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## 2005 a successful year in quarry fight: group

Robin Downton-Poirier, Special to The Champion

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The Family Skate, being held Friday at Carlisle Arena, will mark the end of a busy year for Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE) and the group's fight to stop the Lowndes Holdings Corp.'s proposed limestone quarry in Flamborough.

The Family Skate, sponsored by Flamborough Councillors Margaret McCarthy and David Braden, is free of charge and is a chance to unwind after a year of hard work, said Graham Flint, FORCE's chairperson.

"We've worked hard this year and the Family Skate is a time just for us to be together, to relax and have some fun," he said.

FORCE formed in the spring of 2004 to fight the quarry proposed for 380 acres on Concession 11 near rural Milton. FORCE fears the quarry, if approved, will impact local roads, water systems, the surrounding community and the environment.

Mr. Flint said 2005 was a positive year for FORCE with several successes. He added it was essentially a year of outgoing and incoming reports.

"Overall, 2005 was a year of reports, both those that we submitted, such as environmental and hydro geological studies, and also ones we've received such as the one from the Peer Review Team," he said.

"The greenbelt legislation that was passed earlier this year was a huge win for us and we had great feedback from the Peer Review Team that backed up our case. We are still very positive and that feedback is bolstering it."

Mr. Flint said the Peer Review Team, a group of experts hired by the City of Hamilton to review the proponent's quarry application, stated that Lowndes Holdings Corp.'s application was 'full of gaps, omissions, and errors' and that further information would need to be provided.

Robert Long of Long Environmental Consultants in Orangeville -- the lead project manager for the quarry application -- said on behalf of Lowndes Holdings that the company's next step is to respond to the Peer Review Team's report and to "resolve the terms of reference for the Transportation Study" that will be completed in early 2006.

A public meeting is expected to be held by the City of Hamilton in the spring for an overview of the Peer Review Team's full report and the comments of the Combined Aggregate Review Team on the proposal.

Mr. Flint said another key success was the revamping of the FORCE Web site to make it easier for residents to access the large amount of information that has been collected over the past 18 months.

For more information, visit FORCE's Web site at [www.stopthequarry.ca](http://www.stopthequarry.ca).



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