

# Neighbourhood News & Views

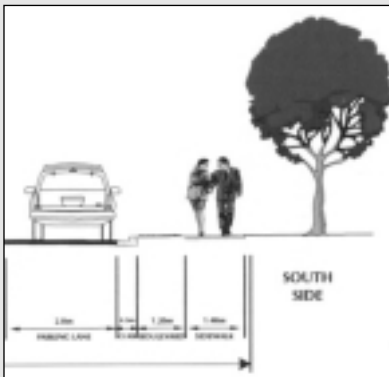
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AINSLIE WOOD / WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
OF RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.  
Spring 2004

*"Building community  
block by block"*



The Trees of  
Westdale

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Traffic Calming  
on Sterling St.

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## Mayor Larry Di Ianni Supports Concept of Downtown Campus

JANET WOODWARD

The AWWCA thanks **Councillor Brian McHattie** for arranging a meeting Jan. 9 with AWWCA president **Rob Payne**, AWWCA board member **Michael Bordin**, **Mayor Larry Di Ianni**, **Jim McGreal**, executive assistant to **MPP Judy Marsales**, and **Mario Joannette**, the mayor's executive assistant.

The purpose of the meeting was to bring our new mayor and member of provincial Parliament up to speed about McMaster's projected growth and its effect on the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Councillor McHattie informed the mayor that student housing is the primary issue for Ward 1 constituents and it is very important that a joint housing program with the university be established to address McMaster's growth plans.

Rob and Michael reviewed McMaster University's Refining Directions growth scenarios and pointed out that our community cannot handle any more growth in the student population. They echoed Councillor McHattie's comments that a joint planning process to look at intensification projects both on and off campus is a priority.

Mayor Di Ianni agreed that a balanced community is a desirable goal and asked Councillor McHattie to be his "point man" on this issue. He also expressed interest in our suggestion of a downtown campus as an option to support McMaster's Refining Directions study.

In a dinner get-together between the officers of McMaster University and city councillors on Jan. 12, the mayor expressed his enthusiasm for the development of a downtown campus in his speech. That evening **Roger Trull**, vice-president, university

advancement, informed Councillor McHattie that the university would be adding a community member to their housing committee, and the following day he informed Rob as well. These actions are welcome steps toward our goal of joint planning around issues that affect us all.



Councillor McHattie, Rob Payne, Jim McGreal, Mayor Di Ianni, and Michael Bordin.  
Photo: Gurcharan Dhaliwal

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 21, 2004

Dalewood School Auditorium,  
1150 Main St. W.

6:00 p.m. Meet with police,  
bylaw officers, and  
McMaster student  
representatives

7:00 p.m. Annual General  
Meeting

Guest speaker

Mayor Larry Di Ianni on the  
topic of student housing

# community NEWS

## Our New Councillor

*Congratulations to **Brian McHattie**, who was elected the new Chedoke-Cootes (Ward 1) councillor in the municipal elections Nov. 10, 2003. With 57.94 per cent of the vote, his victory was a very clear one. The AWWCA board of directors appreciates his help in working with us to achieve our goals. We asked Councillor McHattie to tell AWWCA members about his background and his vision for our community:*

I'd like to formally introduce myself as your new councillor. I've lived in West Hamilton for the past 17 years. I have worked as an environmental consultant for Environment Canada, assisting in Great Lakes restoration, and am continuing my part-time position as a sessional lecturer in the Arts and Science program at McMaster University. Recently I achieved my Registered Professional Planner status and am working on a PhD in urban planning at the University of Waterloo. I've also held a variety of volunteer positions on the board of the Hamilton Naturalists' Club.

I would like to introduce my assistants at

City Hall: **Kay Morden** handles the administrative side of the office, and **Dale Brown** works on community issues. Both Kay and Dale worked for the previous councillor and therefore have a great understanding of ward issues and know how to make things happen at City Hall—we are all lucky to have them!

I'd like to share my thoughts on just two of the projects I will be focusing on over the next three years:

### *Achieving a stakeholder-driven McMaster University student-housing plan:*

The challenge of housing Mac students in a safe environment remains critical. I am now working to encourage the university administration to prepare a student-housing plan using a participatory model. We don't have to look very far for a strong citizen-involvement model—together we can follow the lead of the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan Stakeholders' Committee, whose model for plan development is renowned across the Great Lakes basin. I know from first-hand experience as a participant in the HHRAP process from 1987 to the present that there would be clear advantages in jointly developing a community-based student-housing plan.

### *Expanding citizen involvement in local politics:*

When the newly amalgamated City of Hamilton was formed in 2000, political representation at City Hall dropped to one councillor per ward. My sense is that this vacuum in democracy must be addressed by investigating new forms of citizen involvement. To me, the most critical goal is to get more citizens involved in making



Councillor Brian McHattie

direct democracy happen. To that end, I'll be conducting research and consulting with you about different ways to share information and about how to devolve power to you, the citizen. Community councils involving citizens from across the community are one model of participation. For more details, please visit my website at [www.brianmchattie.ca](http://www.brianmchattie.ca).

Since I am committed to involving you in municipal decision making on an ongoing basis, I invite you to communicate with me at City Hall at 905-546-2424, extension 2416, or via e-mail at [bmchattie@hamilton.ca](mailto:bmchattie@hamilton.ca). Representing you in Chedoke-Cootes (Ward 1) is a great honour and responsibility. I look forward to achieving great things with you over the next three years!

## Linking Communities

LOREEN JEROME

I attended a workshop on Nov. 1 on behalf of the AWWCA regarding the new Internet project being built to link Hamilton's municipal and community services. It was held at the main branch of the Hamilton Public Library and was sponsored by the Durand Neighbourhood Association Inc. and Hamilton Community Net.

The executive director of Hamilton Community Net, **Linda Lopinski**, spoke on the topic "Connect Hamilton—Create Community (CHCC) Portal, [www.myhamilton.ca](http://www.myhamilton.ca)." Under the direction of Connect Ontario, Partnering for Smart Communities, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade invests in regional and community Internet portals that provide "one window" access to improve online municipal and community information, services, activities, and businesses. The city has acquired \$1-million through Superbuild to assist in the creation of this project. I volunteered to participate on behalf of the AWWCA.

A portal is a website that offers a single point of access to content,

services, applications, and virtual communities—a starting point and gateway to the worldwide web. Users can personalize a portal to provide easy access to services and information they use regularly. It can also provide additional information tools—chat rooms, discussions, alerts, and notification. The website [www.myhamilton.ca](http://www.myhamilton.ca) will be a single-access site to community resources and services, including all levels of government, for information, transactions, and feedback. The creation of this portal will simplify information and transactions on the Internet, and it means that rural residents will have better access to community information. With the addition of e-commerce, cost-effective online services will be developed in the future. For example, you will be able to pay your parking ticket and obtain a dog licence online.

This major project was begun in 2001, the business plan was submitted in March 2003, and funding was approved in August 2003 for a two-year implementation period from September 2003 to September 2005. For more information visit [www.myhamilton.ca](http://www.myhamilton.ca).

## Liz Has a FUN Assignment

AWWCA past president Liz Millar represents the AWWCA on the board of directors of the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario, where she serves as a member-at-large. She continually updates the AWWCA board on matters that FUN is dealing with on behalf of our community.

**Janice Brown**, member-at-large of FUN, writes: "FUN continues to grow its membership and takes on initiatives that are a part of their mandate. As a way of promoting awareness of issues affecting urban residents across the province and establishing an information base to help develop a network of personal contacts who can share their expertise and experience, FUN is publishing a newsletter quarterly.

"The issues that are currently being tackled by the executive on behalf of their membership include:

1. Reform of the Ontario Municipal Board. FUN has been lobbying for OMB reform since 2002. The latest action was a letter to the new government requesting a review of the OMB.
2. Student housing issues. FUN produced a position paper, 'Student Housing Issues for Cities with Post-Secondary Institutions under 750,000 Population.'
3. Municipal-elections reform. FUN produced a draft paper on reform of the Municipal Elections Act."

If you would like information on any of the above or wish to be on the mailing list for the newsletter, please contact Janice Brown at [durand@hwcen.org](mailto:durand@hwcen.org).

## Under One Umbrella

LOREEN JEROME

At a workshop held at the Hamilton Public Library Nov. 1, **Gloria McGinn-McTeer**, past chair of the Urban League of London and current president of the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods (Ontario) Inc., spoke about the Urban League of London, a nonprofit umbrella organization for community groups in London, Ontario, established in 1969. It is composed of representatives from neighbourhood associations and citywide organizations. Their objective is to enhance the quality of life in London by encouraging citizen participation in community and civic affairs and by promoting, facilitating, and initiating innovative projects that contribute to the community's wellbeing. It also serves as a support network for its member associations.

Representatives from a number of Hamilton neighbourhood associations in the lower city attended; I represented the AWWCA.

**Janice Brown**, vice-president, Durand Neighbourhood Association Inc., and **Cathy Gazzola**, member-at-large, Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods Inc., proposed the startup of a similar umbrella organization for the City of Hamilton. After discussion it was agreed that beginning in January 2004 a steering committee will establish a mission statement, set goals and objectives, determine membership eligibility, create structure, and investigate sources of funding. The steering committee plans to report back to the various neighbourhood associations within six months.

Anyone interested in attending the meetings, please contact Janice Brown at [jedbrown2003@sympatico.ca](mailto:jedbrown2003@sympatico.ca) or Cathy Gazzola at [cathy.gazzola@sympatico.ca](mailto:cathy.gazzola@sympatico.ca).

## green NEWS

### Let's Clean Up the Rail Trail

"A serious debris problem lies along the unused CP Rail from Royal Avenue to Rifle Range," noted AWWCA member **Jeannie Bernard** at a recent meeting of the President's Advisory Council on Community Relations. "The railroad is being used as a shortcut for walking between St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School and McMaster University. PACCR, the AWWCA, the City of Hamilton, the McMaster Students' Union, and St. Mary's Secondary School have been asked to sponsor the community cleanup along the tracks on Saturday, May 8, from 9 a.m. to noon," reports **Kenneth Sherman**, cleanup co-ordinator. Volunteers are asked to meet at the parking lot of St. Mary's, 200 Whitney Ave., for directions.

"Councillor **Brian McHattie** has scheduled



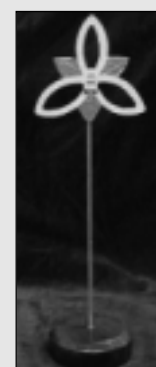
Debris on the unused rail line in March.

Photo: Kenneth Sherman

a meeting with CP Rail at which he plans to discuss an easement on this unused portion of the tracks for the extension of the Hamilton Rail Trail eastward. The trail now begins at Rifle Range Road and goes to Brantford. This expansion will be a great benefit to the neighbourhood for public access and will reduce the neglect that has led to the debris," concludes Sherman.

### The AWWCA Salutes Our White Trillium Winners

Congratulations to AWWCA



White Trillium.  
Copyright City of  
Hamilton 2001

members Frank and Elizabeth Butty and Mildred Fair, who won White Trillium awards in 2003. For the Butties, it is their fifth award, and Ms. Fair has received the award three times.

The Trillium Awards Program promotes and encourages com-

munity pride through the recognition of excellence in property beautification. The specific criteria for judging a property include landscape design, harmony of colour, and maintenance.

## From Asphalt to Meadow

MARY LOUISE PIGOTT

In September 2002, a group of **George R. Allan** parents looked around at our asphalt and bare-turf schoolyard and decided we wanted something better for our children. There is mounting evidence that traditional schoolyards like ours exacerbate discipline problems and promote aggressive behaviour. The movement to naturalize schoolyards began in Britain more than 20 years ago and has since spread across North America. Many schools right here in Hamilton began naturalizing their schoolyards several years ago, and we felt it was high time George R. Allan School did too!

Naturalization is the process of restoring school grounds to a more natural state by reintroducing native trees and plants and by encouraging the return of wildlife, both for educational purposes and to create a safer, healthier environment for our children. Many benefits of naturalization have been documented, but among the most dramatic are reductions in bullying and injuries and increases in standardized-test scores and grade-point averages.

Along with our principal, **Catherine Youngblud**, we began the lengthy process of researching, planning, and fundraising that culminated in the construction of the berm and meadow habitat that can be seen in the schoolyard today. We are very grateful to the following sponsors and local



The author's daughter, Sylvia Kukucska, enjoying the new garden.

Photo: Mary Louise Pigott

businesses who believed in our dream of an enriched environment for our children: **TD Friends of the Environment Foundation**, the **Garden Club of Hamilton**, **Evergreen Canada**, the law firm of **Simpson & Watson**, the **City of Hamilton's Waste Management Division**, **Little Caesars Pizza Westdale**, and **Subway Westdale**, as well as numerous enthusiastic parent volunteers,

including the following AWWCA members: **Kathryn Kohler**, **Patrice and Penny Palmer**, **Bruce Simpson**, and **Jane Walker**.

Stay tuned! We are currently working on a long-term plan for the entire school grounds. Offers of time and resources are gratefully accepted. Please contact me at 905-524-2423 or [mlpigott@sympatico.ca](mailto:mlpigott@sympatico.ca).

*Mary Louise Pigott is an AWWCA member*

## Community-Based Tree Planting

Last year, councillors removed all funding for tree planting from the city's 2003 budget. Homeowners may purchase subsidized trees through a local environmental organization; call **Green Venture's** Homeowner Tree Planting Program at 905-540-8787.

**Councillor Brian McHattie** is pushing to get the city's tree-planting program back up and running, as is **Councillor Dave Braden**. Mr. McHattie is working with a citizen, **Gary Hendin**, Green Venture, and the Chamber of Commerce on a proposed community-based tree-planting program patterned on one in Toronto. Under this scenario, the City of Hamilton would be a funding partner with corporations and perhaps other levels of government.

A City of Hamilton staff report of Sept. 30, 2003, to the Committee of the Whole, "Street Tree Program Service Levels,"\* provides the rationale for a 2004 enhanced tree program that would include planting a sufficient number of trees to balance those removed over the last two years, a pruning program based on a five-year cycle across the new city, and an urban-forest health program to extend tree life. The committee approved the report and directed staff to bring it forward again as part of the 2004 budget deliberations. AWWCA members need to get involved in the budget deliberations to ensure that the tree program happens. The plan is to finalize the budget by the end of March, so this is a critical time for citizens to get involved.

\*See the report at <http://www.city.hamilton.on.ca/>, and enter PW03142 in the search box.

## Third Annual Spring Cleanup Will Take Place ... in May!

AWWCA member **Dmitri Malakhov** writes:

Dear fellow residents of Westdale! The third annual spring cleanup will be held on Saturday, May 1 (rain date Sunday, May 2). Meet at the children's playground in Churchill Fields at 1 p.m. We will be distributing flyers in the community and reminding AWWCA members on e-mail. I most sincerely hope you can join us.

For the past two years about 20 people have participated in the cleanup and collected around 20 large garbage bags. Let's work together to increase the number this year. We are doing our best to maintain a minimal standard of neatness of the streets we walk every day. It is in this spirit that I ask you to help us (and yourselves!) clean up our village. To help boost morale at the event I will seek support from local businesses to donate food for a barbecue after the cleanup.

Let me also provide closure to a promise I made in the autumn newsletter when I reported on the cleanup in regard to rental properties. I made a call to the city's property-standards department and asked for their help in tackling this issue. Unfortunately, for legal reasons, the city cannot co-sign a letter requesting the owners to clean up. They will, however, investigate complaints.

If you are interested in helping out at the cleanup, please e-mail me at [malakhdd@mcmaster.ca](mailto:malakhdd@mcmaster.ca). Furthermore, please do e-mail me suggestions of any kind, and I promise to consider them and respond to you.

Yours in trash, Dmitri Malakhov Jr.

# The Condition of Westdale's Trees

JANET WOODWARD

A comprehensive tree inventory was carried out in Westdale last summer through a program called Trees Count. **Don McLean**, of Environment Hamilton, put together the program to give lay people the tools and skills to monitor trees in their community. More than 30 Trees Count volunteers collected 30 pieces of data on 1,391 trees. No one refused access to their property. Funding was provided by **TD Friends of the Environment Foundation**, **Dofasco**, and **Mountainview Residents for Recreation, Hamilton**.

This information has now been analyzed at the University of Toronto, and Mr. McLean presented the results to over 50 residents at a public meeting on Jan. 7 at Westdale United Church, at which **Councillor Brian McHattie** was present. At the presentation, Mr. McLean said: "The AWWCA was the reason we came to this community, and yours is the only community in Canada where this program has been done. We knew we would have strong community support here through the AWWCA and through the group that formed out of the loss of the Barclay oak in July 2002."

A few of the findings of the inventory include:

- 88 per cent of the leaf area of Westdale is provided by two species (white oak and silver maple) that make up just over 8 per cent of the total number of trees in the study area.
- Three species make up nearly half of all the trees in Westdale.
- Two-thirds of the trees are native species (a high rate).
- 68 trees are regionally rare, for example, honey locust, oak, and the endangered butternut.
- 50 trees are potentially heritage trees.
- Some of the most valuable trees are the large silver maples, of which there are 95 in the study area. The downside is that they were probably all planted around the same time, and we will likely lose them all around the same time, which may be very soon.
- 70 per cent of the trees are privately owned.
- 135 trees were identified as potentially hazardous, the majority of them owned by the city.
- More than 30 per cent of the city-owned trees are in very



We said goodbye to a silver maple on Cline Avenue North last fall.

Photo: Janet Woodward

poor condition.

- A conservative valuation determined that Westdale's trees are worth nearly \$1.5-million.

At the Jan. 7 meeting the final part of the project commenced—the formation of a community committee to review the report and make recommendations about appropriate

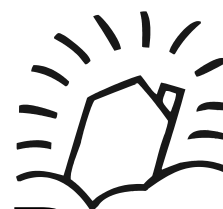
actions to protect and enhance Westdale's urban forest. Mr. McLean said 10 community members volunteered for the committee, and it would be beneficial if the committee was connected to the AWWCA. At the AWWCA's board meeting on Feb. 2, a motion was passed unanimously to include the trees committee as a subcommittee of the AWWCA. **Ron Lancaster**, an AWWCA member, said "I was very impressed with the work that has been done to protect our trees. The AWWCA is to be congratulated for assisting with this initiative. I signed up for the committee!"

See the entire report, sorted by address, at <http://www.environmenthamilton.org/treescount>, where you can check out the value of the trees on your property, as well as hundreds of other pieces of information about trees in our community. For more information contact Don McLean at 905-549-0900 or [treescount@environmenthamilton.org](mailto:treescount@environmenthamilton.org).



Team of volunteers examines tree in Westdale.

Photo: Environment Hamilton



## Because we care

# AROUND the NEIGHBOURHOOD

## The Walking School Bus

**Caroline Stinson**, co-chair of the George R. Allan School Traffic Committee, reports that **Sharon Mackinnon**, who is on the Active and Safe Routes to School steering committee, has been instrumental in initiating the Walking School Bus program, in which parents take turns walking neighbourhood children to school. (Go to <http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/> for more information on this international program.) The installation of a sidewalk along



Workers apply the finishing touches to the new sidewalk on Cline Avenue North.

Photo: Janet Woodward

the park on Cline Avenue North was a key component of the program.

Caroline says, "It seems that there is a greater effort on the part of 'concerned' parents (*concerned* being the operative word!) to combine efforts with respect to getting kids to and from school on foot. No one is wearing the official Walking School Bus arm bands, so it doesn't look

official, but the effort is there. Has vehicular traffic to and from George R. Allan dropped as a result? Hard to say; however, I definitely think there are more people parking responsibly now that there is a parking limit of three hours on Cline Avenue North. But parking illegally in front of the school has not been eradicated."



Bowlers at Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club.

Photo: Mildred Fair

## Summer Is Coming. Looking for an Outdoor Activity?

MILDRED FAIR, PETER CLARKE

Summer is coming. Looking for an outdoor activity? Why not try lawn bowling at the Churchill Fields Club?

The 2004 lawn-bowling season will begin May 7 with a get-acquainted evening at 7 p.m. at the club, located in Churchill Fields (Cline Avenue North and Marion Avenue North). Everyone is welcome!

On Saturday May 8 at 1:30 p.m. we'll officially open the season with a jitney (the name used for club games). Even if you haven't bowled before, you are most welcome to join in the afternoon activities. Coaching is available for the whole season, which ends on Thanksgiving (Oct. 11, 2004).

Jitneys are held three evenings a week at 7:15 p.m. Afternoon bowling can be arranged.

What will it cost? Bowls are available at the club for the first season for new bowlers at a nominal charge of 25 cents per game, which includes cleaning. Introductory fees are \$50 per season for new bowlers; all others pay \$95 per season.

What to wear? Casual wear is the dress code for jitneys. Whites are worn for tournaments. Lawn bowling is a fun, challenging activity for all ages. Bring the whole family and enjoy!

*Mildred Fair is the membership convener of Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club and an AWWCA member; you can reach her at 905-523-5199. Peter Clarke is the president; you can reach him at 905-523-5276. The club phone number is 905-529-0621.*

## Calling All Seniors and Retirees

EFFIE YORK

Do the seniors and retirees of Westdale/West Hamilton need a seniors' club comparable to the ones at Main/Hess, the YWCA, Sackville Hill, Ancaster Achievement Centre, Dundas Seniors, and Club 60 in Stoney Creek?

Since Sept. 25, 2002, a group of about 30 members has been socializing once a month to help define the need for a seniors' centre in our area. We have been meeting in Grace Hall, Grace Lutheran Church, 1107 Main St. West, on the third Wednesday of each month from 1:30 to 4 p.m. We enjoy fine fellowship, card and board games, travelogues, guest speakers, musical presentations, and potluck luncheons.

We hope to increase our membership, thus proving there is a need for a centre comparable to those listed above. This can only be accomplished with the input and support of area residents. We welcome and need new members and ideas to proceed with our dream. Your involvement will help us increase the frequency of our gatherings and, we hope, enhance our programs. Eventually we would like to apply for some funding from various sources. Please join us.

For further information, call **Pat Barton** at 905-527-5137 or **Effie York** at 905-522-6256.

*Pat Barton and Effie York are AWWCA members.*



# Application for Indoor and Outdoor Liquor Licence in Westdale Village

JANET WOODWARD

On Feb. 5, 2003, King Paisley Haus applied to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario for an indoor and outdoor liquor licence. This is the establishment known as Planet Ice Cream or Pita Planet, at the corner of Paisley Avenue North and King Street West.

Those who opposed the outdoor licence included the AWWCA, 349 individuals who signed a petition, and about 80 who wrote letters. The AGCO told me they had never received so much opposition to any application.

The application was heard by the AGCO on June 9 and July 3, 2003. **Michael Bordin** led the opposition on behalf of the AWWCA, and **Phyllis Tresidder** presented an extensive amount of data. She said that "We are in a unique position with regard to the expression of needs and desires of our community. The questionnaire of the City of Hamilton planning department sent to every household in our community west of the 403 asks: 'What would you like to see more of in your community?' Not one respondent said they wanted a licensed outdoor patio or more licensed seating."

**Karyn Callaghan** submitted well-prepared evidence from notes, but **Liz Millar**, who had a prepared text to read, was prevented from doing so by the chair. The applicant was nevertheless later permitted to read from a prepared text. Because on the first day of the hearing the commission members asked questions about policing statistics, **Sergeant Jim Adam** volunteered to attend the second day of the hearing in his off-duty time. However, he was not permitted to speak, as the commission members ruled that the objectors' testimony had been completed on the first day.

We were advised that a decision would be made by Oct. 3 at the latest. Since no word had been received by that date, I contacted the AGCO. I was told that the objectors weren't notified because the person handling the case was on vacation when the decision was made on Aug. 7. To date, no notice of the official decision has been received by any of the objectors who submitted evidence at the hearing.

The AGCO advised me on Oct. 8 (two months after the decision was made) that the outdoor licence was approved with restrictions, and I received a copy of the Aug. 7 decision in late October. However, the licence will not be issued until the AGCO receives letters of compliance from the city's building, health, and fire departments. These letters are normally submitted before the hearing; at press time the fire letter was outstanding. Until they are all submitted, King Paisley Haus is not permitted to serve alcohol on its patio.

The AGCO mentioned to me that often an establishment will get an outdoor patio licence because they think it will be a great boost to their revenue, but in fact that is not the case.

On Dec. 9, an indoor licence was granted for 65 seats for a period of two years. The licensed area is the north section of the dining room. The indoor licence was issued with the following conditions:

1. No live music is permitted in the licensed area.
2. If any type of ambient music is played, all windows and doors must be closed.
3. No alcohol is to be served after 11:15 p.m.

The restrictions for the outdoor patio are:

1. The maximum number of patrons permitted outside is 24.

2. No music of any type is permitted on the patio.

3. No alcohol is to be served on the patio after 10:15 p.m.

Although this is not the news we wanted to hear, we are glad there are restrictions. Not only are the restrictions good for the community, they can be used as a precedent if there are subsequent applications for outdoor liquor licences.

Once King Paisley Haus has received their patio licence, the community will have to be watchful for any application to lift the restrictions. Watch for signs on their establishment window and notices in *The Hamilton Spectator*.

## *Westdale Co-op Preschool*

.....  
**Celebrating 30 years (1974-2004)**

99 North Oval, Hamilton (Westdale United Church)

**905-381-2667**

We offer:

- Morning program 9-11:30
- Monday to Thursday, two or four mornings a week
- Ages 2½ to 4 years
- Small class with a 4-to-1 child-to-adult ratio
- "Show and tell," gym, and monthly trips

Why preschool? Your child will:

- Make new friends
- Explore new activities
- Become familiar with school routines
- Enhance gross motor, fine motor, and speech skills
- Become more independent

Why a co-op preschool?

- Affordability

Parents will have an opportunity to:

- Actively participate in the governance of the school
- Get to know their child's friends and the parents of their child's friends
- Develop leadership and administrative skills

Why Westdale Co-op Preschool?

- We're where you live
- Excellent reputation and long-standing history in Westdale
- Wonderful and caring teacher
- Relaxed atmosphere

## *Global Village Market Opens in Westdale Village*

**Penny Palmer**, with the support of her husband, **Ken Thomson**, announces the opening of Global Village Market at 948 King St. West by April 1.

Penny says: "My aim is to support as many micro-businesses who support sustainable food systems as possible, such as shade-grown and fair-trade coffee and tea (packaged and take-out), other fair-trade products, organic nuts, dairy, and some produce; I will also offer specialty foods, packaged foods from Europe and Indo-Thai regions, premium breads, desserts, and olive oils, and Ten Thousand Villages giftware. I want to appeal to homeowners, visitors in our community, and this neighbourhood's students. That's the challenging part . . . to find the balance. I hope the neighbourhood will support my entrepreneurial spirit. Please drop by and visit us. We are located opposite Westdale Library."

*Penny and Ken are AWWCA members.*

# members' NEWS

## Highlights of the AWWCA's Fifth Annual General Meeting

The AWWCA's fifth annual general meeting was held Sept. 23, 2003. Based on response from members at the 2002 annual general meeting, the board of directors changed the format for the 2003 AGM to allow residents an hour from 6 to 7 p.m. to interact directly with police, the city's bylaw co-ordinator, and representatives from the McMaster Students' Union.

Attending were: **Police Superintendent Michael Shea, Staff Sergeant Scott Rastin, Sergeant Alan Smethurst, Constable Jack Vander Pol, Judy Downey**, Hamilton's co-ordinator of standards and licensing, **Neville Boney**, MSU president, and **Kate McDonald**, chair of the MSU community committee.

About 100 residents attended this session. They spoke of their personal stress due to noise problems, parking violations, and declining property standards. They expressed a strong sense of frustration with the lack of enforcement of the property standards bylaws, saying they want landlords in violation to be fined. (See the article Fees for Property Owners on page 19.)

Police increased their presence significantly during the first part of September. Noise-bylaw officers were on duty every night until 4 or 5 a.m. Many fines were issued for noise violations. Offenders also received visits from police and letters of reprimand from McMaster. The session

ended with the announcement that the Westdale Community Policing Centre would be opening shortly.

Attendance at the main session commencing at 7 p.m. was 168, compared to 128 the previous year. Membership secretary **Janet Woodward** reported that in the past year the AWWCA welcomed 57 new members and as of August 31 (the end of our fiscal year) had 402 paid-up members, including 14 Friends of the AWWCA. In her capacity as newsletter co-ordinator, she noted that **Bob and Michelle Edmonds**, who design and print the AWWCA's *Neighbourhood News & Views*, entered the last two years' winners in a national competition. The winners will be announced in April.

**Liz Millar**, in her last duties as president, chaired the AGM and summarized the AWWCA's activities in the last year. First was the successful community meeting in February 2003 cosponsored by McMaster's President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations, the McMaster Students' Union, and our Ward 1 councillor. Liz thanked our representatives involved in the environmental assessment of the future Main Street West entrance for McMaster: **John Harkness, Stephania Millar, Phyllis Tresidder**, and **Christine Wilson**. She noted that the AWWCA has also been involved in the planning processes for land use, transportation, and stormwater man-

was also one of the sponsors of the new Community Policing Centre in Westdale. The primary concerns of members continue to be unregulated off-campus housing and bylaw infractions, particularly property standards. The AWWCA was the only group in the entire new city of almost 500,000 to make a presentation to city council about harmonization of property standards bylaws.



Liz Millar with certificate from the City of Hamilton.

Photo: Janet Woodward

Former councillor **Marvin Caplan** presented Liz with a framed certificate, signed by the mayor and councillor, on behalf of the City of Hamilton, recognizing her exemplary service to our community.

The main business item was to elect a slate of directors for the next two years. All were acclaimed, as only one candidate had been nominated for each position. The directors are: **Liz Millar**, past president; **Rob Payne**, president; **Janet Woodward**, membership secretary; **Tom Bryner**, recording secretary; **Loreen Jerome**, trea-

surer; **Betty Bechtel, Michael Bordin, Cary Kinsley**, and **John Wigle**, board members.

The main agenda item was the meeting of all-candidates for Ward 1 councillor. Former vice-president **Gabriele DiFrancesco** introduced the candidates: **Marvin Caplan, Brian McHattie**, and **Michael Puskas**. Each one had a time-limited oppor-



Judy Downey answers questions at the preliminary session.

Photo: Janet Woodward

agement in Ainslie Wood and Westdale, which are wrapping up. The AWWCA is active in the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario; its student-housing subcommittee prepared a white paper to present to the provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Minister of Colleges and Universities. The AWWCA



tunity to respond to two questions from the board of directors: (1) What do you see as the greatest need or issue in the Ainslie Wood/Westdale area, and what are your plans for addressing the issue? (2) In these times of tight municipal budgets, how will you ensure that there is funding for the issues facing our area (such as failing infrastructure, student housing, and bylaw enforcement)? Each candidate then had



Certificate from former MPP David Christopherson.  
Photo: Janet Woodward

the chance to respond to written questions from the audience that John Wagle had collected and collated. The candidates answered members' questions on city finances, garbage in the streets, property-standards bylaws and off-campus student housing, regulating the number of student rental houses per block, using fire and health bylaws to improve rental housing, and the need for the university to plan for student housing.

Former MPP **David Christopherson** presented a framed certificate congratulating the AWWCA on its fifth anniversary.

*With contributions from Betty Bechtel, Tom Bryner, and Carolyn Kinsley.*

Thanks to the Barn in Westdale for donating bottled water for our Annual General Meeting last September.

## President's Report

ROB PAYNE

The key component in our association's mission, which is to preserve and enhance our neighbourhood, is to develop joint planning with McMaster University with regard to student housing.

My key meetings and e-mail contacts for 2003 with the university are outlined below:

### February

Meeting: With **Jennifer Kleven**, off-campus housing co-ordinator

Topic: Joint planning and off-campus student-housing safety concerns

E-mail: To **Jayne Johnston**, acting director, public and government relations

Topic: Follow-up on request to develop housing statistics to form a base for joint planning

### April

E-mail: From **Jayne Johnston**

Topic: Jayne advised us to contact Dr. Phil Wood, associate vice-president, student affairs, on issues regarding student housing

Meeting: With **Dr. Phil Wood**

Topics: The need for formal, joint housing planning and the need for McMaster to have a housing policy

### May

Meeting: With **Andrea Farquhar**, director, public and government relations, and Jayne Johnston

Topics: The need for a formal housing plan and issues that will arise regarding off-campus housing as McMaster continues to expand

Letter: To **Dr. Ken Norrie**, provost and vice-president, academic

Topic: To alert the Refining Directions committee to the need for a formal, joint housing plan

In May I joined the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations (PACCR). This committee now has three board members from the AWWCA to show our support for joint planning processes.

### June

Meeting: With **Jennifer Kleven**

Topic: Ensuring student safety in off-campus housing by developing preferred listings for houses that pass some form of fire and electrical inspections

Meeting: With **Neville Boney**, president, McMaster Students' Union

Topic: Joint planning with regard to overcrowding and safety issues in off-campus student rental houses

Meeting: With **Dr. Phil Wood** and then-councillor **Marvin Caplan**

Topics: The need for a joint, formal housing plan and the need to house a higher percentage of students on campus, as at peer universities

### September

E-mail: From **Dr. Phil Wood**

Topics: He advised us that he will not participate in the ASPECT working group on housing and that he will develop an internal group at the university to look into building another residence

E-mail: To **Jayne Johnston**

Topic: A follow-up on comments made by Dr. Peter George and Dr. Phil Wood to municipal candidates that a formal housing plan and new residence are in the planning stages

Meeting: With **PACCR**

Topic: I asked McMaster to define the phrase "a strong residential community" in their Refining Directions document

Letter: To **The Hamilton Spectator**

Topic: The need for a formal housing plan for student housing

### November

Meeting: With **Karen Belaire**, vice-president, administration

Topic: Review of McMaster's underbuilding of residence space compared to peer universities and the need for housing planning that includes the city and neighbourhood

E-mail: To **Dr. Ken Norrie**

Topic: To confirm that my letter sent to the Refining Directions committee was taken into consideration

Letter: To **The Hamilton Spectator**

Topic: The need for McMaster to develop more on-campus residence spaces

### December

Meeting: With **Dr. Peter George**, president, McMaster University

Topics: The need for joint planning around student housing, especially in light of the Refining Directions' discussion of target enrolments. Student safety in unregulated, overcrowded off-campus housing was also discussed

Meeting: With **Roger Trull**, vice president, university advancement, and **Jayne Johnston**

*See REPORT on page 10*

- Topic:** The need for a joint housing planning process and the need for the university to develop a housing policy
- Meeting:** With **PACCR**
- Topic:** The need for a formal, joint housing plan given the Refining Directions committee's discussion of larger target enrolments
- Meeting:** With **Councillor Brian McHattie**
- Topics:** The need for a joint housing plan and why after ten months had no joint process yet been agreed to by McMaster?

#### January

- Meeting:** With **Mayor Larry Di Ianni**, **Councillor Brian McHattie**, and **Jim McGreal**, executive assistant to **MPP Judy Marsales**
- Topics:** To bring our newly elected mayor and member of provincial Parliament up to speed about McMaster's expansion and its impact on student housing

## Summary

The AWWCA believes that transparent, joint decision making between the city, the community, and the university should be the communication model for discussing common issues.

As can be seen from the above list, we have worked hard to develop this model over 2003, specifically with regard to key issues of student safety, overcrowding, and formal planning for student housing.

These discussions led to the development of a city-led joint housing committee, and we hope we have raised the awareness of all involved officers of the university to our concerns.

We will continue to move forward on these issues in 2004 by attempting to develop new strategies to achieve concrete results. The safety of students and the health of our neighbourhoods will continue to be our primary focuses in our discussions with the university and the city.

# Waterloo Hosts Town and Gown Symposium

The AWWCA has been keeping in contact with Waterloo and Kingston in an effort to avoid "reinventing the wheel" when it comes to implementing good ideas.

AWWCA president **Rob Payne** is delighted that the City of Waterloo hosted a Town and Gown Symposium, "After the Double Cohort: Student-Community Relations," Mar. 4-5 and that the City of Hamilton and McMaster University were well represented. Attendees included **Councillor Brian McHattie** and **Dr. Phil Wood**, vice-president, student affairs, at McMaster.

The symposium provided a forum for cities that are home to postsecondary institutions to discuss issues of common concern: housing the growing number of students enrolled in postsecondary institutions, maintaining balance and stability in the neighbourhoods that host these young residents, improving and implementing regulations governing different forms of housing, and promoting transportation appropriate for sustainable cities.

Rob will be reporting on the symposium in our next newsletter.

## Block Representatives, Our Community Needs Your Help

AWWCA president **Rob Payne** has been encouraging block representatives to become more active in our association. On Sept. 26, Nov. 24, and Feb. 4 he sent all block representatives on e-mail an update on the activities of the AWWCA, focusing on its top three priorities—student housing, bylaw enforcement, and traffic and parking. He plans to continue to do this periodically.

He also invited block representatives to meet in small, task-oriented groups. Rob hosted the first such meeting Nov. 26. It was attended by four block representatives, as well as board member and area representative **Loreen Jerome**. The format of four to six block representatives plus two board members seemed to work well, as it allowed time for each block representative to list their concerns, as well as for the group to put some structure to the conversation.

The second meeting was held in February, and these meetings will continue. Please contact Rob at 905-525-7338 or [robpayne@sympatico.ca](mailto:robpayne@sympatico.ca) if you would like to participate. If you are not a block representative but would like to receive the mailings, or if you would like to become a block representative, please let Rob know.

## Phyllis Is Moving Up!

JANET WOODWARD

Phyllis Tresidder's outstanding contribution to our community was recognized at the AWWCA's annual general meeting last September when past president Liz Millar introduced a motion to appoint Phyllis president emerita. Liz noted that the board had expressed utmost gratitude for Phyllis's service from the earliest days of the association, including her term as president of the AWWCA from 1998 to 2001, as well as outstanding contributions on numerous committees. The motion passed unanimously, after which there was a sustained round of applause. Liz presented flowers to Phyllis as an expression of the AWWCA's appreciation.

During her time as president, Phyllis not only ran for public office but was honoured as

Woman of Year 2000, Women in Community Service, by the Hamilton Status of Women Committee.

Although Phyllis has officially resigned from the board, she still assists from time to time on various projects and also provides her advice. She is an artist and a woman of many talents and is now happily carrying on her decorating business, "Filliby's." We wish her well.



Phyllis working on her new decorating business.

## Liz Millar, President of the AWWCA 2001-2003

At the AWWCA's annual general meeting last September, **Janet Woodward** presented **Liz Millar** with a framed certificate from the board of the AWWCA, outlining her contributions and thanking her for her dedication and commitment to our neighbourhoods. It stated:

*Liz accepted the challenge of being president with aplomb and modesty. Her organizational skills are impressive. She*



Liz Millar with framed certificate from AWWCA.  
Photo: Janet Woodward

*not only ran meetings efficiently but kept track of the many activities in which the AWWCA is involved, receiving, forwarding, and replying to innumerable messages and phone calls.*

*Liz attended meetings with our mayor, city councillor, and city staff and with students and administrators from McMaster University. She represented the AWWCA at community workshops, Neighbourhood Watch, and the Graffiti Abatement Project and graduated from the Citizens' Police College. In addition, Liz expanded our contacts with neighbourhood associations in Hamilton and in other university cities. She has represented us at the provincial Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods since its founding meeting.*

*Her stamina is complemented by her professional, even-tempered, nonjudgmental manner in dealing with people and her reliability, honesty, sincerity, and sense of humour. She has the gift of thinking through situations, seeing the big picture, and searching for more information.*

*Liz is also a gracious hostess whose garden paradise has charmed and soothed us.*

# Our Community Thanks Linda and Rick Grigg

BETTY BECHTEL

The Ainslie Wood/Westdale community thanks the Griggs for their many years of dedicated work on our behalf.

Back in 1995, **Linda Grigg** came knocking on our door with a petition requesting a bylaw to prohibit monster houses. It was impressive that someone would undertake such a mission for our community, so my husband, Jim, and I decided that we had better pitch in and help. With her many connections in the community, Linda had become aware of the oversized houses that were being built as rentals and were eyesores in our neighbourhood of family homes. Linda persuaded other neighbours to help. This was also the beginning of countless meetings at City Hall with aldermen (as they were called), City Hall staff, bylaw officers, firefighters, and police. Protesting applications that were not "minor variances" at Committee of Adjustment hearings became a large part of our lives. Sometimes these applications went on to Ontario Municipal Board hearings, and again the community was represented by

Linda, her husband **Rick Grigg**, and a core group of community members. Linda is gifted with determination, energy, and drive. She also made it her business to learn about building codes and the language required to make appropriate challenges at the various committees.



Rick and Linda at farewell party Aug. 11, 2003.

Photo: Janet Woodward

Rick was supportive of Linda's efforts and helped whenever his work permitted. When he retired, he also took on the challenges with energy and a determination to find solutions to the many difficulties facing the residents. His engineering background was an asset. Rick became a member, and then chair, of the McMaster University Area Task Force, chair of the McMaster Area Task Force Report Implementation Committee (MATRIC), and chair of the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Secondary Plan Executive Committee and Team (ASPECT). One can only guess at the countless hours that went into the preparation for and attendance at these City Hall meetings.

Meanwhile, Linda realized the need for a venue for homeowners to voice their concerns. She and **Joy James** contacted people in the community in June 1998, and in September of that year the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners (AWWCA) was formed. Both Linda and Rick were active members on the executive, and Rick took on the task of producing the first few newsletters of the association. Rick noted, "We went through a lot." Both said it was great to meet so many neighbours through their work with the AWWCA and lamented, "We will miss everyone."

They have recently moved to a new home in Glanbrook, which they are thoroughly enjoying. We thank them for their immense contributions to our community and wish them well in their new community.

*Thanks to Janet Woodward for contributing to this article.*

# planning NEWS

## Traffic Calming and Bike Lanes for Our Community

KENNETH SHERMAN

The Transportation Master Plan and Stormwater Management Master Plan "notice of completion" was sent to area residents in December 2003 and published in *The Hamilton Spectator* Dec. 19. These two projects include a number of recommended actions. The 36-day review period ended Jan. 26, but in order to allow enough time to adequately respond to the numerous submissions received, the public review period was extended to Feb. 18.

Recommendations under transportation

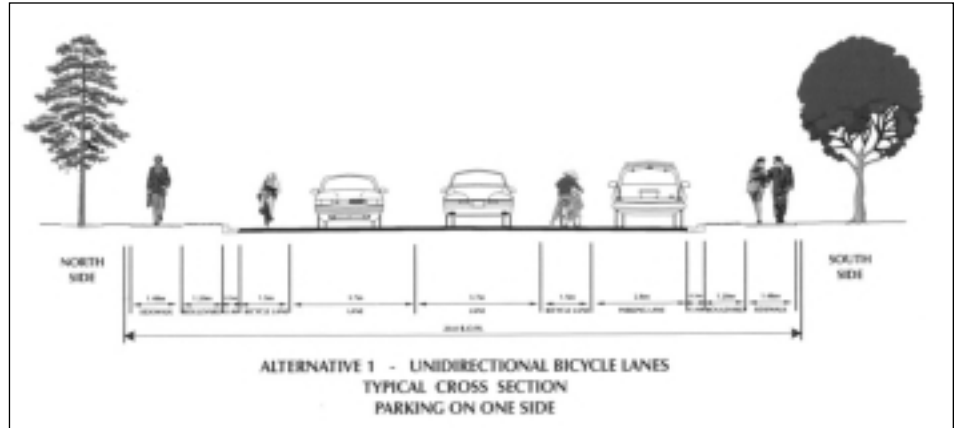
include improvements to the Cootes Drive and Sanders Boulevard bicycle and pedestrian crossing, curb extensions for Arnold Street and Traymore Avenue at Dalewood and Forsyth Avenues for traffic calming, and median islands for Forsyth Avenue North from King Street West to Sterling Street.

The plan also incorporates my recommendation for a dedicated on-street bicycle lane along Sterling Street from King Street West to the entrance to McMaster. Parking will

be allowed on only one side of Sterling Street.

Recommendations under stormwater management include several improvements related to the three combined-sewage overflow areas, as well as a number of other actions.

The Transportation and Stormwater Master Plans will be before city council for adoption in early 2004.



Proposals for Sterling Street: bike lanes and parking on one side.

# Planning Our Community

## Update on the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Secondary Plan

### Introduction

VANESSA GRUPE

The Ainslie Wood/Westdale Secondary Plan study has expanded to allow for further detailed discussion of important areas. Three working groups were set up as subcommittees of the Ainslie/Wood Westdale Secondary Plan Executive Committee and Team (ASPECT) during September 2003:

1. Student Housing—chaired by AWWCA board member **Michael Bordin**
2. Town and Gown and Sense of Community—chaired by **Shelagh Snider** of the Westdale Business Improvement Area
3. Parking Enforcement, Bylaws, and Property Standards—chaired by **Stephanie Michelle**

These groups each met four times, from late September until early December. By early January, all of the groups had submitted their recommendations. Below are reports from each group. The Town and Gown and Sense of Community group has expanded its membership and continues to meet to develop further recommendations and actions.

A Community Strategy on non-land-use issues is being prepared, based on the working groups' recommendations and discussions at ASPECT.

The Secondary Plan will include policies to address the issues identified and definitions of land use types for each area in the community to guide future development.

An Implementation Strategy will indicate the ownership of each action, time frame, priority, budget implications, and other details.

A joint final draft containing the Community Strategy, Secondary Plan, and Implementation Strategy was completed in early February 2004 for review by ASPECT, staff, and agencies.

A public open house will be held in the spring to enable public review and comment on the proposed secondary-plan policies, land-use designations, and community strategies.

Revisions will be made to the proposed plan based on the public review and input. The final document, once agreed to by all parties, will be taken to the Planning and Economic Development Committee for approval by June.

The plan will then be adopted as an amendment to the City of Hamilton Official Plan. Several options are being considered for the format of an implementation committee of stakeholders.

*Vanessa Grupe is a senior planner in the planning and development department, in long-range planning and design, and the project manager for the Ainslie Wood/Westdale Secondary Plan.*

### Student-Housing Working Group

MICHAEL BORDIN

The housing working group of ASPECT was made up of members of the community, including AWWCA president **Rob Payne**; MSU president **Neville Boney**; staff from the Off-Campus Resource Centre; and city staff from building and licensing, long-range planning, and fire prevention; I was chair.

Discussions at the four meetings focused on the issues of providing safe housing for students and creating and maintaining balance in our community. The need for safe housing for students and the concern that there are many unsafe student houses was a view shared by all members.

The desire for balance was identified in two main areas: the ratio of student houses to owner-occupied homes and the number of students living in a house. The working group recognized the importance of a balanced community in order to maintain the resources, services, and businesses required to sustain a healthy community. These include schools, recreation centres, religious institutions, and libraries. It was also recognized that the issue of balance requires further discussion to flesh out the specific details.

The housing working group drafted a list of recommendations dealing with the issues of safety and a balanced community. If you would like a copy, please contact me at mbordin@jfevanslaw.com or 905-523-5666.

## Aspect Working Group on Town and Gown and Sense of Community

CAROLYN KINSLEY

This subcommittee of ASPECT had four meetings between Sept. 30 and Nov. 25, with representatives from the Westdale Business Improvement Area, city staff (long-range planning, building and licensing, and the Ward 1 councillor's office), McMaster administration, the MSU, the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations, and the AWWCA, as well as some other neighbourhood residents.

With Shelagh Snider of the BIA as chair, we reviewed the August 2003 recommendations of the McMaster Area Task Force Report Implementation Committee regarding communications; prepared an inventory of existing vehicles for communication between the AWWCA, the Westdale BIA, Ward 1's councillor, the City of Hamilton, McMaster University, and the MSU; prepared a survey of residents to gauge the effectiveness of communications and ask for suggestions for improvement; and brainstormed for ideas to improve the sense of community between students living off campus and long-term residents. Our summary list of specific recommendations and the chart of existing communications tools are available from Dale Brown at daabrown@hamilton.ca or 905-546-2226.

Ms. Snider has taken the initiative to continue this committee into 2004, with a focus on retaining McMaster graduates in Hamilton, and has recruited some new members to this end.

## Parking Enforcement, Bylaws, and Property Standards

LOREEN JEROME

The working group of ASPECT on parking enforcement, bylaws, and property standards met four times with staff from the numerous city departments responsible for these matters. Below is a brief summary of the subcommittee's recommendations.

**Stephanie Michelle**, who did an excellent job at chairing the meetings, compiled the official list of recommendations that went to ASPECT and staff for review in January.

**Property standards** were the number-one issue. These standards are encompassed under two city bylaws, Property Standards Bylaw No. 03-117 and Front Yard Bylaw No. 03-118, which include complaint processes and fines. It is important to remember that all complaints remain anonymous.

### Recommendations:

- Provide easier access to bylaws from the city's website.
- All students living off campus and permanent residents should be made aware of the bylaws.
- The Off-Campus Resource Centre booklet contains the bylaws, but since many students do not rent through OCRC, it was proposed that the bylaws be printed in *The MSU Almanac* because all students receive it.
- Other postings of the bylaws could be on the OCRC and MSU websites, *The Silhouette* could have a regular column, and the AWWCA could print a summary of necessary information.

We examined fast-tracking of enforcement but were unable to make any progress. Much of this process is governed by provincial legislation and must be adhered to in case of any later legal action against the city. I asked **Judy Downey**, co-ordinator, standards and licensing, if pro-active enforcement for eight months was feasible rather than two months. Besides the usual challenge of budget restraints, she said it would not be financially feasible; my suggestion that perhaps it could pay for itself

seems to be unrealistic.

The property-standards bylaw gives **landlords** the responsibility and obligation to maintain their property as specified in these laws. If a landlord says the renter is supposed to shovel the snow and the renter does not, it is still the landlord who is responsible. Lack of compliance will be dealt with in the prescribed manner.

**Noise** was next on the list. Education of people concerning the bylaw is extremely necessary. The City of Hamilton's noise bylaw is in effect **24 hours a day** and states: "No noise shall be created to disturb another." A noise heard off property is a violation; for example, if the stereo next door can be heard on your back deck or in your home, that is a violation of the noise bylaw.

Some examples of noise that residents are forced to live with are extremely loud keg parties continuing well into the night and early morning, loud music from both inside and outside houses, car stereos, and speeding cars squealing their tires. It is also a noise violation when inebriated people on their way home from pubs or house parties create loud disturbances. The AWWCA and the police keep records of infractions and a list of houses where there have been problems, based on reports from members and other residents. All complaints remain anonymous.

### Recommendations:

- Noise-bylaw guidelines and contact names and phone numbers need to be posted at beer and wine/liquor stores.
- After-hours calls should be directed to the radio room at the central police station. Our area is Beat 691.
- Guidelines need to be publicized in the AWWCA newsletter, *The MSU Almanac*, the OCRC guide, and perhaps a yearly reminder article in *The Silhouette*. The bylaw itself is posted on the city's website.

Last, but not necessarily least, was **Parking**. Some of the issues discussed were front-yard parking, stacked parking in driveways, the number of parking spaces required in a driveway per house, harmonized parking regulations, parking permits, the cost of a parking ticket on the street compared to the cost of parking on campus, lack of campus parking, and McMaster's proposed use of the Henkel site for parking.

# STUDENT HOUSING

## Steps Toward Our Goals

ROB PAYNE

In our autumn 2003 newsletter, we highlighted a number of goals related to student housing. Key areas are:

1. The development of a formal housing plan by the university.
2. A target number for on-campus housing.
3. A city licensing system for rental properties to provide safe housing for students and to ensure a "balance" in the community.
4. An off-campus listing service for rental homes that highlights accommodations that meet certain safety requirements.

It is important that we continue to review the steps toward our goals. To date, the following activities are taking place:

### 1. A Formal Housing Plan Is Mandatory

We have kept up a steady stream of communication with the university requesting action in this area. Our letter entitled *Refining Directions: A Student-Housing Focus* was sent to the university's Refining Directions Committee in May. Our former councillor and I met with **Dr. Phil Wood**,

vice-president, student affairs, in June to discuss this matter. In October my letter to the editor was published in *The Hamilton Spectator* outlining the need for formal planning. Our efforts made student housing a prominent issue in the recent municipal-election campaign.

**The university has started an internal working group on student housing, primarily to discuss issues around the building of a new residence.** We will continue to work with the joint housing committee to examine the larger and longer-term issues related to student housing.

### 2. A Target Number for On-Campus Housing

We have provided data to the university showing that McMaster is behind the development curve when it comes to other benchmark universities. McMaster currently houses just 18 per cent of full-time students. Benchmark universities have an average target of housing approximately 25 per cent of full-time students. The University of Toronto (number 1 in Maclean's rankings in 2002) has a formal housing program that will see them create 3,000 new residence beds to meet their 25 per cent target for full-time students.

**To date, McMaster has not been receptive to developing formal housing targets.** We will continue to highlight the need for this, within the scope of a formal housing plan.

### 3. A Licencing System for Rental Housing

We have continued to work closely with city officials through our involvement on various committees within ASPECT (Ainslie Wood/Westdale Secondary Plan Executive Committee and Team).

Former councillor **Marvin Caplan** and city staff visited the City of Waterloo in October to become more familiar with the licensing systems currently in place in that city.

**Mr. Caplan presented a motion in a November council meeting to authorize a formal study examining the development of a licencing system for rental housing. The motion was passed.** We feel this is an important first step that will lead to much discussion over the next year.

### 4. An Off-Campus-Housing Service that Differentiates Listings Based on Safety-Inspection Requirements

AWWCA members on the ASPECT working group on housing pushed for safety standards for student rental housing. At present the university does not require any safety-inspection certificates (e.g., electrical, fire) for listings on their website.

**The McMaster Students' Union is investigating adopting a model from Queen's University that allows students living off campus to rate their accommodations, giving would-be renters a method to evaluate a property.**

**The Off-Campus Resource Centre at McMaster is developing a voluntary program to segment properties based on certain inspection-certificate criteria.**

We regard these actions as very positive and look forward to their completion this year. The AWWCA will continue to focus on these important issues and push hard for continued action to make the above goals a reality.

## Student Housing and McMaster's "Refining Directions: Long-Range Planning – What Does It Mean?"

ROB PAYNE

### Background

During the McMaster University Senate meeting in November 2003, **Dr. Ken Norrie**, vice-president and provost of McMaster University, presented the three possible enrolment targets under consideration within the Refining Directions process. See my article "Refining Directions: A Student-Housing Focus" in the autumn 2003 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* for my May 2003 submission to an earlier Refining Directions document.

The university's working groups are currently discussing future

enrolment targets for undergraduates at McMaster. The AWWCA is concerned that the potential impact of these increased enrolment figures on the community is not being addressed. The presentation made by Dr. Norrie entitled "Refining Directions: Long-Range Planning—What Does It Mean?" discusses specific cost structures that would need to be addressed, including faculty, staff, libraries, physical plant, scholarships, etc., but there is no mention of student housing, on or off campus.

The following submission addresses the possible housing issues the Refining Directions enrolment process needs to take into consideration.

*See HOUSING on page 15*



## University Benchmark and Planning Criteria for Student Housing

McMaster University has a number of existing planning criteria for student housing.

1. The university desires to house on campus all first-year students who request it, plus reserve 20 per cent of on-campus residence beds for upper-year students (University Planning Committee, Apr. 12, 2003, item 4). This target is the competitive norm for doctoral universities. McMaster calculates that 67 per cent of first-year students require on-campus accommodations.
2. The benchmark percentage of on-campus residence beds is 25 per cent of all full-time students. Research-intensive universities such as the University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario, and Queen's University either have formal

housing plans to meet this target or have in fact already met it. McMaster housed only 18 per cent of its full-time students in 2003.

3. Single-family residential homes in the surrounding neighbourhoods are already overcapacity and cannot handle any additional students. This means that all expansion of enrolment targets would need to be housed on university grounds. The possibility also exists in the city for redevelopment of existing buildings or new construction in areas planned for intensification of housing.

Based on the benchmark and internal-planning criteria above, the following on-campus residence beds would be required:

Refining Directions Enrolment Targets	Think Small 4,200 Year 1; 18,000 full time	Edge Upward 6,500 Year 1; 27,200 full time	Think Big 8,000 Year 1; 33,000 full time
1. House 67% of first-year students + 20% of on-campus residence beds for upper years	Approx. 3,400 on-campus residence beds	5,200 on-campus residence beds	6,400 on-campus residence beds
2. House 25% of all full-time enrolment on campus	4,500 residence beds	6,800 residence beds	8,250 residence beds
3. Community at capacity (approx. 5,000 students). All future enrolment increases on campus (assume 50% enrolment within 2 km of campus)	18,000 divided by 2 = 9,000 9,000 – 5,000 = 4,000 residence beds	27,000 divided by 2 = 13,600 13,600 – 5,000 = 8,600 residence beds	33,000 divided by 2 = 15,000 15,000 – 5,000 = 10,000 residence beds

Note: Current on-campus residence beds = 3,200

## What I Think the University Is Thinking Regarding Housing

### 1. Think Small: 18,000 full-time students by 2014

This option would require the addition of 200–1,300 on-campus residence beds, depending on the criteria the university adopts as its target. The university considers that the addition of two to three residences over 10 years is feasible and would not be a financial burden, based on residences becoming cash-flow positive after five to six years.

### 2. Edge Upward: 27,200 full-time students by 2014

This very aggressive option would require the addition of 2,000–5,400 on-campus residence beds, again depending on the benchmark criteria one uses. The university considers that five to 12 residences would be required over 10 years. The AWWCA's position is that this option would require a joint study of housing intensification both on and off campus.

### 3. Think Big: 33,000 full-time students by 2014

This excessively aggressive option is beyond the scope of any housing planning that could occur over the next 10 years, as it would require such major structural changes. One idea for accom-

modating such a large increase could be the development of a downtown campus.

## Summary

1. It appears that neither the capital costs for additional on-campus student housing nor the revenue from such housing is included in Dr. Norrie's report.
2. The housing requirements needed for each alternative over a 10-year time line argue for a "think small" decision, combined with the building of at least two on-campus residences.
3. A decision for either of the other alternatives needs to include plans for a satellite campus, as the surrounding neighbourhoods cannot absorb the growth.

*"Building community  
block by block"*

# NEWS from the BLUES

## Community Policing Centre Opens

*Truly a combined effort*

BETTY BECHTEL

Back in 1999, **Sergeant Alan Smethurst** sat in our living room and told Jim and me about a pet project of his: to have a community-based policing centre (CPC) in the west end. He wanted to know how the AWWCA would feel about endorsing this project. The AWWCA readily agreed with the concept and made a donation. This year the CPC became a reality due to the combined efforts of police, McMaster students, the Westdale Business Improvement Area, and the surrounding community.

In 1999 Sgt. Smethurst found a storefront location on Emerson Street. He and **Police Constable Jack Vander Pol** envisioned that this would meet their objectives, as there are many problems in the area, and the price was right. But it took time to organize the funding, and the store was sold before they could rent it.

Sgt. Smethurst formed a draft proposal for the CPC in 1999, which he gave to **Superintendent Terry Sullivan**. It was then taken to the Police Board for approval. Supt. Sullivan was a keen supporter of the proposal, and he contacted McMaster's **Roger Trull**, vice-president, university advancement, and the late **Dr. Mary Keyes**, associate vice-president, student affairs, for support.

Meanwhile, P.C. Vander Pol became the driving force in getting a CPC for the AWWCA area. He met with McMaster

administration, and they agreed to become a financial partner.

Sgt. Smethurst and P.C. Vander Pol also sold the idea to **Sam Minnetti**, vice-president of the McMaster Students' Union in 2000. The following year, as its president, Sam took the proposal to the MSU. P.C. Vander Pol had extensive meetings with the MSU, many during his off-duty time, to make financial arrangements and to keep the project moving forward. The MSU gave unanimous support for its funding commitment. Because of P.C. Vander Pol's work as high-school-liaison officer, an anonymous partner also committed funding.

When **Supt. Michael Shea** took over Division 1 in 2002, he too became a strong supporter. He authorized P.C. Vander Pol to spend the time required to keep the project on track. **Inspector Bob Buck** also helped to ensure the centre became a reality.

The biggest challenge was to find a suitable location. **Kate MacDonald** of the MSU worked tirelessly searching for a location, contacting many real-estate firms. The challenge was finding a suitable location with reasonable rent, as rents are high in this area. Jack Vander Pol told **Shelagh Snider**, of **The Picture Frame**, about their dilemma, and she offered the second floor of her store at a reasonable rent. It was felt that

**Ed Oliver**, donated a refrigerator.

**P.C. Scott Moreton** is the officer in charge of overseeing administration of the centre. A supervisor will be in charge of training the volunteers. Community members, including McMaster students, have volunteered to work in the centre. High-school students, who are required to do 40 hours of community service, may assist the volunteers.

On Sept. 6, 2003, the CPC opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. In addition to most of the above-named persons, others who attended included: then-deputy **Chief of Police Brian Mullan**, **Sgt. Jim Adam**, **Police Board Chair Bernie Morelli**, then-councillor **Marvin Caplan**, his administrative assistant **Dale Brown**, McMaster professor and then-candidate for Ward 1 councillor **Brian McHattie**,

AWWCA representatives **Phyllis Tresidder**, **Loreen** and **Elizabeth Jerome**, and me, BIA representatives **Paul Snider** (his daughter **Beth Snider** also attended), **David Simpson**, and **John Garbe** (who provided refreshments), McMaster University planner **Linda Axworthy**, MSU president **Neville Boney**, director of building and licensing **Peter Lampman**, co-ordinator of standards and licensing **Judy Downey**, representatives from the media, as well as other community members and volunteers from other policing centres.

On Nov. 6, during Crime Prevention Week, the police held an outdoor barbeque at the CPC. It was well attended by the community, including students, residents, and police officers.

The centre is currently open limited hours until volunteers have been trained. During this startup period, we suggest you phone before you go to the centre.

**CPC phone numbers: 905-546-8951 or 905-546-8952**

The AWWCA thanks all those who contributed to the centre's grand opening on Sept. 6. What a remarkable combined community achievement!

The AWWCA board of directors holds its monthly meetings at the Community Policing Centre at 7:00 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. We welcome those interested in attending.



Supt. Shea and P.C. Vander Pol at BBQ Nov. 6, 2003. Photo: Janet Woodward



Community Policing Centre BBQ Nov. 6, 2003. Photos: Janet Woodward



arrangements could be made for those unable to climb stairs. Ms. Snider spent many hours setting up the CPC, including arranging for a grant to make renovations, getting a building permit, finding a contractor to do the work, closing down the store during renovations, hiring students to remove the store contents to the basement so that a new carpet could be laid in the store, and cleaning the CPC area. AWWCA past president **Liz Millar** and her husband,

# Our Thanks to Sergeant Alan Smethurst

BETTY BECHTEL

For the past seven years, **Sergeant Al Smethurst** has been the supervising officer for Division 1, which encompasses the area from Sherman Avenue to the Dundas border and from the base of the mountain to the bay. He enjoys this area, takes a personal interest in it, and recently bought a home in the west end. He rides his bicycle to work along the waterfront trail, and his daughter attends McMaster University. Sgt. Smethurst was given the task of instituting community-based policing in the west end, the first of its kind in Canada. It has been so successful that he has been invited to visit other university and college communities to address their concerns.

Sgt. Smethurst has been a friend to the AWWCA since its beginning. When the AWWCA was formed in 1998, we sent out letters heralding its arrival to various community representatives, including those at City Hall and the Hamilton Police Service. The police were the first to respond and asked for a meeting with the executive. Attending this meeting at our home were **Inspector Bob Buck**, **Staff-Sergeant Bob Watts**, **Sgt. Smethurst**, and the officer for Beat 691, **Police Constable Gina Azulay**.

After the initial meeting with the AWWCA executive, Sgt. Smethurst started dropping in to update Jim and me about policing strategies, ask about community issues, and seek suggestions. If we presented a problem, he researched it carefully before providing an answer or solution. He later asked for volunteers to represent the community to the Beat 691 officers. He wanted the officers to put faces to the people they were serving. Jim and I readily volunteered and have felt privileged to get to know the officers. Still later Sgt. Smethurst asked me to be on the Police Superintendent's Advisory Committee to represent our community. This committee has become a communication vehicle for me to learn more about policing challenges and to meet representatives from other parts of Division 1.

One officer described Sgt. Smethurst as

"one of a kind." Not only is he an inspiring friend to his beat officers, as well as a wise and understanding supervisor, but also he has become a friend to the AWWCA community, McMaster students and administration, and the Westdale Business Improvement Area. He has attended many meetings, sometimes in his off-duty time, related to the activities of the community. He listens thoughtfully to concerns and offers workable solutions based on his experience.

Sgt. Smethurst's statement that he loves his work is confirmed by his enthusiasm, his many contacts with people, and his unique and resourceful ways of handling difficult situations.

We learned recently that Sgt. Smethurst is being transferred to the east end of the city to do similar work. We thank him for his considerable help to our community over the past seven years, and we wish him continued success in his work. But we will miss him!

## Police Liaison Report

BETTY BECHTEL

Congratulations to **Police Chief Brian Mullan** and **Deputy Chief Ken Leendertse** on their recent promotions. The AWWCA wishes them every success in their work and looks forward to

continuing its mutually supportive relationship with the Hamilton Police Service.

There is a lot of information sharing among police, bylaw officers, McMaster, the Westdale Business Improvement Area, and the community. I attend

**Superintendent Michael Shea's** Advisory Committee, which gives me the opportunity to express AWWCA concerns. Supt. Shea is understanding and supportive of the needs of the AWWCA areas and approves extra policing initiatives at times of peak demand. These initiatives have been outlined in previous newsletters and e-mail messages to members. **Inspector Bob Buck** meets monthly with McMaster Security. **Police Constable Jack Vander Pol** continues to undertake many extra duties to help the community,

in addition to his full-time work as a secondary-school-liaison officer. He regularly communicates with McMaster administration, the McMaster Students' Union, McMaster Security, **Shelagh Snider** of the Westdale BIA, and me. He is in contact with local bars, including Quarters at McMaster and Billy Bob Ray's, and elicits co-operation from bar owners and staff. He tries to contact each person who voices complaints about area problems and visits residents on his list of "offending houses." **Beat 691 officers** also undertake many initiatives on our behalf.

## Police Business Refit Seminar

Last year I was invited by Supt. Shea to the Hamilton Police Service's Business-Plan Refit, a three-day seminar held at the Maplewood meeting facility in Ancaster. Every three years police from all ranks, civilian staff, and members of the police board hold these seminars with the mayor, councillors, and citizens who volunteer in the community. The purpose is to plan achievable goals for the next three years, taking into account the many challenges the force faces and developments in our society that influence police work. This was a well-organized event. Participants were divided into groups with specific topics to define policing goals for the next three years. I am repeatedly impressed by the amount of organizational planning that is part of the Hamilton Police Service and with the many checks and balances in place. For me, it was an opportunity to learn more about policing and to meet many delightful people, both officers and community members, who contribute so much to our community.

## Citizens' Police College

This is an eight-week series of lectures provided by the Hamilton Police Service every fall in each of the three divisions. A similar series for seniors is held in the spring. Several AWWCA members are graduates of the college. I took this fascinating course last fall and encourage anyone who is interested to enroll. Topics include accident reconstruction, the use of force, and the work of the major-fraud branch, canine unit, pawn office, and the High Enforcement Action Team, which combats illegal drugs. We also had a tour of Central Station.

*Some tips I learned about protecting oneself from identity theft:*

1. Debit cards are particularly open to identify theft.

See COLLEGE on page 19

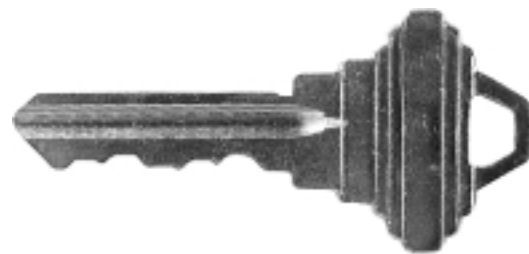


Sergeant Alan Smethurst



Police Chief Brian Mullan

# Security Update



BETTY BECHTEL, POLICE LIAISON, AWWCA

## *Policing Strategies*

The AWWCA area experiences numerous challenges related to an ever-expanding university and to the security incidents created by other members of society. We hope that police and bylaw strategies and the AWWCA's initiatives regarding student housing will ease the stress.

## *Noise, Noise, Noise!*

Repeatedly, the common denominators of local complaints are drunken behaviour and noise. Police receive more calls for service regarding quality-of-life issues from the AWWCA areas than from anywhere else in the city. Police and bylaw officers focus on bar routes, including: King Street West, Sterling Street, Forsyth Avenue, Sanders Boulevard, Main Street West, Haddon Avenue, and Emerson Street. Noise from house parties permeates the surrounding blocks. Many long-time neighbours have left the area because of the drunken behaviour and noise.

### **Problems that have been reported to me since last September:**

1. There are repeated reports about drunken behaviour, vomiting, public urination, yelling, swearing, vandalism, theft, and cars speeding and screeching. Drunks play ball games at 3 a.m. on residential streets in good weather. Nearby residents hear filthy language, and many are kept from sleeping most of the night. Some residents also report being harassed by rowdy, drunken student neighbours.
2. A resident of Cline Avenue North reported observing the following some months ago: One evening, after dark, a driver, with several young people in the car, pulled into the main parking lot of Anshe Sholom Temple, got out of his car, walked in front of it, stood in the glare of the headlights, and urinated in full view of any onlookers and the youths in the car, who did nothing to stop him. It appeared to be intended as an act of bravado and indecency directed at the synagogue.
3. A car owner in the Sanders Boulevard area found that someone had jumped on the trunk, roof, and hood of his car. He had to pay \$2,288 to repair the car.

4. Another car owner paid \$300 to repair side-view mirrors that had been ripped off. She also had to replace a tire because beer bottles were smashed at the foot of several driveways on her street.
5. Bar patrons in Westdale Village urinated in front of pedestrians and apparently knocked over construction equipment on Cline Avenue North. They repeatedly made so much noise along streets radiating away from Westdale Village that several neighbours reported being kept awake on many occasions, and in good

along their streets, day and night. Trucks are supposed to use King Street West, and deliveries are banned at certain hours of the night. **Supt. Shea** said he contacted McMaster security last year about this issue and will do so again.

10. On Jan. 19, two male youths, about age 20, appear to have been posing as canvassers for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). We were advised that the streets targeted were Cline Avenue North, Barclay Street, and Paisley Avenue North. Several residents who were home in the day, when the "canvassers"

## *New Noise Bylaw Brings Higher Fines and Escalated Enforcement*

On Jan. 20, Doug Rose, manager, standards and licensing, outlined to the AWWCA board of directors changes to the noise bylaw, including increased fines and escalated enforcement. "The new noise bylaw was passed by city council on Jan. 22, 2003. We have recently had our short-form wording (SFW) ticket system approved by the Chief Justice of Ontario, which allows us to issue tickets on the spot to bylaw offenders. This SFW ticket system carries a maximum fine of \$500, and the SFW system is usually used for first-time offenders. Repeat offenders are summoned to court by way of a Part 111 summons and are subject to larger fines, to a maximum fine of \$5,000. Noise enforcement is available on a 24/7 basis." Judy Downey, co-ordinator, standards and licensing, told us that 28 tickets were issued pursuant to the City of Hamilton noise bylaw last September.

weather student residents continued their noisy celebrations on their front porches.

6. Last fall, Binkley United Church's chain-link fence was torn down and a protector over a leaded window was broken.
7. Luba Mera Spa on Main Street West, which has done such a super job of renovating its premises, has been damaged on at least three occasions: new shrubbery was pulled out, shrubbery was stolen, and latticework on their new entrance porch was ripped off and stolen.
8. Postal boxes are knocked over virtually every weekend, and graffiti mars most of them.
9. Residents on Traymore Avenue and Arnold Streets have had difficulties with trucks making deliveries to the hospital

came around, all reported the same response when they refused to donate: the youths were rude, defensive, and belligerent.

11. On Jan. 21, the home of residents on Cline Avenue North was broken into during the day. Most of what was stolen was electronics.

These are just some of the problems that have been reported to me. There are some areas for which I have not received reports.

Important! Your input is important to police and bylaw officers in their continuing efforts to reduce problems. I relay your information to the Superintendent's Advisory Committee, to Beat 691 officers, and to the AWWCA board of directors. You can contact me at [betjimb@interlynx.net](mailto:betjimb@interlynx.net) or 905-526-1714. Thank you for your help.

# PROPERTY STANDARDS

## Fees for Property Owners

We asked Hamilton's co-ordinator of standards and licensing, **Judy Downey**, about the new fees-for-service bylaw. She responded:

"The Fees for Service Bylaw was passed just prior to the summer of 2003, and we have set a process in place in terms of our computer system and process respecting the Property Standards and Yard Maintenance Bylaws. A process will be set for the noise bylaw; however, we are issuing tickets.

"When a violation has been determined and compliance is not obtained, if the inspector has to attend the subject property a second time, and the violation exists, the owner will be charged a fee of \$180, and for each subsequent inspection a fee of \$250 will be charged. These costs will be added to the tax roll and collected in a like manner as municipal taxes, without any further notice to the property owner. Please be advised that this is not a set fine but a fee for service and is charged directly to the property-tax account. Please call me at 905-546-2424, extension 6108, if you require further information."



Betty Bechtel holding resource book from Business Refit Seminar and wearing shirt from Superintendent's Advisory Committee. Photo: Janet Woodward

## It's the Law

One of the major complaints we heard this winter and last was the number of unshovelled walks on both residential and commercial properties in our community. Snow must be shovelled within 24 hours of the end of a storm.

Here are the details of the city's sidewalk snow-clearing rules:

- Forward complaints to 905-546-CITY (2489), after hours to 905-574-3433.
- Complaints are assigned to a municipal law-enforcement officer, who will begin an investigation within 24 hours of receipt of the complaint.
- First- and second-time offenders who have not completely cleared the sidewalks abutting their property will be issued an order to comply and warned that failure to clear the snow from the sidewalk will result in city staff performing the work at the property owner's expense.
- If the officer observes, during the course of the investigation, that the snow has not been cleared from a sidewalk adjoining another property in proximity to the property that is the subject of the investigation, the bylaw will also be enforced respecting the proximate property.
- If no fresh snow has fallen, an officer will re-inspect the location for compliance after 24 hours have elapsed since the initial notice was issued. If the walks are still not completely cleared, the officer or municipal law-enforcement clerk will forward the complaint to the appropriate Public Works Roads District, which will have the sidewalk cleared. The property owner will be charged the full cost of the snow removal, enforcement, and administrative overhead through property-tax billing; a notice to that effect will be left at the property when the clearing is performed.
- Third-time offenders (those who were issued two violation notices or for whom clearing was performed twice before in a given winter season and who have again not cleared their walks of snow and ice within 24 hours after the end of a storm) will receive no warning. The officer or municipal law-enforcement clerk will forward the complaint to the appropriate Public Works Roads District. The owner's walks will be cleared by city employees or the city's contractor, and the owner will be charged for all costs via the tax roll, and a notice will be left at the property at the time of clearing.
- The same procedure is followed for fourth and subsequent offenders in a given winter season, but in addition the offender will be issued a Provincial Offences Notice or Summons with a fine in accordance with the approved fine schedule.
- Vacant properties or uninhabited residences will be treated as third-time offenders on the occasion of the first offence.



Let's get shovelling!

Photo: Janet Woodward

## COLLEGE from page 17

Do not use them to buy gas or if there is only one person working at a business or if you do not know the owner. Thieves have many ways of copying your personal-identification numbers, including at automated-teller machines.

2. Do not carry your social insurance card or birth certificate with you unless you need it for a specific reason. Keep them in a safe place at home. You are not required to give your social insurance number when making a purchase.
3. Never put anything with your name and address in the garbage. Buy a shredder and shred it first.

# VARSITY NEWS

## Dear President George

*The following is adapted from e-mails Carolyn Kinsley sent Dec. 9 to president Peter George and six senior administrators at McMaster University with whom the AWWCA has been in contact regarding student housing, target enrolments, and related matters.*

At a meeting last November, I was taken aback by a university representative's irritation with residents of Forsyth Avenue North and Mayfair Crescent who are concerned about McMaster's plans for the oval green space between their houses and the university. (She spoke frankly because the residents weren't present.) I believe the residents have reason to be concerned as the university expands. Over the decades it has built the gym, the library, the library expansion, and the student centre across the street from them and this fall opened a new entrance to campus parking at the north end of the oval.

Shortly after that meeting, McMaster's Daily News announced that the former president's residence on campus was being converted to alumni offices, and I was hit by a lightning bolt: Not one of McMaster's senior administrators lives within the boundaries of the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations (Ward 1 between the 403 and Dundas). They live in Ancaster, Burlington, Dundas, and Flamborough. If they did live in the community surrounding the university, they might have more empathy for residents' concerns. This is not good public relations. In fact it indicates a real estrangement from the community.

My suggestion for the Mayfair oval: a Westdale Tudor-style president's residence. It would set a good example: commitment to the community, urban intensification (instead of sprawl), and the elimination of commuting. It would be appropriate to

have it in place before the university has a new president.

McMaster University is indisputably a major asset to Hamilton, but the administration has failed to take responsibility for the effect of its growth on the surrounding neighbourhoods. Westdale (the area I am familiar with) has gone from being a well-kept residential family community when my husband and I moved here in 1984 to having beat-up student rental houses dragging down entire blocks, and it has happened very quickly. The changing mix of businesses in Westdale Village reflects the downscale trend, as does the incessant litter around the village and all along Sterling Street.

A student recently told a middle-aged local real-estate agent, "This is a student neighbourhood. Why don't you old people move?" Students' memories can be very short, and some of the university administrators' also. When we moved here, this was an area with a very low turnover of residents. We weren't choosing to live in a transient student neighbourhood. We expected this to be our permanent home, with long-term neighbours.

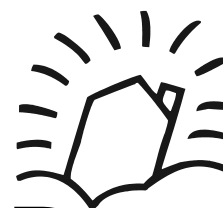
My personal opinion is that detached family houses are unsuitable accommodations for undergraduate students living on their own. Student rental houses used to be the exception in Hamilton, purchased by parents while their kids were at university, then sold back into the regular market. Now such houses have become ongoing big businesses operated by absentee landlords. Houses, especially old ones with character—and Westdale was built over 70 years ago—demand a lot of maintenance. When they're used as student rentals, there is a constant turnover of tenants, no on-site superintendent, minimal or no maintenance, no upgrades (unless forced by insurance companies), no respect for the architecture of the houses and the streetscape, no landscaping, no pride of ownership.

If undergraduate students are going to live off campus, the majority should be in residences specifically designed for that purpose, incorporated into neighbourhood planning, and managed and maintained to the same standards of safety and appearance as on-campus residences. The university is responsible for attracting thousands of full-time undergraduate students to West Hamilton (14,110 in 2002–3), yet once they move off campus, it takes no responsi-

bility for their safety and well-being or for the impact of their numbers on the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The AWWCA and the city have been doing almost all the research and legwork trying to find alternatives to feckless landlords attracted by the ever-increasing number of students needing off-campus housing. The university has just plain dumped the problem on us. Peter George's letter of Jan. 26 to donors boasts that the university has increased its undergraduate enrolment targets by 21 per cent from 2001. We also know that the university is considering whether to expand enrolment to 26,400 undergraduates by 2014. Where are the students going to live? The vacancy rate in Hamilton is a very tight 1.5 per cent; 3 per cent is considered healthy. Irresponsible absentee landlords ought to be put out of business. But where will the university house its students if that happens?

Having the campus next door was the deciding factor when we chose to move from Dundas to Westdale. We sold our second car right away, as we could walk to campus, run errands on foot, and take the bus downtown. Religious institutions, excellent schools, shopping, the library, and the Royal Botanical Gardens trails are all within walking distance. I don't want to see my neighbourhood trashed. There isn't another one like it in Hamilton. Westdale was the first planned community in Canada, but we are battling to maintain its integrity. Good housing keeps good students, and a balanced residential area attracts faculty, researchers, and staff. I would like to see McMaster shake off its inertia, plan for alternatives to student rental houses, and help to restore our community to an area where even its president and senior administrators would choose to live.



## Because we care



# Lobbying Worked!

JUREK KOLASA

The new McMaster Learning and Discovery Centre will soon be completed along Forsyth Avenue North directly adjacent to the residential neighbourhood. It is the largest building erected on the McMaster campus in the last 20 years. The building is quite different from the original design, and this is a direct result of lobbying. An unlikely feat, but it did happen. A small group of residents from Forsyth Avenue North and Forsyth Place banded together over concerns related to the centre's appearance, landscaping, pedestrian traffic, and the shade it would cast.

The group initiated discussions with university officials, which

led to a meeting with architects in 2002. Some of the discussions were warm to heated, but the results are clear to see. The building has evolved from its original box shape into a more diversified one, especially in the area next to the Health Sciences building. The upper floors were recessed to provide more light and create a less imposing effect on the neighbourhood. The siding was changed from aluminum to stone. All these changes arose from our explicit suggestions. The least expensive, but quite satisfying, victory has been the salvation of the large oak tree at the intersection of King Street West and Forsyth Avenue North. Surprisingly, our attention to a single tree helped to improve the esthetics of the Sterling Street entrance to campus. Perhaps we need more trees for Westdale's benefit.

*Jurek Kolasa is an AWWCA member who lives on Forsyth Avenue North.*

## AWWCA supports STUDENTS

## Community Associations in University Neighbourhoods: Pro-Student, Pro-University

ROB PAYNE

In my first few months on the job as president of the AWWCA, I have met a large cross-section of our community. I have noticed that some people have the false perception that resident homeowners' associations like ours are "antistudent," and thus a barrier to the growth and success of universities.

Our association has spent a lot of time recently applying pressure to the McMaster Students' Union and McMaster University administration to improve the safety of off-campus student housing. At present, there is no system to differentiate between safer, inspected houses and potentially unsafe houses in the off-campus listing service, which is run by the university. One exam-

ple of how this issue has been addressed can be found at the University of New Brunswick. The student union physically visits each prospective off-campus student home and must approve the house before it is placed on the listing service of the university. Our association has strongly pushed for a similar model, including a requirement for fire and electrical inspection certificates before a listing is accepted.

In addition, we have focused on students' preferences. Formal studies examining student housing needs (surprisingly few of

them done by universities) point to a desire to live in less crowded (maximum five people), safe accommodations on or close to campus. There is some evidence that students who live on

campus actually do better academically, a concept that is promoted by universities across North America. We are encouraging McMaster University to do two things: (1) join with us in a decision-making process around student housing that includes university administration, students, the surrounding community, and the City of Hamilton and (2) begin providing the type of on-campus housing requested by students. McMaster is making progress on these issues, and we will continue to lend



Rob Payne

our support to these student-centred issues.

These two major areas of focus—safer housing and an inclusive decision-making process to create a formal housing plan—strongly support the students' needs to have safe housing on or close to campus. Support for this approach will also benefit the university, as success in these areas will mean:

1. Less traffic and parking, as the campus and surrounding area will be compact enough to be accessible by pedestrians.
2. A higher satisfaction rating among students, which will lead to better recruitment and more generous alumni.
3. A strong, supportive surrounding residential community, which will provide a welcoming off-campus housing environment for students.
4. A positive influence on the academic success of students who live on campus.

The AWWCA is working toward the development of a balanced, vibrant community. Our efforts to develop higher standards for landlords and to ensure that our community has the proper balance of families, seniors, and students are sometimes viewed as antistudent and anti-university. On the contrary, promoting desirable on-campus student housing supplemented by safer, less-crowded student housing in a thriving community is the best service we can offer both the students and the university. Our efforts strongly support university initiatives to be student centred. We hope that student organizations and universities will be open to the possibility of such a positive contribution and begin to see our community associations as pro-student and pro-university.

# MACycle Co-op Welcomes the Community

SEAN PARK

Whether you are a local resident or a student, staff, or faculty member of McMaster University, you are probably quite aware of how you commute within in our community. Transportation in our region of the world has been supported by the automobile, but the evidence is mounting that our car-centric culture is having a profoundly negative impact on the vitality and sustainability of our communities. With the explosive growth of McMaster in recent years and the subsequent increase in automobile traffic, the university and surrounding residential community are having difficulties dealing with increased travel demands. Creating more parking lots and forcing students to park on residential streets are simply ad-hoc solutions and frustrate residents, businesses, and members of the McMaster community alike. We can be thankful there is a growing recognition of the need for alternative and meaningful transportation solutions.



Sean Park and Rob Payne.

One initiative taking hold at McMaster is the **MACycle Co-op**. This full-service centre for bicycle repairs, skills training, and used-bicycle sales located at Wentworth House is the newest service of the McMaster Students' Union, with membership open to the entire community. Started last year, the Co-op now has close to 200 members and provides a wide array of services that are extremely affordable, socially engaging, and environmentally conscious. Some high-

lights of the service include a partnership with the City of Hamilton whereby old bicycles are donated from municipal waste-

transfer stations, refurbished by volunteers, and sold for very reasonable prices (\$50 on average). In addition, members can pur-



Sean Park (wearing helmet) with AWWCA board members (l to r) Janet Woodward, Rob Payne, and Jim and Betty Bechtel.

chase parts and accessories such as lights, locks, fenders, and tires—all at close-to-cost prices.

The long-term vision of MACycle Co-op is to promote self-sufficiency through hands-on skills training and to become a service provider for the entire West Hamilton community. The latter will take time to develop but is moving in the right direction. In early November, MACycle Co-op formed a partnership with the AWWCA to help promote the service to local residents. AWWCA president **Rob Payne** commented: "The AWWCA is an active supporter of all efforts to reduce traffic in our neighbourhoods. MACycle is a student initiative that fits well with our neighbourhood philosophy, as the program offers a solid transportation alternative for our residents." With the generous financial donation from the AWWCA, MACycle will make more effort to involve the community at the on-campus Co-op.

If you're interested in finding out more about how MACycle Co-op is providing a great transportation alternative, or would like to become a member, please contact [macycle@mcmaster.ca](mailto:macycle@mcmaster.ca) or check out the website at [www.msu.mcmaster.ca/macycle](http://www.msu.mcmaster.ca/macycle).

*Sean Park is MACycle Co-op director and is in his fourth year of the bachelor-of-health-sciences program at McMaster.*

## AWWCA Supports Students' Food Drive



Rob Payne, AWWCA president, and Maria Leluzzi, vice-president, administration, SOCS, load food donation.

Last Halloween, the AWWCA donated over 100 pounds of food to the Society of Off-Campus Students to support their Halloween for Hunger campaign.

SOCS collected over 2,000 pounds of food and delivered it to the Neighbour to Neighbour Centre, a local food bank.

## The AWWCA Encourages Safe Housing for Students

AWWCA president Rob Payne has asked the McMaster Students' Union and McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre to participate in a voluntary program with the city this spring to encourage any student renters who feel they are living in unsafe conditions to let city inspectors inside to ascertain whether their homes are safe.

# Who Ya Gonna Call?

Abandoned Barn shopping carts

- 905-523-5044 during store hours
- Ask for Joe Sazekas, manager

City Hall: 905-546-CITY (2489)\*

Crime Stoppers (*to report a crime anonymously*)

- 1-800-222-8477\*

Garbage, waste management, barking dogs

- 905-546-CITY (2489)\*

Graffiti

- Hot Line: 905-546-4723\*
- Graffiti on Canada Post boxes  
905-521-6571 or 1-800-267-1177 (*Canada Post national number*)
- Graffiti on street signs  
905-546-4376\*
- Graffiti on property  
Judy Downey, co-ordinator, standards and licensing  
905-546-2424, ext. 6108 (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

McMaster University  
Office of Public Relations, Community Help Line

- 905-525-9140, ext. 27305

Noise infractions

- 905-546-2782
- After hours 905-546-4925\*

Parking infractions

- 905-540-6000\*

Police (*non-emergency*)

- 905-546-4925\*; a person will answer after the taped message
- To report keg deliveries: Staff Sergeant, 905-546-4725\*
- If you need further assistance: Police reception desk, 905-546-4771\*

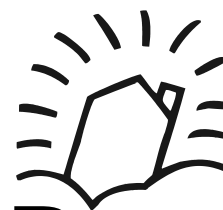
Property-standards infractions

- 905-546-2782 *or*
- Judy Downey, co-ordinator, standards and licensing  
905-546-2424, ext. 6108 (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

Street signs missing or damaged, traffic lights not working

- 905-546-4376\*

\* Indicates hours are 24/7



## Because we care

The AWWCA is a volunteer, nonprofit association whose mission is to preserve, protect, and enhance the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community environment and the quality of life for all residents. The AWWCA newsletter, *Neighbourhood News & Views*, is published and distributed to members. The opinions expressed within 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 (no Polaroids please) to:

AWWCA  
1063 King Street West, Suite 221  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8S 4S3

GENERAL INQUIRIES  
905-526-9101 *or*  
905-526-1714

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*"Building community  
block by block"*



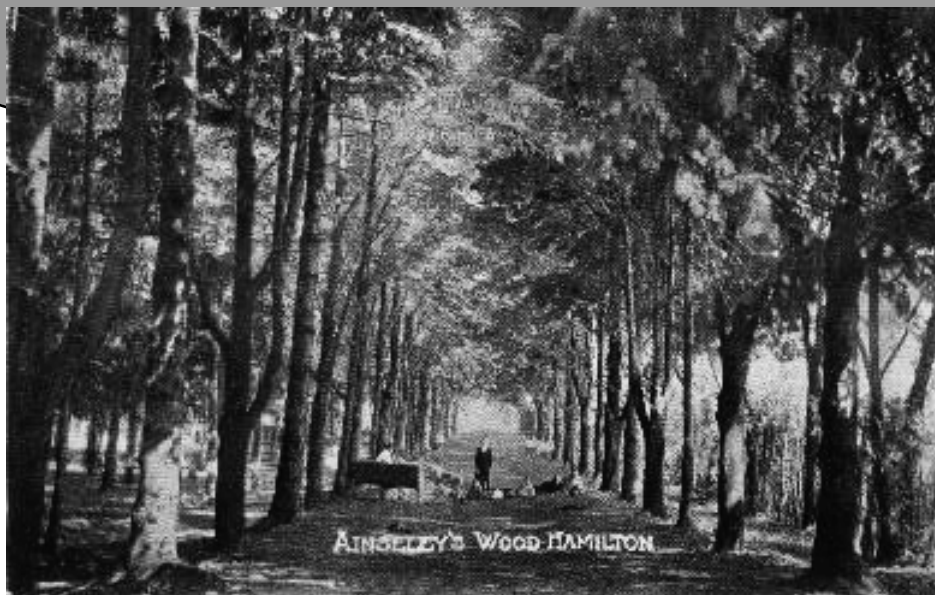
# The Way We Were

## Ainslie's Wood

LOREEN JEROME

Ainslie Wood was once private land owned by Colonel Robert C. Ainslie (alternate spellings are Ainsley and Ainslee). Colonel Ainslie inherited a 60-acre farm in the former Barton Township from his father, George Howlett Ainslie, who settled there in 1838. The farm was on what is now the south side of Main Street West, west of Longwood Road. George built a stone house on the property that lasted over a century. The beautifully forested area contained ravines, a spring, a stream, and a waterfall. In the 1880s it was turned over to his son, Colonel Ainslie, who added swings, a ball field, picnic tables, shady trees, and a pavilion with birds, raccoons, coyotes, monkeys, and other animals. In the late 1800s Hamiltonians made their way to this idyllic spot to picnic, watch birds, paint, and hike. "Go to the end of Aberdeen Avenue, cross the road to the west side, you enter the lane leading to the property," states an article in *The Hamilton Spectator* (Mar. 10, 1951).

By 1879, Ainslie's Wood became so popular that The Hamilton and Dundas Steam Railway officially started offering rail service to Ainslie's Wood. The steam train, named "The Dummy," ran through the south end of the farm. It was a little train of two or three cars pulled by a steam engine encased inside a cab, so as not to bother the horses on the farm. Its route originated at Ferguson Avenue and terminated in Dundas. In 1885, a railway company bought Ainslie's Wood to operate it as



Postcard courtesy of [www.hamiltonpostcards.com](http://www.hamiltonpostcards.com)

a park for the public and built a sports field for baseball, cricket, and lacrosse. Many local writers and reporters wrote about the woods and the happy times people spent there. However, by 1895 the park's popularity was waning because Canada Westinghouse built a railroad yard nearby.

Around 1920, Sir John Gibson, educator, lawyer, military man, and eventually lieutenant-governor of Ontario, bought Ainslie's Wood and kept the Ainslie name. After his death in 1929, Lady Gibson and her family donated part of the land to the Hamilton Parks Board, while the rest went to Hillfield School in memory of her late husband and three sons.

In 1961, the City of Hamilton sold 38.23 acres of Ainslie's Wood for \$67,345 to build the Chedoke Expressway, now Hwy 403 (the section between the Main Street East and Ancaster exits). Hillfield School moved to its present location on the mountain in 1963 and sold its part of the Ainslie property to the developers of the Camelot Towers Apartments and the Board of Education. The Board of Education built and opened the Ainslie

Wood Vocational School near the station end of the property in 1970. The school closed in 1994 due to funding difficulties. It was taken over by Columbia International College and renovated a few years ago to expand their school.

The contemporary Ainslie Wood

Park is not part of the original property. That park was officially given its name on Nov. 24, 1987, and is located on land in the Ainslie Wood area formerly owned by the Bowman and Bamberger families. Ainslie Avenue is south of Main Street West and runs from Bowman Street on the east to Clifford Street on the west.

The historical significance of Ainslie's Wood is indicated by the fact that a street is named for it, four of the six areas in Chedoke-Cootes (Ward 1) include the name Ainslie (Ainslie Wood North, Ainslie Wood East, Ainslie Wood, and Ainslie Wood West), and of course our community association contains the name Ainslie Wood.

Sources: *Hamilton Public Library's Special Collections and Mabel Burkholder's "Out of the Storied Past," The Hamilton Spectator, Mar. 10, 1951.*

Mailing Label