

Kingston & the Islands NDP

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Riding Association

The Newsletter of the Kingston & the Islands New Democrats **NDP**  **NDP** Apr 2009

Kingston hosts Jack Layton and Andrea Horwath for first in series of town-hall meetings on economy

By *Jamie Masse*

On March 19, the Kingston & the Islands New Democrats hosted an Economic Town Hall with federal leader Jack

Layton and newly-elected Ontario leader Andrea Horwath.

The leaders replied to audience questions about the Party's economic policy, as well as discussing ideas and solutions for the economic crisis that is unfolding on the global stage. The event was extremely well-attended; the audience was estimated at 400 people, with three-quarters consisting of students from Queen's University.

Community members spoke of their concerns about the provincial and federal governments' direction on the economy, the environment, health care, and poverty. Post-secondary funding was also the subject of much discussion, following the recent announcements of cuts to the Queen's linguistics program.

Many in the audience were impressed with the activist backgrounds of both NDP leaders and their experiences within their own communities.

At the event's close, moderator Pauline Kuhlmann thanked the leaders for taking the time to speak with the concerned citizens in attendance, and presented them with Kingston & the Islands NDP golf shirts. The Queen's



NDP also made a gift of books to each leader.

Ultimately, the event was a huge success for both Kingston & the Islands and Queen's New Democrats. Both leaders have since expressed their thanks for Kingston's warm hospitality.



KINDP Annual General Meeting on May 12

The Kingston & the Islands New Democrats will hold our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, May 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wilson Room at the Central branch of the Kingston Frontenac Public Libraries, 120 Clarence Street. Registration is at 6:30. Everyone is welcome to attend.

We will elect the Riding Association Executive for the next year, as well as discuss policy resolutions for the Federal Convention in August.

For more information, phone Dan Beals at 613-549-8399 or email dbeals@ndpkingston.org.

New dawn for Ontario New Democrats

By *Cameron Holmstrom*

The March Leadership Convention in Hamilton was the culmination of one of the most amazing seven-month stretches in the history of the Ontario NDP. Over that period of time we had our first leadership race of the new millennium and the first "One Member, One Vote" leadership contest. Many people had the amazing good fortune not only to witness the leadership election as a Party member, but to be involved in the process in a way that many never thought we'd get to.

All the campaigns worked hard, crossing this vast province and meeting with as many New Democrats as they could. They debated, they brought forth policy, they raised funds, and they used new techniques and technologies in their attempts to become the next leader of our Party. Even though most didn't get over the top, I hope that these

campaigns broke new ground for the Ontario New Democrats and I hope that our new leader, Andrea Horwath, will continue on that path that they helped to blaze while blazing her own.

The Kingston & the Islands riding was very well represented at the Leadership Convention, with close to 20 delegates from the Limestone City making the trip. That included a group of 10 delegates from Queen's University, making it the largest campus-club delegation in the province.

The Convention also elected a new Party executive. The Kingston & the Islands riding saw our representation on the provincial wing of our Party grow: Jamie Masse was elected as the Male Eastern Regional Representative, and Cameron Holmstrom was elected as the Aboriginal Male Representative and Co-Chair of the newly-formed Ontario NDP Aboriginal Committee.

(See "Dawn" overleaf)

C.D. Howe Institute says Bank of Canada should create money for public debt

By Richard Priestman

Well! Wha'd'ya know? Even the C.D. Howe Institute says the Bank of Canada should buy Government of Canada securities (C.D. Howe Monetary Policy Council Report, 2009-04-16) – or, to put it another way, the government should borrow from the Bank of Canada. When the government sells a bond it is borrowing from the purchaser of that bond, and when the government borrows from the Bank of Canada there is effectively no interest on that debt because interest paid comes back to the government as dividends. In this way, the government can borrow whatever is necessary to get the economy moving again without hanging a huge debt-burden around the necks of future generations. We pay enough interest now on the debts of our three levels of government (over \$63 billion a year) for money borrowed privately instead of from the Bank of Canada. We don't need any more privately-financed public debt!

“A strong majority” of the Monetary Policy Council “favoured purchases of Government of Canada securities [...]

rather than purchases of private securities.” While their goal is more cash for financial institutions, the same procedure can be used to provide cash for our three levels of government to invest in public services such as housing, infrastructure, education, research, the CBC, health care, recreation facilities, etc. Investments of this nature provide big dividends, some of the biggest coming from education and research. Among others who support government investment in public works to get out of the recession is David Dodge, former Governor of the Bank of Canada.

With unemployment climbing by the tens of thousands a month, much more needs to be done than is being done currently. Some will balk at the thought of taking on more debt, not fully understanding that investments in public service using interest-free money pay off in future dividends. Others balk at it because of an ideological commitment to smaller government and privately-run services. Public financing of public works not only would make it possible to do what needs to be done, it would also lower taxes and, more importantly, reduce the influence of lenders on gov-

ernment! The legislation for using the Bank to finance government debt exists in the Bank of Canada Act.

Now that the C.D. Howe Institute supports use of the Bank of Canada to buy government securities, maybe the Canadian Council on Public Policy (CCPA) will say more about the issue. They used to include a statement about it every year along with their “alternative budget”, but have said very little for the past several years. The Council of Canadians adopted a resolution on this at their 1994 annual meeting, but never acted on it. Likewise the NDP adopted a resolution on it at their leadership convention in 1995, then promptly ignored it. Maybe we, too, will talk about it. Maybe even the Liberals and Conservatives will support the idea. And maybe the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) will talk about it at the rallies they are organizing all across the country in their “Campaign for Change”.

If enough Canadians say that public debt should be financed by our public bank, the political party(ies) which support this policy will have the best chance of getting elected at the next federal election.

Dawn (continued from overleaf)

Now the real work begins for Ontario's New Democrats, and that work must be a team effort, with the people brought together from all the campaigns in this race. The only way for our Party to move forward is for everyone to be brought into the fold, with no one shunted away.

I disagree with those that say we must push aside those who are, as MPP Peter Kormos put it, “far beyond their expiry dates.” Our movement needs these people now and frankly, it's not “time for these folks to move on”; it's quite the opposite. It's time for these folks to stay, to work with the new blood and help our Party and move-

ment move forward. As George Santayana said, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,” and we need that sage experience to help our party improve. Our team effort must involve a balance of the old experience and the young blood.

Personally, I look forward to being a part of this group that will do the work. I am not looking upon all of this as an end of a journey, but the start of a new one, a new dawn as it were. Most importantly for all of us in the Ontario NDP, this is a chance that's now firmly in our grasp. Our future is in our hands, and it's up to us to make that future bright. As Andrea has been saying throughout this campaign, “It's time.”

Volunteer honoured

The Kingston & the Islands New Democrats wish to congratulate Jeremy Dent as one of four winners of the Mayor's Award for Youth Volunteerism. This award singles out young people who have shown their dedication to our community through volunteer service and fundraising efforts.

Jeremy has performed extensive volunteer work at Sydenham United Church, H'art School of Smiles, and Queen's University Medical School. He was also a tireless volunteer for the Rick Downes federal NDP campaign.

We are extremely pleased to see him recognized for his ongoing efforts on behalf of our community.