

# Update

The Newsletter of Ontario's Healthy Communities

## How Politics Works

by Ed Corrigan, BA, MA, LL.B.

With apologies to Carl von Clausewitz, politics is war continued by other means. Many political activists, environmental and other, want to influence decision makers and effect political change. Activists convinced of their cause get frustrated when they cannot get elected politicians to vote their way. Faced by this inability to influence decision makers, many activists get alienated from the political process. Both sides on an issue will lobby politicians and the strongest campaign usually determines the outcome.

The failed campaign to have London city council adopt a bylaw prohibiting the cosmetic use of pesticides is an excellent case in point. Despite packing the gallery at City Hall, having the support of the Medical Officer of Health with considerable medical evidence to back their cause, and the support of a large majority in the public opinion polls, council voted 15 to 3 against a



bylaw on pesticides. The majority of council chose to listen to the lawn care and chemical companies and adopted a plan supported by the pesticide industry.

In an example of a recent successful political campaign the anti-smoking lobby bombarded each member of City Council with more than a 1000 e-mails and showed that they had political power behind their cause. This expression of power convinced wavering members of City Council that it was politically prudent to support a bylaw to ban smoking in public places. This battle

was won despite a determined campaign from the tobacco lobby and their allies in the restaurant and bar business.

Part of the problem, in my opinion, is that activists do not understand what motivates elected politicians or how to influence them. Politics is about power. It is about the ability to get things done and make things happen. It is a military exercise and an organizational task. Those who get elected make the decisions. In politics perception is reality. But in electoral politics, reality is the vote in the election.

Many people who are alienated from politics refuse to participate in the political process. For them this abstention is a political statement. However, those who do not participate in the political process are destined to be governed by those who do.

Contempt for politics is a device for masking subservience to those who know how to make the political system work for them.

*Continued on page 4*

---

**INSIDE: 3/Woolwich Healthy Communities 5/Voter's Guide 7/Video Resource: Cause & Effluent**

*Visit our new web site at: [www.healthycommunities.on.ca](http://www.healthycommunities.on.ca)*

---



**Update** is the newsletter of the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition

#### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Monique Beaudoin  
Paul Filteau  
Lorna Heidenheim  
Kerri Jones  
Andrew Koch

#### LAYOUT

Kerri Jones

#### TRANSLATION

mots pour maux

#### PRINTING

Sherwood Digital Copying Inc.

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Sophie Bart  
Monique Beaudoin  
Ed Corrigan  
Melissa Dennison  
Joy Finney  
Lorna Heidenheim  
Lisa Tolentino

#### Please contact us at:

Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition  
555 Richmond Street West, Suite 505  
Box 1100  
Toronto, ON M5V 3B1

**telephone** (416) 408-4841

**toll free** 1-800-766-3418

**fax** (416) 408-4843

**e-mail** info@healthycommunities.on.ca

#### Visit our web site at:

www.healthycommunities.on.ca

The material contained herein reflects solely the views of the contributors and is not officially endorsed by OHCC or the Province of Ontario.

**Thank you to our funders:**  
Ontario Ministry of Health and  
Long Term Care  
Ontario Trillium Foundation

## November Elections An Important Opportunity, But Not The Last

By Melissa Dennison

Community participation in decision-making is one of the fundamentals of the Healthy Community approach. The November 2003 municipal elections offer every adult in Ontario a straightforward way to influence the political process in their community – by voting.

Our lead article is a piece by London City Councillor Ed Corrigan, who sends a clear message that voting is an essential part of civic engagement. He also outlines other forms of political power and how to use them to build support for your issues among elected officials.

The November elections are not the end of the political process, but another beginning. The composition of your council is likely to change, and over the course of its term hundreds of decisions will be made. Each decision provides an opportunity to move closer towards healthier, more sustainable outcomes. Many of these decisions will be preceded by formal and informal processes of research, public consultation, reflection, assessment of options and, of course, negotiation. The task for healthy community advocates is to influence as many of these processes as possible in order to ensure that they have a positive impact on the well-being of the community.

Provide councillors with well-reasoned alternatives when challenging their decisions. Many municipal decisions are made with the aim of solving a particular problem. While a Council may be able to see that one course of action might be less than ideal and unpopular, it won't be enough for them simply to reject it. The original problem will still exist, and Council

will be under pressure to do something about it. Community groups will have greater success if they give decision-makers superior options that have obvious public support.

Tell councillors when they have done something right! Every day, councillors receive letters, e-mails and faxes from citizens that express discontent with one municipal issue or another. A *compliment*, however, is rare enough to lodge in a councillor's mind and influence their beliefs about what their constituents really want from them.

Along with the political focus in this issue, you'll get an update on "House This", a conference organized by the Southwestern Community Development Network. Fascinating presentations and workshops explored the various layers of the housing issue, and OHCC's AGM also took place.

We are also introducing a new item to *Update*. From now on, we will be featuring a member profile. Our first profile focuses on Woolwich Healthy Communities, one of our community coalition members. You'll also find a reference to a voter's guide that OPHA has prepared. It is a useful resource for anyone interested in making public and community health an issue in the upcoming elections.

We hope that this issue of *Update* will be helpful to you and your community group in ensuring that the November municipal election makes the health of your community a priority.

*Melissa Dennison is a Canadian urban planner who recently returned from a four-year stint in community development in Australia.*

## OHCC MEMBER PROFILE

# Woolwich Healthy Communities: Bringing A Vision Alive

By Joy Finney

Woolwich Healthy Communities (WHC) is one of the oldest Healthy Communities Coalitions in the province. As a not-for-profit rural community initiative with members from all walks of life, WHC groups have been working since 1991 to improve the social, economic and environmental health of Woolwich Township.

### The Beginning

In November 1988, after the discovery of N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) in the ground water which supplies Elmira's and St. Jacobs' water systems, the Region of Waterloo appointed the Woolwich Community Health Committee to respond to the resulting health concerns of the community. In May 1991 a broad cross-section of people from across the township participated in a 'visioning day'. Out of the visioning day, three themes emerged, leading to the formation of three groups to plan and carry out a course of action in each area:

#### 1) Clean Waterways Group

The Clean Waterways Group works with farmers along the Canagagigue Creek to restore streams by



The Elmira Kiwanis Club joined the Clean Waterways Group's Adopt-A-Creek initiative in 2001

restricting cattle access to the creek and planting native trees and shrubs. The group won an Environmental Sustainability Award in the Region of Waterloo for their contribution to improving the health of the Canagagigue Creek.

#### 2) Woolwich Trails Group

The Woolwich Trails Group promotes hiking and biking in the Township for both transportation and recreation. The group works with the Region of Waterloo and the Township of Woolwich to incorporate trails into the planning process. Their *Woolwich Trails Guide* features over 77 kms of trails and has become the non-fiction bestseller at a local bookstore.

#### 3) The Woolwich Healthy Communities Coordinating Committee (WHCCC)

The WHCCC worked with Woolwich Township Council to create Healthy Communities guiding principles which encourage people to consider the economic, environmental and social implications of their decisions. The WHC Sustainable Communities group, which no longer exists, assessed how Woolwich is doing as a Township in the areas addressed by the principles, e.g. affordable housing. The principles and the *Woolwich Community Report* can be viewed at the Woolwich Healthy Communities website.

#### Challenges and Successes

WHC has had a remarkable history of community involvement and local government support. Previously, members would review Official Plans or proposed public policies. Today,

## NEW IN UPDATE!

In this issue you'll notice a new feature of *Update* – a membership profile. We plan to establish this as a regular feature in each issue.

OHCC has three types of membership:

#### Provincial Association:

an organization, professional association, network, or professional association that operates on a province-wide basis and has passed a resolution to support healthy communities and join OHCC.

#### Community Coalition

**Member:** a multi-sectoral community coalition or regional network that has passed a resolution to join OHCC.

**Network Member:** an individual or organization that supports healthy community principles and the goals of OHCC.

If you are a member and would like to have your work profiled, please contact OHCC.

members are increasingly interested in hands on, concrete projects, such as planting trees and creating trails.

WHC's greatest challenge is to make public policy issues relevant to citizens' lives, and to ensure that the healthy communities perspective becomes a stronger voice in the arena of public policy.

For further information please contact Joy Finney at (519) 664-3794, ext. 230 or visit the WHC website at [www.woolwichhc.cjb.net](http://www.woolwichhc.cjb.net). Joy Finney is one of the founding members of Woolwich Healthy Communities.

*Continued from page 1*

Activists must learn how to make the political system work for them. In the November 2000 London Municipal election voter turnout was only 32.75%. Those that voted determined who got elected. The 67.25% of Londoners who did not vote had no say in who controls City Hall. They gave up their political rights to those who voted. Some elections in London have been decided by as few as 6 votes.

Elections are the key pressure point in the system. How to have an impact in elections is the critical question. Politics is about power. Expression of power comes in many forms.

### **Money Power**

First there is money in the form of campaign donations. Corporations get to write off political donations as business expenses. Groups and individuals can also donate money. Some Ontario cities give individuals tax credits for political donations at

the municipal level. London does not. It is easy to see why developers and other businesses that make tax supported donations have influence with elected politicians. There is no point complaining about this fact, this is reality. Money pays for advertising, signs, pamphlet distribution and even workers. Money donated to political campaigns helps determine the outcome.

If you want to have political impact, donate to candidates that support your views. Organizations can host fund-raising parties and raise money from individuals and businesses. It is easy to see why elected politicians are very attentive to those who donate to political campaigns and ignore those who do not. The system also tends to eliminate those who do not have adequate financial resources and favours those who can raise money for political campaigns. Politicians are very aware of who makes donations.

### **People Power**

Money is not the only form of power in politics. Organization is also critical. Community groups have people power. Showing support by providing sign locations to a political candidate is effective. Public expressions of support help attract votes and build up name recognition to help a candidate win. Door to door canvassing and other techniques of communication of political support are also very important. Put your issues on the election agenda. Use your newsletters. Use the internet. A small group of people who work together in an organized fashion for a candidate for a ten-week period once every three years can have a huge political impact. Elections are a competitive exercise.

The point is -- get involved! Endorse and support candidates who support positions important to you. Take a sign, make a donation, volunteer time, get the vote out for candidates who support your positions and most importantly, VOTE!

This is how elections are won and lost, and how issues are decided. You will have the opportunity to help decide the composition of your City Council this coming November. It is up to you, how you participate, and you will have to live with the result.

*Ed Corrigan is City Councillor in London Ontario. He has been active in politics since 1976 and has a B.A. in History, a M.A. in Political Science from the University of Western Ontario and a Law degree from the University of Windsor. In his spare time he practices administrative and human rights law in London Ontario.*

## **Tips For Ongoing Advocacy**

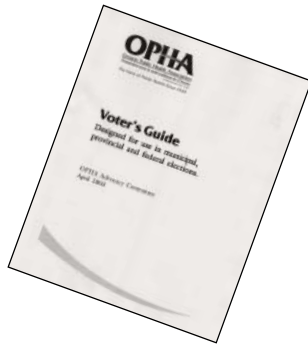
Here are further ideas to help community groups bring their concerns to the forefront of local political agendas:

- Determine what kind of participation processes you want for your community. What has worked in the past? Were there any pre-amalgamation processes that can be re-instated? How do other communities create opportunities for participation, and can those practices be adapted for your own?
- Establish relationships with municipal staff as well as elected officials. Staff are charged with conducting public consultations and research, and developing the recommendations that councillors will later accept or reject. To address your group's concerns throughout this process, staff need to hear from you.
- Think like a councillor. Be aware that every proposal is judged on its probable interpretation by the media, popularity with campaign supporters and popularity with citizens who vote (not those who don't).

*"Ten people who speak make more noise than ten thousand who are silent."*

*- Napoleon Bonaparte*

# OPHA Voter's Guide: Resource For All Elections



The Ontario Public Health Association is a provincial voluntary association of individuals and constituent societies from various sectors and disciplines in Ontario who promote the optimum health of the public.

The mission of the OPHA is to provide leadership on issues affecting the public's health and to strengthen the impact of people who are active in community and public health throughout Ontario.

The *OPHA Voter's Guide for Use in Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections* was developed by the OPHA Advocacy Committee to assist people who work in community and public health throughout Ontario, in order that they might make public health issues more visible during election campaigns. The guide contains a list of useful resources on advocacy and election processes, and can be used to promote key public health messages to election candidates.

For further information on the OPHA, please contact:

Sophie Bart  
Coordinator of Communications and Volunteer Resources  
(416) 367-3313 or toll free at 1-800-267-6817, ext. 237  
sbart@opha.on.ca  
You can also download the *Voter's Guide* at [www.opha.on.ca/resources/voter.pdf](http://www.opha.on.ca/resources/voter.pdf)

## REFLECTING ON OHCC IN THE YEAR PAST AND THE MONTHS AHEAD



*OHCC's Board of Directors*

The OHCC 2003 Annual General Meeting was held in London, Ontario, at Fanshawe College, in conjunction with the OHCC Annual Provincial Conference.

President Roni Summers Wickens welcomed members, noting that many organizations have embraced the concept of building healthy communities. It is now quite common for planning principles to be adopted that encompass social, cultural, economic and environmental factors contributing to well-being and quality of life in communities. Healthy Communities has become part of our vernacular and has come to represent social and economic inclusion, collaboration, and community decision-making processes. It has also come to represent hope and optimism; that which is positive and possible. It provides a framework with which to bring diverse peoples, neighbourhoods, communities, and geographies together.

After listing some of the activities and achievements of OHCC over the past year, she thanked the OHCC Board of Directors and staff for their contribution to building and sustaining an organization that lives and demonstrates its values. She closed her remarks by saying, "As the Ontario Healthy

Communities Coalition continues to evolve, I am confident that we will, together, continue to leave a lasting and important fingerprint on Ontario communities."

OHCC was pleased to welcome two new Board members at the AGM:

**Vernon Garlick** is a community representative for the Greater Toronto Area. Garlick is an active volunteer with the Durham Environmental Network, Clarington Healthy Communities Committee, Durham Region Community Care, Durham Region District Health Council, Memorial Hospital – Bowmanville (Board Governance) and Clarington Older Adults Association. In 1992, he received the Commemorative Medal for the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada for his "contributions to compatriots, community and to Canada."

**Evelyn Brown** is a community representative for the Central Region, residing in Bracebridge. Brown is a former Director of Education and is currently a Director of the Muskoka Community Futures Development Corporation.

The AGM was preceded by a Members' Forum, in which current pressing issues were identified and the possible roles for OHCC in addressing them were discussed. It was followed by a Board/staff planning session, in which the results of the past year and plans for 2003-2004 were considered.

For additional information presented at the Annual General Meeting, please view our OHCC 2002-2003 Annual Report online at [www.healthycommunities.on.ca](http://www.healthycommunities.on.ca).



## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

### London Homeless Coalition Keeping Busy

More than 200 people attended “InVisible Eyes on Homelessness”, an innovative art gallery showing at Museum London. The partnership between the London Arts Council, Museum London, The Art Exchange, Strand Fine Art Services and HRDC made the show possible.

The art was created by homeless people and those who have been homeless. Museum officials said they had never had so many people at an opening. Some of the artists were quoted as saying that preparing for the show had a tremendous impact on their lives. It is hoped that those who

see the show will view homelessness through new eyes. The show runs until September 14, 2003.

A new video is being produced in co-operation with London Police Services to help frontline and municipal workers better understand the issues they are dealing with around homelessness.

The Community Plan is under revision following an April forum where 100 people met to provide input and to help to revise the original plan.

The City of London has helped to launch a Rent Bank initiative with \$500,000 in funding. This will be ready to go by early fall.

The Coalition is continuing to raise awareness and build partnerships with local, provincial and national partner groups and networks.

### Lawyers Roll-Up Their Sleeves For The Community And The Environment

On June 26, 2003 the law firm of Cassels Brock & Blackwell donated a day’s worth of work for 15 of their able-bodied law students to assist with the North Toronto Green Community’s naturalization project at Eglinton Park in Toronto.

A far cry from their air-conditioned offices, business suits and legal work, the law students dressed in gardening garb, worked in the open air, and got their hands dirty mulching, weeding and planting native and heritage plants along a naturalized hill slope.

They learned about the benefits of naturalizing landscapes, growing heritage plants and using organic gardening methods.

## Generating Alternatives For Housing and Homelessness

The Southwest Community Development Network hosted its second annual conference and professional development day at Fanshawe College in May 2003. This year’s partnership event entitled, “House This”, was co-ordinated with OHCC, the Sonier Centre and the City of London. One hundred and fifty people spent three days talking, brainstorming and learning about housing and homelessness issues.

Award-winning Montreal Architect Avi Friedman has developed a world renowned graduate program in affordable housing at McGill University. He challenged participants to be creative in thinking about community rejuvenation and housing development opportunities in existing buildings.

“I know a housing development has become a comfortable place for people when I see flowers planted and growing and where people

have concern for the environment they are living in,” says Friedman.

Michael Shapcott, Co-Chair of the National Housing and Homelessness Network told participants that we all know the answer: “Housing cures homelessness.”



*Avi Friedman speaking at the “House This” conference.*

Other workshops looked at alternatives to shelter, creating solutions, Options For Homes, Smart Growth in communities and alternatives to eviction.

Since the conference, there has been a meeting of the Ontario Smart

Growth Network. They have developed a founding agreement and a set of guidelines that will provide ongoing work on these issues and allow housing and homelessness groups to work more closely with green activists to create communities that are both socially and environmentally sustainable.

Also, the “Creating Solutions” workshop has developed a list-serve to continue sharing ideas and developing action plans.

If you would like more information about either of these initiatives or more information about the conference, please contact Ted Town at London Community Resource Centre in London (519) 432-1801 or [ted@lcrcc.on.ca](mailto:ted@lcrcc.on.ca).

OHCC is hoping to continue co-ordinating conferences with regional events and will be working with local groups to explore how this can best be done.



Law students working at Cassels Brock for the summer donate a day of work to help NTGC's naturalization efforts at Eglinton Park.

Cassels Brock & Blackwell hires a dozen or so students to work in their office every summer. Each year, a day of the students' time is donated to community work. As a non-profit environmental organization, the North Toronto Green Community was thrilled to be working on environmental issues with a law firm and hopes to see more partnerships like these bringing business and community closer together.

For more information, contact:  
Minaz Asani-Kanji  
North Toronto Green Community  
(416) 781-7663  
info@ntgc.ca

Deborah Glatter, LL.B.  
Director of Professional  
Development and Student Programs  
Cassels Brock & Blackwell  
(416) 860-6606  
DGlatter@CasselsBrock.com



## RESOURCES

### Educational Video: *Cause & Effluent*

The prevailing approach to waste management in North America is dump and flush. But as cities run out of capacity in their own dumps and sewage treatment plants, rural communities confront ever-expanding landfills, manure from

factory farms, and urban sewage sludge spread on farm fields. The result: rural land, water and air are increasingly at risk.

*Cause & Effluent* is presented by OHCC and explores a range of ecological technologies and strategies available for rural municipalities, farms and households that treat waste as a resource rather than a burden. Some of the case studies include:

- An organic beef farm near Stirling, Ontario where traditional manure composting techniques foster healthy land, cows and consumers;
- Forteau on the Labrador coast where a school wastewater treatment system combines filtration by locally available sphagnum peat moss with a constructed wetland;
- Interface Flooring factory in Belleville, Ontario which over the past seven years has reduced its energy use by 70% and its output to landfill by over 90%, while increasing production, jobs and profit.

To order a copy of this video, please contact OHCC's central office.

Funded by: The EJLB Foundation; The EcoFluency Forum & Fair (Ontario Trillium Foundation, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada); Great Lakes Aquatic Habitat Network and Fund; CREEK (County Regional Environmental Evaluation Ko-Alition, Prince Edward County).

### A Year Of Partnership

Brant County Health Unit has released its 2002 Annual Report entitled *Partnering Together For a Healthier Community*. The report highlights the numerous partnerships that have been established in Brant County to improve the health and well-being of residents. A range of purposes are served by these partnerships, for example: to promote diabetes awareness, to promote car seat safety, to undertake a community planning process for Early Years programs, to promote and develop aids for increased physical activity in schools and to enforce the Clean Air bylaw that was enacted in June 2003 which severely restricts smoking in public places.

Partners include police services, school boards, the YM/YWCA, the Ontario Physical Education Association, the Canadian Diabetes Association, Dell Pharmacy, municipal parks and recreation departments and community volunteers.

For more information please visit [www.bchu.org](http://www.bchu.org).

**Group Insurance For  
OHCC  
Associations & Members**

...brought to you by



**LMS PROLINK Ltd**  
www.lms.ca  
Insurance and Financial Programs

- **DIRECTORS & OFFICERS LIABILITY**
- **VOLUNTEERS LIABILITY & TRAVEL**
- **PROPERTY COVERAGE**
- **HEALTH & DENTAL**

"...putting the pieces together  
for you *and* your members"

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

# Who Are We?

## Board of Directors 2003-04

OHCC is governed by a Board of Directors which represents all regions of Ontario and all OHCC membership categories.

### Provincial Association Representatives

Trish Conley-Knight  
(Vice-President)  
Parks and Recreation Ontario

Grace Strachan  
Ontario Professional Planners  
Association

Maria Herrera  
Ontario Public Health Association

### Community Representatives

*North*  
Dwight Gessie  
City of Thunder Bay Community  
Services Department

*Southwest*  
Karen Kirkwood-Whyte  
(Treasurer)  
Chatham-Kent Community  
Capacity Builders Forum

Sheila Lupson (Secretary)  
London Healthy Communities  
Coalition

*Central*  
Trudy Beaulne  
Waterloo Region Healthy  
Communities Coalition

Evelyn Brown  
Muskoka Healthy Communities  
Coalition

*Greater Toronto Area*  
Charmaine Charles  
Working to Your Full Potential  
Program, Family Services of Peel

Vernon Garlick  
Oshawa

*East*  
Roni Summers Wickens (President)  
Community Dev't Council of  
Quinte

Marc Bisson  
Centre de santé communautaire de  
l'Estrie

### Network Representatives

Dr. David Burman  
LETS Toronto

Miriam Gbehi  
World Communities Development  
Alliance

### Board Appointments

Katherine Pigott  
Healthy Communities and Policy  
Division, Region of Waterloo

Wayne Schnabel  
Municipal Councillor, Chatham-  
Kent

### Ex-Officio

Shawn Heard, Past President  
East Algoma Community Futures  
Development Corporation

### Central Office Staff

Local: (416) 408-4841  
Toll Free: 1-800-766-3418

**Lorna Heidenheim**  
Executive Director  
lorna@healthycommunities.on.ca

**Andrew Koch**  
Administration & Program Support  
andrew@healthycommunities.on.ca

## Community Animators

Please note the changes made recently to OHCC's community animation staff.

### CENTRAL

**Leila Sheriff**  
Phone: (705) 325-5177  
Fax: (705) 325-1343  
leila@healthycommunities.on.ca

### GREATER TORONTO AND GOLDEN HORSESHOE

**Lisa Tolentino**  
Phone: (416) 414-8778  
lisa@healthycommunities.on.ca

### EAST

**Susan Brandum**  
Phone: (613) 267-2257  
susanb@healthycommunities.on.ca

### NORTHEAST

**Monique Beaudoin**  
Phone: (705) 671-9983  
Fax: (705) 671-1922  
monique@healthycommunities.on.ca

### NORTHWEST

**Paul Filteau**  
Phone/Fax: (807) 683-6298  
paul@healthycommunities.on.ca

### SOUTHWEST

**Frances Shamley**  
Phone: (519) 287-2618  
Fax: (519) 287-5036  
frances@healthycommunities.on.ca

Chi miigweech to Elizabeth Angeconeb, our former **ABORIGINAL LIAISON**, who is moving on. Best of luck to you Elizabeth!