

Neighbourhood News & Views

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AINSLIE WOOD / WESTDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
AUTUMN 2010 OF RESIDENT HOMEOWNERS INC.

“Building community block by block”



Westdale Magic 9



Be A Super Recycler 25



A Well-Run Parade 34

Hazel Broker Receives Because We Care Award

At our 12th annual general meeting **Hazel Broker**, an AWWCA member since 2003, was presented with the AWWCA’s *Because We Care Award* for her outstanding contributions to the quality of life on Paisley Avenue South in Westdale. Hazel’s optimistic spirit creates a positive living environment on the street where she has lived for almost 70 years. She welcomes new residents (most of whom are short-term renters) and makes them feel at home, shovels snow, and cleans her block and often three others along her street. Hazel’s actions contribute to the preservation, protection, and enhancement of our community, all of which are goals of the AWWCA. The award expresses our appreciation for her exceptional efforts. Following is her acceptance speech:

I have seen many changes and have watched the camaraderie of those early years when every homeowner took pride in his or her small piece of property slowly disappear. Lending a hand whenever one could help had become a tradition, and when I retired 33 years ago, shovelling snow for those on the street who needed help gave me a good reason to get up early on winter mornings, since clearing the walks was much easier before they were walked on. I soon learned that rather than grumble to myself about pieces of icy sidewalk in areas I travelled, it was more effective to clear the snow away early and perhaps avoid a fall.

Then came the weeds growing in the curbs as more and more homes became rental properties and the litter that accumulated as more and more pedestrians



AWWCA president John Wigle presenting *Because We Care* award to Hazel Broker. Photo: Janet Woodward

used our street. Keeping our block clear of both took only a few minutes each week.

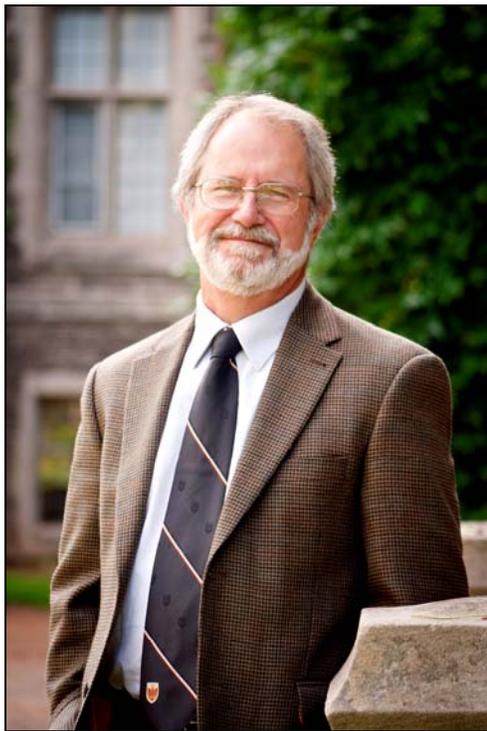
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President's Report, 12th AGM

JOHN WIGLE

The board of directors chose a different venue for the annual general meeting for three reasons: We wanted to “show the flag” in Ainslie Wood; we wanted the AGM to be more accessible to our members in Ainslie Wood; and, in place of the rock-hard seats of the often-sweltering Dalewood Middle School auditorium, we thought the cushioned seats of the air-conditioned sanctuary of Westside Baptist Church would be a pleasant change.

I thanked **Reverend Dave Stimers** and his congregation for being our gracious hosts; **Andrew Hall** of **Water Solutions** for donating cool water and for his assistance; **Angela Tirone**, our recording secretary, for co-ordinating donations of food this year to the Salvation Army food bank; and **Reverend John Smith** and his congregation at St. George's Anglican Church (Reformed Episcopal) for permitting the board to hold monthly meetings in their church hall.



Dr. Patrick Deane

Photo: J. D. Howell

Our invited guests were the new president of McMaster University, **Dr. Patrick Deane**; McMaster's associate director, public relations, **Gord Arbeau**; president of the McMaster Students Union **Mary Koziol**; director of the

MSU's Community Support Network **Laura Stevens**; **Councillor Brian McHattie**; and representatives from the Hamilton Police Service, municipal law enforcement, and fire prevention.

In her classic book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, the late Jane Jacobs emphasized the importance of “eyes on the street.” She was referring to the need for ongoing activity in urban areas and for engaged stakeholders to develop and preserve safe and vibrant residential communities and merchant districts.

As I start my fourth year as president I believe that the association and its community partners are these valuable eyes on the street. The excellent autumn 2009 and spring 2010 issues of *Neighbourhood News & Views* reveal the amazing scope and depth of the board's and members' volunteer activities. These include:

1. the Adopt-Your-Block program—42 neighbourhood blocks now have sponsors;
2. the Adopt-A-Box graffiti-cleanup program;
3. creation of the memory garden on Emerson Street;
4. compelling Jimmy Gringo's Burrito Factory on Marion Avenue North to comply with bylaws on seating and parking;
5. formal presentations to Hamilton Health Sciences on its Access to the Best Care plan and to the Ontario Ombudsman regarding the Local Health Integration Network's lack of public consultation;
6. participation in the Neighbourhood Residential Housing Community Liaison Committee, whose report has been tabled with city council;
7. planning and participation in the MSU annual pajama parade;
8. the AWWCA's ninth annual community cleanup;
9. participation in Earth Day 2010 activities, which included planting 2,400 trees in Churchill Park;
10. helping to build a boardwalk on Caleb's Walk on the Royal Botanical Gardens' trail, all in one day; and
11. supporting a community garden in Alexander Park and rehabilitating the herb garden at the Teaching Garden in Churchill Park

These good works send a clear message to residents and to visitors to our near-campus community that all are welcome, that we care, and that we are ever vigilant.

I have two short anecdotes, both involving the annual community cleanup on April 17. In Ainslie Wood East I met two gentlemen, one in his early to mid-70s. They casually mentioned that every second week they walk through their immediate neighbourhood picking up garbage. Then my route

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took me to the intersection of Emerson Street and the Rail Trail. There I met **Adela Antonow**, a retired Polish lady of short stature and a big heart. Every week, no matter the weather, she cheerfully patrols a section of the Rail Trail, picking up garbage. These three people do this "grunt work" without expectation of public praise or recognition, but simply because they care—another example of eyes on the street.

I end with the same request that I made during my report



L to R: Angela Tirone, Betty Bechtel, Barb Mansfield, and Nancy Brooks-Bittle happily await guests at registration tables.
Photo: Janet Woodward

at the 2009 AGM, but with a greater sense of urgency. Since some of our directors may be stepping down altogether or reducing their duties because of personal commitments, the board needs new energetic members. Since each director has a particular "portfolio," the time commitment is certainly manageable. Please give our request your serious consideration—call me at 905-528-8411, and enjoy a sense of fulfillment in helping to maintain our community's livability.

12th Annual AGM

ANGELA TIRONE

President **John Wigle** called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in our new location, Westside Baptist Church. Following his report (see p. 2 in this issue), he presented the AWWCA's Because We Care Award to Hazel Broker (see the cover story), after which he introduced McMaster's incoming president, **Dr. Patrick Deane**. Speaking without notes, Dr. Deane talked about his personal knowledge of problems in near-campus communities from his time at Queen's. He commented on the slide show and focused on the slide depicting Westdale as Canada's first planned community, noting how special it is for McMaster to be located here. He then spoke about the Garden City Movement that influenced the early planning of Westdale.

The new format was introduced, and participants were asked to choose two of the following small-group discussions they would like to attend:

1. Police concerns with **Sergeant Sabrina Feser**, **Inspector Scott Rastin**, and members of the ACTION team and mounted unit, facilitated by **Ira Rosen**.
2. Proactive bylaw enforcement and fire with superintendent of municipal law enforcement **Glyn Wide**, community liaison co-ordinator **Kelly Barnett**, and chief fire-prevention officer **Jim Winn**, facilitated by **Carolyn Kinsley**.

3. Ainslie Wood and Westdale stabilization strategy with manager of strategic projects **Al Fletcher**, facilitated by **Phyllis Tresidder**.

4. City initiatives for our community with **Councillor Brian McHattie** and representatives from parks, cycling, walkability, and waste management, facilitated by **Rob Payne**.

The first round of small-group discussions took place at 7 p.m., followed by the second round at 7:45 p.m. We all reassembled in the auditorium at 8:30 p.m. to hear the facilitators summarize the discussion in the two sessions of their group. Feedback on the new format was overwhelmingly positive (see p. 5).

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For the second year we asked that donations of non-perishable food be brought to the AGM. We collected a large barrel of food that was donated to the Salvation Army's food bank.



President John Wigle addresses the AGM.

Photo: Janet Woodward

John Wigle thanked all who participated and adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m. For a fuller report of the annual general meeting, go to awwca.ca/agm-2010/.

Angela Tirone is the AWWCA's recording secretary.

'Hazel Broker' continued from page 1



Soon I found myself pulling weeds in the block to the north of mine as I walked by. Bending and pulling is good exercise. Recovering from knee-replacement surgery these past two years has slowed me down, but by using my walker I could patrol the street for garbage and pull the weeds, thus giving me a good reason to get out of doors to exercise. Using a sturdy stool I could remove weeds from lawns, and I found myself extending my operations from King to Main. This year I contacted all the homeowners about the invasion of plantain into our lawns, asking for help. The response has been encouraging, and Paisley Avenue South had a neater and trimmer appearance this past summer. As for myself,

my mobility steadily improved with my exercise, and my cane now sits in a corner. I am happy. I am looking forward to the new year. 'If something bothers me, don't waste time complaining but do something about it' has become my motto. I was very surprised to be chosen to receive the AWWCA's Because We Care Award for 2010. Thank you for honouring me.



**Thanks,
Water Solutions**



Andrew Hall of Water Solutions
Photo: Janet Woodward

Thanks to Andrew Hall of Water Solutions for donating bulk water to help us avoid using bottled water, to Westside Baptist Church for the use of their premises, and to all those who brought food for the Salvation Army's food bank.

12th AGM—Member Feedback

BETTY BECHTEL

The 2010 annual general meeting's new location and new format were a winning combination. The AWWCA sent out a questionnaire after the AGM asking for feedback about the location, format, and related questions. Twenty-seven respondents declared in glowing terms that they enjoyed the changes. Comfort was a key word in describing the facilities at Westside Baptist Church, which included comfortable seats and meeting rooms, ample parking, air conditioning, and help from church staff.



Proactive bylaw enforcement and fire breakout group with City of Hamilton co-ordinator Kelly Barnett and facilitator Carolyn Kinsley. Photo: Janet Woodward

Using the new format, people chose which two of four groups they would attend: police, proactive bylaw enforcement and fire, Ainslie Wood and Westdale stabilization strategy, or city initiatives for our community. At the end of the group sessions, summaries were presented to the whole group. Responses from members said it all: Good facilitators, prepared speakers, relevant topics, intimate group sizes, breakout sessions, and summaries at the end were very much appreciated. Sample replies: "An incredibly good night of information and positive neighbourhood building." "Kudos to **Councillor Brian McHattie** for persuading busy City Hall staff who gave up their evening to come to our AGM." "We are lucky to have Brian McHattie working for our community. We thank all of you and all of our partners—police, bylaw, fire, and McMaster University."

Betty Bechtel is an honorary board member of the AWWCA.



City initiatives for our community with Councillor Brian McHattie, facilitated by Loreen Jerome. Photo: Janet Woodward

We also received good suggestions for improvement and have formed a small committee to implement as many of them as we can for next year's AGM.

The final words are for the AWWCA board of directors. One respondent said, "I am so proud to be a member of this organization." Another said, "The strong leadership and selfless commitment demonstrated by the executive, past and present, of the AWWCA has made a huge difference in the quality of our lives. We are truly grateful to all of you."



Ainslie Wood and Westdale stabilization strategy with manager of strategic projects Al Fletcher and facilitator Phyllis Tresidder. Photo: Janet Woodward

Openings on the AWWCA Board of Directors

Two of our key board members, **Janet Woodward** and **Loreen Jerome**, will be retiring from the AWWCA's board of directors after 13 years of service to the community.

These retirements create openings in two positions that are fundamental to our community association: newsletter co-ordinator and membership secretary. Detailed job descriptions follow. Janet and Loreen will be happy to provide training. If interested in volunteering, please contact Janet for newsletter co-ordinator or Loreen for membership secretary (see below).

Newsletter Co-ordinator Job Description

The newsletter co-ordinator has many opportunities to learn more about our community and our association while producing the newsletter and participating in AWWCA board meetings.

Neighbourhood News & Views focuses specifically on building community in Ainslie Wood and Westdale. It is an important communication vehicle, pulling together for our members, friends, and other community associations the many activities and groups with which the AWWCA is involved. An accessible record of our work, it also informs resident homeowners about issues that will benefit from community input so that we can help to manage change, supports members with practical information, and helps to attract new families to our lively community. Past issues may be viewed on our website, awwca.ca.

Duties:

1. Obtain written material and photographs from community members for the production of two newsletters per year.
2. Edit contributed material for clarity, length, and suitability.
3. Send finalized material to the AWWCA's copy editor, who uses *The Globe and Mail Style Book* with some modifications.
4. Incorporate copy editor's changes and finalize copy for layout artist.
5. Review the layout artist's PDF file, send to copy editor for proofreading, and make any last-minute changes.
6. Deliver PDF file to printer and pick up printed newsletters.
7. The newsletter co-ordinator is a member of the AWWCA's board of directors and attends monthly meetings.

This position requires someone competent with word processing and e-mailing who has a passion for our community and will enjoy meeting and interacting with others who are also working to improve our community. A background in print media would be helpful but is not essential.

I have found co-ordinating the newsletter a stimulating and fulfilling way to spend my volunteer time for the past 13 years.

Janet Woodward, newsletter co-ordinator,
woodward.janet@gmail.com.

Membership Secretary Job Description

This volunteer position is vital to the AWWCA. We are the largest community association in Hamilton with paying members, and our influence has grown with our membership. Keeping good records is extremely important. The membership secretary has an opportunity to get to know people in our community and an opportunity to work from home.

Duties:

1. Obtain information on new members from the treasurer and insert it in the supplied database.
2. Update the database as members renew or their status changes.
3. Prepare a monthly report for the board of directors.
4. Prepare an annual report for the AWWCA's annual general meeting in September.
5. When the newsletter is produced: (a) print mailing labels for members, using the mailing database, (b) prepare a list of memberships for renewal, and (c) contact area representatives to pick up their lists, mailing labels, newsletters, list of memberships for renewal, renewal forms, and return envelopes.
6. Using information from block representatives and other sources, update the AWWCA Excel spreadsheet that tracks rental properties and update our rental maps.
7. The membership secretary is a member of the AWWCA's board of directors and attends monthly meetings.

This is an interesting and rewarding position.

Loreen Jerome, AWWCA membership secretary,
loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca.

"Building community block by block"

Membership Report

LOREEN JEROME

At the end of our fiscal year, Aug. 31, the AWWCA had 602 paid-up members, including 14 Friends of the AWWCA; 19 memberships were overdue. In the past year, we welcomed 66 new members to our association. Each member helps us to continue as a strong association. Between newsletters, we communicate with 89 per cent of our members by e-mail, an increase of 3 per cent over last year.

I wish to thank **Betty Bechtel, Earl Jerome, Barb Mansfield, and Janet Woodward** for their assistance in membership collection. Please renew your membership when you receive your renewal notice or by the time your membership expires. Two-year renewals are appreciated.

Thank you also to our block representatives, who delivered about 2,800 invitations to our AGM, and to **Murray Babb, Earl Jerome, Anne Klaus, and Linda Kisko** for delivering invitations to blocks without representatives or where representatives were unable to do it. A number of blocks in Ainslie Wood East have no representative. If you are able to help by becoming a block representative, please contact me at loreen.jerome@sympatico.ca. It is a small commitment of time but a big help to our association and community.

AWWCA board members as of September 2010

Back row, L to R: treasurer Barb Mansfield, webmaster Jay Parlar, past president Rob Payne, honourary board member Betty Bechtel, president John Wigle, first vice-president bylaw liaison (noise) and police liaison Ira Rosen.

Front row, L to R: newsletter co-ordinator Janet Woodward, corresponding secretary Carolyn Kinsley, recording secretary Angela Tirone, membership secretary Loreen Jerome, second vice-president development and land-use liaison and bylaw liaison (property standards and parking) Lavinia Welsh.

Absent from photo: student liaison Shelli Eisenberg.

Photo: Diane Sicinski



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.

Responses to Spring Issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views*

July 6: “Wow! What an impressive newsletter! I just looked through it.”
Jim Hudson, executive director, Bay Area Restoration Council

July 13: “In our mailbox yesterday we received the spring 2010 AWWCA newsletter—a well-documented outline of the activities that make Westdale and Ainslie Wood neighbourhoods so vibrant. It is so impressive and wonderful to learn about the continued volunteerism of members and others who are contributing to the welfare of our community. My admiration is boundless with regard to the dedication, perseverance, and commitment of all involved with the AWWCA. The article regarding rental-property investment risk in West Hamilton is of particular interest. It suggested a limited number of real estate professionals inform clients about risks, particularly the vacancy rate. As a resident and professional real-estate broker, it is my experience the problem is not as severe as suggested. If not all, the majority of REALTORS® provide professional service, fully informing clients about risks and factors impacting their real-estate purchase. The article centred on purchases for children attending McMaster. Usually the family member has friends who are pre-arranged to live with them and thus the vacancy rate, however significant, is not a concern. Moreover, an analysis of single-family homes (REALTORS® Association of Hamilton-Burlington MLS® sales data) demonstrates single-family homes’ price increases

have kept pace or outpaced the price increase of rental property. And property purchased by a son or daughter is likely to increase in value tax free. Real-estate professionals are just that—professionals who articulate the risks and rewards of any real-estate purchase using the data which are available to them and good common sense.” *Cameron Nolan, AWWCA member*

July 14: “I have been reading your spring newsletter and find it very informative. Have city council members made a final decision to withdraw their plans to pave the footpath? I hope so. It would be a disaster. Most of our old rail tracks in England are natural, but very occasionally there are tarmac surfaces. Malcolm Horsnell’s article about the origins of Westdale is interesting. Letchworth in Hertfordshire and Welwyn were built on similar lines by Ebenezer Howard. These Hertfordshire towns were originally known as Garden Cities, and their full names are Letchworth Garden City and Welwyn Garden City. They have been very successful towns and have maintained their own identity. The value of property in those towns is still high, and they have easy access to the mainline trains to London.” *Audrey Webley, Derbyshire, England*

July 18: “The newsletter was superb. The standard set is so high that each issue can hardly be improved on!”
Ken Ockenden, AWWCA member

Aug. 3: “Just to let you know we received the neighbourhood newsletter. It was marvellous, and we realize that a lot of time and energy go into putting out such an informative newsletter with fascinating photos. In fact, the article about the Stream of Dreams at George R. Allan School so inspired us that we have

lent the newsletter to our minister, who avidly promotes the use of solar power, to see if this would be a good water-awareness project for us as a church group. We would incorporate young and old in this if we get the green light.” *Jane and Jim Evans, AWWCA members*

Aug. 5: “The Bay Area Restoration Council folks sent along the link to your excellent article in the spring issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* about the Stream of Dreams project at George R. Allan School. Today we posted it on our site at streamofdreams.org/index.php?pgid=8. You certainly do have a vibrant community. I am proud that Stream of Dreams is part of it, both beautifying and, one hopes, inspiring people to think more about our waterways and take care of water! It might be fun to interview people about what the mural means to them and whether they have changed any behaviors that affect water as a result of the project. Perhaps your reading audience would welcome a list of actions that residents and businesses in your community could take, maybe building on your Adopt-Your-Block program. Enjoy the fish as well as your gardens and trails.”
Joan Carne, co-founder, Stream of Dreams project, and executive director, Stream of Dreams Murals Society, Burnaby, B.C.



English Channel Conquered by Westdale Graduate

JANET WOODWARD



Hour 5: Crossing the English shipping lanes. The rains have stopped, and the sun has returned. Photo: Wes Oczkowski

Once again, Westdale Secondary School graduate **Kristin Roe** has successfully completed a challenging swim—this time with the goal of raising \$100,000 for charity. Kristin is the daughter of AWWCA member **Janet Lebeau** and stepdaughter of AWWCA member **David Mills**. In the autumn 2005 issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we reported on Ms. Roe's swim of the Northumberland Straight (from Prince Edward Island to New Brunswick), when she raised \$25,000 for charity.

In 2006, while in South Africa on a research project, Kristin swam to raise money for the Treatment Action Campaign, a charity in South Africa that provides health care for people with HIV and AIDS. That swim was from Robben Island to Cape Town in 11 C water. In 2008 she did a double crossing of Northumberland Straight and raised \$80,000 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation and a local charity, Farmers Helping Farmers (Prince Edward Island farmers helping farmers in Africa).

On July 22, the 29-year-old Kristin swam the English Channel from Dover to Calais, in 16 hours 40 minutes. She is working on her goal of raising \$100,000 for the Stephen Lewis Foundation and the Nova Scotia-Gambia Association. David joined Kristin in England a few days before her swim and was in the boat that accompanied her. David's friend, **Dr. Wes Oczkowski**,

photographed and chronicled the swim and kept everyone informed. Here is a chronicle excerpt: "Hour 15. Dark. Cloud cover. Calm waters. Warmer as we get closer to the shore, relatively speaking, by a half degree. We are still fighting the current off shore; for every meter she swims forward she is pushed two meters up the shore; we don't want to drift into the bay. Kristin took the captain's request to pick up her pace like a woman possessed with the prospect of a Paris shoe sale. She is swimming through the ferry lane. The ferry ships are brightly lit and look massive as they pass by, leaving their wake for Kristin. She had a quick feed; gummy candies and warm tea. She returned to a quick determined pace."

Said David, "There is a pub in Dover called the White Horse that all the swimmers go to after their swim. Those who complete the Channel swim put their names and swim times on the walls. Kristin was sick for the first six hours of the swim so after her swim she wrote on the pub wall, 'I fed the fishes a lot.'" Only 10 per cent of those who attempt the swim make it.

The fundraising campaign continues. On Sept. 14 there was a gala evening at Pier 21 in Halifax featuring Stephen Lewis and East Coast musician and songwriter Lennie Gallant. You can donate to the fundraising campaign at the Channeling Hope website, channelinghope.com.

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

"Building community block by block"

Westdale Has Always Been Magic for Me

ANN MCLAUGHLIN



McLaughlin-Aiello family: Joe, Rosie, and Dylan Aiello, Ann McLaughlin

My love for Westdale began many years ago, when as an adventurous 16-year-old I careened on my boyfriend's Honda 90 through the neighbourhood's peaceful streets. We were entranced by the elegant architecture and beautiful gardens. He went on to become a civil engineer building massive buildings, and I, somewhat to my surprise, went on to become a Westdale resident.

Westdale for me is about community. An exclusive neighbourhood when I first became acquainted with it and not one that I imagined ever inhabiting, it is now at the other end of the spectrum—a lively, inclusive community. When I review my friends and neighbours throughout Westdale, I am struck by the fact that most of them (even my own husband) would not have been allowed to own a home here only 60 years ago. I am proud of how far we have come in creating a richly multicultural, pluralistic community.

Westdale for me is about beautiful domestic architecture. Each day I find something to appreciate in the design and construction of our home. Whether it is the pleasing dimensions of the rooms, the high ceilings, the beautiful caramel-coloured gumwood paneling, or the sparkling leaded-glass window in the dining room, I continue to experience gratitude for the human ingenuity that, over centuries, has led to the creation and ongoing revival of our home.

Westdale for me is about tangible history that we can appreciate—a gift of memories from the previous inhabitants of

our home. When we purchased it 21 years ago, I happened to mention our purchase to my friend, **Joan Hendershot**. Her reply was unexpected: "Ann, I think that was my grandfather's house."

She came to visit soon after and confirmed for us that we had indeed purchased "the Hendershot house." It was her first time inside it, and for her a very special experience to visit the home in which her father grew up. She was able to clear up two mysteries for us. She identified the coat of arms embedded in the terrazzo floor in the basement family room as the Hendershot coat of arms and the large black number 13 embedded in front of the fireplace as her grandfather's lucky number. Our attic, which feels like an artist's garret, with windows facing east and west, was used by her talented aunt, **Rae Hendershot**, for her painting. Rae's daughter, **Katherine MacDonald**, is a well-known artist who lives in Westdale; her work was recently shown at the McMaster Museum of Art. We were delighted to learn these details of our house's history, and it enriches our daily pleasure in imagining the happy, creative Hendershot family inhabiting the same space.

Recently another piece of our house's history fell into place. Our neighbours had mentioned that a punk band used to practice in our basement. One beautiful summer afternoon, while I worked on my endless gardening tasks, an unknown black SUV pulled into our driveway. A pleasant man in his forties stepped out and announced, "I grew up in your house!" A delightful conversation and tour ensued, and he, **George Parks**, confirmed that his brother had been a member of Teenage Head, which spent many hours practicing in our basement.

Both our Westdale community and our home are successful incubators for budding artists. Since both of our children are pursuing artistic lives, I wish them the same good fortune. For the McLaughlin-Aiellos, the magic of Westdale continues.

Ann McLaughlin joined the AWWCA in September 1998.

Why We Chose Westdale

JUDY POLLARD SMITH

Journalist John King of the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote about the late Jane Jacobs' visit to San Francisco in May 2004: "If there's a Gospel According to Jacobs, it's that old is better than new, and small is better than big." I have often thought how Ms. Jacobs would have approved of Westdale, with its human-sized buildings, its walkability, its sidewalk ballet, as she called it.

The diverse housing stock and the ancient trees and foliage fit us like a comfy old shoe. For us there is no comparison to the soulless suburbs where everything is manicured and sameness rules.

We chose to move here recently from our family home on the east Mountain for several reasons:

1. The two-bedroom bungalow east of Longwood Road suited our downsizing scheme after two of our three children married (and what's not to love about leaded windows?).
2. A delightful walk through nearby Churchill Park woods or down the hill to the waterfront trail gets us to Paradise, literally.
3. If the time should come when we no longer can drive, we can buy groceries, do banking, visit the library, access professional services, and mix socially by taking another easy walk five minutes to the village shops.
4. My husband, John Smith, is rector of St. George's Anglican Church on Emerson Street in West Hamilton, and our new location makes us a part of the community he serves.
5. When our three children were at McMaster University, we grew to love the diverse nature of the student body and the way that people come from all over the world to make this an interesting place to live.

Where else could you leave the breakfast table and in three minutes be looking at a blue



John and Judy Smith

heron that waits for his own breakfast at the foot of the bridge? One of my journal entries on an October morning describes the berries I found along the path: "grape-blue, orange, white berries, all hanging on the fence against leaves of lime green." I can't imagine a more fulfilling way to start a new day, as if the west end is being enfolded in the embrace of gigantic arms. The view of the escarpment from St. George's Church in West Hamilton is a comforting one. In some ways a throwback to the sanity of an earlier era, this community is one where, as Ms. Jacobs reminds us, *small* is good and *old* will do us very well.

Judy Pollard Smith is an AWWCA member. Some of her short stories are published in a British women's magazine. A recent one was about a woman in midlife trying to reorganize herself. She set it both on the waterfront trail and in the Second Cup in Westdale with McMaster students strolling past. Said Judy: "They published it without reworking it with British English and reference points, and told me they enjoyed the Canadian feeling to it, so Westdale won in that issue."

Know Your Neighbours?

In a survey reported by BBC News Dec. 4, 2009, a third of young people do not know the names of their neighbours, while nearly everyone over 65 does. The study showed that older adults are more likely to enjoy being with neighbours and to chat with them in the street. It was pointed out that retirees over 65 usually have more time to spend with neighbours. A 77-year old man said, "I feel safer knowing that I have friends living next door that I can call on if I need to." The full story is at news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/8393872.stm.

Walkability: A Key Aspect of Our Community

ALICE SABOURIN



Walkability continues to be a key aspect of what makes Ainslie Wood and Westdale wonderful places to live. The AWWCA walkability committee's work has been a catalyst for improvements for pedestrians and has raised the profile of walkability in the community. Although the pilot committee disbanded after the work was completed, the recommendations in the report continue to be implemented and will be linked to major upcoming city initiatives such as the Ainslie Wood Westdale Transportation Master Plan and the Churchill Park Master Plan. The goal in the transportation plan will be to shift away from the traditional approach and make walkability the fundamental principle of the plan.

Sharon Mackinnon, a walkability committee

member and public health nurse, continues to promote walkability and is developing a toolkit to help citizens assess walkability in their community.

Upcoming Westdale Business Improvement Area projects will add to the pleasant experience of walking through the village. Ten new benches are planned in addition to sidewalk improvements between TD Canada Trust and Basilique Restaurant. In the past two years, ongoing tree plantings, more effective snow removal, and bylaw enforcement have also supported walkability throughout Ainslie Wood and Westdale.

There is also potential to seed a variety of projects to improve walkability through fundraising. Our Ward 1 councillor and the sponsor of the walkability committee work, **Brian McHattie**, is keen to investigate a West Hamilton service-club model (similar to the Rotary Club in Dundas) to support a variety of community projects, including walkability. News about opportunities and future projects will be shared as the effort takes shape.

Alice Sabourin is the Ainslie Wood/Westdale walkability liaison and an AWWCA member.

Our Very Walkable Community

JANET WOODWARD

As Canada's first planned community, Westdale was designed as a walkable community, and walkability is still high on the list of benefits of living in Ainslie Wood and Westdale. The walkability committee of the AWWCA was formed in March 2007. We have reported on its work regularly since then. Information about its formation and the committee's 56-page assessment report is at awwca.ca/articles/2008/10/28/ainslie-wood-westdale-walkability-assessment-repor/. At our annual general meeting on Sept. 20, **Sharon Mackinnon** and **Peter Topolovic** spoke about walkability in the breakout group on city initiatives for our community.

A few months after the walkability committee was formed, an organization called Walk Score was launched in July 2007. Its mission is to promote walkable neighborhoods, with the goal of having every property listing include a walk score. Over three million walk scores are generated every day by that group. Gareth Seltzer, who buys, renovates, and sells houses, was quoted in *The Globe and Mail* on Aug. 21,

“Neighbourhoods where people don't need to own cars are most likely to rise in value.”

A random sampling of addresses in our community at walkscore.com confirmed the walkability of Ainslie Wood and Westdale, with four of our six areas rated as very walkable. That means most errands can be accomplished on foot and includes scores rated between 70 and 89. Those four areas are Ainslie Wood East (a score of 74), Ainslie Wood North (70), Westdale South (85), and Westdale North (78). A few homes on Sterling Street that are close to the core of the village score at 89, just one point away from the walker's paradise category, which includes scores between 90 and 100. “Walker's paradise” is defined as a neighbourhood in which “daily errands do not require a car.” Both Ainslie Wood with a score of 58 and Ainslie Wood West at 52 rank as somewhat walkable, which includes scores between 50 and 69. Try putting your own address in the search box at walkscore.com and see how walkable your property is.

Westdale, a School Second to None

MARLENE CASTURA



Principal Em Del Sordo in front of his character wall.
Photo: Janet Woodward

A wall of distinction at Westdale Secondary School highlights the outstanding alumni members who once walked the halls of this building. Their spectacular achievements in a variety of fields since graduation speak for themselves, but this display confirms the quest for excellence for which the school has long been noted. Students are challenged to delve deeply into knowledge and research and rise to a level of expectation of performance in a safe and inclusive learning environment. This is a tribute to teachers, past and present, who set the example with commitment, dedication, and leadership skills.

Janet Woodward and I arrived on Oct. 1 for our appointed interview with **Em Del Sordo**, the master teacher and principal of Westdale Secondary School since 2007. His office is an approachable place, exuding a positive aura. Framed pictures of world leaders and personalities grace the walls, and inspirational words cover the character wall: love, integrity, joy, etc. Dynamic in his philosophy and enthusiastic in his support for the school, teachers, and students, he speaks of his commitment to offer

programs to enhance student choice and opportunity while addressing individual needs, interests, and abilities. His goal is to enhance the “best school in the province,” supporting students to be life learners while presenting pathways to graduation based on strengths and interests.

With a population of 1,635 students, Westdale is the largest secondary school in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Many unique programs have created a magnet, attracting 30 per cent of its students from outside the catchment area. Westdale is the only school in the board to offer French immersion at the high school level. The language and cultural opportunities for the 242 students enrolled in that program are intensified by the option of going on an exchange trip to France.

Westdale put Hamilton on the map in 2008 by pioneering the first International Baccalaureate Program in the city. The school received certification to offer the high-quality courses, with international guidelines and standards established at headquarters in Geneva. Canada is one of 129 countries offering the IB certification. Ontario students in the IB program receive two diplomas upon graduation: a special diploma recognized worldwide as well as the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. An excellent program for students



Westdale Secondary School

Photo: Janet Woodward

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'School Second to None' continued from page 13

travelling with families on sabbatical leave or work studies and returning to their home school before graduation, it ensures continuous progression of studies. There are many advantages for students studying in the IB program.

Blazing another new trail, Westdale offers two Specialist High-Skills Major Programs initiated by the Ontario government and the Ministry of Education. Students in Grades 11 and 12 embark on pathways to their desired postsecondary destinations, whether it be apprenticeship, college, university, or the workplace. Packages of courses are individualized to include experiential and contextualized learning in all courses.

Areas of major study include construction and arts and culture. An arts and culture trip to Austria and Budapest this year focuses on architectural design and famous paintings and sculptures.

Although Mr. Del Sordo speaks quickly, there are many more opportunities at Westdale that he wants to mention. The music strings program is highly acclaimed in proficiency and in competition. The enrichment courses in English, mathematics, and science offer challenge and excitement. The computer-based Grade 9 mathematics courses have improved student performances in provincial scores by 12 per cent in the last two years. "Have I mentioned the Student Bridging Borders Society?" asks Mr. Del Sordo. A student-led organization, the society recently invited and presented **David Suzuki** as guest speaker to student and community assemblies. The Athletic Hall of Fame needs mention, as does the vibrant theatre program, with song and dance added to its repertoire. Our time is up, but Mr. Del Sordo has made a definite statement: Westdale is a school second to none.

Marlene Castura is a retired secondary school teacher with the HWDSB and an AWWCA member.

Editor's note: A front-page article in The Globe and Mail real estate section (Nov. 19) is captioned: "Homes that get an A+: Parents in search of schools with International Baccalaureate programs are heating up the real estate market in some [Toronto] neighbourhoods."

West Hamilton Schools—Changes and Opportunities

JUDITH BISHOP

There are about 2,000 vacant seats in Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's high schools, with the number projected to rise to 6,000 in five years. This surplus space must be heated, maintained, and cleaned, and these unnecessary expenditures are an increasing burden on our tight education budgets. The school board therefore is embarking on an accommodation review of its secondary schools.

An accommodation-review committee will be convened in January 2011 to look at Westdale, Highland, Parkside, and Ancaster high schools and another to look at all the other high schools in the lower city. These evaluations will be undertaken according to our accommodation-review policy, which is on the board's website (hwdsb.on.ca). Program, community, and building issues will be considered with community input. This involves two parent representatives from each school, open meetings, and four meetings to hear delegations from the public.

As Westdale Secondary School is one of the few HWDSB schools that is at capacity, I am not expecting great changes to it, or that the school may be closed coming out of this exercise. Westdale has already had updates to its mechanical systems, repairs to the roof,

new windows, and improvements to its elevator, but the review may address other needed renovations, such as updates to washrooms.

The accommodation-review process has been positive for Wards 1 and 2 schools in the past, and this new process, which has a greater emphasis on providing adequate student programs within the context of a vision for Secondary Schools for the Future, should provide more opportunities for our students.

In 2008 the HWDSB approved a motion that, depending on provincial prohibitive-to-repair funding being available, Dalewood and Prince Philip schools be replaced by one new kindergarten to Grade 8 school. Both schools had been declared prohibitive to repair by the province, just as the city has declared the Dalewood Recreation Centre prohibitive to repair. It was built at the same time as Dalewood School. The city has recently announced that it will be rebuilding this recreation centre, which provides an opportunity for the city and the board to work together and perhaps

Continued on page 15

West Hamilton Schools' continued from page 14

achieve some cost efficiencies. This may lead to a change in HWDSB's Capital Plan coming to the board for approval in January in a modification to the current recommendation. Then an accommodation-review process will be put in place for Dalewood and Prince Philip, again with community input. George R. Allan has had new windows installed and but it still needs an elevator and new washrooms, including some on the second and third floors. At present the result of an area accommodation review is unknown, although the elimination of both Prince Philip and George R. Allan schools seems unlikely because of enrolment.

There is no doubt that in this next trustee term

accommodation issues will be reviewed in Ward 1. I hope that one result will be a new school built in the west end with the same amenities as the new schools at Queen Victoria and Dr. Davey and I am hoping that the accommodation issues at George R. Allan will be addressed.

Our schools in Wards 1 and 2 are now better maintained and have more amenities than when I first became a trustee in 1988. I look forward to continuing to serve you for this coming four-year term.

Judith Bishop is an AWWCA member and was acclaimed as the HWDSB trustee for Wards 1 and 2 in the recent municipal election.



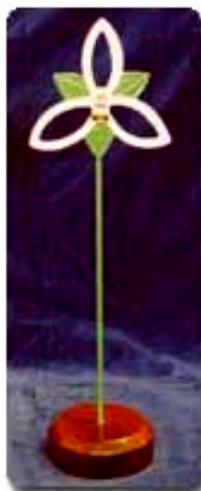
George R. Allan School.

Photo: Janet Woodward

The AWWCA's Trillium Award Winners

The mission statement of the Trillium Awards beautification program is to promote and encourage community pride through the recognition of excellence in landscape design, maintenance, and efforts to beautify properties. The AWWCA shares that goal. In fact, the first statement in the AWWCA's mission statement is, "To preserve, protect and enhance the Ainslie Wood/Westdale community environment and the quality of life for all residents."

We congratulate our AWWCA members who won White Trillium Awards in 2010: **Carol Davids** has won a total of 12 White Trilliums, including this year's. She has also won two Pink Trilliums. **Shelli Eisenberg** is a fifth-time winner. First-time winner **Phyllis Tresidder** said, "I think the judge felt sorry for me, gardening between the weed beds of



White trillium
Copyright City of Hamilton 2001

the rental properties on either side of my house." 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 more pleasant place to live.

Note that there is no longer any need for nominations, as all properties in the City of Hamilton are reviewed and considered for a White Trillium Award.

The Royal Botanical Gardens promotes the Trillium Awards program and provides communication and media opportunities. You can be part of this wonderful program by volunteering to be one of the over 300 judges. For information on the program, including information on how to volunteer as a judge, go to hamilton.ca/CityDepartments/PublicWorks/Parks/Horticulture/2010+Trillium+Awards+Program.htm.

EQAO Results for Ward 1

The Education Quality and Accountability Office is an arm's length advisory board created by the provincial government in 1996. It administers provincial, pan-Canadian, and international assessments in elementary and secondary schools. EQAO tests began in 1998 and are based on the Ontario curriculum introduced in 1997. Below is a message received Sept. 22 from trustee Judith Bishop regarding EQAO 2010 results for Ward 1. Read more at <http://Allchildrenspotential.blogspot.com/2010/09/eqao-results-ward-1-and-2-elementary.html>, and read Judith's blog at allchildrenspotential.blogspot.com/.

There have been some very gratifying increases in EQAO results. Congratulations to the following schools: Applied math results for **Westdale Secondary School** increased by 15 per cent to 50 per cent from 2009, when 35 per cent of all students met the provincial standard (levels 3 and 4). Academic math increased by 1 per cent to 83 per cent. Both are above the provincial average. **Prince Philip Junior Public School** had wonderful results at Grade 3: reading increased by 21 per cent to 93 per cent, meeting expectations. Math increased by 17 per cent to 86 per cent. Writing increased by 3 per cent to 86 per cent. Reading increased at **Strathcona Junior Public School** by 30 per cent to 66 per cent, math increased by 14 per cent to 47 per cent, and writing improved by 9 per cent to 56 per cent. **Earl Kitchener Junior Public School** saw a 2 per cent increase in reading to 60 per cent, a 19 per cent increase in writing to 64 per cent, and a 14 per cent increase in math to 59 per cent. At **George R. Allan Public School** reading increased by 7 per cent to 85 per cent, writing by 9 per cent to 87 per cent, and math by 10 per cent to 84 per cent. Like Prince Philip, George R. Allan's results are above the provincial average. At Grade 6, **Dalewood Middle School** also saw increases: 13 per cent increase in reading to 87 per cent, 14 per cent increase in writing to 87 per cent, and a 13 per cent increase in math to 70 per cent—above the provincial average.

These results represent a great deal of work by staff. Of course EQAO results are just one way that schools' achievements are assessed, but they show that the emphasis on literacy and numeracy is paying off.



Judith Bishop with a young student.

Photo: Claude Mongeon

“Building community block by block”

Elementary Accommodation Review Committee Dalewood Review Area

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is about to begin a review of how best to accommodate students in elementary schools within the Dalewood Review Area, which includes George R. Allan, Dalewood, and Prince Philip elementary schools.

Accommodation Review Committees, like this one, include principals, teachers, parents, students, and community members, whose mandate is to look at the future of a school or group of schools and provide a recommendation to the school board. The trustees' final decision occurs after the full involvement of an informed community and must be based on a broad range of criteria focused on the learning experience for students. In addition to working meetings, ARCs hold a minimum of four public meetings. The committee for the Dalewood Review Area will hold its first public meeting on April 6, 2011, and present its report to the HWDSB on Oct. 28, 2011.

Learn more about the Elementary Accommodation Review, including meeting dates, at hwdsb.on.ca/arcelementary.



Dalewood Middle School

Photo: Janet Woodward



Prince Philip School

Photo: Janet Woodward

Environmental Assessments “Missing”

BARB BLOEMHOF



This spring, the City of Hamilton plans to pave the Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail, a beautiful natural trail that parallels Main Street between Stroud Avenue and Fortino's, and a new 12-foot winding trail along the northeast perimeter of the Chedoke Golf Course, for which significant tree cover would be

removed. Neighbours of both trails want the new city council to rethink the approval given in 2007, made long before details like pavement and tree destruction were made known to the public, and to ask staff to come up with a gentler development plan.

On Nov. 25, a spokesperson for the Ministry of the Environment confirmed that the city's environmental-assessment approach to many of the 223 separate projects within the City of Hamilton's Cycling Master Plan was not appropriate. The city had designated 222 of them as automatically approved, with no need for any environmental assessment. Because many of these projects are more than merely routine operations and maintenance and therefore can be expected to significantly change the characteristics of the land, they cannot be approved automatically.

The original intention of the Environmental Assessment Act was to deal with environmental issues of protection, conservation, and wise management at the beginning of the planning process. The current plan seems to have sidestepped environmental assessment completely.

A number of permeable-surfaced urban trails have been used as cycling paths since well before the city's 1999 and 2009 cycling master plans, but now they are slated for pavement. The position of the Friends of Ainslie Wood East is that it is absurd to think that these places need city approval to be deemed cycling-path infrastructure—they already are, year round. In fact, one of the benefits of Hamilton's permeable trails is the absence of toxic and caustic winter deicing chemicals. The trails are a valuable natural asset, providing a soft, level surface for urban exercise for runners and people

who wear prosthetic devices or are recovering from joint surgery. Paving five-meter-wide roads over these peaceful places adds unnecessarily to the built environment, with no increase in use commensurate to the cost of development and maintenance.

The City of Hamilton pays the highest average taxes of any Ontario municipal jurisdiction over 100,000 population (thehamiltonian.net/2009/01/10-tough-questions-with-city-manager.html), and projects like this help us understand why. A permeable trail surface costs a quarter of pavement. Paving westward from Stroud, which would swallow up the Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail and beyond, could only be justified if the increase in cycling traffic on the trail was large enough to offset the increased financial cost of the development. That seems unlikely, given that the existing surface already works so well for cycling. If you are concerned about the lack of an environmental assessment, we urge you to contact our Ward 1 councillor, Brian McHattie.



Cyclists on Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail at Bowman Street, looking west, August 2010.

Photo: Joe Grilec

Barb Bloemhof, spokesperson for the Friends of the Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail, is an economist at McMaster University who resides in Ainslie Wood East. You can reach the Friends of the Ainslie Wood East Rail Trail at foawert@gmail.com.

Rail Trail Heritage Designation Denied

JANET WOODWARD

In the spring issue of *Neighbourhood News & Views* we reported on the AWWCA's request of Feb. 5, 2010 that the City of Hamilton grant heritage designation to the Rail Trail in West Hamilton under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Following is the summary of the planning and economic development department's decision of Oct. 5:

Staff concludes that the former TH&B right-of-way does satisfy the Provincial criteria for determining cultural heritage value. It is the opinion of Staff that the important characteristics (e.g. the width, alignment, vegetated edges, etc.) of the former railway right-of-way will be maintained through the City's ownership and use of the westerly portion of the former right-of-way as a recreational trail. The easterly portion of the former right-of-way remains in active use by Canadian Pacific Rail and retains its character by virtue of this continued use. The City does not appear to have jurisdiction to designate the federally-regulated railway lands or the Crown-owned hydro corridor. Therefore, designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act is neither necessary nor effective for the appropriate management of this cultural heritage resource. Staff does not recommend further research and assessment for purposes of possible designation under the Ontario Heritage Act or inclusion of the property on the City's Register of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. Staff recommends that the Public Works Department



Rail Trail in West Hamilton at Stroud Road, looking west.
Photo: Janet Woodward

and the Owners of 10 Ewen Road, 45 Ewen Road, 1579 Main Street West, 1733 Main Street West and 0 Rymal Road West (hydroelectric transmission corridor) be advised through this report that the property does possess some cultural heritage value and interest, and that the City should retain ownership of these lands in perpetuity and consider the heritage value of the property in the design and maintenance of the currently planned recreational trail. A City heritage plaque commemorating the TH&B railway exists across from the Hamilton GO Centre.

The 23-page report (including a history of the TH&B Railway beginning in 1884), decision, and application are available at hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/14EAB488-7E7C-4A78-8495-427F1076CD42/0/Oct05EDRMS_n93838_v1_PED10222.pdf.

Layout Volunteer Needed for *Neighbourhood News & Views*

We apologize for the delay in delivering this autumn 2010 newsletter. AWWCA member **Chris Harvey**, who so generously donated his time and professional layout skills for the past three issues, regrets that he is unable to continue for the foreseeable future. **Laura Cleghorn**, another AWWCA member, graciously filled in on short notice to set up this issue, but cannot do it on a continuing basis. We thank Chris and Laura for donating their time.

We need someone to set up future issues of *Neighbourhood News & Views*. Chris used publishing software, but Laura set up this issue in Word. Although publishing software is preferred, it is not necessary to have it to set up the newsletter. If you can help, please contact **Janet Woodward** at woodward.janet@gmail.com.

Old-Growth Forests of Cootes Paradise

TYS THEYSMEYER

It is something that we all take for granted, as it has always been there; however, the rarest of habitats in southern Ontario is an old-growth forest. In our area old-growth forests are doubly unique, as they of the southern forest type (Carolinian), characterized by trees such as hickory and sassafras and an understory of witch hazel and tick trefoil. Just 20 kilometres north of here it is too cold for these southern species to exist. The largest patch of Carolinian forest is located around Cootes Paradise but is mostly associated with the Westdale ravine.

Despite an old-growth forest's solid-sounding name, it is the most fragile of habitats, as its integrity is held together by a very simple thing—the forest-floor leaf-litter and humic layer. This layer has two main roles—retaining moisture in the soil and suppressing weedy species, making room for the many bulb-like perennials such as trilliums, Solomon's-seal, and round-leaved hepatica. We put mulch on our home gardens for the very same purpose, but how many of us realize that we are mimicking an old-growth forest when we do this?

The forests of the Westdale area have been in decline for decades. While many factors are involved, the most notable is the disappearance of the permanent leaf-litter layer. The two dramatic signs are gradual replacement of forest-floor perennials with weedy species and the death of a number of the large trees during dryer years. Some weeds, like garlic mustard, are not originally from North America.

What is affecting the leaf-litter layer? Physical crushing of the leaves is accelerating the rate of leaf decay. This is often by human activity, which is the factor that has changed the most since the forest originally formed. Trampling breaks the leaf litter into

smaller fragments, accelerating the next step in the leaf-decay process. This process is also altered due to changes in the forest animal community, a result of a degraded Cootes Paradise marsh. Amphibians are also a key player in this story, as it is actually frogs, toads, and salamanders that keep the leaf-litter eaters in

check. With the historical loss of Cootes Paradise marsh, amphibians (species that require a healthy wetland for reproduction) had all but disappeared, leaving nothing to hold the balance and reminding us that when it comes to the environment it is all interconnected. With the marsh restoration, amphibians are on the comeback, although at the moment most salamander species have been lost from the south side of Cootes Paradise.

In order for the old-growth forest of Westdale to remain, it requires us to keep forest trampling to a minimum and the waters of Cootes Paradise clean so that amphibians continue to recover their numbers. Land use adjacent to the forest also seems to need some adjustments. This is because the towering trees draw

people like a magnet, as the forest stands in such stark contrast to the urban lands and open sports fields next to it. Churchill Park is a great place to start creating some of the features that we are looking for when we go outdoors. The City of Hamilton has initiated development of a master plan for Churchill Park, which it leases from the Royal Botanical Gardens. I look forward to seeing you at the public meetings.

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



Heritage oak tree, north shore of Cootes Paradise.
Photo: Paul Smith

Churchill Park Master Plan Moving Forward

LAWRENCE STASIUK

Churchill Park has been a special place in the Westdale community since it was created as a public park in 1928. It has served many different types of users, from the active athlete, the school child, the nature enthusiast, the vegetable gardener, to the casual walker. One thing is quite clear, the users love their park with a passion.

Churchill Park is a jewel serving a variety of recreational pursuits, as well as being a gateway to the trail system of the Royal Botanical Gardens and the natural lands around Cootes Paradise. The park does present some challenges, however. These include repurposing the lawn-bowling facility, accessibility to park features, drainage, the use and condition of existing sports fields, and protection of the natural lands.

To help the community address these issues and to protect the values it places on the park, the City of Hamilton public-works department has begun a formal master-planning process with extensive public consultation. This is an important tool for shaping our parks and providing the opportunity to (1) frame the planning vision and weigh a variety of options, (2) involve the public and allow ideas to be heard, and (3) set a direction, once approved by Hamilton City Council, for future works.

The park lands that are included in the master-plan study are the athletic fields along Parkside Drive, the former lawn-bowling facility

on Cline Avenue North, and the community gardens and Aviary off Oak Knoll Drive. The total area is approximately 19 hectares (47 acres).

The first general public meeting was held Oct. 6 at the Westdale branch of the Hamilton Public Library. Approximately 50 residents and park users attended and were invited to submit their ideas on the comment sheet or via e-mail to the project manager. Following this meeting, a Public Stakeholder Advisory Group was formed with representation from neighbourhood residents, recognized associations, and sports user groups. The PSAG will work with the city planning team in a series of workshops. The first workshop was held on Nov. 30 with 24 members attending.

The city has established a Churchill Park Master Plan web page on the City of Hamilton website under the landscape architectural-services section at hamilton.ca/LAS. Information about the project, past meeting presentations and reports, and drawings are posted for viewing or downloading.

The city continues to invite comments from the public. You may e-mail your thoughts directly to me (see below), or you can obtain a comment sheet from the website noted above. The AWWCA will be notified of the date, time, and place of future public meetings.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 905-546-2424, ext. 2292, or at Lawrence.Stasiuk@hamilton.ca.

Lawrence Stasiuk is a landscape architect and project manager with the City of Hamilton.



An aerial view of the existing park and surrounding lands with the study boundaries outlined. Photo: City of Hamilton

Sassafras Point Update

TYS THEYSMEYER

Last year a few volunteers participated in the planting to naturalize the spur trails off the Sassafras Point Trail, and we are happy with how things have already grown together. In the coming years we hope to complete the tip of Sassafras Point with a formalized lookout and rest spot. However, several other locations, with much higher visitor traffic, including the Chegwin Trail, will be redeveloped before we can address this element of Sassafras Point.

LHIN Spin

KEN OCKENDEN



Editor's note: The websites referred to in this article can be accessed at awwca.ca/access-to-best-care/ or directly.

In January 2008, Hamilton Health Sciences presented the Access to the Best Care (ABC) Plan to the community (for a full description see hhsc.ca/body.cfm?id=1309). In the months following the initial presentation there was a great deal of discussion in the community about the plan, and considerable anxiety was expressed about some aspects of it. Before the ABC Plan could proceed, part of it had to be approved by the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network.

Ostensibly the LHIN system was set up to allow citizens to have a greater voice in the health decisions that affect them. (For details about the LHIN see hnhblhin.on.ca/Page.aspx?id=307.) Because of the anxiety about the ABC Plan, there were about 30 letters to

the LHIN from the public, including the AWWCA, describing the issues worrying citizens and asking the LHIN to review the effects of the plan on the community. Past president of the AWWCA **Rob Payne** and I attended the LHIN board meeting in September 2008 where the ABC Plan was discussed. Our reactions, which were negative, are recorded at awwca.ca/articles/2009/02/02/hhs-one-year-review/.

Many others who attended that meeting were also shocked at the lack of consideration given to the issues citizens had raised. Of the 51 slides presented about the ABC Plan, only two presented brief summaries of concerns, and even these were glossed over. With minimal discussion, the LHIN board endorsed the ABC Plan. The following day one of the board members resigned over, among other things, the lack of public input.

Following this decision, it was realized that there was a systemic problem with the LHIN, and the feeling was that the Ontario Ombudsman, André Marin, should be informed in the hope that the LHIN system would be reviewed. Citizens as well as the AWWCA sent him letters outlining the problems, with the result that eventually his office carried out a careful review of the LHIN. Although the process took a long time, the final report vindicated the concerns expressed in the letters regarding the functioning of the LHIN. It must be said, however,

that the LHIN chair reacted negatively to the report, and it remains to be seen whether major changes will occur.

The full report by Mr. Marin, "The LHIN Spin," is available at ombudsman.on.ca/en/media/press-releases/2010/ombudsman-finds-hamilton-niagara-region-lhin%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%99Cclandestine%E2%80%99D-meetings-illegal-urges-province-to-increase-transparency-of-all-lhins.aspx. It is a document that is well worth reading: Only 35 pages long, it is clear, easy to read, and free of jargon. It gives an excellent summary of the LHIN's history and actions in this case and outlines suggestions for improvements.

HHS is fully implementing the ABC Plan, and the LHIN has made some changes in its own function. We can only hope that the efforts of the many citizens involved in this process over the past two years will make a better health system in the future.

Dr. Ken Ockenden is a member of the Urgent Care Centre Community Advisory Committee of Hamilton Health Sciences and an AWWCA member.



Update from Hamilton Health Sciences

December 2010

AGNES BONGERS

We would like to bring you up to date about what has been happening at Hamilton Health Sciences.

We have begun construction of the new West Hamilton Urgent Care Centre at the corner of Macklin and Main Street West, within the West End Clinic and adjacent to the McMaster Family Practice, which has been located there since 2002.

Opening April 2011, the UCC will provide fast care to people with acute but non-life-threatening medical

department, and renovations are now taking place at Hamilton General's emergency department to enhance its service.

The changes at McMaster University Medical Centre taking place in April 2011 will create a threefold focus for this hospital: women's health, McMaster Children's Hospital, and an adult ambulatory centre (outpatient clinics and outpatient surgery). While adult in-patient beds will be transferred to other city hospitals in



needs, such as lacerations, sprains, mild asthma attacks, and simple fractures. It will be equipped to perform X-rays and ultrasounds. The family practice will continue to treat patients who are on its roster and have appointments, while the UCC is intended for anyone who needs immediate attention. As always, in case of an emergency, call 911. On the day the UCC opens, the emergency department at McMaster University Medical Centre will begin serving children only. Adult emergency care will continue at McMaster until that date. As part of the Access to Best Care, the new Juravinski Hospital includes a modern emergency

department in 2011, the women's health program (obstetrics and gynecology) and its in-patient beds and services, will continue to be a vibrant health service at the hospital. This will include a new critical-care area located immediately adjacent to the labour and delivery suites, staffed by professionals trained in adult critical care.

Please check out our website for more information at hhsc.ca or follow us on Facebook or Twitter. If you have any questions, contact me at bongers@hhsc.ca.

Agnes Bongers is senior public-relations specialist with Hamilton Health Sciences.

Editor's Note: A more detailed HHS report is at awwca.ca/articles/2010/11/17/update-hamilton-health-sciences/.

Ward 1 Chedoke-Cootes: Councillor's Report

BRIAN MCHATTIE

I would like to update you on projects that I am pursuing on your behalf.

Student housing continues to be a major focus of my work and includes reviewing Committee of Adjustment minor-variance applications, building-permit applications, working with the Hamilton Police Service and municipal law-enforcement staff in Project Compliance and other bylaw-enforcement initiatives, and working with McMaster University to link their planning with city and neighbourhood planning. The 190-student purpose-built housing on Carling Street (east of the Metro grocery store in Westdale) was approved by the Committee of Adjustment this past fall. A larger student-housing facility at 17 Ewen Road remains on hold while the developer continues discussions with Cadbury, which is concerned that housing adjacent to their plant may limit their ability to operate as an industrial use.

In this issue you can read about McMaster's Campus Capacity Study and the AWWCA's response; I have asked the city's planning department to respond as well. Through the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations at McMaster, we are working with the AWWCA and the university on a neighbourhood strategic plan. With a projected light-rail-transit plan expected early in the new year, the five-year review of the Ainslie Wood Westdale Transportation Plan should begin this spring, giving us an opportunity to respond to traffic issues.

More updates:

1. The Dalewood Recreation Centre feasibility study was approved by city council in September 2010. Design work for the new recreation centre will occur in 2011 in partnership with the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.
2. Sidewalks will be repaired and new gateway signage installed in May in Westdale Village, in conjunction with the Business Improvement Association.
3. The renovated Coronation Arena reopened in January 2011, with the new pool opening in summer 2011.
4. The one-year Churchill Park Master Plan process has begun, providing an opportunity to rethink the park, particularly changes to the former lawn-bowling area and the Aviary (the Aviary will be moved to larger quarters in Gage Park). The washrooms and change rooms are now heated and freshly painted in the lawn-bowling building. This is making skating this winter a warmer and more pleasant experience! The digging in the park observed in the fall by some residents was in connection with a new soccer field being installed in the footprint of the previous baseball diamond to add more playing space for children's soccer. The digging was to investigate any possible archaeological resources, but nothing of note was located.

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 905- 546-2416 or bmchattie@hamilton.ca.



Councillor Brian McHattie speaking at his campaign launch party Sept. 13. Photo: Janet Woodward

Congratulations, Councillor Brian McHattie

The day after the municipal election, AWWCA president **John Wigle** e-mailed **Councillor Brian McHattie** congratulations on his re-election with 64.9 per cent of the vote in Ward 1 Chedoke-Cootes and copied our members. He had an especially strong showing in Westdale, where he won 83 per cent of the vote. The AWWCA views Mr. McHattie as a strong ally in our work to improve the quality of life for our near-campus neighbourhoods. We look forward to continuing to work with him over the next four years.

*"Building community
block by block"*

Project Compliance

KELLY BARNETT



Effective in mid-July, the City of Hamilton implemented an 18-month pilot program of proactive bylaw enforcement for Wards 1–8. Named Project Compliance, it was created in response to the city's investigation into the feasibility of licencing rental housing. A community-liaison committee was established in 2009 to examine the feasibility of regulating rental housing through licencing. Based on feedback from stakeholders, the committee instead recommended proactive enforcement of existing bylaws as an alternative to licencing. The common theme echoed by stakeholders was, "The city currently has bylaws in place (property standards and yard maintenance); why don't you enforce them?"

Six temporary part-time officers have been hired for the project. The officers are proactively enforcing the City of Hamilton's property-standards bylaw and yard-maintenance bylaw (long grass and weeds, garbage and debris), focusing on all dwellings, including high-rise buildings. Project Compliance is funded through the Parking Reserves fund—not from the tax levy.

In Ward 1 the following work on Project Compliance has been done:

July 28:

40 properties investigated, resulting in 14 orders for property standards, 14 field orders for yard maintenance, and 20 courtesy letters.

Sept. 14:

25 properties investigated, resulting in 9 orders for property standards, 8 field orders for yard maintenance, and 12 courtesy letters.

For the period Jan. 1–Oct. 25, municipal law enforcement received 280 property-standards and zoning complaints in Ward 1 and 591 property-maintenance complaints. Roughly 75 per cent of these complaints came from the near-campus communities of Ainslie Wood and Westdale

If you are concerned about property standards at a specific property, you have three options in making a complaint:

1. Contact bylaw at 905-546-2782 (select option 2) or mle@hamilton.ca,
2. Contact Councillor Brian McHattie's office at 905-546-4528 or nikola.wojewoda-patti@hamilton.ca.
3. Complete the online complaint form on the city's website at hamilton.ca/mle.

If you are a tenant and have a problem with your rental unit, first you need to contact the property owner, landlord, or superintendent in writing listing the problem(s). If the repairs are not done in a timely manner, you can make a complaint as noted above.

Environmental-team officers and the summer student officers were both reactive and proactive in ensuring compliance with the

solid-waste-management bylaw (storage of waste containers, containers left at the curb, and bags over the limit) and the yard-maintenance bylaw. As part of proactive enforcement, officers patrolled every street in Ward 1 the day after waste-collection day to ensure compliance with the solid-waste-management bylaw.

Kelly Barnett is community-liaison co-ordinator, municipal law enforcement, City of Hamilton. She can be reached at 905-546-2424, ext. 1344.

Be A Super Recycler



Master recycler in training.
Photo: Dennis Guy

You may be curious about the gold boxes you have seen in our community. Winners of gold boxes receive a yellow recycling box and a letter stating that the box is an award that recognizes excellence in recycling. Says the City of Hamilton's master recycler, **Dennis Guy**: "We like to call it a 'gold' box because it's like winning a gold medal in the recycling Olympics. That's because they've shown that they know what's recyclable by sorting things correctly, including keeping their papers and containers separate." For more information and an opportunity to win a gold box, go to mygoldbox.ca.

Introducing Sergeant Feser



West Town crime manager Sgt. Sabrina Feser
Photo: Janet Woodward

Sabrina Feser was hired by the Hamilton Police Service in January 1997 and was appointed West Town crime manager on May 9. She has a diploma in law and security from Conestoga College and a police-studies diploma from McMaster University.

Currently in her 14th year with the HPS, Sergeant Feser is assigned to the Division 1 crime manager's office. She has worked uniform patrol out of the Mountain and Central Divisions and plainclothes in the vice and drugs unit, intelligence in the gangs and weapons enforcement unit, and as a detective constable in the Central Criminal Investigation Division. Over the years she has also attained the skills and expertise of a bicycle officer, breath technician, domestic-violence officer, crisis-intervention training officer, coach officer, and member of the public-order unit.

Sgt. Feser has been in the Hamilton Police Female Choir for nine years (she was one of the original members and served on the executive for six years). She has volunteered as a Cathedral High School student mentor, performed as a simulated patient for the McMaster University School of Medicine, and is a committee member of the Canadian Cancer Society's Great Ride and Stride. In whatever free time she has left, Sgt. Feser performs in Hamilton Community Theatre, enjoys singing in her band and dancing, and is an avid traveller.

Additional Policing for Our Community

IRA ROSEN

Two special-duty police officers are provided for the Ainslie Wood and Westdale area through a program called Mac 91/92. McMaster University pays for the officers, and the city and Hamilton Police Service pay for their vehicles. Mac 91/92 is usually on duty on the most popular pub nights from November to April, between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday). Note that the schedule varies depending on need, as well as on holidays and during exams.

We remind you to report all criminal activities to the police. This is the only way a police report can be generated. If it is not a crime in progress, call 905-546-4925. Press 0 to skip the taped message and speak to a person, who will take your report and determine if further investigation is needed.

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

Sergeant Sabrina Feser and Ira Rosen Photo: Janet Woodward



Police Information



Following is a summary of police information prepared by West Town crime manager **Sergeant Sabrina Feser**. It includes pertinent information on calling the police and her responsibilities as crime manager.

Calling Police

Did you wake up this morning to find your car has been broken into? Did you come home from work today to find your house has been broken into? Are you at home trying to sleep at 1 a.m. but noisy neighbours are keeping you up with their party next door? Do you want to call police for these reasons or another reason but are not sure which number to call?

Call 911 for:

- Crimes in progress, such as assault, robbery, theft
- A missing child or elderly person
- A car collision where there is an injury
- Fire or smoke
- Medical emergencies
- Driving emergencies (be cautious using a cell phone while driving so you do not create another emergency)

Call 905-546-4925 for:

- Cold crimes such as theft from vehicles, break-ins, stolen bicycles
- Lost property
- Information

Priority Response System

The Priority Response System pamphlet is on the Hamilton Police Service website at hamiltonpolice.on.ca/hps/. Click on “report a crime” on the right side of the home page and then click on the 911 tab. The content of the pamphlet follows:

Police reports can be taken three ways:

- Over the telephone
 - when the incident is not urgent or about safety
 - there is no evidence to gather
- Walk-in
 - when the complaint is not urgent or about safety
 - the complainant may have to prove identity
 - the complainant may have evidence to deliver (e.g., a video)
 - the report is taken by a police officer or volunteer at a police station or community policing centre
- Police attend the location
 - when their response time varies based on urgency
 - someone is being injured (immediate)
 - a crime is in progress (urgent)
 - the crime was recent (as soon as possible)
 - the suspect is still nearby (as soon as possible)
 - there is evidence to gather (less urgent)
 - the crime is cold (expect a delay)

The direct link to the pamphlet is hamiltonpolice.on.ca/NR/rdonlyres/AEAC3261-8DE6-4340-8598-F53295BD97FF/0/PRIORITYRESPONSEPAMPHLET.pdf.

What Are the Responsibilities of the West Town Crime Manager?

Crime managers oversee complaints of crime, quality-of-life issues, and the overall policing problems in their area. They do not physically attend requests for police service called into 911 or reported to 905-546-4925.

When police reports are taken in the ways listed above, they generate the statistics the crime manager needs to develop strategies for tackling spikes in crimes, problem areas, etc. Citizens are encouraged to report crimes to police to assist in this process.

Sgt. Feser welcomes inquiries by e-mail (sfeser@hamiltonpolice.on.ca) or phone (905-540-5093) but emphasizes that this does not constitute reporting your incident to police. Please do so in one of the three applicable ways above.

Fed Up with Your Neighbours?

LAURA STEVENS

Are you fed up with your neighbours, their noisy parties, and garbage left on the curb days after collection time? Do you ever wish someone would knock on their door and tell them to tidy up their property or shovel their snow? There is a solution, and it does not have to be you. The Student Community Support Network's Peer-to-Peer program can help.

The SCSN, funded by the McMaster Students Union employs six community assistants, one for each of the six near-campus neighbourhoods in Ainslie Wood and Westdale, to carry out the Peer-to-Peer program in their jurisdiction. CAs are upper-year McMaster University students trained by city bylaw officers and chosen for

their knowledge of Hamilton and their excellent people skills. Each CA is responsible for proactive patrolling of their area looking for property-standards violations, as well as for educating tenants and doing community programming.

In addition to proactive patrolling, the Peer-to-Peer program responds to complaints received from the community. Community members can report a problem to SCSN in three ways:

- Call 905-525-9140, ext. 27618
- E-mail [scsn@mcmaster.ca](mailto:scsn@msu.mcmaster.ca)
- Fill in the form at scsn.msumcmaster.ca under programs: Peer-to-Peer



SCSN staff, L to R: director Laura Stevens, CAs Erika Richter, Laura Bromwich, Jamie Denton, and Vibeish Vickinadas, Newsletter and promotions co-ordinator Doug Calderwood-Smith, CAs Marushka Rodrigues and Meaghan Langille, and co-ordinator Mariette Lee.

Photo: Kristi Boulton

Continued on page 29

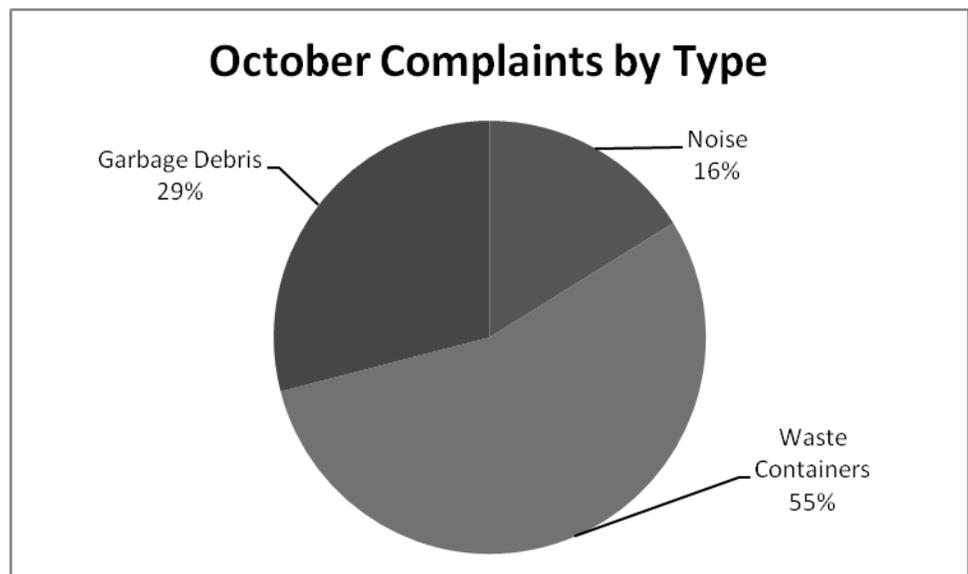
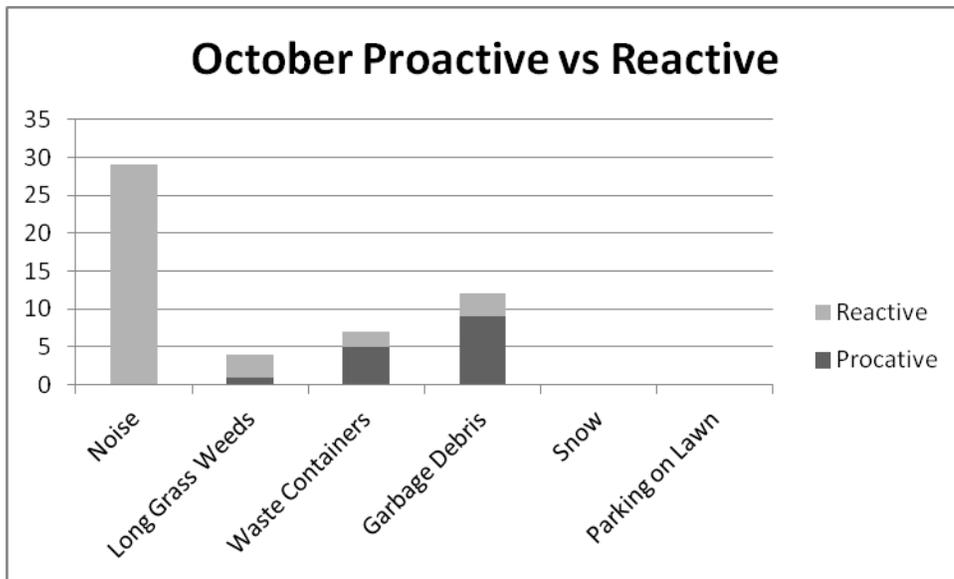
'Fed Up with Your Neighbours' continued from page 28

SCSN never discloses the name or address of the source—complete confidentiality is always maintained. As soon as we receive an address it is forwarded to the CA responsible for that area. Within a week the CA visits the house, giving the tenants a notice of violation and a By-law 101 pamphlet and talking with them about the violation. SCSN CAs are always respectful and courteous and make a point to mention the diverse composition of our neighbourhoods. Most tenants are receptive to the message. Many of the garbage and debris problems have been resolved by the time the CA follows up. It may take approximately a week for us to

get back to you, but please be patient. We are a student-run organization, and we all have full course loads.

Our CAs are not police or bylaw officers—we cannot break up the party next door. We can be a part of the solution, however, by following up with the tenants and reinforcing the message. Please call us for any minor issues that have not escalated to the level of needing bylaw or police, and please also include us when you do call bylaw and police. Often, when tenants hear about the problem from their peers, it really drives the message home.

Laura Stevens is the director of SCSN.



Community Volunteers Deliver Welcome Bags to Students

JANET WOODWARD



Reusable welcome bags contain lots of helpful information.

After a successful pilot project in 2009, **Jennifer Kleven**, manager of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre, contacted the AWWCA about repeating the welcome-bag project this year. After just one e-mail request to block representatives, we had enough volunteers to take up the challenge of delivering welcome bags to our student neighbours during the week

of Sept. 13. Last year, block representative **David Hitchcock** prepared a personal letter to include with each bag, introducing himself and the community, detailing the bag's contents, and providing his e-mail address. This year we sent a template of the letter to area representatives so they could personalize their own letters to the students.

In addition to the friendly personal letter from their volunteer neighbour, most bags included information pamphlets on subjects such as fire safety, local bylaws, McMaster's Student Community Support Network, tenant booklets from Community Legal Education Ontario, a Tourism Hamilton magazine, coupons from local businesses, a pen from BMO/MasterCard, and guides for properly handling garbage and recycling in the City of Hamilton. There were also some fun items, such as a Frisbee or a magnetic whiteboard and pen set provided by McMaster alumni. All the materials were delivered in reusable bags provided by McMaster.

This year 500 bags were delivered by 31 community members, 11 of whom were new volunteers. Of the 31 volunteers, 19 also volunteered in 2009. A few declined delivering to rental properties due to unsafe steps. Noteworthy is **Loreen Jerome's** area south of Main Street, which doubled the number of volunteers and bag deliveries. Special thanks to **Murray Babb**, **Pat Chandrashekar**, and **Shelli Eisenberg**, who delivered to many more blocks than their own.

Homecoming Woes in Near-Campus Communities

BETTY BECHTEL

Many of you experienced and reported serious problems during McMaster University's Homecoming events in September. Several reports were sent to **Councillor Brian McHattie**, **Sergeant Sabrina Feser**, **Inspector Scott Rastin**, superintendent of municipal law enforcement **Glyn Wide**, and the AWWCA board. At Mr. McHattie's suggestion these reports were also sent

to McMaster University president **Dr. Patrick Deane**. During the pajama parade, the Hamilton Police Service's ACTION team provided excellent police support, and the event was well run. The ACTION team was not used during Homecoming, but Inspector Rastin assured me that it would be used at McMaster's 2011 Homecoming.

Absentee Landlords—Absent Renters

On Oct. 14, well over a month after students were settled into their accommodation, **Jennifer Kleven**, manager of McMaster's Off-Campus Resource Centre, reported that there were still 113 active for-rent advertisements on their website in all categories and locations or zones.

Of these, 57 per cent (64) were in Ainslie Wood and Westdale, and 84 per cent were available immediately. They ranged from one-bedroom apartments to single or multiple rooms in a rental house or in a landlord's home. There were also three ads for entire houses.

Off-Campus Housing Initiatives

LAVINIA WELSH

AWWCA first vice-president **Ira Rosen** and I attended a meeting on June 28 at McMaster University to discuss initiatives for off-campus student housing. Representatives from bylaw, police, McMaster's Student Community Support Network and Off-Campus Resource Centre, Mohawk College's Off-Campus Housing office, a few landlords, **Councillor Brian McHattie**, and **Joe Xamin** (the city's manager of operational strategies in the planning and economic-development department) attended. **Roger Trull**, vice-president, university advancement, chaired the meeting.

A lot of information was shared about what everyone is doing, with some gaps identified. Some of the information the AWWCA has known about for awhile, but there were a number of initiatives that I had not heard about or were new. Mr. McHattie and Mr. Xamin outlined their plans for a neighbourhood strategy. As you may know, Mr. McHattie recently acquired senior staff in the planning department to create a neighbourhood plan for our area. There also were reports from most of the others in attendance. Mr. Trull volunteered to co-ordinate a business planning session to

document the various initiatives in a flow chart.

I made a plea for the university to join us in our neighbourhood-strategy planning, noting that we need their input, especially in terms of projected enrolment. I reiterated that we understand their plans are fluid but that their participation is critical to ensure an adequate supply of safe, affordable housing for students. After the meeting, Mr. Trull told me the university would be more than happy to be part of the neighbourhood strategy.

In a followup meeting we started to formulate our strategic plan. This plan will identify a few tactics that as a group we can easily implement by early 2011. During this session we identified topics in the following areas: progress to date, opportunities, pressing needs, and work to do. Out of this discussion three key strategic areas were identified: education and communication, landlord identification and engagement, and continued bylaw enforcement, especially regarding noise.

In early November a third meeting was held to identify specific tactics for each of the three areas. Our first initiative will

be to support the city's SOS (snow off sidewalks) campaign by using all of the communication lists of the various participants. The university will participate by sending notices and reminders of the SOS campaign to the 2,300 landlords on the off-campus-housing list and to their 8,000 Facebook fans. In addition, through **Paul Martindale** of Wink Property Investment, over 15,000 landlords and realtors in the city will receive SOS information, including an outline of their responsibilities.

The full report and tactics will be reviewed by the President's Advisory Committee on Community Relations, the board of the AWWCA, city staff, and Mr. McHattie. Roles and responsibilities for each of the tactics will be assigned, with a view to implementing all initiatives in early 2011.

This is a great example of the co-operation and willingness of all stakeholders to improve our community.

Lavinia Welsh is the AWWCA's land-use and development liaison and bylaw liaison (property standards and parking).

**The AWWCA Cares
About Our
Near-Campus Community**

Living Harmoniously on Hollywood

MARY KOZIOL



Editor's note: We invited McMaster Students Union president Mary Koziol to tell us about herself at our Sept. 6 board meeting. Her experience living in the community is a reminder to us all to be neighbourly by taking the first step when new people move in—whether resident homeowners or tenants.

During my four years at McMaster University I have enjoyed various aspects of the Ainslie Wood and Westdale community. After living in residence as a freshman, I lived for three years on Hollywood Street South, before returning to residence for my year as MSU president. Though I have seen discord between students and the community on a number of occasions, particularly in my current position, my years living in the community demonstrated how positive and gratifying this relationship has the potential to be.

I attribute a large portion of the credit for such harmonious co-existence to a next-door neighbour. The day after my five housemates and I moved in, our neighbour

came over to talk to us, invite us for dinner, and let us know that if we ever needed anything (ranging from eggs to a shovel) she would be happy to help. In taking that initial step, she clearly established grounds for mutual respect, treating us as neighbours, not as rowdy students. I like to think that over our three years we earned and reciprocated that respect. Sure, we occasionally forgot our property-maintenance chores, but this was part of learning to live on our own. Nevertheless, out of respect for the community that had welcomed us, we did our utmost to maintain the aesthetics of our property, respect the noise bylaws, and be considerate neighbours.

This experience has been foundational in fostering my love for Hamilton, and this love has translated into much of the work I am doing this year as president of the MSU. Sustainability is one of the core pillars of my platform, as well as a personal passion. The first initiative I undertook this past summer was establishing a farm-produce stand on campus. Running weekly, this stand offered a range of produce from three farms within a 50-kilometre range and is open to students, staff, faculty, and the surrounding community. We established the farm stand not only to promote fresh, healthy eating but also to cultivate a sense of responsibility for and dedication to our community and environment. My other projects have included introducing more bike racks on campus, renovating our current website with the introduction of a

community section (launched in October), and organizing the MSU Vision Conference, which aims to create aware, engaged, and responsible student leaders.

I have been working closely with MSU vice-president (education) **Joe Finkle**, who has a hearty interest in enhancing relations between students and our community. He organized a new event during Welcome Week, a community cleanup where students collected 125 bags of garbage and recyclable items from the Ainslie Wood and Westdale areas. During the fall municipal election, Joe distributed promotional and educational material and arranged an on-campus mayoral debate. To encourage graduating McMaster students to start their careers in Hamilton, he works with city officials to provide learning opportunities outside the classroom, lobbies for improved transit (with an emphasis on light-rail transit), and provides cultural opportunities for students in Hamilton, such as free museum and art-gallery passes.

After attending the session on city initiatives for our community at the AWWCA's annual general meeting on Sept. 20, I am particularly proud to be a member of the Hamilton community and excited for this city's potential to grow and prosper. Thanks to everyone in this wonderful city who has helped to make my fellow students and me feel like such an important part of the larger, multifaceted picture that is Hamilton.

A Well-Run Parade

SHELLI EISENBERG

This year all who attended the pajama parade considered it very successful. Under the new leadership of **Al Legault**, McMaster Students Union director of campus events, we developed new strategies in an effort to eliminate past problems.

The first thing we tackled was asking the city to agree to alter the route. The first-year students are now walking on the north side of Sterling Street when they exit the university, instead of the south, which eliminates the need to cross Sterling Street to enter the side streets. In the past, they turned left at Dromore Crescent, causing a huge bottleneck crossing Sterling, with the result that numerous first-year students were pulled out of the parade into drinking parties with some occupants of the rental properties between Dalewood and Dromore. This year, turning left at Dalewood eliminated that problem, and the students moved smoothly through the route. It also eliminated the problem of the first-year students being greeted at the first turn by many older students high-fiving and hugging and causing big bottlenecks. I also think that the first years enjoyed not having to stop for long stretches before they were greeted by the high-fivers.

The smooth movement was also aided by several more police added this year, who were excellent at keeping the parade flowing well. Instead of upper-year students who were representing their faculties parading with the first-year students, they were posted along the route. Al gave them coloured chalk to do sidewalk drawings while waiting for the students to arrive. This was effective in keeping them at their spots to greet the parading students all along the route. Children watching the parade enjoyed interacting with them, and some participated in the sidewalk art.



Third-year McMaster student Beth Snider welcomes new students.
Photo: Janet Woodward



Sidewalk art at the parade.

Photo: Janet Woodward

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'A Well-Run Parade' continued from page 33

The four mounted police were an awesome new presence. Students were forewarned to stay away from the horses, and there were numerous groups chanting, "Don't touch the horses." The students seemed to enjoy themselves as the parade moved so smoothly. Some observers, however, complained that it was perhaps a bit too tame and went too fast. In fact, the whole parade finished in just 35 minutes! We will work on slowing it down next year, especially for the young families who came out to watch. One way of doing that is to re-introduce the buskers, dancers, and singers stationed at six locations along the route last year, and I will recommend that.

The day after the parade we e-mailed our members, asking for feedback. We received 10 responses, including

many accolades and good suggestions for improvement, but some said that there was too much police presence this year. All comments have been forwarded to the pajama-parade committee for review over the coming year at our numerous meetings.

I personally was thrilled to see that, because of the new route, the extra police, and Al's dedication to staying on top of the movement of student traffic, not one first-year student was pulled out of the parade to party with the older students at their homes along the route. It was a tame parade, perhaps too tame for some, but all in all a success. I hope more people come out with their families next year to enjoy this traditional and long-standing event during Welcome Week.

Shelli Eisenberg is an AWWCA board member and student liaison.



Mounted unit on Sterling Street.
Photo: Janet Woodward

Welcome Week Artists in Our Community

BETTY BECHTEL

It is a tradition for upper-year McMaster University students to decorate their coveralls for Welcome Week. This year, we watched second-year students in the Arts and Science Program decorate their coveralls in the driveway we share with our next-door neighbours, one of whom is **Shanthiya Baheerathan**. We saw many unique and artistic coverall designs on campus and in the pajama parade.

Students in the Arts and Science Program study both disciplines. There are approximately 60 students per year, each requiring an 88 per cent average to enter and a substantial supplementary application. **Mary Koziol**,



Decorating their overalls for Welcome Week.
L to R: Tina Cody, Theresa Tingey, Shanthiya Baheerathan.
Photo: Betty Bechtel

president of McMaster Students Union, whom the AWWCA board met at its September meeting, is a fourth-year student in this program.

The program was designed to provide students with a broad-based, liberal education. The curriculum has three major objectives:

- to provide for substantial work in the disciplines of both arts and science;
- to further the development of skills in writing, speaking, and critical reasoning;
- to foster the art of scholarly inquiry into issues of public concern.

These bright, enthusiastic students are an asset to our neighbourhood.

"Building community block by block"

McMaster in LEEDership Role

GORD ARBEAU

When it comes to constructing and renovating sustainable buildings, McMaster University is taking the LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—a set of sustainable building standards developed by the United States Green Building Council and subsequently adapted for Canada.

The LEED system addresses six major areas: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design

process. Certification is based on the total points achieved following an independent review. Certification is granted by the Green Building Council and is based on the points received; buildings may achieve silver, gold, or platinum certification. McMaster implemented a sustainable-building policy in April 2005, requiring that new buildings and renovations be constructed to at least the LEED silver standard.

McMaster has five buildings that are LEED certified or in the process of being certified.



Les Prince Hall, opened in 2006 and one of the first student residences in Canada to be LEED certified, is a LEED silver building. Photo: Janet Woodward



The David Braley Athletic Centre, opened in 2007, is LEED silver. Photo: Janet Woodward



The Engineering Technology Building opened on Main Street West in 2009 and was certified LEED gold Nov. 2. Photo: McMaster University



Renovations to the Burke Science Building were completed in 2009 to LEED silver. Photo: Janet Woodward

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'McMaster in LEEDership Role' continued from page 35



The DeGroote School of Business's Ron Joyce Centre in Burlington was constructed to LEED silver; it opened in September. Photo: McMaster University

By implementing LEED certification standards for current and forthcoming renovations and new buildings on campus, McMaster continues to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the environment. LEED initiatives also reduce operating costs for the entire life of the building, so the additional building costs are an investment worth making. It costs about 35 per cent less to operate a LEED building.

Gord Arbeau is associate director of public relations at McMaster University

McMaster's Campus Capacity Study

The following is an edited excerpt from a message from Councillor Brian McHattie sent to AWWCA members Oct. 28.

McMaster is nearing completion of a campus-wide study that provides a clearer understanding of how space is used on campus and will help determine the university's physical capacity. A committee of senior leaders, faculty, and staff has been working on the study for a year. Its draft final report was presented during a campus open house on Oct. 19. The open-house presentation and other background materials are available at mcmaster.ca/avpira/campuscapacitystudy.html.

The study states on page 9, "To support existing enrollment, there is a need for 12 per cent more space than what McMaster currently has." Page 12 of the study states, "Although physical constraints need to be overcome, some growth in enrollment is inevitable. This presents both an opportunity and challenge for facility growth and renewal."

Some opportunities are outlined on page 13, including:

1. Reconfigure and manage the space McMaster currently has differently.
2. Align facility needs with emerging pedagogical trends.

3. Consider new facilities on the main campus.
4. Plan for the expansion of the downtown campus and other off-campus locations.
5. Invest in student housing and administrative offices off campus. Main Street may offer locations for proximate off-campus locations.
6. Expand the role of the downtown campus.
7. Investigate potential off-campus locations.
8. Invest in transit and communication technologies as a key component of any satellite campus strategy.

Since there are implications for our community, AWWCA members were encouraged to submit suggestions and feedback prior to the report being finalized. On Nov. 11 AWWCA president John Wigle sent a letter to Karen Menard, chair of the steering committee of McMaster's Campus Capacity Study. Copied were McMaster president Dr. Patrick Deane; McMaster's associate director, public relations, Gord Arbeau; Urban Strategies urban planner Elsa Fancello, and Mr. McHattie.

Following are excerpts of that letter:

Our organization has spent a good deal of time and resources looking at our neighbourhood

capacity. We contributed heavily to the city's Ainslie Wood Westdale Secondary Plan and community strategy, which encompass a vision for a balanced, stable community where the diverse needs of transient students and long-term residents are met. We have long contended that the Westdale campus was at or over a capacity that would facilitate this vision. We are therefore pleased that this study does confirm that McMaster's Westdale campus is over capacity.

For us, however, its over capacity is a matter not only of facilities on campus but of the lack of housing for the ever-increasing number of undergraduate students who are living off campus and who are overwhelming Ainslie Wood and Westdale.

We fully recognize the pressures that will continue to be placed on the university to grow. Increases in the number of postsecondary graduates will be important for Ontario to continue to compete and lead in our 21st century global economy. It may be possible for the university to "tweak" existing facilities to

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.....
 'McMaster's Campus Capacity Study' continued from page 36

accommodate some of that growth or to move non-academic services to off-campus facilities in order to increase undergraduate teaching at the Westdale campus. The AWWCA cannot emphasize too strongly, however, that this approach would further undermine the surrounding community and do nothing to enhance the living experience of the students.

We believe that for the long-term health of the City of Hamilton it is important that many of the students choose to stay in Hamilton and use their skills to contribute to this community. Part of that decision will be a positive living experience during their student years where safe and affordable housing and a connection to the neighbourhood can be achieved.

Over the past eight years we have seen huge growth in the number of single-family homes that have been converted to student rentals. In 2002 the inventory of rental homes in the near-campus community stood at 18 per cent of the total number of single-family homes. By the start of this current

academic year the number of rentals had grown by 95 per cent so that, today, over 35 per cent of all single-family homes are rental properties. Portions of some neighbourhoods have in fact reached what might be considered "student ghetto" levels, with up to 85 per cent of all properties housing students.

Based on the growth of the campus over the past eight years, Faculty Growth Assumptions of the Campus Capacity Study will come to fruition. If they do, the surrounding neighbourhood will lose a further 700 homes and will reach an overall percentage of 51 per cent student rentals. We know that our local businesses, schools, places of worship, and community facilities will be seriously eroded should this occur. Many students today live in substandard housing, and this too will be more of a norm should the neighbourhood erode further. This will do nothing to enhance the student experience or encourage graduates to stay, work, raise their families, and contribute to the long-term prosperity of this city.

Again, we do not believe that any further growth of the student population on the Westdale campus is appropriate. We therefore strongly urge that the university work with the city and the community to look at alternate sites for campus growth—that we explore innovative ways to use land, perhaps either in the downtown core or in the west harbour. We believe that these alternatives, along with light-rail-transit development, offer us all a unique opportunity to plan for growth, including appropriate housing and support services that will make McMaster and the City of Hamilton the "go to" choice in the future.

Ms. Fancello responded Nov. 12, saying that the AWWCA's participation in the process is appreciated, that they are currently consolidating the results of the study into a final report, and that they plan on incorporating the comments and feedback received into that report. The final report is expected in early 2011, and we will keep our members informed.

About the AWWCA

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

Each September our annual general meeting hosts a speaker or panel on a current community issue, and we work with the McMaster Students Union to organize the annual pajama parade for first-year students. In the spring, around Earth Day, we co-ordinate a community cleanup. Our board of directors meets monthly with our ward councillor, a representative of our local police unit, and other guests. The AWWCA, through individual members and committees, works on many projects, some short term, many ongoing: lobbying for maintaining and upgrading neighbourhood schools and community facilities; making our area inviting to pedestrians; fostering good town and gown relations; publicizing and participating in local events; providing input on master plans for transportation, parks, and land use in our area; promoting our area to families to maintain a balance between long-term residents and students; working with the city, police, and fire department on property standards, quality-of-life issues, and safety standards; promoting best practices through research and membership in provincial organizations with similar goals. We maintain a website, publish a newsletter, and communicate frequently with members by e-mail.

Useful Websites

Architecture Hamilton: architecturehamilton.com

Art Bus: thepearlcompany.ca

AWWCA: awwca.ca

AWWCA on Facebook: facebook.com/pages/AWWCA/282204334377

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

Bay Area Restoration Council hamiltonharbour.ca

Citizens at City Hall: hamiltoncatch.org

City of Hamilton: hamilton.ca

Councillor Brian McHattie: brianmchattie.ca

Environment Hamilton: environmenthamilton.org

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 Service: hamiltonpolice.on.ca

Hamiltonians for Progressive Development: progressivedevelopment.ca

Helping local communities achieve more autonomy: localgovernment.ca

Historical Hamilton and Westdale: historicalhamilton.com/westdale

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

Snow Angels: volunteerhamilton.on.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=55

Student Community Support Network: scsn.msumcmaster.ca

Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo Railway Historical Society thbrailway.ca

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

Mark Your Calendar
AWWCA's 13th
Annual General Meeting
Monday, September 19, 2011
Westside Baptist Church,
261 Whitney Avenue

Details will be sent
to members by e-mail
and
delivered to households in
Ainslie Wood and Westdale in
early September

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 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
COPY EDITOR
Carolyn Kinsley
EDITORIAL CONSULTANT
Malcolm Horsnell
DESIGN & LAYOUT
Laura Cleghorn

Useful Numbers

Abandoned shopping carts:

Metro: 905-523-5044; Fortino's (Rifle Range store): 905-308-9045, press 0

For next-day pickup of Fortino's buggies: the Buggy Man: 905-921-5811

or thebuggyman.com, postmaster@thebuggyman.com

Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario: For how to file an objection to a liquor-licence application or report problems with a licenced establishment: agco.on.ca, 1-800-522-2876, or licensing@agco.on.ca

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 Wojewoda-Patti, nikola.wojewoda-patti@hamilton.ca

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

Contractors: To find out if a contractor is licensed: 905-546-2782 and press 3 for licencing.

For concerns about contractors' activities: Building Services Division at 905-546-3950 or

hamilton.ca/building or hamilton.ca/tradelicence. Other helpful resources: Ontario Renovators' Council

(Ontario Home Builders' Association) for a consumers' guide to the Standard Renovations Contract at

1-800-387-0109 or ohba.ca/newsinfo/homeownersguidetorenovations; the Better Business Bureau at

bbb.org/canada; Consumer Protection (Ontario) at www.consumerbeware.mgs.gov.on.ca

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

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

Fire: Prevention Division (complaints, information, inquiries): 905-546-2424, ext. 1380; Alarm

Room/Dispatch (illegal fireworks, backyard fires): 546-3333* (choose option 5 from the six offered)

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

Graffiti:

In progress: 911*; on city property (including street signs) or private property: 905-546-CITY (2489) or

hamilton.ca/ProjectsInitiatives/CleanCityStrategy/GraffitiForm.htm

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:

To report a non-emergency incident: 905-546-4925*; a person will answer after the taped message

(press 0 to skip the message). If you have further inquiries about the West Town area *after* your report

has been made, the crime manager welcomes e-mails (sfeser@hamiltonpolice.on.ca) or phone calls

(905-540-5093)

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

Community police: communitypolice@awwca.ca

Property-standards infractions (dwellings, structures, and yards):

Councillor Brian McHattie, 905-546-2416, or bmchattie@hamilton.ca and copy his assistant,

Nikola Wojewoda-Patti, nikola.wojewoda-patti@hamilton.ca

Signs:

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

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

*Hours are 24/7

History of Huntingford

LOREEN JEROME

Samuel Bamberger was an early settler whose West Hamilton house is now in Westfield Heritage Village. His grandson, William Bamberger, built his own home at 1341 Main St. West at the corner of Emerson in the late 1860s and named it Huntingford; it was in the Bamberger family until 1905.

From 1932 to 1945, Alex Shields lived there with his family. From 1946 to 1948 the home operated as Parkview Tea Room and Tourist Home under proprietor Peter J. Revie. From 1948 to 1951 St. Cuthbert's Presbyterian Church worshipped in the renovated building. In more recent years, our community has known the building as a funeral home, which is the focus of this story.

The Swackhamers had been in the funeral business since 1936. Harold C. Swackhamer and his wife, Mary, operated a funeral home named Green Guernsey at 758 King St. East. They also ran Patricia Ambulance Services from the same location until the business was sold in 1959. Stanley Hilts became a partner in the 1940s. In June 1944, Mary Swackhamer was one of the first women to receive her licence as an embalmer and funeral director from the School of Embalming in Toronto. In addition, she was the organist and funeral cosmetician. Mary and Harold had daughters named Joyce and Nadine.

Harold, always a man of vision, acquired the building at 1341 Main St. West in 1951. Renovations were made to accommodate both the funeral home and his family. Swackhamer and Hilts Funeral Home opened in early 1952. The building had a large centre hall on the first floor, and the foundation was built with 12-inch-thick brick walls. An office was added on the right of the building at the front, and the family lived on the second floor. Later it was renovated into four apartments when the funeral home was expanded. In the



1975 drawing by Phyllis Tresidder of Huntingford, before the building was renovated by Harold Swackhamer. Courtesy of Joyce MacRae (Swackhamer).

mid 70s, one of the apartments was rented to Phyllis Tresidder (president of the AWWCA from 1998 to 2001) and her husband, Warren Tresidder.

Joyce recalled that, when she was in Grade 9, her father allowed her to have a haunted-house party as a sorority initiation. The “young ladies” were blindfolded and led from inside the garage down a chained ramp that normally was used to slide caskets into the embalming room in the basement. Unable to see, the girls’ young imaginations raced, fuelled by the sound of dripping water and having their hands placed in a bowl of wet spaghetti; there was much screaming and laughing. Joyce also remembers an occasion when the funeral chapel was used for a relative’s wedding.

Over the years the business was known as Swackhamer and Hilts before amalgamating in 1979 with Blachford and Wray. The business was sold in 1984 to Wes Kee; later Ted Powell was involved and then conglomerates. Harold agreed to stay on as a consultant for five years. In 1997 the business was sold to its final owner, Service Corporation International Canada. The last funeral at 1341 Main St. West was held in March 2009.

A company affiliated with Dundurn Edge Developments purchased the property in 2009 with plans to redevelop the site, but it is for sale again.

Sources: Joyce MacRae (Swackhamer); Local History and Archives Department, Hamilton Public Library; Phyllis Tresidder.



Mailing Label