

NEWS FROM OUR AGM

Our AGM on June 15 had all the spirit of a People or Planes gathering, according to POP originals Janet and Michael Robertson. Others described it as “enthusiastic” and “energizing.” Toronto Deputy Mayor Glenn De Baeremaeker called it a “magical” evening.

The Brougham Hall, birthplace of Land Over Landings, was filled with people, energy, and a powerful commitment to keep working together for this common cause. The evening began with a rousing sing-along of “The Land That We Love,” by Peter Byberg. One of many special guests, the Hon. Pauline Browes, long-time crusader for the Rouge, afterwards asked to be connected with Peter so he could write a song for that cause too.

There were old friends and new, from near and far, including members of Food & Water First, the Ontario Soil Regulation Task Force, and the Ontario Farmland Trust. There were stirring talks by Jayden Rae, young environmentalist and food security activist, and by Glenn De Baeremaeker, who has been fighting for 30 years to save the Rouge. Both speakers exemplified how such causes can grab you when you’re young and become life-changing. And together we committed to continuing to work towards the protection of all the remaining Federal Lands and the expansion of the Rouge National Urban Park, which is, to quote Ms Browes, “wonderful and necessary.” [cont’d]



Photos: Alexis Edghill Whalen

OUR EXECUTIVE, 2016-17

- **Mary Delaney**, Chair
- **Gord McGregor**, Honourary Chair
- **Laura Springate**, Vice-Chair
- **David Masters**, Treasurer
- **Gabrielle Untermann**, Secretary
- **Pat Valentine**, Communications
- **Susan Reesor**, Events
- **Maggie Channon**, Fundraising
- **Alexis Whalen**, Membership/Outreach
- **Reid Williamson**, Volunteers
- **Heather Rigby**, Officer at Large
- **Jim Miller**, Officer at Large



We welcome Laura Springate of Whitby (left) and Susan Reesor of Altona. Both have strong backgrounds in social justice issues, with particular interests in climate change and food security. Laura, pastor of Claremont United Church, was a frequent participant in our meetings and events before joining the executive. Susan, home after years of working on women’s rights and governance in Asia, now manages social media for Reesors Farm Market and her husband’s furniture restoration business, both within the RNUP. A 9th generation Reesor, she has brought “farm cred” to our meetings with Ag Minister Leal and the Durham Federation of Agriculture.

We thank departing executive members **Joanne Azevedo** and **Peter Rodrigues** for their contributions over the past year. Both remain stalwart supporters.

We thanked our friend Karen Phillips, who is stepping down after many years of above-and-beyond-the-call contributions as our website's developer and administrator. And we introduced Yvonne Berg, who is developing a new site to meet today's fast-changing tech needs. Launching soon!

Land Over Landings was called a "dynamic, democratic, and determined community group" that is "creative, cheerful and collaborating, [with the goal of] bringing informed reality to decision makers." We think that sums us up nicely. And we happily accept the well-earned pats on the back on behalf of the many people who are doing their part to save these Lands, including so many of you!

PM AND ENV. MINISTER PADDLE THE ROUGE

In early June the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, announced that changes had been made to the proposed *Rouge National Urban Park Act*, including amendments to beef up "ecological integrity" and the excellent news that farmers' leases would now be up to 30 years.

Just a few days later, the minister participated in the annual Paddle the Rouge event with surprise guests the Prime Minister and his family as well as a who's-who of environmentalists, municipal politicians, MPs, and MPPs, mostly from ridings within the Rouge. All were there for Ontario's announcement: an agreement has finally been reached and the Province will be transferring its portion of the Rouge lands to the national park.

The Prime Minister and Ontario's Minister of Economic Development and Growth expressed particular thanks to the citizens who have worked so tirelessly for decades for this cause. At last, the Park will truly connect the Lake to the Moraine.

We were there, wearing our T-shirts, chatting with politicians, Parks Canada staff, bureaucrats, and media, reminding them there's still more land to add. As the Prime Minister said, "This is a big day. But there will be more." We're hoping he means the rest of the Federal Lands in Pickering!



Mark Binch Photography

Our intrepid Lexi Whalen, wearing LOL T-shirt, paddles alongside PM and family.

MORE SUPPORT FOR OUR AGRICULTURAL STUDY

- National Farmers Union – Ontario
- Maude Barlow, National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians, Chair of Washington-based Food and Water Watch
- Ian Cumming, Pickering City Councillor, Ward 2

ON ROGERS CABLE

Our Chair discusses the AGM and our new campaigns:

<http://rogerstv.com/page.aspx?lid=237&rid=2&gid=254779>

Food for Thought

"Ontario is an agri-food powerhouse ... (generating) more than \$35 billion in GDP and (providing) more than 781,000 jobs Ontario's agri-food industry is the cornerstone of our province's success, and the government recognizes not only its tremendous contributions today, but its potential for growth and success in the future. The 2013 Local Food Act takes that support further, providing the foundation for our Local Food Strategy to help increase demand for Ontario food here at home, create new jobs and enhance the economic contributions of the agri-food industry."

~ Jeff Leal, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Land Over Landings Because food is a **GROWING** concern!

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