

Karst preservation group earns environmental award | Your online community newspaper for Hamilton, Ontario and area

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Friends of the Eramosa Karst will receive a Hamilton Environmentalists of the Year Award next month.

FOTEK will be recognized for its efforts to save, preserve, expand and enhance the Eramosa Karst lands in upper Stoney Creek.

FOTEK is one of two groups that will receive the Dr. Victor Cecilioni Award for the Environmentalist of the Year for 2012.

Over a six year period, FOTEK members worked to have the area rezoned as open space by the City of Hamilton. Last year, the Eramosa Karst feeder lands were protected through a lease agreement with the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

The province agreed in March of 2011 to preserve the 35-hectare grassy expanse to the east of the karst, but then hit the authority with a curve ball when its real estate arm, Infrastructure Ontario, demanded market value for the land.

The conservation authority later struck a deal to lease the lands for \$1 per year, ending the impasse.

The Eramosa Karst contains underground caves and streams, meadows and forests, making it a one-of-a-kind property in the Hamilton area. The karst is located on Upper Mount Albion Road. As a conservation area, the site is a popular location for hiking, nature appreciation, and education.

The June 5 event hosted by Environment Hamilton celebrates Environment Week and environmental activism in Hamilton.

Friends of Rural Communities Everywhere (FORCE) is also being recognized for its decade-long battle to stop the construction of a large aggregate quarry in Flamborough.

Robert Edmondson will receive a lifetime achievement award for his effort to preserve natural watershed areas in Halton.

Awards will be presented at the 34th annual Environmentalists of the Year Awards Dinner on June 5, at the Michelangelo Banquet Centre at 1555 Upper Ottawa Street in Hamilton. Refreshments will begin at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:45 p.m.

Tickets are available for \$30 per person and must be purchased in advance by May 31. Tables of eight or 10 can be reserved.

Tickets are available at Royal Botanical Gardens' Shop or at Environment Hamilton, 22 Wilson Street, unit 8 in Hamilton. Call 905-549-0900, or email contactus@environmenthamilton.org.