

Why I joined SCAN! (and why you should, too!)

by Barbara Linds, OPSEU/OPSSU retiree

I've been a union, NDP, and social justice activist all my adult life. I was privileged to work at OPSEU Head Office for almost 30 years. Since retiring I have continued to be involved in many organizations, struggles and campaigns.

I am also a grandmother. I'm devastated about the world we are leaving to our grandchildren and to the other young people in our lives.

We were told several decades ago that switching to energy efficient lightbulbs and composting would save the planet. We did all that. We have an electric car. We heat and cool our home with a heat pump. Taking individual action is not enough.

More than a year ago I went to an educational about Seniors for Climate Action Now! I found a home in SCAN! Seniors for Climate Action Now! is a group of seniors compelled to take action on the climate emergency.

SCAN! members are retired activists. They are mostly from Ontario and come from almost every sector. They are organizers, campaigners, communicators and researchers.

A big part of the work of SCAN! is outreach. I was initially concerned that I didn't know enough about climate science to be able to talk knowledgeably to my friends and others. I found that most people I reach out to do not need convincing. They are looking for a way to get involved.

SCAN! is informing and mobilizing seniors in an effort to prevent more climate catastrophes. We are in this for the sake of future generations and the survival of life on the planet.

Time is running out.

We have less than a decade to avoid locking in runaway climate change. Canada bears enormous responsibility for global warming. Canadian corporations' climate disregard, and our Government's failure to act, cause

major problems both at home and around the world. This summer, average worldwide temperatures are the hottest ever recorded. You don't need to be a climate scientist to understand that we're in uncharted territory. As I write this article Canada is in the middle of an unprecedented wildfire crisis and major heatwaves are scorching Ontario and Quebec.

We need decisive action. The planet couldn't be sounding the alarm any clearer. SCAN! collaborates with other groups, such as Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet (GASP), and 350.org. We have been part of large mobilizations including the recent OFL Enough is Enough rallies. SCAN! has organized an ongoing Labour retirees' group that meets to compare experiences and strategize how to bring climate issues into the work of union retirees' organizations such as the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC). CURC President Michael MacIsaac participates in our work.

I'm currently living in Napanee. Last fall Kingston area members of SCAN! got together to focus on Kingston based actions. In the spring we collaborated with Queen's University activists and others, including 350.org to organize a one hundred-strong rally in front of the main RBC branch. We're continuing to mobilize this summer. We need to expand the number of seniors mobilized for climate action in Ontario and across the country. That is why we are looking to form more local SCAN! groups around the province.

I encourage you to take a look at SCAN!'s [Statement of Purpose](#). I hope you get involved in this important struggle by joining SCAN!.