

CHAPTER ACTION UPDATE

By Carleen Pickard

LONDON CHAPTER SECURES BOTTLE BAN

In late August, the Council of Canadians' London chapter played a key role in getting their municipal government to ban the sale of bottled water in all city facilities. *The Globe and Mail* reported that "The water fountain is about to make a comeback. Plastic water bottles are the focus of a growing national backlash that's turning them from a fashion accessory into the latest environmental taboo ... Despite vocal protests from the beverage industry, London's Council easily approved the proposal, 15-3." The ban came as a result of extensive lobbying work done by London chapter activists.

STILL LOOKING FOR TRADE BARRIERS

Federal and provincial leaders confirmed their commitment to push forward with TILMA-like provincial trade agreements at a meeting this summer. Concerned about the announcement of an Ontario-Quebec Economic Partnership Agreement (OQPEA), Council chapters in Ontario have been educating their city council members about the TILMA experience in B.C. and Alberta. Thanks to chapter efforts, by the end of the summer 11 Ontario municipalities had passed resolutions either questioning or flat-out rejecting Ontario's plan to sign an inter-provincial trade agreement with Quebec.

NO PNWER! OPPOSITION HEARD LOUD AND CLEAR

As hundreds of Pacific North West Economic Region (PNWER) delegates met in Vancouver in July, chapters in Vancouver, Burnaby, Surrey/Langley/White Rock, North Vancouver and Salmon Arm joined forces with the "Snakes In the Grass" initiative of the Victoria chapter to oppose the summit's deep integration agenda. With workshops and panels planned to discuss an



Activists from the Council of Canadians' Whistler, B.C. chapter helped raise concern about the clearing of a rare wetland to make way for the "Hydrogen Highway," an initiative of the B.C. government to showcase hydrogen transportation and technology.

exclusive and limited vision of Canada-U.S. relations, PNWER delegates reviewed joint security initiatives, the 2010 Olympics, energy development, and increased opportunities for corporate investment. Corporate sponsors had unique access to policy decision makers from B.C., Alberta, the Yukon, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Alaska at the event.

Meanwhile, members of the Snakes initiative gathered to expose the corporate participation at the PNWER Summit, then sang and chanted songs highlighting the corporations' contributions to climate change and human rights violations in Canada and internationally. Joining a protest of about 50 people, chapter members made some noise by banging pots and pans, disrupting the summit's opening dinner party. Local and international papers reported on the action while also highlighting the summit's closed-door agenda.

NUCLEAR CRITIC HOSTED IN NOVA SCOTIA

In June, the Annapolis Valley chapter hosted Dr. Gordon Edwards, president and co-founder of the Canadian

Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility. Edwards met with politicians and spoke to the public, presenting information about why uranium and nuclear energy are not the way of the future and encouraging them to take action to ensure that the provincial government's uranium mining and exploration moratorium is put into legislation. The Nova Scotia government recently announced it is considering lifting the moratorium, which has been in place since the early 1980s.

NEW BEGINNINGS

We extend a warm welcome to members of the newest Council of Canadians chapter. Community members in Peace River, Alberta, have come together to take action and oppose the push by Bruce Power for a nuclear reactor on Lac Cardinal.

IN MEMORIAM

This issue we remember Red Deer chapter activist Pauline Dusyk, Salmon Arm chapter activist Pat Fritzel, and St. John's chapter activist Sister Marie Ryan, who all recently passed away. Their commitment to the issues, volunteer work to improve their communities and country, and generous involvement with the Council of Canadians will not be forgotten.

NEW DIRECTION

After three years as Director of Organizing, Brent Patterson leaves his post this fall to take on the role of Director of Campaigns and Communications at the Council of Canadians. While Brent will continue to play a key role in the analysis, action and strategy planning of the Council, his leadership amongst the Council's chapters and organizing team will be missed.

Carleen Pickard is the former BC-Yukon Regional Organizer and new Director of Organizing for the Council of Canadians.