



Neighbourhood News & Views

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AINSLIE WOOD / WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
OF RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.
Spring 2009

*"Building community
block by block"*



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LET'S PLAN OUR COMMUNITY, TOGETHER

JOHN WIGLE

The second year as president of your association has been an eventful one. It started in September 2008, is not over, and is certainly not slowing down for me, for the other directors, or for a number of dedicated volunteers. All members of the AWWCA are well served by them. Certainly I am.

The association, its members, and citizens who are not members face a number of challenges to their environment and, therefore, to their quality of life. I start with the issue of purpose-built student housing. West Village Suites, on the former CNIB site on Main Street West, has completed its second year of operation as a privately run student residence. It is a well-designed building and appears to be well managed. Its long-range impact on our neighbourhoods is still to be determined. We hope that the availability of purpose-built housing for students, such as is provided by West Village Suites, will lead to the return of many houses to ownership by families who intend to live in the houses. Some of you know that West Village Suites exceeds the height recommended by the Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan. The board expressed concern about this prior to the construction but ultimately accepted the height increase in view of the location.

The growth in enrolment of McMaster University and Mohawk College and the apparent decision of those institutions to build no more residences or fewer residences have encouraged private developers to acquire land in our neighbourhoods with a view to addressing students' needs for



accommodation. As outlined elsewhere in this issue, there are currently four more proposed purpose-built projects in our community. However, at least one will exceed the limits recommended by the secondary plan.

Your board of directors and a number of members of our association have expressed concern about the size of some of these projects. Understandably, we wonder why the association and city planning staff worked so hard in developing the secondary plan. Speaking for myself and the other board members, we acknowledge the reality of purpose-built student housing and its probable growth in our neighbourhoods. However, we are not convinced that the secondary plan should be disregarded, and we are worried about further exceptions being granted to developers, even experienced and reputable ones.

The next annual general meeting of the association will be held on Tuesday evening, Sept. 22, at Dalewood School auditorium. The board of directors is giving serious consideration to devoting much of the AGM to a discussion and debate about the criteria the association should use in assessing purpose-built

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LIVING IN OUR COMMUNITY

A WRITER AT HOME IN WESTDALE

SORAYA ERIAN

When my husband, Mohammed Dokainish, joined the Mechanical Engineering Department at McMaster University in 1964, our friends advised us to drive to Ancaster, Burlington, and Dundas to look for a home. At the end of our day's search, we drove around the university, and I exclaimed, "Oh! But *this* is where we're going to live!" That was before the beautiful Sunken Botanical Gardens were replaced by the imposing McMaster University Medical Centre.

We enjoy the closeness of our home to the university. Each September's student parade strengthens our belief that the presence of the young in our

community enriches and energizes us. We have met students from Engineers without Borders and learned about their work in Africa and here at home. Our daughter and son attended Westdale schools and then the Arts and Science program at McMaster.

Upon arrival in Hamilton I tutored at McMaster while pursuing my PhD in English at the University of Western Ontario. In the 1960s I joined the 16-member faculty at Mohawk College in a building on Dundurn Street South. In 1970, the college moved to Fennell Avenue West, where I taught for 30 years.

I found life in Westdale conducive to reflection. My writing career began with seven books of poetry and drawings; it continued with fiction, each novel containing several pieces of my art work. In my second novel, *Mystic Loon* (2007), I portray the life in Canada I have come to love: a symbiotic existence where diverse people's cultures are intertwined, a theme that has matured within me over the decades. I chose Westdale for its locale. The characters share a bond with the land and with each other's roots. But this is where fact ends and fiction begins in my novel. The photographer-heroine is in search of the spiritual identity of her adopted land. Her husband, an internist at McMaster Medical Centre, is dedicated to the physical well-being of others. Husband and wife are the antipodes of life.

The immigration story is told through characters who adapt to their new home, and others who do not. The main



Mohammed and Soraya with son Hisham, daughter Madiha, and grandchildren, L to R: Faris, Jenna, and Callum.

couple travels through Canada to experience its French heritage, its First Nations' roots, as well as its English culture. Love, deception, passion, doubt and hope, clash of cultures, forgiveness, acceptance, and creativity constitute the vibrant texture of this Canadian journey.

Mystic Loon probes post-multicultural Canadian identity. In the 20th century, we applauded Pierre Elliott Trudeau's vision of a cultural mosaic consisting of separate but equal parts glued together, a good first step. But in the 21st century, we know how glue tends to age and the pieces fall apart. *Mystic Loon* portrays cultures inextricably connected with each other. Individuals who possess a creative vision for their country enjoy living in these integrated communities, yet they do not lose sight of their native roots. Akin to baking a cake! Different ingredients mix to form a whole, a process especially inspiring in the Canada of the 21st century.

Soraya Erian and her husband have been AWWCA members for eight years. A writer-artist from Egypt, Soraya came to the University of Toronto on a Canada Council scholarship to obtain her MA in English literature. She taught creative writing, literature, and communications at Mohawk College. Now retired, she is enjoying a life of contemplative creativity and her three grandchildren, who "fill her heart with joy." You can view Soraya's publications and artwork at soraya-erian.com.

An American in Ainslie Wood

Cathie Costanzo e-mailed us on April 4: Today I found “Why I Moved to Ainslie Wood/Westdale” while looking for something else on your website, as is common with me. I moved to Hamilton from the United States with my Canadian-born spouse. I am from a western state surrounded by mountains. I missed the mountains, but the Hamilton area and the polite people reminded me of home. The road that goes from Ainslie Wood and Westdale to Ancaster offers great views of the area below. It reminded me of driving through the mountains out west. And the airport is nearby. Hamilton is a city that is not boxed in, is how I see it.

The Ainslie Wood/Westdale area is safer and cleaner than where my husband lived in the Corktown area of Hamilton when I first moved to Hamilton. My car was broken into twice in less than four months in Corktown. Also, since I have a child with autism, and we needed a more open, airy place that did not cause her anxiety, I began to look around and make calls. Ainslie Wood was it; we moved there in 2004.

In 2006 we returned to the United States, but I still love the Ainslie Wood/Westdale area. Key points that led us to move to Ainslie Wood were its cleanliness, abundance of parks, safety,

ample parking for businesses, and access to a doctor who would see my daughter. With just a short drive you are near open areas and conservation areas with a creek nearby, so green compared to the western U.S., which is quite dry. I also love the Ainslie Wood/Westdale area because you can escape the cars and congestion and go at a slower pace, yet in a few minutes you can be in the heart of the city.

Some Canadians think Americans do not like Canada. Nothing could be further from the truth. I help moderate an online group with U.S. and Canadian members and am working with the U.S. embassy in Canada to help disseminate U.S.–Canadian news and issues in a good light.

I think that when the city is promoting tourism, it should promote the west end, especially to American tourists. It is far more wheelchair accessible than the downtown core and has friendly people, nice things to see that are easy to get to, and noticeably cleaner air. I often think, before Hamilton develops further, it ought to look to the west end: Make the city walkable, livable, and keep some open spaces. I highly recommend the Ainslie Wood/Westdale area to anyone.

**‘Let’s plan our community’
continued from page 1**

student housing. Currently we are looking for informed people to sit on a panel that will have a moderator. As we develop this concept over the next two months, we will send e-mail bulletins updating members regarding the agenda for the AGM. We invite input from members and friends of the association. This AGM will be significant, and we encourage people to attend.

The board meets on the first Monday evening of each month, except in August. It has become a custom for members to ask to attend our meetings to make presentations. For example, **Dr. Ken Ockenden** has provided updates on the work of the Access to Best Care committee which has monitored Hamilton Health Science’s plan to eliminate the emergency department at McMaster Medical Centre for adults. The efforts of Ken and **Rob Payne**, the association’s past president, among others, have caused the Ontario Ombudsman to investigate the processes of the local health integration networks in this province. Concerned members, with input from the city’s recreation department, have made presentations about the use of the property formerly used by the Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club. You will read about some of the ideas for the property in this issue. These initiatives are mere samples of the initiatives that your board facilitates. Also, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the excellent walkability report prepared by **Alice Sabourin**, a former vice president, and her committee. The report is on our website and is well worth reading.

When you meet any of our current or past directors on the street please acknowledge and thank them for their efforts. In my opinion they represent the true spirit of volunteerism. They expect and want your thoughtful input, and they certainly deserve your support. Enjoy the summer.



The escarpment from Main Street West heading to Ancaster.

Photo: Janet Woodward

*“Building community
block by block”*

Making Strides in the Right Direction: An AWWCA Walkability Committee Update, April 2009



ALICE SABOURIN

The AWWCA walkability committee expresses deep gratitude to the 35 keen residents who attended a successful community presentation at the Westdale Library on March 5. It was co-hosted by our committee and the Westdale Business Improvement Area. Ward 1 Councillor **Brian McHattie**, an avid supporter and early champion of walkability, introduced presentations by:

- **Kathryn Gold** of Green Venture on combatting urban sprawl by designing liveable cities
- **Laurel Harrison** of Earth Day Hamilton on an Earth Day event April 18 including a five-kilometre walk and fun run, ending at Churchill Park for tree planting
- **Suzanne Brown** and **Alice Sabourin** of the AWWCA walkability committee on findings and recommendations from our walkability initiative

A few businesses were worried that walkability improvements might result in losing parking spots in the village core, but the committee and Mr. McHattie assured them that removing parking was not a goal. Along with schools, parks, and recreation centres, the businesses are noted as important places

that act as pedestrian magnets; their viability is a key aspect of walkability.

This community presentation followed a milestone for the walkability committee—our presentation to Hamilton’s Board of Health in February, which was met with support after **Mayor Fred Eisenberg** made a motion to move the recommendations forward and align them to the Transportation Master Plan. See the article featured in The Hamilton Spectator at thespec.com/article/519814.

More recently, city staff reviewed recommendations with us that the committee affectionately refers to as a “working wish list.” The review and implementation process is expected to take several months and will bring together many stakeholders, including the BIA, city staff, and the AWWCA.

The partnerships in the past few months are a growing testament to the broad appeal of walkability. It continues to capture the attention of environmentalists, public-health professionals, economists, policy makers, urban designers, and people interested in creating thriving public places. In walking, we connect with the community, our friends, and our neighbours. By choosing our feet over the gas pedal, we reduce our carbon footprint and, yes, the psychological drama that is road rage. We achieve a healthier lifestyle in an era of unprecedented obesity. It is good for us, and it is good for society—it is both a means to an end and an end in itself.

Walkability is one of Westdale’s greatest assets, and we hope to empower others to study, protect, and preserve the fundamental pleasure of walking. A few people have already expressed an interest in conducting walkability audits in areas not covered by the pilot study. If you are interested in starting a walkability workgroup, please contact the walkability committee at 905-523-0337. The committee is developing a toolkit and is happy to act as a resource to continue promoting walkability in our neighbourhoods.

Alice Sabourin is chair of the AWWCA walkability committee.

Welcome, Seniors and Retirees

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



Laurel Harrison of Earth Day Hamilton speaking at the community presentation March 5.
Photo: Loreen Jerome

How Would a Heritage Conservation District Apply to Westdale?

ANTHONY BUTLER

Probably most of you are aware that individual buildings can be designated for protection because of their heritage value. The Ontario Heritage Act also has another section that provides for designation of heritage conservation districts (HCDs).

Many people now consider the HCD to be one of the most effective tools available, not only for historic conservation, but for the protection of sound planning and good urban design. There are already at least 75 HCDs in Ontario, dating back to 1980. Hamilton currently has seven, including Durand-Markland, St. Clair Avenue, and Cross-Melville (in Dundas). Their designation contributes significantly to preserving the fine architectural quality of their streetscapes while being less restrictive than designation of individual buildings. The original part of Westdale, with its unique plan dating from the 1920s and its still-harmonious streetscapes, would be an excellent candidate for designation as an HCD.

Although more HCDs are being proposed and developed all the time, there is still residual resistance to the concept from some members of the public. This resistance typically centres on concerns about bureaucratic processes that might cause loss of control over one's property and the possibility of unfavourable impact on property values.

People living within HCDs, however, usually discover they enjoy real benefits. This is confirmed by a thorough study of 30 well-established HCDs all over Ontario, just completed by University of Waterloo graduate students led by Professor Robert Shipley. The study found that a large majority of residents in these HCDs reported higher property values

and positive "happiness" ratings, particularly where heritage guidelines they established had been rigorously followed. The converse was only found to be true if enforcement of the guidelines by the municipality was lax and inappropriate alterations were permitted.

Developing a successful HCD is in the hands of the residents themselves, who, working with the support of municipal planning staff, determine guidelines for the standards they wish to apply to protect their neighbourhood. The focus is on shared community values to protect the architectural character of the streetscape. Additions or alterations that have no impact on the appearance of a house from the street are not governed by the guidelines. When the guidelines are properly managed and complied with, property values are likely to increase.

I recently attended a conference in Toronto to discuss HCDs, where many of us agreed to become part of a network to continue discussions of best practices. We in Westdale should benefit from this initiative by seizing the opportunity to preserve and protect the unique quality of our chosen neighbourhood.

If you are interested in supporting designation of Westdale as a heritage conservation district, you can obtain more information by contacting me at anthony.butler@sympatico.ca or **Carolyn Kinsley** at kinsleyc@hwcen.org.

Anthony Butler is a retired architect and AWWCA member who lives in a house on Dromore Crescent next door to the house where his wife grew up.

WE CONGRATULATE OUR TRILLIUM AWARD WINNERS

JANET WOODWARD



White Trillium
Copyright City of
Hamilton 2001

We congratulate our AWWCA members who won White Trillium Awards in 2008. Your gardens, and all the other lovely gardens in our community, enhance our neighbourhood.

Stephen and Catherine Plevak: Stephen commented, "This is the second year in a row we won the award. It is one of the advantages of student housing—less competition.

Shelli Eisenberg: A fourth-time winner, Shelli said, "I planted moss, which also requires quite a bit of watering. So I'm not the perfect example of an environmentalist.

I think the moss is much prettier, though, as it's lime green, and there's no mowing. Dropping the grass is great, though, and moss is more interesting. I also have the inner area filled with small stones, three rocks, hostas, and annuals. One more thing about the moss—people comment about it all the time;

they love it. I definitely recommend it over grass, but patience is required for it to multiply, unless you are willing to invest a considerable amount of money and install many plants close together."

Joyce Killin and Bernardo Lopez: Said Joyce, "It really was a big surprise to receive the award, our first. It is particularly nice because the front of our house has virtually no lawn but is planted with some natives and generally drought-tolerant plants. It maintains itself."

We also congratulate **Scotiabank** at 999 King St. West in the Westdale Business Improvement Area for winning the Award of Excellence for Ward 1. Awards of Excellence are given to selected nominees from industrial, commercial, institutional, and multiresidential properties across the City of Hamilton.

Hamilton's Trillium Awards Program is one of the largest and oldest beautification programs in North America. It is funded by private donations and corporate sponsors and is managed by a volunteer committee, assisted by the City of Hamilton.

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Marking the 100th Anniversary of the Village of West Hamilton

JUDY POLLARD SMITH

For those who enjoy the novels of the late Barbara Pym, you missed an evening lifted straight off her pages, replete with an illustrated lecture and slide show in the parish hall, two vicars, a couple of professors, a young man interested in archival work (Pym's novels *always* have a young person documenting history), a damp November evening, and a cup of tea and sweets. The only bit missing was a woman sitting in the corner knitting socks for the vicar, but perhaps we can arrange that for the next lecture.

At the invitation of **Dr. John Ferns** of St. George's, **Margaret Houghton**, Special Collections archivist at the Hamilton Public Library, agreed to be our guest. St. George's Parish Hall was packed on the evening of Nov. 29, 2008. Ms. Houghton's lecture at once informed and entertained us and answered our questions.

There were a few things in Ms. Houghton's lecture that surprised and gripped the literary corner of many hearts. It seems that a certain Scottish immigrant by the name of **Lockhart Duff** was a friend of **Sir Walter Scott**. In Scott's honour, Duff built a grand home on Main Street West, across from

where McMaster Hospital now stands, and named it Abbotsford, after Scott's *Abbotsford House* in the Scottish Borders. We salivated as Ms. Houghton talked about the ornamentation of the house, the fine quality of materials used, the grandeur, and then, a collective groan to see a photo of the strip mall that replaced it when it was demolished in 1961.

In an opposing story, we saw photos of the dump under the McKittrick Bridge that became home to 14 hobos despite the putrid stench of small spontaneous fires in the garbage. The Hamilton Spectator reporters who toured the dump in 1949 were noted as having their "nostrils twitching ominously." In 1949 it was recommended for closure. That did not happen until July 1957. In 1982 that spot became known as Kay Drage Park after the hardworking late alderwoman who represented the ward.

And who knew that the first Royal

Mail Service in Canada was initiated right here in our own small village?

Sir Walter Scott said, "One glorious hour of crowded life is worth an age without a name." We were privileged to spend one glorious hour at St. George's Parish Hall, around the corner from the home that had been named in Scott's honour. It was a wonderful way to mark the 100th anniversary of the Village of West Hamilton.

Judy Pollard Smith is a member of the Barbara Pym Society, St. George's Anglican Church (Reformed Episcopal), and the AWWCA.



Margaret Houghton speaking at the 100th anniversary. Photo: Richard Palmer

Makers' Market

Made locally, grown locally, buy locally.

What: a community market offering farm-fresh foods, local art, handmade goods, and vintage items

When: 10 a.m.-3 p.m., fourth Saturday of the month (May 23, June 27, July 25, Aug. 22, Sept. 26, Oct. 24)

Where: St. Paul's Anglican Church, 1140 King St. West at Cline Avenue North

Other locations, dates, and poster: awwca.ca/events/2009/05/01/makers-market/



Makers' market at St. Paul's May 23.

Photo: Janet Woodward

CHURCHILL PARK & RBG NEWS

1,200 TREES FOR CHURCHILL PARK

JANET WOODWARD



Volunteers planting some of the 1,200 trees.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Our community came together on a lovely Saturday afternoon on April 18 for a community tree planting and family festival at Churchill Park near the Aviary. The event was run by Earth Day Hamilton-Burlington and sponsored by Sunoco, which paid for the trees, all of which were grown locally and are native to our area.

At the AWWCA's February board meeting, **Laurel Harrison**, co-ordinator of Earth Day Hamilton-Burlington, presented the idea of having the festival at Churchill Park rather than at Cootes Paradise, where it has been held in the past. We were happy to promote the event through our website and via e-mail to our members.

Ms. Harrison reported that 1,200 trees were planted and approximately 800 people attended, including participants from schools, as well as guide and scout groups. One of our community's schools, Colombia College, sent 50 students to plant trees. Earth Day Hamilton-Burlington has been organizing tree-planting events since 1997.

Aviary volunteers wandered through the crowd with birds on their shoulders and offered tours of the facility, while participants enjoyed horse and wagon rides into Westdale Village, face painting, Tai Chi, a drum circle, live musical entertainment, a live birds-of-prey show, an eco-savenger hunt, a free draw for a bike, free shuttles to Bayfront and Princess

Point on a replica city trolley bus, a barbecue, and eco-specials from Westdale Village merchants. Environmental exhibits included Home Depot's bird-house building, Green Venture's eco-driving, the Hamilton Naturalists Club's downtown peregrine project, Horizon Utilities' eco-energy, Mountain Equipment Co-op's "no trace camping," ManoRun Community Supported Agriculture Farm, Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board Science Fair displays on recycling and water, the citizens' Waste Reduction Task Force Advisory Committee, the Bay Area Restoration Council, and the Royal Botanical Gardens.

Thank you to the AWWCA members who participated and dropped by our booth and to those who adopted mailboxes in our Adopt-A-Box program.

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



Tara and Sylvia planting their trees.

Photo: Janet Woodward



Staffing the booth at the Earth Day event are, L to R: student liaison Shelli Eisenberg, membership secretary Loreen Jerome, land-use liaison Lavinia Welsh, and Adopt-A-Box co-ordinator Ken Ockenden.
Photo: Janet Woodward



The very popular horse and wagon rides.

Photo: Janet Woodward

LAWN BOWLING CLUB'S FUTURE USE IN TEMPORARY LEGAL LIMBO

MARY LOUISE PIGOTT

Mike Cheeseman, a project manager in community services (recreation division) for the City of Hamilton, attended the AWWCA's board meeting on May 4 to discuss the community's ideas for repurposing the Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club building so that he can help us implement them.

Mr. Cheeseman reported that the recreation department supports the use of the building as a community resource and sees it as an important community asset. Because the city does not own the property, a legal agreement between the RBG and the City of Hamilton is required before any upgrades to the building can be undertaken or lease agreements entered into with community groups. Unfortunately, records of any pre-existing lease agreement between the former lawn-bowling club and the Royal Botanical Gardens cannot be located. City council has passed **Councillor Brian McHattie's** motion to instruct the city's legal department to enter into an agreement with the RBG for the use of Churchill Fields Park, including the lawn-bowling clubhouse, but at the moment there is no way of knowing how long this will take.

Mr. Cheeseman said that the city will seek a long-term lease with the RBG that will allow subleasing to community groups and making improvements to the building. He said: "So many things are possible when a committed group of people get together in a community association." Mr. Cheeseman noted that because our community is well organized and enthusiastic about seeing something happen, Mr. McHattie wants to continue working with the community to gather all the ideas submitted and keep the momentum going, while awaiting the legal agreement. The recreation department concurs with this approach. The hope is that when the agreement has been finalized, the community and the city will have decided on the uses for the property and will be in a position to proceed.



Families enjoy the new ice rink Feb. 6.

Photo: Janet Woodward

At their request, I have provided the AWWCA board with the proposals generated at the community meeting held Nov. 1, 2008, as well as other feedback from informal community consultations. This information has also

been submitted to Mr. McHattie's office.

Mary Louise Pigott is an AWWCA member who has a keen interest in the future of Churchill Park.

BUILD A BOARDWALK AT RBG'S CALEB'S WALK TRAIL

TYS THEYSMEYER



Everyone tries to walk around that wet muddy spot on Caleb's Walk, just down the hill and over the creek. The Royal Botanical Gardens'

Conservation Department staff would like to join with Westdale residents for a volunteer community event this fall. We will need at least a dozen people to create a boardwalk in one day. The hope is to have it in place for Thanksgiving weekend. The date of the event is Saturday, Sept. 26, with a rain date the following Saturday, Oct. 3.

As a starting point, I suggest the RBG provide materials that are mostly

precut and ready for construction.

However, anyone from the community can contact me with items or ideas to chip in, and a community co-ordinator would be of help. Overall, the size of the boardwalk is expected to be about 150 feet long, elevated about one foot above the ground, with a four-foot wide deck.

The RBG is removing a boardwalk from a high-priority protection area near Grindstone Creek and the RBG centre and may be able to recycle some material for use at this site. If you are interested in being a part of this project, please contact AWWCA board member **Janet Woodward** at woodward.janet@gmail.com, so that we can gauge the level of interest in the community. We hope to see you this fall.

Mr. Theysmeyer is head of conservation at the RBG. He grew up in Westdale and now lives in Greensville.

May Fair More Than Fair



A balancing act.

Photo: Janet Woodward



The benches installed last year were well used at the fair.

Photo: Janet Woodward



Thomas and his sister enjoy tree climbing as Anne Pollard (standing) looks on.

Photo: Janet Woodward

On a fine Saturday, May 30, the Westdale Children's School held its 12th annual May Fair by the Aviary in Churchill Park. Children and adults enjoyed the charm of a traditional children's celebration with music, games, crafts, and homemade food.

In addition to a parent and child program for children 18 months to four

years and a kindergarten program for children three to six years, beginning this September the school will offer care before and after the half-day junior and senior kindergarten classes at George R. Allan School.

The Westdale Children's School is held at St. Cuthbert's Presbyterian Church, 2 Bond St. North. Founded

in 1996, it is licensed under the Day Nurseries Act and is a non-profit, registered charitable organization, as well as a developing member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America. Contact: info@westdale.org, or 905-529-4678 or visit westdale.org.

TENNIS ANYONE?

SHIRLEY RODRIGUES AND BRIAN SHANLIN

There is a movement afoot by many community members to convert the former Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club into a community centre and tennis club, while maintaining an ice rink in the winter months. We calculate that there is space for four courts and space for gardens around the courts.

Successful examples of a dual-season facility exist in several places in the Greater Toronto Area. For example, High Park in Toronto has a refrigerated rink on asphalt courts. See toronto.ca/parks/highpark.htm#tennis. Also, a town on the top of a mountain in Colorado has a non-refrigerated rink on post-tension concrete courts. See nedrink.com/gallery.

Our vision for this community-based club is that it would be accessible to neighbourhood schools for outdoor physical-education programs. The clubhouse would be a shared community space to accommodate some of the other



Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club 2007.

Photo: Janet Woodward

proposals put forward at the Nov. 1, 2008, park meeting, such as yoga classes, seniors' and youth drop-in, community suppers, meetings, social events, and art exhibitions, to name a few.

Do you share this vision of a vibrant community-driven club? If you have questions or would like to be part of the committee to help make this happen,

please contact **Shirley Rodrigues** at 905-528-6549 or shirley.rodrigues@sympatico.ca or **Brian Shanlin** at 905-297-0515 or bshanlin@cogeco.ca.

Shirley Rodrigues and Brian Shanlin live in Westdale South; Shirley is an AWWCA member.

LIVING IN OUR CAMPUS TOWN

Land Use and Rental Licencing Update

LAVINIA WELSH

Several projects have been occupying my time over the past few months. An overview follows:

Hamilton Metal Products, Aberdeen Holdings, and Trinity Developments (Aberdeen Avenue and Longwood Road South). As you may be aware, Trinity Developments has a proposal to build a big-box-store shopping complex on the property of Hamilton Metal Products and Aberdeen Holdings, next to the lands designated for McMaster Innovation Park. The lands lie within the West Hamilton Innovation District, a city-designated area for high-tech businesses.

For Trinity's development to go forward, the zoning of the lands would have to be changed. Trinity has appealed the city's zoning to the Ontario Municipal Board. On behalf of the AWWCA, I attended two prehearings of the OMB and a meeting with city staff regarding the process and have been listed as a presenter at the OMB hearings starting in October. Trinity has made available their reports (totaling 428 pages) supporting their proposal, including traffic studies, market surveys, and infrastructure. The AWWCA, the Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association, and the Business Improvement Areas of Locke Street, Main Street West, and Westdale Village have significant concerns about the Trinity proposal and its impact on our neighbourhoods. We support the city's view that the zoning on these lands should be reserved for industry that supports the innovation park and brings skilled, high-paying jobs (and the families of the employees) to our area, with only limited retail to support the businesses. We believe that our neighbourhoods are already well served by the existing big-box stores.

The OMB has recently ruled against a Trinity big-box-store complex in the Leslieville area of Toronto and has upheld the city's right to reserve employment lands. **Councillor Brian McHattie** reports that City of Hamilton lawyers are reviewing the decision and speaking with key witnesses. Mr. McHattie has spoken to Toronto Councillor Paula

Fletcher on the role the community played there and will be pulling together a meeting of community groups here to share the Toronto grassroots response.

Over the next few months more information will be sent to our members outlining our concerns about Trinity's development proposal and our presentation to the OMB.

17 Ewen Road proposed purpose-built student housing.

AWWCA president **John Wigle** and I attended a meeting with the developer, city planning staff, and Mr. McHattie. Auburn Developments has a good deal of experience building and running purpose-built student housing. To address community concerns, they have amended their 10-storey building to a wedding-cake design (see sketch below, showing top stories set back and smaller than lower stories), removed balconies from the plan, changed the location of outdoor common spaces, and changed their entrance to Rifle Range Road from Ewen Road. The current proposal has nine stories of residential suites with mechanical equipment making up the 10th story. It is our understanding that this equipment could be moved, leaving a nine-storey building. Their proposal for a zoning change from light and limited heavy industry to high-density multiple residential in our secondary plan initially went before the city's economic and planning committee on April 21. A number of residents and area business people (including Cadbury Adams) spoke to the committee, opposing the development. One of Cadbury's concerns is that noise from their candy plant next door would lead to complaints from student residents that they would be unable to solve. The AWWCA opposed the height of the building and asked that the committee use the guidelines of the secondary plan for new developments. We noted the number of community volunteer hours that went into formulating the secondary plan and asked that the guidelines

of the plan be respected. We said that, should the development be approved, we support Mr. McHattie's request that the developer commit to shuttle-bus service, to and from campus, particularly for late-night events. Also, we asked Auburn to pay for additional proactive policing for the



Sketch of proposed Ewen Road building. Courtesy of Kristen Barisdale, planner with GSP Group Inc.



69 Sanders Blvd.

Photo: Janet Woodward

neighbourhood. Mr. McHattie moved that the decision be deferred until a noise study is completed and until Auburn and Cadbury's meet to try to resolve their issues.

69 Sanders Boulevard proposed purpose-built student housing. A local businessman, **Adam Ellis**, has purchased 69 Sanders Blvd. This property currently houses the Colin Macdonald Community School. Mr. Ellis applied for a change in zoning to add a use for student lodging home to the existing institutional uses. This was approved on May 19 by the economic development and planning committee. The current footprint of the building cannot be changed without further applications and further public input. Mr. Ellis plans to house a maximum of 50 students in the renovated space. Following a meeting with Mr. Ellis's planner, Mr. McHattie, and me, Mr. Ellis changed his proposal to have the main entrance open onto Main Street West instead of Sanders Boulevard. At the request of the AWWCA and Mr. McHattie's office, he also held a public information meeting and agreed to notify all citizens on Mr. McHattie's e-mail list in Ainslie Wood and Westdale, as well as the AWWCA's e-mail list.

Residents overwhelmingly voiced concerns about the plan and the addition of more students in a property that backs onto single-family homes in a neighbourhood already at risk. Mr. Ellis has expressed to me his desire to be a good community citizen, and we will explore ways he and his tenants can contribute to the community of Ainslie Wood North. We will continue to update you on this proposal.

Ainslie Wood North Revitalization Committee.

Due to ongoing concerns about the viability of this area as a residential neighbourhood, with over 50 per cent of housing given over to rentals and the balance occupied by resident homeowners and their families, Mr. McHattie has called

together a volunteer committee to look at strategies to revitalize the neighbourhood and restore a balance between owner-occupied homes and rentals. We have participated in meetings on this initiative.

Neighbourhood Residential Rental Housing Community Liaison Committee. Spearheaded and chaired by Mr. McHattie, and at the request of city council, a community liaison committee has been formed to look at options, including a possible bylaw to licence rental housing. A committee specifically looking at problems in neighbourhoods surrounding Mohawk College and McMaster University started work in

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Councillor Brian McHattie speaking at the Feb. 24 public meeting at 69 Sanders Blvd.

Photo: Janet Woodward

IT'S A RENTER'S MARKET

JANET WOODWARD

Students who are looking for accommodations have lots to choose from in Hamilton because of the abundance of rooms and empty houses. I contacted **Jennifer Kleven**, manager of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre, to update us on the listings to compare with our report to members on March 13 last year. On March 13 this year, there were 453 active for-rent advertisements on the OCRC website, macoffcampus.mcmaster.ca (in all categories and locations). Of those, 84 were for entire houses. That is a 6.6 per cent increase in for-rent advertisements over last year and a 16.6 per cent increase in empty houses. Investors who are considering buying a house as a rental would do well to do a market study before they jump into a renter's market.

The OCRC introduced a new program last November, called the Rental Accountability Program (RA Program). Ms. Kleven reported:

It has proven to be a fairly popular item for landlords. In March we had 96 properties in the program (owned by 61 different landlords). The RA Program does not involve an inspection of the property, as did the former Student Rental Accommodation Review Program. This new program is designed to put the onus on the landlords, to hold them accountable for their property and their actions (hence the name of the program!). By signing up, landlords are basically making a public declaration that they promise to be good landlords, to make themselves available to their tenants, and to maintain the property according to the Residential Tenancies Act. In return for their joining, we allow landlords a few "perks" with their ads that other landlords do not receive, such as:

- *including six photos with their ad; we also go to the house to film a 360-degree panoramic video for their ad;*
- *providing them with a welcome kit to give to their new tenants (a blue*

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Side-by-side houses on Cline Avenue North for rent in March.

NEW FARMERS' MARKET IN WESTDALE VILLAGE

We welcome the farmers at the new Westdale Farmers' Market in the north parkette (in front of My Dog Joe and Subway). Visit the market every Saturday, 8 a.m.–1 p.m., from June 20 to the end of October.

A number of farmers will sell their produce and poultry including Plan B Organic Farm of Branchton, 905-659-2572, planborganicfarms.ca; ManoRun Farm of Copetown, 905-304-804, manorun.com; and Fenwood Farm, Ancaster, 905-765-1479, fenwoodfarm.com/contact.htm.



ManoRun Farm proprietor Chris Krucker and son Kaleb exhibiting their produce at Earth Day April 18. Photo: Janet Woodward

'Land Use and Rental' continued from page 11

January under Mr. McHattie's leadership. Representatives include the AWWCA and Mohawk-area neighbourhood associations, homeowners, landlords, students, and tenants. The AWWCA is represented by **Ira Rosen, Ken Sherman**, and me. Monthly meetings have been scheduled through June, at which time the CLC will make its recommendations. The resulting report will form the core of a city staff report to the economic development and planning committee, expected in September.

King Street West and Carling Street proposed purpose-built student housing. Ninco Construction Ltd. of Dundas has proposed a 210-unit purpose-built student-housing building on the vacant lot between Carling and Street King Street West, opposite TT Liquid Handling Equipment Ltd. This land is already zoned high-density residential and so can be built to 10 stories. Ninco's projects include Valley Park Condominiums at 1770 Main St. West (in the Ainslie Wood West area) and Cornerstone Condominiums at Upper Ottawa Street and Mohawk Road East.

Proposed purpose-built student housing opposite McMaster. Dundurn Capital Partners, developers of the West Village Suites on Main Street West, have purchased the former Swackhammer Funeral Home with the intention of building another LEED-certified student-housing building. For redevelopment to occur, the developers must go through a public process for zoning change; therefore, the community will have a say in the final plan. I have developed a set of criteria that we will be using to evaluate this and other development proposals. The city does not expect to receive a development application before the end of October. Your association is committed to voicing to developers and to the city that any future development plans need to follow the guidelines of our secondary plan.

In addition to the above, several meetings and reviews of documents have taken place regarding the city's proposed new Official Plan, which is to be finalized by the end of June. All existing secondary plans needed to be revised to ensure that definitions in them are the same as those in the Official Plan. In reviewing our existing secondary plan side by side with the proposed revisions, I found there were three policies missing on the Henkel site-specific area and pointed them out to the city's planning and economic development department. They will now be included in the final plan.

In June 2008, the lands located at 11, 17, 28, 45, 58, and 60 Ewen Road and at 5 Ofield Road were removed from the city's employment lands and changed to a site-specific area. This means that existing businesses can continue. Should the industrial uses cease, however, a range of development options may occur. These lands are subject to three objectives and six policies that "recognize the significant opportunity and range of development options which may occur should the industrial land uses cease; and, identify the type, form, height and other

Useful Websites

Architecture Hamilton: architecturehamilton.com

AWWCA: awwca.ca

AWWCA bylaw complaints: awwca.ca/initiatives/initiative/municipal-bylaws

Citizens at City Hall: hamiltoncatch.org

City of Hamilton: hamilton.ca

Councillor Brian McHattie: brianmchattie.ca

Federation of Citizens' Associations: fca-fac.ca

Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario: urbanneighbourhoods.ca

Fire, Hamilton Emergency Service: hamilton.ca/fire

H Magazine: hmag.ca

Hamilton's Event Calendar: hcal.ca

HammerBoard: hammerboard.ca

Hamilton Police Services: hamiltonpolice.on.ca/hps

Hamiltonians for Progressive Development: progressivedevelopment.ca

Helping local communities achieve more autonomy: localgovernment.ca

McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre: macocho.com

Ontario Greenbelt Alliance: greenbelt.ca

Ontario Professional Planners Institute: ontarioplanners.on.ca

Ontario Smart Growth Network: greenontario.org/osgn

Raise the Hammer: raisethehammer.org/index.asp

Town and Gown Association of Ontario: tgao.ca

TownGown World: towngownworld.com

Urban League of London: ul.london.on.ca

Westdale Business Improvement Area: westdalevillage.ca

Westdale Slide Show: <http://forum.skyscraperpage.com:80/showthread.php?t=135327>

features of development on this site, to ensure best fit with the surrounding community."

In addition to time put in by other AWWCA representatives, I will have volunteered over 200 hours in the first nine months of 2009 on this important portfolio.

Lavinia Welsh is the AWWCA's liaison for land use and rental licensing.

HOSPITAL NEWS

WE NEED YOUR INPUT: New Urgent Care Centre Opens April 2010

AWWCA member **Dr. Ken Ockenden** has agreed to sit on the Urgent Care Centre Community Advisory Committee of Hamilton Health Sciences. This committee includes six community members who will provide community feedback and suggestions to the HHS working group tasked with developing the UCC. The new UCC is to open in April 2010 in the space formerly occupied by the Fertility Clinic in the same building that houses McMaster Family Practice at Main and Macklin Streets.

We are asking members and the community at large to send Ken their comments, questions, and especially concerns regarding the UCC. Some decisions have already been made and are “done deals”; for example, the McMaster emergency department will close to adults, and the UCC will be at the location noted. But some things can be influenced by how many people respond. For example:

- Do you think parking should cost less than the \$5 flat rate for long-term parking at St. Joseph’s UCC?
- Do you want the same hours or different hours from St. Joseph’s UCC, which are from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.?
- McMaster’s ER is tentatively scheduled to close April 2010. Do you agree with that date, or would you like to see a different date?
- The plan is likely to retain the family practice unit as is. Do you agree with this decision?

Your input and questions are valuable.

Please note that Ken may not be able to reply to each of you individually, but he will consolidate the comments and take them to the committee. He can be reached at ken.inthecastle@gmail.com.

Progress Update: ABC Plan at Hamilton Health Sciences

JOHN WIGLE

Dr. Ken Ockenden, chair of the Access to the Best Care committee of the AWWCA, and **Rob Payne**, AWWCA past president, continue to monitor Hamilton Health Sciences’ plans as they proceed with consolidation of their services.

At the direction of the board, I sent a letter of complaint on Nov. 26, 2008, to the Ontario Ombudsman about the process by which the Local Health Integration Network approved HHS’ plans. That letter, together with ABC information from various sources, is posted at awwca.ca/access-to-best-care/. The letter was also forwarded to the press.

We provided information and updates to AWWCA members via e-mail and on Dec. 2, 2008, asked members concerned about the planning process to write to the ombudsman. We know that at least eight AWWCA members have sent letters of concern. The ombudsman has the power to review how the LHINs operate and make their decisions.

On Dec. 19, 2008 Ken and Rob had a conference call with the ombudsman to discuss the lack of transparency and minimal opportunity for public input in our LHIN’s oversight of HHS.

On Jan. 28 Ken and Rob participated with other interested community members in an editorial board meeting at The Hamilton Spectator for a discussion of public citizens’ concerns about the lack of transparency and public participation in decision-making processes at both the LHIN and HHS.

The Hamilton Spectator published Ken and Rob’s article on Feb. 2, “HHS needs to be accountable,” which can be viewed at awwca.ca/articles/2009/02/02/hhs-one-year-review/.

Also in February, Ken was asked to join a newly formed HHS Urgent Care Centre community advisory committee to

provide input into the development of the new urgent-care centre. This group had its first meeting on March 3, and the AWWCA appreciates the volunteer time Ken is putting into representing our organization in this planning group.

A press release from the ombudsman on March 24 prompted the following e-mail to our members that day: “We are pleased to let you know that the AWWCA’s work has contributed towards a formal investigation of the Local Health Integration Network. This is the first investigation by the ombudsman of a LHIN, so it is significant. Thanks to all who took the time to write, as well as a specific thank you to Dr. Ken Ockenden for spearheading this issue, and to Rob Payne, who was instrumental in the whole process. You can view the press release at awwca.ca:80/articles/2009/03/24/ombudsman-investigate-hamiltonniagara-area-lhin/. We view this investigation as a very good development. Having an external professional review can only be positive for improving the process for public engagement with the LHIN in the future.” Rob was quoted the following day, in an article by Carmela Fragomeni in The Hamilton Spectator: “Payne said the LHINs were created to represent taxpayers and to ensure the money is spent wisely in the health-care system. The [AWWCA] wants the LHINs to have ‘a strong eye to review any proposals . . . and to ask tough questions.’”

Major concerns remain, particularly the potential for a dramatic increase in taxes to pay for the large increase in ambulances that will be needed when the adult emergency department at McMaster is closed. The city recently completed an independent audit which determined that at least \$1.5-million annually will be added to the city’s taxes.

The AWWCA will continue to monitor this issue closely.

CITY HALL NEWS

WHY WE OPPOSE A LIQUOR LICENCE AND OUTDOOR PATIO FOR JIMMY GRINGO'S

CAROLYN KINSLEY

A new fast-food "eatery" in the Westdale Business Improvement Area opened earlier this year on Marion Avenue North between King Street West and North Oval. The owners have applied for a liquor licence for indoor seating for 26 persons and a patio that would seat 25.

Nearby residents held a meeting at one of their homes March 26, which **Janet Woodward** and I attended. They had written letters to file their objections with the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario before the March 18 deadline. **Councillor Brian McHattie** organized a meeting with the owners of Jimmy Gringo's at the office of the Westdale BIA March 27 to discuss the application. A number of the affected neighbours were able to attend despite it being a weekday morning; Janet and I represented the AWWCA board of directors, and **Paul Snider** of The Picture Frame also attended.

Mr. McHattie has requested that the AGCO hold a hearing "in the public interest," but the date has not yet been set. Even though it was past the March 18 deadline, the AWWCA has written a letter to the AGCO stating our reasons for opposing outdoor seating and a liquor licence at Jimmy Gringo's. Mr. McHattie says that he will present our concerns at the hearing.

We object to a liquor licence and a patio because:

- Jimmy Gringo's opens directly onto a residential side street; it is directly opposite the back yard of a house fronting on North Oval.
- Parking was already insufficient for the BIA, yet the city waived the normal parking requirement for Jimmy Gringo's on the technicality that its address is 1008 King St. West (Unit B, carved out of Chez Bonbon).
- Customers park in the no-parking area in front of Jimmy Gringo's to pick up their orders.
- Large delivery trucks put their ramps down on Marion in front of Jimmy Gringo's, adding to the congestion.
- The limited fast-food menu does not need liquor to succeed, judging by the experience of other primarily take-out places in the BIA. The food was good when Janet and I tried it, and the owners agreed at the March 27 meeting that the business can be viable without a licence.
- Many of the clientele are young and underage.
- The BIA's proximity to 20,000 undergraduates at McMaster makes it unsuitable for licenced patios adjacent to a residential area.
- Jimmy Gringo's is open till 3 a.m.
- This business already disturbs the neighbourhood with customers lingering outside, noise, and litter, in addition to the traffic congestion.
- A patio would require removing the landscaped area along Marion in front of the business.



Marion Ave. North looking toward King St. West with Jimmy Gringo's in the foreground.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Another concern was Jimmy Gringo's initial disregard and lack of common courtesy for their neighbours and for the bylaws that other businesses observe. Several people observed and commented about the following:

- They kept blocking the sidewalk on Marion and on the corner of King and Marion with sandwich boards advertising the business, although this is prohibited by the city.
- One of the owners kept parking on the lawn on the other side of the alleyway and moved aside the logs the homeowners placed along the alleyway to stop it.
- Garbage is poorly handled and attracts animals.

We believe a liquor licence would augment the problems.

*Carolyn Kinsley is
corresponding secretary for the
AWWCA.*



WARD 1 CHEDOKE-COOTES: COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

BRIAN MCHATTIE



Longer and warmer days have brought our birds back, with warbler sightings and frog calls heralding spring, a new beginning. As always, we have been busy in the Ward 1 office, and I would like to update you on our work and discuss issues that I am pursuing on your behalf in 2009.

The city's Neighbourhood Residential Housing Community Liaison

Committee has met five times. We are still gathering information from other campus towns: Oshawa is still the only municipality to adopt a bylaw to licence rental houses, while London first rejected the idea but is reconsidering it now. A related aspect is a bedroom limit (or "habitable room" limit, encompassing other rooms, for example, sewing rooms, that typically end up as bedrooms), which London and Oshawa have implemented; students are concerned that such a limit would drive up the price of rental housing. I anticipate a final report to the community and then to city council in the fall.

Action continues on the purpose-built student-housing front: The proposed development at 17 Ewen Road for 550 students went to the city planning committee April 21. There were questions from Cadbury about the noise from their plant affecting the residents next door. Discussions are taking place, and it is hoped there will be a resolution.

Despite my opposition to the proposal, given neighbourhood concerns, on May 19 the planning department approved a

student lodging home at the former Binkley School at 69 Sanders Blvd. (currently the Colin Macdonald Community School).

Additional proposals are pending on Carling Street (zoning approval was given several years ago for a condominium development) and across from campus on the site of the former Swackhammer Funeral Home on Main Street West. A new supply of purpose-built student housing could counteract the students' concern about rising prices, should we enact a bedroom-limit bylaw.

As we have discussed, there is some potential that an abundance of student housing (via purpose-built units) may lead to an opportunity to get families back into former rental houses. I am meeting with area real-estate agents to better understand the dynamics of the Ainslie Wood and Westdale housing market. I am also meeting with the McMaster Faculty Association to discuss their role in encouraging new and existing professors to live in neighbourhoods around campus.

The Ainslie Wood/Westdale Transportation Master Plan (prepared in 2003) will be reviewed this summer, offering us an opportunity to revisit the various transportation challenges in our neighbourhoods. What do you think about roundabouts instead of stop signs on Sterling? Watch for bike lanes on Longwood Road this summer, linking the Westdale and Kirkendall neighbourhoods, including lanes along King Street to the McKittrick Bridge bike lanes over the 403. The city will announce the location for light-rail transit late this spring, as we await a funding decision from Metrolinx in the fall.

Special thanks to **Jim Steep** for his fantastic work on the Churchill Park ice rink on the site of the former lawn-bowling greens. This summer, Timbit soccer is on the west field Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The plan is to expand to

the east field once it recovers from the water pipe installation. I am working with the city's legal department and the Royal Botanical Gardens to fashion a sublease for the lawn-bowling building, which would allow a Friends of Churchill Park community organization to winterize and upgrade the building for a variety of uses, such as changing and warming up after skating, holding Friday-night neighbourhood



"Timbits" playing on the former lawn-bowling greens June 2.

Photo: Janet Woodward



The first flooding of the new ice rink Jan. 15.

Photo: Malcolm Horsnell

suppers, the Soupee children's summer program, and providing space for area seniors to socialize.

Below are some quick updates on my citywide efforts:

1. Our two significant heritage-restoration projects downtown, at the Lister Block and City Hall, are right on schedule. Council will be back at its civic digs in the summer of 2010, and city staff will be occupying the Lister Block in the spring of 2012.

2. As the city representative on the Poverty Roundtable, I was pleased to see the new Ontario Poverty Strategy mirror our work, with an emphasis on children, improvements to the National Child Benefit, and affordable housing. I accepted the Canadian Urban Institute's David Crombie Urban Leadership Award in Toronto June 5 on behalf of the city for our poverty work.

Please visit my website at brianmchattie.ca for more details on my City Hall committee work and projects listed above. I invite you to communicate with me at City Hall at 905-546-2416 or via e-mail at bmchattie@hamilton.ca. Have a great summer!

Snowdrop Award

KENDYLL WOODMAN

We are all familiar with the Trillium Award that gifted and devoted gardeners can earn for their beautiful gardens. I would like to propose that we introduce a Snowdrop Award for those people who show pride of ownership or hard work by leaving not a "drop" of snow on their sidewalks following each snowfall. I chose the snowdrop because, like the trillium, it is a flower.

I am going to start the (snow)ball rolling by nominating three individuals for this award for the winter of 2008-9. In the resident-homeowner category I would like to nominate **Paul Skinner** of Dromore Crescent. Mr. Skinner lives on a corner lot, yet immediately following a snowfall his walkway is immaculately clean, and he even is considerate enough to make a metre-wide opening onto the roadway at the corner for getting on or off his sidewalk. He is always courteous and friendly when one chats with him as he is shovelling away. This attention to detail shows concern for the many pedestrians who pass his home daily on their way to and from McMaster University. A huge thank you,

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MOBILE SIGN BYLAW IS WORKING

LOREEN JEROME

In the autumn 2006 issue of *Neighbourhood News and Views* I wrote about the suggestions **Carolyn Kinsley** and I made for revising Hamilton's sign bylaw and how that work resulted in some changes to the bylaw. The AWWCA was the only community group to submit a written presentation. At the public presentation, I said: "There's no point in passing additional laws if they are not going to be enforced." I am pleased to learn that the city's plan to use the permit fees to hire additional bylaw officers is working. We are happy that the AWWCA's submission is paying off for the city, not only in more money collected, but also in fewer complaints.

A May 20 article by CATCH (Citizens at City Hall) reports:

Charges are up, citizen complaints are down, and revenue from fines is climbing, all evidence that the city's mobile sign bylaw is working, says Marty Hazell, senior director of parking and bylaw services.

"In 2008 we had 765 complaints, or about 64 per month average. In 2009 we have 44 complaints, or about 12 per month average. . . . In 2008 we issued 412 sign permits, or 34 per month. We're now at 588 in four months, or 147 permits per month."

. . . Hazell said enforcement is now "one of the top priorities" of his team. That means six bylaw officers are working on sign enforcement, up from two previously. They have been responding to complaints as well as "driving around identifying" illegal signage and conducting blitzes in some areas. He said 138 charges have been laid and permit revenues are expected to come in \$50,000 over budget in 2009.

"There's documented evidence that we've tried to achieve compliance," he declared. "There are [fewer] complaints, more permits issued, and a healthy revenue forecast."

Now if only the city would listen to the AWWCA regarding enforcement of the property-standards bylaw.

Loreen Jerome is the AWWCA's membership secretary

10th Anniversary Congratulations: The AWWCA



In the spring and autumn issues of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we published a history of the first 10 years of our association: 1998–2008.

In this issue we salute the presidents of the AWWCA who served during that period. We sincerely thank them for their past volunteer service to our community. They continue to volunteer in various ways in our community.

Joy James (top-left) and **Linda Grigg** formed a steering committee in the summer of 1998 to prepare for the formal organization of the AWWCA. Joy was the first president, and she chaired the AWWCA's first meeting in **September 1998**. Joy died of a brain tumour on Feb. 19, 2005; this photo was taken the previous summer, when she spoke at an event to raise money for cancer research. She had just come out of the hospital after having her pancreas removed in an attempt to halt the cancer; she knew it would be her last chance to speak and raise awareness about cancer.

Phyllis Tresidder (bottom-left) was president from **1998 to 2001**. During that time, she ran for city councillor and was named Woman of the Year for Community Service by the City of Hamilton. Phyllis continues to do community volunteer work while pursuing her passion of house and garden design, using her plentiful artistic skills.

Liz Millar (top-centre) served as president from **2001 to 2003**—a challenging time for the association. Using her diplomatic and organizational skills, she steered the association to its next phase. Liz co-ordinates the student nutrition program for Hamilton Partners in Nutrition, located at the Social Planning and Research Council of

We thank the current president and all past presidents

We are grateful for their leadership and their commitment

Recognizes and Thanks Its Presidents 1998-2008



Hamilton. These programs, in schools and community-based facilities throughout Hamilton, provide breakfast (before the school bell), early morning meals (between breakfast and lunch), lunches, or snacks. Her work includes program development, training volunteers, menu planning, and writing

grant applications. HPIN is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services. See partnersinnutrition.ca. In her spare time, Liz enjoys working in her award-winning garden.

Rob Payne (top-right) led the AWWCA as president from **2003 to 2007**. During that time, many new initiatives took place, including partnerships with McMaster University and the Westdale Business Improvement Area. Rob continues his volunteer work as editor of TownGown World and as past president of the AWWCA, representing us on the board of the Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods. He enjoys working with his father on his new business in cottage country, Redock Outdoor Furniture Inc., building furniture from recycled cedar docks. Occasionally, he has time to relax and read.

John Wigle (bottom-right), who grew up in Westdale, has been AWWCA president since 2007. In addition to being a very busy full-time lawyer in Hamilton, as president he has been a strong leader for the community on such issues as truck traffic and student housing. He often can be seen getting his exercise by walking at a rapid pace through Westdale and Dundas, but is always willing to stop and chat. John is ready to take on hard challenges; he deals with everyone in a civil and direct manner and tries to achieve a consensus.



for the generous donation of their time and expertise.

to preserving, protecting, and enhancing our community.

PAJAMA PARADE 2009

SHELLI EISENBERG

The pajama-parade committee, which includes both the president and vice-president administration of McMaster Students Union, the president of McMaster's Society of Off-Campus Students, the Student Community Support Network director, the MSU director of campus events **Christina Burns**, and AWWCA members **Mary Anne Duncan** and **Shelli Eisenberg**, have been busy planning the 2009 parade. The committee was formed in 2005 and has for the past four years sought to improve the parade for both participants and observers. The committee has taken residents' concerns seriously and has made every effort to have an enjoyable and problem-free event this year. The parade takes place Wednesday, Sept. 9 from 6 to 8 p.m.

We are really excited about a new feature this year—three or four busker music stations along the route. This will enhance the parade atmosphere and provide entertainment for the community as well as for the students. Also new this year: groups of up to 20 upper-year students from about 10 faculties will station themselves along the route to welcome the students. These representatives are bound by the university's Welcome Week code and, among other rules, are not allowed to drink during Welcome Week.

Last year the parade was rerouted for the second time in an effort to move it away from streets where upper-year students live, which is where problems tend to occur. Last year's route was considered a big improvement over previous routes, with the exception of a small stretch along Sterling Street at Dromore, where there was inappropriate behaviour by parade observers. There will be about 10 police officers on duty for the parade, and they will give special attention to that corner this year. The MSU will ensure that the students walk on the partially closed roadway on Sterling Street, so that observers can stand on the sidewalk rather than on private lawns.

Here is the route for the 2009 parade: The parade exits campus at the Sterling Street entrance, proceeds east on the

Calling all Musicians and Entertainers!



The MSU Campus Events Department is looking for entertainers to be positioned along the PJ Parade route during Welcome Week 2009. There are up to 6 spots available, and you would be required to be self contained in terms of amplification (ie no power is available).



To Apply

Please forward an EPK (youtube, myspace or sonicbids) to
events@msu.mcmaster.ca

Deadline:

Friday, July 10, 2009



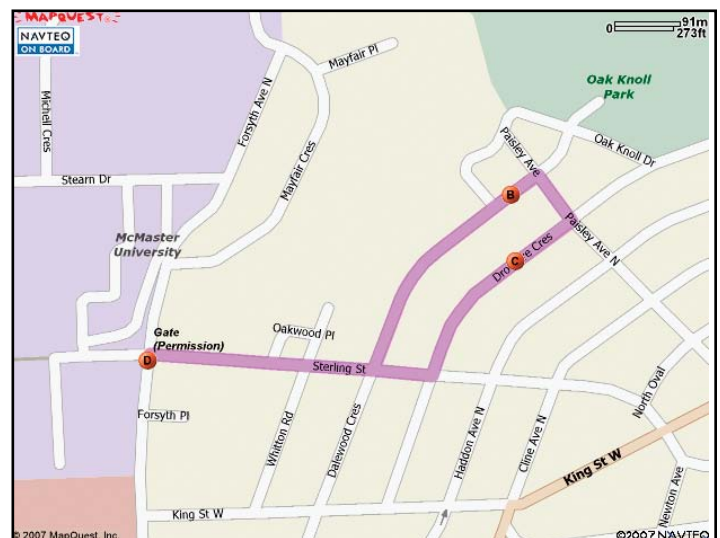
For further details or questions, please email events@msu.mcmaster.ca

south side of Sterling Street, north on Dromore Crescent, west on Paisley Avenue North, south on Dalewood Crescent to Sterling Street, and west on the north side of Sterling Street back into campus.

The parade's focus will once again be environmental. **Derek Taylor**, MACgreen director, expects to be present in his tree suit, possibly hanging out with the Blue Box Man. In keeping with the environmental theme, each of the groups participating will collect garbage along the route, and points will be awarded for the most garbage collected. Following the parade, a group of students will walk the route and ensure that no debris is left. After that, bylaw will check the route for violations.

The AWWCA will again have a booth with a banner on Sterling Street, where Mary Anne Duncan and her family will hand out AWWCA literature and Because We Care

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2009 pajama-parade route. MapQuest and the MapQuest logo are registered trademarks of MapQuest, Inc. Map content © 2009 by MapQuest, Inc., NAVTEQ and its respective copyright holders. Used with permission.

A YEAR OF STRENGTHENED COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

GORD ARBEAU



The end of an academic year provides opportunity to reflect on the joint accomplishments of the many partners that work every day to make our neighbourhoods vibrant, safe, productive, and respectful.

Looking back at 2008-9, it is quite clear that the unique relationship between the AWWCA and McMaster University was strengthened, thanks to the commitment and dedication of many neighbours and residents.

In October, when a deliberately set fire forced nearly 600 students from their Brandon Hall residence, McMaster's neighbours in the community were among the first to call with offers of shelter, clothing, blankets, and cash to help those who were displaced. It was a remarkable outpouring of support spearheaded by **Shelli Eisenberg**, who, as the new AWWCA student-liaison person, has played an invaluable role over the course of the year.

Fortunately, the university was able to secure hotel accommodations for the displaced students and, with much-needed supplies of good humour, co-operation, and community spirit, everyone worked together to successfully manage this crisis. Students moved back to campus after the Christmas break in January.

The Campus Town Association, a joint partnership of the AWWCA, the Westdale Business Improvement Area, and McMaster University, launched two community programs. In September, dozens of students, McMaster staff, and neighbours braved a windy and wet day to collect over 30 large bags of refuse from the streets of Westdale and Ainslie Wood. Later that month, students were welcomed back by Westdale businesses with a banner and poster campaign.

The President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations, co-chaired by AWWCA president **John Wigle**, was active during the year. It began its work with the annual pre-Welcome Week meeting, where student leaders, university staff, neighbours, city representatives, and Hamilton police and bylaw officers gathered to review plans for students returning to campus.

PACCR also discussed public transit and the proposed

light-rail network, reviewed and learned of the activities of the Neighbourhood Residential Housing Community Liaison Committee, was kept up to date on the campus move to an automated parking system, and received reports about the activities of the special-duty police officers who patrol our neighbourhoods during the academic year and are funded by the university and McMaster Students Union.

Also, the committee was kept up to date on the university's enrolment-management strategy. For the second consecutive year, McMaster has frozen first-year enrolment at last year's level for students entering this September.

It has been a busy and very productive year. While there will continue to be differences of opinion on some isolated issues within the community, the integrated partnership forged by the university and the AWWCA continues to provide the platform to discuss these differences and the opportunity to continue to strengthen our community.

Have a safe and restful summer season.

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

'Pajama Parade 2009' continued from page 20

stickers.

We encourage you to bring small change for the children's lemonade stands along the route and for the buskers. Also, students will be collecting funds for McMaster's Shinerama campaign; their goal this year is to raise \$40,000 for cystic fibrosis.

This year we hope to attract more permanent residents and their families to come out to welcome the new students. It would be great if you would make signs to welcome the students; these were well received last year. On Monday, Aug. 31, representatives from the MSU and the AWWCA will together deliver notices to every homeowner on the parade route and speak personally with as many people as possible to encourage them to support the parade and make the students feel welcome.

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

Shelli Eisenberg is the AWWCA's student liaison.



*"Building community
block by block"*

OUR COMMUNITY RECOGNIZES MAC STUDENTS



Back row, L to R: Melody Francis, Emily Closs, Jessica Nasmith, Helen Qian, Dominique DaBreo, Julia Holder, Rebecca Cherniak, JoAnne Fernandez. Front row, L to R: Dora Habib, Giselle Lo, Caroline Shenouda, Sabrina Youash, Desiree Valadares. Absent from photo: Paige Churchill, Nandini Gupta, Sunayna Gupta, Marnie Smith, Julia Wytsma. Photo: Janet Woodward

SHELLI EISENBERG

Thirteen McMaster University students attended the fifth annual student awards which took place on March 30, when they were recognized for their contributions to the well-being of Ainslie Wood and Westdale. Five others were unable to be present.

On behalf of the community, I thanked the students not only for being quiet and respectful of their permanent neighbours but for their friendliness and maturity. Resident homeowners in Ainslie Wood and Westdale are most appreciative of students who are good citizens by shovelling their sidewalks after a snowfall and keeping their properties tidy. All of the students nominated were well-deserved recipients of these awards, and I suggested they include them on their resumé's, and also let their friends know that these awards exist. We are proud of them and

hope to find many deserving students to credit in future years. We wish to live in peace and harmony with our student neighbours, and this is our way of recognizing these young adults.

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

Also representing the community were AWWCA member **Norma Jack**, who nominated one of the students, and **Janet Woodward**, AWWCA newsletter co-ordinator. Representing McMaster were **Phil Wood**, dean of students and associate vice-president student affairs; **Gord Arbeau**, associate director public relations; and **Azim Kasmani**,

outgoing president of the MSU. Dr. Wood thanked the students for their contributions to the community. Representing the HPS were West Town Crime Manager **Sergeant Jo-Ann Savoie** and **Police Constable Pete Moore**, one of the beat officers in our community.

We will be seeking nominations for the 2009-10 school early in 2010.



Promoting Eating Alternately and Sustainably

ZSUZSI FODOR



Last August, the McMaster University chapter of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) supported the

founding of a new food-focused working group called PEAS: Promoting Eating Alternately and Sustainably. PEAS came to life to fill a gap in student-driven food projects in Hamilton with an initial mandate to promote, garner support for, and educate citizens about a more just and sustainable food system in the city.

Our inaugural event was Hamilton's first local food bus tour, *From Seed to Scrap*, in the fall of 2008. The event was advertised in Hamilton, and the AWWCA promoted it as well, resulting in a sold-out event. Since then, we have been hosting workshops around the city, collaborating on events, and organizing a biweekly community kitchen at St. Paul's Anglican Church in the heart of Westdale. As seeds began to sprout this spring, PEAS had a packed agenda in May, when two events took place: a day of planting on May 17 at Churchill Park Community Gardens, and a bike trip to a local sustainable farm on May 24. Our second local food bus tour takes place June 28, when participants will tour some of the blossoming community gardens in Hamilton.

As our regular student attendees go their separate ways for the summer, we would love to harvest participation from the Westdale community for our community kitchen that runs from May to August. Participants come together to share ingredients, a meal, and conversation. Small groups of six to eight participants meet to prepare and eat supper together, using as many local and whole ingredients as possible. The suppers take place at St. Paul's Anglican Church at the corner of Dalewood Crescent and King Street West. If this idea sparks your interest, please get in touch with me at opirg.peas@gmail.com.

Zsuzsi Fodor is the co-ordinator of PEAS.

Editor's notes

- The above PEAS events were e-mailed to AWWCA members on May 1, and all events are posted on the AWWCA's website at awwca.ca.
- The report of last fall's bus tour appeared in the autumn 2008 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.



Sharing a meal in February at the community kitchen at St. Paul's.

Photo: Alex Bissley

'It's a Renter's Market' continued from page 12

- bin in which we include details about garbage and recycling, local bylaws, and more); and*
- *listing their ad under our Featured Ads section on our site to make it stand out more.*

On March 30 I asked **Azim Kasmani**, outgoing McMaster Students Union president, to update us on the MacSHARE website, launched by the MSU on March 7, 2008, and reported on in the spring 2008 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*. MacSHARE was developed to allow students to review their accommodations anonymously to help their peers who were looking for accommodations. Mr. Kasmani said that when their old server failed, MacSHARE data were corrupted, so the site needs to be redeveloped and may not be back until 2010. In the meantime, you can read old reviews at www.msu.mcmaster.ca/macshare, but students cannot add any new reviews.

COMMUNITY CLEANUPS

The AWWCA's Eighth Annual Community Cleanup

LAVINIA WELSH

April 25 marked the eighth annual AWWCA community cleanup. A beautiful Saturday morning brought out 56 volunteers at four different locations. Over 60 bags of garbage and recyclables were collected by our community volunteers, who cleaned the streets surrounding our four meeting spots.

Carolyn Kinsley led the group working around MacNeill Baptist Church, **Loreen Jerome** co-ordinated the group in Ainslie Wood East, **Gerry Crevier** and his crew focused on Ainslie Wood North, and I met with the group at Churchill Park.

This year the AWWCA partnered with the City of Hamilton's new Clean Up Hamilton initiative. We thank the city for their efforts, their contribution of bags and gloves, and for making it easy for conveners around the city to pick up supplies in advance at several convenient locations. Our volunteers had many great suggestions for future cleanups, including the requirement for more bags. Your feedback has been sent to the city.

AWWCA Westdale block representative **Jane Walker** e-mailed us saying, "What a difference the cleanup over the weekend made! Westdale looks beautiful once more. Congratulations and thanks to all who participated." I definitely second Jane's congratulations and thank all who participated. Volunteer efforts such as this are certainly a big part of what makes Ainslie Wood and Westdale a great place to live.

Lavinia Welsh is an AWWCA board member and she co-ordinated this cleanup.



Volunteers at the Ainslie Wood East station. L to R: Ralph Peacock, Linda Panton, Monique Barringer, Ron Collura, Earl Jerome; front centre: Ben Barringer. Absent from photo: Gavin Barringer. Photo: Loreen Jerome



Volunteers at the Churchill Park station.

Front row Westdale kids: Emma, Catherine, Tim, Ryan, Bram, Zane. Middle row L to R: Janet Woodward, Ruth Chen, Krishna Anchala, Shelli Eisenberg, Dolly Palin, Allison Sekular, Vinnie Welsh, Samantha Winemaker. Back row L to R: David Price, Mark Eisenberg, Frank Palin. Absent from photo: Sigal Balshine, David Earn, Shirley Rodriques; Westdale kids: Arielle, Emily, Gabrielle, Jonas, Maya, Miles, Kiran, Lauren, Madeline, Sarah.

Photo: Matthew Ogus



Volunteers at the MacNeill Baptist Church station.

L to R: Murray Babb; Keith, Heather, and Kate Stinson; Cameron Whitney; Edith Gagnon; Rosemary Stearns; David Hitchcock; Linda Bryant. Absent from photo: Kenneth Moyle and Jeff and Felix Newhouse. Photo: Carolyn Kinsley



Marlene Castura at the Ainslie Wood North station.

Absent from photo: John Barkovic, Yoko.

Photo: Gerry Crevier

Seventh Annual Rail Trail Cleanup

JEANNE BERNARD

The seventh annual Rail Trail cleanup took place on Saturday, May 2. This year, in addition to the usual volunteers—**Gillian and Dr. John Ferns, Barb Mansfield, Richard and Linda Palmer, Ken Sherman, Dr. Jean Wiesel,** and several others from Westdale and **St. George's Anglican Church (Reformed Episcopal)**—we were blessed with 20 student volunteers from **Columbia International College** on Main Street West, led by instructor **Darryn Crouse**. Thanks to these energetic young people, who worked extremely hard on the most unpleasant tasks, the team completed the job from Fortino's to Stroud Road in less than 90 minutes.

Once again, and through the hospitality of **Rob Gough of Fortino's**, we were treated to hot drinks after the job was done.

Special mention is extended to **Adella Antonow**, of Emerson Street. Ms. Antonow, who lives next to the Rail Trail, has on her own initiative cleaned and upgraded the section of the Rail Trail from Emerson to Broadway. In early spring there was discarded household junk where the above picture was taken. This junk included a broken toilet and some grocery carts. On her



Some of the Rail Trail cleanup crew standing around Ms. Antonow's garden. Ken Sherman in the foreground; Ms. Antonow standing behind him, with watering can.

own, Ms. Antonow cleared it away, weeded the area, put in plants, and set up the miniature stick fence to keep people from destroying the garden. She has quite literally adopted the area. Ms. Antonow is a shining example of a good neighbour and a welcome resident in our neighbourhood.

Said long-time organizer of the Rail Trail cleanup, Ken Sherman: "Thank you everyone for your help on Saturday, especially the students from Columbia International College. We cleaned up the Rail Trail and the nearby power-line corridor with over 30 helping hands. Also, we had a rabbit who came to watch as we cleaned up his Rail Trail too."

Councillor Brian McHattie reports that we might actually see construction of new trails beginning this September,

one from Chedoke Avenue through the golf course to Studholme Road and Aberdeen Avenue and one through the Canadian Pacific rail yard and along the abandoned CP rail corridor to join up with the existing trail at Fortino's. City council and CP Rail have reached agreement on the project, with the trails to be funded by the city.

Jeanne Bernard is an AWWCA member and block representative.

COOTES CLEANUP AND SPENCER SPRUCEUP

On the same day and at the same time as the AWWCA cleanup, cleanups of Cootes Paradise and Spencer Creek took place, followed by a free barbecue. According to one of the co-ordinators, **Alec Lemaire**: "The event was sponsored by the McMaster Outdoor Club, MACgreen, the family and friends of Ian Grey, and the Hamilton Wentworth Stewardship Council. Our goal is to help Cootes remain a paradise and to spruce up Spencer Creek."

Another co-ordinator, **Nancy McKibbin Gray**, said: "About 75 people turned out over the whole morning, and we had four canoes cleaning up around Princess Point. We are seeing

fewer big pieces of garbage than in earlier years. But there is a shopping cart still in Spencer Creek wedged in by a fallen tree that we could not budge. It needs bigger and stronger people than the two ladies who tried to shift it. The single most collected item of garbage was a Tim Horton's coffee cup and lid, followed closely by MacDonald's food containers and wrappers. It is a town and gown collaboration now as we have the support of the City of Hamilton public works department. The weather was lovely, and everyone enjoyed the post-event free barbecue at McMaster University. We are very grateful and thankful to the folks who came out."

COLUMBIA CLEANS UP

JANET WOODWARD

On a quiet Good Friday, April 10, I was surprised to see about a dozen students walking down my street around 10 a.m., filling two large green bags with street garbage. I thanked them and learned they were from Columbia International College at 1003 Main St. West. I contacted principal **Ron Rambarran**, who explained that "Columbia's students do community service, both as volunteers and as part of our discipline system. Students may be seen picking up garbage in the school's neighborhood on Saturdays, supervised by a staff member. More than 50 of our students were recently involved in the Earth Day tree planting in Churchill Park. Our staff would be happy to consider bringing volunteers or students on disciplinary consequences to assist in future community cleanup efforts." We appreciate the contribution of Columbia College students in keeping our community clean.

GRAFFITI & GARBAGE NEWS

Adopt-A-Box Update

KEN OCKENDEN

In 2005 a group of community volunteers gathered in Westdale to remove graffiti from mailboxes in the area. With simple equipment provided by Canada Post, dozens of volunteers cleaned unsightly graffiti off a large number of boxes. Building on this success, a program was developed in which volunteers would “adopt” one or more mailboxes and be responsible for keeping them free of graffiti and posters.

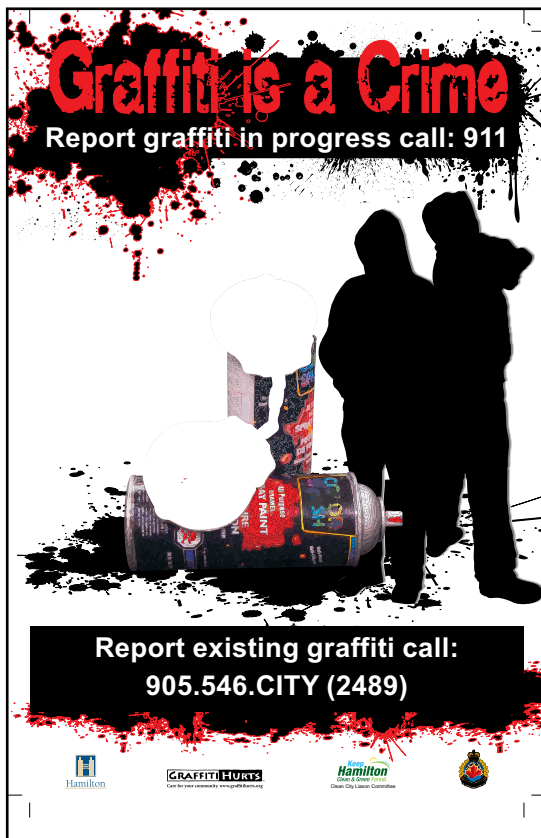
Studies have shown that if graffiti are promptly removed or covered, the vandals soon stop because their displays are removed from the sight of other vandals.

As the years have passed, the program has been quite successful and is currently being started in two other neighborhoods of Ward 1 and considered for other areas of Hamilton. Some of our volunteers have moved, however, and some boxes have also been moved, necessitating revitalization of the program. At the same time, the City of Hamilton has made graffiti control a higher priority.

Thanks to **Councillor Brian McHattie** and the city, I now have excellent maps and can update box locations and track which boxes have been adopted. Also, several new volunteers have joined the program. In two of the six neighbourhoods (Westdale South and Ainslie Wood North) all the boxes are now adopted. In the other four areas (Ainslie Wood, Ainslie Wood East and West, and Westdale North), the need for



Ken Ockenden cleaning graffiti off a mailbox. Photo: Irene Ockenden



volunteers is urgent. The six areas of our association can be viewed at awwca.ca/about. Anyone wishing to volunteer can contact me at ken.inthecastle@gmail.com.

If you are cleaning a box and have not contacted me recently, please do so. If you wish to adopt a box, please e-mail me, and I will deliver the simple equipment and instructions to you. Problems such as mailboxes that are badly damaged or types of paint that are impossible to remove can be reported directly to Canada Post at 1-800-267-1177.

Graffiti on municipal and private property should be reported to the city at 905-546-2489; the operator will take the details, including the exact address of the property. If you report graffiti to the city in this way, I recommend that you monitor the property to ensure timely removal.

In the future we hope to extend the program to include other boxes, including Bell Telephone boxes. Also, the police have been doing a great job of arresting the vandals (thanks in part to citizens' reporting), and there is now a Crown attorney assigned specifically to graffiti cases. We hope to obtain and forward to AWWCA members the results of the cases, showing that the vandals are not only arrested but also appropriately punished.

Finally, I would like to thank all the volunteers who continue to keep their boxes clean, with special thanks to one AWWCA member who looks after 10 boxes! Congratulations to you all.

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

Launching Adopt-Your-Block



SHELLI EISENBERG

Your community association is excited to announce a new program in our neighbourhoods called Adopt-Your-Block.

Here's how it works. You agree to help keep your block clean, then we supply you with gloves and garbage bags and send you on your way. We also have a limited number of blue boxes and grabbers.

We are hoping enough people will sign on that it will make a difference in the appearance of our community and keep our neighbourhood relatively garbage free. Within 24 hours of the program's launch on May 14, six volunteers came forward, and by the end of May we had 15 volunteers.

I am happy to tell you that two of our volunteers are children. What a great way to raise the awareness of children about the importance of picking up litter. In Grade 7, our school spent one morning cleaning the neighbourhood. It was life changing for me. I never dropped a piece of garbage again. Before that day, I never had seen the garbage!

Please consider being part of this exciting new program, by joining us in the "greening" of the community we call home. With a little bit of effort and some exercise, we can keep our streets clean and beautify our neighbourhood for everyone.

Contact me at 905-527-2644 or eisenberg@sympatico.ca to sign on and get equipped.

Adopt-Your-Block and Adopt-A-Box logos designed by Paige Patti.

Shelli Eisenberg and her dog, Tao, picking up garbage on South Oval May 20. Photo: Mark Eisenberg



Help Reduce Graffiti in Your Neighbourhood!

*Thanks to all who made the "Adopt-A-Box" program a success.
Help us do it again!*

THE CONCEPT

**Volunteer to adopt a Canada Post mailbox (red or grey).
Your co-ordinator, Ken Ockenden, will assign a mailbox near you
and provide you with training and removal supplies.**

**Please remove graffiti as quickly as possible.
Councillor Brian McHattie's office will provide
updates on graffiti-cleanup efforts.**

*Your participation in this program is greatly appreciated.
To volunteer, please contact your Adopt-A-Box co-ordinator,
Ken Ockenden, at ken.inthecastle@gmail.com*



PROPERTY STANDARDS NEWS

2009 Proactive Program for Ainslie Wood and Westdale

Councillor Brian McHattie

forwarded the following good news on a new proactive-enforcement program developed by municipal law-enforcement staff; it was e-mailed to AWWCA members on April 16 and is reprinted here, with updates:

Waste Management/Yard Waste and Maintenance

Effective immediately, municipal law enforcement will have environmental officers investigate properties that have exceeded the limit of one waste container or bag that came into effect March 30. If a second container is needed, it must be a clear bag so that it is evident it does not contain recyclables. During the week of April 4, a warning letter was delivered to addresses in violation, and MLE investigated 130 properties and issued 92 notices to comply. Upon re-inspection, 86 properties had voluntarily complied. Officers will also take the appropriate action for violations of the Yard Waste and Maintenance By-law (long grass and weeds/garbage and debris).

Communication/Education

The city mailed a letter to approximately 225 property owners/occupants who had received warnings, fines, or notices to comply for noise or yard-waste and maintenance issues during the September 2008 proactive program. This letter provided information about our enforcement policies and the actions that will be taken for repeated violations, which include tickets and fees for services.



Long grass on Stroud Road, May 23. Many properties with long grass and weeds have been reported to the city.
Photo: Loreen Jerome



Improperly stored garbage on North Oval Sat., April 25—five days after the pickup day.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Noise Enforcement

Starting in September, the Hamilton Police Service and MLE will work together enforcing the Noise By-law. A new database developed especially for this program will enable all officers working the proactive program to use mobile computing and have access to current information so escalating enforcement measures can be taken. Police officers will be stationed in the neighbourhood until 2 a.m. and MLE officers until 4 a.m., for both reactive (complaint based) and proactive (driving around) enforcement.

Student Pilot Program

Effective in May, MLE implemented a student pilot program to assist city environmental officers with yard-waste and maintenance investigations throughout the summer. Students hired to investigate complaints take appropriate action, which includes issuing notices to comply and providing education to occupants. Early indications are that the students are obtaining excellent compliance for long grass, weeds, garbage, and debris.

'Snowdrop Award' continued from page 17

Mr. Skinner.

In the business category I am nominating a young man named **Rodney**, who works for **Palo-mine Landscaping**. He is responsible for shovelling at a business located at the corner of Westbourne Road and Main Street West. With a cheerful smile and pleasantries as I pass by, this young man does a careful and meticulous job of shovelling after each snowfall. In fact, he does such a good job that I inquired whether his company was taking on private customers and was disappointed (but not surprised) to learn that they have no room for new clients. Thank you, Rodney, for your courtesy and dedication to doing a job well.

Finally, thank you to the **anonymous older gentleman** who has a snow blower and twice this winter has cleared our Haddon Avenue North sidewalk (and especially for clearing the big hummock of snow left by the snowplow).

Perhaps the Snowdrop Award will inspire others in the community to show consideration for all those who walk along the sidewalks in our community. I have certainly been inspired by the excellence and consideration of the three individuals I have nominated.

Thanks to **Councillor Brian McHattie** for writing letters of recognition on behalf of the city to Rodney and Mr. Skinner. Maybe next year there will be prizes!

Kendyll Woodman has been an AWWCA member for 10 years.



The beautiful little snowdrop, with a white and green flower, is an early sign that spring is on its way.

WHAT A WINTER!



*This past winter, severe weather made it difficult to navigate our streets. Hamilton had more than twice the average snowfall in February, and the city was kept very busy trying to enforce the snow-clearing bylaw. Below is a condensed version of the report issued by **Councillor Brian McHattie** and e-mailed to AWWCA members Feb. 13.*

We would like to thank everyone who has been working to keep the snow and ice clear from city sidewalks surrounding their properties this winter. With the amount of snow we have received, this has become a larger than usual task! Still, it is an important job, as keeping walkways clear of snow and ice improves the quality of life for all and helps reduce injuries caused by slips and falls.

As you are aware, parking and bylaw services were more aggressive in enforcing the snow-removal bylaw this past winter, providing educational information to the public and making enforcement a high priority. Properties are investigated on the basis of complaints and of a proactive "hot list" of locations where offences have occurred in the past.

Following is the report of the

municipal law-enforcement officers' activity in Ward 1 regarding enforcement of the snow-removal bylaw from Nov. 1, 2008, to Jan. 27, 2009 (note that the Ainslie Wood and Westdale data will be isolated for the final report):

- Investigated 493 addresses
- Issued 216 notices to comply (first offence)
- Sent 70 work orders to public works to clear and bill non-compliant properties (a \$233 fee for service was added to the property taxes for a total of \$16,310)

To assist the four environmental officers, parking and bylaw services reassigned three special-enforcement officers to work on snow enforcement 24 hours after the end of each snowfall. In

addition, they have implemented mobile computing for their environmental officers, which will enable them to pull complaints off the database and investigate in a more timely fashion.

Despite the increased enforcement and public education about the snow-removal bylaw, pedestrians continued to face challenges in walking around our neighbourhoods. Hence I may revisit implementing privately contracted sidewalk snow removal for this coming winter.

In the meantime, the Snow Angels Program (905-523-1910 or snowangels.ca) and the Helping Hands Program (905-546-3057) were available to eligible residents unable to remove ice and snow from their sidewalks. As of mid-February, the Snow Angels Program had matched approximately 75 volunteers to about 150 homeowners. However, more than 300 residents are still on a waiting list. If you can lend a hand as a Snow Angel, please contact the program soon.

Parking and bylaw services have asked the McMaster Students Union Peer-to-Peer Program whether their community-resource assistants could

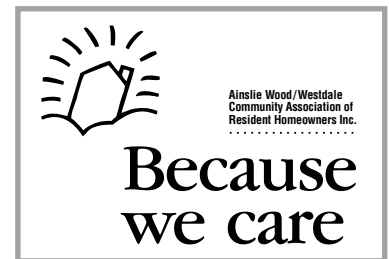
SOS AND RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS

In **Councillor Brian McHattie's** snow shovelling report (see opposite "What a Winter!"), he wrote about involving McMaster's community-resource assistants with snow clearing.

Shelli Eisenberg, the AWWCA's student liaison, contacted **Sasha Rana**, director of the Student Community Support Network, to ask about the above request. On March 3, Ms. Rana replied:

Yes, we did educate a number of students about snow clearing. We produced SOS (Snow Off Sidewalks) pamphlets that were distributed by community-support assistants to problem homes (homes with frequently uncleared snow on their driveway and sidewalk). Homes that complied were documented, and a report will be sent to the City of Hamilton this week. In terms of the snow shovelling, we did not have much interest in terms of volunteers for this season, but I did ask the CRAs to help out their neighbours. Also, we held a Random Acts of Kindness Week, where we encouraged students on campus to commit an act of kindness, one of which was to shovel your neighbour's driveway.

The AWWCA thanks the students for their help.

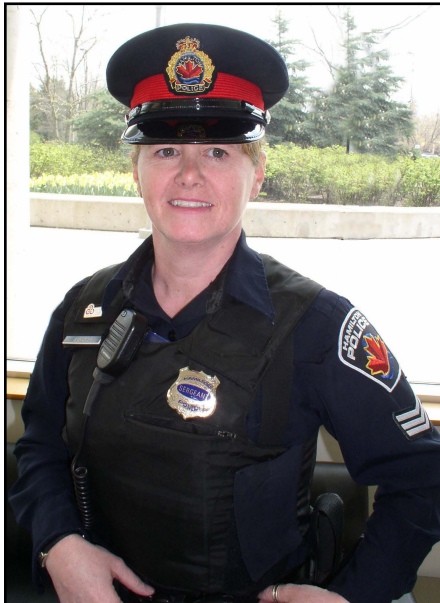


educate occupants about snow clearing at problem addresses in Ainslie Wood and Westdale. They also asked whether the CRAs could find volunteers to clear snow and ice for neighbours who need assistance.

If you would like more information about the snow-removal bylaw, please visit my website at brianmchattie.ca.

NEWS FROM THE BLUES

WEST TOWN CRIME MANAGER'S REPORT



SERGEANT JO-ANN SAVOIE

Happy spring and summer everyone! With the warmer season upon us, I have noticed more people walking about. This is a good thing, for your health and for the environment. Unfortunately this is also the season people tend to let their guard down. If you are parking your car and heading to one of the beautiful trails, make sure there are no valuables visible through the windows. If you must leave valuables in your vehicle, make sure you place them in the trunk. Remember, if you can see the valuables in your vehicle, so can a thief!

Also, with the gardening season upon us, make sure, if you are in the back yard, that you lock your front door and ensure your purse or wallet is not accessible.

There have been several changes to the beat officers patrolling Westdale and Ainslie Wood this year. Your beat officers are **Craig Harrison, Peter Moore, Andrew Poustie, James Sutthery, Sherylann Tailferfer, and Steve Wowk**. There are two vacancies, one on B Squad and one on D Squad, which should be filled once the new recruits are on their own. (Officers train with a coach officer, and once they have been cleared, they are assigned to a beat.)

As reported last fall, the City of Hamilton bylaw co-ordinator, **Kelly**

Barnett, and I have been working on a computer program that will perfect our current communication practices. At present, bylaw and the police have separate databases. If bylaw officers are working and receive a complaint from their call center, it is not currently captured on the police database. So, for example, if bylaw respond to a noise complaint, and later in the night, when they are not on duty, police respond to the same location, police will not know that the address has already been given a warning or charged. They will be responding as if it is the first call of the night and may give another warning rather than a provincial-offence notice. Having bylaw and police work off the same program will make it easier to track those who violate the law. The hope is that data can be gathered immediately rather than days later, as in the current system. Great strides have been made. Currently bylaw officers are using the program and by September all officers will be trained.

In 2008, 68 graffiti arrests were made. This number is significant for two reasons: It indicates community members are reporting crimes in progress, and it has raised awareness of the graffiti problem to the extent that the chief of police has now made "working with communities to arrest and hold accountable those individuals responsible for the incidence of graffiti across our city" one of his strategic objectives for 2009. The city has also taken a hard stance against graffiti and has appointed an assistant Crown attorney to deal with all graffiti arrests. This is very exciting, as we will be ensured that sentencing will be more consistent than it has been in the past.

Although thefts from autos increased 10 per cent in the first two months of 2009, a significant arrest has been made, with 25 auto entries attributed to that one individual. Theft from autos still remains the number one crime for the entire city. If there are any issues you believe I should be aware of, please send me an e-mail at jsavoie@hamiltonpolice.on.ca.

INTRODUCING STAFF SERGEANT MARK COX

LISA DODDS



In October 2008 **Staff Sergeant Mark Cox** took over the role of supervising the four crime managers who liaise with community groups such as ours. The crime managers co-ordinate the mobilization of police resources to address community issues as they arise. When able, Staff Sgt. Cox attends AWWCA board meetings where he provides police input.

We would like to introduce Staff Sgt. Cox to our community. He is a 23-year police veteran who began his career with the Ottawa Police Service in 1987. In 1989 he joined the Hamilton Police Service. Staff Sgt. Cox has a BA in law and psychology from Carleton University and a certificate in police administration from McMaster University. He has worked in all three patrol divisions, as well as with vice and drugs, street crime, child abuse, and the High Enforcement Action Team (HEAT). He has also served as regional youth co-ordinator and has been with the HPS public-order unit for 12 years. Staff Sgt. Cox has been involved with search and rescue since 1999 and was provincially designated as a search manager in 2002. He and his 13-year-old son live in Ancaster with their German shepherd.

You can reach Staff Sgt. Cox at 905-540-5606 or mcox@hamiltonpolice.on.ca

Lisa Dodds is the AWWCA's vice-president, bylaw liaison (noise), and police liaison.

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

LISA DODDS

In partnership with **Councillors Brian McHattie** and **Bob Bratina**, the Hamilton Police Services Board and the Hamilton Police Service hosted a community safety forum for the residents of downtown, Westdale, and West Hamilton to receive input on policing priorities for a new three-year business plan. The forum took place April 7 at the Westdale Secondary School auditorium. About 15 people attended, including AWWCA member **Jane Evans** and board members **Barb Mansfield**, **Janet Woodward**, and me.

Police Chief Brian Mullen noted our community's strong connection with the police and Mr. McHattie. He praised our community and our councillor for pilot projects initiated here, some of which, like the graffiti project, have rolled out citywide. He spoke about the city's commitment to eradicating graffiti. The issue has been highlighted for police officers by rewarding them with a baseball cap for a great job when apprehending graffiti offenders. He said offenders are not always teens, citing a recently arrested repeat offender who is 22 years old.

I emphasized the value of three key police initiatives that are critical to public input into community policing and expressed the hope that all three of these initiatives would be continued:

1. The Superintendent's Community Advisory Committee, where community representatives have regular bimonthly conversation and discussion with the police.
2. Designated crime managers for each community, providing a specific contact person for the public as matters arise and allowing the opportunity for relationships to develop.
3. Local crime statistics shared monthly, allowing the public to view trends and patterns in their specific community.

Audience members asked that anonymous text messaging to Crime Stoppers be included in the business plan and also asked for more community outreach.

Janet asked for a proactive-enforcement program for noise and property standards for the community around McMaster University during the summer.

Responding to a question about Neighbourhood Watch, Chief Mullen said that it is now funded by the city but it is not as active as in previous years.

Deputy Chief Eric Girt spoke about HANDS (Hamilton Neighbourhood Development Strategy) committee work he does. This is a program with eight active hubs, using seed money to erase poverty through nutrition programs and other activities.

Chief Mullen discussed identity theft and mentioned new legislation at the federal level. His advice was to never give any personal information to anyone you do not know (especially over the Internet) and to always verify that the company is bona fide. His slogan is, "If it's too good to be true, it *is* too good to be true."

The following requests came in via e-mail from an AWWCA member who was unable to be present at the forum:



L to R: Inspector Warren Korol of Division 1, Police Chief Brian Mullen speaking at the forum, Deputy Police Chief Eric Girt.
Photo: Janet Woodward

1. *Pedestrian safety: (a) The area around Marion and Longwood is congested and is a safety concern to the Westdale Secondary School students crossing there every day. While I understand that bike lanes will reduce traffic to two lanes from the current four, the need for a proper, city-enforced crosswalk should probably be assessed. (b) A crosswalk at Paisley and King Street West needs to be considered. I often see older neighbours attempting to cross the four lanes with difficulty. (c) The posted speed limit of 50 kilometres north along Dalewood Crescent from Sterling Street is too high given the number of children and elderly people on the block.*

2. *Minor property crimes, car break-ins, and bike theft are a concern.*

3. *Noise from late-night parties: A zero-tolerance policy with hefty fines should be considered for late-night parties that disturb neighbours at midnight and beyond.*

4. *Graffiti, garbage, and litter: There seems to be a general lack of pride which is so unfortunate, given the many assets that Hamilton enjoys. Litter is particularly bad at the three area public schools, along major streets and highways, and around rental housing.*

Chief Mullen said that community policing has been embedded in regulations and laws for about 16 years. It went from a reactive model to the proactive model that is used today. He praised the progressive nature of the HPS, saying that it is unique in seeking community involvement in the police business plan and that he was pleased to announce that the police now have a blog. **Jan Lukas**, who sits on the Superintendent's Community Advisory Committee for Division 3, endorsed Chief Mullen's remarks: "I believe that our police force listens, and they will act on things if they can; they don't just give lip service."

After the meeting, Janet asked **Rita Lee-Irvine**, manager of the Corporate Planning Branch of the HPS, if other communities go through a similar process of community consultation before drafting their business plan. Ms. Lee-Irvine responded by e-mail: "While Ontario Police Services are mandated under the Adequacy Standards Regulation to consult with the community when preparing their business plan, most of them do not go to the extent Hamilton does. For example,

Continued on page 32

She's a Master

Congratulations to our crime manager, **Sergeant Jo-Ann Savoie**, on attaining her Master of Arts degree. Sgt. Savoie attended Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia, from 2007 to 2009 in the Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences in the Master of Arts in Leadership program. Her thesis sponsor was the Ontario Police College, and her supervisor was Dr. Terry Anderson. Her study examined the question of whether leadership competencies should be developed in new recruits at the first available opportunity while studying at the Ontario Police College. More specifically, she examined what leadership skills are required for policing in the 21st century and what key leadership competencies are required at the basic constable level. Qualitative action research was employed through interviews and a focus group, while quantitative analysis was employed in several surveys. Said Sgt. Savoie: "The opportunity to study this topic was significant, as it will help the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Ontario Police College, and all police services in the Province of Ontario gain a better understanding as to why leadership training could be important at the entry level. Literature reviews were done on organizational culture, mentoring, and leadership, and how leadership relates to the development of mentoring relationships."

Sgt. Savoie, we want you to know that we are happy for your achievement, and we wish you success in your career with the Hamilton Police Service.

'Trillium Award Winners' continued from page 5

The city is divided into zones, and each property in every zone is judged by one or two volunteer judges. The qualifications for being a White Trillium judge are the love of gardening and attendance at the judges' workshop in June. They look for properties that have curb appeal, are well maintained, and have good design (harmony, balance, focal area, proportion, texture, and colour). White Trillium Award judging is done between June 12 and July 17. The two properties with the highest scores in each area will receive a White Trillium. Then the one with the highest score in each zone competes for a Pink Trillium, one of which will be awarded in each ward. Pink Trillium judging occurs during the first two weeks of August.

We salute the winners and all in our community who take pride in their gardens. You help improve the quality of life in our neighbourhood, making it a better place to live—one of the goals of the AWWCA.

Information: **Liz Celt**, city liaison with Trillium members, 905-546-2424, ext. 4228, or trilliumawards@hamilton.ca or myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/cityandgovernment/citydepartments/publicworks/parks/horticulture/trillium+awards+program.htm.



Hamilton
Public Works



Sergeant Jo-Ann Savoie takes a break from her studies by planting trees in Churchill Park at the Earth Day tree-planting event April 18.
Photo: Janet Woodward

'Community Safety Forum' continued from page 31

besides holding 18 Community Safety Forums for our diverse and geographic communities, we also had 34 Internal Forums and conducted a member survey with our police officers and civilian staff members. As well, our business plan is put together by 68 planning participants that include Police Services Board members, councillors, association representatives, business owners, police officers, and civilian staff across the organization. I have enclosed a Best Practices Report for your reference." This report can be viewed at: hamiltonpolice.on.ca under publications.



Ainslie Wood/Westdale
Community Association of
Resident Homeowners Inc.

Because
we care

Mark Your Calendar

Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the AWWCA

Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2009

Dalewood School Auditorium, 1150 Main Street West

5:30 p.m.

Meet one-on-one with representatives of McMaster and the City of Hamilton (bylaw, councillor, fire, police) and visit display areas.

7:00 p.m.

Annual General Meeting

7:20 p.m.

Presentations and discussion.

Topic: Let's Plan Our Community—TOGETHER

Join Us

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

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

Contact Loreen Jerome at 905-525-7386 or loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca for the meeting location and information.

2009 AWWCA Elections

This is our election year, and we are seeking nominations for the board of directors. Please take a moment to consider whether you can volunteer some time for your community. If you know of someone who might be interested in serving, please ask them if they would be willing to be nominated.

Two members in good standing of the AWWCA are required to nominate a candidate. Any paid-up member may stand for election to one of the following offices of the association: president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer, recording secretary, membership secretary, corresponding secretary, or director (maximum of five).

- All nominations need to be signed and received by Loreen Jerome, the nominations officer, no later than Sept. 15.
- Nominations may be mailed to the AWWCA's box at 1063 King St. West, Suite 221, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4S3, **or dropped off there postage free.**
- A nomination form is included on page 34 of this issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*.

Questions: Loreen Jerome, 905-525-7386 or loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca

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

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

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

Submissions welcomed. Please send all news, story ideas, and photographs to:

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

WEBSITE awwca.ca

GENERAL INQUIRIES

905-526-9101 or 905-525-7386

NEWSLETTER CO-ORDINATOR

Janet Woodward

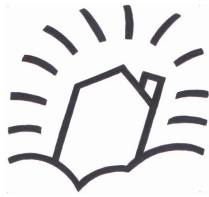
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**Ainslie Wood/Westdale
Community Association
of Resident Homeowners Inc.**
1063 King Street West, Suite 221
Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4S3

2009 AWWCA Elections

This is our election year, and the board of directors of your association is seeking nominations for board positions. Please take a moment to consider whether you can volunteer some time for your community. If you know of someone who might be interested in serving, please ask them if they would be willing to be nominated.

AWWCA Nomination Form

Any paid-up member Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc. may stand for election to one of the following offices of the association: president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer, recording secretary, membership secretary, corresponding secretary, or director (maximum of 5). Two paid-up members of the AWWCA are required to nominate each person standing for election.

Name of member who is standing for election: _____

Address: _____ Office sought: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

We, the undersigned AWWCA members, nominate the above member:

Name: _____ Address: _____

Signature: _____ **Phone:** _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Signature: _____ **Phone:** _____

Note: All nominations must be signed and received by Loreen Jerome, the nominations officer, no later than Sept. 15, 2009. Nominations may be mailed to the AWWCA's box at 1063 King St. West, Suite 221, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4S3, or **dropped off there postage free.**

Useful Numbers

Abandoned shopping carts:

Metro: 905-523-5044

Fortino's (Rifle Range store): 905-308-9045, press 0

For next-day pickup for either store: The Buggy Man: 905-594-8109

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

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

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

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

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

Councillor Brian McHattie: 905-546-2416 or bmchattie@hamilton.ca

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

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

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

Graffiti:

In progress: 911*; on city property (including street signs) or private property: 905-546-CITY (2489) or info@hamilton.ca
Also notify West Town Crime Manager Sgt. Jo-Ann Savoie: 905-540-5093 or jsavoie@hamiltonpolice.on.ca

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

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

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

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

Police:

Non-emergency: 905-546-4925*; a person will answer after the taped message (press 0 to skip the message)
West Town Crime Manager Sgt. Jo-Ann Savoie: 905-540-5093 or jsavoie@hamiltonpolice.on.ca
If you need further assistance: police reception desk, 905-546-4771*
Special duty police: mac91-92@awwca.ca

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

Signs:

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

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

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



*Hours are 24/7

THE WAY WE WERE

Churchill Park

LOREEN JEROME

Churchill Park, originally called McKittrick Park and later Westdale Park, was officially renamed after Sir Winston Churchill in 1987.

The park emerged as a result of some fortunate events. Thomas B. McQueston, a Hamilton lawyer and member of the Hamilton Board of Parks Management, envisioned protecting public land in the 1920s to prevent it from being developed by private enterprise.

McKittrick Properties Ltd., original developers of Westdale, tried in 1925 to gain control of waterfront lots at Cootes Paradise that were owned by the federal government and were adjacent to McKittrick's ravine land. The developers planned to use these large lots for residences at Princess Point, but in 1926 found McKittrick Properties facing bankruptcy due to an economic recession and city tax arrears of \$150,000. The city proposed to buy their land to save them from complete bankruptcy. McKittrick relinquished ownership of 377 acres to the city in lieu of the outstanding taxes. To the dismay of the developers, Cootes Paradise was declared a fish and wildlife preserve by an Order in Council in 1927. In 1928 the city turned 27.5 acres of the former McKittrick property into what is now Churchill Park. In 1930 Mr. McQueston obtained Royal assent to name these lands the Royal Botanical Gardens. By 1941, Mr. McQueston initiated establishment of the gardens as an entity separate from the Hamilton Board of Parks Management.

In the 1940s Churchill Park had a well-groomed, lighted hockey and pleasure rink. You could pick up a game of "shinny" with the likes of Harry Howell, born in Hamilton in 1932. He became the captain of the New York Rangers and was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1979.

The first cricket match was played in the park in 1945, and in 1947 the Hamilton Cricket Association moved from Gage Park to Churchill Park, where members still play today. In 1976, a new cricket pavilion was built after fire destroyed the original one; the replacement no longer exists.

Churchill Park was placed under the jurisdiction of the city's Park Board in 1966. Although the land is still owned by the RBG, the city rents it for \$1 a year plus upkeep. The city has full use of the property, but changes to the park are subject to RBG approval.

The Children's Garden opened on the west side of the park in 1947 under Royal Botanical Gardens' director Dr. Norman Radforth. The city took over management of that too in June 1966, and then in 1980 changed the name to the Teaching



Churchill Park.

Photo: Janet Woodward

Garden, reflecting a broader concept of usage. In June 1996 the city changed the name to Churchill Park Community Gardens where plots may be rented by anyone. In July 1996 the city relocated the Aviary from Dundurn Castle to the building vacated by the RBG at the Community Gardens.

The Churchill Fields Lawn Bowling Club opened its first green in May 1958 and the second in the summer of 1960. The clubhouse, designed by city architect Stanley Roscoe for 200 people, was completed in August 1959. The club was the site of the Canadian Lawn Bowling Championships in 1963 and the provincial ones in 1977. Due to declining membership, the club decided to close in 2008. New uses for the facility are now being considered by the city and the community.

Today the park has facilities for soccer, softball, and cricket, a playground with a small climbing wall, a splash pad completed in 2007, and a new ice-skating rink that opened this past winter on the former lawn-bowling greens. Interesting websites on this topic are: friendsoftheaviary.ca and rbg.ca.

Sources: Leslie Laking, *Love, Sweat and Soil: A History of the Royal Botanical Gardens from 1930 to 1981* (Hamilton: Royal Botanical Gardens' Auxiliary, 2007). Royal Botanical Gardens' history: rbg.ca/pages/more_about_history.html.

Mailing Label