

Exclamations of Delight...All the Way from Denmark!

*by Tom Zietsma
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I recently had the sometimes-publicized negative image of youth and university students in particular, completely shattered. It happened on a lovely winter afternoon when I was on a Karst lands tour with some members of FOTEK (Friends of the Eramosa Karst), Maya (Coordinator McMaster Outdoors Club), and Line Dahl-Pederson, a Danish exchange student. The latter two were delighted to explore the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area and the adjoining lands.

As we started our tour we pointed out the 80 acre parcel of land FOTEK is trying to protect. We told them that the features they were about to see, were in danger of being seriously damaged if development on the said parcel takes place. Line, a first-time visitor, has undoubtedly seen many parts of the world, yet she was overwhelmed time and again as we pointed out the area's natural beauty. She marveled at the habitat with its caves, sinking streams, cave windows, karst formations, deer, coyotes, wild turkeys and countless species of birds. As we walked from feature to feature, Line and Maya could not contain how impressed they were. The natural "amphitheatre" was pointed out and at the "eternal stream" we paused to reflect and talk.

Line could not believe that development was even being remotely considered on the lands to the east of the Karst land. She exclaimed, "Obviously hundreds of houses plus development will hurt these beautiful formations. Why would anyone want to do this?" It was a somber moment down by the flowing stream.

On our way back, Maya promised full support of the McMaster Outdoors Club to protect this very unique gem. Line expressed regret that she was not staying in Canada to help fight for the preservation of this vital land. Line Dahl-Pederson has gone back to Denmark now, but her reaction to what she saw and experienced no doubt lives on in her and our memory. After seeing the area firsthand, she has become an avid international supporter of the Friends of The Eramosa Karst.

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