

The

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Peace and Environment News

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Inside: Sustainable Communities



Shopping at the Good Food Market at Michele Heights. Photo courtesy the Good Food Markets / CHRC's Anti-Poverty Project.

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Articles Invited!

Submissions are invited for the July-August 2013 Peace and Environment News. Articles can be on any topic related to peace, environment or social justice. Deadline is June 15, 2013. Call 613-230-4590, leave a message for Margaret; or email <pen-editor@perc.ca>.

A New Civil Liberties Association in Ontario

by Joseph Hickey

"There is a crying need in Ontario for a civil liberties association that stands for civil liberties." —Founding Principles of the OCLA

The new Ontario Civil Liberties Association (OCLA) held its official launch event in January at the University of Ottawa.

The OCLA was born out of a growing need in our society for resistance to a systemic erosion of the civil liberties of ordinary citizens in work, family, leisure, and political environments, an erosion which suppresses freedom and democracy using the usual pretexts of security, safety, and economic pressures.

Institutions and corporations wield immense power and are becoming ever less inhibited in exercising this power, in a virtual absence of public or parliamentary oversight. Civil liberties are under growing threat. There is fundamental unfairness in countless cases of repression of whistleblowers, self-represented litigants in the courts, and critics of powerful groups, to name only the media-admitted tip of the iceberg. (More pervasive is the decreased opportunity for ordinary citizens to have significant say.)

The OCLA was established to stand as allies to all individuals who decide to push back and not be overrun by the government.

OCLA believes that standing beside targeted resisters, questioners, and critics in defence of their fundamental rights is essential in the struggle to make space for more vibrant public participation in all areas important to individuals. OCLA particularly wants to help those groups and individuals who fight back the hardest on the front lines while risking the most for the benefit of all.

Following our launch event, we have held a first meeting of our working group to promote the rights of self-represented (unlawyered) litigants in court. We have initiated a media outreach and research working group, and given talks at Carleton University.

Members of the OCLA will be invit-

ed to OCLA events and will have access to the Annual General Meeting to participate in shaping the direction of the organization. Membership is free; however, we do ask new members to consider making an optional donation to help sustain the OCLA's work. Donations go toward registering the OCLA as a non-profit organization, organizing public events, funding OCLA legal interventions, and paying for the organization's website, bank account, and administrative fees. All OCLA executives and Board members are unpaid volunteers.

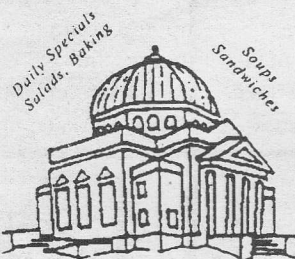
To become a member, please email joseph.hickey@ocla.ca. You will receive an email confirming your membership. Your (optional) donation can be made through the PayPal button located at the OCLA's website at www.ocla.ca.

Joseph Hickey is Executive Director of the Ontario Civil Liberties Association.

The Pantry

Vegetarian Tea Room

Food is organic where possible



The Glebe Community Centre

175 Third Avenue

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11:30 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.

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