



# The Environmental Advocate

[www.conserversociety.ca](http://www.conserversociety.ca)

## 2016 Annual General Meeting and plans for 2017

2016's AGM featured a tour of the Gala Alleyway Project (a Conservers/Green Venture partner project), a brief history of Barton Street and delicious treats at the hip and community-minded "541 Barton Eatery" while listening to an interesting presentation by SoBi Bikes.

The 2017 Annual General Meeting will be held in June (exact date TBA) with a tour of the Dundas Butterfly Garden as part of the event. Stay tuned.

---

## Hello and Goodbye

The Conserver Society bid farewell and offered their thanks to hard-working Board member Kerry Dolan, who is leaving to start her own business. We wish her good luck. Replacing Kerry is Jessah Hodgins, who is a representative from the Urquhart Butterfly Garden. Welcome Jessah!

---

## Call for Nominations - Conserver Board

The Conserver Society Board is seeking members for its Board of Directors. Being a board member involves attending 5 Board meetings a year and spending a couple of hours a month on Society planning and implementation. If you are interested and able to contribute, please contact our Nomination Committee at [contact@conserversociety.ca](mailto:contact@conserversociety.ca).

---

## Environmentalist of the Year Awards Dinner

The 38th annual Environmentalist of the Year Awards Dinner will take place Thursday June 8, 2017 at Michelangelo's Banquet Centre, 1555 Upper Ottawa St. Reception at 5:45 and dinner at 7pm, \$35. Nominations due by March 31. Nomination form is found on the awards website at [www.eoyawards.com](http://www.eoyawards.com)

## The Year of Buying Nothing?

After a holiday season which pushes people to consume, you might be ready to read this article about the one-time publisher of Chatelaine magazine who renounced consumerism and made the commitment to not purchase anything for one year. [www.ucobserver.org/blogs/ybn](http://www.ucobserver.org/blogs/ybn)

Winter 2017

**Conserver  
Society  
of  
Hamilton  
and  
District**

### Inside this issue:

Project : Depave Paradise	2
Project: EcoStars Summer Camp	3
Spirit of Red Hill Lecture	4
<b>Upcoming Events</b>	
Pollinator Paradise	5
<b>In Memoriam</b> Reflections of a New 'Turtle Watcher'	
Urquhart Butterfly Garden	6
Membership	7
Donate	8

## Partner Projects

### Depaving Paradise

This Green Venture project, in partnership with the Conservator Society, engaged volunteers in removing pavement and replacing with plantings of native species. Hard surfaces (paved driveways, parking lots and buildings) interrupt the natural water cycle by preventing rain water from soaking into the ground. This in turns leads to flooding, poor water quality (from run-off) and creates urban heat islands that are warming up our cities.



Picture of Depave Paradise site before project begins

The project took place at R. A. Riddell Elementary School . In spite of temperatures of 30 degrees, parents and students from the school, partners, local resident's and Fern Ridge Landscaping worked to transform part of the school's asphalt playground into a



Picture of Depave Paradise site "after" project

green space, ripping up the asphalt from the school's playground and then putting in permeable pathways and gardens.

This project increases the infiltration rate of rain water, increases cooling of the neighbourhood, keeps water cleaner, and

provides greater connections to the natural world.



More schools are now looking to add green-space and outdoor classrooms so more opportunities seem likely for future projects.

Funding for the project was provided by Green Communities Canada, Ontario Tril-



lium Foundation, RBC Blue Water Project, Intact Financial, Fern Ridge, HWDSB Foundation, EcoSpark, and the Small Change Fund.



## Partner Projects

### EcoStars Summer Camp

Green Venture partnered with the Conservator Society to run a 3 week summer camp program called EcoStars. Each week focused on one particular environmental issue and consisted of 5 full days of activities with early drop off offered free of charge to accommodate working parents. Thanks to CHML, the project was able to offer 28 spots for low income families, with a total of 47 campers registered. Most campers were between 7 and 10 years of age.

Campers participated in games, workshops, crafts, field trips and more, the



goal being to mold children into environmental stewards who will share their values with their peers.

Camp was run by two Eco-counselors, Bright Eyes and Dandy (who in real life are two McMaster University Science students) who made sure that the campers learned about environmental issues and real world applications of how to mitigate them.

Every themed week was packed with fun. The campers that participated were equal parts enthusiastic and creative. Be it an adventurous hike in the woods, or a quick dip in a pool, the

campers were down for everything. Week two was Bugs n Blooms and they especially loved meeting scaly friends who came with the Reptile Man. In the forest at the Dundas Conservation's Trail Centre they found all types of friends both big and small. Week three they even lent a helping at the Victory 'Community' Gardens



Guidance, social skills, and confidence-building were fostered through the planned activities. Campers learned about nature in an urban setting while building confidence, learning leadership skills and independence.

Green Venture is looking to offer an extended program in summer 2017 and then running this program on an annual basis into the future.



### Board of Directors

#### Chair

Don McLean

#### Treasurer

Warren Beacham

#### Secretary

Laurel Harrison

#### Membership

#### Director

Christine Brown

#### Member-at-Large

Michael Gemmell

#### Member-at-Large

Jessah Hodgins



A Conserver  
Sponsored Program

## Spirit of Red Hill: Avi Lewis

In November the Conserver Society once again co-sponsored the annual Spirit of Red Hill Valley lecture. This year's lecture featured Avi Lewis, former CBC radio show host, co-author of the *Leap Manifesto*, and producer of the film *This Changes Everything*,



The packed room of 350 people also heard responses by Ward 3 Councilor Matthew Green, Mi'kmaw storyteller Hannah Katl'n Martin, and

Environment Hamilton executive director Lynda Lukasic.

Lewis' talk included a dissection of the Trudeau government's climate record, especially the approvals of the Kinder Morgan trans-mountain pipeline to Vancouver and Enbridge's expansion of its Line 3 pipeline to Wisconsin. Both projects originate in Alberta and are designed to allow expansion of the tar sands extraction by another million barrels per day.

He noted that the Trudeau government has officially embraced the very modest greenhouse gas reduction targets established by the Stephen Harper Conservatives committing Canada to a 200 megatonne lowering by 2010 (from current levels around 725). However the two pipeline approvals will increase net emissions by more than 200 megatonnes even if the federal government's carbon tax and coal phase-out are implemented. That jump is on top of another huge increase in emissions resulting from fracking and

export of liquefied natural gas from British Columbia that obtained an earlier ok from the Trudeau administration. The entire event can be viewed online

## Feb 4th - Seedy Saturday!

An annual gardening extravaganza that brings together a wonderful community of like minded vendors, environmental groups, and local organizations. It is a community seed exchange, a place to find out about local, sustainable products and practices, and a place to gain knowledge through workshops and presentations. It is the 'go to' place for anyone and everyone interested in backyard gardening, edible gardening, pollinator gardens, sustainability, heirloom and organic seed supplies and more. On Saturday Feb 4 10am-3pm at McQuesten Urban Farm, (St. Helen Centre), 785 Britannia Ave, Hamilton. If you are interested in volunteering or being a vendor, contact [chelsea.curran@greenventure.ca](mailto:chelsea.curran@greenventure.ca)

## Jan 24th - Bee Nest Box Building

Build your own Bee Box improving habitat for pollinators. Learn about native plants which provide pollinator food. Free. All materials provided but bring your own hammer. Pre-registration required at [land@hamiltonnature.org](mailto:land@hamiltonnature.org) or 905 549-0900. Regretfully space is not wheelchair accessible

## Subscribe to Actlocally Calendar

For over a decade Actlocally has provided the region from Halton to Niagara with an online events calendar with a particular focus on environmental, nature, and social justice events, Subscribe and receive a weekly mail out of the week's upcoming events at [www.actlocally.info](http://www.actlocally.info)

## Helen Brink Remembered (1928-2016)

Helen Brink and her late husband Andrew, early members of The Conservers' Dundas Chapter, provided generous support for environmental issues and actively fought to stop quarry expansion in Flamborough/Dundas. Helen was a passionate gardener and potter, building her own studio on her Dundas property, where she taught and made pottery. Later, she created a conservation easement on her property near the Bruce Peninsula with the Escarpment Biosphere Land Trust—a tribute to her passion and a lasting legacy.

## Pollinator Paradise Project

Conservers' Ed Smee Fund supported this Hamilton Naturalists' Club project. 93 students (high school and elementary) restored pollinator habitat, helped to build a pollinator corridor across the city, and learned to be conservation stewards, engaging in classroom, schoolyard, and nature sanctuary activities.

They learned about the rapid decline of pollinator populations and the importance of urban pollinator habitats and their benefits to vegetable gardens. At the



McQueston Urban Farm they helped harvest over 500 pounds of carrots as well as created habitats, removing sod, adding topsoil, borders, planting, mulching, watering and ongoing site maintenance. This successful project has empowered

them to take their knowledge and skills into their communities.

## Reflections of a New Turtle Watcher

by B. Warnick [abridged] After reading a Hamilton Spectator article in spring 2016, I decided to join Dundas Turtle Watch. It was all new to me and I was no great fan of snapping turtles. After training I was ready to volunteer my Saturday mornings, monitoring not just turtles, but any creature alive or dead. Accurate information gathered, shared with RBG, informs on consequences to wildlife on roads passing through marshland.

Our walks provided good exercise and deepened respect for nature. I performed my walks with an experienced watcher and another rookie, filling in data sheets, recording findings and GPS coordinates, taking photos. From day one we were rewarded with turtle nest finds, and placed secure screening over them to protect eggs from predators. Many nests did produce young. Sadly one very large, pregnant snapping turtle was found seriously injured on Cootes Drive and died later at a wildlife care facility, leaving a lasting sad memory. Cootes Drive also gave us a just-killed deer. August saw many nests producing young turtles and much excitement. 2016 was a banner year for nesting and young. Even a few notched turtles (from a 1980 research project) were found. A year-end review meeting provided extraordinary statistics and the intent to return to turtle-watching in 2017.

*Dundas Turtle Watch is always looking for volunteers. The time commitment is approximately 2 hours once a week in the early morning or evening. The work requires a lot of walking and accurate recording of data. All data is shared with RBG and Hamilton Conservation Authority. If interested please contact 905-627-8917*



**Conserver Society of Hamilton  
and District**

c/o EcoHouse  
22 Veevers Dr  
Hamilton, ON  
L8K 5P5

Phone: 905.540.8787 ext 155.  
E-mail: [contact@conserver society.ca](mailto:contact@conserver society.ca)  
Website: [www.conserver society.ca](http://www.conserver society.ca)

**Conserving the  
environment since 1983**

**The Environmental  
Advocate** is published by  
the **Conserver Society of  
Hamilton and District Inc.**, a  
non-profit, non-partisan  
citizen organization  
concerned with the  
environment in the region  
at the western end of Lake  
Ontario.

**Editor: Laurel Harrison**

Submissions for the  
Newsletter are invited and  
should be sent to the  
mailing address or to the  
editor at  
[contact@conserver society.ca](mailto:contact@conserver society.ca) (Email submissions  
preferred, please)

**Urquhart Butterfly Garden (UBG)**

UBG partnered with the Conserver Society and got funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to put new information panels in a kiosk in the garden. Happily, the resulting kiosk attracts a lot of attention.

Overall the number of butterflies were down in 2016, both at UBG and at most other places.

However some uncommon species came in higher numbers than usual (Fiery Skipper).

With Pearly Everlasting planted this year,

the garden was immediately rewarded with American Lady Butterflies laying their eggs. Giant Swallowtails were spotted laying eggs on at least two occasions which is a first for the UBG as those spectacular butterflies usually just pop in for brief visits. This year there were two instances of Monarchs mating for over 48 hours!



'Fiery Skipper' - photo credit Michelle Sharp



Photo of new kiosk

The new neighbouring Canal Park has been great for the UBG because it is full of vetch and clover which attract butterflies, some late into the season. The UBG is fortunate in its new energetic gardener, Jessah Hodgins, who will return in this year. We are looking forward to spring and the great plans for Urquhart Butterfly Garden!



## IT IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

*Your membership enables us to have a stronger, more effective voice for a healthy, sustainable environment in Hamilton and the surrounding area.*

As a member, you are entitled to receive *The Environmental Advocate* (our newsletter), participate in Society activities, and vote at our Annual General Meeting.

The most important role of the Conserver Society is our partnership with like-minded organizations. Our sponsorship with individuals and groups facilitates access to necessary funding. Without this, crucial work in our community would not be done.

The Conserver Society is a non-partisan, registered charitable organization. We gratefully accept donations above the basic membership fee. You will receive a **tax receipt** for your membership and any donation you choose to make.



Name:		Phone:	
Address:			
Email:			
Annual Membership*:	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$20 <input type="checkbox"/> Organization - \$40		
I would like to make an additional tax-deductible donation of:		\$	
I am submitting a total of:		\$	
I would prefer my newsletter by:	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Postal <input type="checkbox"/> Both		

*\*Individuals or families on low incomes are entitled to a 50% reduction in fees.*

Donations can also be made to the Conserver Society online at: [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)

Please mail your completed form and cheque\* to:

Membership Director  
Conserver Society of Hamilton & District  
22 Veevers Dr.  
Hamilton, ON  
L8K 5P5

*\*Cheques should be made payable to the Conserver Society of Hamilton & District.*

***"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction ~ Rachel Carson***



## DONATION FORM

I wish to support the Conservor Society of Hamilton & District, Inc. by making a donation:  
Please find information on my donation below.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: Prov: Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to make a donation in the amount of \$: \_\_\_\_\_

We are a 100% volunteer run organization and all of your donations are used to support environmental projects in the Hamilton area. All donations will be fully tax receipted. The Conservor Society is a registered charity (11922 8419 RR 0001).

☐ I am enclosing a cheque payable to the Conservor Society

### Support the Betty Blashill Fund

Your donation can go towards the Betty Blashill Fund of the Conservor Society, an annual award that honours behind the scenes environmental volunteers.

☐ I would like my donation to go towards the Betty Blashill Fund

### Donate to the Ed Smee Conservor Society Environmental Fund

<http://hamiltoncommunityfoundation.ca/giving/>

If you wish to donate by credit card, please visit the Canada Helps website at:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/dn/5959>

Please mail this form and your cheque to:

Conservor Society c/o Green Venture  
22 Veevers Drive, Hamilton ON L8K 5P5

*\*Cheques should be made payable to the Conservor Society of Hamilton & District.*

***Thank you for supporting environmental action in your community.***