



Photo by Victoria Thoms

Local activists participate in a protest against the Line 9 pipeline, hanging their banner over the Dundas Street bridge. The Line 9 pipeline crosses over 29 rivers, and three major roads in Belleville.

Protesters speak out about Line 9

By Victoria Thoms

Activists protesting against the progress of the Line 9 pipeline shared their opinions with members of the community in a not-so-subtle way on Friday afternoon.

Marching through downtown Belleville, Lindy Powell, Maribeth Bateman, Anthea Weese, Wesley Weese, Susan White and John Lewis carried a large banner stating, "Stop Line 9." As downtown shoppers and residents looked confused and surprised, the small protest carried on downtown showing their bold statement against Enbridge Inc., the company at the centre of the controversy.

Enbridge was not available to provide an interview with *The Pioneer* before the publishing date.

"Short term, what I want is for the tar sands to stop," said Lewis, one of the protest participants.

Enbridge is a large corporation that protesters say is stepping on small communities to get what they want. The reversal of a pipeline segment between Sarnia and Montreal is their current mission, but the project won't end there. The tar sands industry is growing bigger and bigger every year, consuming money, land and natural resources, which is worrying local residents. With the chance of a break in a pipeline causing a devastating oil spill, Enbridge is facing petitions and protests across the country. Nation-wide petitions have been started, and well as provincial discussions and speeches by Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne.

"Groups like ourselves have to resist this, because what we're trying to do is slow down," said Wesley Weese, one of the participants. "By taking a stance on Line 9, we are in fact slowing down this whole process."

Protests are being held to make local

citizens more aware there is more risk than reward involved in this process, the protesters say. Belleville citizens have no direct say in the matter, they add, and are having a hard time having their voices heard.

Bateman also participated in the activities of Friday. She said the risks and rewards are not equally balanced.

"What's in the pipeline, and do we get any reward from that? And the answer is probably not. Unless someone has a relative working in Alberta, then they might. What are the risks, because there is certainly not many benefits," said Bateman.

Enbridge Inc. made an effort to reach out to the citizens of cities and towns along the pipeline route. Hosting small "town hall" meetings, they awarded prizes and gifts to different towns for their participation. Belleville's prize was \$25,000 to refurbish a bus, in preparation

for disaster co-ordination. Enbridge did not state the cause of the potential disaster, saying the bus could be for tsunamis, earthquakes or any other natural disaster that may occur.

"I tell you, it would be a disaster if Belleville didn't have any clean drinking water," said one participant.

Many participants in the latest local protests have been concerned that there are not more people in their communities expressing concerns. In fact, as the group paraded along downtown, one observer shouted out "What is Line 9?"

Many people seemed confused by the sign, or simply unaware of what the cause was. Other citizens say that they've seen it far too often, or feel too pressured to step up and say something.

"Tar sands, smar sands. People can feel that way, or get overwhelmed and not want to hear anymore about it."

"But as soon as they hear that the tar

sands are coming here, to our water and our lake, they change right away. Their opinion becomes 'We're connected; we care.' It's our community and we've got to take care of it," said White.

Local protesters have asked Enbridge questions, and say they have not received responses.

"If I was sitting in a chair at Enbridge, I would say, 'Well why respond?' I would be saying 'Let's just put out our statements, and not respond to the opposition, not react.' The minute you react, you get into a situation that you might be led in some way to somewhere you don't want to go," said Wesley Weese.

The group of protesters showed up along the Moira River, and downtown Belleville on Friday. They are planning to show up in other locations across Belleville with their banner to create awareness of the pending issue that may soon become permanent.

Moccasin-making workshop encourages a sense of community and culture

By Lacy Gillott

The smell of leather, the sound of community and a sense of belonging were highlights of the third annual moccasin-making workshop at Loyalist College on Saturday.

"Even just having one person show up means a lot," explained the event organizer Tegan Mandeville-Mackay.

"Having this many people come out is really encouraging, to have the support of this cultural activity as well as just bringing it to a new collection of people."

The night before the event took place, Mandeville-Mackay had six volunteers and three people signed up and ready to make a pair of moccasins. Many volunteers did not show up. However, there were many unexpected last minute sign-ups.

"I was never going to turn anybody away," Mandeville-Mackay said.

Tracing, cutting, sewing and beading are few of the many necessary steps taken to produce such a culturally rich product.

People came because they felt a sense of culture and connection. Some were making the moccasins as a gift. Others came because they were simply interested in the idea of personally crafting their own pair of moccasins.

"I saw the poster and thought it was unique and interesting. Then I was like, who would come with me," said Shelby Hodder as she looked at her friend, Linda Blanchette, who added "Yes, I'm here because she invited me."

The event ran from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m., which Mandeville-Mackay said "would most likely be enough time to make at least one moccasin." For the process is very time consuming.

Overall the event was a success. "I



Photo by Lacy Gillott

Susanna Bardy, right, volunteered and participated in a moccasin-making workshop at Loyalist College, on Saturday. It was the third annual moccasin-making workshop.

think this is the best turnout we've had," Mandeville-Mackay said.

Because Mandeville-Mackay will be graduating this spring, she hopes one of her volunteers will continue the annual moccasin-making workshop in the following years. If not, Mandeville-Mackay explained she would gladly come back to Loyalist College just to host this event each year.

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Organizer Tegan Mandeville-Mackay

Amnesty...

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Upon her release, Bopha thanked Amnesty International, stating that the Write for Rights campaign was successful.

"Now with social media, there's a lot of push. Things get done. People get publicity. But the letters, they do still help," said Thorne.

"Normally on an urgent action campaign, we're averaging 30 letters," said Marianne Chapelle, treasurer for Belleville's Amnesty chapter.

"It's something anyone can do, and that's been our thrust. Some developing countries don't adhere to the rules and regulations of basic human rights and we're looking to put a stop to these abuses," said Chapelle.

The process, Chapelle explained is made easy for those wanting to participate.

"People can view the Urgent Actions available and choose who to write to. We have all the material here to write the letters. We [also] address the envelopes and take donation for stamps and postage, and we send them."

The group has also seen a response from their efforts – Amnesty International's publication, *The Activist*, sends volunteers information regarding prisoners who have been released.

Anthea Weese, a long-time volunteer with Group 111 has seen some of the letters from the prisoners who have been released.

"Some of the prisoners write back and tell us how the letters made all the difference," said Weese.

Through the years, Amnesty International reports that they have achieved a positive outcome in one-third of the cases they campaign for.

"Often in news reports when you see that a prisoner of conscience has been released, they thank Amnesty International."

Letter writing is open to the public and will take place on the second Tuesday of every month. For all other meetings, contact Belleville's Amnesty International Group 111 representative at cgallupe@gmail.com.

Suzi Willig asked people at Loyalist College the following question:

Are you watching the Olympics, and if yes, what are you most looking forward to?



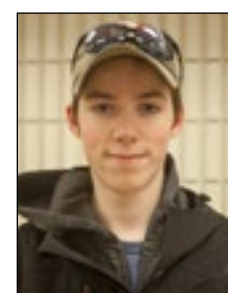
Erica Thompson, early childhood education, "Maybe a little bit, probably snowboarding and skiing."



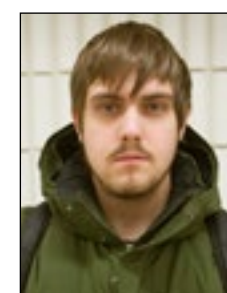
Charles Shaw, 22, chemical engineering, "Absolutely, team Canada winning."



Tanya Sherboneau, 20, early childhood education, "Probably not. I'm pretty busy."



Lucas McQuoid, police foundations, "Yes, I will be watching. I'm most looking forward to bobsledding."



Andrew Tyerman, environmental technology, "Vaguely, I like the ski jumping."



Lindsay Robinson, police foundations, "I only have only one channel, so I'm not gonna watch."