



The newly installed gates and swipe card reader at Fanshawe CA.



Earth Day London is always a popular community event.

Swipe Cards Coming Soon!

Staff at Fanshawe and Wildwood Conservation Areas are excited about the installation of swipe card gate systems at the two parks. The cards will greatly improve customer service. Seasonal campers will now receive a swipe card instead of the vehicle sticker that they received in the past. No more waiting in line; campers will now be able to get in and enjoy our areas faster!

Pittock had a swipe card system installed in 2010 and campers there were very pleased with the system.

Along with the swipe card readers, Fanshawe and Wildwood will both have two new entry gates installed to replace our current aging gates. The total project cost will be around \$26,000. Ontario Parking Systems (London) has been working with staff and will be installing the systems prior to the park opening.

Contact: *Craig Machan, Superintendent, Wildwood CA, and Steven Musclow, Superintendent, Fanshawe CA*

(in a joint project with the Ausable Bayfield CA) all are going to receive new trees and shrubs.

Contact: *Karen Pugh, Resource Specialist*

Ring in the New Phone System

“The number you have dialed is not in service.” Actually, the UTRCA’s 519-451-2800 phone number is still be in service, but Fanshawe Conservation Area has a new number: 519-951-6181. With construction of the new Watershed Conservation Centre underway and a new phone system to be installed there, it was time for Fanshawe to “cut the cord.”

Staff at the UTRCA and especially at Fanshawe CA are pleased with this new development. Having a dedicated phone number to the CA will reduce the call volume currently being handled by the Administration Office staff. The direct phone line to the CA will also improve customer service.

Communities for Nature Spring 2011

The UTRCA is gearing up for 35 planting events throughout the watershed. Over 4,400 students and community members are expected to participate in planting 10,000 native trees and shrubs.

Events of special note:

- London Earth Day - Sunday, April 17 at Watson Street Park
- Stoney Creek Community Day - Saturday, April 30 at Northbrook Park (London)
- Ilderton Scouts - Saturday, April 30 - 70 people will join the UTRCA to plant in Meadow Creek Park
- Medway Creek ESA Community Day - Saturday, May 7 in partnership with the Ratepayer’s Association and the City of London

School yards, public parks, river corridors, conservation areas and private landowners in London, Stratford, St Marys, Ilderton, Beachville, Woodstock, Dorchester, Thorndale, Salford and Lucan



Fanshawe CA staff, including Assistant Superintendent Damian Schofield, have a new phone number: 519-951-6181.

The new phone number and system include options for emergencies, general inquiries, campsite vacancy reports, information on pavilion and group site bookings, special events and a general staff directory. This system is also consistent with the phone systems at Wildwood and Pittock CAs.

Contact: Steven Musclow, Superintendent, Fanshawe CA



This grassed waterway was installed through the CWP to protect the farm field from soil loss during spring snowmelt and rainstorm events.

Clean Water Program Accepting Applications for 2011

The Clean Water Program is in its 10th year of delivering financial and technical assistance to landowners across the watershed. Initiated in 2001 as a cooperative effort between contributing watershed municipalities, the CWP has delivered funding for close to 2500 environmental projects with a value of over 12 million dollars in economic activity. The cumulative environmental impact of these improvements is monitored through the UTRCA's Report Card program.

CWP funding covers a range of categories listed on the program's web site: www.cleanwaterprogram.ca. The program accepts applications from both farm and non-farm residents.

Contact: Brad Glasman, Coordinator of Conservation Services or www.cleanwaterprogram.ca

Orientation Days

In early April, Fanshawe, Pittock and Wildwood Conservation Areas each held an orientation day for the new and returning seasonal staff that will be working at that particular conservation area throughout the 2011 season.

Orientation day is the only opportunity for CA staff to come together for an entire day before their parks open. Staff meet for the first time as a team at their respective parks to become acquainted and to participate in various training exercises. Throughout the day the staff become familiar with their park and learn more about their individual roles and how they fit into the operations of the



Some of the new seasonal staff at Wildwood CA (above). General Manager Ian Wilcox speaks at Pittock CA's orientation day (below).



UTRCA. It's the perfect venue to cover a number of required training exercises such as Human Resources Training, Payroll, WHMIS and Health and Safety.

Although the day is filled with many different presentations from various individuals, the mood is kept light and relaxed. The staff are treated to a good lunch and generally leave with a better understanding of their park, their coworkers and their roles and responsibilities within the UTRCA.

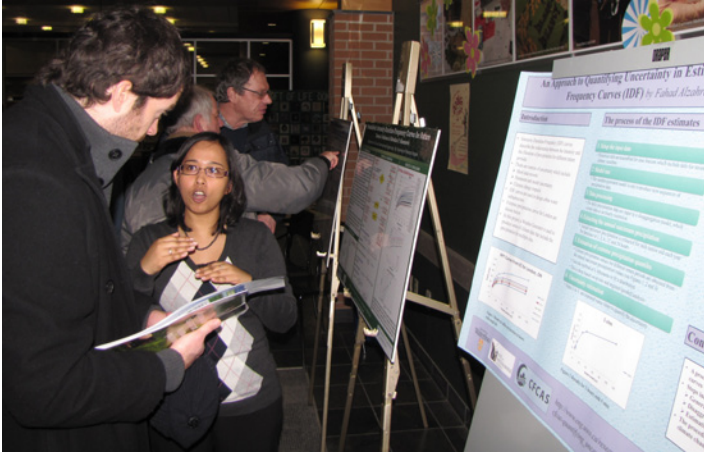
This year marked the 19th orientation day for Fanshawe CA Assistant Superintendent Sean Howley and Wildwood CA Operations and Maintenance staff Roy Ready; the 18th orientation day for Coordinator of Conservation Areas Jennifer Howley; and the 16th orientation day for Jack "Bear" McMullan, Grounds Maintenance staff at Pittock CA. Staff reminisced about how this day has evolved over the years – and all agreed that lunch has always been the most important part of the day!

Thank go to all the UTRCA staff and board members who came out to present information or greet the new staff. Your contributions were well received and greatly appreciated.

Contact: Ryan Datema, Superintendent, Pittock CA

Bringing Home Climate Change

On Tuesday, March 29, the UTRCA hosted the "Bringing Home Climate Change" event at the Wolf Performance Hall in London. Over 100 people attended the event to hear internationally-



UWO graduate students provided an informal poster session before the evening's presentations.

recognized local scientists present the most current global and local information about climate change.

The event included a poster session and presentations. Graduate students from the University of Western Ontario (UWO) presented an informal poster session to highlight the results of their recent research. Each project investigated an approach to quantifying uncertainty in modeling future extreme precipitation events.

The presentations provided a continuum of perspectives on climate change – from global to local. Dr. Gordon McBain, Director of Policy Studies at the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction and Professor in the Departments of Geography and Political Science at UWO, provided the global perspective. Dr. Donald Burn, Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Waterloo, provided an overview of the challenges faced when using global models to predict climate change impacts on the local level. Dr. Slobodan Simonovic, Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Director of Engineering Studies at the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction at UWO, explained the impacts of climate change expected in the upper Thames River watershed. The presentation are available at www.thamesriver.on.ca

Contact: *Teresa Hollingsworth, Coordinator, Community & Corporate Services*

70,000 Trees Planted in 3 Weeks!

A sure sign that spring has arrived is the beginning of the tree planting season at the UTRCA. This year, more than 70,000 trees will be planted throughout the upper Thames River watershed.

This year's efforts continue a legacy of planting trees in both rural and urban areas. The UTRCA has planted over 10,000,000 trees throughout the watershed since 1950.

Staff visited more than 200 landowners last fall to organize planting plans and discuss conservation practises. To qualify for this private lands planting program, landowners must own 1 hectare or more and plant at least 25 large stock trees or 100 seedlings.

The Communities for Nature program will also contribute, planting nearly 10,000 native trees and shrubs.



The arrival of the trees in April is a busy time for forestry and CA staff.

The benefits of tree planting include:

- improving water quality by creating a natural buffer,
- reducing soil erosion by planting wind breaks,
- improving air quality, and
- increasing habitat for wildlife.

UTRCA staff can also assist landowners with soil erosion control, woodlot management, water quality improvements, and nutrient management. Funding is available through the Clean Water Program www.cleanwaterprogram.ca

Upcoming Events

- April-May: Community Forestry Program
- April 30: Stoney Creek Community Day, London
- May 17-20: St. Thomas-Elgin Children's Water Festival
- May 23: Fanshawe Optimist Fireworks (rain date May 29), Fanshawe CA
- June 4-5: Oxford County Triathlon, Pittock CA
- June 18: The Wild Ride, Wildwood CA
- June 18: Outdoor Day, Fanshawe CA

Contact: *Steve Sauder, Marketing Specialist*

On the Agenda

The following items will be presented at the UTRCA Board of Directors meeting on April 26th, 2011. Board meeting minutes are posted at www.thamesriver.on.ca; click on "Downloads."

- Capital Maintenance Funding Request- Conservation Areas
- Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 Report
- Watershed Conservation Centre Update - 3D Rendering of the new Watershed Conservation Centre
- Conservation Ontario Update

Contact: *Susan Shivas, Executive Assistant*

