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The Environmental Advocate

www.conserversociety.ca

Conservers Annual General Meeting – Tuesday April 17th

The Conservers Society of Hamilton & District Inc. invites members and friends to our annual general meeting.

Changing the climate... of climate change

This year's guest speaker will be Grant Linney, a recently retired career outdoor and environmental educator. His most recent classroom featured 426 acres of forest, meadow and wetlands (including the Credit River) near Georgetown. He is very concerned about climate change and has conducted 35 presentations on this subject over the past 2 years as a volunteer for Al Gore's Climate Reality Project. In January, Grant also started up his own blog and website, www.climategrant.com.



Grant Linney

For this presentation, Grant will speak about two projects on climate change that he is currently developing in cooperation with the Conservers Society of Hamilton.

He will also give us an update on the main messages on climate change that he currently seeks to convey in his presentations. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Date and Time:
Tuesday April 17th, begins at 5:30

Location:
15 Colbourne St (Just off James St. North). 905-543-8512.

Agenda:
5:30: Conservers Society AGM: Activities and financial reports
6:00: Snacks and beverage social
6:45: Grant Linney talk.
8:00 – ?: Green Drinks and socializing (cash bar available).

Beverages and snacks available for participants during the AGM.

Bring a friend! - non-members welcome. Memberships are available at the event. See you there!

**RSVP or questions:
contact@conserversociety.ca**

March 2012

Conservers Society of Hamilton and District

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Hamilton Naturalists' Club's Monarchs & Milkweed program a great success for students and for Monarchs



**A Conserver
Sponsored
Program!**

The Hamilton Naturalists' Club's popular Monarchs & Milkweed program successfully reared dozens of Monarchs and taught more than 100 students about this wonder of the natural world. Students in grades 1 to 5 from Hess Street, Lawfield, Lakeview, and Cathy Wever schools participated in the program.

The Monarchs & Milkweed program began in April with the HNC visiting the classes to talk about the significance of Monarchs and their unique dependence on milkweed. A goal of the program was to show the students that they can take action to help restore Monarch habitat. This was achieved by having the students grow native plants from seed in their classrooms. The plant species included both common milkweed and butterfly weed, both used by Monarchs, as well as other savannah species. The students cared for the plants and

tracked their growth. The plants were transplanted by HNC volunteers at the HNC's Amaolo Nature Sanctuary to help with an ecological restoration project that is underway and that will create habitat for many species of insects, birds and small mammals.

In June the students visited the Cartwright Nature Sanctuary in Dundas. For



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Society of
Hamilton & District
today!**

some of the students it was their first nature outing. The students remembered much of the information discussed in the classroom and were happy to report on the growth of their plants. During the nature outing the students completed a non-collecting Scavenger Hunt that encourages them to discover interesting plants, insects and birds. The nature outings are always fun and the students often have interesting questions. On one trip we saw a turkey vulture and a grade 4 student asked if they could lie down and play dead to see if the vulture would come down to them. This means that the student remembered our classroom discussion that had happened two months previously.

The exciting program culminated in September with students rearing Monarch caterpillars and releasing the butterflies for their journey to Mexico. This was a very popular part of the program and students kept a close eye on their caterpillars each day. It is quite an experience to watch the caterpillars move around the cage constantly eating and

growing. Monarchs often make a big impact on people and that was evident with this program. One autistic boy in grade 1 increased his vocabulary to include Monarch, butterfly, and milkweed and was able to tell stories about the caterpillars in his classroom.

This hands-on program was really popular with students and teachers and the HNC hopes to keep it going. In mid-November the HNC and The Print Studio will be visiting the students to help them create Monarch artwork. Having these multiple opportunities to connect with the students helps to ensure we can drive the conservation message home while providing unique programming for the students.

The HNC thanks the Conserver Society for generously funding the program through the Ed Smee Environmental Fund.

For more information about the Monarchs & Milkweed program, please contact Jen Baker at 905-524-3339 or land@hamiltonnature.org.



The Hamilton Naturalists' Club is a non-profit organization with over 500 members dedicated to the study, appreciation and conservation of our wild plants and animals. The Club traces its history to the founding of the Hamilton Bird Protection Society in 1919.

Early achievements include the designation of Cootes Paradise as a nature reserve in 1927, and the organization of 34,000 children in Junior Audubon Clubs across Canada during the 1930's.



Green Venture is a
community-based
non-profit
organization
committed to
helping residents
live more
sustainably at
home, at work, and
in their daily lives.

Green Venture and the Conserver Society team up to clean up the harbour

Green Venture would like to thank the Conserver Society of Hamilton and District for sponsoring the Healthy Harbour! program. Funding in the amount of \$5,000 has been generously provided by an RBC Blue Water Project Community Action Grant.



Enjoying making a pet waste composter at Green Venture's Pet Waste Composter Workshop

Green Venture is excited about this opportunity to help protect our local rivers and reduce non-point pollution entering Hamilton Harbour. In recent years, Hamilton has experienced serious problems relating to stormwater and runoff including environmental and water quality degradation, threats to human health and safety, and millions of dollars in property damage.

This program will provide tangible results in eliminating toxins from our environment. To-

gether with residents in the community, we will construct forty pet waste composters and one rain garden.

The program goals are:

- (1) Reduce non point source pollution entering Hamilton Harbour
- (2) Educate residents about the effects of stormwater runoff
- (3) Motivate behavioural change

Pet waste workshops will improve local water quality by eliminating an expected 4,380 pounds of pet waste from landfills and waterways each year.

Rain gardens allow stormwater runoff to filter naturally through the ground as nature intended, replenishing groundwater aquifers.

Stay tuned for more details about upcoming Healthy Harbour! workshops. Contact Kathryn Gold at water@greenventure.ca or 905-540-8787 ext. 114 for more information.



Volunteers, workshop attendees, and Green Venture staff get ready to install a rain garden at Green Venture's Eco-House.

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Aerotropolis update

Individuals and organizations are lining up to participate in the Ontario Municipal Board hearings on the aerotropolis – the proposed “employment growth district that will consume 2,500 acres of prime foodland around the airport. Over forty signed up at the February 15 pre-hearing and the deadline has been extended to April 16.

The Conserver Society is seeking one or more individuals to speak on our behalf or their own. Get in touch with us at contact@conserverociety.ca or call Environment Hamilton at [\(905\) 549-0900](tel:905-549-0900) for information on how to register.

The city has set aside \$300,000 in 2012 for the aerotropolis hearings and has hired outside lawyers and multiple consultants to present their case to the OMB. Environment Hamilton is one of the appellants arguing that the half billion dollar boundary expansion is a mistake. They are seeking donations to help them cover legal and planning fees.

The first set of formal hearings will start immediately after the long weekend in May. Deemed a ‘threshold hearing’, this round will focus exclusively on whether or not residential and commercial development will be allowed on aerotropolis lands.

The city wants this determined first because most of the appellants are large land holders in the aerotropolis who specifically want permission to use their lands to build subdivisions and/or big box complexes. These appellants represent more than a third of the aerotropolis lands – and their appeals make it clear that the city’s dream of reserving it for industrial uses is likely just a dream.

Residential development is about four times more lucrative than industrial, and this helps explain why much of the city’s already-designated 1,800 acres of greenfield land remains empty as its owners wait for an opportunity to have it converted to residential or commercial uses.

This reluctance of private land speculators to sell for industrial uses is also very evident in the existing 250 acre airport business park that was established in 1992 and has yet to attract even one entrepreneur.

System change not climate change

In an extensive analysis of the appeal of climate sceptics, acclaimed author Naomi Klein argues that they may be more perceptive than environmentalists in recognizing the real implications of the global climate crisis. She says their main arguments are emotional, not scientific, and maintain that climate change is really a left-wing plot to destroy capitalism and the ‘free’ market. Klein suggests there is some truth here.

“The fact that the earth's atmosphere cannot safely absorb the amount of carbon we are pumping into it is a symptom of a much larger crisis, one born of the central fiction on which our economic model is based: that nature is limitless, that we will always be able to find

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Dennis Corr

more of what we need, and that if something runs out it can be seamlessly replaced by another resource that we can endlessly extract,” she writes in the current edition of *The Nation*. “But it is not just the atmosphere that we have exploited beyond its capacity to recover – we are doing the same to the oceans, to freshwater, to topsoil and to biodiversity. The expansionist, extractive mindset, which has so long governed our relationship to nature, is what the climate crisis calls into question so fundamentally. The abundance of scientific research showing we have pushed nature beyond its limits does not just demand green products and market-based solutions; it demands a new civilizational paradigm, one grounded not in dominance over nature but in respect for natural cycles of renewal – and acutely sensitive to natural limits, including the limits of human intelligence.”

Klein thus agrees with the sceptics that climate change itself isn’t the issue.

“Climate change is a message, one that is telling us that many of our culture's most cherished ideas are no longer viable. These are profoundly challenging revelations for all of us raised on Enlightenment ideals of progress, unaccustomed to having our ambitions confined by natural boundaries.”

Wrapping up Mobile Monitoring

In late 2010 to 2011, the *Mobile Monitoring*, an air quality project, took samples from 11 different areas in Hamilton. While this City has stationary air

quality monitors, for example, Hamilton Air Monitoring Network

(hamnair.ca), one of the unique aspects of this project

is that its mobility-data can be collected anywhere in the City. Rotek Environmental, Inc gathered samples and analyzed the information, using a specialized vehicle with an air quality station mounted on it.

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Conserver Society board member Denis Corr has performed a number of mobile monitoring air quality studies to estimate and control the localized health impacts of air pollution.

The results were used to determine *total health impacts*, i.e. its effects on mortality. With this information, concerned residents are able to find out the air quality in their neighbourhood and can identify certain predominant pollutants and potentially their sources. Ideally, with this information, residents can work towards decreasing contaminants in their environment.

Five contaminants that were measured:

- Carbon Monoxide (CO)
- Oxides of Nitrogen (NO, NO₂, NO_x)

**Rotek
Environmental Inc.**
is a full service
environmental air
quality monitoring
company providing
a wide range of
technical services
to both
government and
private sector
clients for over 15
years.

- Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂)
- PM₁₀ (Inhalable Particulates, is “coarse” an example is dust stirred up by traffic”
- PM_{2.5} (Respirable Particulates, is “fine” and found in smoke or haze and can only be viewed through a microscope)

Originally, 11 locations were monitored: Beach Blvd / Eastport Drive, Delta, Dundas, Jones Road / Arvin Avenue, Lawrence Avenue to Burlington Street, Limeridge Mall, McAnulty Blvd, near Mountain, North West End, Red Hill neighbourhoods, Wentworth North. After neighbourhood interest, two locations had previously collected data analyzed: Kirkendall and Strathcona Neighbourhoods.

One of the interesting results from the study was that, on average, the City has an *increased mortality* of 11.5%. In

other words, for every 100 deaths in Hamilton (from non-traumatic causes), there is, on average, an additional 11 deaths due to air pollution.

“Non-traumatic” means not caused by car accidents, etc. Throughout the 11 areas studied, the increased mortality rates ranged from 6.8% to 18.4%.

Presentation:

Information about increased mortality and details for each of the areas studied was discussed in a presentation by Rotek Environmental, Inc., in January 2012 to over 60 residents. The results have been compiled in a report, *Hamilton Neighbourhoods: Mobile Air Quality Monitoring to Determine Local Impacts*. Dr. Corr presented his findings of health impacts in the various neighbourhoods.

Continued on last page...



Van owned by the Ministry of Environment and used by Rotek to conduct mobile monitoring in select Hamilton neighbourhoods.

Formed in 1998, Clean Air Hamilton is a multi-stakeholder group dedicated to improving air quality in Hamilton's community. The group is committed to improving citizens' health and quality of life through communication and promotion of realistic, science-based decision-making and sustainable practices.

Pleasant View update

The Pleasant View lands in Dundas, bounded by Cootes Paradise and the escarpment, have added protection by the provincial government which has approved inclusion of Pleasant View into the Niagara Escarpment Plan. There are some appeals before the Niagara Escarpment Commission Tribunal from the landowners.

The Hamilton and Halton Conservation Authorities, HNC, RBG and McMaster are working on a vision of the Pleasant View lands becoming part of an EcoPark, which would include the Veldhuis property in Dundas as the gateway to the park. The EcoPark is part of an even larger connected park system laid out in the Cootes to Escarpment project.

The Head-of-the-Lake Land Trust, a program of the HNC, recently had a wonderful fundraising dinner and silent auction to assist the Land Trust in acquiring more land in Pleasant View, to add to the Cartwright Sanctuary.

We need more voices behind our important work.

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One afternoon tea or morning coffee with two of the Conserver Society's finest...

The Board of Directors requests the honour of two members to join the search party for new Board members. This is an annually appointed committee whose job it is to meet once at least 10 weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting, held in March, to present nominees for election to the Board of Directors.

If you are interested in the search and know of people who could be approached to join the Board of Directors, please apply by e-mail to Christine at cebrown@cogeco.ca or call 905-648-3391. Alternatively, contact Alison at 905-648-6964 or by e-mail at asf.healing@cogeco.ca.

Info junkie and tech savvy, and looking to keep the environmental network humming?

Have you seen our website lately? Yes, it needs updating.

Steven Nagy is our web-site manager and we would like to support him with someone who can provide updates to its contents and linkages to appropriate groups and interests. Familiarity with the Conserver Society is an asset unless you are a quick study.

Please contact Christine at 905-648-3391 or cebrown@cogeco.ca

Get involved with the Conserver Society!

In addition to the opportunities on this page, we are looking for board members and are actively searching for youth members.

**If you know a young person between the ages of 20-30 that would like to gain experience on a friendly board and help improve the quality of our community, please have them contact us—
contact@conserver
society.ca**

Newsletter editor and layout

We are also looking for someone with layout skills to produce our newsletter. The design is already in place and the machinery exists to distribute it on a quarterly basis. We need your help to bring it together.

Please contact Christine at 905-648-3391 or cebrown@cogeco.ca

Ed Smee funding update

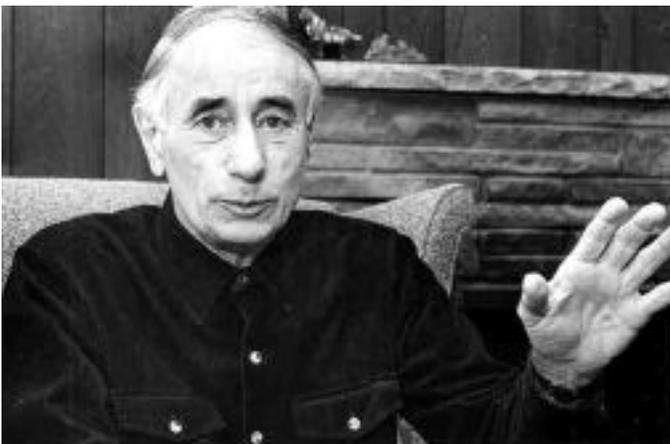
The Ed Smee Conserver Society Environmental Fund Advisory Committee conducted is pleased to announce that based on our recommendation, \$2,500 will be awarded in 2012 to the Hamilton Naturalists' Club's Regeneration Project.

Through the Regeneration project youth (aged 12-21) connected with the Good Sheppard Society's Notre Dame House, as well as other street-influenced youth programs (ex. Wesley Ministries) will be given an introduction to natural history in the Hamilton area while helping with stewardship projects at the HNC's nature sanctuaries.

Examples of stewardship projects include setting up vegetation and photo monitoring plots. This may include conducting photo monitoring of the more than 200 Eastern Flowering Dogwood trees at the HNC's Spooky Hollow Nature Sanctuary. Other stewardship activities include building wood duck boxes for the Amaolo Nature Sanctuary, weather staining boardwalks at the Cartwright Nature Sanctuary, clearing trails at the Spooky Hollow Nature Sanctuary and controlling invasive plants at all of the nature sanctuaries. Through these activities the youth will be able to make meaningful contributions to steward natural areas while also earning volunteer hours.

Overall, three fantastic proposals were reviewed and rated by the committee — choosing only one was very difficult. If you have an idea for a project, Please let us

know as we will be conducting another round of funding in 2013.



Ed Smee

A big thanks from the Board to the Ed Smee Committee members: Susan G, Barbara T, and Catherine B—thank you!

Mr. Ed Smee was the founding Chairman of the Society and served not only as a leader and mentor in his work as a volunteer with the Society, but also by example through his personal life working on environmental issues. Ed Smee is credited by his friends at the Society with helping to create the first action plan for the Bay.



**Conserver Society of Hamilton
and District**

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**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: Pete Wobschall

Submissions for the Newsletter are invited and should be sent to the mailing address or to the editor at contact@conserverociety.ca (*Email submissions preferred, please*)

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Next Steps:

In 2012, Green Venture, in partnership with Rotek Environmental, Inc., Ministry of Environment and Clean Air Hamilton will be submitting a funding application to study other neighbourhoods in Hamilton. There has been great interest from area residents in this project and the continuation of funding would allow Mobile Monitoring to gather and analyze more data in different areas of the City.

Thank you to Conserver Society of Hamilton and District, Ministry of Environment, Rotek Environmental, Inc., and Public Health for their partnership and dedication to this project.

Special thanks to *Mobile Monitoring* funders, ArcelorMittal Dofasco and Clean Air Hamilton.

Links:

To view the complete report, *Hamilton Neighbourhoods: Mobile Air Quality Monitoring to Determine Local Impacts*, visit Clean Air Hamilton's website at:

<http://cleanair.hamilton.ca/default.asp?id=72>

For a map of the boundaries of each area, visit:

<http://g.co/maps/a6v5u>

For information of the January 2012 presentation by Dr. Denis Corr and Rotek Environmental Inc., visit Green Venture's website at:

www.greenventure.ca or contact@greenventure.ca.

Call for Nominations

The Conserver Society Board is seeking Board of Directors members.

If you are interested and able to contribute, please contact Alison Healing, Nomination Committee at contact@conserverociety.ca.

Being a board member involves spending between 5-6 hours a month to prepare for and attend meetings in the Hamilton area and contribute to projects that the Society plans and implements.

*Call for
Nominations*

Conserver Society of Hamilton & District 2012 Membership Application or Renewal Form

Your membership fee enables us to be an effective voice for a healthy, sustainable environment in Hamilton and the surrounding area. As a member in good standing, you will be entitled to receive the Environmental Advocate (our newsletter), participate in projects and activities of the Society and its chapters and vote at our Annual General Meeting.

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 the amount of your membership fee and any donations you choose to make.

Please print this form, fill it out and return it with your cheque to:

Membership Director

Conserver Society of Hamilton & District

Box 89002, 991 King St. West

Hamilton, Ontario, L8S 4R5

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our important work.**

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and join today!**

Yearly (2012) Membership Fee Individual _____ \$10 Family _____ \$20 Organization _____ \$40

(Individuals or families on low incomes are entitled to request a 50% reduction in fees.)

I would like to make an additional tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

I am submitting a total of: \$ _____

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

Member Information

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date: _____ Check here if this is a membership renewal: _____

Please direct the chapter portion of my membership fee to the following chapter:

_____ Ancaster _____ Dundas _____ Hamilton

If you do not specify a chapter, your entire fee will be directed to the parent body and allocated to Conserver Society activities as needed.

Thank you!