



THE TRUE WHIG

A Publication of the Kingston and the Islands Federal Liberal Association

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UPCOMING EVENTS / SAVE THIS DATE

BBQ:

AUG 11 2012

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

Welcome to Volume 1 Issue 1 of **The True Whig** – the renamed quarterly newsletter of the Kingston and the Islands Federal Liberal Association. What you are looking at is a work in progress, and we hope that when you are looking at Volume 5 Issue 4 it will still be a work in progress. Newsletters are dynamic instruments. Yes, they are intended to provide information and announce events, celebrate triumphs and offer condolences, report on meetings and speeches – and we will, in our fashion, do all those things. But we will also strive to offer food for thought to tickle the philosophical synapses and a dollop of controversy that may achieve a little heated blood. If we can find any humour in today's grim political reality, we will bring you that too. In other words, our goal is to be interesting: to engage you.

This first issue is heavier on information than philosophy. The new Executive, whether in Ottawa or Kingston, is still wrestling with the direction the Liberal Party is going to pursue and the initiatives it can bring forward to re-establish Liberalism as the driving force in Canadian politics. Much of that discussion will be played out in these pages. And a leadership race to boot. Stay tuned!

We are planning to provide forums for these conversations. Starting with our next issue we will have a

point/counterpoint article in which two individuals take opposing views of a relevant issue. We will introduce a regular column with a specific woman's point of view, and hope to do the same with our youth contingent. Today, we are introducing a column called "In My Opinion....", our version of The Rant, which is intended to ask questions and can be written by anyone (submissions are welcomed). We will introduce you to members of the Executive - they are not all elderly men with too much time on their hands – and other interesting Liberals. And of course we will have Letters to the Editor, often the best read section of a newspaper. So keep in touch; call, write, email, send a postcard, tweet, post on Facebook, find a pigeon – just do it!





A WORD FROM TED HSU M.P.

Dear Liberal friend,

I've just completed a busy and difficult sitting of Parliament -- busy and difficult because Mr. Harper's majority government has pushed through a large amount of legislation that significantly changes the Canada we have known.

One of the toughest days was the 22-hour voting marathon on the omnibus Bill C-38, where we pointed out all the things that were wrong with C-38. Many Canadians who don't normally pay attention to politics knew about it. What you might not have known about is that the Liberals and the Green Party combined to force 137 of those recorded votes while the NDP only had 17 amendments go to recorded votes.

I want to thank you for the fact that, throughout this ordeal and during the rest of the sitting, I never felt like I was alone. You have shown your support, whether it has been writing in to the newspapers, commenting online, talking to your friends, or in your communications to me. You have spoken out about what is wrong with this majority government. Please continue to speak out. Ask others who agree with us to join us and join the chorus of voices speaking out. Ask them to also consider joining the Party, or becoming a donor, to show their support.



I wish to thank the riding association for covering the cost of a telephone town hall that I held recently. Thanks to you, we reached about 7,000 people during the hour that I spent answering questions from constituents, and over 30,000 people at least got a phone call and knew that their Liberal MP was trying to reach out to them. We got a few calls from people who didn't like getting the call, but we received vastly more positive responses from voters.

Over the next nine months, I am looking forward to the contest to choose our permanent leader. I'm sure that many candidates will be working hard to earn your vote, and I am pleased to know that your riding association executive has committed to make sure that the riding association will be impartial towards all candidates, including giving them equal opportunities to have access to you, the Liberal members and supporters. That's what we believe in as a riding.

Some people have been asking what exactly the Liberal party stands for. Many words have been written and spoken about that question. In nine months we will choose a person who will embody what our Party stands for. It will be an exciting time for Liberals.

RIDING ACTIVITIES

Climate Change Conference — Saturday, April 14



A standing-room crowd of 270 Kingstonians packed into City Hall on April 14 for our town hall discussion on climate change action. Their sheer number, energy and commitment proved how much Canadians still care about the issue. Ted Hsu, John Smol and Stéphane Dion each spoke passionately and then responded to comments and questions from the floor. The most important

outcome was that participants rose to the challenge of not allowing the energy in the room to dissipate. More than half those present formed *Kingston Climate Change*, a new non-partisan citizen activist group which has already delivered a well-received presentation to Parliamentarians.

Pride Parade — Saturday, June 16



The 23rd annual Pride Parade was the largest ever held in Kingston. This year also featured the first time the military participated in full uniform. Groups such as SHRC -

Sexual Health Resource Center were well represented. Ted Hsu also took part with his family and gave a well received address to the crowd.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On Being Liberal in Tougher Times

There's no question that this is a challenging time to be a federal Liberal. Yes, we're currently in the uncomfortable position of being the third party in Parliament and yes, some typically short-sighted commentators have written us off for dead. Despite all that, I strongly believe Canada now needs a revived Liberal Party more than ever before.



The future is not immutable – it's what we collectively choose to make it. The forces currently at play in Canada and the world are driving us towards a darker future, one in which the lives of most of our children and grandchildren are likely to be harsher than ours. Those forces include

increasing income inequality, a rapidly warming planet, other environmental degradation, a weakening social safety net, citizen disempowerment, and a precipitous decline in the influence and high regard Canada and Canadians once enjoyed in the world. One of the most pernicious consequences has been a loss of hope for a better future on the part of our youth ([as evidenced by the May 2012 Frank Graves poll](#)).

We humans who share this planet have the knowledge and the capability to forge a different and better future if we could only muster the collective will to make it happen. In the past, Canada would have played a positive leadership role in that respect. Tragically, almost every

Harper government policy and action seeks to exacerbate rather than counter those negative forces, to the short-term benefit of a few at the long-term expense of practically everyone. Absent the Liberal Party, voters will have a stark choice between two opposing ideologies: neo-conservatism and socialism. They are two sides of the same coin, one promoting “economan” (an idealized purely rational and utterly selfish economic actor) and the other “socialist man” (an equally uni-dimensional caricature). Real people are far more complex and diverse, just like Canadians. Liberals revel in that diversity, accept Canadians as they are and base public policy on the evidence – what works – rather than simplistic ideology. That's why it will take a Liberal-led government to deliver the kind of future in which all Canadians can again thrive.

I sense a growing unease amongst our fellow citizens, the kind that resulted in almost 300 Kingstonians packing our April town hall meeting on climate change action rather than the 25 that Stéphane Dion was expecting. The Harper neo-conservatives have held onto power by discouraging civic engagement and voting, actively disempowering Canadians. Only 26% of the eligible electorate actually voted for Conservative candidates in the last election, compared to almost 40% who stayed home. The future that Mr. Harper is building doesn't serve the interests of that 40%, who have the power to relegate the Conservatives to the dustbin of history if ever they chose to exercise it.

For the next two to three years, your riding association will be undertaking a variety of outreach activities to engage our fellow citizens, listen to their concerns and give them hope for a better future. I hope that you will help by joining our volunteer teams, becoming a Victory Fund donor if you are not already, and above all, by continuously engaging with your friends and neighbours on the kind of Canada we and they want. By choosing to take the future into our own hands, every one of us can make a positive difference.

Ron Hartling
President, KIFLA

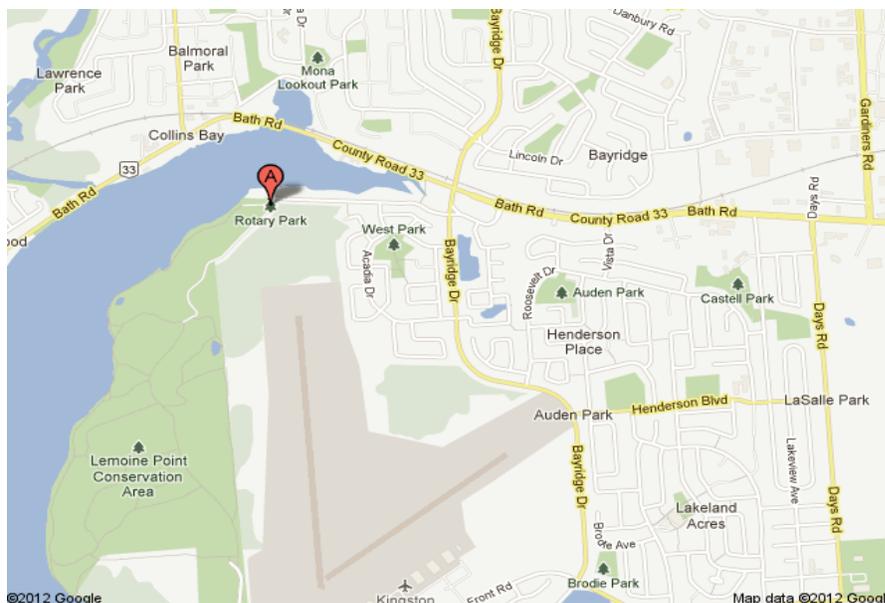
KIFLA SUMMER BBQ

Our summer BBQ will be held on Saturday August 11, 2012 from 2:30 pm till 4:30 pm at Rotary Park. (see map). The cost is \$12 per person for non-members, \$6 for members and free for Victory Fund and Laurier Club donors. The menu will include:

- Hamburgers
- Hot dogs
- Salads
- Beverages (non-alcoholic)

You are advised to bring a chair, a hat and possibly an umbrella, although we expect sunshine and good times.

Come one, come all! It's open to the public, so bring your friends and neighbours!



KIFLA EXECUTIVE 2012-13

Elected Officers

President	Ron Hartling	president@kingstonliberals.ca
Vice President	Bittu George	vicepresident@kingstonliberals.ca
Secretary	Alice Gazeley	secretary@kingstonliberals.ca
Treasurer	Robert Hamilton	treasurer@kingstonliberals.ca
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Outreach Director	Sophie Kiwala	outreach@kingstonliberals.ca
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Director at Large	Craig Perry	directoratlarge@kingstonliberals.ca

Ex-Officio Members

Member of Parliament	Ted Hsu	ted.hsu@parl.gc.ca
KIPLA President	Catherine Milks	info@kipla.ca
QULA President	Chelsey Morphy	qulapresident@kingstonliberals.ca
KIWLA President	Lana Coe	

General Inquiries

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IN MY OPINION...

Democracy in Canada

An Internet site on Building Democracy attributes a quote to Sir Winston Churchill on the topic of democracy which states that, *“No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time”*.

The article goes on to say that there is no “perfect form of government” but that when it comes to regulating public affairs, democratic systems are the least undesirable. Considering some of the choices such as dictatorships, theocracies, oligarchies, aristocracies and monarchies, a small pat on the back for democracy might be due.

From the Athenian and Roman cradle to modern times, the terms set out for democratic rule have seen many changes. It would seem, however, that the move has generally been toward ensuring that power not be concentrated in the hands of a few and, more importantly, not abused. The principals which democracy purports to protect are *basic human rights and freedoms*.

When compared to totalitarian regimes, which do not guarantee protection from persecution, torture, unlawful detention and summary execution, for example, or to authoritarian regimes where the objective is to maintain power and personal enrichment at the expense of a country’s people, democracy would seem to be an enviable system of government.

Canada is both a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy. Queen Elizabeth II is our monarch with powers limited by the Canadian Constitution. Her representative is the Governor General whose role is now largely ceremonial. As a parliamentary democracy, Canadian citizens elect members to the House of Commons to make laws for the country.

Canada joins 53 independent states as a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. Regardless of social, political and economic diversity, the goals of this membership are to *promote democracy, human rights, good governance, rule of law, individual liberty, egalitarianism, free trade, multilateralism and world peace*.

Looking at the last of the list of goals, world peace, what is Canada’s track record? Since 1956 when Lester

B. Pearson proposed a multinational peacekeeping force be sent to Egypt to separate Israeli, British and French troops from the Egyptian troops, and for which he was awarded the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize, what have we done to promote world peace?

Fast-forward to the present Canadian Parliament headed by Prime Minister Stephen Harper whose government now promotes, in the words of Ian McKay and Jamie Swift, co-authors of the book, *Warrior Nation*, “... militarism and the celebration of martial virtues and military masculinity,” and taken us from a “... moderate voice of reason ... to a cult of blood and death”. (YouTube Warrior Nation).

How did this “right-wing elite”, in such a short time, take us down the road from a peacekeeping nation to a pariah military state, from a moderate voice on the world stage to war mongering regime. Is this the country we want to build? Is this the “peaceable kingdom” we dream of? If it’s not already too late, someone had better ring the bells in the Peace Tower to wake us up.

Brenda Wilson

Kingston

July 2012



Brenda has enjoyed a multifaceted career as a McGill University professor, media producer, television host, company executive and world traveller. Now retired, she lives in Kingston with her husband.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Grow a Row—Share the Harvest

Drop off your own extra garden produce, or veggies bought from one of our local market vendors at:

Springer Market Square: Tues & Thurs
2pm-4:30pm or Sat 11am-4:30pm

Memorial Centre Market: Sun 12pm-2pm

Food will be shared with local community groups in need. Register and weigh your harvest under “Kingston and the Islands Federal Liberal Association” and let’s see what our end-of-season tally will be. Liberal values in action!

We are hopeful that the other political parties will take us up on our challenge and contribute as well but so far they have not indicated their willingness to participate. Fingers crossed!

iPOLITICS—(YOU ACTIVE?)

The president’s article in this newsletter urges you to consistently engage everyone you can in political discussion aimed at fostering a more critical perspective on where Canada can and should be going. Doing that effectively requires having easy access to in-depth, up-to-the-minute information on the issues in which those people may be interested, the sort of high-quality information which may not be readily available in your newspaper or other media.

Fortunately, we’re now in a position to give you access to a great information tool for just that purpose. We have negotiated a special deal with iPolitics.ca that gives all of our activists unlimited access to their information at no additional cost. That includes optional email bulletins and daily political news summaries. Please check it out at www.ipolitics.ca. For full access, you’ll require a code which all of our directors are empowered to provide. By activists, we mean any of our members, donors or other volunteers who are actively helping to spread the Liberal message in our community. We would be delighted if you see yourself as being a Liberal activist.

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