



**Jennifer Serdy, Art Klipfel, Gwen Noyes, Mary Coelho, Nancy Cirillo, John Bac**

## *Some Thoughts on Pipeline Protests*

**Skip Schiel** photographed a rally and march on June 25th. In his blog post reflecting on his experience, he begins his piece with background information highlighting the importance of these actions. Skip writes:

I've long wished to join the series of actions at the West Roxbury lateral pipeline in Boston, which often includes civil disobedience. The actions attempt to stop a pipeline being laid thru land taken by eminent domain. The 5-mile pipeline is part of a 1,100-mile pipeline being built by Spectra Energy of Houston, Texas, and its subsidiary, Algonquin Gas Transmission, in Waltham, Massachusetts, to carry natural gas from Pennsylvania. Some claim it will transport gas extracted by hydraulic fracking further south in the States for sale in Canada. This presents a multiple whammy.

The process of fracking pollutes water and releases methane, making it allegedly more destructive to the earth than coal.

While much of the pipe is under roads, causing little inconvenience except during construction, some pipe I suspect is under useful land snatched by the law, such as home and school lands.

The gas in this high pressure line could explode and destroy buildings and lives along the route. In addition, as a final seal of potential doom, one stretch is next to a quarry where explosives are used to mine the rock.

It increases the potential for gas leaks, already a major problem not only in Boston but widespread in the nation.

It encourages more use of fossil fuel rather than emphasizing renewable energy.

See Skip's photos and read more about his experience in his full blog post at [skipschiel.wordpress.com](http://skipschiel.wordpress.com).

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**Sev Bruyn** was one of five Cambridge Quakers who engaged in civil disobedience at a pipeline protest on Thursday, June 23. Others arrested the same day include Kim West, John Bach, Jennifer Serdy, and Maureen Lanan. Present and supporting those engaging in civil disobedience were Gwen Noyes, Arthur Klipfel, Nancy Cirillo, Suzanne Cooper, Mary Coelho, Mary Gilbert, and Katherine Fisher (Beacon Hill). Sev shares his story here:

Our team of Quakers walked (illegally) on to the pipeline street in protest while it was being laid. Everyone was arrested and put in a paddy wagon except me.

I was left alone in the street.

So I gave the police a hard time. I kept stopping all the traffic coming down the street again and again. This made them mad at me.

I said Arrest me, but the top officer in charge (Marcy) refused to do it.

I kept stopping the traffic when suddenly two hefty police officers came around from behind me and lifted me off the street and on to the sidewalk. They stayed there with me for a while. The crowd started shouting, "Yea Sev! Yea Sev!" (Somebody must have told them my name.) Soon the police officers left the sidewalk and left me by myself. I waited a minute and then went out in the street to block traffic again. Suddenly the two hefty officers came from behind again and carried me back off the street to the sidewalk. And the crowd shouted again "Yea Sev!" and broke off into a song.

So the officer in charge (Marcy) decided to re-route the traffic from the street. Any drivers coming down that street had to take a new route around the construction site. Now I could not block traffic.

I kept making trouble and Marcy decided to call an ambulance for me. (At that point I realized that she was refusing to put me in the paddy wagon because I was too old.) I waited for the ambulance but it did not come.

So I asked another police officer why so long? He said ambulance drivers have priorities, 1 to 8. I was number 8. A person with a heart attack is a number 1.

I demanded that they arrest me. I will stay here all night, I said. So top officer Marcy said Okay. We will arrest you.

Some officer asked for my driver's license and wrote up a report on me. I was doing something like disturbing the peace. I was

told that I would receive a summons to appear in court.

Then Louise came by and I went home. At 5pm Louise and I went to pick up any who were arrested. While we waited, Marcy came outside (out of uniform) and sat in a bench across from us.

We had a light-hearted interaction for a few minutes. Marcy smiled and proceeded to tell us why we should not be doing this protest. She said that we take up too much of the time for the police. The police have other work to do.

Somebody else said that I would get the summons in the mail. If I did not show up at the courthouse and pay my fine, a police officer would come out to my house and arrest me. I said that I did not plan to come to the courthouse in West Roxbury.

We waited for 2 and half hours to take the arrested home after jail time. Then Patti Muldoon said that she would see that they all got back home and so we left for our home.

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**Patti Muldoon** was one of three Cambridge Friends arrested at a pipeline protest on August 12th. Here she reflects on her experience.

Seven older white women were arrested on August 12, 2016 for disturbing the peace and trespassing at the West Roxbury Lateral Pipeline. We were women associated with the Compañeras Affinity Group along with other like-minded women, including three Cambridge Quakers: Minga Claggett-Borne, Diana Lopez and myself. In addition to those of us who were arrested that day, many supporters gathered on the sidewalk nearby.

Over 150 people have been arrested in many actions since the fall, as we have called for an end to this new methane gas pipeline that will directly worsen climate disruption. This Spectra Energy pipeline is particularly egregious because it has a Metering and Regulating Station directly across the street from an active stone quarry, with near

weekly dynamiting. All the houses nearby have cracks in walls and foundations. A gas explosion here like the one in California could easily set a 13-block radius of houses on fire. The neighborhood has many fire, police and court employees as residents, so this civil disobedience has more support from enforcers than many other actions.

It was my second arrest here. This one was especially powerful for me, as I was one of the four women who went into the deep trench where the pipeline was being laid below the street. One worker was very helpful: "It's not safe to jump. Try over here," pointing to their own ladder into the trench. I climbed down and lay on the pipeline. Holding garden flowers in full bloom, I looked up at the clouds from the shadowed trench; I observed the earth's beauty. My heart stopped racing and I found a peaceful place in myself in connection with mother earth. After singing songs, those of us in the trench stood on the pipe and extended our flowers to our compañeras seated above us. We formed a circle of those below and those above, and in spirit with the supporters nearby we prayed and shared our hope for all beings on this delicate planet.

As we climbed out of the trench a fireman offered his hand to me, saying, "You are so

brave." I heard others saying, "Thank you." The police were gentle handcuffing and transporting us older women. Later, in our cold cells waiting all day at the police precinct, I danced and meditated and waited. We occasionally sang together, hearing each other through the echoing walls. Finally released after seven hours, I reflected on the disparity of our treatment and that of others with darker skin tones, who have not been so gently treated or have not had supporters waiting all day for them.

Our first court arraignment was on the following Monday, but after arriving we found out that the DA was going to treat those of us in the trench more harshly than those above, so we needed an additional lawyer. Our court arraignment has been rescheduled for October 4. If this goes to trial, we will ask for supporters to join us then (but not at the arraignment).

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A REPORT of New England Quakers' recent participation in an action to stop oil pipeline construction written by **Minga Claggett-Borne** is posted on the Earthcare Ministry page of the NEYM website.

**[neym.org/earthcare-ministry/news/quakers-part-aug-12th-action-stop-pipeline-massachsetts](http://neym.org/earthcare-ministry/news/quakers-part-aug-12th-action-stop-pipeline-massachsetts)**