

localbriefs

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS TO HELP HONE SUSTAINABLE KINGSTON PLAN

Kingston's community strategic planning committee, FOCUS Kingston will hold a series of community conversations on the first draft of Sustainable Kingston, an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) that will help guide Kingston toward its vision of becoming Canada's Most Sustainable City.

Each of the following meetings runs from 6:30 to 9 p.m.:

- East: Thursday, Nov. 26 at the Glenburnie Fire Hall, 1485 Unity Rd.
- North: Wednesday, Dec. 2 at the Cataraqui Region Conservation Area (West Hall), 1641 Perth Rd.
- West: Thursday, Dec. 3 at the INVISTA Centre (Rona Hall), 1350 Gardiners Rd.

This draft of Sustainable Kingston: Designing our Community's Future... Together is available for review at www.cityofkingston.ca/sustainability.

FOCUS Kingston and contributing volunteers aim to have the Sustainable Kingston plan, including a report on the state of sustainability, ready for action in 2010.

FOCUS Kingston and contributing volunteers aim to have the Sustainable Kingston plan, including a report on the state of sustainability, ready for action in 2010.

FLORA'S IN TOWN

Flora MacDonald, former head of Canada's external affairs, and former Kingston MP, will discuss efforts to rebuild Afghan communities at the grassroots level Monday, Nov. 30 at 7:30 p.m. at the Kingston Frontenac Public Library, Wilson Room, 130 Johnson St.

Her talk is Another View of Afghanistan, and she is hosted by the Sydenham District Association. MacDonald was made a Companion of the Order of Canada and has received the Pearson Medal of Peace. International honours include being chosen Scot of the Year as well as the highest civilian award that India bestows, the Padma Shri. She has also received honorary degrees from 17 Canadian and international universities.

KINGSTON STUDENTS PLACE SECOND IN REGIONAL BUSINESS COMPETITION

Local Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition winners Ryan Peterson and Cord McGee placed second in the Eastern Ontario regional competition held in Peterborough recently. The business plan for their lawn care and landscaping company, Lawn In Order, was evaluated along with nine other plans by a panel of judges over the course of the summer.

Peterson and McGee were excited to win the regional second place and claim the \$750 prize. They also received an additional \$100 for being a finalist in Eastern Ontario.

"This was a great experience for us and we will definitely put the money right back into the company. It's going to buy us an awesome lawn mower," said Peterson.

In their senior year at Bayridge Secondary School, Peterson and McGee worked with Youth Business Consultants at The Entrepreneurship Centre at the Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO) to fine tune their plan.

"The competition is based on the viability of the business plan submitted," said Jan Dines, Manager of The Entrepreneurship Centre at KEDCO. "The difference with Ryan and Cord is that they went beyond the planning stages and started Lawn In Order. They not only won a top spot for their planning, they had a successful first year of operation."

Peterson and McGee, now in their first year of the Bachelor of Commerce program at Queen's University, will be resuming Lawn In Order operations next spring.

NEWS

Mecca of sustainability launched in downtown core

HOLLIE PRATT-CAMPBELL
Kingston This Week

A different kind of operation has officially opened its doors at 193 Princess St.

The Kingston Sustainability Centre has caused a buzz in the city since unofficially opening last July, drawing an estimated 2,000 curious citizens over the last few months. The space is intended to showcase a wide variety of green innovations from sustainable landscaping and energy sources, to alternative transportation methods like electric bikes, to wildlife conservation endeavours.

The building is owned by Phillip and Pat Brown of Brown's Fine Foods and was the home of the Card Merchant for many years. Back in April, organizers had the idea to turn the space into a sustainability centre, and worked closely with a team of interns and project planners, as well as companies like KEDCO and Utilities Kingston to make the Kingston Sustainability Centre what it is today.

Kitchener project manager Randy Cluff joined the team after seeing the centre when visiting Kingston over the summer. Soon interns Dan Hendry and Kelsey Jensen also joined in, after receiving sponsorship from the YWCA.

A fortuitous sequence of events led Hendry to where he is today. After completing a Masters in Strategic Leadership Toward Sustainability from the Blekinge Institute of Technology in Sweden, he returned home to the Kingston area. One day, he was walking down Princess Street and saw the beginnings of the centre.

"I went in and I said can I get a job? They said they didn't have the money. I said if I find the money could I get a job? And they said yes, so I found a Youth Eco internship funded by the YWCA that allows me to integrate myself into this."

In this fashion, the entire project grew to where it is today. One by one, local businesses and organizations came on board to help unite the quest for sustainability in Kingston.

"What was unveiled [on Friday] is a lot dif-



Photos: HOLLIE PRATT-CAMPBELL

(L-R) – Rachel Melnik-Proud, Tasha Proud, and Cam Flynn MacDougall from Goal Patrol have a station at the sustainability centre to create awareness about the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals. The little houses were made by school children in a workshop held by the Goal Patrol.



Regi Green Team member Marika Maksymec signs the "door to the future."

ferent from what was there even a couple days before," says Hendry. "That's the community coming together and bringing things in related to specialties that they already have. When we did set the date for the grand opening things really started coming together."

Mayor Harvey Rosen and Kingston and the Islands MPP John Gerretsen joined over 220 people to celebrate the centre's opening.

"If we look at sustainability as not simply isolated to individual efforts, but as a way of living our lives generally, we will accomplish great things," said Rosen. "This sustainability centre is a great beginning to allow people in our community to realize the diversity of the efforts we can expend on making our community sustainable."

Gerretsen spoke of the importance of weaning ourselves off fossil fuels.

"In exactly the same way that we went to a smoke-free society we can go to a waste-free society," he said. "Twenty-five years ago most people never would have thought that possible.

I know that we can build a sustainable society here in Kingston because we have so much goodwill."

The sustainability centre also kicked off its "Doors to the Future" campaign Nov. 20. Symbolic doors will be commissioned to local businesses for approximately \$250. Each door can be made into a declaration, a message board, or anything else the business chooses; they will then be rotated around the centre.

A commemorative door was signed by all who took part in the Kingston Sustainability Centre's grand opening last weekend.

Hendry hopes the centre will generate awareness about all the environmentally-friendly ways of living available to Kingstonians. He plans on hosting a wide variety of programs such as movie nights and workshops.

"I want the community to use this to help each other, and bring together all the pieces of the big picture," he says. "I hope it will become a place for celebration and collaboration."