

perspectives



Features

Making a Difference

By Marlene Monster

Meet Tamara Baldwin (emphasis on the "Tam"). Her position is Residence Life Co-ordinator, but her passion is Service Learning. By volunteering, students from any program can learn about real issues of social justice. In order to foster an awareness of life beyond the campus, several Hamilton agencies welcome help from the Mac students. The Wesley Urban Centre, Boys and Girls Club and the Ancaster Food Drive are just a few such worthy causes.

In addition to the volunteerism, Tamara's goal is reflection and learning. In small groups with the aid of a trained facilitator, these young people try to ask the tough questions about their experiences. Did I make a change? What can I do as a student? How does change occur?



Tamara Baldwin — Recipient of a 2006 President's Award

afield in addition to Hamilton. Vancouver, Newfoundland, Louisiana, Mexico are the locales for an immersion into issues of social justice. Students are selected in November and prepare well for their placement.

For the last few years, Tamara herself has become personally involved with a slum community in Nairobi, Kenya. As she explains, the Kenyan government promised free primary education but did not provide an infrastructure. One school had 23 teachers for 2100 children. So, in May she took eight students and another advisor with her to Africa. They lived with host families, built a student resource centre and taught. This is an on- going project. Thanks to Tamara and McMaster students, several hundred children now have a place for after-school activities.

Educating, assessing, discussing - these are all components of the volunteer service experience. By making a difference, Tamara and her students have learned some valuable lessons outside the classroom.

For her commitment to Service Learning, in 2006, Tamara Baldwin was the recipient of a President's Award, the most prestigious award available to non-faculty employees of McMaster University.

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Agencies Mac Students and Residence Life Co-Ordinator Tamara Baldwin have recently worked with include:

- Wesley Urban Centre
- Boys and Girls Club
- Ancaster Food Drive

Don't Recycle

By Madeline Barr



"Don't recycle just anything." Too many contaminants in a recycle bin will ruin the entire collection.

With the destruction of the environment and global warming becoming a real issue we often hear from well known figures, such as David Suzuki and Al Gore, sending their messages to rethink how we treat the environment and recycle. I'm not well known but my message to you is *don't recycle just anything at McMaster.*

Did you know at one point in time 90% of the outdoor recycling bins on the McMaster campus were contaminated to the point where they couldn't be salvaged? Sometimes recycling the wrong items is worse than not recycling at all. Too many contaminants in a recycle bin will ruin that entire collection. The solution to this is simple, right? Yes, but the answer is not 'just take it out.' How do you take out the leaky cola stuck to the other items? How do you take out the rotted food item out of paper?

So what can't be recycled at McMaster?

The McMaster [RETHINKING RECYCLING website](#) is an informative and humorous website devoted to recycling at McMaster University and has an entire page devoted to what cannot be recycled. Some of the items I was surprised to read about were:

- Tissues and napkins - Personal hygiene and clean-up products are not recyclable because they are considered contaminants. During cold and flu season put your germ filled tissues in the trash.
- Partially filled bottles and cans - Not only will the liquid in the container contaminate to the bin, but could contribute to spills, slips and falls to those in the recycling plant.
- Shrink Wrap, Plastic Cutlery and Straws - These items do not fall under category #1 or #2 plastics (see [paragraph below](#) for description of categories of plastics).



- www.mcmaster.ca/recycle
- www.mcmaster.ca/recycle/guidelines/specialitems.htm
- www.davidsuzuki.org
- www.climatecrisis.net

On the flip side, I was surprised to read that when recycling paper, neither staples, paper clips nor tape has to be removed. Also windowed envelopes are acceptable in paper recycling.

Recycling Plastics

McMaster University only recycles plastics that are categorized as #1 or #2. On plastic items you will find a number in the centre of the arrows that indicates what type of resin was used to make the container. There are 7 categories. Category #1 are Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET), such as plastic pop bottles, and category #2 are High Density Polyethylene (HDPE), such as trash bags, detergent bottles, bleach bottles and aspirin bottles. To learn more about the 7 plastic categories see <http://www.p2pays.org/ref/14/13156.pdf>.

The solution to ruining an entire collection of recycling is simple: **When in doubt throw it out.**

Of course a more pro-active approach would be to contact recycle@mcmaster.ca to find out if it can be recycled!

Reusing Specialty Items

Finally, there are some very important and larger items that are not suitable for recycling but can be reused - printer ink cartridges and computers. Ink cartridges can be placed in their original packaging or sealed in an envelope and address to Mail Services, MGD-B109. Simply put the package in your outgoing mail box and Mail Services will take care of them from there.

Computers that are Pentium II, 300MHz or higher can be donated to "Computers for Schools". But, before you do, be sure that all McMaster licensed software and confidential data is removed from the computer. To find out exactly how to have your computers reused go to <http://www.mcmaster.ca/recycle/guidelines/specialitems.htm>.

For further information in McMaster's recycling program be sure to check out: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/recycle>

Editorial

As a member of the Perspectives Editorial Board, I must take my turn to "do the Editorial". Keep it short and sweet say those who have preceded me with their well-executed paragraphs. Thus I go forward very carefully.

Since I am a retiree and member of the Quarter Century Club, I should have some profound thoughts about life, work and everything. But whenever I choose words of wisdom, I realize they are not my own. Eat well, exercise regularly, be kind to others yet find time for yourself.

These are familiar guidelines for healthy living.

As for retirement, it is true what everyone says. You can be busy, very busy. Trips to neighbourhood stores take twice as long because people want to stop and chat. A visit to the library can be hours! Then there is the local pool...

One last word of wisdom comes to mind. As we grow older time seems to go slower. And maybe that is a good thing.

Written by: Marlene Monster
Editorial column, Perspectives, Fall 2007

Mac Facts

Check it Out! Mills Library

By Tamara Monster

Did you know that current and retired McMaster staff have access to McMaster Library services? Borrowing books and other materials works much the same way as the public library system. However, instead of using a separate card for [library transactions](#), you only need your bar-coded McMaster ID card.

At Mills Library, you can check out books at the Circulation Desk on the first floor, or you can use the new self-checkout service (also on the first floor). With its easy-to-use touch screen and step-by-step instructions, checking things out has never been quicker or easier! Either way, you can request a paper receipt listing book due dates. *(Continued on next page)*



McMaster University Mills Library Circulation Desk



Mills Self-Service Check-Out

There is no limit to the number of items that can be checked out and the loan period is two weeks. These tasks can be [performed online](#) without a visit to the library:

- Renew, recall or request items
- Recommend a book or journal for purchase
- Requesting an item be retrieved from storage

Last year, the library implemented a [laptop lending program](#). Staff may borrow a laptop from [Mills](#), [Innis](#) or [Thode](#) for a 3 hour time period. These laptops are loaned on a first-come, first-served basis and cannot be booked in advance. Not close enough to Mills to come and check things out? You may be interested to know that you have access to the library's vast collection of electronic resources. [With a valid Mac ID](#), or your bar-coded McMaster employee card, you can search the catalogue for online resources that the library has acquired. From your office or in your home, you are only several clicks away from a comprehensive array of e-resources of many types, on many subjects.

Part II of this three part series, will look at another exciting addition to Mills that is bound to appeal to all book lovers!

For more information about McMaster Libraries or to search the catalogue go to: <http://library.mcmaster.ca/>

If you have questions about your Mac ID, go to: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/>

Employee Health & Wellness

Sun Life Member Online Service www.sunlife.ca/member

By Deridor Collier

It is a matter of personal preference whether you call **1-800-361-6212**, or use the [Sun Life online member service](#). If you like to be more "in control and in touch" or are a visual person, you may prefer the online service. It is an excellent tool to see where you are spending your health care dollars. You can use the online service to create an Access ID or reset a forgotten password. Alternatively, call the 1-800-361-6212 to assist you.



After receiving the Health & Wellness monthly letter this summer, I decided to visit the site. A long time had elapsed between visits and I needed a password reset. Sun Life had made changes and I had to select a new verification question and set a personal answer. They were not the standard questions you would expect which was great. However, the option to make up your own personal question and answer (as McMaster does with the MAC ID service), would be more customer-friendly.

The online service is user-friendly and easy to navigate. Basic items such as your last claim date with the details and the next time you can submit a claim is great for busy members. It offers quite a few features, which I encourage you to check out. You can print claim forms, see recent claims, check eligibility, coordinate benefits with your spouse, and setup direct deposit. You do not have to wait for the cheque in the mail or worry that it arrived at the wrong destination. If the cheque did go astray, Sun Life has a process in place to resolve the mystery of the missing cheque and ensure you receive payment.

Sun Life has created a secure message centre that you can use for confidential messages. If you prefer to send confidential messages or are curious as to how it differs from regular email, sign up to access Sun Life Members Online Service. (*Continued on next page*)

In today's health conscious time, it is advantageous to be well informed about health care matters. Other resources you may find helpful and informative are the Health and Medication Libraries. Be sure to read and understand the information shared with the independent health content provider before deciding to proceed.

Sun Life Online Members Service is interested in your opinion to improve service. Before you conclude your visit to www.sunlife.ca/member, click on Quick Links and select Your Comments. There is a short nine-question survey to collect your opinion. Any questions regarding McMaster health benefits should be directed to the [Benefits](#) area of Human Resources Services.

Fun Stuff

Just for Fun – Fall Word Puzzle

Exercise your Brain and complete the Fall Word Puzzle!

- Download [Fall Word Puzzle](#) (71KB PDF)
- Answers available on-line at: <http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/perspectives/>

The Amazing (McMaster) Race

We had a fantastic response to the Amazing (McMaster) Race scavenger hunt in the Spring/Summer 2007 issue of Perspectives. The results are as follows:

GRAND PRIZE INDIVIDUAL WINNERS

1st Place (tie):

- Cathie Roberts
- Susan Marsh-Rollo

2nd Place (tie):

- Norma Brown
- Rick Parrish

GRAND PRIZE TEAM WINNERS

1st Place (tie):

- Team name: Jason Bourne (Paul Lysecki, Greg Kujbida, Daniel West, Jason Tang)
- Team name: Van Engelen, Yee & Zha (Niel Van Engelen, Robin Yee, Nanxi Zha)

2nd Place (tie):

- Team name: Conference Services (Larysa Baran, Chris Marco, Lindsay Oldershaw, Wendy Read)
- Team name: Tey & Guevara (Rovena Tey, David Guevara)

Thanks to all of you who participated in the contest!