



First Nations Drum

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REZ WARRIOR

Mohawk Protester
Speaks Out For
Sacred Waters

New AFN Chief Wants
Plan Of Action For
H1N1 Virus

John Hawke, Fire Keeper
Photo by Danny Beaton

CANADA'S NATIONAL NATIVE NEWSPAPER

Mohawk Protester Speaks Out For Sacred Waters

Story by Dr. John Bacher
Photos by Danny Beaton

My friends and I started camping in Georgian Bay on a regular basis about 10 years ago. It is probably one of the most beautiful places that I have been to in my entire life. The waters are everywhere. The forests are everywhere. We pick the berries. We eat the fish and we gather cedar on a regular basis. I call it the Healing Place. In the past few years, we started seeing signs saying “Stop Dump Site 41 Protect Our Water.” I said to my best friend one day, “See that sign? I am going to get involved in that. It’s very serious, I can tell.”

Around that time, I started phoning the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Tiny Township and Penetanguishene and the surrounding area of Simcoe County. One of the questions I was asking them is what is going on with this Stop Dump Site 41 sign? I was telling them that I am a Mohawk environmentalist and I want to get involved. I learned from an employee of the local recycling store that it was Steve Odgen who made the sign. They gave me his phone number and said that he was a good guy.

When I phoned Steve Odgen around October last year, I mentioned that I just returned from Atlanta Georgia with my best friend. We had just been involved with the Walk For Water for ten days, and I felt it was a very effective way to bring attention to a water issue. We had walked from the headwaters of the Chattahoochee River to the legislative buildings in Atlanta, Georgia.

I suggested to Steve that we walk from Georgian Bay to Toronto and call it Walk For the Water. It would bring attention to the Sacred Waters of the Alliston Aquifer and the tributaries that run into the Georgian Bay. Steve had explained to me that Simcoe County’s plan along with Miller Waste was to build Dump Site 41. After we did the walk, which lasted eight days from the end of November to the first week of December 2008, we were very pleased with what we had accomplished by stopping in local towns along the way and generating media attention to the struggle that Steve Odgen has been involved with for 23 years.

Steve had been a local farmer for many years until Dump Site 41 came along. In January 2009, I organized a press conference with Maude Barlow

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Farmers and Fire Keeper at peaceful vigil at the main gate to Dump Site 41.

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of the United Nations, The Council of Canadians, Elizabeth May of the Green Party, Andrea Horvath of the NDP, Dan McDermitt of the Sierra Club, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation. This press conference was for the launching of an online petition directed at Honourable Dalton McGuinty and Honourable John Gerretsen to Stop Dump Site 41. At present, the petition can be reached on my web site (www.dannybeaton.ca) and has over 7,000 signatures and comments denouncing Dump Site 41 and the rape of the Alliston Aquifer. On March 8, 2009, we organized the press conference at Queen's Park with native spiritual leaders (Arnold Thomas, Shoshone from Utah and from Robertjohn Knapp, Seneca-Tobattaloma from California) to ask Dalton McGuinty and John Gerretsen to Stop Dump Site 41 and the rape of the Alliston Aquifer and for Natives to unite in this struggle.

At the same time on May 8, five Anishinabe Kweag (Ojibway women) organized a protest camp to hold a peaceful vigil across the road from Dump Site 41. Since the peaceful protest camp began, arrests and charges began to be laid by the Ontario OPP and authorities starting August 5, 2009. Retired 82 year-old farmer Keith Wood and his wife Ina, 76, were forced to turn themselves in to OPP on mischief charges at the Midland detachment. Mr Wood said, "Since my family has farmed in the area for six generations, protesting is a simple matter of doing the right thing! I would rather march in the front lines than have my children or grandchildren die of poisoned water." Keith added, "I owe it to them." Since the OPP began making arrests, nine people have been charged, including Vicki Monague, the spokesperson for the five Ojibway women.



L to R: Danny Beaton, Harold and Ann Boker, Ina and Keith Wood Protesters at Dump Site 41, Tiny Township



Elder Speaks to protesters about the importance of protecting Sacred Water

To Stop Dump Site 41 please instruct Honourable Dalton McGuinty in Ontario at dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org and the Minister John Gerretsen in Ontario at jgerretsenmpp@liberallola.org Nia weh Kowa

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