



Fall 2011

# The View from Foley Mountain \*

## News from the Friends of Foley Mountain

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## Another Busy Year

The Friends of Foley Mountain have had a busy year!

At the end of May, we hosted our Annual General Meeting in cooperation with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority who held a Board meeting at Foley Mountain on the same day. The evening included a well attended family barbecue for our members as well as a celebration of the completion of many projects by the Friends of Foley Mountain and the RVCA over the past few years including a ceremony to announce the naming of the Jack Herbert Mobility Trail in honour of one of our most generous local donors. A number of dignitaries were present including our member of Parliament, local mayors and members of the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation.

Our major fundraising project for the year was our community auction held in August which again was a great evening from both a fun and financial perspective. Many thanks to all those who contributed items for the auction, to those who attended the dinner and bid on items, and to Ruth Pedherney, Mary Loucks, and Pat Brown and the other Board members who organized the event. The event raised over \$5500 which is being used to support programs at Foley Mountain including the rental

of amphibians for the Children's Discovery Centre and contributions towards the environmental education programs and hiring of a summer student for Foley Mountain.

The Friends also hosted the "Doors Open" event at Foley Mountain in September, participated in the Westport Heritage Fair, and sponsored a prize for the best painting done in Foley Mountain as part of the "Plein Air" Art Contest sponsored by the local Chamber of Commerce.

The Friends, along with the Hudson Burnbrae Foundation, Kudrinko's, the RVCA and Rideau Valley Hearth and Home partnered to provide funding to purchase and install a new cast iron fireplace insert

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# Thank You!

Thanks to contributions from the Hudson Burnbrae Foundation, Rideau Valley Hearth and Home, the Friends of Foley Mountain, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, and Kudrinko's Country Market, the Foley Mountain Interpretive Centre is now equipped with a high efficiency wood burning fireplace insert and chimney liner. This will certainly be a great asset to groups that use the building over the winter and help encourage more use during the cooler shoulder seasons. For more information about the Interpretive Centre, contact Rebecca at 613-273-3255 or [rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca](mailto:rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca).

## Walking in a Winter Wonderland

In not so long, the hills and forests of Foley Mountain will be blanketed in a layer of fluffy white snow. Foley Mountain Conservation Area is open all year round and is a great place to get out and enjoy the winter weather. The trails are perfect for a day out on snowshoes. Pack a snack and thermos of hot chocolate and stop to enjoy one of the several scenic lookouts over Westport and the Upper Rideau Lake. For those of you looking to try out and learn more about this growing winter sport, public snowshoeing clinics are held throughout January and February. Contact Rebecca at 613-273-3255 or [rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca](mailto:rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca) for more information.

\* 'The View From Foley Mountain', is used with permission of Peri McQuay, the author of the original book:

'The View From Foley Mountain.'

## Fun in the Summer Sun

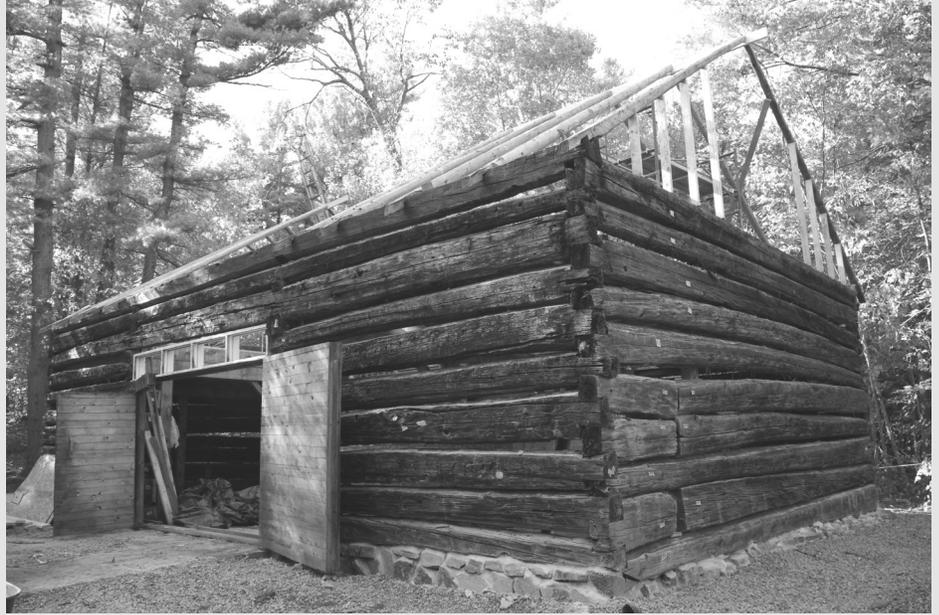
As always, Foley Mountain was a popular summer destination for local residents and seasonal visitors this summer. With the variety of hiking trails, picnic areas, and the natural swimming area, it makes for a lovely afternoon in the woods.

The summer education program has been evolving over the past several years to try and best meet the needs of park visitors. This year, family nature programs were held each Tuesday and Thursday morning to welcome families of all age groups to explore and discover the wonders of Foley Mountain. As a trial program, full day programs were offered over the course of the summer for children aged 6 through 12. The response to this program was very positive and the RVCA staff plan to expand on this approach for the 2012 season. The Children's Nature Discovery Centre was also open Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 10am – 4pm. Park visitors used the facilities with great enthusiasm and enjoyed the various displays, including the live reptiles sponsored by the Friends of Foley Mountain. These programs were supported, in part, by the Friends of Foley Mountain through a contribution towards the salary of the education summer student.



For more information about our summer programs, including feedback and interest in full day programming, please contact Rebecca at 613-273-3255 or [rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca](mailto:rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca).

## Silversides Log Heritage Barn



Currently, there is an additional building being re-constructed at the group camping site at Foley Mountain Conservation Area.

The 28 ft. by 44 ft. log barn has been moved from the Perth Wildlife Area where it has existed since the 1980s after being relocated from its original site on a farm near Otty Lake.

Building contractor, Greg Fleming, is the on-site supervisor for the relocation project which includes a team of labourers who are gaining skills in the job creation program sponsored by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities.

"We're trying to save and recycle as much as possible. We're trying for 90% recovery," said Fleming.

The logs, rafters and pieces of the floor system were individually numbered for re-assembly at Foley Mountain, where the pine log building has been rebuilt on a concrete pad and provided with

new chinking and a new roof.

During its sojourn at Perth Wildlife Area, the building had been refitted with stairs to the second story and had served as a museum for woodworking tools from the Silversides family. Those artifacts have become part of the collection at the Rideau Canal Museum in Smiths Falls, thus leaving this building unused.

At Foley Mountain the building will be used for the storage of educational materials with a view to eventually serving as additional shelter for education groups who are participating in the park's programs on the upper level of the park. The park is owned and operated by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority which is actively seeking grants to pay for additional construction materials to complete the project.

For more information, contact Rebecca at 613-273-3255 or [rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca](mailto:rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca).

Find information about the Friends of Foley Mountain and updates at:

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which will increase the use of the Foley Mountain Visitor Centre in the shoulder seasons.

If you've been to Foley Mountain recently, you probably noticed an historic log structure being erected in the group camping area. This project, being led by the RVCA, will result in a new outdoor learning centre facility which is discussed later in this newsletter. The Friends of Foley Mountain has been the recipient of a significant contribution from a local donor to put towards phase one of this project which involved dismantling and moving the shell of the building to Foley Mountain. Stay tuned for a further announcement in early 2012 when we will outline plans to do further fund raising to assist the RVCA in phase 2 which involves the fit up of the inside of the building.

As a final note, I would like to thank all our members and particularly your Board of Directors: Ruth Pedherney (Vice President), Sandy Cameron (Treasurer), Mary Bowlby (Secretary), Don Goodfellow, Pat Brown, Mary Loucks, Joe McNally, Pete Stothart, Margaret Brand and Angela Archambault; for their support.

We still have a few vacant seats on our Board. If you are interested in volunteering, please give me a call at 273-8578.

You will also find a membership renewal form as part of this newsletter. We count on your support and contributions to continue our work at Foley Mountain. Please take a few minutes and renew your membership for 2012. Thank You.

Mike Fay  
President  
Friends of Foley Mountain

## Fantastic Fall at Foley Mountain



Along with the changing colours of the leaves, this fall brought week after week of beautiful weather conditions! This made for a wonderful season of viewing the fall colours and enjoying all Foley Mountain has to offer. The park was visited by school groups and community groups as well as playing host to a fundraising fun run for Rideau Vista Public School. Thanks to all involved for a great season.

### Friends of Foley Mountain Statement of Operating Account

*For the period January 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011*

<u>Revenue:</u>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Memberships	\$ 3695 *	\$ 9000
Fundraiser (Auction)	6792	6100
Grants & Donations	1045	1000
Bank Interest	315	300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 11 847</b>	<b>\$ 16 400</b>
<u>Expenses:</u>		
Administration	\$ 177	\$ 200
Educational		500
Advertising, Promotion, Newsletter	118	1200
Miscellaneous	364	100
Fundraiser	1223	1600
Memberships		500
Animal Rental	865	800
RVCA Contribution (Accrued)	8000	8000
Summer Student topup (Accrued)	2500	2500
Special Projects (Accrued)	1000	1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 14 247</b>	<b>\$ 16 400</b>

\* Goal is to increase membership revenue to the budget level by year end

# The Forest Never Sleeps

Although the face of the forest changes drastically in the winter months, many animals are still very active during the frosty Canadian winter. The conditions are harsh and temperatures low but the battle for survival never stops. The great thing about winter is that even though we might not be around when these animals are out, they often leave behind tracks and signs in the snow that can tell us what they have been up to.



**Owls** – These silent hunters are amazing creatures that leave little evidence of the paths they fly through the dark winter nights. However, you might be lucky enough to find a print left behind in the snow of the owl's wings, tail, and talons where they have swooped in to catch the prey they had been stalking. With their large eyes and sensitive hearing, owls are experts at tracking down critters that scamper over or under the snow on dark winter nights. They are also equipped with flight feathers that are constructed to allow for silent flight. One other sign you may find are owl pellets. These are the undigested remains of fur and bones that are coughed back up after feeding. They are often found at the base of a tree where the owls are nesting or roosting during the day.

Common owls observed at Foley Mountain include the Great Horned Owl, the Barred Owl, and the Screech Owl.

**White-tailed Deer** – The winter is a difficult time for the white-tailed deer. Their regular meal of grasses and other herbaceous plants becomes covered with snow. They then move to the less palatable and often difficult to reach twigs and needles. Deer browse can be distinguished from rabbit browse by the cut of the twig. A rabbit will bite a twig with their sharp front teeth, leaving behind a clean 45 degree cut whereas deer tear twigs with their molars leaving a rough break. Deer are usually more active a night during the winter when they are feeding. During the day, they can often be found resting in sheltered places. They stay in relatively small areas during the winter months where they pack down a network of trails to help them navigate through the deep snow and reach their food. Areas where these trails become denser and where deer gather are called deer yards. Look for heart shaped prints with two hoof marks and piles of oval shaped scat.

**Ruffed Grouse** – This mostly ground dwelling bird is highly adapted to life in the winter wilderness. Every fall, small comb-like projections grow along their toes. Like snowshoes, this increases the surface area of their feet to make travel over the snow easier. The ruffed grouse also has an interesting way of using the insulating snow to stay warm through the long winter nights. When the snow is soft, the ruffed grouse will dive into the snow or scratch out a cavity, tunnel a short distance and snuggle in for the night. Look for tunnels, wing marks, and droppings to identify these quinzees built by our feathered friends.

## Bundle Up and Enjoy!

Here are few suggestions of fun things you and your friends and family can do on a winter trip to Foley Mountain:

- When it is snowing, take some chilled black construction paper outside. Get up close and personal with the snowflakes that fall on the paper using a small hand lens or magnifying glass. What shapes and designs can you see?
- Go for a winter scavenger hunt and look for signs of wildlife. Here are some things you can look for (adapted from "Hands-on Nature", edited by Jenepher Lingelbach and Lisa Purcell):
  - ◆ Tracks of at least 3 different animals. Follow them and see if you can come up with the story behind the patterns.
  - ◆ Five things that animals might eat and try and figure out who might eat them.
  - ◆ 3 signs of animals eating
  - ◆ Shelters for 3 animals
  - ◆ A place where an animal has hidden food
  - ◆ Stop, look, and listen – what other animal signs do you see?
  - ◆ Choose an animal, pretend you are it, and find a place to hide from a predator or storm.
- Bring along a small bag full of seeds or nuts. Visit our winter bird feeding station at the third picnic area and see if you can get the chickadees and nuthatches to eat from your hand. Before you visit, make an easy birdfeeder by tying a string to a pine cone, slathering the pine cone with peanut butter, and rolling it in bird seed. Add it to our birdfeeder collection!