

Going Green Together



2013 Annual Report



About Green Venture



Everyday Green Venture staff, board, and volunteers strive to inspire change. Some are small changes in attitude about our daily routine and others are big changes that are gradually transforming the city. To accomplish this, we network, coordinate, develop, facilitate, engage, support; we join community gardens in planting brave herb and vegetable seedlings and get our hands dirty working alongside young leaders to clean up neighbourhood creeks and green spaces.

In 2013, changes within the organization provided an opportunity for our programs and strategic direction to grow and evolve.

Our Vision

A community where individual and collective actions protect future generations by balancing our environmental, social, and economic needs.

Our Mission

Connecting ideas and people to facilitate sustainable living and realize a cleaner, healthier community.

ABOVE

Green Venture Staff 2013



*Green Venture directly engaged
13,790 residents in 2013.*



2013 Programs

Clean Air for Kids

Climate Change Hamilton

Davis Creek

EcoHouse - Community Garden

EcoHouse – Education & Tours

EcoHouse – Volunteer Program/Green Jobs

Empowering Riverdale's Food Security

Enbridge Home Weatherization
Retrofit Program

Flood My Rain Barrel

Hamilton Community Garden Network
and Seedy Saturday

Oliver's Garden Project:
Growing in the Greenhouse

RAIN: An Ecological Approach to
Stormwater Management

Residential Energy Audits

Totally Transit for Kids

Totally Transit for Older Adults

Waterfront Kiosk

Going Green Together

Message from the Chair



2013 was a year of change and transition at Green Venture, where economic reality resulted in both staff downsizing and the repositioning of remaining staff to ensure long term sustainability of the organization. In keeping with the theme of change and transition, our long term Executive Director Mr. Pete Wobschall left the organization for a career growth opportunity. After an extensive search, the Board selected Ms. Kathryn Enders as the new Executive Director.

Education has always been a core focus area for Green Venture. This year, we have created new curriculum linked tours for EcoHouse, and continued to work with seniors on increasing their comfort

levels riding the bus. Working with other local organizations including the Bay Area Restoration Council, Environment Hamilton, and Hamilton Naturalists' Club we continued our outreach to newcomers.

Climate change, gardening, and sustainability are key areas of Green Venture's education focus. Our organization has continued to work with Clean Air Hamilton throughout 2013. The garden program continued to grow rapidly, and our own community garden was transitioned to elevated plot style gardens. Staff engaged with sensitivity training to ensure education is provided appropriately to all people interacting with Green Venture. Our good work in the community resulted in obtaining

an award from Sustainable Hamilton for our Sustainability Report.

On behalf of the Board, we would like to thank all the staff and volunteers for our success in 2013. It is the enthusiasm, time, and effort of volunteers and fellow Board Members which continue to complement the work of staff to make Green Venture a truly sustainable organization.

We are focused on maintaining current programs while continuing to transition and grow as an organization.

We would like to thank our funding agencies for their confidence in Green Venture. Funding trends have changed and the Board is now supporting a new long term fundraising plan. We are looking forward to implementing this plan in 2014 through the Good to Great program (with the support of the Sustainability Network). Ongoing support is crucial to allowing Green Venture to work with the local community to create a healthier and sustainable environment for future generations to enjoy.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Velma I. Grover". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Velma I. Grover
Chair
Sept. 2009 - Sept. 2013



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kevin Hunt
Chair
Sept. 2013 - Present

Flood my Rain Barrel



Over the course of the spring and summer, Green Venture was out in communities across Hamilton disconnecting downspouts and installing high capacity rain barrels. Trained Green Venture staff, summer students, YMCA interns, and exchange students provided and professionally installed twenty-one large 500-litre rain barrels to qualifying households in frequently flooded neighbourhoods.

When the Red Hill Cooperative Housing Corporation signed on for the Downspout Disconnect program, Green Venture had a unique opportunity to reach many households with just two large rain barrels. The rain water they collect is shared and used outdoors by numerous families.

The rain barrels are also a powerful reminder, particularly for the children and youth who live in the co-op, about the importance of conserving water and working collectively to make an impact.

Every disconnected downspout diverts 23,000 litres of storm water from storm sewers each year, so in total, this program will keep 483,000 litres of water out of the sewer annually. Capturing large amounts of water allows homeowners to reduce flooding and redirect rain water so it is absorbed through gardens and lawns rather than going into the sewers.

The 21 households that are now collecting rainwater for use on their garden no longer rely on drinkable tap water to

Through this program alone, Green Venture helped to divert 483,000 litres of storm water.

maintain their gardens or wash their cars, bikes and outdoor spaces. This program was a win for homeowners and water conservation.

Funding for this project was generously provided by Arcelor Mittal Dofasco and the Hamilton Port Authority.

"...I am very happy with the rain barrel that Green Venture installed and would recommend others utilise rain barrels as well."

Program Participant, Hamilton, ON



Before



After

Totally Transit for Older Adults



There are many circumstances that influence older adults to reduce their dependence on personal vehicles or to stop driving all together. Making the transition to public transit can be frustrating and act as a barrier to using more sustainable forms of transportation. Totally Transit for Older Adults was piloted to give these individuals the tools needed to navigate their city and reduce their emissions.

Green Venture received overwhelming positive responses from the eighty-five older adults that participated in the workshops and guided trips. These interactive learning opportunities boosted their confidence in using public transit.

Many workshop attendees did not have previous experience with public transportation, or had not used the system in many years. Some participants indicated that they had been apprehensive to use transit, but felt much more comfortable after having learned about the system, and having their questions and concerns clarified.

When older adults use public transit, the community as a whole benefits; older adults remain independent, active, and social, and our environment benefits through the reduction of vehicle emissions and traffic congestion, and an increase in public transit users can contribute to a more vibrant and robust system that will further attract more users.



As a result of this pilot program's success, Green Venture has received numerous requests from public libraries and retirement homes, wishing to offer this learning opportunity to their communities and residents.

"Thank you very much for making life in the city easier. I am looking forward to learning to navigate my way around the city, malls, etc."

Senior, Program Participant

Community Garden Re-Design



In 2013 the EcoHouse Community Garden celebrated its tenth anniversary in style with a complete overhaul.

A fresh layout and over 250 square metres of renovated garden area means the new community garden is a tool for building vibrant community connections and place-based learning opportunities.

Since 2003, thousands of gardeners, students, and community groups have visited and engaged with Green Venture's Community Garden. The latest renovation presents so many fresh opportunities for partnership and program growth. This renovated garden allows Green Venture to lead the community to explore the full potential of a physically accessible outdoor education space.

Some of the main changes to the EcoHouse Community Garden:

- There are now wide, stabilized, mulched pathways throughout the garden to create safe access for school and camp tours, as well as other visitors walking through.
- The garden has moved to a 'plot based system,' meaning that community members may pay a small fee to rent a plot for the summer and collect their harvest as the season progresses. Gardeners have the opportunity to experiment with different techniques and increased plant diversity.
- All of the garden plots consist of raised beds, making it easier for gardeners with a limited range of motion to participate in our garden. Some of the plots are wheelchair accessible.
- A community message board was installed to provide up-to-date seasonal information and to enhance garden member and volunteer communication.
- Educational signage was added to the garden space, highlighting sustainable gardening techniques, plants, insects and conservation tips.

“Since building the new pathways and community member plots, 13 new community members got involved in the garden and an additional 8 new community volunteers participated in the renovation process.”

Clare Wagner, 2013 Green Garden Coordinator

Mobile Monitoring – Fresh Air for Kids



The school air monitoring program, “Fresh Air for Kids” was an innovative combination of air quality, science, and school and community outreach.

The project involved 110 Grade 2, 4/5 and 6/7 students from St. Marguerite d’Youville, Holy Name of Jesus and St. Lawrence Catholic Elementary Schools in air quality issues and the Air Quality Health Index. Through hands on learning with real equipment, unique field trips, guest speakers, customized curriculum linked in-class projects, activities and events, students gained the knowledge needed to translate complex statistics and technology into tangible information.

Students felt empowered and committed to take personal actions to reduce their air pollution exposures, modifying their commuting routes to school and engaging in modal shifts to more active modes of transportation (walking, cycling). Students took what they had learned, and became champions by creating family and community outreach.

ABOVE

Class at Air Monitoring Station - Site visits were organized to a local air monitoring company, Rotek Environmental Inc., air monitoring station.

Special Recognition

Fresh Air for Kids was made possible thanks to dedicated staff, students, funders and community partners.

Clean Air Hamilton/Public Health Services Hamilton funded this project for St. Marguerite d'Youville Catholic Elementary School.

Many partners made this project a success. Ontario Ministry of the Environment West Central Region volunteered the use of their upgraded mobile monitoring unit,

Rotek Environmental Inc. hosted a site visit to their facility and an air monitoring station, and the Centre for Spatial Analysis at McMaster University provided the Geographic Information software for neighbourhood air quality mapping.

Green Venture and Corr Research executed the project while Mrs. Hunt at St. Marguerite d'Youville organized the school interactions and activities.

“This is a great connection, we want the students to be informed of what the air quality is like in their community and stress to them that they can play a role in improving the air.”

Juby Lee, Clean Air for Kids Project Coordinator

Volunteers & Green Job Experience



For nearly two decades, Green Venture has played a central role in providing green job opportunities in the local non-profit sector. We attract a diversity of skilled employees, interns and volunteers whose individual and collective contributions demonstrate community.

Green Venture volunteers are not only a vital part of our team, but are always up for new challenges. As existing

programs develop and new initiatives are launched, volunteers get involved with everything from supporting seniors in navigating the public transit system to leading curriculum linked school activities at the EcoHouse education centre. Whatever the need, every volunteer hour translates into meaningful action and valuable work experience.

“Along with the new skills you taught me you also took time setting up job visits which gave me a new perspective on available opportunities.”

Tahmid Uddin, Sir John A. MacDonald coop student



2013 Green Job Experience Collaborators

Brock University (Internship)
EcoCanada Environmental Immigrant
Bridging Program
Hamilton Wentworth District School
Board Secondary School (Coop)
Mohawk College (Internship)
Ontario Works Placement
YMCA – Summer Jobs Youth

ABOVE

Community Gardeners devoted countless hours nurturing new plant life in the renovated community garden.

RIGHT

Green Venture volunteers work tirelessly to maintain EcoHouse demonstration gardens. By controlling the spread of invasive plant species, such as Garlic Mustard, volunteers support biodiversity.



Financials



	Audited 2012/2013	Budgeted 2012/2013
Revenue	550,664	617,000
Expense	543,767	615,000
Balance	6,897	2,000



Funders and Volunteers



Over 80 volunteers invested 100 hours towards cleaning 20 garbage and recycling bags, equal to over 300 lbs of waste, from Davis Creek.

The generous support of our funders enables Green Venture to have a positive impact on our community:

Arcelor Mittal

Bay Area Restoration Council

Benjamin Moore and Co.

Boys and Girls Club

City of Hamilton

- Planning and Economic Development
- Clean Air Hamilton
- Public Health
- Public Works

Clean Air Partnership

Conservator's Society of Hamilton & District

EcoAction

Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc.

Environment Canada

Green Communities Canada

Government of Canada - HRSDC Summer
Jobs Program

Hamilton Community Foundation

Hamilton Council on Aging

Hamilton Port Authority

Horizon Utilities

Keep America Beautiful - Lowes

McCutcheon Foundation

Metcalf Foundation

Metrolinx

Nature's Path Gardens for Good

Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture,
and Sport

Ontario Trillium Foundation

Shell Fuelling Change

USC Canada

Wesley Urban Ministries

Whole Kids Foundation

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