

# BORDER CITY ORACLE

## Windsor West NDP Newsletter



February 2012 Edition

### Message from the President



Our volunteer riding Executive and myself have been working hard these past number of years. We have been active and successful on many initiatives.

We are starting a newsletter once again, something that has not occurred in nearly two decades. We want it to be grassroots oriented. That includes your original perspectives.

This will bring growing pains, but I know with our seasoned executive and help from our membership we can look forward to more interactive grassroots activities. Communication is key to our successes, this will be one tool in our collective workstation that can keep us truly connect.

A brief history about our riding association stability. When I moved here from the riding of Windsor Walkerville in 1997 and joined the executive back then, I saw the potential to help grow our political organization. Building on the foundation of past members activities. I saw that we needed continuity to stay connected with our community.

I established a riding mailbox address that we have had since 1999. I help initiate the riding website established in 2001. In 2002 we established our brand telephone number 253-WEST (9378) that we continue to operate and have used on every campaign since. We have also established a Facebook group since 2007.

These may appear to be small things, but are the building blocks that keep us constantly connected with our members and community. As your riding president for eleven terms, I want to keep growing and keep that stability connected. With your help and indulgence, this launch of our newsletter will bring our thoughts, ideas and actions closer together.

~by Mariano Klimowicz~

### Keep Tending to the Garden



The financial house of cards has fallen, reflected in the surge in poverty and unemployment caused by the powerful conservative forces.

Persistent studies demonstrate how both wealth and power is consolidating and growing disparities are intensifying throughout the world including Canada.

Capitalism has always been at odds with the fundamental values of equity, fairness and democracy itself.

During the time of Tommy Douglas, we recall the "vision of the New Jerusalem", democratic socialism. Tragically, we now witness how those on the right are gaining momentum. The New Democratic Party has historically operated unlike the other Parties. The Party's vitality has always depended upon the inspiration it can generate among those less powerful and the most vulnerable and the increasing proportion of the population disillusioned with the democratic process. Voting turnouts at elections have now reached all time lows.

The Parties unique "niche" must be in its mission to secure greater equality for all. Now when there is no surplus to distribute, we must ensure those most vulnerable are not the victims in the name of "protracted Restraint." The immediate future will witness the growth of more and more draconian policies.

Unlike the other Parties, we accept the interdependence of both the social and economic thrusts. Now when there is no surplus to distribute, we must ensure the vulnerable is not targeted thus becoming the primary casualties.

*(continued; page two)*

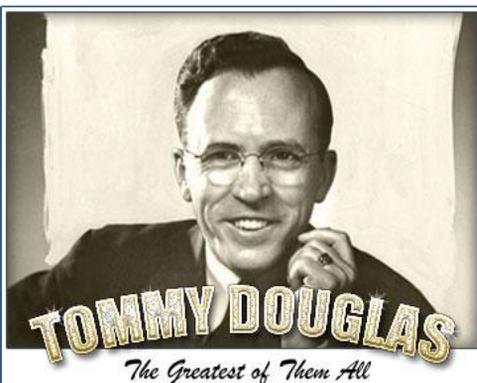
(Howard Pawley ; continued from page one)

Finally the test of our success will be achieved by greater democratic control over our political and structures and an expansion of social, economic and human rights so that every person receives adequate housing, health care, a genuine education and employment.

This year we have the opportunity to seize the opportunity at the Federal N.D.P convention to reach out and speak and listen to the electorate. We can and must build the strength and resolve and others have done to successfully defeat the forces of re-action.

The above is written from my past experience in Manitoba 1977; the New Democratic Party was defeated and demoralized . Despite a low membership and a huge debt accompanied by a serious Party schism ;we would nevertheless go on to win in 1981. In three years we succeeded in re-building the highest party membership in Manitoba history., consultation sessions were held throughout the province and the Party became more active than ever before. This followed the advice we had received from Tommy Douglas "keep your Party busy as one tends a garden". After only one term in government, the defeat of the Lyon Conservative government would be the only time this has ever occurred. the only time after only one term in government. We can do the same in Canada paying respect the legacy of our esteemed former Leader Jack Layton.

~by Hon. Howard Pawley ~



Courage, my friends; 'tis not too late to build a better world.

## An Adamy of Youth Employment

By Adam Isherwood



Have you ever been unemployed when you were 22 years old? I am here to talk to you about the unemployed youth in Canada. I am 25 years old and I am just about to start a new job. This job is my first one in over 3 years.

Ever since my layoff from my full time job at the age of 22, I have been handing out resumes, filling in applications, and going to countless interviews. I'm struggling to keep afloat as the debt just keeps piling up.

For 1 year, while I was unemployed, I did receive Employment Insurance Benefits. That helped out a lot. Benefits only last a short time. Then I was back to no income. Finally I decided that I had to go on the Ontario Works program, A.K.A Welfare. That was the absolute last option that I wanted to take, but I had no choice.

I felt completely ashamed to apply for welfare. I told my case worker that I am only doing this until I can get back on my feet and get a job. It has taken 2 years for me to find a job. Finally, I received **the** phone call. My long youthful wait has come to an end (?) Good news. I start a brand new job on Feb 6th. I'm a typical Canadian young person; I am also one of the statistics of the Canadian youth workforce.

Job prospects among youths aged 15 to 24 have declined for the third consecutive month. A loss of 17,000 youth jobs this past December. The youth unemployment rate is 14%, nearly twice the general workforce unemployment of 7.5%. For students in secondary and post-secondary institutions, the unemployment rate is even higher at 19.2%.

So if you are a youth under 25 without a job, I know how you feel. Just keep one thing in mind. "GOOD THINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WAIT". But why was I waiting this long to start my future.

To submit your article for Oracle publication in the next edition. Please forward to aquacraft77 @ gmail.com by April 1<sup>st</sup>

## Are you worth 50 Percent - by the 1%

By Joe Pekar



What do workers deserve in return for their labour? Who has the right and the power to determine what workers deserve in return for their labour? What process do they use to determine what workers deserve in return for their labour?

The Caterpillar strike in London really makes these sentences scream out at me?

In the context of a collective agreement, the workers have made the statement of <What We Deserve> Does deserving make them selfish. No. It makes them human.

A lot of job application forms have a line on them that reads "Salary Expected", There is a question implied here. Do you know the message? The message is <What Do you Deserve?> The application form is asking workers what they deserve in return for their labour. . Now, who is likely to fill in that line on the form? White collar workers - and - not Blue Collar. That is usually the case. And that sets up a we-against-them kind of situation. It carries the subtle message that White collars have permission to communicate what they deserve, but, Blue Collars do not that have permission.

Caterpillar has made what I call their fifty-percent declaration, They want to cut the wage of the workers by fifty percent. It is an insult. By doing so, Caterpillar has decided that Blue Collar workers are inferior to their executive employees and to other white collar workers and to the investors and to the board of directors. They are telling the work force just who is <deserving> and who is <not>.

And, what kind of a message are they delivering? Well, if you were <down south>, you might hear something like the following. "Hey boy, you take what we give you . And you feel happy about it" "Know your place and keep it". In their way of thinking, , a worker is equal to some kind of a slave.

That train is picking up steam. People are chanting and stamping that outsourcing will save them money. And the city farms out garbage collection. But - at the same time - they do have money in the budget to hire expensive out of town lawyers. Did they fire garbage

collectors in order to secure the money to pay their legal bills. Is that the thought that was in their minds?

Just who is it who deserves respect and due consideration? Lawyers, or, workers. Actually, both, in fair measure. We live in a democracy. What does democracy mean for those at the <top>. And what does democracy mean for those at the <bottom>. And what does democracy mean for those in the <middle>?

All men are created equal. That is what they say. But, some men are created more equal than others. How does all this <creating> happen? Who is doing all the creating? Who is creating the inequality between those at the top and bottom? A small group of people, with a lot of money and lot of power and a lot of selfishness..

Firing city workers. That sounds like a real good money saver. But, it sets a terrible precedent for workers. The word gets out. "If they can do it over there, then, we can do it over here."

Pay cuts. Can you imagine the city demanding that their lawyers reduce their fees or they will face termination? How about their accountants. How about their advertising companies? How about their contractors? No, that will never happen. In the mind of the city fathers, those <professionals> are sacred. There are protected by the hidden but all-mighty hand of free enterprise. If you , the workers, try to challenge them - the outcome will be terrible for you. These <professionals> are too powerful to question. That is their myth. That is their ideology. That is their belief. They shove it down your throat. They threaten you with it. They call it <reality>. And, they thunder at you that you can have no other kind reality except for their version of reality. That encourages working people to feel confused, and weak, and divided, and helpless, and hopeless, and dependent. <Divided We Fall>

And then – they have you.

Unless – of course – the workers resist, and join together, and challenge these ideas, and say <United We Stand> Unless they take very seriously the fact that they are citizens in a democracy. Unless they demand that people in "authority" respect their rights.

And that is what the workers are saying to Caterpillar. In the context of a collective agreement, the workers have made the statement of <What We Deserve> Does deserving make them selfish. No. It makes them human.

They are citizens in a democracy. They demand the respect that is due to citizens in a democracy.

## The Changing Face of Ward 2



As we enter 2012 some of the up-coming projects for Ward 2 have been solidified and will soon begin. From Sunset to Campbell, a \$1.7 million street scaping transformation for Wyandotte West and \$.5 million for Sandwich Street will enhance and revitalize these neighbourhoods.

Expanding on the information, desires and concerns garnered at the Strategic Session held by MP Brian Masse in 2011, a nucleus of passionate, informed individuals came together prior to the holidays to formulate the beginnings of a dream for a West Windsor world class museum.

The War of 1812, French Settlement, First Nations, Underground Railroad and the River were identified as the pivotal factions that have shaped and grown out of Sandwich defining both the direction of our city and of our country.

The vision of our forefathers is being harnessed and refocused in order for our residents, businesses and west end institutions to advance our past while creating a new and vibrant future. The uniqueness of the west end, the awareness of the struggles that have proceeded and followed, need to be articulated in order to work from reality, rather than perception. Individuals need to understand the forces which have shaped and influenced communities and their identities.

As we work toward a Development Corporation model for the Sandwich area, public meetings will proceed to encourage participation and partnerships. The framework for governance, funding and sustainability are coming together. Stay tuned. The west end is once again on the rise and there is room for everyone to get on board. ~Ron Jones ~ Councilor Ward 2

## The Drummond Report Rumours

*Potential Impact on Education by; Shannon Porcellini*



For months rumours have been floating around about the contents of the forthcoming report on provincial government efficiencies that was prepared by Don Drummond for the Premier's Office.

We won't really know what's in there until the budget is released in mid-March. But there are some hints of what to expect: the outsourcing of administrative government functions – the hidden “back room operations” of the business of government. As a former school trustee, my focus is on education. So what does this mean for the education sector?

There's been a push in Education over the past 8 years to consolidate in a search for efficiencies. For example, every board in the province has been mandated to form a transportation 'consortium' with other local boards, in an effort to save money. This hasn't been much of a shift here in Windsor-Essex because our transportation consortium (named Student Transportation Services or buskids.ca) has worked, fairly well, for the past 3 decades. But, this has caused an enormous culture shift in other boards in the province, where transportation has always been a hot-button or defining issue. This includes Toronto, where transportation of elementary students only occurred in one board, but not the other, or in some northern boards, where the costs and distances are huge.

Consolidating regional consortia into a provincially administered service is the kind of initiative that's been bandied about in discussions about the Drummond Report's contents. This is a prime example. If boards can't work together effectively to make these services work for parents and students, then could the province do it more efficiently and economically? And if it works for transportation, what about other services in education, like accounting and payroll? Or psychological or social work services?

Shannon Porcellini

*Continued from page four*

None of these are “front line” services like teaching or custodial work, so the visibility to taxpayers would be minimal, ideally. And the potential savings could be astronomical, - very attractive to politicians who need to pay down a massive debt.

In my opinion, these potential consolidations of both transportation and backroom administrative functions are a gross threat to local democracy and local economies. In the case of transportation consortia, right now they aren't overseen by locally elected representatives. The boards of these consortia consist of Superintendents of Business for the participatory school boards. If control over things like bus provider contracts is shifted to Toronto, there will be even less oversight on a budget line item that in our area is upwards of \$9M combined for the 2 English boards. In my opinion, local bus operators will be forced out of business in favour of bus lines that have the infrastructure to operate across the province. The opportunity for parents to petition for “courtesy rides” will be diminished even further than it has in the past 2 years.

Efficiencies in accounting and payroll functions will lead to job losses in both unionized and non-union positions in school boards across the province. And again, the ability to locally control a school board's budget will be severely impaired. Consolidating or outsourcing psychological and social work providers will create massive backlogs in service for local children and families, as they compete for a place on a list with families across the province.

Instead of looking at consolidation at the provincial level as a vehicle for cost savings, taxpayers should be insisting on increased local control of education funding, so that school boards have the ability to be immediately responsive to the changing needs of the communities they serve.

## NDP Leadership candidates

The race to succeed our late Jack Layton continues and concludes in Toronto March 24<sup>th</sup>. We will choose a new leader of Canada's Official Opposition and the next Prime Minister of Canada.

All NDP members will be able to cast their ballots in a one member one vote format. You can be a delegate to the federal leadership convention in Toronto March 23 – 24 at the Allstream Centre. Register online today. [www.ndp.leadership](http://www.ndp.leadership)

The riding executive has been communicating with the leadership candidates and inviting them to visit with our members. Thus far, Nathan Cullen, Peggy Nash and Niki Ashton were our guests. Up coming, we are currently speaking to the Paul Dewar, Thomas Mulcair and Brian Topp campaigns. We will announce to you once arrangements have been made.

### Ontario NDP Convention

New Democrats will be busy continuing the orange wave this year as we join the conversation for the ONDP Convention in Hamilton April 13-15. Be sure to participate by submitting a resolution at the next riding general membership meeting Feb.19<sup>th</sup> (see flyer). Be a delegate and be part of the action at the Hamilton Convention Centre. The riding will be holding a workshop Feb.12<sup>th</sup> to help our members properly prepare resolutions. See the flyer to register.

### Grow the Riding & Grow the Party

We're taking Tommy Douglas's advice “ keep your Party busy as one tends a garden”. The riding membership is growing, the orange wave continues, if you know someone who is able to join, just ask them, then sign them up.

Engaged citizens are politically active, if you are interested in becoming a member of the executive call the riding President Mariano 519-977-0729.

Now is the time for all good men and women to help their party grow, make a donation to your riding association.

Windsor West NDP  
Riding Executive

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Federal Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer Fed & Prov.  
Youth Co-Chair  
Youth Co-Chair  
Member Parliament  
Prov. Council Delegate  
Prov. Council Alternate  
Accessibility Chair  
Education Chair  
LBGT Chair  
Fund Raiser Co-Chair  
Ethnic Liaison Officer  
Social Justice  
Development Co-Chair  
Social Justice  
Development Co-Chair  
Members at Large

Mariano Klimowicz  
Shannon Porcellini  
Kieran McKenzie  
Shelly Harding-Smith  
Ian Bawden  
Renee Taylor  
James Vander Voort  
Brian Masse  
Mike Cardinal  
Darlene Dunn Mahler  
Mickey Monks  
Brian Hogan  
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