

**Malcolmson Eco-Park  
2019  
Advisory Committee**

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**Inside this issue:**

- \* Invasive Plants .....P1
- \* School Adventures..... P1
- \* Seed Starting.....P2
- \* Park Fairies.....P2
- \* Historic Greenhouse....P3
- \* Spring Visit.....P4

# The Pin Oak

**Issue 22**

[www.fomep.com](http://www.fomep.com)

**November 2019**

## Niagara Community Foundation Grant Assists Invasive Plant Removal

Thanks to a \$4,000 grant from the Niagara Community Foundation for 2019, we were able to have Giles Restoration do a follow up foliar spray in June of invasive Common Buckthorn, Oriental Bittersweet Vine, Manitoba Maple, and Tartarian Honeysuckle in several forest areas. They out-compete native plants, which reduces habitat for native birds and insects. This was very effective as can be seen in the picture below.



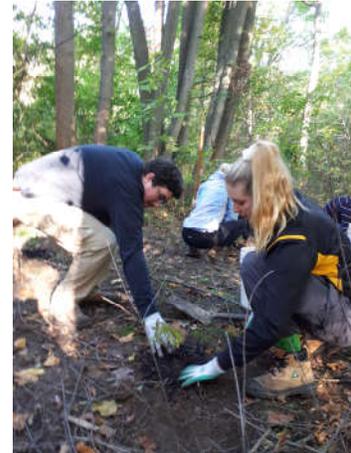
Sprayed Buckthorn

The grant will cover a December spray of a different forest area, this time north of the pond.

In October, with volunteer student groups from Niagara College and Niagara Falls Collegiate Institute, we replanted most of the sprayed areas with native shrubs and trees like Serviceberry, Spicebush, and Ironwood. A BIG THANKS to Andrea Sinclair and her ecosystem restoration students, and Edison and the N.F.C.I. Students!

We are happy to announce that the City of St. Catharines will partner with us to continue

this project in 2020. The plan is to do follow up spray of the new area treated in December, and then move on to spray a 3rd forest area. This keeps us on track with our 5 year plan.



Replanting with bush  
honeysuckle

## Elementary School Adventures at the Park

Port Weller grade 5 & 6 students and Katie Woods' environmental club visited the Park in May/June to learn about native plants and invasive plants. They helped pull invasive garlic mustard and to replant native flowers. They grew different wildflowers from seeds collected at the Park.

*(Continued on page 2)*

Teachers and  
kids,  
**WE LOVE  
YOUR VISITS**

Malcolmson  
becomes  
an  
"Experimental  
Farm"

There are  
fairies in the  
Park!!!!

(Continued from page 1- School Adventures )

E. I. McCulley students came to learn about native plants and invasive plants and hike through the Park.

Our Advisory Committee members had so much fun with the kids! Thanks for you leadership! Teachers and kids—WE LOVE YOUR VISITS, and you are really helping to protect native plants and habitat for wildlife, birds and insects. Keep on coming to the Park



Port Weller Students Ready To Plant



E.I. McCully Learning Time

## Seed Starting to Produce Plants for Sales and the Park

Three of the Park volunteers Doug Walls, Veronica Clarke-Hanik and Mike Higgs decided to start a small project this summer to determine what might be required for the Park to produce some of its own herbaceous perennials. Although it was a late seeding date, June 27, that wasn't a major concern since one of the primary objectives was to see how much time and effort was involved. Each member started 2 50-cell trays of seed - orange butterfly weed, Eastern columbine, lance-leaved coreopsis, purple coneflower, blanket

(Continued on page 3)



## The Garbage Fairy by Veronica Clarke-Hanik

It was a perfect fall afternoon for a leisurely stroll through the park last week. I picked up a couple of pieces of garbage along the path and wished that I'd had a bag with me.

Just past the "prairie" area and into the woods I came across a young woman, halfway down a gully, adding to a huge pile of garbage she'd been collecting. I was aghast at the quantity of dirty, wet shopping bags as well as food and drink packaging but pleasantly shocked to find this dedicated high school student cleaning it all up.

At this point my walk in the park became a mission to help. After running home to get bags and returning on her bike, we managed

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 2 - Seed Starting )  
flower, and Indian grass.

The preliminary results are encouraging — good germination: columbine, coreopsis, blanket flower; mixed results for the butterfly weed—one tray had reasonably good germination while the other did not. The purple coneflower germinated well enough but did not put on any growth at all. The Indian grass was a complete failure.

The next step will be to determine how best to overwinter the seedlings without babying them.

The three volunteers were encouraged enough by these results that they will pursue the project in the spring with an earlier seeding date and more species.

## Historic Greenhouse at Malcolmson Park

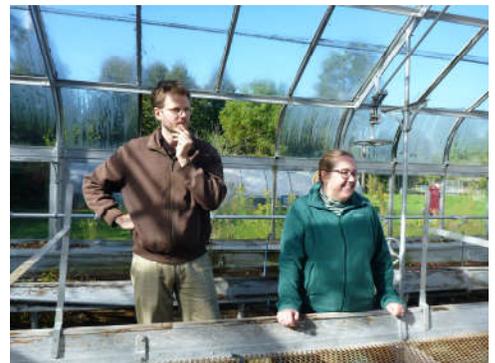
On the grounds of Malcolmson Park sits a historic greenhouse which was designed and built by Lord and Burnham, a well known greenhouse manufacturer. There was a relationship with the Welland Canal going back to the 1930's, a park was established and the greenhouse was built to overwinter plants. The greenhouse was built in 1927 and unfortunately has fallen into a state of disrepair over the years. As one of the Committee members commented “it is sad to see this part of history deteriorating before our eyes”. There had been some discussion about the potential of the



greenhouse being torn down. Our City has seen too many buildings from the past

bulldozed. The Friends of Malcolmson Park Committee decided to pursue what alternatives there might be instead of a demolition.

Willowbank School of Restorative arts is located in Queenston and offers a diploma in Heritage Conservation. We approached the executive director at Willowbank about the feasibility of having the students from the School come out to assess the greenhouse. Chloe Richer, the Heritage Planner for the City contacted Willowbank and eventually it was the decision of Willowbank that this project might be worthwhile for the students to work on.



Students and their instructor showed up at the Park on October 9. The students spent a considerable amount of time in the greenhouse and adjacent building. A report should be forthcoming in the near future. In the meantime the Greenhouse is on the agenda for the next Heritage Committee meeting on November 16. As well, a staff report will have to go before Council for a decision to be made as to the future of this historical building. We are hopeful the end result will be to avoid the demolition of this part of the history of St. Catharines.



*Students in  
Glass Houses  
Take Notes*

*(Continued from page 2 - Garbage Fairy)*

to gather up and drag them to the big blue containers provided for garbage and recycling.

The park now has a new volunteer who will be joining various events throughout this coming year before going off to university next Fall.

We are fortunate to have her as another steward of the park. Thank you for your care and concern.

In future, I will carry a bag and gloves with me and hope that it will be unnecessary to use them.



*Frogs and  
Insects and  
Kids, Oh my!*

## A Spring Visit to the Park

On a beautiful sunny day Veronica and Sheila met with some special children from a school in Welland. The event was organized by the teacher, Billy-Jo Battiste, who remembered coming to the Park when she was a child. Several of these children had never been in woods before nor had they experienced the sounds of nature (birds singing, frogs croaking and insects chirping) and the beauty of the trees and plants in the park. As we meandered along the trails we passed the amphibian pond where we could hear the

frogs making their mating sounds.



One little girl, who called herself "Ghost" need to use a washroom as we arrived near the far north of the main trail. As the closest one was an outhouse at Sunset Beach we decided to walk to the Beach. When we arrived at the lake the children were in awe; eleven or twelve laker boats were sitting offshore. It was the highlight of the day. They also enjoyed being at the beach and posed for a picture on a huge log.



Not only did the children have unforgettable experiences that day but it was a fun and heartwarming day for Veronica and Sheila. And even more special were the thank you letters we received from each child. Each child had drawn a picture and told us what the best part of the walk was.

