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INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
President's Message	1
Birkebeiner	2
A Year of Hiking on DVD	2
Membership Discount	2
Website Makeover	3
2016 Hikes	4
Beyond the Waskahegan	5
Trail Maintenance	6
Membership Form	7



JoAnne Burek

## President's message

You might know how deeply satisfying it can be to work on a worthy cause. Why else would you choose to get involved? What's really interesting though is looking back on one's involvement, and discovering things that you didn't expect to find. As I look back on my six years on the board, here's what surprised me:

**How much fun it is to call the shots.** Have you ever been part of a group, for instance in a job or a club, where you thought *I would handle that differently, or I think we could do that better?* Or did you ever wish to learn or try out a new skill?

I had two opportunities like that. One was the new edition of the guide book. I was thrilled to apply my new editing and indexing skills on this project. We even obtained an ISBN number for the book and sent a copy to Library Archives Canada.

The other opportunity was the website. For a long time I felt it needed a makeover. The rise of content management systems (we used Wordpress) made it possible to modernize the website and introduce new capabilities. I got to learn, and play with, this new toy which will soon go live. My favourite feature is that it can take contributions from any volunteer who wants to submit content.

**How insightful it is to correspond with the public.** For instance, you wouldn't believe how many emails we get from people (even overseas) wanting to backpack the trail end-to-end. It made me realize that we could do a better job on our website so that people get a clearer idea of the trail.

**How congenial our members are.** I love every one of our board members. They are friendly, conscientious, caring, respectful, and open-minded. Because of them, our board meetings have been very efficient. We cover a lot of business and have many laughs doing it.

**How satisfying it is to discover what really matters.** As the president, I spent some time thinking about the vision for the trail. It brought clarity to questions--complicated questions such as "Should we be spending our energy on *this task* or *that task*?" "Is it time to change a long-standing practice?" (as when we moved to some scheduled hikes on Saturdays). Reading about the history of the trail, and thinking about the role of the trail for people today, has guided my thoughts about our priorities and choosing direction.

**What I wish** for the next board is everything I got out of it myself: to do interesting projects, to be inspired by the founders of the trail, to make a difference to people of, and visitors to, the area, and to have great fun doing it.

## THE WTA EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT/HIKE COORDINATOR:	JOANNE BUREK	780-487-0645	TRAIL MAINTENANCE/ EVENT COORDINATOR:	KAREN BELL	780-642-6372
PAST PRESIDENT:	ROB FAULDS	780-478-5622	LANDOWNER RELATIONS:	GEOFF FLECK	780-855-2126
MEMBERSHIP/SECRETARY:	SANDRA CARRUTHERS	780-467-9572	WEBMASTER:	LEE STICKLES	780-487-0645
TREASURER:	GARY BUCHANAN	403-485-6341	PUBLICITY	JOHN RAPOSO	780-481-2850
NEWSLETTER/ PERMISSIONS ADMINISTRATOR:	MARILYN TICHKOWSKY	780-456-1819			

## Birkebeiner 2016

### A Brief History of the Birkebeiner and the Weather

The Canadian Birkebeiner started in Devon in 1985. On race day on February 9<sup>th</sup> a blustery wind chill of -38C threatened cancellation. The story goes that the race organizer held his thumb on thermometer long enough to officially declare that the temperature was acceptable.

1987 The Canadian Birkebeiner was cancelled due lack of snow. When lack of snow threatened again in 1988, the event was moved to Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area, where it has been held ever since.

2008 The Canadian Birkebeiner was cancelled because of -41C weather.

2016 The Canadian Birkebeiner was cancelled due to lack of snow, unseasonable warm weather and strong winds blowing debris onto the ski tracks.

2017 The global climate change will hopefully be in our favour.

—Bev Stokowski




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## A YEAR OF HIKING ON DVD



Have you hiked a few or all of our scheduled hikes? Did you enjoy where you hiked? Would you like a memento? Would you like to tell the world (or just your friends) all about "The Waskahegans"? The "Year of Hiking" DVD for 2015 is in the works. In the meantime, you can purchase DVDs from 2010 to 2014.

The cost for the DVD is \$5, plus an additional \$5 if you want it mailed. Additional DVDs purchased on the same order are \$2 each. Please contact JoAnne Burek at [780-487-0645](tel:780-487-0645) or Sandra Carruthers at [780-467-9572](tel:780-467-9572), or mail a request to Waskahegan Trail Association, P.O. Box 131, Edmonton AB T5J 2G9, enclosing a cheque payable to "Waskahegan Trail Association."



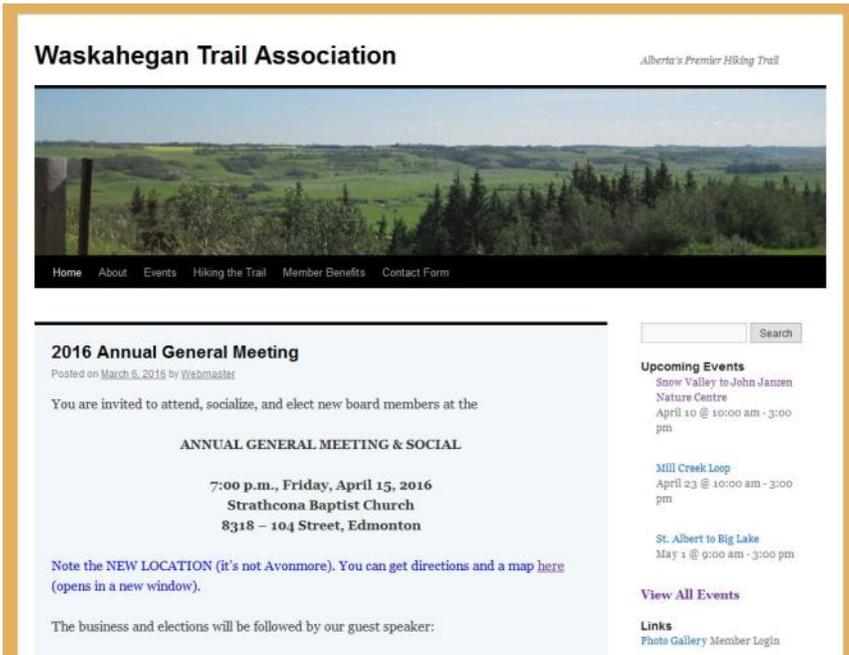
## MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

Waskahegan members are eligible to receive 10% off any regular priced merchandise bought at Camper's Village on 170 Street or at 32nd Avenue and Calgary Trail and also at Track 'n Trail, 10148-82 Avenue. To obtain the discount you must show your current membership card.

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## Our website is getting a makeover

Websites have come a long way since the last version was launched in 2009. That's why we decided it was time to redo it. We built a new site on the Wordpress platform, and have been loading it up with the content that we know you are interested in. Any day now we'll make the big switch: when you type [waskahegantrail.ca](http://waskahegantrail.ca) into your browser or click on your bookmark you will arrive at the home page of the new site.



The new site is using capabilities that we couldn't even dream of in 2009:

- You'll see upcoming events on the sidebar of the homepage, and other useful information like the latest posts.
- The text will be easier to read, especially on a smartphone or tablet.
- Volunteers can post news and articles, and an article can include links to pictures in the photo gallery (which is not moving yet). This will

save the webmaster a lot of work.

- Anyone, including the public, can "like" or write a comment on a post. Of course comments will be approved before they get posted, and we'll have the ability to block spammy commenters.
- We will never lose a post. Every announcement, news, or article will be accessible in the archives.
- We are moving to a simpler calendar that's easier to update and manage. And if you happen to use Google calendar yourself, you can add a Waskahegan event with one click.

These are just some of the features you can see now. Other features are in the works

In the meantime, you can watch the new website grow by visiting <http://waskahegantrail.ca.previewmysite.com>. The information you find here will be accurate, because we are updating content as we move it. The calendar, for instance is current.

Do you have any feedback about the new site or any of the pages? Let us know. Try out the page's Comment box or use the Contact Form page, or send an email to [information@waskahegantrail.ca](mailto:information@waskahegantrail.ca).

## 2016 Hikes

Here is the schedule of hikes from May through October. Note that the schedule includes the occasional Saturday hike; Saturday dates are **bolded**. The guide book page number is listed for each hike destination.

As this schedule is prepared well in advance, please consult the website for the most current information ([www.waskahegantrail.ca](http://www.waskahegantrail.ca)), or call the hike leader, or email [information@waskahegantrail.ca](mailto:information@waskahegantrail.ca).

There are several hikes that still need leaders. If you can lead a hike, send an email to [information@waskahegantrail.ca](mailto:information@waskahegantrail.ca) or call another hike leader.

### Meeting Places and Carpooling

Unless otherwise indicated, we meet at the northwest corner of the parking lot at Superstore on Calgary Trail near 51<sup>st</sup> Ave.

The locations of alternate meetings places are the following:

Capilano McDonalds: 9857 - 50 St.

Westmount McDonalds: 11260 Groat Road (around 112 Avenue and 133 St.)

Carpooling: If you are going to be a passenger, it is suggested you bring \$5 for the driver to help with gas and wear and tear.

Departure Time is 9 a.m. We depart from the meeting place at 9:00 a.m. We recommend that you get to the meeting place by 8:45 to allow time for signing in.

Date		Destination	Guide Bk Pg	Leader	Phone
1-May	Sun	St. Albert to Big Lake		JoAnne B.	780-487-0645
8-May	Sun	Miquelon A86 to A87 North	71	JoAnne B.	780-487-0645
15-May	Sun	East Battle Rive A62 to Rest and Be Thankful	53	David M.	780-434-2675
22-May	Sun	Ross Creek A109 to A111	105	Karen B.	780-642-6372
<b>28-May</b>	<b>Sat</b>	Blackfoot Staging Area		Irene M.	780-679-2218
5-Jun	Sun	Coal Lake A45 to Water Plant	37		
12-Jun	Sun	Wanisan Lake to Winter Shelter	85	Kirsten N.	780-263-0703
19-Jun	Sun	Middle Battle River A62 to A61	51		
<b>25-Jun</b>	<b>Sat</b>	East Hastings & Allen Nature Trail	79-81	Yvette S.	780-756-3623
3-Jul	Sun	Middle Coal Lake A43 to Point Cooperation	35		
10-Jul	Sun	Pipestone A50 to Bigstone Creek	40-43	JoAnne B.	780-487-0645
17-Jul	Sun	Fort Ethier A48 to A48D	41	Bev S.	780-469-7948
24-Jul	Sun	Miquelon South A86 to A85	71	Kirsten N.	780-263-0703
<b>30-Jul</b>	<b>Sat</b>	North Coal Lake A40 to "B"	29		
7-Aug	Sun	Ministik Spilstead (A87) to Horseshoe Lake	73	Gladys V.	780-941-2459
14-Aug	Sun	West Battle River A57 to C (Schnee Hill)	49	JoAnne B.	780-487-0645
21-Aug	Sun	Saunders Lake	25	Stella C.	780-488-9515
<b>27-Aug</b>	<b>Sat</b>	Stoney Creek	57	Irene M.	780-679-2218
4-Sep	Sun	Trappers Lake A104 to Oster Lake	101		
11-Sep	Sun	MacTaggart Sanctuary		Karen B.	780-642-6372
18-Sep	Sun	Kopp Lake A35 to A34	27	Helen W.	780-468-4331
<b>24-Sep</b>	<b>Sat</b>	Mill Creek Ravine		Yvette S.	780-756-3623
1-Oct	Sun	West Battle River A60 to C (Schnee Hill)	49	JoAnne B.	780-487-0645
9-Oct	Sun	Gwynne and Chickadee Trail	47	Oscar Z.	780-435-1197
16-Oct	Sun	Devon Trails		Helen W.	780-468-4331
23-Oct	Sun	Blackfoot Islet Lake	87	Kirsten N.	780-263-0703
<b>29-Oct</b>	<b>Sat</b>	Capilano to Riverdale via Kinnaird Ravine		Sandra C.	780-467-9572

## *Beyond the Waskahegan Trail Events*—Karen Bell

Last year we hiked in Elk Island park, explored Gouin natural area, and went on a road trip to the Whitecourt area. We also went on overnight trips to Mt. Robson Provincial Park, Nordegg area and Canmore Kananaskis . In October, the membership enjoyed our annual BBQ and hike at Miquelon Provincial Park.



*Hard Luck Canyon*



*Gouin*



*Kinney Lake*



*Barrier Lake Kananakis*

This year I hope to offer a few one day, beyond the trail trips. The Lamont church and historic road trip will likely be in the fall. Some others, that I am still in the process of planning, will be announced on the website.

Please contact me if you have ideas for beyond trips. Also, feel free to call me if you would like to lead a beyond trip and need some help organizing it. I would be glad to help.

I have not confirmed any overnight trips at this time. I am planning to organize a fall trip in Kananaskis. I hope to book William Watson Lodge for this event but cannot make reservations until two months prior, space permitting.

A BBQ in the fall will also be announced.

Look for news on the website or contact Karen at [karenb32@telus.net](mailto:karenb32@telus.net).

## *Trail Maintenance News* – Karen Bell

Hello fellow Waskahegans! Have you thought about volunteering to clear the trail? We usually hike about 5km at a slower pace, while we work and enjoy being out in the country.

Maintenance activities include clearing deadfall, installing and replacing trail signage, trimming brush and weeds from the trail, and mowing the trails. We also install and repair bridges and fence crossings. The tools we use are chain saws, mowers, weed eaters, clippers, hammers, and small hand tools. We train you in the use of any tools. All volunteers are covered by WCB.

This season's schedule for work crews will be posted a month at a time on the website with changes as they occur. I will also email updates to volunteers who have signed up and come out regularly. If you can, let me know that you are coming out on specific days as it helps me plan. You are also welcome to show up if you decide to join us at the last minute. Just as last year, we meet at the McDonald's on 82 Ave next to 75 St. leaving at 9:00am. We will work mostly on Wednesdays. Always check the website for last minute changes, mostly due to weather.

Volunteers will continue to be treated to a coffee and a muffin after each work day!

### *Are you tearing down a deck or know of some treated wood available for our use?*

There are quite a few building projects to be done, mostly bridges and boardwalks. I hope that we can get free wood, perhaps from decks that are being rebuilt. The rising cost of wood does not allow us to buy what we need within the budget.

### *Do you know of a 2<sup>nd</sup> hand trailer?*

We are ruining the cables on the lawn mowers by constantly folding and unfolding them so that they will fit on our current trailer. To alleviate this problem I would like to acquire a larger, second hand trailer that would permit the transport of the mowers with the handles unfolded. Ideally, we'd like a lightweight trailer approximately 6 ft wide by 8 ft long with 12 to 14 inch wheels, sides, and a back that flips down to serve as a ramp for loading the mowers. Our current trailer will be sold once we have purchased a replacement.

### *Do you have a vehicle with a hitch to pull our trailer?*

Currently we are limited to one vehicle with a trailer hitch to pull our equipment trailer and a truck that is used for transportation of equipment and work crews to the trail. If you have a vehicle with a hitch and want to volunteer for clearing the trail, please contact me.

Contact Karen at [karenb32@telus.net](mailto:karenb32@telus.net) or 780 642-6372.



## Membership Renewal

If your membership expired in 2016, you can use this form to renew. Mail it with your cheque, and we will send you and updated membership card.



## WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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Please complete this form and Member Waiver(s) and mail to **Waskahegan Trail Association**, P.O. Box 131, Edmonton, AB T5J 2G9

**First and Last Name:** Family or Group, provide a Primary Contact Person's First and Last Name.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Family or Group Name:** If joining as a family or organization  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mailing Address including Postal Code**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Alternate Phone**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail:** Family or Group, please enter a Primary Email Address.  
 \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Single/Family/Group Membership Fee</b>	_____	<b>\$20.00/ year</b> <i>Membership runs March 1 to February 28. New members joining after September 1 receive the balance of the year free with a full paid membership for the next year.</i>
<b>Guide Book (Members Only)</b>	_____	<b>\$12.00</b> available to members only
<b>DVD "A Year in Hiking"</b>	_____	<b>\$5.00</b> for the first one, <b>\$2.00</b> for additional
<b>Guide book and/or DVD shipping</b>	_____	<b>\$5.00</b> required if you want these mailed to you
<b>Crest</b>	_____	<b>\$3.00</b>
<b>Decal</b>	_____	<b>\$2.00</b>
<b>Pin</b>	_____	<b>\$3.00</b>
<b>Donation</b>	_____	Tax receipt issued for donations of \$10 and more
<b>Total \$</b>	_____	<b>Total in Canadian Dollars</b>

Newsletters will be emailed to you. If you request, we will mail you a black and white paper copy.

*I wish to receive paper-copy newsletters through the mail*

We welcome and appreciate our member volunteers. Please indicate whether you or members of your family or group would be willing to help, by checking the area(s) of interest:

- |                   |                          |                              |                          |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hike Leader       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Board of Directors           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Trail Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> | Social Events                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Please Call Me    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Website/Newsletter/Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> |