

Big week of community initiatives for BASC



By Chris Drost

The past week was a very busy one for members of the Bancroft Area Stewardship Council, to the benefit of the community, and the local environment. On May 4, members of the stewardship council's board of directors gathered to assemble all the orders from the annual tree and shrub program. This initiative alone, results in approximately 8,000 trees and shrubs being planted across the region. "When you multiply that by the more than 20 years the program has operated, that is a lot of trees," said Ian Hendry, the stewardship council's chair. The volunteers gathered for a photo after assembling the orders in record time. Freymond Lumber kindly offered to pick up the seedlings once again this year. "The customers seemed happy with their orders and were very appreciative of the volunteers," added Hendry. On Sunday, May 7, about 22 cubs and six self-advocates, under the guidance of North Hastings Community Integration Association staff, descended on McGeachie Conservation Area in Limerick Township to plant 250 white pine tree seedlings. This area was devastated last May by a derecho, a severe windstorm that caused major damage to the conservation area, including the loss of many trees. The stewardship council donated the 250 tree seedlings and rounded up these individuals to help with the planting. "The kids were so enthusiastic," said BASC director, Fred Werner, who coordinated the planting. He also took the opportunity to teach the participants how to properly plant a seedling to achieve a better chance for success. On Monday, May 8, it was off to two locations for Hendry, and Werner, to complete the shoreline restoration projects, one at Lake St. Peter, and the other, at Albion Lake. Last fall, Werner visited the two sites and worked with the landowners, who were selected in a contest, to plan for the spring planting. The goal of the stewardship council's shoreline restoration project is to help bring awareness to the importance of re-naturalizing the waterfront at seasonal lakefront properties. More vegetation helps reduce runoff into the lake. On May 8 as well, the stewardship council's board member, Sheila Currie, headed out to Coe Hill Public School where additional plants were added to the school's existing butterfly garden. This garden is intended to attract all important pollinators to the garden, such as bees and butterflies. BASC also donated red oak seedlings and Bebb's willow for the lower area at the back of the school property.