

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



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Fort Frances Chamber hosts All Candidates Debate



From left Liberal Party candidate, Ken Boshcoff, NDP candidate, John Rafferty, moderator, Tannis Drysdale, Green Party candidate, Ed Shield, Conservative candidate Moe (Maureen) Comuzzi-Stehmann.

By Marlene Deschamps

The Fort Frances Chamber of Commerce held an All Candidates Debate at the Civic Centre on Wednesday, April 20th. There were more than 50 people who came out to hear the debate.

Before questions were asked by the media, the Chamber representative and Wayne Helliar from the NWOTA, each candidate delivered a short speech on why they were seeking election and/or re-election.

NDP John Rafferty told those present that he worked hard to represent the people of the riding. He spoke of how he maintained a constituency office here and was in the riding on many occasions. He cited the number of people that had been helped in dealing with different government agencies on concerns they had. He asked for everyone's vote so he could return to Parliament and continue to work in the best interests of the people who elected him.

Liberal Party candidate, Ken Boshcoff spoke of how he had worked to bring people together to try and find solutions for people from Northwest. He cited private members bills he had brought forward that had been approved in Parliament while he was MP. He also mentioned the many times he had been in the district throughout his term. He asked for peoples votes in order to return as their MP and assured them he will work hard for the people of the district.

Green Party candidate, Ed Shields said it was time there was a PH scientist in Ottawa. With global warming and changing climates he said it would be important to have scientists on board. He mentioned the importance of developing local food businesses and how it was a massive opportunity for well paying jobs in the bio technology field.

Conservative candidate Moe Comuzzi-Stehmann thanked the organizers for arranging the

event. She said she was a life-long resident of Northwestern Ontario and passionate about the area. She told everyone she runs a business and believes that the Conservatives led by Stephen Harper has steered the country through the recession by providing stability. She said she would be a strong voice at the table and champion growth for the Northwest.

The candidates were then asked questions on Border Crossing Issues, Pension Reform, Federal Support for the Forest Industry, Maintaining Canada's Economic Position and Economic Development.

Ken Boshcoff stressed the importance of innovative new products from the forestry and how FedNor should have adequate funding as a stand alone agency. He said there should be more awareness and information given to American tourists before they reach the border so they can produce proper documentation regarding past offences. He mentioned that these issues do not come up at airports or for snow mobilers but just at land crossings so they have to sit down and come to some agreement that won't impede tourism or other business. Ken also spoke of the tremendous opportunities coming with the mining industry. He mentioned that Service Canada must start training for upcoming jobs.

John Rafferty spoke of how he had tried through Freedom of Information to find out if other border crossing problems similar to our existed. He didn't get a response. He said the unemployment rates are too high and they must start taking care of infrastructure and building the farming community. He also said we must keep our forestry jobs and the government must subsidize this sector as the Americans do. He said the new provincial allocation rules would open up to anyone bidding under the free trade

agreement. We could see raw logs going over the border. He said there should be incentive based tax breaks given to those companies that would provide jobs.

Ed Shields stressed the point that there were no scientists in Ottawa and how at this point they were badly needed. He again mentioned the tremendous opportunities available in the new and increasingly important green economy. He cited bio bricks, medical genetics, nano technology and all that can be done locally. He said people are now investing in personal solar and wind projects. Ed noted that this can be an exciting time for this great economic change and there is wonderful potential for the area. But he stressed the need for a scientist to be in Ottawa to try and bring these new ideas out a make sure Northwestern Ontario was a part of this new economy.

Moe Comuzzi-Stehmann pointed out that she ran a business and that they should not raise taxes but stay on course. They should provide training and hiring credits for small business. Moe said that they must continue to cut red tape. She said she had spent time at the border earlier in the day to discuss the problems occurring regarding tourist crossings. She mentioned the problems in the forestry industry because of reduction in the need for newsprint and housing materials in the U.S. She said the forestry industry must change by innovation and market development. Moe said that she knew how important forestry was and she would work diligently on this. She added that the decision was clear. Vote for a stable Conservative government or face a coalition with the Bloc.

After final statements everyone was invited down to the Committee room for coffee and donuts and a chance to speak with the candidates.

St. Mary's Youth Group re-enact the Passion of Christ



By Marlene Deschamps

On Good Friday at 3 pm, the St. Mary's Youth Group re-enacted the Passion of Christ. Different members of the group played the role of Jesus, Mary, mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, King Herod, Roman soldiers and the apostles. They went down the aisle, pausing at each station of the Cross and portrayed what is

depicted at that station. They had King Herod passing judgement, the scourging, the choosing of Barabbas being freed instead of Jesus, the call for Crucifixion, carrying of the cross, nailing of Jesus onto the cross and his last works before dying. They then removed him from the cross and carried him over to be laid in the tomb after which a large stone was rolled

in front of the entrance. Although each action appeared to be real, sound effects were used very well to simulate the scourging and the nailing to the cross. The youth group did a fabulous job and their costumes were great and all those who packed the church for the service were very impressed by their actions and their devotion to this holy day.

Mildred Ouellette celebrates 100th Birthday



Pam Cain (Mildred's 2nd cousin) and Mildred Ouelette at celebration of her life.

By Marlene Deschamps

Mildred Ouellette's actual birthday was April 21st but a drop in celebration was held on Saturday, April 23rd at Rainycrest where she now resides. Hallett Hall was packed with family and friends who stopped by to help her celebrate this milestone birthday. Mildred is a well known artist in this area and many of her

painting were on display at tables set up around the room. Many were for sale and many of them were sold to people who came out to wish her well and who were also familiar with her work.

She received congratulations from many dignitaries, including Queen Elizabeth 11. Mildred did get to see the Queen many years ago shortly after her coronation and when she was working with the phone company. That is just one of the exciting encounters Mildred has had over the years. When she was quite young her mother ran cabins on River Road as a tourist operation. She was curious when she saw the car of their first customer but was told not to tell anyone about it. As it turns out that first customer was Al Capone. Mildred said she really enjoyed riding horses at that time. When Mildred was younger she worked for some very inter-

esting people in Fort Frances. One of them was Dr. Robert Moore. He was very prominent and as we all know there still exists the school named after him. She also worked for judges and lived at the White Pine Inn. This was in it's glory days and it looked like it did in an article printed in an earlier edition of The Westend Weekly. She was also one of what today is called Rosie the Riveter and she worked in Brampton, Ontario during WW 11. Mildred then worked for the Town Telephone System and transferred over to Bell Canada where she worked for many years. Mildred has travelled all over the world including Egypt and Ireland and stated that Ireland was her favourite place to visit. Many of her paintings are of Ireland, its landscape and its people. Mildred has always been interested in art and horticulture and belonged to the Fine Line Art Gallery and the Horticulture Society. She also was a bowler and belonged to the Seniors bowling league until she was 95 years old. Mildred really enjoyed visiting with everyone and accepting their gifts of flowers and the many cards she received. She received a kiss on the cheek from John Rafferty, NDP candidate and then received a second kiss so a picture could be taken. Mildred's mind and memory are still quite sharp and when asked how she is feeling about being 100 years old, she smiled and said "I'm still running around doing things". A family member said that after the celebration, when everyone left, Mildred was busy helping family and staff clean up the hall. Congratulations Mildred and HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!!

Pegamigaabo School and Emo Library to host author Gloria Alcock

By Marlene Deschamps.

Gloria Alcock who was the head nurse for the Northwest Health Unit for many years, has written a book about her time as a nurse in the most northern regions of Canada. Her book has been very well received and she has had readings in Winnipeg, Thunder Bay and

Regina to name a few.

Gloria remembers with fondness the people she met with in the various communities and First Nations in our area.

Gloria will be speaking with the students at the Big Grassy School about her adventures during Thursday classes and

then speak with the adults and sign books after class. She will be bringing some of her memorabilia from the north to show the children.

On Friday she will be at the Emo Library shortly after 1 pm. There will be a table set up for her so she can sign books and

talk with those who would like to know more about her wonderful adventures.

No doubt there are many who remember her and want to meet with her and read about the adventures she had in the north before moving to Northwestern Ontario.

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