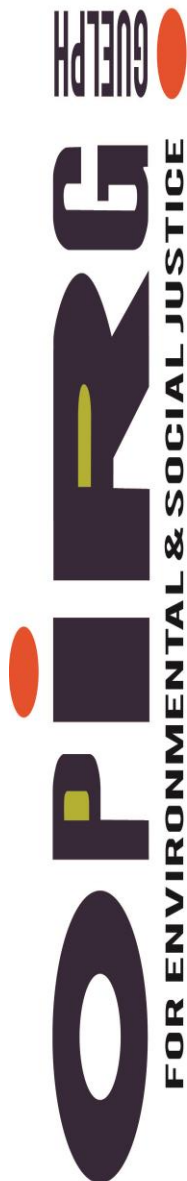


# OPIRG- GUELPH

## Annual Action Report

September 2011 to August 2012



In 2011/12, OPIRG- Guelph staff, volunteers and board of directors worked hard on numerous campaigns and projects throughout the community as well as within our organization. This year we have achieved many accomplishments as well faced many challenges. As staff members we continue to be amazed by the dedication and drive of our volunteers and allies in the community. Fueled by our achievements and despite the growing criminalization of dissent climate we work within, we grew our relationships with both campus and community, launched new Action Groups, were apart of new and exciting partnerships and initiatives, and worked to revision our organization.

We applaud everyone for your passion and energy to environmental and social justice. Thanks to those have already joined us in our struggle! OPIRG' s efforts to both grown community and challenge the system could not happen without you!

In Solidarity,  
OPIRG Guelph

*That OPIRG is a volunteer fueled organization founded in 1976 that provides training, support and opportunities for our members to be active citizens in their communities in areas of social and environmental justice.*



## Who we are - Staff and Volunteer Board of Directors

→Our mission is to bring about greater environmental and social justice through research, education and activism. We've created a positive, accessible space for the sharing of skills and information, and access to resources and support - these are available for both campus and community activists, as well as those who are looking to deepen their political analysis.

We rely on the creativity and dedication of our members to carry out our mission in cooperation with our team of capable staff and committed Board of Directors.

### Board

Christine Mishra

Drew Garvie

Tyler Burleigh

Rosanne Vandermeer

Ryan Johnston

James Johnstone

Kathleen Kinsella

Kelsi Morri

### Staff

#### Permanent Staff

Marnie Eves - Coordinator of Organizational and Policy Development

Kiran Bhattarai - Office Coordinator and Speed River Project Coordinator

Mandy Hiscocks - Volunteer Coordinator

#### Temporary Staff

Aundraya Rivera - Volunteer Coordinator

Sarah Scanlon - Coordinator of Organizational and Policy Development

#### Summer Staff

Carolyn Ayer - Library Clerk

Alanna Balint- Archiving and Special Events

"Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something." -Anton Abele

## Organizational Priorities

OPIRG's organization's priorities are based on the strengths and interests of OPIRG members and the resources available to us, as well as an assessment of the environmental and social justice being done on campus and in the community at the time.

This year we focused our energy on:

- Activist training
- The Speed and Eramosa River initiatives
- Israeli Apartheid Week
- Internal strengthening and sustainability projects
- Growing our partnerships

### A Word from our Board of Directors.

It was an exciting year for OPIRG in 2011-2012! The Board of Directors worked tirelessly to improve the strength of our organization by investing in new administrative best practices. With a view that a healthy organization is a well-run organization, our efforts targeted OPIRG's management of human resources, financial processes, improvements to our office space, and updates to our framework of OPIRG-Guelph policies. It has been no small undertaking and our work continues well into 2012-2013.

We may have been a smaller Board but what we missed in size we accounted for in enthusiasm, commitment, and availability. We continued the successful practice (from 2011-2012) of dedicating two Board members to the Staff Liaison portfolio. A busy and often stressful position, our Staff Liaisons supported our great OPIRG-Guelph Staff through a year of many changes.

Our Finance portfolio holder worked diligently to streamline and rationalize our financial processes. Successes have been achieved that better connect the financial contributions of our membership to meaningful student-run initiatives around campus and in the Guelph community.

Together we have been grateful to serve our OPIRG-Guelph membership and look forward to our 2012-2013 responsibilities. And *remember*... OPIRG-Guelph thrives on the commitment of our intrepid volunteers so be sure to visit our office at 1 Trent Lane, see what's going on, and sign up!

"History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived. But, if faced with courage, need not be lived again."

-Maya Angelou

### *Did You Know?*

- ✧ *That consensus based decision making is at the heart of our process at OPIRG. Consensus is a process in which decisions are made through an effort to come to an agreement that is acceptable to all. There are a number of advantages including greater acceptance of decisions and more creative solutions to difficult issues.*

I ♥ Consensus

## Overview of OPIRG Guelph Finances - 2011/12

Revenue	Amount
The University of Guelph Student Levy	\$249,970
Woolwich Arms for Speed River Project	\$5769
Government of Canada for Summer Job	\$3,102
Others	\$1,311
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$260,152</b>

Summary Statements of Financial position as at August 31, 2012		
Assets	Year 2011/2012	Year 2010/2011
Total Current Assets	\$123,428	\$138,376
Capital Assets	\$14,313	\$11,131
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$137,741</b>	<b>\$149,507</b>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Account Payable and Liabilities	\$11,667	\$5,389
Income and other tax payable	0	0
Deferred Revenue	\$2,000	\$5,780
Net Assets	\$124,074	\$138,338
<b>Total Liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$137,741</b>	<b>\$149,507</b>
Summary Statement of operations for the year ended August 31, 2012		
Revenue	Year 2011/2012	Year 2010/2011
Donation and fundraising	\$5,958	\$5,769
Grant for program	\$4,380	\$3,102
Membership fee University of Guelph's student	\$268,628	\$249,970
Others	\$1,824	\$1,311
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$280,799</b>	<b>\$260,152</b>
Expenses		
Wages and benefits	\$174,678	\$153,941
Office administration	\$56,639	\$40,665
Programs	\$57,863	\$45,539
Amortization	\$5,883	\$3249
<b>Total expense</b>	<b>\$295,063</b>	<b>\$243,394</b>
<b>Total net income (loss) for the year</b>	<b>\$(14,264)</b>	<b>\$16,758</b>

Note: The summary financial statements are based on audited Financial Statements which are available upon request.



*Did you Know? That all permanent and term staff are Unionized with CUPE 1281. This means along with other staff and other Ontario PIRGs, we have a collective agreement that outlines the conditions of their work and their relationship with their employer ( Board of Directors.)*

## Co-sponsorships, Donations and Requests Fund

Part of OPIRG's mandate is to assist individuals and groups with their own events and projects through funding opportunities. This year we are proud to report the many projects and initiatives we supported on and off campus!

No	CDR recipients	Sponsor Events
1	Tegan Maxwell	Catering for Sexploratorium
2	Grahame Russell	Right Action
3	SEDRD GSS	SEDRED Graduate Student Society professional development events on Strategies for working at risk youth
4	CSA Food Bank	CSA Food Bank
5	Heather Jarvis	Sexploratorium-2
6	Demetria Jackson	Time Wise Hate Free Campus Event
7	Guelph Student for Environmental Change	Sustainability Week
8	Guelph ABC	To Run Down The Wall Website
9	Saqib Mannan	Tedx Perceiving Past the Paradigm Events
10	Footnotes Collective	Footnotes Collective Journal
11	GRCGED	Women's Self Defence
12	Brave New Foundation	Creating Media That Makes Impact
13	Dr. Kerry Preibisch	Migrant Agricultural Worker
14	George Kelly	Democracy in Crisis (GWCSJ)
15	GRCGED	12 years Tour of Mohammad Mahjoub Event
16	Greg Shupak	David Heap Speaking on Freedom Waves Boat to Gaza
17	Tom Higson	Occupy Garden Visioning
18	Support for Migrant Worker	Annual May day Event
19	Matt Soltys	Healing the Earth Radio Book Lunch

**Note: OPIRG Guelph CDR Committee makes decision for this funding**

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”  
— Margaret Mead



Campus and Community Partnerships



Like many non-profit organizations we often seek out partnerships and alliances in order to reach a greater audience, to benefit from the skills and knowledge of others and in order to live out our values of cooperation and diversity of tactics.

Transition Guelph	Festival of Moving Media	TeaTree House
Transition Guelph is a group of concerned and active Guelph residents who have come together with the shared vision of building resilience and sustainability into our community in response to the challenges of peak oil, accelerating climate change, and global economic instability.	<i>Festival of Moving Media (FOMM) 's mission is to present a major, annual cultural event for Guelph and surrounding communities. The festival features moving media that celebrates art and ideas that inform people, and which move them to act locally and to think globally about ecological, political, economic, or social issues. FOMM aims to provide a venue for the work of local, national and international independent artists whose work is not necessarily considered in the mainstream. The festival also serves as a catalyst for increasing community understanding of the world and its diversity by offering forums for discussing media arts and their impact with the artists who produce them.</i>	Teatree House Café was initiated in 2009 by a group of University of Guelph students who are passionate about critically (local and ethically) sourced food. Our main goal is to establish a student-run membership co-op that provides affordable options, and is considerate towards those dietary needs not yet satisfied by current establishments on campus. Teatree House Café was an OPIRG action group for two years. Since June 2012 we are in official partnership with OPIRG. This collaboration provides a variety of mutual benefits! We are currently working to extend our roots deeper within the UoG Campus by finding accessible space, and a community of members



## Radical School's In - An Overview

"Those who have been required to memorize the world as it is will never create the world as it might be."

### **What's happening in our Radical Library?**

The OPIRG Guelph resource library is dedicated to providing alternative and independent publications to our working group volunteers, community members, and University of Guelph students. We achieve this through careful selection of materials, coordinating with the community, volunteers, staff, and board on acquisition decisions, and having our book collection available through the University library system TRELLIS.

Winter 2012 saw a comprehensive weeding and streamlining of our periodical collection. Our clogged periodical shelf was purged of out-of-date back issues and our policy was adjusted to limit the retention of back issues to only the past two years, thereby opening up needed space in the library. We also renewed many of our subscriptions continuing to provide alternative sources of journalism to our volunteers and working groups.

The OPIRG library saw its collection grow this summer thanks to a generous donation of books from the dissolved library of the Guelph International Resource Centre. From a donation of about 25 boxes of books we chose 350 books which fit the criteria outlined in our development policy. These books covered a large range of subject matter, from histories of movements and social justice struggles around the world to DIY guides to urban gardening.

### **Activist Workshops**

There are two mandatory workshops for active OPIRG volunteers: Anti-oppression and Consensus Decision-Making. They are held once in each of the fall, winter and spring/summer semesters.

A large part of OPIRG's mandate is to offer training and skills-building opportunities for activists and organizers. Throughout the year we also host many other workshops based on the needs of our action groups and requests of our members and partners. This year we put on workshops about co-operatives, digital activism, green justice, and Adobe graphic design.

*If you have a workshop you'd like to offer or an idea for one you'd like to attend, please get in touch. It's important for us that the workshops we offer fill the needs of the community. If you're developing a workshop and would like input or feedback, we'd be happy to help.*

**THE REVOLUTION STARTS HERE AND NOW  
within each one of us**

## Summer Institute

Every summer OPIRG teams up with the Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity (GRCGED) to host the Summer Institute, a series of workshops held on campus and in the community through July and August. In 2012 we offered:

Campaign Strategy 101  
Anti-oppression  
Ecological Justice  
Trans 101, Feminism Digital Activism

Non-violent Communication  
Global Movements and Grassroots Activism  
Reproductive Justice

## *Creating Change... One Event at a Time*

"Activism is the rent I pay for living on this planet." - Alice Walker

## Orientation Week

Orientation Week is the University of Guelph's official welcome to new students, involving residence halls, administration, faculty, clubs and organizations. OPIRG ran alternative campus tours, had an open house, and tabled at the resource and volunteer fairs. We also had a booth at the meet-and-greet open mic, which was put on by the Student Help and Advocacy Centre in the Bullring.

## Disorientation Week

DisOrientation Week is put on by a coalition of campus and community activists and organizers as a way to introduce new students to the more radical side of the campus and the city. This year OPIRG teamed up with the CSA Food Bank, the Critical Knowledge Collective, Guelph Queer Equality, Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity, RAWC, Guelph Young Communist League, The Peak, Student Help and Advocacy Centre, CFRU 93.3FM and Guelph Anarchist Black Cross. Some of the many events were a radical tour of the downtown, a panel discussion titled Occupy Your Education and an alternative poster sale and resource fair. There were also workshops, film screenings, talks and letter writing to prisoners.





## Speakers, Film Screenings and More

We hosted or co-hosted the following events:

Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> - Bus to Tar Sands and Pipelines protest in Ottawa

Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>- Speaker. Micheal Parenti : Imperialism Today and the 99% Solution

Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>- Screening and Discussion. If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front

March 5<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> - Israeli Apartheid Week

May 7<sup>th</sup> - Speaker. David Heap: First Hand Account of capture at Sea of Canadian Boat to Gaza David Heap gave his account of the Freedom Waves to Gaza which took place in November 2011, when Irish and Canadian boats tried to break the Israeli blockade of Gaza.

June 10<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> - Two Rivers Festival

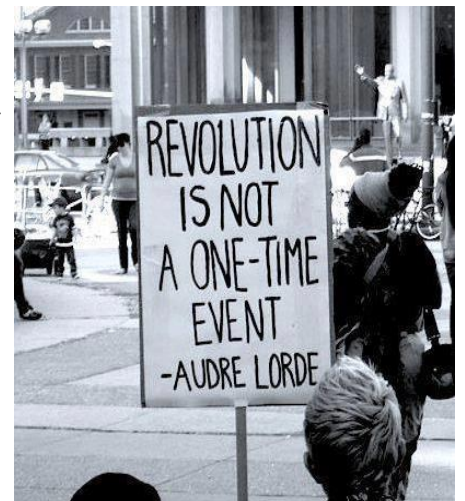
The first ever Two Rivers Festival ran 24 events June 10 to 17 in Guelph. Created by organizations and individuals across Guelph, the festival included riverside hikes, a tour of Guelph Lake Dam, music, a panel discussion about the future of the river lands, an exploration of the history of the rivers, some juggling, tree identification for kids and more. The festival celebrates the uniqueness of Guelph's Speed and Eramosa rivers which converge in Guelph.



*"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive." - Howard Thurman*

### Did You Know?

*That OPIRG- Guelph is one of eleven Public Interest Research Groups that belongs to the network of PIRGs called Ontario PIRG? Through this Network the PIRGs come together for training at the board and staff levels, organize speaking tours, share resources and skills and provide support to each other. Each PIRG holds a portfolio and has particular responsibilities within the portfolio. Guelph holds the Financial Portfolio and the Archiving Portfolio. This means that we are involved in the development of a draft budget for the Ontario PIRG, sit on a Finance Committee and maintain a record of meeting minutes and policies.*



## In our Community, On the Water...

### Speed River Cleanup

**On June 16, 2012, close to 200 people waded into our rivers and collected trash for the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Speed River Cleanup!**

**This year OPIRG teamed up with the first annual Two Rivers Festival, and the Clean Up became an anchor event of the week-long festival. Our trusty Crew Leaders led groups of community volunteers out to assigned sectors of the Speed and Eramosa rivers and collected 890 kg of trash!**

**After the Clean Up we made our way, as usual, to the McCrae house. Catered by Green Table Foods, volunteers enjoyed a hard-earned lunch and displays from Two Rivers Festival partnering organizations. As always, we presented the Bonnie McCallum Award, a memorial award presented for environmental action. This year's recipient was the passionate Mary Anne Young, a University of Guelph graduate involved in many local environmental projects.**

**OPIRG-Guelph's 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Speed River Clean Up removed 890 kg of trash from the Speed and Eramosa rivers in a span of only two hours. Though we are proud of this accomplishment, we are also disappointed that after so many years we are still battling the garbage within it; we are committed to pursuing the greater issues that contribute to the cause of river pollution.**

**Stay tuned for info on the 2013 Clean Up!**

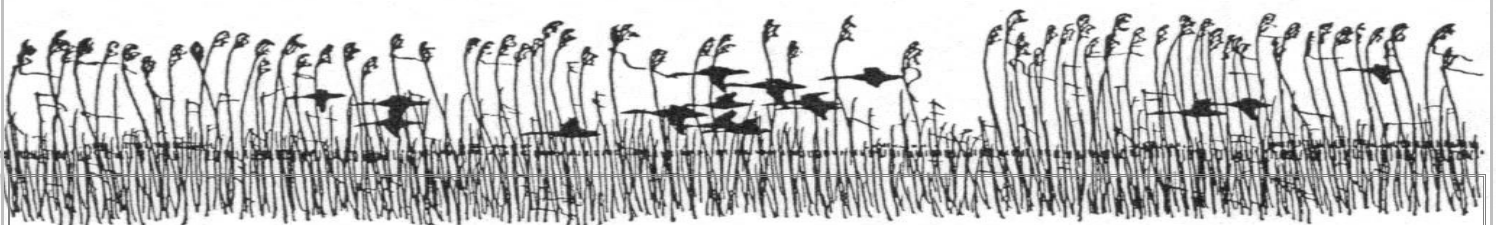
### Two Rivers Festival

**In early 2012, a group of passionate individuals and organizations came together to spearhead the City of Guelph's first annual Two Rivers Festival. The Festival is intended to celebrate the significance of the Speed and Eramosa rivers to our local community and the Grand River Watershed. OPIRG Guelph is proud to be one of the original organizing partners of the festival.**

**In June of 2012, the week-long festival was held, providing more than 20 free workshops and educational events. On the final weekend of the festival, a community concert and celebration was held at the Boathouse, and OPIRG Guelph hosted the 37<sup>th</sup> annual Speed River Clean Up as an anchoring event.**

**Thousands of community members came out during the week to learn more about our watershed and how we can not only protect it, but celebrate it here at home. In 2013 the Festival organizers hope to build on this overwhelming success to include a broader range of organizations and events. Keep an eye on the festival website, [www.2riversfestival.org](http://www.2riversfestival.org), for the most up-to-date info on 2013 events!**

"Water is the driving force of all nature." - Leonardo da Vinci



## Speed River Project

The Speed River Project grew out of OPIRG-Guelph's Annual Speed River Cleanup. Between 1988 and 1997, this project involved large-scale naturalization initiatives, ecological monitoring, education and outreach, all supported by OPIRG-Guelph's staff and volunteers. Since then OPIRG-Guelph has continued these activities at various scales, such as planting native species, hiking workshop for plant identification, Speed river project river forum, river restoration fundraising dinner, removal of invasive species and park maintenance. The goal of the Speed River Project is essentially to provide meaningful opportunities for students and the broader community to engage in action-oriented projects intended to enhance the ecological health of the Speed and Eramosa Rivers. By hosting seasonal planting days, when dozens of volunteers plant hundreds of native species, we create opportunities to connect with neighbours, to practice native species identification and to learn about Guelph's rich natural heritage. Although some environmental problems in the watershed are not reversible, the situations can be improved through meaningful collaboration for interactive learning, advocacy and direct action. There are many things that citizens can do to improve the condition of the area. Here we provide a brief description of activities run by the speed River Project from September 2011 through to August 2012.

### Speed River Project River Forum

Speed river project's River Forum was held on Saturday, May 5, 2012 at 10 Carden Street. Claire Holeyton was the key note speaker of the forum. She was been working as a Water Quality Specialist at the Grand River Conservation Authority. Her talk was on "Past, Present and Future Water Quality in the Speed River."

"The environmental movement can only survive if it becomes a justice movement. As a pure environmental movement, it will either die, or it will survive as a corporate 'greenwash'. Anyone who's a sincere environmentalist can't stand that role." - Vandana Shiva

### **Spring Tree Planting and Park Maintenance**

In order to increase the biodiversity of native species and improve the vitality of the riparian zones in our watersheds Speed River Project organized two different planting days in May 2012 ( May 11 and 26) along the north bank of the Eramosa River at York Road Park. The York Road Park is one of the riparian areas that have seen most visible activities of beaver. Particularly to replace trees and shrubs destroyed by Beaver, we selected the York Road Part of one of planting sites. More than 50 volunteers together planted around 400 additional native trees and shrubs along the Eramosa river at the York Road Park. In addition to our local community volunteers, for the last two years, we have had the student volunteers from the University of Southern Mississippi participate in planting days, as a part of their community service learning trip to Canada. It is becoming apparent that planting trees and shrubs into the river corridors have helped further the work of the river restoration.

### **Native Tree Identification Hiking Workshop**

The Native Tree Identification Hiking Workshop was held at Wolfond Park on Saturday in June 2012. The workshop was facilitated in small groups by experienced facilitator. Participants identified native and non-native species with the help of the facilitator, and a handout that explains prominent identifying characteristics of the dominant species was also provided. The main goal of the workshop was to encourage community engagement and be empowered with the knowledge about natural areas in our neighborhood.



### Autumn Tree Planting

More than twenty volunteers including park steward come together and had a lot of fun with native trees planting at east side of the Wolfond Park on Saturday September 2011. Here we would like to provide a letter from Sue Smith, Wolfond Park Steward as follows:

*Fall 2011 saw the planting of an additional 150 trees into the Riparian zone within the Wolfond Park east. Volunteers planted seedlings of Black cherry, Sugar Maple, Nannybush, Viburnum, Red Oak, and several other native species.*

*During the early summer storm which brought down many large trees throughout the city, a massive old Manitoba Maple came down in the park - into the river. A very large old willow came down just below the playground area and took out everything underneath it. This particular area was suddenly flooded with sunlight from the considerable gap in the canopy, and was a major target of the fall planting. The downed Manitoba maple in the river was removed by a crane service and mulched on the spot. The resultant pile of mulch under which are at least 10 of our seedlings from previous plantings, will serve for future plantings.*

*Ms. Sue Hubner's DaVinci class spent a day in the park, Fall 2011, learning about the rehabilitation initiatives, tagging trees, weeding, mulching, clearing Japanese Knotweed to give more light and space to the dogwood rehabilitation site which is getting more vibrant every year.*

*Winter 2012, we notice evidence of an active beaver in the riverbank areas - taking down a variety of trees. Of note - the beaver took a Buckthorn near the weir. Hurray! Discussion is required on this new inhabitant of the park - how to balance its need for food and our desire to foster the growth of trees. Beaver guard? If only the beaver would take all the buckthorn....Yes, let's beaver guard everything but the Buckthorn!*

*Looking ahead, we are planning for a spring planting and mulching. We note that the city has marked two large trees for removal near the playground equipment - one is a very large and very dead Elm, the other is a very large Manitoba Maple which appears to be structurally compromised.*

*Looking forward to the spring planting! Let's grow Guelph's canopy.*

*Sue Smith (Community Park Steward)*

*Speed River Project*

"Radical simply means 'grasping things at the root.'" -Angela Davis



### **River Restoration Fundraising Dinner**

The Woolwich Arrow Pub has been hosting the Speed River Project fundraising dinner for the last 18 years. This year the Annual River Restoration Fundraising dinner was held on the July 23, and rose over \$2000.00. OPIRG- Guelph is so grateful for the hard work of the staff at the Wooly and to the folks from Creemore Springs Brewery for their generous supply of beer. This event is important not only for raising funds for our river restoration and conservation projects, but for bringing together speed River Project supporters and volunteers for a well-deserved celebration of volunteer's work in aid of our rivers restoration and conservation of local water bodies. All the proceeds from the fund raising dinner went directly to OPIRG's Speed River Project. OPIRG- Guelph has been using the money to run different river restoration activities, such as they annual speed river cleanup, native tree species planting along the bank of Eramosa and Speed River, running hiking workshops for tree identification, river forum for community discussion, removal of invasive species and maintaining the riparian vegetation along the bank of the two rivers.

### **ACTION GROUPS 2011-2012**

Action groups are made up of five or more people who choose to focus on a particular issue or area related to social and environmental justice. Each action group receives funds, organizational support, training, space to meet and organize, and access to OPIRG's networks of student and community activists. All you need to start a group is an idea for a project or campaign that fits within the OPIRG mandate. The Volunteer Coordinator can help you to find other interested people to work with, and go over the proposal form with you.

*Did You Know?*

Anyone is able to start an action group through OPIRG-Guelph, or join an existing one. To learn more about how to plug yourself into OPIRG- Guelph Action Groups, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [opirg@uoguelph.ca](mailto:opirg@uoguelph.ca)





## Palestine Solidarity Network

This action group was active in the spring, summer and fall of 2012 and held two events.

In May the group teamed up some off-campus organizers to host David Heap, a Linguistics professor at UWO who was part of the Canadian Boat to Gaza and as a result briefly found himself in an Israeli jail. Heap gave background information on the Israeli siege of Gaza and the Canadian state's support for it and the consequent need for people in Canada to fight to change this policy through measures such as supporting the Gaza. He told the story of the effort to organize the boat as part of an international flotilla and shared some of his experiences and observations from aboard the ship. And of course he gave his account of when Israeli commandos boarded the boat and brought many of those who were on it to jail as well as of his stint in the Israeli jail, the Canadian government's lack of concern with getting him out, and Israel's refusal to return the boat.

In October the group hosted a talk and performance by Remi Kanazi, a Palestinian-American spoken word artist. Kanazi talked about the importance of the BDS movement and, with reference to a few musicians that BDS has pressured to cancel shows in Israel with mixed results, he placed particular emphasis on the need for a cultural and artistic boycott of Israel. He also performed several poems and shared a bit about his visit to the West Bank as well as a bit of his family's experience of being forced to leave Palestine.

*Interested in Palestinian human rights and solidarity? Please get in touch with OPIRG so that we can connect you with people continuing to do this work.*

## GotBike

GotBike promotes cycling and other forms of active transportation on campus and around Guelph. This past year GotBike lead group rides to Hillside and hosted a community film screening and public discussion on how bicycles empower people in Guelph and around the world. This coming year GotBike is working to host Guelph's first car free day along Carden Street downtown June 8. They will also be leading large group rides to the Hillside Festival again along with bike maintenance workshops and safety gear giveaways.

## ALERT Guelph

ALERT Guelph was an activist group that researched the corporatization of campus, unethical investments, and donations given to the University of Guelph. The group also raised awareness about the large corporate presence on the Board of Governors (the highest decision making body at UofG) and called for more student and worker representation on the BOG. Now many of the activists from ALERT are members of the Guelph Student Mobilization Committee that is in partnership with OPIRG. GSMC members are student movement activists that were inspired by the Quebec Student Strike, believe that education should be a right, and organize and mobilize students for accessible, public education.

### RadiOPIRG

Last year was quite a productive time for RadiOPIRG. Topics covered include the Occupy movement, cyber-activism (focusing on Wikileaks in particular), working class struggles, student movements (especially the Quebec Student Strike), and Indigenous movements around the world.

In addition to the radio show, the group hosted two workshops on digital activism. These focused on the techniques of media manipulation used by the corporate media and how grassroots activists and journalists are fighting back using a variety of tools including live streaming and social networking. They looked at how activists got around the media blackout imposed in the early days of Occupy Wall Street and explored how the writing of history itself is often manipulated to serve the interests of the powerful.

Finally, a resource manual was created, containing resources, ideas, tips on radio techniques and so on, to assist the training of new volunteers and in the creation of new radio content.

*RadiOPIRG airs 1-2pm on Thursdays on CFRU 93.3FM. Tune in, or listen live or to the archives online at [www.cfru.ca](http://www.cfru.ca). Volunteers are always welcome, and all training is free but is not required. If you're part of a group or project focused on environmental and social justice and want to come on the show let us know.*

### Tar Sands Action Group

Members of the Tar Sands Action Group attended a protest against Keystone XL in Ottawa in October and did a banner drop in the University Centre later in the year. A large focus of the group was education and outreach: tabling, button-making, a bake sale and the creation of an information pamphlet.

### Occupy Gardens

The goals of Occupy Gardens are to increase food security around the city of Guelph; to educate people about growing, storing and cooking food, as well as how to use medicinal plants; to empower lower income people to grow food which is free from chemical additives; to divert plastic bottles and containers by making seed pots from them; and to use public space more productively. The group put on a workshop and a tour in the spring and summer. This was mostly a formative year for Occupy Gardens and the ongoing work continues.

