



Neighbourhood News & Views

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE **AINSLIE WOOD / WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**
OF RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.

*"Building community
block by block"*



**Salvaging the
Garden**

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**Stream of
Dreams**

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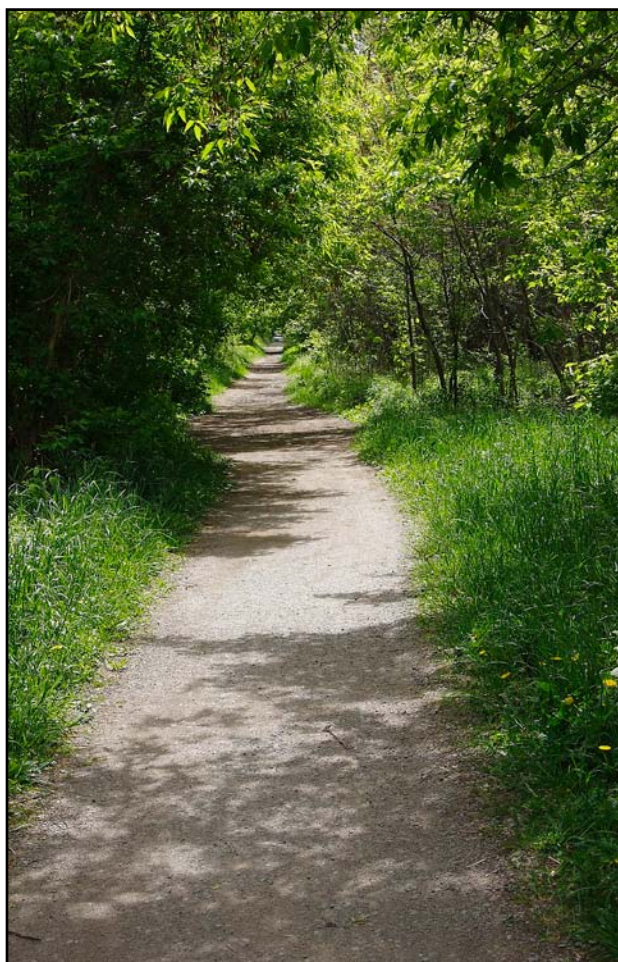
**2010
Year of Change**

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Thank You, Little Friends of the Rail Trail

On Earth Day, April 22, AWWCA member **Jeanne Bernard** visited with Grades 4 and 5 students at Prince Phillip Elementary School. Jeanne, a retired Halton District School Board secondary teacher, learned that almost all the students knew and used the Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail, and she explained the paving plan to them. Students then talked about what we could do to keep the earth "green" and specifically what could be done to preserve the natural habitat of the trail. They had been learning about how to support the natural environment with their teachers, **Colleen Morgan** and **Graham Boyce**.

After Jeanne's meeting with them, the children created and addressed 34 letters to the mayor, the ward councillor, and the editor of The Hamilton Spectator. In the letters, the students voiced enthusiastic opposition to the drastic pavement project, citing specific aspects of the environment that needed our stewardship and highlighting their own desire to continue to play and walk in a natural place. These letters



A five-meter-wide lighted tarmac roadway will replace this beautiful natural pathway.
Photo: Joe Grilec

show how aware the children are of their environment and the need to protect the natural habitat in this area for current and future uses.

RAIL TRAIL NEWS

ASPHALT SLATED TO COVER OUR NATURE TRAIL

BARB BLOEMHOF

As part of a city-wide infrastructure spree, the city plans to pave the existing nature trail that runs parallel to Main Street West between Stroud Road and Fortino's. The community was not consulted in the decision, being told in August 2009 that the former rail spur enjoyed by cyclists, runners, and people with strollers and pets would be replaced with a five-meter-wide lighted tarmac roadway that had been on the books since 2007. **Councillor Brian McHattie** is excited about completing the cycling plan, but is less cogent about why the only way to achieve this goal is via invasive paving. "My reasons are no more complicated than wanting to facilitate cyclists and commuters throughout the winter (i.e. removing snow) and facilitating other users such as those in wheelchairs etc.," he said in an e-mail dated April 21.

Residents have been asking since last August why paving the Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail is the only possibility, but have not heard compelling answers. Permeable surfaces that avoid the warming effects of tarmac and eliminate

drainage issues are the standard for year-round multi-use trails in a growing number of municipalities, and the Ministry of Natural Resources confirms that dirt or gravel paths can meet local accessibility plans. Besides being far less costly to establish and keep up, these more natural surfaces are harmonious with the existing landscape and character of the spaces.

At the March 31 meeting of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group at McMaster, an attendee commented that the fact that this is "a beautiful gem of a trail" is sufficient reason not to pave it; the main issue is not the cost of the paving, lighting, and ongoing maintenance but rather the destruction of the character of the trail. Part of the charm of the nature trail is that it currently looks like public property in the daytime and private property at night. If the trail is developed and lit at night, it may attract undesirable late-night usage. There will be virtually no buffer space between the trail and peaceful enjoyment of residential property. Furthermore, people living adjacent to the Ainslie Wood East Rail

Trail can expect the winter runoff of de-icing chemicals to leach into their vegetable gardens and kill plants on that perimeter. Although Mr. McHattie has said informally that they will not be used, people anticipate that he will have to renege on this pledge because a paved surface without de-icing chemicals will be more dangerous in winter than a permeable surface with natural friction.

The existing permeable surface should be preserved or gently enhanced so that it can go on supporting cyclists and others: runners, pet owners, families who enjoy the peacefulness of this area reclaimed by nature and valued by neighbours over the decades since the trains stopped running. There is no evidence that paving will increase the number of commuters cycling along it, and there are quiet streets nearby that are more congruent with the actual commuting traffic flows, all currently lit and maintained year round. So it seems unnecessary that the vision for a cycling-friendly city should depend upon damaging a valuable community asset forever.

As the project's environmental assessment ought to show, building a five-meter-wide roadway has negative environmental, nuisance, social, and speed impacts on the Ainslie Wood community that outweigh any benefits from people not using their cars. Tax money spent on such projects would be better spent on other necessary projects.

A petition of approximately 170 names from people who are opposed to paving the trail was delivered to the mayor and all councillors on May 3. You can contact the Friends of Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail at foarwert@gmail.com.

Barb Bloemhof resides in Ainslie Wood East; she can be reached at bloemhof@canada.com.



Joggers prefer to run on permeable surfaces, and residents enjoy gardening beside the trail.

Photo: Joe Grilec

Heritage Designation Requested for the Rail Trail

JANET WOODWARD

The AWWCA on Feb. 5 formally requested that the City of Hamilton grant heritage designation of the Rail Trail in West Hamilton under the Ontario Heritage Act, and we copied our councillor on the application. It is council that approves the designation, which is enacted in a bylaw. Designation is under provincial legislation that enables the municipality to act.

Before making the application, AWWCA member **Malcolm Horsnell** and I met with city cultural-heritage planners **Joseph Muller** and **Meghan House** on Jan. 15. We provided them with a disc containing 25 pictures of the main intersections of the trail, looking both east and west. Also on the disc were maps of the area of the trail for which designation is requested—from the east side of the old Chatham Street engine-service terminal to and including the bridge over Highway 2 (Main Street West) that leads to Ancaster.

We also provided them with a summary of Malcolm's history of the TH&B line in West Hamilton, which appeared in the autumn 2009 issue of the AWWCA's *Neighbourhood News & Views* (p. 32). In the same issue there are articles about the importance of the Rail Trail in the community (pp. 12 and 13). You can access this publication at media.awwca.ca/site_media/Autumn_09_newsletter.pdf.

The Rail Trail is well used by walkers and cyclists in all weather and at all times of the year. A report of the seventh annual Earth Day cleanup, a grassroots community initiative, is on page 25 of the spring 2009 issue at media.awwca.ca/site_media/newsletters/Spring2009cColour_mediumResolution.pdf. Also, the Rail Trail is featured in a section of our community website, Laneways and Rail Trail, at awwca.ca/stockphoto/laneways/.

Through heritage designation we aim to retain the defined cultural-heritage values, which would include:

- The existing right-of-way.
- Community gardens incorporated as part of the adaptive re-use of the rail corridor.
- Gardens (and perhaps community gardens) on the sides of the trail.



Rail Trail looking west from Emerson Street.

Photo: Janet Woodward

- Railway-crossing signs (crossbucks), perhaps similar to those on the trail at Jerseyville, at the sections of the trail where it crosses the north-south streets.
- A history of the rail line with interpretive panels along the trail, recreating the original railway fabric. The recreation could include a sample rail-crossing signal from the area, crossbucks from the area, along with any other interpretations. The tracks still imbedded at Broadway Avenue would be an ideal place for an interpretive panel.
- Public art reflecting the history of the TH&B and its impact on West Hamilton from 1892 to 1987.

Heritage designation is a long process, and this is just the first step. We will communicate with our members when we hear from the planners.

Janet Woodward is the AWWCA's newsletter co-ordinator.



Why I Like Living in Our Community

CATHERINE WEIR

When my husband bought our house in Ainslie Wood East in 1982, it was unloved and underappreciated. The lot itself, however, was pretty, with flowering trees, mature hedges, and three levels as you walked to the back of the property. An overgrown rock garden on a slope indicated that someone who once lived here had loved gardening. To this day I am pulling out the ever-prolific lemon balm. As for the house, soon to be 100 years old, my husband could see that it had potential.

This was our first home, but we were not quite ready to settle down. After doing some basic redecorating to make the house feel like ours, wanderlust took us to the United States, Mexico, and across Canada—partly by motorcycle with no backrest. Our elderly neighbours on both sides referred to us as “the hippie couple,” but over time we became fast friends. Our neighbour to the east, **Mrs. Gleave**, gave my husband marmalade whenever she made a batch. Our friend on the west side, **Betty Shimizu**, became my son’s surrogate grandmother; even though she has moved out of the community, we are still strongly connected.

When our son was four, we thought about living on Canada’s west coast for a year. We loved the idea of having the ocean at our door. Real estate prices, however, were plummeting in Ontario and soaring in British Columbia. I believe that everything happens for a reason, so we decided that, if the west coast was not accessible, we would stay in our home here and build a studio where I could work and continue to develop my career as a potter.

When our son went to school, he became friends with children from many cultural backgrounds due to the proximity of McMaster University. Alexander Park, next to Prince Philip School, was and is a great place for children to play. The neighbourhood felt safe, and he could walk to school with his friends. To this day he comments about how good it feels to

come home and see the escarpment and all the old trees that thoughtful people planted so many years ago.

My husband and I still like living in our neighbourhood. We are so fortunate to be able to access a hiking trail with

spectacular waterfalls in about five minutes by car. The Rail Trail is great for biking and walking and makes it easy to shop without using a car. We feel as if we live almost outside the city, yet we are close to all that a city has to offer; such as walking to a pub for a nice meal and live music on the weekend. Westdale is within walking distance for books, chocolates, art, and other basic requirements. The quaint town of Dundas is also easily accessible via the Rail Trail.

Our neighbourhood has changed over the years. Families with small children who lived next door and across the street have moved on, and now students reside in those houses. We know there are issues that come with living in a neighbourhood where students live, but we also enjoy the vitality they bring to the area. Other changes over the years are

less tolerable. We are happy that the “monster house” bylaw put an end to the building of boxy rooming houses lacking any sense of architectural aesthetic. These replaced some old homes purely for investment purposes without any desire on the part of the absentee landlords to be part of the community. We hope the new purpose-built housing for students will relieve some of the pressure on the permanent residents; we are now almost surrounded by homes owned by absentee landlords. Fortunately this has not affected our daily lives to any great detriment, and we are still enjoying all that this neighbourhood has to offer.

Catherine Weir’s artistic work can be viewed at catherineweir.ca. She has been an AWWCA member and block representative since the AWWCA’s inception in September 1998.



Catherine Weir in her studio.

Photo: Rita Bertoldi

Mac Students Receive Community Awards

SHELLI EISENBERG

The sixth annual student awards took place on March 30 at McMaster's Student Centre. These awards are given to students nominated by community members because they have contributed to the well-being of Ainslie Wood or Westdale. The nine nominees live on Thorndale Crescent, Haddon Avenue South, and Sterling Street.

In thanking the students on behalf of the community, I said they deserved to be honoured for being excellent neighbours and that, as the student liaison for the AWWCA, I was extremely proud of their contributions and the honour bestowed upon them. I know that the AWWCA and many members of our community share in this pride. We do not give these awards lightly. Nominees have to make enough of an impression on permanent residents for us to ask for their full names and submit them to the AWWCA. I thanked them for their contributions and for holding themselves up as models for the many students who share the neighbourhood with us.

Each student received a letter of appreciation signed by the mayor, the university president, the student-union president, and the chief of police. The student-award program was launched in April 2005 by the AWWCA, the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Police Service, the McMaster Students Union, McMaster University, and the Westdale Business Improvement Area.

In addition to me, AWWCA president **John Wigle** and newsletter co-ordinator **Janet Woodward** attended the event. Representing McMaster were **Phil Wood**, dean of students and associate vice-president student affairs; **Gord Arbeau**, associate director public relations; PR intern **Emily Du**; and **Vishal Tiwari**, outgoing president of the MSU. Representing the HPS were West Town crime manager **Sergeant Tina Potter** and **Police Constable Debbie McGreal-Dinning**, who works with the Division 1 mobile-response unit. Sgt. Potter presented the certificates, saying, "It's not very often we are seen congratulating people for good



Back row L to R: Veena Deekonda, Merissa Wiebe, Rayanne Ragoonath. Front row L to R: Amanda Schroeder, Carrie Lau. Absent from photo: Tarin Arenson, Ilana Horvath, Anna Kos, Tanya Stone. Photo: Janet Woodward



Back row L to R: Police Constable Debbie McGreal-Dinning, Phil Wood, John Wigle. Middle row L to R: Shelli Eisenberg, Veena Deekonda, Merissa Wiebe, Rayanne Ragoonath, Vishal Tiwari. Front row L to R: Amanda Schroeder, Carrie Lau. Photo: Janet Woodward

behaviour, so this is a real privilege."

AWWCA members **Don and Harriet Woodside** wrote on Jan. 27: "We are losing our sense of connection and community as most of the family

homes that are sold on our block turn over into student houses. For the last three years, we invited the students who live next to us for dinner shortly

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TAKE NOTE, RENTAL-PROPERTY INVESTORS

JANET WOODWARD

For the past few years, we have reported in *Neighbourhood News & Views* the number of properties for rent in mid-March. Each year, the number of empty houses and rooms has increased. Compared to last year, rooms-for-rent advertisements are up 7.5 per cent, and advertisements for entire houses are up 11.2 per cent.

Jennifer Kleven, manager of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre, reported on March 13 that there were 457 active for-rent advertisements on their website (in all categories and locations or zones). Of these, 84 per cent (384) were in Ainslie Wood and Westdale. They ranged from three to eight bedrooms for rent. Of the 457 advertisements, 81 were for entire houses and 162 were for bedrooms in a student house.



These houses, photographed March 19, diagonally opposite each other on Haddon Avenue North, have displayed For Rent signs since last fall.

It is clear from these statistics and from a walk around our community any time during the school term that available housing exceeds demand. Why, then, are we still hearing reports from neighbours and real estate agents that when a family home goes on the market investors are bidding on the property? We are told that often they are parents of students and want to buy a house for their child to live in while studying at McMaster and to rent out the spare rooms, sometimes using their retirement savings to do this. We wonder if they are aware of the glut of rental housing on the market.

Ms. Kleven said, "When potential investors contact our office, I tell them the market is saturated and there is no need for any more housing, and I tell them of the purpose-built student housing currently available and about other developments in the works." If all the planned purpose-built student housing developments proceed, we will have over 1,400 off-campus purpose-built student housing beds in place within a few years, so we expect there will be even less demand for family houses to be converted to rentals.

It would be helpful if real-estate agents informed parents that it is a risky investment to purchase a house for their children to live in, because many rental houses sit partly or fully empty, and they may have difficulty recouping their investment. Local agents (and AWWCA members) who do inform parents of the risk are **Vivian** and **Mark DeBruyn-Smith**. Said Vivian: "People are uninformed about the glut in the market, and for years we have been telling investors that there are too many empty rentals. In the last couple of years, we have found that from December to April, some parents, especially those who have daughters going to McMaster, are looking for houses for them. Perhaps it is because interest rates are low and the stock market has been down for the last few years and they see bricks and mortar as a solid investment. We don't list or sell rental properties. Added Mark, "We purposely don't deal with investors, not only because of the negative effect on the community but also because we have grave concerns about the safety and legality of single-family homes being converted to non-conforming boarding houses without adequate parking, exits, fire escapes or liability insurance."

Judy Marsales Real Estate Limited Brokerage in Westdale promotes West Hamilton as a wonderful place to raise a family because its proximity to shopping, schools, restaurants, entertainment, parks, and the library makes it ideally suited to family life. Said **Judy Marsales**, "Students bring a vibrancy to our community and it is the delicate balance between permanent residents and students that we work to achieve. My brokerage company has committed to not promoting family homes as multiple-income properties." Judy is a Friend of the AWWCA.

New regulations introduced by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on April 19 make it more difficult for people to buy a separate property to use as a revenue generator. They are designed to prevent speculation in the market, and we hope they will help our community restore houses for permanent use.

A Year of Community Partnerships

GORD ARBEAU

It seems that, with each academic year, the time between the first few days of welcome week in September and the writing of final exams in April passes with increasing speed. Now that the students have written some 80,000 examinations, the McMaster community of students, staff, faculty, and neighbours can look back on the year that was and ahead to the year to come.

The 2009-10 year featured a number of important university-community partnerships. The provost and vice-president administration are leading a collaborative campuswide study to determine McMaster's physical-space capacity and to gain a clearer understanding of how space is used and activities scheduled. In January, AWWCA president **John Wigle**, past president **Rob Payne**, local businessman **Albert Snow** (all members of the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations), and local landlord and AWWCA member **Ken Moyle** were invited to a meeting with the committee to share suggestions, concerns, and questions about capacity and space usage. Their input will be added to the thoughts of faculty, staff, and students who have also met

with the committee. A draft report is expected this fall, and the community will be invited to an open house to review those initial recommendations and to provide further input.

PACCR also spent the year discussing many other issues. The committee met with representatives of the city's light-rail-transit team and had an opportunity to share the community's questions and suggestions for LRT planning. If the city builds an LRT line, a station will be located on the McMaster campus.

Valuable input was provided by PACCR as the city considered a new rental-licencing strategy, discussed various campus traffic and parking initiatives, and met with former West Town crime manager **Sergeant Tina Potter**. At year's end we gave nine students good-neighbour awards for their outstanding contributions to our community. It was a fitting way to end a busy and productive year in partnership.

PACCR looks forward to welcoming **Dr. Patrick Deane** as McMaster's next president and thanks **Dr. Peter George** for his leadership and support.

To our partners, neighbours, and friends, have a wonderfully relaxing summer.

Gord Arbeau is associate director of public relations at McMaster University.

'Community Awards' continued from page 5

after they moved in. Despite lukewarm reactions in previous years, we have continued to do this because it lifts our spirits to recognize at least some of the faces who live alongside us. We would like to nominate five of the students who currently live next door at 46 Thorndale Cres. They are **Veena Deekonda**, **Carrie Lau**, **Rayanne Ragoonath**, **Amanda Schroeder**, and **Merissa Wiebe**. These young women were enthusiastic about our invitation to supper last September. They showed up for what was a very pleasant meal. We were delighted when they asked for some cornstarch to make their first turkey gravy at Thanksgiving. For us, this is what neighbors are all about. To our surprise, Amanda, Carrie, Merissa, Rayanne, and Veena brought us a large collection of home-baked holiday cookies. More recently, they shovelled our front walk. The connection which has grown between us may seem small, but the impact on us is big. Because of our neighbours' unexpected and thoughtful actions, we feel heartened that there can be positive connections between students and homeowners on our block."

The day after the event, Ms. Deekonda wrote to Janet Woodward, "Thank you for sending the pictures; none of us had a camera so these pictures are valuable tokens and will be a cherished memory of our time at McMaster. I browsed through the most recent edition of the newsletter on the AWWCA website and found it to be an enlightening read. On behalf of my housemates, I would like to once again express our gratitude, as this experience has strengthened our sense of community in Hamilton. Thanks to you, the AWWCA, and the Office of Public Relations at McMaster, our motivation to become more involved in the community has increased."

We thank those who nominated students this year and hope to receive more names next year. We will be seeking nominations for the 2010-11 academic year early in 2011.

Shelli Eisenberg is an AWWCA board member and student liaison.

SENIORS & RETIREES GROUP WELCOMES YOU

The Westdale/West Hamilton Seniors and Retirees meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. at Grace Hall, Grace Lutheran Church, 1107 Main St. West. Programming includes cards, board games, shuffleboard, guest speakers, refreshments, and good conversation. Join us Wednesday, Sept. 15, for celebrations, cake, and ice cream on our eighth anniversary. Parking is available, and the building is handicapped accessible. New members are most welcome. Contacts are AWWCA members **Pat Barton**, 905-527-5137, and **Effie York**, 905-522-6256.

AINSLIE WOOD NORTH GROUP

BETTY BECHTEL

Bill Wilson, a McMaster student in fourth-year labour relations, has been researching student-resident relations in Ainslie Wood North through **Councillor Brian McHattie's** office. He interviewed residents, students, and others in this area and plans to focus on students for his thesis.

AWN residents are continuing to meet to organize the group and to brainstorm ways of fostering improved relations among the permanent residents and the student residents of this area. Door-to-door contact, progressive dinner parties, and fall garage sales are

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GREENING OUR COMMUNITY

Help Build a Garden in Alexander Park

KATHRYN WIERSMA

~~~~~  
*Why toil in the soil if you have a bad back?  
Why share a place when life feels like a race?  
As a garden grows, the living slows, and then we know,  
Home can be made by many hands together.*

~~~~~  
—Kathryn Wiersma
~~~~~

Vegetables grow, and those who like to grow strong eat them. Communities that want to grow strong will grow vegetables together. After learning how easy, interesting, and fun gardening can be, I would like to help to build a small community garden in Alexander Park.

A site has been selected with help from **Councillor Brian McHattie**, staff from the city's public-works department, Prince Philip Public School principal **Dave Maddocks**, and Westside Baptist Church's pastor **Dave Stimers**, whose church is located near the garden site. Dave is a Friend of the AWWCA, and has shown interest in the project along with friends and community members, including **Irina Gorodskoy**, an enthusiastic parent of an equally eager Grade 5 Prince Philip student. **Kate Whalen** at the Office for Sustainability at McMaster University has offered to engage interested McMaster students in the project. Residents of Ainslie Wood have shown support, including **Sandra Bentley**, several elementary students, and the **McBride** family.

My participation in community projects is enabling me to learn and to network for the Alexander Park garden project. I joined the community volunteers in the reconstruction of the teaching garden by the Aviary in Churchill Park, which is providing me with guidance for the Alexander Park project. Always searching for more gardeners to assist in the project, on May 30 I shared my understanding of native plants with a new seniors group at St. George's Church on Emerson Street. Through projects like these, I hope to continue collaborating with Mr. McHattie to build awareness of the benefits of gardening in the Ainslie Wood and Westdale areas of our ward.

I envision a plan to construct and plant the garden in one day, followed by weekly visits to nurture it along. I am hoping to form a diversified committee to launch and guide the garden project for shared growing, learning, and, of course, tasty fresh vegetables! Representation from different walks of life will provide a strong groundwork for this concept.

The Hamilton Community Garden Policy has just been formed and will begin to make community gardening an accessible and beneficial activity for residents of Ainslie Wood and Westdale.

I am a landscaper with the company Green Home Solutions and would be delighted to share my expertise in helping your



Kathryn Wiersma at the site selected for the community garden in Alexander Park, next to the city's building.  
Photo: Tony Wiersma

own garden grow. I also teach Pilates classes and work at a community and health-centered café downtown. In all, I work to enable people to move well, eat well, and enhance the natural landscape for everything that grows. I hope a collaborative gardening project will provide opportunities to share what you know, learn something you didn't know, meet a new friend, and relax into the pleasurable experience of nurturing plants for the benefit of all.

If you would like to be part of this new and vibrant project, your contribution is welcome. Please contact me at 905-572-1046 or [kathrynwiersma@cogeco.ca](mailto:kathrynwiersma@cogeco.ca).

*Kathryn Wiersma has resided in Ainslie Wood East since 2007 and is an AWWCA member.*



# Salvaging the Herb and Plant Lover's Garden

MARY LOUISE PIGOTT

Under the auspices of **Dan Riegler** (a Friend of the AWWCA), volunteers spent several Saturday mornings beginning in May working with the city to revitalize the herb garden and plant lover's garden at the Aviary in Churchill Park. For a number of years Dan tended the gardens on a volunteer basis and donated many of his own rare medicinal herbs. He was featured in the article "Local Hero" in the spring 2006 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* (see [awwca.ca/site\\_media/newsletters/06\\_Spring.pdf](http://awwca.ca/site_media/newsletters/06_Spring.pdf)).

The first Saturday (May 15) we dug up hundreds of rocks that had been used to define the beds and salvaged some of the few remaining herbs. It was discouraging to see how many of the hundreds of original plants, as well as those donated by Dan, had simply disappeared—choked out by weeds and invasive species. Digging up and moving the many large rocks was a back-breaking job, and the volunteers, ranging in age from young kids to well-seasoned veterans, deserve a great deal of credit. Regrettably, I did not get everyone's name, but in addition to Dan, volunteers included, **Shelli Eisenberg**; **Gwynn French**; **Jane Walker**, and one of her daughters, and a friend; my own three children and a friend; **Ginny**; and **Steve**. Also, we were delighted to have two members of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group from McMaster come out. On May 22



Volunteers restoring the gardens May 15.

Photo: Cornelius Heesters

a smaller group braved the rain to begin clearing the overgrown plant lover's garden of its many weeds and invasive plants, and on May 29 **Kathryn Wiersma** joined the work group.

Once we have salvaged what we would like to keep from the herb garden, the city will come in with a backhoe and clear the garden for replanting a lower maintenance garden. For this ongoing effort we need volunteers from the community; notices of upcoming opportunities will be sent to members by e-mail. If you would like to help, please contact AWWCA member **Maureen McKeating** at [mmckeating@cogeco.ca](mailto:mmckeating@cogeco.ca).

*Mary Louise Pigott has been an AWWCA member for 10 years.*

## 2,200 TREES PLANTED IN CHURCHILL PARK BY 1,200 VOLUNTEERS

LAUREL HARRISON

Students from the community really stepped up to the plate this year. Over two planting days, approximately 400 students planted trees in Churchill Park.

On Thursday, April 22, the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, 300 students walked, were bused, or took public transit to Churchill Park to plant an Instant Forest® of 1,000 trees



Volunteers plant trees April 24.

Photo: Cornelius Heesters

supplied by the Tim Horton Children's Foundation and Hamilton-Wentworth Stewardship Council. It was amazing to see how engaged these students were in planting for a greener tomorrow. They came from schools across Hamilton, including Parkside High in Dundas, Sanford School downtown, Hillcrest on the Mountain, and of course our local Westdale schools.

Then on Saturday, April 24, Churchill Park was alive again

with nearly 800 people at the 14th annual Earth Day Tree Planting Festival, when 1,200 trees supplied by Earth Day Canada and Suncor Energy Foundation were planted. This year a four-hour lineup of top-notch local entertainers kept people enthralled. The drum circle rocked, the horse-drawn wagon was always full, and the face painting was out of this world with Simon the Wonderful demonstrating the most amazing techniques. Attendees were able to take tours of the Aviary, and there was a large contingent of people practicing Tai Chi. Once again, AWWCA board members staffed

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# Cootes to Escarpment Project

**TYS THEYSMEYER**

The recently released vision for the Hamilton-Burlington Cootes to Escarpment Park System was celebrated at a wintry Feb. 6 event of outdoor hikes and hot chili. The park system is a collaboration between eight landowning groups in the region and supports Ontario's greenbelt initiative. Local mayors, the regional chair of Halton, the Greenbelt Foundation, and our local MPP affirmed their support for the vision, and the community applauded the work of an eight-partner collaborative that made it happen.

The land-owning agencies demonstrated that their lands, when viewed together, form a 3,440-acre park system that is ecologically significant, visually stunning, and an important cultural and recreational space for the area and for Canada. The plan promotes managing over 27 individual properties (some of which are within the Ainslie Wood and Westdale area) as one large, intact ecosystem with restored natural linkage, while management control remains with the individual agencies.

The goals of the vision are to stop fragmentation of the landscape; enable partners to restore a resilient environment that can contribute to a



Mayors, MPP, and board chairs light the fire as a ceremonial endorsement of the plan.

Photo: Cornelius Heesters

sustainable future for the area; provide clean air and water, biodiversity, and recreation for rapidly growing cities; and, most importantly, remind people of the growing pressures of urbanization on the last-remaining major area in southern Ontario that still contains sensitive species.

While the plan outlines management policies to expand the current acreage of protected areas and to work with

other landowners as stewards of their properties in keeping with the vision, it is the natural history that captures the imagination and gives this area a special place in the hearts of local residents.

Botanically rich, the area contains over 1,500 species of flora and fauna—many rare and others endangered: turtles, snakes, and salamanders; birds, such as the yellow-breasted chat, least bittern, red-shouldered hawk, and short-eared owl; the monarch butterfly; the woodland vole; and plants such as the American chestnut, red mulberry, and American columbo.

The vision is a terrific example of how the Greenbelt is an invaluable asset to communities. The Greenbelt Foundation, the principle project sponsor, applauded the leadership, enthusiasm, and strong support from Hamilton, Burlington, and Halton Region to ensure that lands within the park system grow wilder and more cherished in the future. Additional information: [rbg.ca:80/greenbelt/](http://rbg.ca:80/greenbelt/).

*Tys Theysmeyer is head of conservation and natural lands at the Royal Botanical Gardens.*



Children enjoyed playing in the trees while waiting for the horse and wagon ride.  
Photo: Cornelius Heesters

**'2,200 Trees' continued from page 9**

an exhibit booth. Magnolias and other trees blossomed in full glory, the weather stayed fine, and the barbecue was a sell-out. There were more exhibitors than ever, including a bike-repair clinic, and of course the wonderful Mountsberg birds of prey attracted young and old.

The site was also the finish line for the fourth annual Tim Hortons Earth Day Walk/Fun Run, with awards given to the first male and first female across the finish line. Columbia International College brought in 100 students to plant trees and participate in the walk.

*Laurel Harrison is the Hamilton-Burlington Earth Day co-ordinator.*



# CLEANING OUR COMMUNITY

## Can the Butts

**SHELLI EISENBERG**

Can the Butts is the name of a new project from your student liaison, Miss Keep Your Neighbourhood Clean Lady! As you may have noticed, some front gardens are strewn with cigarette butts. It is now time to become more proactive.

I will be filling large tin cans with sand and affixing signage. In the fall, I will introduce myself to the residents of houses with butts on the lawn and suggest to them that they use their butt cans instead of the lawn.

Please give me addresses where lawns are strewn with butts, and I will introduce the tenants to our Can the Butts program.

The AWWCA board thanks AWWCA member and consulting editor of *Neighbourhood News & Views*



**Malcolm Horsnell** for coining the slogan that received the most votes from the board.

If you would like to join me on this project, contact me at 905-527-2644 or [shelli.eisenberg@sympatico.ca](mailto:shelli.eisenberg@sympatico.ca).

## Ages Two to 88

**SHELLI EISENBERG**

### ***Adopt-Your-Block Program Is Growing***

In the autumn 2009 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we listed the 36 blocks that 22 Adopt-Your-Block volunteers are keeping clean. Since then, more volunteers have come on board, bringing the number of volunteers to 29 cleaning 42 blocks. These newly adopted blocks are Ward Avenue (Emerson to Leland) in Ainslie Wood East, Sanders Boulevard (Norfolk to Thorndale) and Thorndale Crescent in Ainslie Wood North, and Haddon Avenue North (Marion to Paisley), Marion Avenue North (Dromore to Cline), and South Oval (Paisley to Newton) in Westdale South.

At the AWWCA's community cleanup April 17 all volunteers received a letter from me, thanking them for cleaning up and asking them to consider joining the Adopt-Your-Block program. I said that my block, South Oval, used to be littered with coffee cups, water bottles, and



Anthony and Julie Herrington and their children: Sophia, Ella, Jonathan.  
Photo: Janet Woodward

sandwich wrappers, but now that I pick up garbage while I am out for a walk I see that others are less prone to carelessly drop more.

We are pleased to tell you that our newest volunteers are a family of five. Wrote **Julie**

Continued on page 19

## A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY TURNS TO GRAFFITI

**KENNETH OCKENDEN**

Spring is here, and a young man's fancy unfortunately too often turns to graffiti!

Over the past while, in fact, the amount of graffiti in Westdale and Ainslie Wood has been quite variable and not nearly as bad as in other areas of the city. However, we must continue our efforts to keep our neighborhoods clean and clear of graffiti.

Although the response of residents has been excellent in some areas, the western part of Ainslie Wood still has a lot of orphan mail boxes, and I hope we can get volunteers to clean them. It is not an onerous job, and thanks to **Councillor Brian McHattie** we have ready access to needed supplies.

If you see graffiti on private or city property, it should be reported (but not cleaned). Simply phone 905-546-CITY and describe the area of the graffiti (the operator will need to know the *exact* address of the site that requires cleaning), or use the new online form at [hamilton.ca/ProjectsInitiatives/CleanCityStrategy/GraffitiForm.htm](http://hamilton.ca/ProjectsInitiatives/CleanCityStrategy/GraffitiForm.htm). It has been my experience that cleanup of municipal property has been a little slow and sometimes requires a gentle reminder.

With the arrests by the police, cleaning by the city and volunteers, the new anti-graffiti mailbox covers, and ongoing vigilance we have made a difference, and again I thank you for your efforts.

If anyone wishes to adopt a mailbox please contact me at (905) 528-4805 or [ken.inthecastle@gmail.com](mailto:ken.inthecastle@gmail.com).

Have a graffiti-free and enjoyable summer.

*Kenneth Ockenden co-ordinates the Adopt-A-Box program in the Ainslie Wood/Westdale area and is an AWWCA member.*



# THE AWWCA's NINTH ANNUAL COMMUNITY CLEANUP

**SHELLI EISENBERG**

April 17 marked the ninth annual AWWCA community cleanup. A cold and windy Saturday morning brought out 62 volunteers at five locations. About 125 bags of garbage and recyclables were collected by our volunteers, who cleaned the streets surrounding the meeting spots. In addition, **John Popham** co-ordinated the McMaster University campus cleanup to take place on the same day as ours.

**Gerry Crevier** and his crew focused on Ainslie Wood North, **Carolyn Kinsley** led the group working around MacNeill Baptist Church, **Linda Panton** co-ordinated the group in Ainslie Wood East, **Harriet** and **Don Woodside** looked after the group in Ainslie Wood West, and I met with the group at Churchill Park.

The AWWCA partnered with Hamilton's public works department, Hamilton's Clean City Liaison Committee, and local Tim Hortons stores for their Team Up to Clean Up Week. We thank them for providing bags and gloves and picking up the filled bags. The co-ordinators did a great job and provided excellent feedback for making future cleanups even more successful.

Despite the weather, volunteers had a good time working with others and a sense of accomplishment in seeing our neighbourhood look cleaner.



Volunteers at the Ainslie Wood North station.  
L to R: Charles Shields, Brian Coombes, Mario Eric,  
Gerry Crevier, Betty Bechtel, Mike Kliffer.  
Absent from photo: Marlene Castura, Jean Wessel.

Volunteers at the Ainslie Wood East station. L to R: Tom Kotsiou, Shauna Eisenberg, Joe, David Weir. Absent from photo: Kathy Greaves, Norma Jack, Ralph Peacock, Klaus Schultes, John Sheeler, John Wigle.  
Photo: Linda Panton







Volunteers at the Quaker Meeting House station.  
Front row L to R: Nina Cooper-Hay, Victoria Knechtel, Sylvie Ruland, Harriet Woodside. Second row L to R: Carol Leigh Wehking, Glenna Janzen, Eric Klassan, Nathi Aziz-Zamisa. Third row L to R: Roberta MacGregor, Betty Preston, Beverly Sheperd. Back row L to R: Nancy Cooper, Louise Trepanier, Don Woodside, Sheldon Clark, Wilf Ruland, Dick Preston, Edgar Rogalski. Absent from photo: David Longstaff.  
Photo: Chris Cutler

Volunteers at MacNeill Baptist Church station.  
L to R: Linda Bryant, Murray Babb, Adela Antonow, Erika Stearns, Rosemary Stearns. Absent from photo: Edith Gagnon, Diane Sicinski, Cameron Whitney.  
Photo: Carolyn Kinsley



Volunteers at Churchill Park station.  
L to R: Jane Evans, Lyle Helfond, Anil Varughese, Barb Mansfield, Loueen Madill, Shelli Eisenberg, Olivia and Blaise Petric, Hugh and Julianne Burgesse, Jaqueline and Lloyd Bently and their dog. Front centre: Jordana Helfond.  
Absent from photo: Mira Votakh.  
Photo: Cornelius Heesters



# OUR YOUTH ON THE GO

## Westdale Welcomes “Adventure Running Kids”

MIKE WADDINGTON

With the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the organizers of the Salomon *Dontgetlost.ca* Raid the Hammer Adventure Run brought an exciting new kids’ running program to Westdale this spring—Adventure Running Kids.

ARK is an adventure-running training and racing program open to boys and girls aged eight to 16. Adventure running combines cross-country, night, orienteering, and trail running with teamwork in a fun, challenging, and often muddy eco-adventure. Adventure running is growing in popularity across Europe and North America and is a great recreational and sport activity for kids and teens who have a sense of adventure and enjoy the outdoors.

“Our spring session of ARK is 13 weeks long. It kicked off on March 24 in Ancaster, following a several-week pilot project in Churchill Park right here in Westdale,” says **Patrick Goeres**,

a champion adventure runner, Westdale resident, and head coach of ARK. “Each Wednesday evening practice has a different theme, such as hill running, route finding, speed, agility, navigation, team dynamics, power, and terrain running. We take pride in being a unique, innovative program that kids can participate in while complementing their other activities.”

The Westdale coaching connections extend beyond Mr. Goeres, with ultra trail runner **Paul Trebilcock**, McMaster varsity cross-country runner **Dan Wojcik**, and two McMaster professors and adventure-sports athletes, **Mark Tarnopolsky** and me, all volunteering our time to this new community program. Not only do ARK leaders and coaches challenge and teach kids to be stronger, tougher, and faster runners while having an appreciation of our environment, but they also coach kids on problem-solving skills that are valuable in training, racing, and life.

“There is such a long history of cross-country running, trail running, and orienteering running here in Westdale, and we wanted to help develop that for kids in a fun, challenging, and teamwork kind of way” says Mr. Goeres. He adds, “In this program we take running and make it muddy, and combine it with maps, capture the flag, and other adventure-based activities to get kids running in a fun, eco-adventure way.”

Information: [AdventureRunningKids.ca](http://AdventureRunningKids.ca) or e-mail coach Patrick Goeres at [AdventureRunningKids@dontgetlost.ca](mailto:AdventureRunningKids@dontgetlost.ca).

*Mike Waddington lives in Westdale and he is an AWWCA member.*



L to R: Chloe Hewitt, Olivia Rogers, and Emma Waddington take part in an Adventure Running Kids activity.

Photo: Mike Waddington



# Stream of Dreams at George R. Allan School

**JANET WOODWARD**

On June 15 my curiosity was piqued as I watched the installation of beautifully painted wooden fish on the chain-link fence at George R. Allan School near the intersection of King Street West and Bond Street North.

I spoke with **Mary Louise Pigott**, one of the volunteers and an AWWCA member, who filled me in on the project and referred me to the Stream of Dreams website, [streamofdreams.org/](http://streamofdreams.org/). The concept began about 10 years ago when a chemical spill nearly destroyed a creek in Burnaby, British Columbia. The murals are spearheaded by the Stream of Dreams Mural Society, a non-profit organization founded to deliver eco-education programs. Their mission is to “educate communities about their watersheds, rivers and streams while dazzling them with the charm of community art.” **Suzu Sebeslav**, a teacher at G. R. Allan School, championed the project here with the support of the Bay Area Restoration Council.

A total of 500 fish were cut from wood by volunteers from Westdale Secondary School, Barton Secondary School, and BARC and by **Mike Kukucska**. Mike, the owner of Hamilton Scenic Specialty Inc., is a G. R. Allan parent and AWWCA member and, not coincidentally, Mary Louise’s husband; he responded to a request for last-minute help by cutting 150 fish.

Parent volunteers, some students, and custodial staff sanded and primed the fish in blue on the back and white on the front. Said Ms. Sebeslav, “Some of the Grades 4 and 5 students helped with priming and **Cheryl Myke**, our custodian, painted tons.” Then each student decorated the front with their own artwork. BARC staff sorted the fish by colour, design, and theme, arranged them into the Stream of Dreams pattern and then, with assistance from the parent volunteers, wired each fish individually to the fence. An information plaque about the project will be installed by BARC.

Although most of the Stream of Dreams projects are in British Columbia, 10 schools in Hamilton are displaying murals. BARC’s role is to

provide environmental education and oversee the production and hanging of the fish. You can read more at [hamiltonharbour.ca/programs-streamdreams.htm](http://hamiltonharbour.ca/programs-streamdreams.htm).

The day after the artwork appeared, one of our guests, an artist from Port Perry, said, “How wonderful to turn a rather ugly chain-link fence into a venue for creativity!”

Stream of Dreams mural at George R. Allan School.

Photos: Janet Woodward





# COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE ZONING

LAVINIA WELSH

The City of Hamilton is in the process of creating one new zoning bylaw to cover all the amalgamated municipalities in the City of Hamilton. The zoning bylaw is a rulebook that assigns each property to a land-use zone, letting landowners know what they can do with their property. Zoning controls the size, height, and location of buildings, as well as permitted uses. The zoning bylaw takes direction from the Official Plan and from secondary plans like ours for Ainslie Wood and Westdale.

The new zoning bylaw is being completed in stages.

Recommendations are currently being developed for mixed-use and commercial zoning. Public information centres took place during February and March, and one-on-one meetings with stakeholders took place in March and April. The final recommendations are expected to go to council in June. Following that, the residential-zoning recommendations will be considered. New zoning will not become law until after the Official Plan has been approved by the province and any appeal process on that plan has been dealt with. This likely means new zoning will not be in effect for a few years.

One of the key innovations of the new mixed-use and commercial zoning is that any new development will have maximum setback rules instead of the minimum setbacks that exist today. The idea is to encourage entrances and windows near the street, with parking behind, to encourage walkable neighbourhoods.

There are seven types of commercial zones, of which Ainslie Wood and Westdale contain four. The following is a brief description of the four zones found in our area with an example of the types of properties included:

### C1 – Local Commercial Zones

Small shopping area that provides convenience retail sales and services to the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

Small-scale, stand-alone commercial structures, plazas, and



C7 Mixed-Use Buildings.

Photo: Mark DeBruyn-Smith

multi-storey buildings with residential use permitted above the ground floor.

Maximum two storeys and maximum gross floor area of 1,000 square metres.

*Example: Main Street West, east of Longwood Road.*

### C2 – District Commercial Zone

A primarily retail/service commercial area that serves surrounding neighbourhoods and communities.

Typically large supermarkets, stores selling household goods, restaurants, and offices with residential use allowed above ground floor.

Maximum gross floor area of 10,000 square metres and maximum height of four storeys.

*Example: Fortino's.*



C3 Mixed-Use Medium. An example on Plains Road, Burlington.  
Photo: Lavinia Welsh

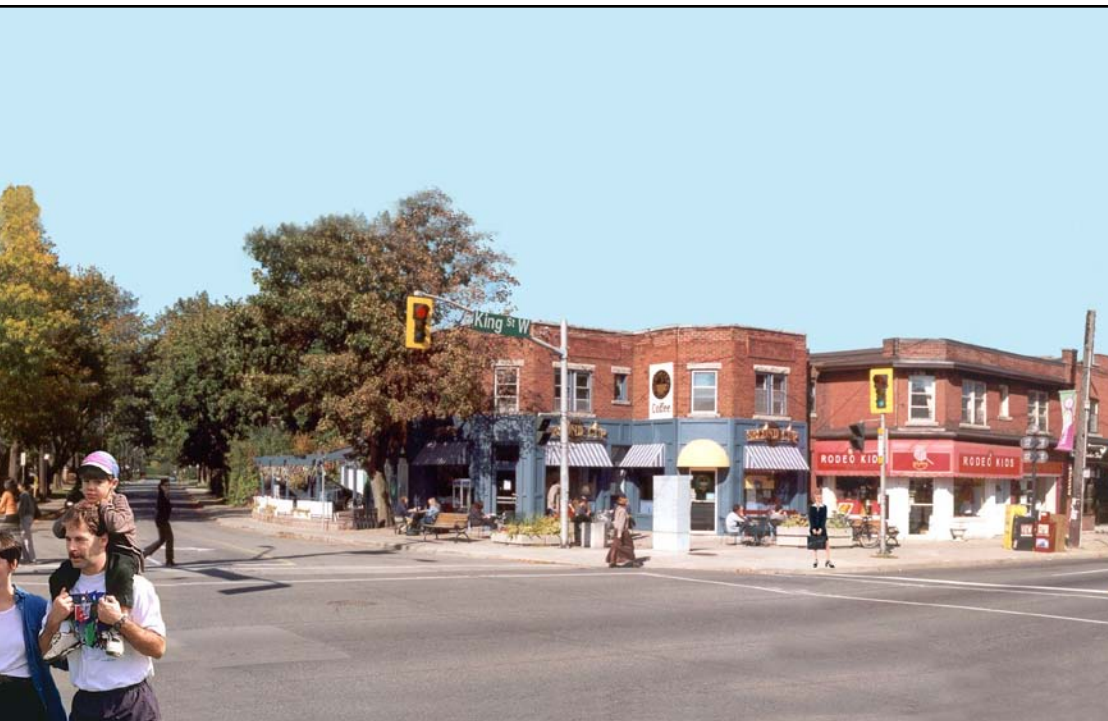




C1 Local Commercial Space.  
Photo: Lavinia Welsh



C2 District Commercial.  
Photo: Lavinia Welsh



## C3 – Mixed-Use Medium Zone

A larger pedestrian-oriented shopping and mixed-use area serving the surrounding neighbourhood and a larger community or citywide clientele.

Typically supermarkets, restaurants, offices, hotels, and clothing stores.

Single-purpose commercial structures, office buildings, multi-storey residential and multi-storey mixed use.

No maximum gross floor area for commercial use; however, maximum six storeys.

*Example: The majority of commercial zoning in Ainslie Wood and Westdale, particularly along Main and King Streets outside the Westdale Business Improvement Area.*

## C7 – Mixed-Use Building Zone

A pedestrian-predominant area characterized by mixed-use buildings serving the local neighbourhood at a pedestrian scale.

Typically small-scale grocery stores, drug stores, coffee shops, offices, and hotels. Drive-through not permitted.

Minimum height of two storeys and maximum of three storeys.

*Example: Westdale BIA.*

The proposed commercial and mixed-use zoning also includes parking requirements based on use. Compared to those in place today, some requirements have been eased and some increased. They are based on having light-rail transit, looking to the vision of walkable neighbourhoods and alternate transportation, such as bicycles and public transit. One area of concern to your association is a recommendation that would require only one-third of a parking space for apartments that are smaller than 538 square feet.

Further, the proposed zoning recommends that all BIAs, including Westdale's, be exempt from the overall parking regulations; instead they would just maintain any legal parking spots that exist when the law goes into effect, regardless of the type of businesses or tenants in the future. We are particularly concerned with restaurants, as any increase in the number of restaurants without adequate parking could have a negative effect on nearby neighbours due to increased parking on residential streets. Your association raised these concerns with city planning staff in March. They commented that they had heard similar concerns from residents near the Locke Street BIA. They promised to look at alternative recommendations and report on them to us.

The full set of recommendations and more information about the zoning process can be found at [hamilton.ca/CityDepartments/PlanningEcDev/StrategicServicesSpecialProjects/ZoningBy-law/](http://hamilton.ca/CityDepartments/PlanningEcDev/StrategicServicesSpecialProjects/ZoningBy-law/).

*Lavinia Welsh is the AWWCA's land-use and development liaison and bylaw liaison for property standards and parking*



# Bylaw Enforcement



**KELLY BARNETT**

Municipal law enforcement, in partnership with the Hamilton Police Service, continues to work on our proactive program in Ainslie Wood and Westdale.

**Proactive enforcement of bylaws:** The April proactive program continued with the same expanded enforcement that was provided in September

2009, including enforcement of bylaws for property standards, signs, yard waste and maintenance, public nuisances, and the Liquor Licence Act. We are working with waste management to enforce the limit of one waste container that came into effect on April 5.

**Courtesy letter:** A letter was mailed to property owners in Wards 1 and 8 where violations were determined in September 2009, advising them of the expanded proactive program and the consequence to them as property owners for bylaw violations.

**Noise enforcement:** Officers have been directed to take a zero-tolerance approach to noise enforcement. Tickets are being issued to occupants for first and second violations; a fee for inspection is being applied to property taxes for second and all subsequent violations, as well as a summons to occupants and/or property owners to appear in court for third violations. As of April 21, MLE and police officers have been responding to noise complaints and carrying out proactive inspections on properties that have been problems in past years. If there is a violation of the noise bylaw, contact the HPS at 905-546-4925. [See also Useful Numbers on page 31.]

**Hamilton Police Service:** Command officers of Division 10 (Central) have again committed to a zero-tolerance policy in response to unruly behaviour. Officers have been instructed to lay appropriate charges for all noise and litter violations, public nuisances, and liquor and criminal offences. Members of the vice and drug unit, emergency-response unit, HEAT (High Enforcement Action Team), and the crime manager's office may assist the assigned beat officers.

**Mobile technology:** Police and MLE officers continue to use mobile computers, allowing them to access the same information and thus take escalating enforcement measures.

**Continued student summer pilot program:** Four summer students have again been hired to assist in public education and enforcement of the bylaw for yard waste and maintenance that deals with long grass, weeds, garbage, and debris. These students issue orders to comply when properties are in violation and, when possible, educate the occupants on the bylaw. An information pamphlet is also provided. Most property owners and occupants comply once they are aware of the violation; if they take no action, the file is assigned to an MLE officer, who will take the necessary measures to bring the property into compliance. Students will also issue orders to comply when they are working in the field and witness a violation (a proactive investigation). In addition, student staff do proactive enforcement on Tuesday mornings throughout the summer to ensure proper storage of waste containers.

From May 1 to Sept. 30, 2009, MLE received 472 complaints and issued 140 orders for violations in Ward 1 for long grass, weeds, garbage, and debris. Police and MLE continue to monitor, enforce, and report weekly. In September they will, once again, provide the near-campus community with the proactive program.

[Editor's note after consulting Councillor Brian McHattie's

office: Although complaints can be sent directly to MLE at [mle@hamilton.ca](mailto:mle@hamilton.ca) or by calling 905-546-2489, it is preferable to have them go through Mr. McHattie's administrative assistant, Nikola Wojewoda-Patti at [Nikola.Wojewoda-Patti@hamilton.ca](mailto:Nikola.Wojewoda-Patti@hamilton.ca). When she forwards a complaint to MLE, she receives a status update, which she in turn will forward to the complainant. If you submit your complaint directly to MLE you will only receive an automated reply that it has been received, and if you want a status update you will have to call MLE. Mr. McHattie likes to be kept in the loop because it helps him to keep track of problem areas in Ainslie Wood and Westdale.]



Blue boxes on Emerson Street with "wrong stuff" notices.

*Kelly Barnett is community liaison coordinator, municipal law enforcement.*



# Westdale's Student Trustees



**HAAKIM NAINAR**

It takes a village to raise a child: these words leave an indelible mark in the minds of those in the education system. We all have a responsibility to ensure that members of tomorrow's society are getting a strong education foundation—a process that is a function of academic achievement and engagement, which are two of the three values of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Engagement is often overlooked in the pursuit of education. Parents and educators naturally have a stake in the process of education. However, often those who are not considered are the ones with arguably the greatest stake in the future of education: the students.

I have been a student in the Hamilton board for almost 12 years and have lived in Westdale for the same time. My younger brother and I attended George R. Allan School, and my sister attends there today. Yet their schooling is no longer the same as I experienced. Our schools are constantly changing the curriculum, the use of technology, and the facilities. At each HWDSB meeting, the elected school trustees help drive this change. It is also imperative that students take an active role in shaping their education system directly—hence, the student trustee.

The role of student trustee was instituted in changes to the Education Act in 1997. Every publicly funded board of education, whether English or French, public or Catholic, is mandated to have one to three student trustees sit on the board of trustees. Political legitimacy is conferred via the student senate, a body composed of senators from each secondary school in the board. **Matt Fondevilla**, a fellow student trustee, and I co-chair the HWDSB student senate.

What exactly comprises the role of student trustee? In addition to participating in policy and other deliberations at the board, during the past year the student senate has taken an active role in articulating responses to the draft nutrition policy

and the school calendar for 2010-11. The draft nutrition policy was particularly contentious regarding clauses prohibiting low-nutrition fundraisers. Also, our policy committee is currently working on writing a recommendation paper on drug and alcohol abuse in Hamilton schools.

In addition to my local responsibilities, I am a senior executive of the Ontario Student Trustees' Association. Formed in 1999 and run entirely by student trustees, it is recognized by the Ministry of Education as a stakeholder in public education. Representing over 2.1 million students in Ontario, we are the highest level of the organized student voice in Ontario. We are involved in Ministry and self-policy development, curriculum review, professional development for student trustees, and general student advocacy. One of the iconic achievements of the past year is the publication of the report "Inspiring Citizenship: Ontario's Careers/Civics Curriculum" ([osta-aeco.org/Reports/2009/Inspiring\\_Citizenship.pdf](http://osta-aeco.org/Reports/2009/Inspiring_Citizenship.pdf)). In past years OSTA has published reports on equitable student fees, French education, and religious education. Students' voices do have an impact on their academic education; in the past year I participated in a French curriculum review, and Matt and I gathered responses to the draft curricula for Canadian and world studies and for French at the student senate. Connecting all the facets of the education system, student trustees play a vital role in representing students.

I graduated from Westdale Secondary School in June and on July 31 will relinquish my responsibilities at the HWDSB to **Micaela Corcoran**. Student participation and engagement are vital, and the mechanisms are in place.

Students, consider yourselves invited to participate in all aspects of your education—ask your student council what your student trustees and student senate are doing. Students and parents, come to public meetings of the board's committee of the whole to see what policies and discussions are affecting education—the education that is our village's responsibility. I invite you to contact me about education issues at [smbnainar@gmail.com](mailto:smbnainar@gmail.com).

*Haakim Nainar lives in Westdale and is the AWWCA's youngest member, having turned 18 this spring.*

## 'Ages Two to 88' continued from page 11

**Herrington** on March 8: "I am a member of the neighbourhood association. I just discussed the concept of Adopt-Your-Block with my kids over the weekend, and they have told me they would like to do it! So I think we're committed to trying to go out once every weekend to clean up the street. Our team would consist of our whole family: **Anthony** (dad), me (mom), **Sophia** (7), **Ella** (5), and **Jonathan** (2). The block we would like to adopt is Haddon Avenue North between Marion and Paisley."

As noted in our last newsletter, no one is too old or too young to volunteer. With our newest volunteers, our volunteers range in age from two (**Jonathan Herrington**) to 88 (**Hazel Broker**).

We encourage you to participate in this worthy community project. If you are already keeping your block clean, please let me know, and I will add your name and block to the list. Contact

me at 905-527-2644 or [eisenberg@sympatico.ca](mailto:eisenberg@sympatico.ca) to sign on and get equipped with gloves and bags. Some grippers and blue boxes are also available.





# MAC STUDENTS ON THE GO

## Pajama Parade 2010

**SHELLI EISENBERG**

The pajama-parade committee has been busy once again, planning the 2010 parade. The committee was formed in 2005 and for the past five years has sought to improve the parade for both participants and observers. The committee has taken residents' and the former MSU president's concerns seriously and is making every effort to have an enjoyable and problem-free event this year. The parade takes place Wednesday, Sept. 8, from 6 to 8 p.m. The committee includes the president and the vice-president administration of the McMaster Students Union, the president of the Society of Off-Campus Students, the director of the Student Community Support Network, MSU director of campus events **Christina Burns**, and me.

We are hoping to have the McMaster Marching Band lead the parade this year and once again will have busker music stations along the route. Groups of upper-year students from various faculties again will station themselves along the route to welcome the students. These representatives are bound by the university's Welcome Week code and, among other rules, are not allowed to drink during Welcome Week.

This year we will reroute the parade for the third time so that it flows more evenly and smoothly. Instead of parading east from campus on the south side of Sterling Street, students will walk on the north side and turn left at Dalewood Crescent instead of Dromore Crescent. This will ease congestion at the beginning of the parade. The MSU will ensure that the students walk on the partially closed roadway on Sterling Street so that observers can stand on the sidewalk rather than on private lawns.

The 2010 parade will exit campus at the Sterling Street entrance, proceed east on the north side of Sterling Street, turn left onto Dalewood Crescent, turn right onto Paisley Avenue North, turn right onto Dromore Crescent, turn right onto Sterling, cross the street to the south side, and proceed back into campus.

For the last few years the parade has emphasized a clean



2010 pajama-parade route.

Map © 2010 by MapQuest, Inc. and NavTeq. Used with permission.

environment. Each of the groups participating will collect garbage along the route, and points will be awarded for the most garbage collected. Following the parade, a group of students will walk the route and ensure that no debris is left. After that, bylaw will check the route for violations.

The AWWCA will again have a booth with a banner on Sterling Street, where we will give out the AWWCA's Because We Care stickers. We encourage you to bring small change for McMaster's Shinerama campaign, which raises funds for cystic fibrosis.

This year we hope to attract even more permanent residents and their families to come out to welcome the new students. It would be great if you would make signs to welcome the students; these were well received last year. In the week prior to the parade, representatives from the MSU and the AWWCA will together deliver notices to every homeowner on the parade route and speak personally with as many people as possible to encourage them to support the parade and make the students feel welcome.

Other additions and improvements are being explored by the committee, and we thank community members for all their feedback. Please continue to send your suggestions and comments. Our goal is to make the parade a positive experience.



## HELPING THE UNDERPRIVILEGED THROUGH STUDENT OPEN CIRCLES

SHELLI EISENBERG



In early March I contacted **Jeff** and **Marybeth Leis Druery** to learn more about the group they formed, Student Open Circles. I asked Jeff if I could attend one of their meetings. He invited me to join their annual day-long volunteer program on March 13 to experience first hand what their organization was about. I took him up on his offer.

Some 20-25 McMaster students met at 8:30 a.m. at McMaster's Student Centre for snacks and to choose a place to volunteer. Jeff and Marybeth had arranged three locations: Wesley Urban Ministries' soup kitchen, the Equestrian Association for the Disabled, and the Eva Rothwell Resource Centre (the former Robert Land School) on Wentworth Street North. I chose the Eva Rothwell Resource Centre and piled all the participants into my van (the other groups took public transportation).

When we arrived, the co-ordinator of the centre gave us a wonderful tour of the large old building, now used as a community centre for their very poor area. It provides free access to the gym, and they have furnished a room with a couple of old pool tables, a large television, and some sofas where teens can hang out. Healthy snacks are provided in the small kitchen attached to this room. In the basement there is a boxing room with free instruction offered, and on the second floor a library where kids can borrow books, as well as a room where donated

clothes can be had free of charge.

Our group was assigned a large classroom that desperately needed a facelift, so we immediately set to work repainting it. This room will be rented to help raise much needed funds for the centre. Within hours, working as a team, the classroom had been transformed into a clean and cheerful space.

By 4 p.m. we were cleaned up and off to the café at the Sky Dragon Centre to join the other volunteers for a round-up session. Each participant was given the opportunity to share their experiences and express how rewarding it felt to contribute to the underprivileged and the disabled in our society. As we sat around two large tables, Jeff and Marybeth posed a few thoughtful questions, asking the students how they felt they could contribute to making the world a better place.

I truly enjoyed my day working alongside Jeff and the students. Marybeth, who had taken responsibility for the equestrian group, joined us at the café. The goal of this lovely couple is to live and teach a life of love and compassion and to help bring awareness and peace to every one of their participants. In my eyes they had definitely achieved their goal for the day—everyone seemed to have felt deeply moved by their experiences.

I asked Jeff if the greater community, both adults and pre-university students, could become involved. He welcomed all who are interested. I think their program provides a wonderful opportunity for our neighbourhood to become involved, as well as our high school students who are looking for volunteer hours. For more information, please contact Jeff or Marybeth at [StudentOpenCircles.com](http://StudentOpenCircles.com).

## Student Community Support Network Update

LAURA STEVENS



The Student Community Support Network has had a busy and productive year. Our Bylaw 101 Nights, both fall and winter, have been very well received by students. We plan to continue them next year and expand the series with a Hamilton 101 Night, to get to know the city.

Our Random Acts of Kindness Week was featured in the Silhouette, McMaster University's student newspaper. We asked students to post their random acts of kindness on our display board and gave out energy-efficient light bulbs, as well as reusable water bottles.

The February edition of our *Community Connection* newsletter featured students volunteering in the community. Our April newsletter showcased things to do in Hamilton for the summer, since we are always trying to encourage students to get out into the city.

SCSN was excited to partner with the AWWCA for a community cleanup on April 17. Along with the Alumni Association and the Office of Sustainability, we met at McMaster before venturing out in the community. As well, we are working hard to communicate the new one-bag garbage

policy to students.

We have expanded our volunteer opportunities to include the Snow Angels program in collaboration with Volunteer Hamilton. Students can earn volunteer hours by shovelling a senior citizen's sidewalk. SCSN has had fantastic participation in our Resident Buddy Program, which pairs up a student and a senior citizen for at-home visits, telephone reassurance, and participation in the Victorian Order of Nurses SMART fitness program (Seniors Maintaining Active Roles Together). See [von.ca/en/special\\_projects/senior\\_exercise.aspx](http://von.ca/en/special_projects/senior_exercise.aspx).

Our community assistants have been patrolling for bylaw infractions such as recycling bins left at the curb, garbage, and unshovelled sidewalks. If you have any problems with student neighbours, feel free to contact us at [scsn@msu.mcmaster.ca](mailto:scsn@msu.mcmaster.ca) and we will have a community assistant visit the property to educate the tenants—no need to get the bylaw officers involved.

I am very pleased to continue as director for the 2010-11 year, and look forward to furthering the excellent relations we have with the AWWCA. Some of our plans for next year include restarting the Student/Resident Representative Communication Program, a Hamilton speaker series, and a Your City conference in the fall. We would like to see

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# McMASTER STUDENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**JEFF DRUERY**

Preparing a meal at a homeless shelter, running a fun, educational game for children who struggle in school, teaching a recent young immigrant, taking adults who live with disabilities on an outing—these are just a few of the activities that over 300 McMaster students are engaged in every week with Student Open Circles, a Hamilton-based charity. Through its Community Volunteer Action Program, these student volunteers give over 9,000 hours of personal time each year.

For **Justin Chow**, who leads a team of volunteers at the Learning and Fun program, it is time well spent, benefiting both the children and the volunteers. In his words: “The LAF after-school program is designed to foster relationships with at-risk youth in the north end of Hamilton. This area is ravaged by many social issues, including widespread poverty, unstable families, and single-parent homes. Every Monday, since September 2009, our group has worked on creating bonds with these youth by working with them one on one in a relaxed atmosphere where we can freely converse about anything while interspersing this ‘fun time’ with homework (or at least attempting to!). What is most rewarding about my experiences at LAF is seeing the changes that occur in the youth themselves. To see a child who was struggling with behavioural and learning issues in September sit down in January and quietly work on math with a mentor is a very gratifying experience. LAF has helped both the youth and our McMaster volunteers to mature and develop in a way that is inexplicable. For my part, I simply can’t find



McMaster University students are role models and make learning fun for at-risk children at after-school programs in Hamilton through the local charity Student Open Circles.

the right words to describe how much I’ve grown in character in my time at LAF. Volunteering here has been such a joyous experience that it has almost become a guilty pleasure coming every week—so much so that I can hardly call it volunteering!”

Student Open Circles trains and mentors 45 student leaders like Justin each year. It facilitates the volunteer teams and leads weekly discussions where students can talk about their experiences and what they are learning. The group discussions raise questions about poverty and social issues, inspiring a lifelong commitment to volunteering.

In addition to the Community Volunteer Action Program, SOC creates on-campus forums for students to discuss their values and social-justice concerns. Through events, retreats, weekly discussion groups, and individual mentoring, students experience a diverse community of peers supporting them in their personal growth and life journeys.

SOC is funded by the United Way, the Hamilton Community Foundation, and many individuals, organizations, and faith communities. More information about how you can support these programs can be found at [StudentOpenCircles.com](http://StudentOpenCircles.com).

*Jeff and Marybeth Leis Druery are staff members of SOC and have provided guidance for students since 1995. They share an interest in today’s student culture, love being with people, are committed to living lightly on the earth, enjoy nature, and express themselves through music and art.*



Katerina mentors a child at the Learning And Fun after-school program in Hamilton’s north end.

*“Building community  
block by block”*



# COMMUNITY UPDATES

## 2010 Offers a Year of Change

IRA ROSEN

We have had two changes of West Town crime manager recently. In January, **Sergeant Tina Potter** replaced **Sgt. Jo-Anne Savoie**, who served our community for two years. Sgt. Potter was transferred to us from her position as crime manager in the north end of the city, bringing a high level of experience to our neighbourhood. Hamilton's new police chief, however, has instituted a citywide program to be used where needed, Action Teams (Addressing Crime Trends in Our Neighbourhoods), and Sgt. Potter was transferred again. As of May 9, our West Town crime manager is **Sgt. Sabrina Feser**, who comes to us from the detective unit.

**Police Chief Glenn De Caire**, formerly staff superintendent for the Toronto police, has a vast amount of experience. He accepted our invitation to come to the AWWCA's June board meeting to share his ideas with us.

During the past year, we have had too many occurrences of theft from vehicles. As a community, we need to do a better job of removing temptation from the criminal element. Police advise you to keep your vehicle locked at all times and keep the interior clutter free. Remove all items that may act as a temptation, such as laptops, cell phones, GPS units, power cords, and loose change. Never leave your vehicle running unattended.

We have also had thefts from homes. To avoid this, please lock your doors at all times, even when you are at home. If you have security-related concerns, the Hamilton Police Service offers a program called Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. As its name indicates, the program suggests security improvements to a residence or commercial location that will reduce the likelihood of a criminal identifying

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Police Chief Glenn De Caire and Sgt. Sabrina Feser, just prior to the AWWCA board meeting June 7.  
Photo: Janet Woodward.

## Urgent Care Centre Update

KENNETH OCKENDEN

On March 9, the Urgent Care Centre Community Advisory Committee met and was updated on the progress of the UCC to be opened at Macklin and Main Street West.

For this to happen on time, other areas of Hamilton Health Sciences are slated for redevelopment. The committee heard that construction is beginning shortly on the emergency department at Hamilton General Hospital and the pediatric emergency department at McMaster University Medical Centre.

Plans are nearly completed for the UCC, and its working group is creating an operational plan. Because of construction timelines, it is unlikely that there will be a lengthy transition period between the closing of the MUMC adult emergency department and the opening of the new UCC. In other cities where similar openings have taken place, rapid changeovers have been very successful.

At a date closer to the opening of the UCC, there will be

widespread dissemination of information to the community (including the AWWCA) and medical professionals so that as many as possible are acquainted with the new system.

A recent announcement that a clinic would be constructed for general practitioners at McMaster Innovation Park will have no effect on the function of the UCC. Rather, physicians and residents who currently practice in the McMaster Family Practice unit at Macklin Street South and Main Street West will move to Innovation Park, and the UCC will be situated in the building at Macklin and Main.

In a related issue, the Ontario Ombudsman's office still has not issued its report on the way our Local Health Integration Network functioned in essentially ignoring citizen input from Hamilton and the Niagara area when making major decisions about health care in those areas. We hope that letters recently sent by citizens to the Ombudsman and the Premier's office will speed up a slow process.

*Dr. Kenneth Ockenden is a member of the Urgent Care Centre Community Advisory Committee and an AWWCA member.*



# CITY HALL NEWS

## Ward 1 Chedoke-Cootes: Councillor's Report

BRIAN MCHATTIE



I would like to update you on our work and discuss projects that I am pursuing on your behalf in 2010.

One of the recommendations from the Rental Housing Community Liaison Committee was to undertake an 18-month proactive bylaw-enforcement project in Ainslie Wood and Westdale and in other parts of the city. Council approved that project, and since

May, additional municipal law-enforcement officers have proactively enforced bylaws for noise, property standards, long grass, weeds, snow removal, etc., in our neighbourhoods. This is in addition to proactive bylaw enforcement during the fall and spring student move-in and move-out periods.

Additional CLC recommendations are being investigated, including a rental-housing registry, a voluntary landlord-certification program, and hiring a community-liaison worker, whose focus would be on problem solving and relationship building between permanent and student residents (based on a London and Guelph model). McMaster University, Mohawk College, and the city would provide joint funding. The economic development and planning committee received a report on these ideas on May 6.

We continue to work on the Ainslie Wood North Community Group, with a website, [awngroup.com](http://awngroup.com), established to facilitate communications between permanent and student residents. A second garage sale and other events are planned for the fall. McMaster's Student Community Support Network assistants would like to work with AWWCA block representatives to bring together neighbours to discuss joint projects.

Many believe that construction of well-managed purpose-built student housing is part of the student-housing solution so that single-family homes can revert to family use. Purpose-built student-housing complexes in Ainslie Wood are the 450-student West Village Suites and the maximum-50-student Binkley Hall residence. The 17 Ewen Road project for 550 students is on hold as a noise study continues to be reviewed. A 130-student project at 71 Leland Avenue has been proposed, with no action to date. In Westdale, construction of the 210-student project at King and Carling begins this summer. In Strathcona, on Strathcona Avenue North between Head and King across the street from Victoria Park, a 22-student residence was completed in fall 2009. If all projects proceed, there will be over 1,400 purpose-built student housing beds in place within the next couple of years.

McMaster University's Department of Psychology has introduced an exciting project to encourage new staff to live in Ainslie Wood and Westdale. AWWCA member **Dr. Ken**

**Ockenden** and I met with AWWCA president **John Wigle**, McMaster's associate director of public relations **Gord Arbeau**, and **Dr. Allison Sekuler**, an AWWCA member who is associate vice-president and dean of graduate studies, to learn more about the project and how to encourage McMaster to expand it.

More updates:

1. The Dalewood Recreation Centre feasibility study goes to the city's emergency and community-services committee for approval in September. Detailed design work will be undertaken in 2011, with construction under way in 2012-13 (capital budget pending) for a new Dalewood Recreation Centre on the same site.

2. A new soccer pitch will be built this fall in Churchill Park, and work on the master plan for the park begins in June. A number of community meetings will be held to gather ideas.

3. Ronald McDonald House has received funding from the Canada-Ontario Stimulus Program for expansion of their facility at Cootes Drive and Main Street West by 36 rooms.

4. Traffic improvements around Westdale Secondary School are planned—a dedicated drop-off area for parents, flashing lights denoting a lower speed limit on Main and Longwood during school hours, introduction of bike lanes, and removal of parking on the west side of Longwood to improve pedestrian sightlines.

5. A brand new heated outdoor pool will be constructed at Coronation Park this summer, along with important renovations to the arena. An open house to provide more detail on the project will occur this summer.

6. In December, the city purchased the Canadian Pacific Railway lands adjacent to McMaster Innovation Park, effectively stopping plans for a big-box retail complex.

Please visit my website at [brianmchattie.ca](http://brianmchattie.ca) for more details on my City Hall committee work and projects listed above. I invite you to communicate with me at City Hall at 905- 546-2416 or [bmchattie@hamilton.ca](mailto:bmchattie@hamilton.ca). Have a great summer!

## Ward 1 Neighbourhood Associations Meet

CAROLYN KINSLEY

Councillor **Brian McHattie** invited board members of the three neighbourhood associations in Ward 1 to a meeting at St. Joseph's parish hall Nov. 23 to discuss forming a community council (ward advisory council). **Ira Rosen**, **Janet Woodward**, and I attended for the AWWCA. Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association was represented by **Margaret Strecker**, secretary; **Mary Lou Reiman**, president; and **Susan Millman**, membership. Strathcona Community Council

Continued on page 25



**'Ward 1' continued from page 24**

was represented by **Dawn Graham**, president, and **Kathy Wolsey**, secretary (accompanied by seeing-eye dog **Gibson**). It was established that none of us, including Mr. McHattie, felt the need for a community council. He thought, however, that it might be useful for representatives from the three community associations to meet once or twice a year to share concerns and strategies.

Because we have a particular and ongoing concern—McMaster University's impact on the adjacent neighbourhoods—the AWWCA is the largest association and the only one restricted to resident homeowners. Janet said that when we began in 1998 we signed up 300 members immediately. Kirkendall has about 40 paid members and about 150 on an e-mail list. They charge \$5 per family per year. Strathcona, organized in the early 90s, does not have a membership fee but maintains an e-mail list. Volunteers deliver flyers, and they have a website in development.

Kirkendall was forming a development-review committee to learn about the city's process for approving

(or rejecting) new developments. Their focus is on mediation rather than taking a position, since they do not believe they can speak on behalf of the entire membership. They also have a pedestrian committee (comparable to our walkability committee). Strathcona focuses on "giving back to the neighbourhood," helping food banks, for instance. A big issue for them was the Good Shepherd development.

Kirkendall went through a transportation plan two years ago. At the time of our meeting, Strathcona was developing a secondary plan and transportation plan.

We all have concerns about transportation, traffic, parking, land use, and development.

Mr. McHattie mentioned that there is new purpose-built student housing that accommodates 22 students on Strathcona Avenue North between Head and King across the street from Victoria Park. The owner is **Werner Burwell**, who is also a real-estate agent. It was built on what had been an empty lot.

Mr. McHattie also told us that in January or February city staff's report on the recommendations of the

Neighbourhood Residential Housing Community Liaison Committee would be going to the planning committee. (See his report in this issue.) London is charging \$20/year for a citywide licencing program for fourplexes and smaller rentals. The owners self-certify using a list from the city. The fee pays for a dedicated bylaw officer and an administrative person, and the city conducts random inspections. Oshawa's licencing bylaw is being challenged. [Update: The Supreme Court of Canada recently upheld Oshawa's legislation to address the intensification of residential units. On May 12 Oshawa told Hamilton that it underestimated the number of staff needed, will have to raise fees to recover costs, and is still contending with confusion about the rules but has licenced approximately 210 properties out of approximately 300 known rental locations.]

Janet suggested that it would be good to join forces once again for an all-candidates meeting for the next municipal election. [Update: It will be Wednesday, Oct. 20, time and place TBA.]

*Carolyn Kinsley is corresponding secretary for the AWWCA and newsletter copy editor.*

## GRINGO'S AND THE OMB

### JANET WOODWARD

Seven concerned neighbours, including two representatives from the AWWCA board, assembled at 10 a.m. on Feb. 25 in downtown Hamilton for the Ontario Municipal Board hearing regarding Jimmy Gringo's Burrito Factory. Background on this business, which operates on Marion Avenue North, appeared in both the spring and autumn 2009 issues of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.

Before the OMB chair arrived, Gringo's counsel, **Ivan Marini**, told the city lawyers, the planner, and the residents that he planned to request an adjournment. He said that they are "not going to apply for a liquor licence and are prepared to put that on the record and in writing." City counsel replied that the liquor licence is a separate issue. Mr. Marini said he wasn't aware of Gringo's being a problem to the neighbourhood and asked if the neighbours had

experienced any problems. Several people cited problems.

The meeting began with a request for adjournment by Mr. Marini, who offered his apologies, saying that he was retained only the week before because his clients' previous representative had given them only 10 or 12 days notice that he could not represent them and that there was no time to hire a planner. He said, "My clients feel they have not been properly represented. . . . I recognize the OMB's policy against last-minute adjournments. . . . I am not seeking a long adjournment, but just enough time to retain a planner . . . there is no bad faith here being advanced. . . . I feel my clients are being upfront with me . . . and I come 'cap in hand' . . . and appreciate the huge inconvenience to all."

Counsel for the City of Hamilton replied that the city was not consenting to the adjournment and cited OMB Rule 64: Adjournment is only possible

due to illness and if a representative cannot be obtained. Documentation was entered from three cases as precedent in terms of board decisions not to allow adjournment, one of which showed that lack of a lawyer and planner was not a valid reason for adjournment. In other words, due diligence is up to the appellant. Counsel then outlined the reason for the previous adjournment of the Feb. 3 hearing: it was a clerical matter because the hearing room was not available and the OMB asked for an adjournment. The OMB chair noted: "The delay of 20 days should have helped the appellant." Counsel said, "Sept. 25, 2009, was the date Gringo's appealed, and this is their own hearing. The applicant has not followed the rules, Rule 64, for adjournment." A list of infractions was then cited, with the conclusion, "The applicant does not deserve to be rewarded with a last-

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# Proposed Expansion of Ronald McDonald House

## PHYLLIS TRESIDDER

A public information meeting regarding the proposed expansion of Ronald McDonald House was held April 22 at Binkley United Church. In attendance were representatives of the developer (IBI Group), Ronald McDonald House, architects Vermeulen and Hind, and the Hamilton planning department, together with Councillor Brian McHattie, about 15 nearby residents (including AWWCA members), and members of Hamilton Tree Keepers.

An Official Plan Amendment is being sought to permit a change from open/greenspace to the land-use designation of the existing building. Plans are for a four-story, addition with a maximum of 36 units and an increased parking area. Stimulus funding is to come from the province, and the target date is spring 2011. The land to be purchased from the city would extend into existing green space and would require the removal of several mature deciduous trees.

Concerns were expressed regarding:

1. The loss of trees and useable green space.
2. The proposed height of a building that is adjacent to residential housing on Norfolk Street North.
3. The creation of an oddly shaped and almost landlocked dogleg of open space on the old rail corridor.

Responsive actions were suggested:

1. Through a site-plan development process, new trees, buffering, and attractive landscaping will diminish the necessary loss of trees. This process will include community input.
2. Mr. McHattie will keep residents informed about the development process by

posting a link to be provided by the developers, IBI, for this purpose, including elevations and site plans as they become available.

3. An opportunity was identified for a parkette or playground to be shared by guests at Ronald McDonald House and neighbourhood families with small children. This was enthusiastically supported by residents and Ronald McDonald House representatives, but was met with caution from planners and developers. Still, the feeling was that this is something to consider seriously, and again Mr. McHattie will provide liaison for an inclusive development process.

*Phyllis Tresidder is president emerita of the AWWCA.*



Ronald McDonald House on Main Street West at Cootes Drive.

Photo: Janet Woodward

**'Gringo's' continued from page 25**  
minute adjournment."

Mr. Marini appealed to **Mr. Christou**, the chair, saying that it was not fair. The chair asked Mr. Marini if he had approached a planner. He replied: "I haven't approached a planner since being hired. I only had the documents two days ago." Mr. Christou responded, "They are public documents."

Mr. Christou then asked each of the five residents who had signed in if they would agree to the adjournment request. All answered "no," and two of them said they had taken time off work to be present. The chair took a 10-minute break to consider the adjournment. When he returned, he declared that the adjournment would not be granted because some people had made special arrangements to be present, taking time off work. In response, Mr. Marini said that his instructions were to withdraw the application.

One of the city lawyers, **Mr. Zuidema**, requested an Order of the OMB dismissing the appeal, but Mr. Marini took exception to that request, saying, "There is a huge distinction between withdrawing the appeal and dismissing it." The chair responded,

"The [OMB] board has to issue an order. This application does require four parking spaces . . . you will have to work with the city and come up with another plan and you can apply to the Committee of Adjustment again . . . by withdrawing, you are not going to contest the C of A decision that stands." The OMB's disposition dated March 31 read: "The Board having been advised that the Applicant/Appellant does not wish to proceed with this matter; the Board orders that the appeal is dismissed and the variance to By-law 96-109 of the City of Hamilton is not authorized. This is the order of the board."



Ainslie Wood/Westdale  
Community Association of  
Resident Homeowners Inc.

**Because  
we care**



# MEMBERS' NEWS

## Responses to *Neighbourhood News & Views*

**Jan. 22:** "The newsletter just keeps getting better and better. The articles are very informative, telling us what is going on in our community. I thought Malcolm Horsnell's article on the TH&B was terrific. It makes me wonder why we bother to buy the major city paper—it doesn't have much about our community in it." Earl Jerome, AWWCA member

**Jan. 27:** "I find the newsletter highly informative. It is positive in promoting progressively better relations between the university and the community at large. It has a real flavour of professional journalism—clear and concise writing. I thought the article on the TH&B in the autumn 2009 issue was super in terms of the development of this area (I am a train enthusiast too). It would be nice if this article could be expanded to include time frames for the individual industrial companies such as Westinghouse and Hotpoint. Also, perhaps a picture of the very first industrial company that was there before Westinghouse." Arnold Beale, AWWCA member

**Jan. 31:** "Thank you for that wonderful article about the TH&B Railroad. I'm old enough to remember it. Whenever my family drove over a railroad crossing, my father would say, "That's To Hell & Back." My mother, Thelma Batzold Bechtel, was from St. Thomas. Her father and three of his four brothers worked on the railroad, some as engineers. One of them, Percy, was the engineer on the TH&B from Waterford to Hamilton. I remember, at the age of three or four, being terrified on the train and as we went under the Hunter Street tunnel. Mother worked in the office of Michigan Central Railway. Thorold, one of her younger brothers, was the superintendent of the railroad section of the Michigan Central from Detroit to Niagara Falls. He lived in St. Thomas. Thank you for that great piece of history." Jim Bechtel

**Feb. 3:** "What a great newsletter! Thanks for including us." Adam Kuhn,

manager, Community Service-Learning and Civic Engagement, McMaster University

**Feb. 4:** "In my misbegotten youth I worked on a TH&B section gang for two summers (after first and second year university) changing ties and rail. I reported to the Aberdeen Yard. It was a physically demanding job, and the crew was great fun. I did become very proficient with the hammer, and I could drive spikes in the hardest of railway ties very quickly. And after work I consumed vast quantities of lousy draft beer at the infamous Paddy Green's. I had better stop there." John Wigle, AWWCA president

**Feb. 5:** "The newsletter continues to flourish and have improvements with each new issue. This latest issue is positive and upbeat. It reflects a feeling of well-being in the community. This 2009-10 semester does seem quieter." Betty Bechtel, AWWCA board member

**March 4:** "Great newsletter. I enjoyed the article about the wild turkey, especially since she is a daily visitor and has figured out how to access my bird feeder." Kenneth Ockenden, AWWCA member



Turkey on the Ockenden's bird feeder.

Photo: Kenneth Ockenden

# ED AND LIZ SENDOFF

Members of the AWWCA board, former board member **Dmitri Malakhof**, and **Councillor Brian McHattie** gathered at the home of **Betty and Jim Bechtel** on Dec. 9, 2009, to extend our best wishes and thanks to **Liz Millar** and **Ed Oliver**. The following week they moved to Dundas. We miss them and their award-winning garden on Cottrill Street in Ainslie Wood North. Liz served as president of the AWWCA from 2001 to 2003.



The farewell cake.

Photo: Janet Woodward



Ed and Liz cut the cake at the party held in their honour. Photo: Janet Woodward

## 'SCSN Update' continued from page 21

our community assistants create a relationship with AWWCA block representatives, beginning with the Ainslie Wood North area through the newly formed AWN Group.

We are always striving to be more visible on campus and to get more students involved with our programs. Along with the Society of Off-Campus Students and the Off-Campus Resource Centre, we will be preparing a series of educational and interactive videos about important issues for off-campus students, including how to be a good neighbour!

*Laura Stevens is the director of SCSN.*

## Join Us

The AWWCA board of directors holds its monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. Members and guests are welcome to attend by prior arrangement.

**Why?** By becoming involved with your community, you have the opportunity to promote positive change, improve the quality of life for all, and feel good about what you have accomplished.

Contact Loreen Jerome at 905-525-7386 or [loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca](mailto:loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca) for the meeting location and information.

## 'Ainslie Wood' continued from page 7

among the suggestions.

The Student Community Support Network works with students regarding bylaw issues. This is just one of many functions that it undertakes to facilitate students' transition into community living during the school year.

Having the AWN Group offers hope to the beleaguered area and an opportunity to become acquainted with fellow residents.

Please visit the AWN Group's website for area news: [AWNGroup.com](http://AWNGroup.com).

*Betty Bechtel is an honorary board member of the AWWCA.*



# ABOUT THE AWWCA

The AWWCA is the largest dues-paying neighbourhood association in Hamilton, with about 600 members. We are a volunteer, non-profit association with the mission of preserving, protecting, and enhancing the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community and the quality of life for all residents, and of organizing, communicating, lobbying, and pursuing the needs of the members of the association.

Each September our annual general meeting hosts a speaker or panel on a current community issue, and we work with the McMaster Students Union to organize the annual pajama parade for first-year students. In the spring, around Earth Day, we co-ordinate a community cleanup. Our board of directors meets monthly with our ward councillor, a representative of our local police unit, and other guests. The AWWCA,



through individual members and committees, works on many projects, some short term, many ongoing: lobbying for maintaining and upgrading neighbourhood schools and community facilities; making our area inviting to pedestrians; fostering good town and gown relations; publicizing and participating in local events; providing input on master plans for transportation, parks, and land use in our area; promoting our area to families to maintain a balance between long-term residents and students; working with the city, police, and fire department on property standards, quality-of-life issues, and safety standards; promoting best practices through research and membership in provincial organizations with similar goals. We maintain a website, publish a twice-yearly newsletter, and communicate frequently with members by e-mail.

## We Said Farewell to Sergeants Savoie and Potter

**'Year of Change' continued from page 23**

it as an easy target. If you would like to have your home evaluated, contact the police at 905-546-4925.

Improved diligence and becoming more involved with our community are positive ways of making it a better place to live. Many students in our community are living on their own for the first time. We recommend that you try to get to know the ones who live near you. You can advise them, if they are planning to leave their home for a few days, to lock their doors and windows and to leave on a light or install timers. Positive relations and communication will help reduce crime and result in a year of positive change.

*Ira Rosen is the AWWCA's first vice-president and police liaison.*



Sgt. Jo-Anne Savoie (on left) and Sgt. Tina Potter.

Photo: Janet Woodward

The AWWCA is a volunteer, nonprofit association with the mission to preserve, protect, and enhance the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community environment and the quality of life for all residents, and to organize, communicate, lobby, and pursue the needs of the members of the association.

The AWWCA newsletter, *Neighbourhood News & Views*, is distributed to members twice a year and supplemented by news sent by e-mail.

Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the writers unless otherwise specified and do not necessarily represent the views of the AWWCA.

Submissions welcomed.

Please send all news, story ideas, and photographs to:

**AWWCA**

1063 King Street West, Suite 221

Hamilton, Ontario

L8S 4S3

**WEBSITE** [awwca.ca](http://awwca.ca)

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## Useful Websites

**Architecture Hamilton:** [architecturehamilton.com](http://architecturehamilton.com)

**Art Bus:** [thepearlcompany.ca](http://thepearlcompany.ca)

**AWWCA:** [awwca.ca](http://awwca.ca)

**AWWCA bylaw complaints:** [awwca.ca/initiatives/initiative/municipal-bylaws](http://awwca.ca/initiatives/initiative/municipal-bylaws)

**Citizens at City Hall:** [hamiltoncatch.org](http://hamiltoncatch.org)

**City of Hamilton:** [hamilton.ca](http://hamilton.ca)

**Councillor Brian McHattie:** [brianmchattie.ca](http://brianmchattie.ca)

**Environment Hamilton:** [environmenthamilton.org](http://environmenthamilton.org)

**Federation of Citizens' Associations:** [fca-fac.ca](http://fca-fac.ca)

**Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario:**  
[www.urbanneighbourhoods.ca](http://www.urbanneighbourhoods.ca)

**Fire, Hamilton Emergency Service:** [hamilton.ca/fire](http://hamilton.ca/fire)

**H Magazine:** [hmag.ca](http://hmag.ca)

**Hamilton's Event Calendar:** [hcal.ca](http://hcal.ca)

**HammerBoard:** [hammerboard.ca](http://hammerboard.ca)

**Hamilton Police Service:** [hamiltonpolice.on.ca](http://hamiltonpolice.on.ca)

**Hamiltonians for Progressive Development:**  
[progressivedevelopment.ca](http://progressivedevelopment.ca)

**Helping local communities achieve more autonomy:**  
[localgovernment.ca](http://localgovernment.ca)

**McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre:**  
[macocho.com](http://macocho.com)

**Ontario Greenbelt Alliance:** [greenbelt.ca](http://greenbelt.ca)

**Ontario Professional Planners Institute:**  
[ontarioplanners.on.ca](http://ontarioplanners.on.ca)

**Ontario Smart Growth Network:** [greenontario.org/osgn](http://greenontario.org/osgn)

**Raise the Hammer:** [raisethehammer.org/index.asp](http://raisethehammer.org/index.asp)

**Town and Gown Association of Ontario:** [tgao.ca](http://tgao.ca)

**TownGown World:** [towngownworld.com](http://towngownworld.com)

**Urban League of London:** [ul.london.on.ca](http://ul.london.on.ca)

**Westdale Business Improvement Area:**  
[westdalevillage.ca](http://westdalevillage.ca)

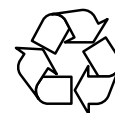
**Westdale Slide Show:** <http://forum.skyscraperpage.com/showthread.php?t=135327>

### Sources for Westdale: Canada's First Planned Community

John C. Weaver, *From Land Assembly to Social Maturity: The Suburban Life-Cycle of Westdale, 1911-1951* (Hamilton: J.C. Weaver, n.d.); F. Kent Hamilton, *Beauty Spots in Westdale* (Hamilton: n.p., [1928]); Michael Doucet and John Weaver, *Housing the North American City* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991); Urban Marketing Collaborative, "Commercial Market Analysis: Westdale BIA" (commissioned by City of Hamilton, 2009); Hamilton Central Library, Local History and Archives; [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westdale,\\_Ontario](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westdale,_Ontario); [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don\\_Mills](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don_Mills); [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_planned\\_cities#Canada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_planned_cities#Canada).

# We're on Facebook!

Check out the AWWCA at  
**[facebook.com/pages/AWWCA/282204334377](https://facebook.com/pages/AWWCA/282204334377)**





# Useful Numbers

## **Abandoned shopping carts:**

Metro: 905-523-5044; Fortino's (Rifle Range store): 905-308-9045, press 0 for next-day pickup of Fortino's buggies: the Buggy Man: 905-921-5811 or [thebuggyman.com](http://thebuggyman.com), [postmaster@thebuggyman.com](mailto:postmaster@thebuggyman.com)

## **Animals injured or in distress:** 905-574-3433, press 2

## **Assessments:** Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, Hamilton, 1-866-296-6722

## **Barking dogs:** 905-546-CITY (2489)\*; after hours: 905-574-3433

## **Building permits:** If in doubt about a building permit for a renovation site, contact Councillor Brian McHattie, 905-546-2416, or [bmchattie@hamilton.ca](mailto:bmchattie@hamilton.ca); if there is no permit, file a complaint with him and copy his assistant, Nikola Wojewoda-Patti, [Nikola.Wojewoda-Patti@hamilton.ca](mailto:Nikola.Wojewoda-Patti@hamilton.ca)

## **City Hall:** 905-546-CITY (2489)\*; if you know the extension, call 905-546-2424

## **Contractors:** To find out if a contractor is licensed: 905-546-2782 and press 3 for licencing. For concerns about contractors' activities: Building Services Division at 905-546-3950 or [hamilton.ca/building](http://hamilton.ca/building) or [hamilton.ca/tradelicence](http://hamilton.ca/tradelicence). Other helpful resources: Ontario Renovators' Council (Ontario Home Builders' Association) for a consumers' guide to the Standard Renovations Contract at 1-800-387-0109 or [ohba.ca/newsinfo/homeownersguidetorenovations](http://ohba.ca/newsinfo/homeownersguidetorenovations); the Better Business Bureau at [bbb.org/canada](http://bbb.org/canada); Consumer Protection (Ontario) at [www.consumerbeware.mgs.gov.on.ca](http://www.consumerbeware.mgs.gov.on.ca)

## **Councillor Brian McHattie:** 905-546-2416 or [bmchattie@hamilton.ca](mailto:bmchattie@hamilton.ca)

## **Crime Stoppers (to report a crime anonymously):** 1-800-222-8477\*

## **Fire, Hamilton Emergency Services (Fire and Fire Prevention Division):** 905-546-2424, ext. 1380

## **Garbage, waste management:** 905-546-CITY (2489)\*

## **Graffiti:**

In progress: 911\*; on city property (including street signs) or private property: 905-546-CITY (2489) or [hamilton.ca/ProjectsInitiatives/CleanCityStrategy/GraffitiForm.htm](http://hamilton.ca/ProjectsInitiatives/CleanCityStrategy/GraffitiForm.htm)

Also notify West Town Crime Manager Sgt. Sabrina Feser: 905-540-5093 or [sfeser@hamiltonpolice.on.ca](mailto:sfeser@hamiltonpolice.on.ca)

## **McMaster University, Office of Public Relations, Community Help Line:** 905-525-9140, ext. 27305

## **Noise infractions:** For noise in progress call police at 905-546-4925\* or the city's municipal law-enforcement department at 905-546-2782, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; after hours, 905-546-CITY (2489)

## **Parking infractions:** 905-540-6000\* (you need to call while the vehicle is in violation for the vehicle to be ticketed)

## **Park permits:** 905-546-2424, ext. 4270

## **Police:**

Non-emergency: 905-546-4925\*; a person will answer after the taped message (press 0 to skip the message)

West Town Crime Manager Sgt. Sabrina Feser: 905-540-5093 or [sfeser@hamiltonpolice.on.ca](mailto:sfeser@hamiltonpolice.on.ca)

If you need further assistance: police reception desk, 905-546-4771\*

Community police: [communitypolice@awwca.ca](mailto:communitypolice@awwca.ca)

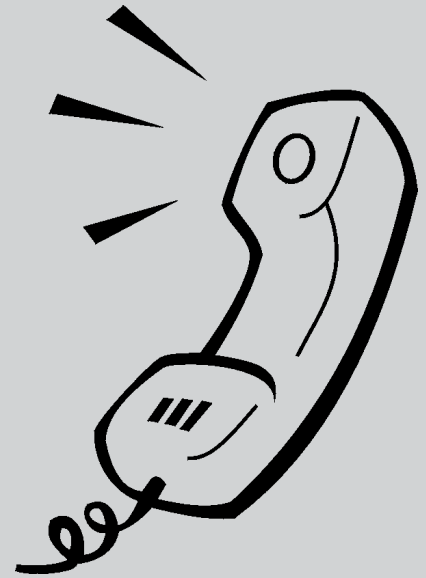
## **Property-standards infractions (dwellings, structures, and yards):** Councillor Brian McHattie, 905-546-2416, or [bmchattie@hamilton.ca](mailto:bmchattie@hamilton.ca) and copy his assistant, Nikola Wojewoda-Patti, [Nikola.Wojewoda-Patti@hamilton.ca](mailto:Nikola.Wojewoda-Patti@hamilton.ca)

## **Signs:**

Illegal signs: 905-546-2424, ext. 2782

Street signs missing or damaged, traffic lights not working: 905-546-4376\*

## **Snow-clearing infractions:** 905-546-CITY (2489)\*



\*Hours are 24/7

# THE WAY WE WERE

## Westdale: Canada's First Planned Community

MALCOLM J. A. HORSNELL

Westdale, in Hamilton, Ontario, is Canada's first planned community. By "planned community" I mean a community planned from the beginning as fully integrated and self-contained on previously undeveloped land, in contrast to one that grows up *ad hoc* or is not self-contained.

Westdale is bounded by Highway 403 to the east, Main Street West to the south, Cootes Drive to the west, and Cootes Paradise of the Royal Botanical Gardens to the north.

Various organizations, literature, and websites incorrectly claim Don Mills, Ontario, as Canada's first planned community. The "Muddy York: Toronto Real Estate Blog" on its website claims this, as does Will Ferguson's book, *Canadian History for Dummies* (Toronto: J. Wiley & Sons Canada, 2005, p. 336). Don Mills, announced only in 1953, is Canada's first *post-World War II* planned community.

A report commissioned by the City of Hamilton says that "The neighbourhood of Westdale Village had its beginnings in 1911" and "prides itself in being one of the first planned communities in Canada" ("Commercial Market Analysis: Westdale Village BIA," 2009, p. 1). Based on new city building ideas, architect Robert Pope "purposefully created Westdale Village as a self-contained neighbourhood" with a "concentric circle configuration of the street layout." On page 2 the report notes that Westdale was to be centred around a local commercial district for approximately 1,700 envisioned households. As of 2009, after so many decades, "the pride of being *the first planned community in Canada* has begun" (p. 55, *italics mine*). Of course many of Westdale's heritage-minded residents have prided themselves on this fact for years.

In 1911, J. J. McKittrick (McKittrick Properties) bought and promoted 100 acres called Hamilton Gardens, later expanded to 800 acres, the land on which Westdale now lies. Surveys were carried out in 1913, and Hamilton annexed the holdings in 1914. Of Westdale's 16 component parts, 13 surveys were registered between 1920 and 1931; only three were registered later, in 1939, 1941, and 1944. Construction began in the 1920s. Most residents arrived between 1925 and 1930. Westdale was nearly complete by 1931, with the last two areas finished by 1951.

In 1918, F. Kent Hamilton took over management of McKittrick Properties. He produced a multipage pamphlet,

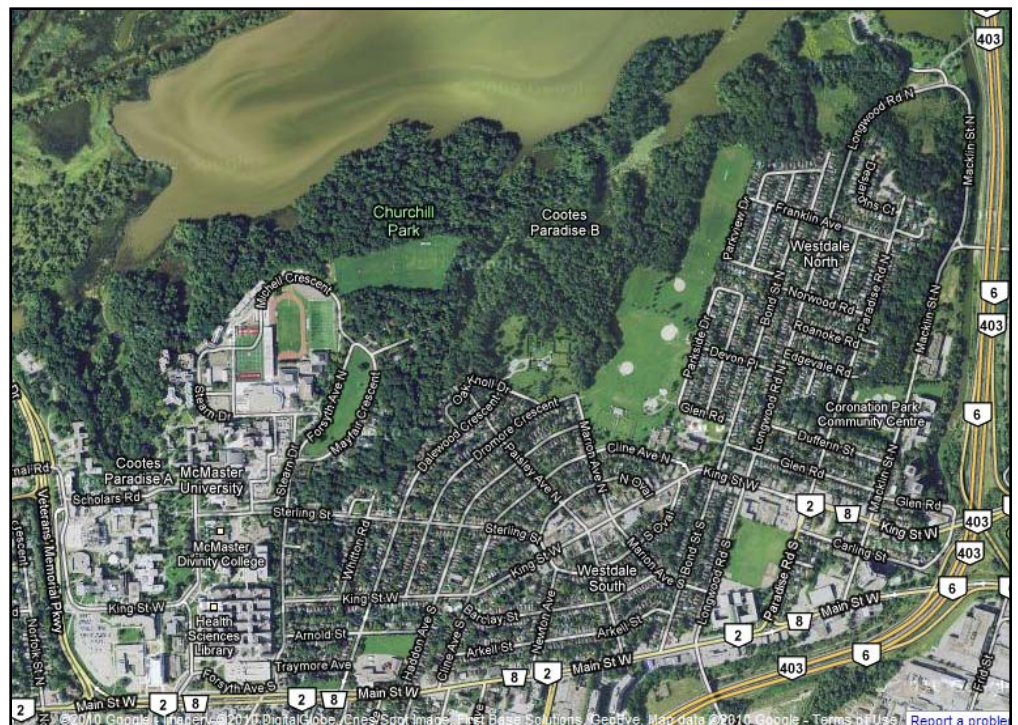
*Beauty Spots in Westdale*, to promote the community to prospective residents. The centre spread shows a map of Westdale with all the proposed streets.

Commonly called Westdale Village, because of its village-like ethos, Westdale has its own shopping area at the centre of the residential community. The planners provided areas for homes, stores, apartments, and what today we call mixed use (residential above stores). Westdale provides the daily services a family needs, such as shopping (groceries, clothes, shoes, pharmacy, computers), gas stations, restaurants, medical services, lawyers, places of worship (Canada's oldest Reform synagogue moved to Westdale in 1952), a large park, schools, public transit, and more, all within walkable distances. An Art Deco movie theatre still exists; today it and other locations in Westdale are sometimes used for movie shoots. Families can raise their children through all levels of schooling, including university. (McMaster University relocated from Toronto to Westdale in 1930.) As a walkable community, Westdale is not dependent on the automobile, in contrast to Don Mills and other so-called planned communities.

In summary, Westdale is Canada's first planned community, entirely planned and funded by the private sector starting in 1911, built in the 1920s and 1930s, and largely settled by 1931.

*Malcolm Horsnell is the consulting editor of Neighbourhood News & Views.*

Sources on page 30



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Mailing Label