

Climate activist and stewardship council work together to ?green? Bancroft



May 26, 2020 By Nate Smelle

Thanks to Bancroft 10-year-old climate striker Brynn Kilpatrick and Ian Hendry on behalf of the Bancroft Area Stewardship Council, North Hastings' future is now looking a little greener. Inspired by the young activist's weekly school strike for climate ? currently on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic ? Ian Hendry, on behalf of the Stewardship Council recently donated 100 trees to be planted at various locations throughout the Town of Bancroft. Four different species of trees ? 30 sugar maple, 20 white pine, 20 red pine, and 30 white birch ? were planted by town staff at Bancroft's Millennium Park, Riverside Park, Churchill Park, and the Dungannon Recreation Centre. Brynn joined the crew with her father Bill on Wednesday, May 13 to help plant the last bundle of trees outside the Bancroft Train Station in Riverside Park. Although Brynn hasn't been on the picket line at the Bancroft Climate Strike for a few months now because of COVID-19, she has been using her time to better understand the environment she is fighting to protect. Spending as much time outdoors as possible, Brynn said has been expanding her environmental awareness by connecting with nature. From hiking with her mom, touring the trails with her dad on the ATV, and birding in the backyard, she has been learning a lot. Reflecting on what she has learned from her experience of watching a mother robin raise her young in a nest in her family's backyard, Brynn said ?I did not know they were this protective. I have also learned how when there is a predator nearby the mom chirps a really loud chirp that will distract the predator to target her because she can fly. So then the babies are safe ? She sits on a high branch in an old dead tree and chirps to scare our cat Gaz off, or get us to scare him away. Sometimes I have to scare him away with a stick. If we didn't do this they'd be dead by now. All this has happened in less than a month! I come out here like every single day just to watch them. ?In her backyard, Brynn said she has seen many other species including bluebirds and what she thinks were a pair of peregrine falcons. She sees these type of learning experiences in nature as something positive to come out of the pandemic. Recognizing how all levels of government have stepped up to collaborate in the fight against COVID-19 by closing schools and businesses, Brynn would like to see a similar degree of action taken to address the climate crisis. Pointing out how the death toll from the increasing number of extreme weather events caused by climate change is greater than the number of fatalities caused by COVID-19, she said really highlights how serious a threat the climate crisis truly is. ?Tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, fires they have killed millions, ? said Brynn. ?This virus is probably going to go away at some point. Climate change is not just going to go away. ?As soon as the pandemic has passed and it is safe to assemble with her fellow environmentalists, Brynn said she plans to resume with the weekly School Strike for Climate every Friday.