

## *Ferguson Forest Centre Update*

For the past year the FFC has been trying to obtain a new long-term lease. It has been a long struggle and we are close only because councilors Terry Butler, Barb Tobin and Tim Sutton strongly support it. If you have followed the news, then you also know that the Mayor and Deputy-Mayor have been adamantly against it. The latter two still see the lands as better being developed rather than as a green and growing space. A short-term view as opposed to a long-term vision.

Your support on this matter has been central to its success and is greatly appreciated. Keep the pressure on and keep voicing your concerns.

In expectation of the new lease, FFC also had discussions with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) about the crown lands we help manage. The existing *Memorandum of Understanding* between FFC and the MNR has been changed to an “evergreen” document that is automatically extended, assuming that all obligations are met. We are now set for some long-term thinking and projects.

With long term security, we can now move forward and start moving on some long delayed projects. The Recreation, Education and Conservation (REC) plan has now been developed. FFC committees will be looking at an overall plan for the *Community Recreational Area* along Kemptville Creek, and a Trails Plan for the rest of the lands. If you would like to be on one of these committees, or help with the various projects, please let Colleen Morris-Wilson or myself know. Not only is your participation welcome, it is essential if we are to make this a true community reality.

Ed Patchell has helped bring the *Kemptonville in Blossom* project to the FFC site. Among other things, we hope to be able to have the students help us with some trail work. Another way to make things better for all of us.

The Nursery is busy getting ready for the spring lift and then seeding season. The winter snows saw us lose some greenhouses and the December fire was another setback. We are managing to recover from those and expect to be fully functional later this year. The success of our nursery will provide the funding for our recreational goals. While we still have rebuilding and modernization ahead of us, we have already accomplished much of it and hope to have more resources available for community activities within a few years.

John Wilson  
President, Board of Directors  
Ferguson Forest Centre

## *Around the Forest*

After a fruitful autumn, the Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre (FFFC) went dormant for the winter months, but the sap is starting to run again, with several activities planned for the spring and summer.

FFFC holds two annual clean-up days in the Ferguson Nursery Forest, one in the spring and one in the fall. Volunteers pick up the debris, ranging from candy-bar wrappers to old TV sets, dropped or dumped along the trails. They also clear some of the smaller debris left by Mother Nature such as broken branches, however downed trees have to be cleared by qualified staff with the proper equipment. The collected waste is taken to the municipal waste disposal site.

Our fall clean-up day was on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Over 30 volunteers turned out to walk the trails and make repairs and improvements to some of the bridges. Special thanks to the young men from the Kemptonville 73's who came to help out, earn community service hours and enjoy Linda Patchell's home-made cookies. Volunteers were also rewarded with hot-dogs, coffee and hot chocolate, courtesy of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Thank you Linda Touzin.

On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007, the FFFC held a fall *Walk in the Woods* for members of the FFFC. Alf Campbell, the former superintendent of the G. Howard Ferguson Forest Station, now the Ferguson Forest Centre, led the walk. Hef led about 20 members (and several dogs) on a walk along the western half of the Management Trail. Alf pointed out and discussed the sites that illustrated aspects of good forest management and answered a steady stream of questions about forestry and about trees in general. It has always been Alf's hope that the Management Trail will again become a focal point for outdoor education in the community.

New trail markers have been ordered for the Management Trail, the Turtle Trail and the Maple Trail and the old markers will be replaced over the spring and summer.

Trail maps will be printed and be made widely available by the end of April 2008.

The **2007 Annual General Meeting** was held on October 25th. Turnout was rather sparse. It has been observed that, while Friends members are happy to turn out for work projects and special events, they are not enthusiastic about meetings. That's ok! Actions always speak louder than words and there are plenty of work projects ahead.

Your executive, consisting of Colleen Morris-Wilson, Virginia Bourget, Trevor Buck, Sally Hamilton, Jim Beckett, Linda Patchell, Mark Blaisdell and Gillian Organ, all agreed to carry on for another year.

## Upcoming Events

### **Spring Trail Clean-Up Day - April 26, 2008 - 9:00 am to 12:30 pm**

Hopefully the snow will have melted by then! Clean up will start at 9:00 am and volunteers will meet at the FFC office to receive their work assignments. Workers should come dressed for the weather (warm clothing, boots and work gloves) and students will be given credits for community service hours. Free hot dogs and hot drinks will be served after clean up. Bring shears, Robertson screwdrivers, and clippers if you have them. For more information visit our web site at: [www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca](http://www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca)

### **Spring Flowers "Walk in the Woods" - May 10, 2008 10 am to 12:30 pm**

This fun and educational walk will focus on life in the forest during springtime. The walk will be lead by Andrea Howard, well known in the area as a teacher and nature interpreter. Andrea will talk about spring wild flowers and environmental issues. The event is open to all. Participation is free for members and their families, and there will be a nominal fee charged to non-members who attend, to cover the cost of food.

### **Membership Drive - May 24, 2008 - 8:30 am to 12:30 pm**

The FFFC will be holding a spring membership drive on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at both Jonsson's Independent Grocers and Food Basics. Volunteers will be needed to staff the booths in two-hour shifts between 8:30 am and 12:30 pm. During the membership drive, local residents will be able to "Adopt A Tree" by signing and dating the back of a numbered trail marker. The numbered marker will then be placed on a tree in the trail system and be "adopted". If you can help, please contact Colleen at 613-258-4400.

### **Dandelion Festival - June 8, 2008 - 10:00 am to 3:00 pm**

The Friends will have a booth at the Festival to promote the Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre.

### **Canada Day Parade - July 1, 2008**

The theme this year is "*Make Dreams Live*". The Friends will be entering a float and decoration will take place on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Help will be needed to decorate the float and walk in the parade.

### **Forest Fair -September 27, 2008 - 9:00 am to 3:00 pm**

Come out and enjoy the fun. Forest Fair hosts the largest lumber and wood auction in Eastern Ontario. There will be dog and horse demonstrations and of course the Friends will be selling their now famous coffee and home baked cookies. We will also have an information booth and be selling memberships and gifts.

### **Fall Trail Clean-Up Day - October 4, 2008 between 9:00 am to 12:30 pm**

Workers should come dressed for the weather and students will be given credits for community service hours. Free food and hot drinks will be served after clean up. For more information visit our web site in September at: [www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca](http://www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca)

### **Annual General Meeting - October 23, 2008 - 7:30 pm**

Ferguson Forest Centre board room

### **Fall Walk in the Woods -November 1, 2008 - 10 am to 12:30 pm**

This is a special fun and educational event that is open to all. Participation is free for members and their families, and there will be a nominal fee charged to non-members who attend, to cover the cost of food.

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### **Gifts Available**

The Friends now have T-shirts and buttons available, with our logo, for purchase. We also have limited edition art cards showing pictures of the Ferguson Forest Centre and depicting scenes from logging in the early 1900's. For more information contact Colleen Morris-Wilson at 613-258-4400.

### **Membership**

Individual - \$10.00  
Family - \$ 15.00  
Corporate - \$50.00

Our web site is being re-designed. Come and see our new look at: [www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca](http://www.friendsofthefergusonforest.ca)

**The Friends of the Ferguson Forest Centre would like to thank our corporate sponsors and members for their support.**

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