

## Information pertaining to Oxford County and Area environmental issues

OPAL website <http://www.opalalliance.ca/events>

### April 2017

#### ZERO WASTE INITIATIVE WINS

The **Canterbury Folk Festival** was honoured to receive 1st place for the Innovation Award at the Southwestern Ontario Tourism Corporation Conference March 8. The festival was 1 of 3 finalists & was awarded for demonstrating excellence for their Zero Waste program for 2016. Nominations were accepted for organizations & businesses who made a positive impact on the tourism industry in the southwest region. As with many events, the Canterbury Folk Festival was producing about 50 cubic yards of waste. Over 15 years, the waste was reduced to 4 cubic yards. "Despite this success, we knew we could do better & partnered with local grassroots group "Transition To Less Waste" said Brenda Boswell who does marketing & promotion for the festival. Transition to Less Waste started to provide reusable plates the first year & added cups, cutlery & a refillable water station to the festival. The dishes were provided to vendors at no charge. They also manually reviewed the garbage to ensure all recycling was diverted. In 2016, the festival declared itself a No Waste Zone where vendors were requested to be mindful of what they were bringing in to the festival. There were no garbage containers onsite & in the end, only a couple of bags went to the landfill. Volunteers worked tirelessly scrubbing items such as cardboard food containers by hand to ensure they met recycling standards. The festival's efforts have been an inspiration to the rest of Oxford County to have zero waste going to landfill by 2025. The award was presented by conference keynote speaker Michele Romanow the newest & youngest ever entrepreneur to join Dragons' Den. She is ranked as one of the "100 Most Powerful in Canada" by Women's Executive Network & is the only Canadian included on Forbes' "Millennial on a Mission" list. The 2017 Canterbury Folk Festival will be held July 7-9 and will have special activities in keeping with Canada's 150th birthday. This will include a performer from each of the provinces and the return of a number of major acts including: Valdy, Ian Thomas, Red Moon Road & Lennie Gallant. For more information contact: Brenda Boswell, 519-539-8670, [brendajboswell@gmail.com](mailto:brendajboswell@gmail.com).

#### ZERO WASTE IN OXFORD COUNTY

Did you know that ....

- Oxford's Zero Waste committee has praised the Waste-Free Ontario Strategy and asked that the province move forward on it quickly?
- Ingersoll's Canterbury Festival has been recognized by South western Ontario Tourism for the quality of the music & its zero waste initiative?
- Transition to Less Waste continues to help groups all over Oxford planning zero waste at tournaments, gatherings, group picnics, concerts....?
- Every time you boil up turkey bones from a family feast, you are saving money and the environment?
- The Lunch Bunch no longer uses disposable glasses weekly when offering a full hot lunch to students at Ingersoll elementary schools because washable glasses are cheaper & better for the environment?
- Six schools across Oxford won compost bins in a contest sponsored by the Oxford Coalition for Social Justice and are now producing rich soil for gardens?
- STICH Supper Club providing generous hot meals every Thursday at Ingersoll's Legion composts in the kitchen & from plate scrapings, including even paper serviettes to avoid garbage?
- Bryan Smith is glad to weekly feed compost from Lunch Bunch and STICH to his garden. You can too?

## **FUTURE OXFORD'S ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR**

According to the recent Canadian Index of Well-Being results in Oxford, 88% of residents feel “a personal responsibility for the environment. That’s an astonishing commitment to sustainability. So, when an invitation was sent to all on a list of Oxford organizations, plus a few others whose interest in was known, the response was swift. Replies began. They included confirmations of attendance, regrets of unavailability, questions about being glad they had received the invitation, requests for the notes from the meeting, remarks about Future Oxford’s actions, asking if they could bring a friend who was highly engaged too. The answer – of course! Various groups and/or individuals identified actions they were engaged in which were listed under the goals in the Community Sustainability Plan or which met the goals despite not being a listed action. It was agreed that the achievement of goals was more important than hewing to the actions listed, i.e., that the goals are important & the actions are examples, and often exemplary. We discovered a broad consensus on the goals in the environmental portion of the Future Oxford Sustainability Plan, that many actions are well under way which will contribute to the realization of those goals, and that some actions which serve the goals were not even imagined at the start of the Community Sustainability consultations. All this is good. In addition, there was significant overlap among the actions being done & planned by various groups and individuals present, meaning that we have driven our goals higher than expected. The next meeting of the Environmental Pillar of Future Oxford will include yet more groups. If your group was not represented at the initial meeting – check with your members on this – please contact Bryan Smith, the Acting Chair, at [bryansmith@oxford.net](mailto:bryansmith@oxford.net). For more information on the environmental, community & economic action consult <http://www.futureoxford.ca/> or meet them April 20 at Future Oxford Expo in the Oxford Auditorium on the Woodstock Fairgrounds.

**REUSEAPALOOZAHA! LIKE TRASHAPALOOZAHA?** Yes, indeed, ReuseapalooZaha is Zorra’s edition of the renamed event. Why the name change? Not everyone understands that old saying “One person’s trash is another’s treasure” to exclude the sofa that the cats have shredded, bedded on or worse. That’s the kind of thing that needs to head directly to Salford. What ReuseapalooZaha in Embro’s Community Centre is looking for is reusable goods which you no longer need which your neighbours & friends will see, shout “Aha” then take home to use, rebuild, upcycle & love. So, ReuseapalooZaha is a grand swap meet & a place to talk with friends. It’s also a statement about dumps – saying we can keep things out of them & out of ditches, fields & laneways. It is also a collaboration between the team who bring ReuseapalooZahas around the county and the Thamesford Lions. You can help them with their good programs by bringing scrap metal, electronics & vehicle batteries to either the Thamesford arena, or to their trailer at the Embro Community Centre when you come with clothes, tools, toys, housewares, etc. to give away. Come as early as 8am. The event wraps up at 2pm. Don’t miss out. For more information, Bryan Smith recommends you check out the ad in this Village Voice, flyers or visit [www.reuseapaloozaha.ca](http://www.reuseapaloozaha.ca).

**MANY RIVERS TO CROSS** “Many rivers to cross” goes the song, but people in Beachville & Ingersoll were right in thinking that their part of Oxford County only had one river. What a surprise then to see a document showing a large number of lakes! Where did all those bodies of water come from? Not too long ago, the Ministry of the Environment denied that the Quarry Lake is a lake (!?). Now, their partners in the Ministry of Natural Resources show several large lakes scattered north of the Quarry Lake in a plan to rehabilitate farm land to water. While water is vital to farming, it’s difficult to drive a tractor through. Those wondering what

was being planned were further baffled by the short, insubstantial postings on the EBR website (<https://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/displaynoticecontent.do?noticeId=MTMxODEw&statusId=MTk5OTcz&language=en> ). So, Bryan Smith, like several others contacted the case officer. Not a lot more information came forward, but enough to make you wonder if the MNRF is consulting the public appropriately.

### **WALKER VS OXFORD COUNTY**

The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) used Oxford County Council chambers on March 2 for a pre-hearing where Walker is challenging Oxford County's Official Plan, the one that drives us toward Zero Waste. OPAL, Oxford People Against the Landfill, supports the County's position & has been granted participant status. If you want to watch this quasi-judicial process in action, the next date, where Walker will argue for a delay in the hearing of facts, while the County will argue that the facts are evident, is on May 11, 10:30am, in the County Building in Woodstock. Members of the public can sit in the audience. Bryan Smith has attended other OMB and similar tribunals & has found them an education. All Oxford should be interested in this one.

**A RED LETTER DAY...** Tavistock, Tillsonburg, Beachville, Woodstock, Embro, Ingersoll – these are some of the local addresses on letters sent to the Ministry of the Environment with reasons why **Glen Murray the Minister should stop Walker's dump.**

The ink is black or blue, green or red, yet all say the same thing: there is no reason to impose 17 million tonnes of Toronto area's trash on Oxford. Recently, thanks to local residents and people from Mississauga & Toronto, Kirkland Lake which fought and beat a dump, and other towns all over Ontario, the count of letters sent to Queen's Park surpassed 81,000. Someone there has to be listening! Add your signature to a letter at events like ReuseapaloozAHA, the Farmers' Markets, etc. or write your own. OPAL will be glad to mail them for you. It will be a red letter day in Oxford when Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment gets the message thanks to you. Bryan Smith has written a few letters to him & is waiting, like you, for his reply.

## **January 2017**

### **OPAL SEEKS DONATIONS and volunteers**

The Oxford People against the Landfill are seeking multiple kinds of donations. We need to continue as a community to sign letters against the proposed dump. At 78,000, this is no time to stop!

We need volunteers on April 22 in Embro when we run ReuseapaloozAHA, yet another great free swap meet. We also need to gather funds to pay for experts like water scientists to prove to the Minister of the Environment that a dump puts our ground & surface water at too great a risk.

That is why, we appeal to all members of the community to consider what we can give.

Cheques can be mailed to OPAL c/o S. Fleming, 205 George St, Ingersoll, N5G 1Z5. Cash or cheques can be deposited in the donation box at Coffee Culture in Ingersoll too.

**We are all in this together.**

Bryan Smith is the president of OPAL and glad to be affiliated with you all in this fight.

### **OPAL THANKS STUDENTS**

Where would we be without students? Their energy, insight & enthusiasm seem boundless. When elementary students in Ingersoll invited Bryan Smith in to see their dance, their skits & their research, he was as impressed as he was with the intelligence of high school classes in Woodstock, not to

mention the courage of one girl who volunteered to help perform the four-sieve simulation. For more information on the four-sieve test and whether they can stop your toxic coffee sludge from filtering through, see OPAL November newsletter. For more information on OPAL's fight to stop the dump visit [www.opalalliance.ca](http://www.opalalliance.ca).

### **WHAT DO THOSE WORDS MEAN?**

We speak a tricky language. There are so many shades of meaning. Recently, before the Supreme Court of Canada, First Nations in the north & nearby asked what "consultation" and "the Crown" mean. Those are very important for the Chippewas of the Thames when it comes to protecting our water. Incidentally, they are important to us too. We are all treaty people, and the treaties between the British and their allies of the War of 1812-1814 are some of the earliest records which describe rights of settlers & indigenous peoples.

When there are threats to our water, we'd like to have it known that local knowledge has been heard, that local questions are being answered with full scientific and reliable proof.

OPAL Alliance members await the work of scientists to confirm what they already know: dump liners leak; the risk is too high; water is life.

Bryan Smith participates in conversations with First Nations whenever he can. It's important for us to understand our history and to control our futures.

### **COMPOSTERS SPAWN MORE PROJECTS**

What do you do if you are using a community hall for an event & you know that there will be peels & cuttings from food preparations, then scrapings from finished plates? If you are environmentally aware, you'd take some buckets, some lids which seal them well, compostable liners & deposit the contents in your home compost bin. Hurray! Zero waste, here we come! Better yet, people will see this in action & suggest that their pigs would like all the compost as feed, if we'd be kind enough to sort the serviettes separately for composting. It's too high in fibre even for porkers. Others will suggest that their nearby institution could have compost bins & take advantage of the rich soil it makes for flowerbeds & vegetable gardens. When the Oxford Coalition for Social Justice, of which Bryan Smith is the chair, launched its call for environmental projects, it had no idea how rich the ideas would be or how deep the thinking might be. With the wonderful green cones which the County provides, rich natural resource and deep underground worm action can spawn lots of good ideas.

### **PREVENTING POISONING OF THE WATER**

People in Paris, Ontario are concerned that their water could be imperilled if a pit is opened atop their wells for drinking water. It seems sensible that you'd not open ground water to the sky & to run-off across fields. The community thought the Ministry of the Environment would be their ally on this, help protect them. What a shock then, when the Ministry hired lawyers to argue against the community & to allow the mixes soils to be removed, the sand & gravel to be extracted too close for comfort!

Not deterred, locals in CCOB, hired their own experts and asked for lawyers' help. They drove fundraising through the roof to pay for it all.

Their situation is a bit like that of people in Centreville, Beachville & Ingersoll, many of whom feel that the Ministry of the Environment has not argued their case against the dump strongly enough, and that as a community they would have to fight back.

Bryan Smith remains convinced that the Ministry of the Environment could and **should act like a Ministry for the Environment and help stop the dump.**

### **CULTURE VULTURES OVERWHELMED!**

It was a busy end of the 2016 year in communities all over Oxford. There have been plays, pageants & parades. There have been choirs, concerts & carol singing. At times, it's been hard to schedule all 5

evening events into the same day. You can run out of room on the calendar. This active cultural life of music, painting, pottery, quilting, weaving & spinning helps to characterize Oxford County. What energy! It will be wonderful, says Bryan Smith, when we can concentrate all our energies on these positive events, on initiating rural business & industry, rather than fighting off Toronto's trash. 2017 will be a busy year, protecting all that we hold dear.

## **Prior to 2017**

### **AGM - April 17**

If you are wondering what OPAL or your favorite group is doing at their AGM, there is no better way to find out than to attend. OPAL hosted by the Ingersoll Legion at 2pm on April 17.

An AGM is in fact the annual general meeting which all incorporated community groups (as well as big profit-making companies) hold where they set out the work done of the past year & the plan ahead. In OPAL's case, expect to hear about our many efforts to stop the dump. Annual general meetings can be closed or open. OPAL has chosen to have our's open to all members, volunteers & to the general public as part of our effort to inform & educate around the significant threats posed to our community by pollution of our water, land and air. Join us.

### **TrashapalooZaha - April 23 - Embro**

#### **EARTH DAY - ISN'T IT EVERY DAY?**

World Water day is in March. Earth Day is April 22, the day before Embro hosts TrashapalooZaha. But shouldn't we be working every day to make the Earth better, our lives more sustainable? Without a doubt! Nonetheless, it is a good idea, now & again, to celebrate our efforts & our successes in improving the quality of life. That is why OPAL and its Alliance partners have chosen to fete David Suzuki, a long-time crusader for the environment and Planet Earth at the Embro Community Centre at the same time as all there take concrete action to improve our county by removing metal, batteries & electronics destined for the dump & donating them to the Thamesford Lions. Additionally, books, toys, household electronics, kitchen wares, clothing, decorations & sundries can be brought in to offer up free to a good home, or to take home free. All of this diverts significant waste from dumps, saves energy in their manufacture & saves money in several ways. The one day event on April 23rd isn't the end, however, of efforts to reduce our impact on planet Earth. All remaining goods will be donated to Good Will and other charities to support their work in the community. Any and every day of the year is a chance for people to do the same - donate to charities rather than trashing goods & our planet. Come celebrate our work, & do good work too!

### **FREE WOODSTOCK! - May 7**

No, Snoopy's friend, the bird, has not been caged. Woodstock has joined Embro & Ingersoll in offering a giant free swap meet. This spring, while people clear out the closets, garages & sheds, they will have an opportunity on May 7 to see those items go to someone who can use them. Additionally, they can find free & wonderful treasures at the Woodstock Fairgrounds in the barn taken over for the day by Trashapaloozaha. In spring, there is the music of birds in the air. On May 7, a local band will sing along, providing musical entertainment, while the Woodstock Environmental Advisory Committee offers composting advice for gardeners looking for free sources of soil-enriching nutrients for their gardens, containers & pots. Come out of your cozy winter-proof cage.

This spring, see Trashapaloozaha in one or more venues.

## **BEACHVILLE COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE - May 28**

8am-noon will be a great day for people from all over Oxford County to visit Beachville. Not only is it a picturesque place as OPAL's November newsletter pointed out, but it is the host of a village garage sale. There will be deals for sure. In fact, OPAL's Board members will be present, at STS Roofing at the east end of town, with lots for sale, and with all proceeds going to their fight against the dump. You can help out by shopping in Beachville on May 28. Not only will it be a pleasant outing for you & your family, but it will also mean more funds for OPAL to stop the landfill. Bantering is always welcomed, but don't barter too hard, please.

## **WALKER TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Ministry of Environment & Climate Change approves Terms of Reference for Walker Environmental Group Southwestern Landfill Proposal. Joint Municipal Coordinating Committee responds to Province's decision on Walker Southwestern Landfill proposal "The JMCC is disappointed in the decision by the Minister of the Environment & Climate Change to accept with amendments the Terms of Reference for Walker Environmental Group's Southwestern Landfill Proposal. "We believe Oxford's municipalities put forward, through the Peer Review Team submissions, convincing evidence & information regarding the ecological, economic, social & health implications of a mega-landfill for this location in our community. Our citizens have voiced their concerns loudly & clearly to the provincial government. To learn that the Southwestern Landfill proposal will now move to an Environmental Assessment process is devastating news to our community. "We are further disappointed to learn the Minister did not grant our requests for a full Health Impact Assessment, but has left Walker to determine whether or not to expand the scope of the Health Risk Assessment: a far less comprehensive review than what would be required by a Health Impact Assessment. "This community is not a willing host & will continue to oppose Walker's landfill proposal. We share the profound disappointment of our citizens in this failure to protect our people from the impacts of Walker's mega-landfill. The only outcome we can support is the outright rejection of the Terms of Reference & the denial of this project. "The JMCC remains committed to continuing to oversee an independent multi-disciplinary peer review process to ensure the objective, scientific information about the impacts of the proposal will be available to Oxford residents & all other stakeholders. "To that end, we will also work to ensure Walker Environmental Group commits to a full Health Impact Assessment, as submitted to the Ministry by the Oxford County Medical Officer of Health and endorsed by the four Oxford County JMCC municipalities." Margaret Lupton, Chair, Joint Municipal Coordinating Committee, Mayor, Township of Zorra For more information visit [www.oxfordreviewteam.ca](http://www.oxfordreviewteam.ca).

## **WEATHER PREDICTION: A LIGHT DUSTING...**

You can be sure of a dusting of grit on your house, car, lawn & in your lungs almost anywhere in Oxford. Frequent images of dust-caked roads, mailboxes, roofs & windows are sent often to the Minister of the Environment.

Despite that, London area **MOE officials claim that there is no "evidence of significant particulate contaminant exceedances to air quality"**. So that dust in your lungs doesn't bother them even if it does bother you & risk your health.

In fact, Dr. Ray Copps of Public Health Ontario has been clear that the MOE's standards are not health standards. The significant dust quantities have health impacts, negative to be sure. Now we learn that the Ministry of the Environment has been asleep at the switch for over a decade. According to news sources, "Carmeuse Lime in Flamborough is putting a plan in

place to reduce emissions” since “the Greensville plant hasn’t been in compliance with provincial regulations after air quality levels were tightened in 2005”. Over 10 years, people have been inhaling dust & particulate matter at levels which even the MOE considers unacceptable, but this same MOE has done nothing to improve the situation.

Apparently, the London MOE office is not concerned about the health of Oxford residents & has advised the Toronto head office to make it difficult for Oxford residents to access the information we need.

It would be better if both the head office and MOE’s regional office acted on their standards, but much better if their standards showed some concern for public health. The constant dusting needs to stop.

**UNWILLING HOSTS Toronto politicians & provincial ones** have now heard that Oxford County doesn’t want their trash. Not only has OPAL sent letters from the public to **Mayor John Tory, Ingersoll’s Mayor Ted Comiskey** went in person to deliver the message. **Zorra’s Margaret Lupton**, the community where Walker plans to dump the garbage they haul up the 401, has been clear that they are not willing hosts. Additionally, the 48,454 letters to Queen’s Park have made it abundantly clear that Toronto needs to solve its garbage problem through diversion, recycling, composting & vigorous banning of unnecessary waste in the same way as our county. The fight to stop Walker’s dump in Carmeuse’s quarry near Beachville continues: unwilling hosts have seen unwelcomed intruders before. Oxford residents need to communicate with provincial leaders that the effects of garbage on our water, air & land, in fact, on our lives, are not something we will tolerate.

### **WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE ... and not a drop to drink.**

Pity the people of Mississippi Mills who cannot drink their well water. As a community which depends on ground water for all our taps, we can sympathize for sure.

How did that Ottawa area community get in the predicament we want to avoid in Oxford?

The National Research Council has told Mississippi Mills residents to stop drinking their tap water. It’s contaminated with chemicals. The short-term inconvenience is only part of the problem. People will need to wonder about the cumulative effects of the chemicals on their bodies before they were found in their water. So too, they will wonder if they should continue to live in the community where they may never again be able to trust their water supply.

Economically, they have lost: what is the value of a house where the piped water coming out of the tap is unfit for human consumption? A reasonable person would not consider moving there with their family & children.

A reasonable person would foresee some of these same concerns in Oxford if a dump gets put into a quarry in our water table. A sympathetic person would wonder what we can do to help Mississippi Mills. The answer, sadly, is little it’s too late.

A reasonable person would then do everything to prevent the recurrence of this kind of contamination of the water supply.

We don’t want to wait for officials to test the water & pronounce it undrinkable.

Instead we want the Minister of the Environment to prevent this kind of disaster from ever happening in Oxford or anywhere

### **A WASTE-FREE ONTARIO**

That’s a great idea: a waste-free Ontario.

The Ontario government is inviting ideas from people in Beachville, Centreville, Ingersoll, Zorra and other parts of Oxford via the EBR’s comment box.

What a great way to explain to the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Glen Murray, that all Oxford opposes a private dump burying trash near the Thames River and our water table. The EBR is simple to use & open to multiple comments from one or more members of your family.

Google "EBR Waste Free Ontario" or type in <http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEBExternal/displaynoticecontent.do?noticeId=MTI2Njk2&statusId=MTkxMjM4> and add a short or long comment on how & why Ontario's big cities need to deal with garbage through recycling, composting, diversion, regifting or just plain not buying it instead of stacking it into trucks to haul into the countryside here.

Comments are open in January and for most of the short month of February. Act now!  
**Time and an opportunity to have your say are slipping away.**

## **AND THE SIGN SAYS.....**

Ok, you know the song, "you long-haired freaky people" but it "need not apply" to you. In fact, the more signs the better! With the prospect of repeated & added visits by VIPs from Toronto to Oxford, you will want lots of signs on your lawn to say "**No Dump**".

Recently, a dozen signs sprouted on a lawn at Whiting & Holcroft. A whole dozen!

If you are jealous or otherwise inspired to action, signs are now available for purchase at **Grampa's Attic in Ingersoll** (and OPAL thanks the owner Tom Smith for making it convenient for you to get a sign any time).

Each "No Dump" sign sends a message & helps support our collective fight against garbage. So "tuck your hair up under your hat", and get to work installing new signs on your lawn. Hum a familiar "Five-Man Electrical Band" tune while putting your new lawn sign out for neighbours and passers-by to admire.

## **T-SHIRTS PLEASE!**

They are black & bold. They make a statement. They are reusable, washable & something to pass on. Like all good quality clothing, a T-shirt is made to be worn often & with pride.

Put a **giant anti-dump message** on it, and you will want to wear it out – outdoors, over your jacket as outerwear and out to visit.

Thanks to the indoors Woodstock Market Saturday mornings, you can get a wonderful T-shirt, the latest news on our anti-dump fight, a letter to send the Minister and more while selecting delicious local food or greeting neighbours for a snack & conversation.

T's please everyone as a gift too

## **TRASHAPALOOZAHA 6**

Trashapaloozaha 6 comes to Embro, Woodstock and... the giant swap meet returns in the spring, but it has spawned.

One will occur in **Embro on Apr 23**, then another in **Woodstock on May 7**.

The Embro Community Hall, scene of last spring's amazingly successful waste diversion & social event, will host again. Thanks to the Woodstock Agricultural Society, a big barn will be available on the Nellis Street Fairground for all that wonderful stuff that you wonder why you are keeping.

These are 2 great places to check out free stuff too – clothing, books, toys, furniture, garden supplies, tools & building supplies. This is a way to clear out still useful things which you don't want to keep but to be sure they find a home (not a dump).

It is also a great way to meet friends, talk about projects you plan with treasures you find there & enjoy the day.

Reserve these 2 Saturdays, April 23 & May 7, between 8am-4pm, to collect treasures!  
Drop-offs end, though at 2pm. This event benefits you, your community & the environment.

## **IT'S A FEDERAL CASE (Which Makes It Free to Say Something About)!**

What do Sudbury, Montreal & Oxford have in common?

First, all of these are part of the St. Lawrence River system, that vast connection among the Great Lakes & the Atlantic Ocean.

Secondly, all 3 are in areas of rock which are significant: at Sudbury, the Canadian Shield yields up mineral wealth; Montreal's famous Mont Royal is a great vantage point to see the Laurentian Mountains & the Green Mountains.

Oxford is known for the massive quantities of fractured limestone rock extracted.

All 3 are challenged by waste leaking into the environment. The rock formations of each area mean that the danger is **widespread of pollution of drinking water**. According to a ruling by Environment Canada, Vale-Inco is responsible for years of pollutants leaking into the region. A clean-up is in order before local & downriver disasters worsen. Similarly, Montreal has recently released tonnes of sewage into the St. Lawrence River. It will flush its way out to the ocean. A major river thus becomes a **giant toilet**.

In Oxford, the proposal to build a **dump alongside the Thames River**, say some, means a risk of solid & liquid wastes travelling downriver. Unimaginable. Fortunately, these are all federal matters.

Equally lucky, we now have a federal Minister of the Environment & Climate Change in Ottawa.

Her address is: The Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister Environment & Climate Change, The House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6.

Invite her to drop in to visit & see for her own eyes. Ottawa Centre, her riding, is not all that far from Oxford Centre. Tell her about our opposition to a dump & its consequences for us, our downstream neighbours, other provinces along the Great Lakes. An alternation to the health of the Great Lakes would not only be an environmental disaster, but might provoke further effects of climate change.

Ask her to examine the mix of recyclables, compost, trash, chemicals & synthetics which are currently in the plan to be dumped into an active quarry in the Thames River watershed.

Most of all, have her ask her provincial counterpart, Minister Glen Murray to consider making this dump "a federal case". You can do all of this for free.

When you drop your letter into a mailbox, you don't need a stamp. Communication with the House of Commons is free!