

Through The Knothole

a quarterly newsletter of the

HURONIA WOODLAND OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Issue # 100

www.huroniawoodlandowners.ca

Summer 2024

The Huronia Woodlot Owners' Association (HWOA) is a chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA). Please note that membership with the provincial OWA automatically enrolls you as a member of the local HWOA (just be sure to indicate "Huronian Chapter" on your OWA membership form).

In this issue:

- ***OWA AGM Recap***
- ***Indigenous Awareness Workshop recap***
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- ***Draft Strategic Plan for HWOA***
- ***White Pine Award nomination process***

Save the Date:

- ***HWOA Fall Field Day Saturday Sept 28, 2024***
- ***HWOA White Pine Award: Saturday November 16, 2024***

THANK YOU



We wish to thank Vermeer Canada Inc. for supporting the Huronia Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association by supplying the refreshments that we enjoy at our meetings throughout the year.

OWA AGM Recap:

Back on April 23 and 24 the ONTARIO WOODLOT ASSOCIATION held its annual Conference and Annual General Meeting within the Huronia Chapter's part of the province. Held at the beautiful Horseshoe Valley Resort, which is in Simcoe County on the Oro Moraine and adjacent to the magnificent Copeland Forest, the participants were treated to a full agenda of topics.



A series of rain showers threatened the outdoor events, but eventually all who had signed up for the lumber mills tours and the guided walk in Copeland Forest had their chance to soak up the environment.

The second day was a solid agenda of speakers and none disappointed. And the meals provided by Horseshoe Valley Resort were superb!

Huronia Chapter member **Sandie Drury** was the envy of all when she won the OWA Stihl electric chainsaw raffle! Apparently she has consented to let her husband, Craig, actually hold it a few times!

The fall edition of OWA's WOODLANDER magazine will have several great articles that recap many of the events of the Conference... watch for it in your mailbox!



Forest Health Meeting

Each year the Huronia Chapter holds a Forest Health meeting featuring a speaker on topics such as forest management, biodiversity or invasive species. In June 2024, our speaker was **John Williams, Executive Director of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association**.

There was a last-minute change of venue due to the intense heat and humidity of the day, but director **John Crawford** found us an air-conditioned room at the Guthrie Community Recreation Centre.

John presented ideas to improve the overall health of your woodlot in order to maximize sap production while sustaining the strength and vigor of your productive maple trees.

One of the fascinating facts he shared was the indirect impact the emerald ash borer (EAB) has had on maple forests: sugar maples prefer dry soil; white ash trees have become abundant within maple stands over the last 4-5 decades; as the ash have died back due to EAB there is less moisture transpiration from soil to air, resulting in some sites becoming damper and therefore less desirable for maple growth.



John was thanked by director **Sandy Agnew** (who was challenged to find a thank you gift that wasn't our traditional jug of maple syrup!). John Williams speaks to the Huronia Chapter members about managing your maple forest to keep it healthy and productive.

Click on this YouTube link to see a recording of John's presentation.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGUT3hsPfOQ>

John's presentation slides are posted at this link. [Click here](#)



INDIGENOUS CULTURAL MINDFULNESS WORKSHOP.

The OWA coordinated a number of workshops on the subject of Indigenous Cultural Mindfulness Workshop. This was a practical opportunity to better understand where Ontario's indigenous folks have come from, the issues they are dealing with today and what role they might play in the future, along with an chance for us to ask any questions we had in that regard.

The OWA has been able to secure a gifted speaker in **George Couchie** who has been designing and delivering award winning workshops to help us better understand that culture. One of the 7 sessions offered took place in Orillia for residents of this part of Ontario. Local contact was HWOA director **Jack McFadden**. Pre-registration was through OWA.

Members of the Huronia Chapter and others from similar local NGO's met in Orillia on May 23, 2024 to learn more about indigenous culture from renowned speaker George Couchie. George lives in Nipissing First Nation and had decades of experience helping non-indigenous people and organizations understand the indigenous culture and perspectives.

In the morning George provided specific information about the culture and traditions of the indigenous peoples of Ontario. He backed that up with personal examples and some humorous anecdotes. In the afternoon he carefully took us through a history of Canada's First Nation people including sensitive issues such as treaty rights, the Indian Act, the 60's Scoop, and the impact of the residential school system.

Throughout the day he presented things factually and in an unbiased manner. His use of personal examples and humour allowed us to perhaps see things better from the indigenous perspective. He finished the day with a request that we each share some thoughts from the workshop in an open dialogue. It was obvious from the comments that we had learned a great deal and far better understood Canada's history from the indigenous perspective.

There were 12 people at our session from a variety of organizations. We want to thank the OWA for their organizational and financial assistance We also want to thank **John and Doris Crawford** for all the logistical arrangements and food services they provided. From the round-table discussion at the end of the day it was clear that each of us had learned a lot about a Canadian cultural component that has largely been ignored.

*Submitted by **Jack McFadden** Director on the HWOA Board of Directors*

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HWOA Strategic Plan update

At the urging of President **Craig Drury**, members of the Board are creating a forward thinking strategic plan for the Huronia Chapter, spanning 2024 to 2027. Vice-president **Doug Frost** has been assembling an impressive draft of where our organization should be focussing our efforts, and how we will go about achieving the goals.

As background information for this initiative, Doug prepared and sent out a questionnaire survey to 120 registered Chapter members, to which 40 replied. These questions asked a broad range of

topics, ranging from property ownership (or not) to social expectations to practical woodlot management techniques. These replies have helped to create the direction and goals of the Strategic Plan. (A summary of the survey results can be found on the HWOA website.)

This Strategic Plan will be presented at the 2025 AGM for acceptance by the membership, but for now here is a 'teaser' of how things look:

Value Proposition (copied from OWA): We are a community of woodlot owners that live, work and play in our forests. Together we restore, manage and advocate for healthy forest ecosystems.

(Note: wording may change as there are several members who do not own a woodlot yet are very interested in promoting forest health.)

HWOA Strategic Goals:

1. Ensure members get value from Chapter membership.
2. Deliver valued forest health education.
3. Assist members with forest management projects.

Each of these goals is then broken down to a series of sub-categories:

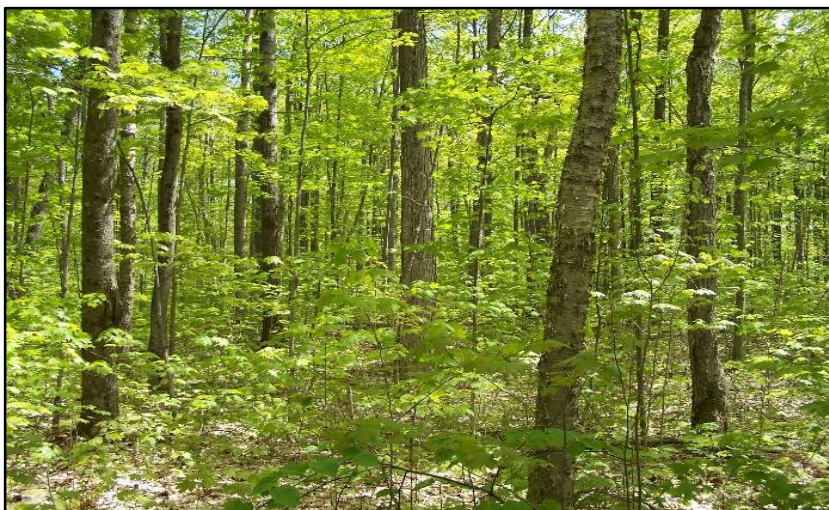
What we are going to do.

How we are going to do it.

How we will measure success.

This plan will indicate clearly what HWOA is all about, how you can become involved and what information/services you can expect. The 'nature' of our Chapter has shifted from the original intent of woodlot owners supporting each other's timber production initiatives to a broader community interest in forests in general with impacts of climate change, rampant land development, the surge in invasive species, and understanding forest values beyond commercial applications.

There will be further updates in the Autumn issue of The Knothole, and prior to our annual general meeting in February 2025.



Website management assistance requested.

Doug Frost has been looking after the HWOA website for several years and is hopeful that there is someone “out here” who would consider taking over this aspect of our communications. While not an onerous job, it does require knowledge of website management (primarily posting new info).

If you, one of your kids, or a tech savvy friend would like to discuss this with Doug, he would really like to have a conversation with you! (705-487-5723) doug@forksinthetrail.com

White Pine Award for Forest Stewardship



Each November the HWOA recognises the work and achievements of one of our members in regards to promoting forest health. Back when our Chapter was smaller and we all knew each other fairly well and often visited each other’s forest to see how things were going, it was easy to pick a annual recipient.

However, we are now a larger and wider ranging membership (which is a good thing) and may not be aware of the good things you have been doing in regards to forest management or education.

There is an application/nomination form on the HWOA website that we encourage you to take a look at. And yes, you may ‘self nominate’!

Jack O’Hara Forestry Scholarship

The HWOA awards the Jack O’Hara Forestry Scholarship annually. This **\$1,000 scholarship** is awarded to a College or University student who has completed one year or two semesters in a Forestry Program or a program that impacts on Forestry.



If you know of a forestry student (or are one) please consider a nomination for this award. There is value on receiving this when placed in a resume... and the thousand bucks can pay for a few forestry books! Full application form is on our website.

SAVE THE DATES:

FALL FIELD DAY:

Huronian Chapter president **Craig Drury** has invited us to visit his farm and forestry operation on **Saturday September 28, 2024**. (669 Penetanguishene Rd (County Road #93) Oro-Medonte Township.)

Craig is from a (famous) multi-generational family of forest stewards, and is setting up his own saw mill operation. This will be a great opportunity to see and discuss the pros and cons of getting yourself set up for such activities.

Current plans are to have multiple stations set up with a variety of machines for processing wood from your own woodlot. Also hoped is to have a chainsaw info session: what saw is best for your activities? And a guided walk to look at the nature, diversity and operations within the Drury property.

Gather at 8:30 a.m. and bring your own lunch. Free for OWA members; \$20 at the gate for non-members.

A detailed poster of confirmed activities will be sent to you in the next couple of weeks, but for now... save the date!

Memberships:

Please check that your OWA membership is current and paid up; you should have received a reminder e-mail recently. Please ensure that you have indicated your preference to be listed with the **“Huronian Chapter”**. You can contact OWA or director **Doug Frost** to clarify your status.

2024 HWOA DIRECTORS:

President: Drury, Craig: Craig.Drury@vermeercanada.com

- Strategic Plan
- Fall Field Day
- VERMEER support

Vice-president: Frost, Doug: (705-487-5723) doug@forksinthetrail.com

- OWA Cooperatives Committee;
- Huronia Community Forest Co-Op;
- Strategic Plan
- Website manager

Treasurer: Crawford, John: (705-487-3373) line8jcrawford@hotmail.com

Secretary: Douglas, Cam: (705-487-7142) cameron.douglas100@gmail.com

- Jack O'Hara Forestry Scholarship
- White Pine Award

McFadden, Jack: (705-534-0138) jjmcfadden@sympatico.ca

- OWA Cooperatives Committee;
- Huronia Community Forest Co-Op

Hawke, David: david.hawke55@gmail.com

- "Through the Knothole" editor

Bowden, David: david_bowden@hotmail.com

Parker, Adam: a_parker@sympatico.ca

- Fall Field day

Agnew, Sandy: sagnew@ecomedic.ca

- Huronia Community Forest Co-op

Gray, Curtis: csquared2003@gmail.com

Casbourne, Grant: bgcas@hotmail.com

Website: huroniawoodlandowners.ca