



# LEGACY

Spring 2007  
Newsletter

Focus on the  
Environment

## Message

from the President & CEO

The environment is now the number one concern for Canadians – and all levels of government, businesses, organizations, and individuals are responding. Hamilton Community Foundation is no exception.

In 2000, when HCF talked to community stakeholders about how we could focus our work most effectively, the community flagged the environment as a priority. Our Board of Directors agreed that, without immediate action by everyone, our society was on a collision course with the well-being of the planet.

Since then, building on the past work of HCF's donor-advised funds and field of interest funds, and with the research and learning we have undertaken with the support of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Hamilton Community Foundation has been refining a strategy to best “play our position” in environmental issues.

We've identified things we can do particularly well: make effective grants, engage citizens in action, build the capacity of our local environmental organizations, and share knowledge and learning.

We launched the POET program (Protecting Our Environment Together) in 2004 with the (continuing) help of a stellar advisory committee. POET's focus on engaging youth and neighbourhoods and building the capacity of our environmental organizations has helped increase our city's ability to address its environmental challenges. Through POET and other funds, HCF is having an impact in Hamilton. This newsletter highlights some of that work.

Every one of us has a part to play in saving our environment. In these pages, we mention two outstanding Hamiltonians, Ray Lowes and the late Bruce Duncan, who have done more than their share. I encourage each of you to take action as well (see page 2 for suggestions) and also to consider contributing to our Environmental Endowment Fund if the community's sustainable future is your passion.

Carolyn Milne

Photo courtesy  
The Hamilton Spectator

## POET Initiative Extended

Grant  
News

Hamilton Community Foundation's innovative environmental grants program, *Protecting Our Environment Together* (POET), has been extended for an additional year to build on its track record of helping to create a greener Hamilton.

Launched in time for Earth Day in April 2004, POET was the outcome of extensive consultation with stakeholders, the formation of an advisory committee, and the learning gained from research supported by the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation. POET's grantmaking focuses on engaging neighbourhoods and youth, and building the capacity of environmental organizations.

“Hamilton has huge assets on the environmental side: the pioneering work of people like Ray Lowes, the natural attributes of our city's setting, outstanding conservation areas and much more,” says Ian Cowan, Chair of HCF's Environmental Advisory Committee.

“At the same time Hamilton has some obvious environmental challenges. We've made an excellent start in addressing these challenges with POET and will continue to make grants through this initiative.”

– continued on page 4

**Student gardener, Marlee MacDougall, was one of the participants in a youth-led POET project.**  
(See page 3)



## Donor Profile



### Ray Lowes

He had a dream that wouldn't fade, and a vision that had to be shared. With development encroaching ever further on the precious habitats of the Niagara Escarpment, he sought to create a nature trail that would span some 800 km, from Queenston Heights in Niagara to Tobermory at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula.

Ray Lowes was a Stelco metallurgist by trade but also an avid amateur naturalist when he launched the Bruce Trail 40 years ago.

He founded the Bruce Trail Association and, with help from numerous volunteers, blazed Canada's longest footpath, providing the only public access to the magnificent Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. He was active on all fronts, from paperwork to public speaking to physical path clearing.

"He's always been a visionary, a trailblazer in every sense of the word," Al Ernest of the Hamilton Naturalists' Club says.

The Bruce Trail opened in 1967, but Ray's legacy was far from complete. In 1992, he established the Ray Lowes Environmental Fund at Hamilton Community Foundation to support environmental causes in perpetuity, and he added to the fund over the years. Until recently, Ray guided the fund himself, but now, in his mid-90s, he allows the Foundation to make grant decisions on his behalf.

"Ray has an outstanding personal commitment to the environment, and he inspired others to share that commitment through his conservation work, and through his philanthropy," says HCF's Carolyn Milne. "Our community owes him a great deal."

## Environmental Tips

- Lower your thermostat at night and when no one is home
- Don't let the water run while you brush your teeth
- Buy locally-grown or produced food
- Stop using pesticides in your garden
- Choose energy-efficient home appliances
- Turn off your vehicle when parked – restarting the engine uses less fuel than 10 seconds of idling and produces less air pollution
- At work, use both sides of paper – turn obsolete documents into notepads or use for fax cover sheets

For more tips see [www.earthday.ca](http://www.earthday.ca) or [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)

## Urban Core Gets New Green Space

The vision: Imagine a small patch of natural beauty, complete with native trees and wildflowers, in the middle of the inner city.

The driving force: Head-of-the-Lake Land Trust, an offshoot of the Hamilton Naturalists' Club.

The startup financial impetus: A \$12,500 grant from Hamilton Community Foundation, through its *Protecting Our Environment Together* (POET) initiative.

"When thinking of the urban core, people don't necessarily think of trees, plants and wildlife," says Al Ernest, Program Coordinator for Head-of-the-Lake Land Trust. "We want to change that by introducing more green space."

The proposed nature sanctuary, to be called Land's Inlet, will transform a 250-metre long corridor of industrialized land in Hamilton's north end.

Strategically located between homes, the rail line and a busy street, the site was originally a waterway allowing boats inland access from Hamilton Harbour – thus the name Land's Inlet. "You can still see a slight valley in the profile of the landscape," Al notes. "This area really jumped out at us in terms of the opportunity for habitat restoration."

Tree and wildflower planting this spring will be followed by other work to continue through 2008. Bird and bat boxes, a bench, pathway and interpretive signs are planned.

Thanks to HCF support through its POET initiative and the Edith Turner Foundation Fund, the club has been able to build new partnerships and leverage other core funding, including a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

## POET Funds 59 Youth-Led Projects

Hamilton high school students are working together to make our city more environmentally friendly, thanks to the help of Hamilton Community Foundation's *Protecting Our Environment Together* (POET) program. To date, POET small grants totaling \$37,400 have supported 59 environmental projects led by students at 26 of Hamilton's 27 high schools.

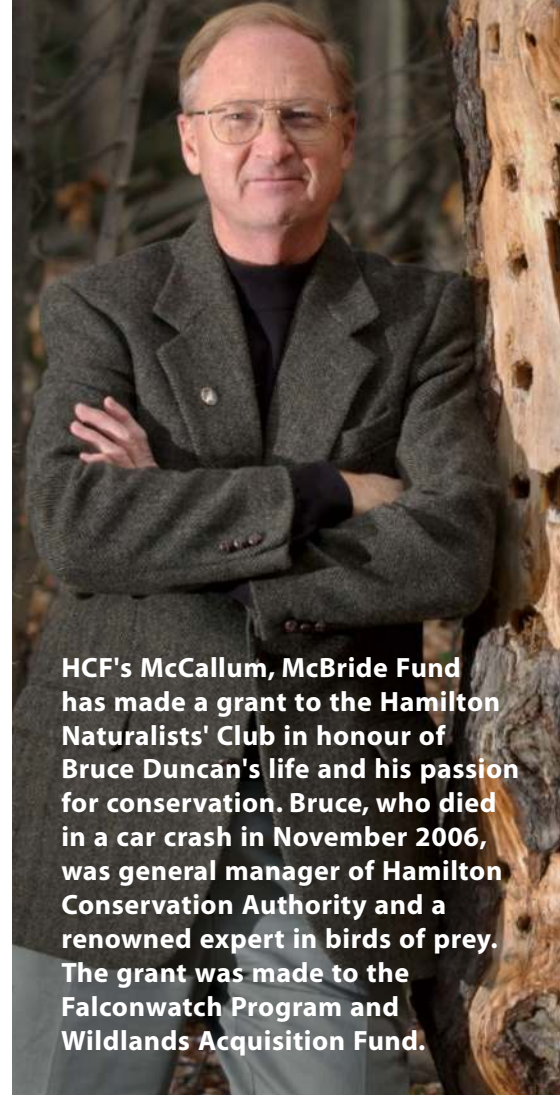
Projects range from a vermiculture project at Parkview Secondary School that turns red worms and cafeteria food waste into compost for the school's landscaping program to a "cycle to school" program at Delta Secondary School.

For the past two years, HCF has hosted *Living the Environment* – a conference that provides a venue for students to talk about their environmental concerns, take part in environmental workshops, and hear about POET youth grants.

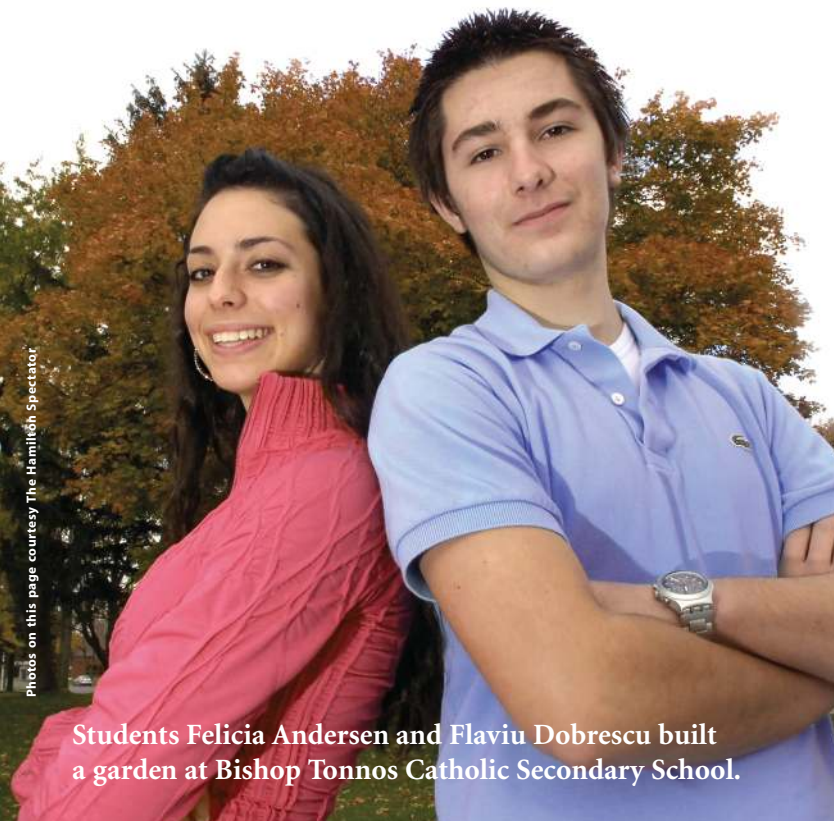
"This conference brings young people together in an environmental forum that isn't just educational, but encourages youth to get involved in hands-on projects," says Linda Hughes, the Adult Advisor to HCF's Youth Advisory Council. "The projects that result from the POET grants show how young people are taking action, developing leadership skills and participating in making their community a better place to live."

POET is now undergoing a formal evaluation but all indications are that the initiative has made a difference, particularly in the high school sector, and in bringing Hamilton's environmental organizations together. HCF is well-positioned to capitalize on the public's building concern for the environment.

## Remembering Bruce Duncan



HCF's McCallum, McBride Fund has made a grant to the Hamilton Naturalists' Club in honour of Bruce Duncan's life and his passion for conservation. Bruce, who died in a car crash in November 2006, was general manager of Hamilton Conservation Authority and a renowned expert in birds of prey. The grant was made to the Falconwatch Program and Wildlands Acquisition Fund.



Students Felicia Andersen and Flaviu Dobrescu built a garden at Bishop Tonnos Catholic Secondary School.

## Thank You!

### POET Advisory Committee Members

Ian Cowan, *PricewaterhouseCoopers (Chair)*

Julia Abelson, *McMaster University*

Bill Gair, *Dofasco*

Bill Jansen, *City of Hamilton*

John Hall, *Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan*

John Shaw, *Environment Canada*

Ollie Thomson, *community volunteer*

Kathryn Townshend, *Canadian Environmental Grantmakers' Network*

Mary Ellen Scanlon, *Ministry of the Environment*

Ben Vanderbrug, *community volunteer*

## Thank You, Dana!

Hamilton Community Foundation reluctantly accepted the resignation of board member Dana Robbins, former editor-in-chief of The Hamilton Spectator, in December 2006, after his appointment as publisher of The Record in Kitchener-Waterloo and The Mercury in Guelph.

Dana joined the HCF board in June 2002 and was chair of the Marketing and Communications Committee, and a member of the Strategic Planning Committee, the Grants Committee and the Audit Committee. Dana was also a key member of the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, where he contributed to putting poverty on the local radar through The Spectator's three-year commitment to poverty as a public policy focus.

In his resignation letter, Dana called the Roundtable "the single most important community initiative that I've seen in Hamilton in the past quarter century. It has the potential, I believe, to be nothing less than transformational." Dana's letter also included words of praise for HCF, calling it a "remarkable organization ... Foundation folks, I've come to appreciate, are 'community builders' and I count it as a privilege to have worked with you."

Dana Robbins

## Donation Tip

### Transferring Stock – A Good Strategy

In the last issue of *Legacy*, our donor tip was about the benefits of making a gift of marketable securities.

This new option can have such a significant tax benefit that it's worth repeating – especially while tax issues are top-of-mind in April. Since May 2006, there is no capital gains tax on shares or mutual funds that are donated to a community foundation. Donors receive a tax receipt for the full market value.

Anyone considering a gift to HCF, and who has marketable securities that have appreciated in value, should discuss this option with their advisor.

For information, please call Pam Lakin at 905-523-5600, ext. 23.

### POET Initiative Extended – continued from page 1

The total grantmaking commitment from POET remains at \$300,000; to date, approximately \$159,000 has been awarded in grants (approximately \$106,600 for citizen/neighbourhood engagement, \$37,400 for youth initiatives and \$15,000 for supporting environmental organizations).

Funds for POET come from the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and five donor funds at HCF, along with support from the Community Fund. At the same time, environmental grantmaking from donor-advised funds is ever-increasing, as citizens express their commitment to a healthier planet.

### A few outcomes of recent HCF environmental grants:

- Hamilton EcoNet was established, bringing together 24 local environmental organizations focused on energy efficiency and pollution prevention ([www.hamiltoneconet.ca](http://www.hamiltoneconet.ca))
- High school students in 26 schools undertook almost 60 environmental projects
- 3,000 north Hamilton households were given energy saving kits that saved 1,600 tonnes of greenhouse gases
- 5,000 trees were planted, 1,800 inventoried, and a tree festival initiated
- 3,500 north-end residents participated with industry and law makers to address neighbourhood environmental concerns
- Young people marked more than 1,000 storm drains with painted yellow fish, flagging the need to stop household pollutants from entering the water system



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For Hamilton, For Ever

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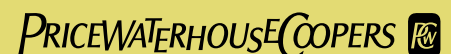
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