

Niagara Group Annual Awards Dinner

The Annual Niagara Group Dinner was held at Marinaccio's Restaurant in Williamsville on May 4. Many thanks to Jane Sheldon who organized the dinner and collected from those attending. Two awards were presented. Niagara Group Executive Committee member Reverend Charles Lamb received the Blake Reeves Award for his contributions to creating a healthy environment. Reverend Lamb's service goes back to CAUSE, which alerted residents of Lackawanna and West Seneca to environmental health problems caused by Bethlehem Steel's emissions in the 1960's. Charles was also involved with Love Canal residents through the Ecumenical task force in the 1970's. Currently Reverend Lamb has been focused on the CWM hazardous waste site in the Town of Porter, Niagara County. He is also an officer of Residents for Responsible Government (RRG) which is deeply involved with the health threat to residents and toxic pollution of the Niagara River and Great Lakes. His efforts have involved many hearings with the DEC, and constant involvement with citizens of Lewiston and Porter. He was instrumental in securing signatures from many religious leaders in Niagara County opposing the expansion of CWM.

Daniel J. Ward, Town of Amherst board member, received and Bruce Kershner Award for his many years of service to Town of Amherst residents, and the protection of the town's natural environment. Councilmember Ward has been involved in many extended environmental matters in the town, including the creation of Nature View Park, the 1200 protected acres of forest, grasslands and wetlands near Tonawanda Creek, the John Muir Woods, and many other matters.

Canadian environmental newspaper reported Douglas Draper was the keynote speaker. Mr. Draper's inspirational comments mentioned the protection of the Great Lakes and Niagara River from the hazards existing on both sides of the border. The difficulty in presenting adequate environmental reporting in this age where the media is often controlled by wealthy businessmen was also touched upon. While interest in environmental reporting has always been high among citizens, management complains of the lack of resources and focuses its efforts on local sensationalized reporting instead of major issues. Mr. Draper and several of his colleagues have discussed creation of an online newspaper with an emphasis on the environment. If you wish to contribute articles to Mr. Draper's paper, please contact Mr. Draper at ddrapers@vaxxine.com.