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MEDIA RELEASE

Blueberry Hill Estates named 2016 Sustainable Tourism Ambassador

NORFOLK COUNTY, January 19, 2017 – Blueberry Hill Estates took home the *2016 Sustainable Tourism Ambassador of the Year Award* presented by the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation at the Economic Development Symposium on January 18th in Port Dover.

The award honours leaders in sustainability whose businesses have made significant differences in the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of Norfolk County. The award is a symbol of achievement and celebrates the accomplishments of community and business leaders who have actively engaged the tourism community to promote and encourage best practices.

The Vranckx family has taken a traditional tobacco farming background and turned it into a blueberry farm and winery known for their distinct cultural and natural assets.

Their focus is to preserve the unique environmental character of Norfolk County and are committed stewards of the land demonstrated through their many environmental projects, said Paul Givens, Director of the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation.

“We are so honoured to receive this award from such an important organization in our community. At Blueberry Hill, we strive towards creating as sustainable an environment and business as possible. This is just the beginning for us, as our family is continually investigating new ventures to add to our sustainable tourism initiatives” stated Nick Vranckx, Winemaker at Blueberry Hill Estates.

Five excellent nominations were received, which made the task of selecting a winner that much more difficult by the members of the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundations’ Board of Directors. They included Canada’s First Forestry Station, Long Point Eco-Adventures, Long Point Beach Club and Tree Climbing Canada and Blueberry Hill Estates.

The 2016 Sustainable Tourism Ambassador of the Year Award was crafted by local artist, Jack Worton, from Long Point. The sculpture is of a Heron carved from Norfolk black walnut mounted on white alabaster secured to a stained white oak base, Blueberry Hill Estates receives a year-long membership from the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation and a decorative plaque to display at their property.

The Sustainable Tourism Ambassador of the Year Award is just one initiative of the Biosphere’s sustainable tourism project in partnership with Norfolk County. Previous winners include, Whistling Gardens and Bonnieheath Lavender Farm. The Long Point Biosphere, together with Georgian Bay, and Frontenac Arch, received an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant to help advance sustainable tourism in each biosphere community through the Amazing Places project visitamazingplaces.ca. For more information about sustainable tourism initiatives in Norfolk, visit www.longpointbiosphere.ca