

# The Pioneer

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Photo by Joel Watson.

Sam Cyr watches the many parade floats go by with great excitement while sitting on the shoulders of Chris Brown at the Belleville Santa Claus parade. The nighttime Santa Claus parade has been a tradition for 15 years. For story and more photos, see page 3.

## Loyalist hosts environmental speaker

By Taylor Hermiston

Whether it's rural or urban, the future of our communities are in our hands and it is up to us to learn how to shape it as a place we all want to live in.

Loyalist College will host Carl Cosack, a member of the North Dufferin Agricultural Community Task Force or NDACT, as a guest speaker, on Thursday, Nov. 21, 2013. Cosack will share his support and experience of the Highland Company's precedent-setting application and why citizens are against the Melrose Quarry.

The Highland Companies Application supports the decision that the Melanc-

thon Quarry, Duffin, Ont. is located in a respectable area for aggregate development. The design can be operated to take full advantage of production with no opposing effects on its neighbours or the environment.

"Not every aggregate application is bad. It is a way to ensure that concerns get a fair hearing and help identify solutions for this particular application," said Cosack.

There is a group of people opposed to the expansion of the Melrose Quarry, located within the Township of Tyendinaga, on the corner of Melrose and Shannonville. The group is called the *Citizens Against the Melrose Quarry*, and are an

ordinary group of Canadians that aim to present facts that guarantee a positive effect on the quality of life in the neighbourhood.

"The Citizens" have the support of nearly 300 people in the township and the number is growing.

How can you help? Cosack highlights The Food & Water First movement. It was created as a movement dedicated to protecting Ontario's Class 1 farmland and source water regions.

They are citizens who understand that Ontario has rare agricultural soils and water resources, which provide Ontario with a great abundance that we must help preserve. They encourage the Ontario

government to adopt a Food and Water First policy so Ontario's vital agricultural sector and source water regions are given priority in land-use planning.

From personal to business, local politics, elections, issues with various impacts, we interact everyday with each other. It is our world to live in. We want to take charge of the process and be part of the solution.

"Decisions everywhere impact your life, from laws to help create civility of conduct, to zoning laws and regulations that might impact the property right across from where you built your dream home, it is our responsibility as human beings to participate," said Cosack. "Be

engaged in the lives of people around you, after all, we are a society."

NDACT is an incorporated, non-profit organization, which was formed in January 2009 by alarmed citizens from the Melancthon and Mulmur townships. Their mission is to preserve and protect the unique and non-renewable resources of North Dufferin County.

This includes the headwaters that supply water to hundreds of thousands of Ontarians. Over 150 years, the distinct prime agricultural farmland and the environment, social economic and cultural characteristics have been an important part of our community and heritage, according to the NDACT website.

## Meyers farm site of weekend peaceful protest

By Anica James

The rain and fog set the mood for what was scheduled to be a peaceful protest at Frank and Marjorie Meyers farm on Sunday Nov. 17.

About 15 supporters showed up, including neighbours, students and activists, holding homemade signs and recording everything with their phones and digital cameras.

Around noon, there were more law enforcement officials than protesters. Five Ontario Provincial Police cruisers and two Canadian Forces Military Police cars arrived on the scene and blocked the Quinte West country road.

"It's all rotten," said Frank Meyers. "You've got to have food, land, water and air. They're taking it all from us."

One cruiser from the Canadian National Railway Police showed up to make sure that people were safe around the railroad tracks that run through the property.

According to Lt. Bettina McCulloch-Drake, public affairs officer at 8 Wing/CFB Trenton, the Minister of Public Works and Government Services (PW-GSC) initiated the expropriation process in January 2012 and all but one affected landowner accepted a negotiated agreement. An agreement with this last landowner, Frank Meyers, was made to allow him to use the parcel of land being expropriated until Sept. 30, 2013, while negotiations on an agreement continued.

Although the property that was expropriated did not include Meyers' current residence located on the north side of Meyers Creek Road northeast of Trenton, it still comes as a shock to the octogenarian because his farmland and childhood home have been taken from him.

"I used to have one hundred head of cattle," Meyers stated. "I was harassed so



Photo by Anica James

Despite his many efforts to combat the expropriation of his property through legal means, Frank Meyers, 85, is saddened to see his family farm scraped away in order to make way for a state-of-the-art 400 hectare training facility for the highly classified Joint Task Force 2.

bad, I had to get rid of them. My mother and father had nothing, but they always made sure that bills were paid and that my sisters and I were fed. This would have never have happened in their time, so why my time?"

In February 2013, Meyers provided the Government of Canada a schedule for the

removal of his equipment and animals from the property. At that time, a licence agreement was entered into between the Department of National Defense as the landlord and Frank Meyers as tenant for the use of the land until Sept. 30, 2013.

"How do you feel about the fact Frank Meyers has had his farm stolen?" yelled

Dean Tea, a supporter who travelled to the farm Sunday morning from Guelph, Ont.

People driving by yelled out their support.

"Kick their ass Frank! Give 'em hell Frank!"

According to McCulloch-Drake, 8

Wing is still in communication with the Meyers family and is doing everything it can to assist Meyers in accessing any remaining crops, livestock and equipment that has been left on the property.

"I cannot say when demolition of any structures on the property will take place," McCulloch-Drake said through e-mail correspondence. "Because that matter is still being discussed with the Meyers family, I also cannot say when construction will start taking place as that has yet to be decided."

"The military made a fool of themselves," Meyers said in regards to the four military officials that showed up on Sunday. "They're waiting for me to open the gate for them but that won't happen!"

Lisa Gibson, the organizer behind the protest and the Facebook page called Save Frank & Marjorie Meyers Farm, said that she couldn't sit back and allow the government to do that without at least trying to stop it.

"I originally read an article in Maclean's magazine that disgusted me," Gibson said, sipping her coffee outside of the Meyers' family home on Sunday Nov. 17. "I posted a link to the article on my personal Facebook page and the response from my friends prompted me to create a separate group. I called Frank and asked if I could do it and he was more than encouraging."

To date, there are close to 6,500 likes, and over 1,600 people are talking about the page.

"I have spent 22 years in the death care sector working in monument sales," said Gibson, who hails from the Morrisburg area and is now a waitress. "I have heard too many stories, first hand, of elders that are in similar situations and it is heart-breaking."

"I can't sleep. I can't help it," Meyers said, clearing his throat. "But I'm still here, still going. They're just waiting for me to move, but I'm not moving."