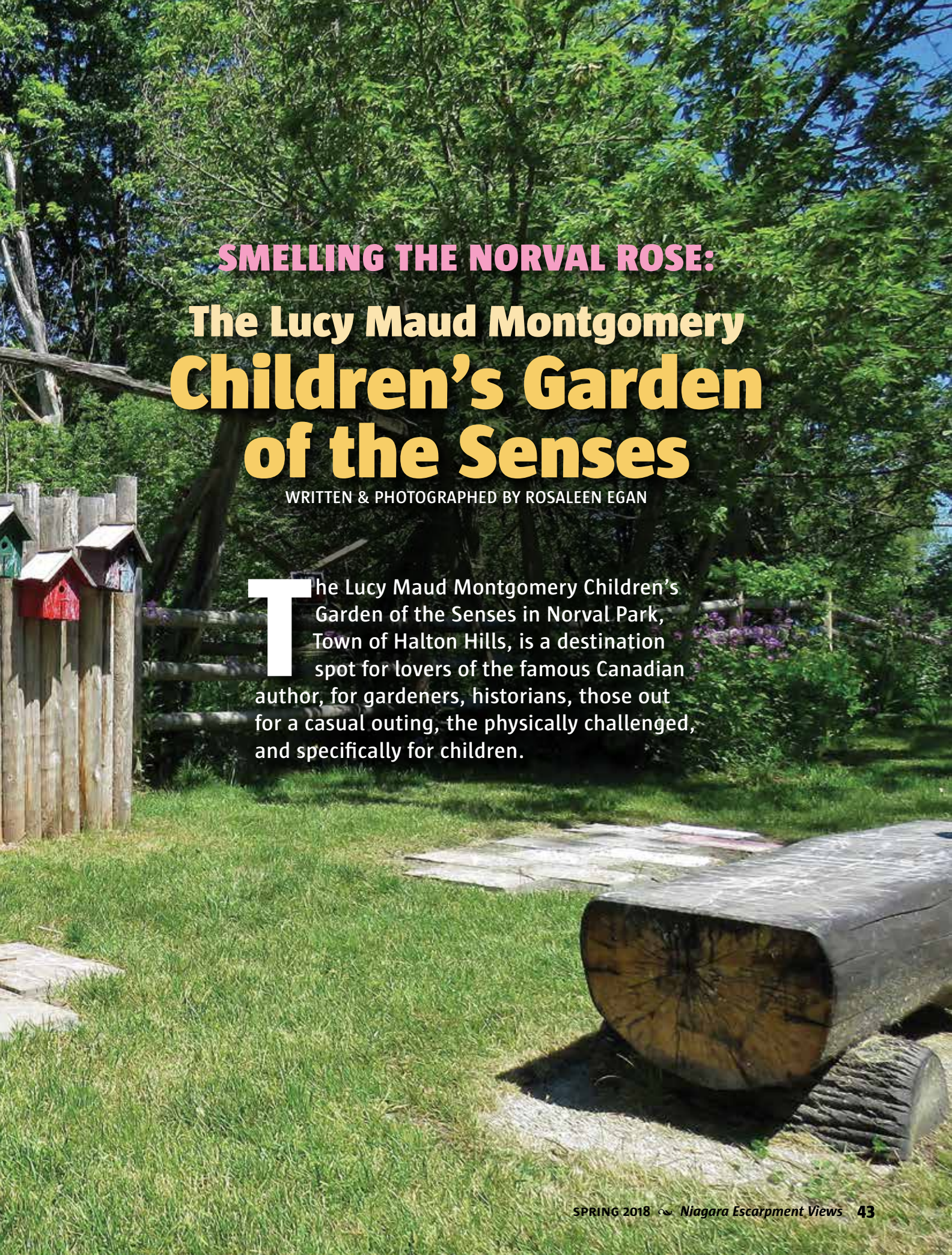
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▲ LM Montgomery Heritage Garden and Children's Garden of the Senses in Norval offers both passive and interactive experiences. This is one of two hopscotch areas, with the colourful palisade wall with bird houses in the background.



SMELLING THE NORVAL ROSE:

The Lucy Maud Montgomery Children's Garden of the Senses

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROSALEEN EGAN

The Lucy Maud Montgomery Children's Garden of the Senses in Norval Park, Town of Halton Hills, is a destination spot for lovers of the famous Canadian author, for gardeners, historians, those out for a casual outing, the physically challenged, and specifically for children.

The garden is dedicated to L.M. Montgomery, who vividly describes in her writings the experiences of being in nature, gardening, and the impact on the senses. The author of *Anne of Green Gables* and many other works, was married to a minister and lived in the Presbyterian manse in Norval from 1926 to 1935.

Working with the Norval Community Association (NCA) Eileen Foley, landscape architect and project manager, designed the garden to be “a fun-filled interactive sensory garden for children to regain contact with nature through the use of the human senses. As well, the garden is intended to be a restorative garden for individuals of all ages and abilities that will promote human well-being through sensory experience.”

Foley continues, “Sensory experience is achieved through journey and exploration and by providing for both passive and



▲ Each of the sensory nodes in the garden includes a bronze sign indicating the sense most likely to be stimulated. Signs include an image of the body part, words in standard English and in Braille.

▼ This sign for the Montgomery Heritage Garden has faced Guelph Street for many years before the Children's Garden of the Senses was added. The long border includes traditional plantings of peonies and flowering bulbs.





◀ This sculpture was donated to the NCA by the family of Ted and Ruth Thompson. The waterfall garden stimulates both sound and touch.

▼ People portraying LM Montgomery's famous character Anne Shirley and her friends played checkers in the children's activity area.

interactive activities.”

The garden is accessible and includes Braille signage, making it a place for everyone. Visitors are welcome to explore through a main pathway that interconnects secondary pathways, allowing entry into each of the five nodes. Easing into a node, visitors experience the garden around them.

The nodes vary in shape including a keyhole design, a semi-circle and a spiral. Material underfoot changes to subtly stimulate senses and indicate change particularly to visitors with sight challenges. Each node features a particular sense or senses. There is a sign at child/wheelchair height suggesting what sense may be most scintillated. A nose on the sign indicates smell, for instance.

Choosing the plants and their placement in the garden was a huge task, says Foley. Beyond suitability for the particular sensory node, other things were considered such as sunlight and soil needs, size, colour and aesthetic when used in combination with other choices.

Over 4,900 plants and 450 plant genus/species/cultivars are planned for the



garden as it continues to grow, providing a diversity of colour, form and texture, as well as scents, sounds, and tastes.

Foley explains the garden is a public destination park of the Town of Halton Hills, but its creation and development as the Children's Garden of the Senses, is an initiative of the NCA.

The official opening of the garden was in September 2016. Children's and senior's programming had already

begun in June of that year.

“We had approximately 1,200 children in June, primarily JK and SK school children,” Foley says. “The children learn about the edible garden and taste some plants, pot up their own bean seeds to take home, explore the sensory gardens including the woodland and waterfall gardens, role-play designing and building their own garden as a team, and enjoy playtime in the activity area.”

Activity Area

This area includes rocks to read or climb on, a checkerboard table and stools, two hop scotch areas, a palisade wall with bird houses, a log bench for sitting or balancing on, and an accessible sand box. There are children's planter boxes with edible gardens, a children's garden shed and accessible picnic table with colourful yellow umbrellas.

In 2017, the NCA launched a horticultural therapy program/garden herbs program for seniors. "This program encourages active and passive physical activity and being engaged in the garden," says Foley, "enjoying the sights, fragrance, sounds, textures and tastes, and making a herb craft."

Norval Park and the gardens include an interpretive gazebo, benches, and two statues donated by community members, of a girl reading a book. It also has a working analemmatic sundial, which is designed to let a person's shadow fall on the hour marker. This sundial was dedicated in 1997 to honour Norval's men and women who served Canada in time of war. There is also the original school bell from the Norval Public School, as the three-acre property once belonged to the Esquesing School Board.

Foley says, "It is really wonderful to see young families, children from the adjacent daycare centre, seniors, and community residents at the garden strolling through the sensory gardens, relaxing in the plaza, hopping through the woodland, exploring the waterfall, and playing in the activity area."

In 1992, with the help of a Canada 125 grant, the NCA introduced the L.M. Montgomery Heritage Garden in Norval Park. The Heritage Garden included popular flowers introduced to Canada by 19th-century settlers, flowers and shrubs from some of the village's gardens, and many of L. M. Montgomery's favourites.

Kathy Gastle, president of the NCA says, "As all gardens do, the L. M. Montgomery garden remains a work in progress. Visitors to the

garden can learn much about its heritage plants. The heritage plants are interspersed within the new plants and many more plants still need to be planted."

Norval Rose

A perfect place is yet to be found for what is known as the Norval rose, a rare specimen of great age sometimes called the Steeple Rose. In March 2017, the Lucy Maud Montgomery Society, an umbrella committee of the Heritage Foundation of Halton Hills, purchased the former home of Montgomery, and created a brand for the





▲ The bell was rescued by the Norval Women's Institute on demolition of the school that originally stood on this property. A cairn was built in 1967 to hold it, and housed a time capsule that was opened in 2017. Other memorabilia was added, and it was resealed.

◀ As the summer progresses, the spiral garden erupts in red, yellow and purple Cone Flowers, Salvia and more to stimulate the sight, while the sound of grasses swaying and the crunch of the gravel under foot stimulate hearing. This garden incorporates the vertical sundial, an existing feature of the LM Montgomery Heritage Garden.



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◀ Under a row of Norway spruce trees planted by Norval Public School students in the early 1940s stands the LM Montgomery stone with the following quotation: “Norval is so beautiful now that it takes my breath. Those pine hills full of shadows - those river reaches - those bluffs of maple and smooth-trunked beech - with drifts of white blossom everywhere. I love Norval as I have never loved any place save Cavendish. It is as if I had known it all my life - as if I had dreamed young dreams under those pines and walked with my first love down that long perfumed hill.” From *Selected Journals of LM Montgomery Volume 3 1921-29*, ed Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, Oxford University Press, 1992.

▶ At the Canada 150, Norval-on-the Credit event on June 3, 2017, Kathy Gastle (left) and Carolyn Martin of the Norval Community Association received recognition for their outstanding volunteerism. They were presented with a Canada 150 pin by MP Michael Chong, and a certificate of thanks from MPP Ted Arnott.

future LM Montgomery Museum and Literary Centre which includes the Norval Rose.

Gastle expresses the ongoing need for community volunteers to maintain the gardens. The NCA will plant a tree in memory of lifelong resident and dedicated volunteer, David Carter, this spring to honour his “unwavering dedication to village life.”

There are other opportunities to volunteer with NCA special events, art shows and the annual Montgomery Christmas, by calling 905.877.7059. Monetary donations specific to the Gardens can be made through the Town of Halton Hills.

Norval Park, including The Lucy Maud Montgomery Children’s Garden of the Senses, is situated on Guelph Street, or Highway #7 in the Village of Norval, Halton Hills. The park entrance is off Mary Street. The park is a destination in itself. Other sites of interest in Norval include the Credit River, Willow Park Ecology Centre, and the Presbyterian manse.

*Rosaleen Egan is an independent journalist, photographer and playwright near Alliston whose last feature for Niagara Escarpment Views was “Orangeville’s Street Art: Enhancing Community,” Summer 2017. Rosaleen blogs on her website: rosiewrites.com. **NEV***



▶ Made of Credit River stone, this Analemmatic Sundial was completed in 1997 to honour men and women from Norval who served their country during war. When you stand on the appropriate month inscribed on the stone slab, your shadow points to bronze numbers representing watch time and true Norval “sun time” on the low elliptical wall.




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ROAD TRIP: Creemore

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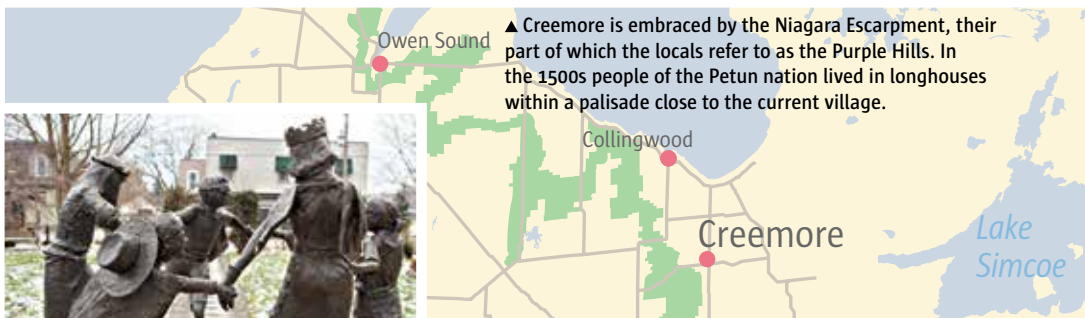
▲ A four-building complex on Mill St. now houses Creemore Springs Brewery, which prides itself on producing a small selection of beers with no additives, preservatives or pasteurization. Free tours and tastings are available every day.



▲ Home Hardware is right on the main drag of Mill St., with parking at the rear.



▲ Cardboard Castles is a children's toy store that celebrates the basics of play by specializing in old-fashioned wooden toys. There is another location in Orangeville.



▲ With a large art gallery on the main street, Creemore attracts plenty of artists. This work, *The Creemore Children's Dress-up Dance*, was created by sculptor Ralph H. Hicks.



▲ Creemore Foodland serves the wide community beyond the village. In the village are also a farmers' market, bakery, specialty food shops and restaurants, including Sovereign Bistro & Grill.

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- Creemore Vintage Festival *In May*
- Creemore Valley Classics *In July*
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- Creemore Children's Festival *In August*
- Creemore Festival of the Arts *In September*
- Christmas in Creemore *In December*

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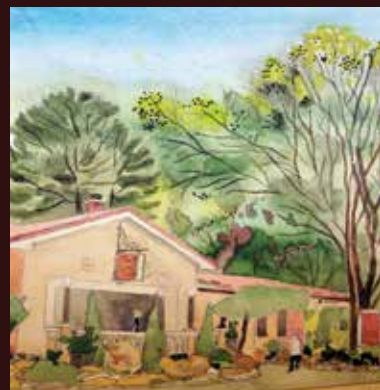
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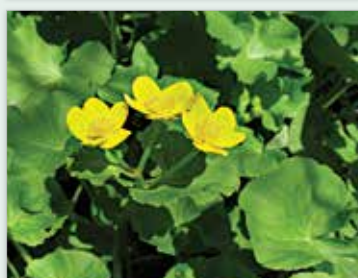
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Our LaCloche Mountain Legacy

Written & photographed by Bob Barnett

Do you have an iconic place? For me, the height of the LaCloche Mountains on the way to Manitoulin from Espanola is just that. Where you first see the Island, Highway 6 climbs way up, then there's the spectacular view of that white mountain and the lakes below. Now we're trying to buy it from Vale so thousands of people can get out of their cars and climb to the top.

The route to the summit is a challenge. You pretty much have to plan each step, but it's not climbing. You just need a good grip on your shoes to handle the angle of the rock. The surfaces are ground smooth by millennia of glaciers. A few trees grow in cracks and stand stark against the sky. As you get higher, glimpses of lakes make you want to get to the top. Finally, the foundations of an old fire tower announce that this is the highest place where rangers watched 30 km in each direction. The rounded top lets you wander around for a 360-degree view to Manitoulin, Georgian Bay, the North Channel and over Charlton and Frood Lakes.

Group of Seven

It's no wonder the Group of Seven chose this very peak to paint the view so often. Then there are all the paintings of the mountain from various angles, usually with the lakes in the foreground. Franklin Carmichael had a camp on Charlton Lake and invited his friends up to paint. The various Group of Seven paintings, now worth millions, are safe, most in museums. Now we have a once-only chance to protect a mountain that inspired them.

INCO bought this land

years ago and has extracted silica from the nearby Lawson Quarry to smelt nickel. INCO sold to Vale and, fortunately, Vale has declared this mountain surplus. Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) has offered \$158,000 for the 235 acres. Now we have to find the money for the land and associated costs. Our members have been very generous so far; we've raised 10 per cent of the money in the first month. There is a long way to go, but we'll get there with the help of old and new supporters and local residents.

Not only is this a great piece of scenery, but you can help us protect 3.5 billion-year-old mountains once as high as the Rockies and one of the oldest mountain ranges on Earth. We have 12 rare species recorded here including Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Cougar, three turtles and three more birds. These are the same Killarney features protected by Ontario Parks and First Nations almost all the way to Blind River. This is one of only two properties now needed to close the only gap in that long band of conservation. Our effort to close the gap started nine years ago when we worked with the Red Deer Village Association to accept their 52-acre trail corridor, and the third-last missing property about three km west of Willisville Mountain. Let's protect the whole thing!

We feel strongly that people will make this a highly visited nature reserve. Our Cup and Saucer, far from Highway 6, is visited by more than 10,000 people a year: likely the top tourist attraction on Manitoulin and certainly one of the top 10 sites in northern Ontario. I forecast that even more people will stop here.... for the exercise....for the

view....for the right to say they got to the top. **But we have to buy it first.** And for that we need your help. You can help us protect a signature part of Ontario. Your acre costs \$700. After your tax savings that's only \$420. And your gift will last for more than the seven generations our First Nations consider when making decisions.

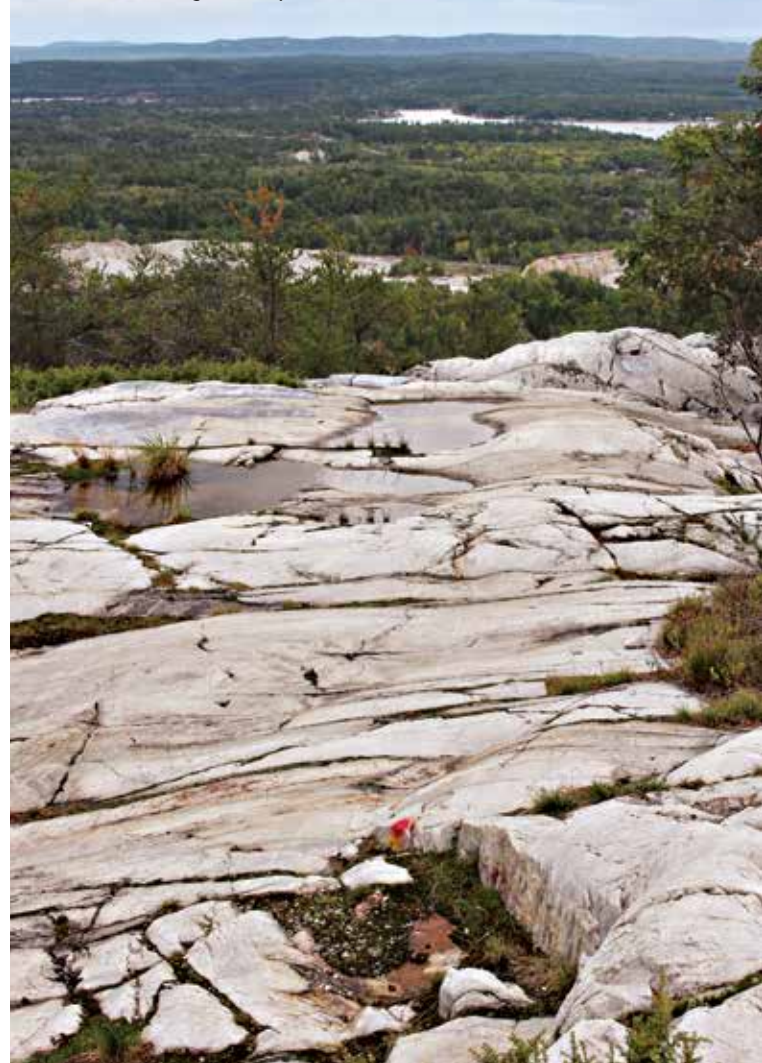
Why This Land

Why is EBC interested in buying this property? EBC's mandate is to create nature reserves in the area of the Niagara Escarpment. Few realize that the Escarpment

is not just the sloped bit at the edge of the ancient sea but the entire ecosystem out to Lake Huron, thus including all of the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island. The delimiter of the ancient sea was the much older LaCloche Mountains which forced the edge of the sea and the Escarpment to turn west. Protecting an Escarpment buffer zone, especially such a significant one, is a bull's eye for us.

Bob Barnett of Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy can be reached at 888.815.9575 or through www.escarpment.ca

▼ Looking south from the summit of Willisville Mountain to Lawson Quarry in the middle distance, then Bay of Islands and toward the Niagara Escarpment.



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Chorus Frogs

By Gloria Hildebrandt

A couple of years ago I attended a workshop about managing ponds and wetlands, given by Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), my local authority. They handed out a list of frogs we might have on our properties: Leopard, Wood, Spring Peeper, Green, Tree.

"What about Chorus Frogs?" I asked. "Why aren't they on the list?" The presenters quickly glanced at each other with wide eyes.

"Do you think you have Chorus Frogs?" one asked.

"Yes, in my swamp."

"They're a species of concern, so if you have them we'd like to come out and hear them."

So last spring when the Spring Peepers and Chorus Frogs started calling, I recorded them with my cellphone video. I contacted CVC and soon an ecologist emailed me that she'd like to visit my property. That same afternoon two young women drove up in a CVC vehicle. One explained that Spring Peepers are sometimes mistaken for Chorus Frogs as they make a similar extended croak. I didn't know this and felt embarrassed.

"Maybe I don't have Chorus Frogs after all," I said. "But let's go see."

Silent Frogs

We went to the edge of the swamp where I had recorded the video. Wouldn't you know it, all the frogs were completely silent. No frog of any kind made any sound whatsoever. The CVC staff member got out her phone. "Let's play a recording and see if they

respond." She did; they didn't.

I was encouraged to play my recording. The young women listened but weren't certain they heard Chorus Frogs. And no frog responded.

"This swamp is perfect for them," one said. "It's shallow." They went on to explain that Chorus Frogs are extremely vulnerable, and that they might be present at one time and then disappear. Droughts can kill them. Late frosts after they have laid eggs can prevent young from hatching. They can very easily die out from a particular location. I didn't know this, having assumed that if I once had them, I would always have them in the swamp.

Disappointed, I asked if they wanted to walk back by way of the pond. They did, and were nicely complimentary, saying it's a beautiful property, I'm so lucky, they would love to have a property like this. The woman lives in Mississauga.

As we poked around the pond, back at the swamp, the frogs started calling again – naturally while we weren't there. One woman asked the other "Do you hear a Chorus Frog?" "I think I do," said the other.

We returned to their car where the first woman asked "Would you confirm it?"

"I would," the other said decisively. I asked what would happen next.

"If you like, you can report it to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, but you don't have to."

"Why wouldn't I want to?" I asked. I was told that



▲ Spring Peeper.
PHOTO BY DAWN RENFREW.



◀ Western Chorus Frog.
PHOTO BY BENNY MAZUR,
COURTESY WIKIPEDIA.

some people don't like to do anything official about their land. But if Chorus Frogs are in danger, and their habitats could be protected, I want to help, and said so.

Help For Frogs

They emailed me exactly where to go online to make the report. On the website, there was a lot of technical information I couldn't provide, but in the comments section I wrote that I have a video recording of the calls. I got an email from the Ministry asking for a copy of the recording and I replied that I had posted it on the

magazine's Facebook page. I got a further email stating "We can hear both Western Chorus Frog and Spring Peeper in the video recording."

I forwarded this message to the CVC person who was happy to learn this and offered to provide technical coordinates for the observation location. So the Ministry person was pleased to get this.

Now it's confirmed by a couple of official organizations that my swamp has Chorus Frogs, a species of special concern.

I think my father would be pleased.

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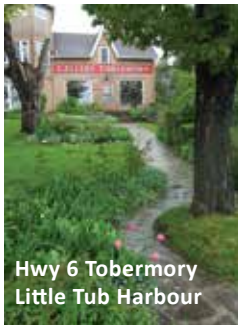
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MARCH 9 – 18

Canada Blooms

Enercare Centre, Toronto
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MARCH 17

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102599 Grey Road 18, Owen Sound
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MARCH 24

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APRIL 2 – 13 & 23

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Owen Sound & Meaford
kiwanismusicfestival.net
info@kiwanismusicfestival.net

APRIL 20-21

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haltonhillschamber.on.ca

APRIL 28

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APRIL 28 & 29

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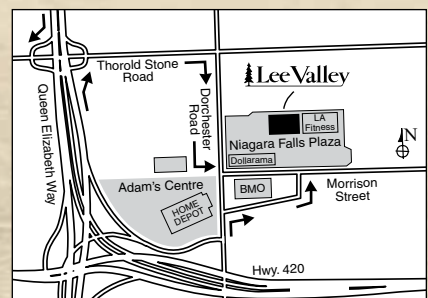


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