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Happy New Year

We are starting the new year right with our “visits” to MPs’ offices. This is part of our latest campaign, Community Resilience and Reistence

Some MPs have already met with local members and, they, of course, look forward to our continued monthly presence (ahem).

Some of these actions are getting good coverage. Read this article, for example, in the Whig Standard about Kingston (pictured above).

There are more accounts of CRR work in the chapter reports below.

Indigenous solidarity

Breathing Lands (Ring of Fire)

There was a gathering of more than 100 people outside the Superior Court of Justice in Toronto to support a legal case for the Breathing Lands (Ring of Fire). This was an especially critical action as Carney and Ford were meeting at the same time to fast track projects including the disputed road into Treaty 9 territory. About 15 – 20 SCAN! members were there, as well as two MPPs.

Ontario filed a “Motion to Strike” in response to the claim filed by several Treaty No. 9 First Nations, supported by RAVEN, through the Breathing Lands campaign. Ontario’s view is that they have complete authority over Treaty 9 territory; and the Treaty No. 9 Nations have no jurisdiction over the land and waters that they have governed and stewarded since time immemorial. Ontario's position risks rendering historic treaties like Treaty 9 empty promises.

Line 5: update on the struggle

Some people outside Ontario are following this story as it is a prime example of Indigenous stewardship and advocacy.

SCAN! is a member of the End Line 5 Coalition, a cross-border coalition of Indigenous and environmental groups which aims to shut down the dangerous Enbridge pipeline that runs from Superior, Wisconsin to Sarnia, Ontario. It threatens the Great Lakes, interior waterways, Indigenous sovereignty and drinking water for 40 million people in both the USA and Canada.

SCAN! members can now listen to a recording of the November webinar, Big Oil vs. Big Water . It features a panel of Indigenous leaders, environmentalists and lawyers, from U.S. and Dani Lindamood from Water Watchers in Canada.

In late November, the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) unexpectedly released a draft on Line 5 drilling.

It proposes a new alternative to the tunnel: installing a new pipeline beneath the Straits of Mackinac using the Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) method. This risky method; i.e., a pipeline pulled straight through the bedrock, does not come with any of the theoretical safety assurances of the tunnel.

Enbridge wants USACE to reject the tunnel. They propose HDD as a more environmental option. Delay all options and the 70-year-old pipeline becomes more dangerous, beyond its 50-year life span. The goal of the cross-border coalition is to END LINE 5 completely.

The Canadian government is not paying attention.

Four SCAN! committees are planning an inter-committee workshop in March with a speaker from the Sierra Club and one from Water Watchers, organizers of the End Line 5 Coalition.

We write letters

A member in the War, Climate and Militarism Work Group had this letter about F35s published in the Toronto Star just before the holidays.

Another member also had a letter published in The Star. Scroll down to “Is nuclear power the best we can do?” Keep up the good work.

Chapter reports
Toronto

SCAN! Toronto members attended Toronto Council's Infrastructure and Environment Committee (IEC) meeting in early December to support the next five-year plan for Transform TO Net Zero, and asking to strengthen it. The meeting was covered in the National Observer

They asked Council to take bold environmental actions, to adopt a green building standard for existing buildings now, and to close the Portlands Energy Centre gas plant as soon as possible, replacing it with electricity from renewable
sources.

At least nine SCAN! members made deputations to the committee and five submitted written submissions. City Hall staff were heard to say they had never seen a committee meeting that full of City residents participating on an issue.

The new green standard for emissions from existing buildings (Building Emissions Performance Standards or BEPS) was put back into the plan for Transform TO, for the 1st quarter of 2027. The results were more modest than the chapter and its allies would have liked, but the collective showing was great.

And by the end of the day, Toronto’ Mayor Chow's office was asking to meet with local environmentalists.

Chapter members have begun their monthly actions at several MP offices as part of the CRR campaign (see above).

Ottawa

In November, ten members attended Power Up training offered by Organizing4Justice. They did the assigned homework, took part in four two-hour sessions and a two-hour practice session. They used the practice session to rework two of their chapter documents. The Power Up approach is going to inform their communications from now
on.

They wrote a letter calling Mark Carney and the federal government to account on their climate promises - and delivered it, with a brief demonstration - outside their constituency offices. One was to Prime Minister and Nepean MP, Mark Carney, and one to Yasir Naqvi (Ottawa Centre). At PM Carney’s office, they spoke to his assistant. Since no one answered at Naqvi’s office, they slipped the letter under the door and also e-mailed it to them.

During the demonstration, other SCAN! members phoned and emailed the offices. The event was fun. Then they made plans to repeat it at other MPs' offices every two weeks starting in January. They posted photos to their social media accounts and got a lot of positive feedback.

They also attended a demonstration in support of Kebaowek First Nation’s court case against the Nuclear Waste Disposal Facility on the Ottawa River.

They asked an Algonquin Anishinaabe from Pikwakanagan First Nation, an Associate Professor at McGill and the Faculty Chair of the Indigenous Relations Initiative at the McGill School of Continuing Studies, to provide best practice advice on working with the Algonquins. They are working in conjunction with the Northwest One condo’s Environmental Action Group and Climate Justice Ottawa.

In February, they plan a papier mache workshop with an artist to work on masks and props for their MP office demonstrations. They are hoping that the Flash Mob will be back by then and can also take part in the workshop.

London

The Chapter had a table at the Climate Grief and Ecological Anxiety Seminar in mid-November at King’s College University on the Western University Campus. Twenty-eight people attended, including seven presenters and eight exhibitors. The thirteen participants had an opportunity to visit the seven table displays.

Barrie

They protested at both their MP’s and MPP’s offices dressed in SCAN! T-shirts and green scarves. They delivered the requirements for Members of Parliament to both offices and spoke at length to Conservative underlings who were unfailingly polite and listened “with closed ears”.

They undertook another action in mid-December at City Hall, where there is more visibility, followed by lunch. They prepared posters to make the subject of the protest clearer, including a version of the infamous carbon capture poster. Their green regalia provided conversation starters. They also brought flyers promoting SCAN! to give out to passersby.

A member visited the local Métis organization to make introductions as well as sending an email to the appropriate contact offering support in their work and explaining the SCAN! campaign.

Kingston

Kingston SCAN! members and supporters held a spirited rally at MP Mark Gerretsen's office in early December. There was a great turnout despite the sub-zero temperatures and an enthusiastic chorus of modified carols. Folks gathered afterwards to share some refreshment and conversation. There was great coverage by the Kingston Whig Standard. See above.

They plan to return to his office in mid-January.

SCAN! Kingston is much in the news. Read this excellent article in the Kingston Crow.

It’s been more than two years since local climate groups united to urge Kingston’s City Council to support a maximum temperature bylaw. But Kingston city council hasn’t been willing or ready to take action. Instead, the council tied any action in Kingston to Toronto’s proposed maximum temperature bylaw. Now the City of Toronto has taken decisive action by passing a comprehensive climate resilience plan. So, according to the amendments to Kingston City Council’s February 2025 motion to move ahead on an extreme heat bylaw once Toronto does - Kingston is required to take immediate action.

Guelph

Members of the Guelph chapter took part in tabling at the Farmer's Market in November and also at the EV Show in a downtown mall. Three members participated in the Grade 9 Climate Conference by acting as judges aas well as tabling for students.

There was a guest speaker at their monthly meeting from e-Merge, Guelph's not-for-profit organization, dedicated to fighting climate change. He gave an update on the Enbridge Gas contract and discussed the Green Development Framework. He also urged the chapter to highlight developers who are building to high performance standards. He explained why the city should remove Allan's dam below the Macdonell Street bridge. The dam serves no purpose aside from cosmetic, increases CO2 and river temperature, encourages invasive species and could contribute to flooding the homes of 3,000 people who live in the floodplain.

Kawartha

The chapter received word that a company was establishing a production facility in Woodville in Kawartha Lakes for storage of power – BESS – Battery Energy Storage System, which they supported. A few members had attended their open house in October. They then lobbied the mayor and city council to support that effort. The city voted to support the project. [Yay! – ed.] They also helped a local high school environmental group, the Green Advocates, with their lobbying.

They continue their advocacy for intercity public transit in and out of Lindsay. They have been making links with supportive city councillors. It seems as if the City of Kawartha Lakes has hired a consultant to deal with that issue. They hope to have input to that process.

In mid-November, several SCAN members attended an open meeting with the mayor and the CAO of Kawartha Lakes. They challenged the mayor on the lack of intercity bus service. They also challenged the mayor on the city’s cooperation with Enbridge their building new pipelines for LNG in Bobcaygeon. There were about 100 people in attendance, with a good deal of support for their remarks.

Some of their members are on the Kawartha Lakes environment committee, challenging the city for greener efforts and projects.

The Lindsay Advocate has been open to articles by Kawartha members. Read this one.

Brant, Hamilton, Niagara, Norfolk (BHNN)

A BHNN member arranged a meeting with Flamborough-Glanbrook-North Brant MP, Dan Muys, in mid-December. In the new year, they will meet regularly with - or gather outside of - various MP offices in the area.

They continue to work on building alliances with other local climate groups.

Edmonton

The chapter continues to support groups like C4RE (Coalition for Responsible Energy) and AEN (Alberta Energy Network) to protest their provincial government’s steadfast resolve to support an Australian billionaire’s quest to build a coal mine along their eastern slopes and to make the polluters pay for the 300,000 abandoned oil wells scattered throughout the province.

They will also continue to support their collaborators like Indigenous Climate Action. Re: CRR, they are starting their campaign with two MPs: Kerry Diotte and Heather McPherson.

Northumberland

They organized a program in late November at the Cobourg library. They discussed SCAN! and ways local members have been active. See below for part of a library series aimed at informing seniors about current events: Boomers and Beyond. It was an impressive agenda, including:

An overview of SCAN! and its website
Local Sustainability
Preserving Natural Heritage
Promoting Electric Transportation
Public Education Using Tables and Tents at Local Fairs
Creating Climate Art (see photo)
Things We Can Do to Help Reduce Our Carbon Footprint

And…

A performance of a New Climate Song: Marie-Lynn Hammond

Social media

SCAN!’s FB page gets a lot of traffic. Some chapters have started a FB group or page. There are also several Instagram accounts: scan_toronto, scan_ottawa,
edmontonseniorsclimateaction, scankingston. As well, many of us follow the Seniors For Climate Instagram account: climateseniors.

It is always important to amplify to get the message out. It’s great to “like” but better to “share”.

Because of restrictions imposed by Facebook on publishing Canadian news, we are publishing the main issues of articles and referring people to the source material as well as Bluesky.

You can follow us on Bluesky
@seniorsfcan.bluesky.social

Instagram: scan.canada

Despite restrictions, we are doing our best to help people keep up to date.

Readers of this newsletter who are not yet members are welcome to join as members any time. Go to the web site and click on "Join us". Questions? email
info@seniorsforclimateactionnow.org