

AGM ON APRIL 26

Environment Hamilton's Annual General Meeting is set to take place on Tuesday, April 26th starting at 7pm in the auditorium of the Main Office – Hamilton Wentworth District School Board.

We are very pleased to announce that our guest speaker this year is Dr. Mike Waddington from McMaster University's Centre for Climate Change.

Dr. Waddington will provide an overview of the purpose of the Centre and will share insights into the Centre's understanding of how climate



change will impact Hamilton. As usual, the AGM will also include an overview of Environment Hamilton's project and advocacy work over the past year.

Join us for our AGM!

Tuesday, April 26th – 7pm

100 Main Street West at Bay

Auditorium – Main Office

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board

**Please use the Bay Street Entrance*

All are welcome! Refreshments will be served.



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EH's 10TH ANNIVERSARY THOUGHTS OF A CO-FOUNDER

Brian McHattie, one of the founders of Environment Hamilton a decade ago, ranks the adoption of an environmental justice approach as its major achievement.

Environmental groups working in the city 10 years ago, "tended to be fairly low key. They weren't as in your face as might be required.

A justice approach, "made the link that a lot of bad air quality, bad water, existed in areas of the city where there were also poverty and low income issues, areas where people didn't have the same tools to fight Stelco and Dofasco.

"It was giving these people the tools to record what they were seeing and then engage the legal process through the Ministry of the Environment to seek change," the ward one councillor said. "To be frank, we needed an organization that would call a spade a spade and say that the air and water pollution that was occurring was unacceptable . . . Environment Hamilton took a bit more of a combative role. To me, that was the departure point from other environmental groups in town."

He also recalls the Red Hill Expressway as a pivotal turning point. The work of environmental groups meant the highway was, "the most environmentally friendly road you could have
see Brian McHattie on page 2



Moving Planet: Beyond Fossil Fuels

Global Day of Action on Climate Change

Saturday September 24 - Mark the Date



ENVIRONMENT MINISTER COMING IN MAY

Back in November of 2010, we reported that new provincial Environment Minister John Wilkinson had committed to come to Hamilton to visit with EH staff and residents concerned about lack of provincial action on key proposed air standards. These proposed standards include limits for emissions on key contaminants including benzene and benzo(a)pyrene, cancer-causing substances emitted from the coke making process at our local steel mills.

The minister's visit has now been confirmed for next month.



THANK YOU ADAM!

For almost 3 months now Adam Pallett, our co-op student from the University of Waterloo's Faculty of Environmental Studies, has been working hard to help further our walkability efforts in Dundas. Adam took the public input gathered through walkability assessments conducted during last year's Dundas EcoMotion project and organized the information into a report that was released to the community in March. On the heels of the release, he organized a public meeting and successfully recruited a core group of 12 enthusiastic Dundas residents to continue to serve on a walkability working committee for the town. On top of all of this, he has become actively involved in sustainable transportation issues in Ancaster where he lives. He will be returning to his studies at Waterloo in May. All of us at EH want to extend our sincere thanks to Adam for all of his hard work. Adam – you've made a difference in Dundas and we really appreciate it!

BRIAN McHATTIE continued from page 1

got," citing ecological monitoring, tree planting and natural stream channel design. "They spent many more millions of dollars on it than they otherwise would have."

As Environment Hamilton enters its second decade, longstanding problems remain with some having the potential to become more acute. 'A lot of the pollution issues are still there, the kind of stuff that's been worked on for many decades. Lynda and EH are still having challenges with Dofasco, for example. There are various emissions they're still not dealing with.

"On the land use side, there's the urban boundary extension and potential loss of farmland.

"The other issue I think is important is biodiversity, the loss of species in the Hamilton area due to the loss of habitat, largely, or the quality of habitat. It's an incremental loss, but nobody's really doing a cumulative assessment on that . . . There is loss related to habitat, climate change, and air and water quality.

"I think we need to develop a big picture strategy on that. From a strategic perspective, we need to decide who plays what role on the activist side, the NGO side, and how do you get the city to raise its game and the Conservation Authority to do something a bit more activist than they are.

"For example, we're going to build a housing development and there is a 15-metre buffer to the forest. Is that adequate? I would suggest definitely not, but that tends to be the standard comment of conservation authorities. How do you get them to take a more scientific examination on what that buffer should be?

McHattie believes the future will see continued expansion of grassroots citizen environmental involvement. "There's increased awareness amongst the population. The children going through school are much more aware of these issues, but it's not a given that governments will be more responsive.

"Here, we will do stuff that's easy to do, like energy conservation because there's a financial benefit. But questions like the housing buffer issue, for example, are the real tests. Are we really serious about this stuff? I think we have a long way to go.

"I'm clearly in the minority on council. For whatever reason, progressive people or environmentalists, whatever you want to call them, aren't running for council and if they are, they aren't being effective. That's my frustration as one of 16 members of council."

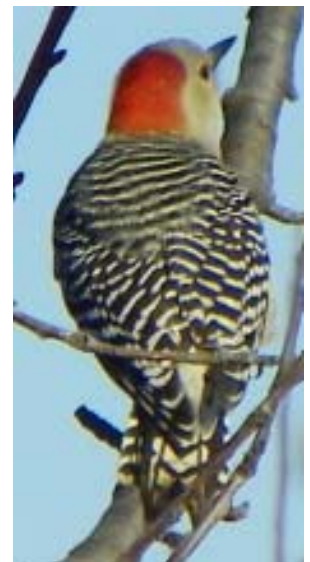


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DEEPLY FLAWED ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

The Eramosa Karst Conservation Area and Eramosa Karst Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) are destined to become an isolated pocket of wildlife habitat stranded in a sea of development. Development has already occurred to the north and east, and is ongoing to the south. Development to the west is currently being planned. The only question is whether the final size of the Conservation Area will be 180 acres (as currently designated), or 260 acres (if the feeder ANSI lands are added).



**What species were found by
Paid Consultants (PC)
versus EH Volunteer (EH)**
At Risk: PC-0 EH-4
Birds: PC-39 EH-77
Snakes: PC-0 EH-1
Frogs: PC-0 EH-2
Butterflies: PC-0 EH-17

The good news is that the feeder ANSI lands are publicly owned (by the Ontario Realty Corporation, ORC). The bad news is that the ORC wishes to sell the lands for development.

It is well known from island biogeography that the number of species an area can sustainably support increases greatly with increased size. The ecological functions of the Eramosa Karst ANSI are best maintained if the plant and animal species in the feeder area are not destroyed by the razing that precedes the building of roads, buildings, and other hard structures. In order to maintain the environmental integrity of the Eramosa Karst ANSI, the 80 acres of the ANSI feeder area need to be added to the currently designated Eramosa Karst Conservation Area.



The ORC paid consultants (“Ecoplans”) to prepare an Environmental Assessment of its proposal to develop on the ANSI feeder lands (most of which are contained in “ANSI Area H”). Ecoplans concluded that razing 80 acres of land within the ANSI would not “impact the environmental integrity of the ANSI”. At public meetings, Ecoplans told the public that there was nothing of significance in Area H, and in particular that there were no “species of risk” and no “species of conservation concern”.

The Ecoplans survey team saw very little in Area H: no snakes, no frogs, and only 39 species of birds. In contrast, a single volunteer observer found snakes, frogs (two species), butterflies (17 species), and 77 species of birds. Four of these species are Species At Risk: monarchs (Special Concern), nighthawks (Threatened), chimney swifts (Threatened), and bobolinks (Threatened).

A population of bobolinks consisting of at least three adult males as well as females and fledglings bred successfully in Area H in 2010 (a “Confirmed Breeding Record”). The Ecoplans/ORC favored development plan would totally eliminate



this Threatened Species At Risk from the ANSI, as well as destroying habitat for three other Species At Risk.

Consequently, if the development plan favored by Ecoplans/ORC is carried out the result would be a violation of provincial law (the Endangered Species Act) by the provincial government. Is this “environmental integrity”?



SPEED GREENING

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to speed-date? There is no time to waste in the speed-dating world and if you don't like someone, you just have to move on. This can be fun, but it can be psychologically conflicting to just move on to another person.

On Sunday March 13th, Environment Hamilton and Greening Sacred Spaces managed to take all of the good parts of speed-dating and threw it all into a beautiful gathering with speakers from six organizations that told us what they're doing to "green-up" places of worship around Hamilton. The speakers each had their own booth, in which people who attended could visit and hear about their project implementations.



There was a time-limit to visit each booth and a special Tibetan bell would ring when it was time to move on to the next speaker. As well, there was only enough time to visit the three booths that really took your fancy, so there was no time to beat around the bush with this form of speed-dating! This was a great way to learn because with the limited amount of time, each speaker could only share the truly important parts of their projects while being able to maintain the listener's attention. This was a very personal form of presenting because there would be a very small group of people gathered around a speaker in each "round".

To start the day, we had the good fortune of having a heart-opening prayer, along with a short video that expressed what a few churches in Hamilton are doing to be greener. This video focussed on the idea of implementing solar electric technologies. Then when the speed-greening began, it was possible to hear more on energy efficiency and energy audits with Will Klassen from Green Venture. If one felt that one needed to "date" some more with the topic of energy saving in mind, one could have moved down to Graham Flint, an electrical engineer and entrepreneur, who spoke about renewable energy technologies.

If you then felt that you were all "energized-out" and were starting to get hungry, you could then try to date Loretta Jaunzarins, pastor of the Grace Lutheran Church, and Kevin McLeod, pastor of Faith Lutheran. They would try to win your heart with their Good Food Box Program. The project provides nutritious and primarily local (except for the exotic fruit and veggies that can't be grown in our precious cold climate) fruit and vegetables to Hamiltonians for a very low cost. There is a wide variety of fruit and vegetables provided in the food boxes, so it is very easy to find your liking and to get a colourful assortment of nutrients! This is a great way to promote eating well and locally!



You could then have the honour of speed-greening with Sue Carson, a member of the St. James Anglican church. If you were lucky, she would have talked to you about starting a green team or eco-group at your place of worship. This would be very special because her church is actually receiving the greening sacred spaces award this year! Last, but certainly not least, you could then speed green with Jim Sweetman from the waste reduction task force in Hamilton, in which you would have heard about the fantastic idea of implementing green bins in faith spaces.

It was a beautiful day filled with joy and valuable knowledge. We all got our secret desire to speed-date out of us, but now we all have a secret desire to speed green some more! Thank you to all of the wonderful speakers that came out and shared their projects with us and thank you, Hamiltonians, for making it happen. It couldn't have been done without you! Spring is here...time for life to begin and change to be implemented. Let's make this change a green one!

EH VOLUNTEER LOUEEN MADILL

A supernova of a volunteer, Loueen lends her prodigious skills not only to Environment Hamilton but to her church group (Westdale United), as well as organizations such Bay Area Restoration Council (BARC), Earth Day Hamilton, Hamilton Coalition on Pesticide Issues, Red Hill Valley, Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), The Cancer Society and the Ainslie Wood-Westdale Community Association.

A long standing member of Environment Hamilton, Loueen volunteers with our Eat Local project. Her background is occupational therapy and medical social work.

She is on the advisory committee of the Greening Sacred Spaces project, the Hamilton 350 committee, and the Environment Hamilton 10th Anniversary committee. We couldn't do without you, Loueen!

How did your interest in environment and sustainability begin?

I grew up in a family that was very committed to stewardship of God's creation.

As an air force family we moved around a lot until settling down around the Bay of Quinte, Trenton Ontario. There, we grew our own veggies, we canned our fruits, we composted. Both my parents were good at that- I just adopted it.

When I moved to Hamilton as an adult, my interest in these issues was something I wanted to carry on. I joined Westdale United Church in 1969. Westdale United is a very social justice oriented congregation. At the time, there was a program called *Hamilton Glass Gobbler* – a program at fire stations and you could separate the glass in the clear or the coloured bins for recycling. I got involved in that.

How long have you been involved with Environment Hamilton?

I knew about Bobbie Kennedy coming to speak (in 2001), but I wasn't able to go. I had followed Lynda's work concerning the Rennie St. Landfill and her taking the City to court. I was also involved in many other groups that cross over with Environment Hamilton. All of them led me to have interest in grassroots initiatives and I just enjoy being part of Environment Hamilton.

What do you like about volunteering?

To me, it's important to take control of our world in various ways. I've got time; I've got the will to help out the organizations and to make connections. I enjoy interacting with other people.

What do you like about volunteering with Environment Hamilton?

I love the fact that it is such a grassroots, outreach program that is concerned with many areas- trying to reach out and be effective.

I love the *Eat local* aspect and the connection with what people can do in their own backyards let alone to help rural farmers. It made me appreciate what taking care of the land gives back to us. I would encourage anyone, any age to connect with Environment Hamilton and there are so many ways one can to that.

In your opinion, do you think we've reached a critical mass of 'environmentally conscious' people or do we still have a ways to go?

It's difficult to assess because I am so often with the converted and I feel surrounded by a lot of like minded people. But I sometimes wonder- when you see some of the policies coming out of government- undermining what we have already accomplished. Or while chatting with some people and they're all, "Oh! I didn't know that."

What advice do you have for people contemplating volunteering?

Just start. Even with one small program or group.



Join Us!



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Memberships
\$25 per year
\$15/unwaged
& student

McMASTER SOCIAL WORK VOLUNTEERS



Pictured back row (from left): Zack Vinegar, Nikki Shannon, Katherine Viner, Andrea Williamson. Front (from left): MyLinh Tran, Josie Minella, Terri Mirecki, Rebekkah Claus.

We've been lucky to have McMaster student interns from the School of Social Work working with us over the past few weeks and with their help, Moving is Not an Option has been able to roll out projects supporting communities across the city. This included interviewing residents about their bus needs, helping prepare a community dinner and creating a website for a grandmothers' group who wanted to expand their outreach.

Zack Vinegar helped the Jamesville Community Centre with their new Tool Lending Library. On page seven, he explains how the project got started.

ABORIGINAL WISDOM SPEAKERS

Sage cleansing, indigenous chanting, and making connections with beautiful strangers. This and much more was how fifty Hamiltonians spent their sunny Sunday afternoon last week at a gathering with three Aboriginal speakers at the First Unitarian Church. We had the honour of hearing teachings about sacred beliefs found within their culture, as we gathered together in a circle. Forming a circle with face-to-face contact, which is typical in aboriginal culture, automatically gave each person a sense of connection, openness and equality. It was an opportunity to open up our hearts and share whatever we felt was necessary.

These teachings included learning about the four sacred medicines that coincide with the four directions and colours of the medicine wheel, including tobacco (east), mother earth's hair / sweet grass (south), sage (west), and cedar (north). Each of these medicines has special healing powers and symbolic meanings. Mind, body, spirit and emotion are what humans are made up of, in which the medicine wheel acknowledges. If there is sickness or sadness within, there is an imbalance in one of the divisions of the wheel. This idea applies to nature as well. In aboriginal culture, unity and equality is seen within all of creation, as nature is our counterpart. All

elements on the planet are organs of mother earth and through these elements she responds to our actions, just as we respond to hers.

Two things were key in this teaching. The first is that love is a miracle drug that is found within our spirits, however in order to release that miracle, we have to conquer the negativity that can bombard our bodies from time to time. The second is that all of the answers are found within. Take a moment and listen to your heart and you will feel the best feeling that you have ever felt in your life. That feeling is truth.



Prior to this gathering, most of the people at this event were strangers. After this gathering, these fifty people found an intimate connection with one another. Being drawn to the same place at the same time was certainly not a coincidence. There was a tingling in the air after fears were released and hearts were opened, as a sense of unity and purity was captured and contained within the circle. These good vibrations will have to continually be released in the rest of the year at more gatherings like this with Greening Sacred Spaces and Environment Hamilton. 2011 is time for change! Let's work together to make it happen Hamilton!

CONTAINER GARDENING WORKSHOP

Last month about 30 women gathered at the Environment Hamilton office to learn about container gardening from Rita Bailey, a Hamilton based writer, gardener and educator. She told us about getting started with a no-soil, mainly peat mixture indoors; planting things like tomatoes, peppers, mesclin mix in found containers of various sizes. According to Rita, it seems most of the things you need for gardening can be found at the side of the road when people get rid of them. She even mentioned cutting up old venetian blinds to label – as when you plant anything, the date and what you planted should be noted.

Rita also mentioned using a watering can with a very fine spray (one called a Haws can be purchased at Lee Valley), or a spray bottle in order to minimize impact on the seedlings and soil surface. Having your plants on an angle can maximize the amount of sunlight they receive, and be careful when transplanting tomato seedlings as their stems are very important for immunity and nutrient support.

Hearing that someone was able to grow 20 lbs of tomatoes on their roof is encouraging to say the least! Potatoes can also have a high yield; as soon as they start to sprout, place another container atop with the bottom cut out and plant more, when finished your constructed tower will be full of potatoes.

Rita also mentioned using sheep manure as a nutritional input. You can ‘steep’ the manure in water to create ‘manure tea’ which can then be used to water the plants while at the same time providing the nitrogen and phosphorus they need from a non-synthetic source. For further resources Rita mentioned Tregunno Seeds, and books by Lorraine Johnson and Sonya Day. She sent each of us home with a tomato seedling.



EMPOWERING TOOLS AT JAMESVILLE

Many residents in the North End neighbourhood of Jamesville are on a fixed income and cannot afford to buy tools if they want to do some gardening or fix their homes. So the Jamesville Community Centre has come up with a solution that’s also a first for Hamilton – a tool-lending library.

Reverend Sue-Ann Ward of St. Peters Anglican Church on James St North noticed that urban gardening and home “do-it-yourself” projects were on the rise and had been lending tools out informally at her church to people they knew well enough, but she wanted to expand the lending for free to residents too. “By borrowing tools instead of buying them, people will have more money for food and other things.”

Sue-Ann was on a visit to Kitchener for a social justice conference when she first saw a Tool Library in action. She visited a co-op called the Working Centre where people could borrow tools and with some guidance, acquire the skills to use them. She decided that the Working Centre provided a workable model she could bring back to her community.

The only problem was getting the tools: the Jamesville Centre had only a small assortment of tools – not enough for a lending library. So Environment Hamilton offered to help – and sent a note to the Hamilton Spectator. An article appeared just before Christmas last year and tool donations flooded in, much to everyone’s delight.

Other communities are interested to hear about this innovative project promoting both sustainability and community-building – so more tool libraries could spring up across the city. Stand-alone shelving and racks, as well as more tools are needed! If you have any you’d like to donate that are in good condition - everything from hammers to garden forks – contact Lorna Shaw at the Jamesville Community Centre at **905-525-3069**. Donations would be appreciated.



Join Us!



Join EH on-line

You can now join EH or renew your membership on-line. Simply click on the 'Become a Member' link from our home page, Fill out the application form and make a secure payment with Paypal or your credit card.

905 549-0900

www.environmenthamilton.org

Memberships \$25 per year or \$15/ unaged & student

DUNDAS ECO-MOTION PROJECT

The Dundas Eco-Motion Project continues to move forward in 2011, with co-op student Adam Pallett becoming project manager in February. In early March, a report highlighting the community's comments and concerns about Dundas walkability was released. That led to a



Walkers gather for a winter hike led by Richard Reble.

public meeting on March 16th at the Amica Retirement Residence, with the goal of prioritizing the concerns displayed in the report, and organizing a smaller group of keen Dundasians to create a Dundas Walkability Committee. There was certainly a large amount of energy at the meeting, with many enthusiastic attendees who provided very helpful feedback and comments.

With a passionate group of 20 coming together and providing a lot of input, it became clear that there are a lot of concerns and information to still be considered. As a part of the Dundas Eco-Motion Project, we hope to take the information gathered from the Walkability Committee, and discuss a couple of the most pressing issues in Dundas with Councillor Russ Powers. The goal will be to gain more information about what is being done in Dundas with respect to walkability, and what *can* be done or what the possibilities are.

NEW EH HOST ON CABLE 14

Partnering with our local cable provider, Eat Local has created a series of in-the-kitchen shorts (3-5 minutes each) that can be found on Cable 14's Hamilton Life, a daily lifestyle newsmagazine, highlighting the people, places, and things that make our city such a wonderful place to live. Cooking on-location with a variety of chefs and food producers from around the city, tune in to see our new host, Katie Stiel, showcase the great ways to utilize the delicious produce our city has to offer!

Karen Burson, Eat Local's previous host, will still be involved with the segment's production, but will be scaling back her on-air presence due to time constraints. With her love for local food and her passion for and cooking show addiction, Katie is excited to take on this new role and help cook up some tasty treats! Hamilton Life can be seen Mondays through Thursdays at 5:30pm, 6:30pm, 7:30pm, 8:30pm, 9:30pm, 10:30pm, and 11:30pm.

LOCAL FOOD AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Vermont farmer and author Ben Hewitt drew an enthusiastic crowd out to his February 23rd talk at the Freeway Cafe. Hewitt shared some lessons he's learned by observing the success that farms, restaurants and other local businesses in Hardwick, Vermont have had in sparking local economic development.

His approach to insight-sharing included examples of real people who play key roles in local sustainable food systems. For instance, Hewitt described a family of 'enablers' who serve as a mobile slaughterhouse, visiting farms as they need their services. He also shared his observations of some of the challenges that exist in socio-economically challenged communities where farming and food production are looked to as viable ways out of economic hardship. How do you deal with local food production that generates niche market products that most local residents can't afford to buy because of off-the-chart price points? While producers pursuing these markets can provide healthy wages to their workers, their product is often beyond the average consumer's reach. So, there were not answers to all of the challenges associated with creating a sustainable local food system, but there was plenty of great discussion.

The event was hosted by Environment Hamilton's Greening Our Local Economy (GOLE) project through the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, with sponsorship support from the Beasley Neighbourhood Association and Canadian Organic Growers.

If you're looking for a good read, Hewitt's book *The Town that Food Saved* is currently available in hard cover and set to be released in paperback in June of this year.

