



# Street to Trail Association

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Paul Mackle  
Executive Director

Street to Trail Association  
Report from the Board of Directors  
Annual General Meeting  
April 26, 2010

Society's neediest are often the worst hurt and the last to emerge from an economic recession. While the Street to Trail Association Board of Directors is pleased to report record fundraising and record participation in program activities in 2009, need remains acute and our financial condition remains tight. Last year, we stretched our resources as far as we could, making constant use of the van that was donated in 2008, buying food with Toronto Dollars, soliciting and receiving other donations in kind, building our network of volunteers on and off the trail, as we brought hope, light and dignity into the lives of the city's homeless. But ultimately, we fell short of our fundraising targets for 2009 and had to cut back on planned expenditures accordingly.

Highlights of the year include:

1. **A record number of participants on S2T outings.** Total participation on 19 day hikes, 8 overnight camping and canoe trips, and several other activities involving S2T voyageurs, was 283, up 37% from our 2008 numbers. Executive Director Paul Mackle reports that activity levels underscored logistical problems: at times, we reached transportation capacity.
2. **Trip destinations varied according to weather conditions and the hiking skills of the participants.** Building on our success with winter outings begun in 2007, we held two winter camping trips and repeated the successful overnight New Year's Eve excursion. Paul uses visits to the Island to train assistants and voyageurs in camping skills and land stewardship, presenting certificates to those who participate in the programs.
3. **The second annual Street to Trail 5km Hike-a-Thon in Toronto's Taylor Creek Park held on May 30.** We raised more than \$10,000 from this event with total participation nearing 100 friends of S2T. This annual fixture has established itself as our major fundraiser. More details on the 2011 hike are included with this letter.
4. **No new camping or canoeing equipment purchases again in 2009, due to budget constraints.** We continue to benefit from our relationship with Mountain Equipment Co-op for purchases and donations of miscellaneous hiking gear. The Board has appealed to major donors for gifts of equipment with tents and canoes badly needed.
5. **Extensive media and external recognition.** Last Spring, a crew from CBC Weekend Report followed Paul and S2T on the streets of Toronto, on a hike to Scottsdale Farm and camping and canoeing at Poker Lake – a compelling portrayal of the power of the program. We also spread the word with a Centennial College video, a story for the Toronto Star which ran in January, 2010, participation in Paddlefest at Sunnyside Beach, and a citation by the City of Toronto accompanied by a donation of Toronto Dollars. Details of these and other activities can be accessed through our much-improved web site and on Paul's blog ([www.street-to-trail.org](http://www.street-to-trail.org)).

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6. **Changes to S2T Board of Directors.** Kathy Biasi, director of Wychwood Open Door, leaves us after four years of valued contribution. We will miss Kathy's hands-on perspective on our program's clients and her experience in navigating through the city's social agency and funding sources. At the Annual Meeting, we will be pleased to nominate two new candidates for the Board, Jeremy Toman and Cécile Thompson. Jeremy is a student at the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine and has been an active supporter of S2T for the past year. Cécile, after careers in the military and education, now volunteers for several social agencies in downtown Toronto.

In 2009, we raised a record \$53,500, but still fell short of our target. You will notice that we have included the Hike-a-Thon flyer in this package to save postage costs and that we have used black and white photocopies for this letter to save printing costs. Our Treasurer, Dorothy Browne, will present detailed financials and our 2010 budget at the Annual Meeting.

While S2T can readily track the number of participants in our activities, the funds raised, the outings undertaken and the costs incurred, numbers don't express the changes we can bring about to someone's life. Richard, who was interviewed on the CBC program, sent us this heartfelt testimonial last Autumn:

On the first hike with Paul, I was fighting a gambling problem and was living on the streets. There were times life seemed hopeless. But every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month I had Paul's hikes to look forward to. The hikes gave me a chance to experience nature and leave all my problems behind, if just for one day.

A former employer saw Richard on TV and helped him find a job. Richard is now in permanent housing, but remains in close touch with Paul and the program.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Executive Director Paul Mackle, I wish to thank you for your continued support. Please consider a donation to Street to Trail at this time, and help ensure that we don't have to cut back on planned activities this summer. We look forward to seeing you on the trail!

Sincerely,



Denton Creighton,  
Chair of the Board, Street to Trail Association