

Caledon Citizen

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Challenges in store for the new Caledon council

The game has begun anew.

With four new faces soon to sit around the Caledon council table, residents will have an interesting mix for the next four years. Hopefully that mix will provide some renewed enthusiasm, fiscal prowess and wisdom. Hopefully, they won't be shy about making some noise when it's in our best interest.

All nine politicians have been given a mandate by their constituents and we expect them all to perform admirably. Sure, there will be a learning curve for some and a "settling in" period of adjustment, but we're confident the veteran councillors will be more than up to the challenge of assisting the newcomers to their posts.

While victory may be sweet for the new crop of representatives, we should point out voter turnout was still miserably low at 34.7%. Imagine, decisions of such magnitude will be made by a group of people voted in by only one-third of Caledon's eligible voters.

Of course the onus was on taxpayers to take a few minutes out of their busy schedules to exercise their democratic privilege. For the 34.7% of those who voted, good for you - you will help shape your own future in this municipality. For the remaining 65.3% (the majority) shame on you. A few thousand extra votes here and there would have totally changed the election's outcome, and reshaped Caledon's landscape. But we'll never know, will we?

Now, the onus is on those seven men and two women to protect our interests and ensure Caledon remains the best place in which to live, work and enjoy a unique lifestyle. That's what most of us strive for in our daily lives, and that's why we've made such a huge investment in this town.

The councillors all say they'll be vigilant, and hopefully residents will make sure they keep their promises. From tax relief to a speedy completion of outstanding projects, many issues were raised during this campaign and they are all a matter of record. Don't be surprised if statements made at debates or contained in election material, surface from time to time, just to keep them on their toes.

From the mayor to area councillors, we're

going to toss in our three cents worth (inflation you know) of opinion, observation and advice.

From the top, it seems most voters didn't want a change of leadership and preferred to stick with a good thing. Mayor-elect Marolyn Morrison has served this municipality well for more than nine years in various capacities, the last three as mayor. Her decisive victory over Gary Moore was quite different from her narrow 2003 win in a three-way popularity contest against Richard Whitehead and Garry Wiles. While Moore put up a good fight, the reality is it's difficult to unseat an incumbent mayor. That being said, she shouldn't rest on her laurels, but rather pick up the pace and set the stage for the coming term. Whether that means coming up with innovative communications strategies, or just spending some money on much-needed staff or infrastructure, we hope she and her new band of merry men and women will run with the baton they've been given. She's has a golden opportunity to blossom and really leave her mark on Caledon's political landscape.

With every loss comes some gain. In what was the most dramatic race of the election, veteran Whitehead upset incumbent Nancy Stewart as regional councillor for Wards 3 & 4. Some will be sad to see Nancy go, but that's the harshness of politics (there's no reward for finishing second). Whitehead did, after all, occupy that seat for more than a decade, leaving the regional post to shoot for the mayor's chair in 2003. From Whitehead we expect to see some insightful perspectives, an honest and practical approach to issues and hopefully some innovations needed to combat the realities of the region and GTA as they unfold today. We're confident he'll temper his bombastic speeches with a bit more humour and compassion. He's confident he can achieve two of his campaign promises - tax reduction and building the Bolton bypass. These may require some creative budgeting, but we agree they're not only possible, but necessary. Accomplishing these two things alone will greatly increase taxpayer confidence.

His ward counterpart, Nick deBoer, received a whopping 75% of the vote, asserting the need and desire for a solid agricultur-

al voice on council. (But again, that's 75% of the 35% who voted.) Residents in Bolton or Cedar Mills may not fully appreciate the fact that Caledon is a rural community and agricultural operations are a huge part of what we are. Helping reinvent the modern family farm is something deBoer will be involved with in the coming term. We'd like to see agriculture given some extra clout in the big picture, forcing the province to rethink some of its Greenbelt policies to allow for continued agricultural success, in whatever form that takes. A grass roots groundswell is often all it takes to make a point.

Perhaps now that Allan Thompson has captured the regional seat for Ward 2, that voice will be heard loud and clear outside of our borders. We think Thompson will easily grow into his new position, like sliding on a comfortable pair of boots. But to play ball at the regional level, you'll need more than good intentions. Keep the shark repellent handy!

Gord McClure arrives as the new Ward 2 area councillor. He spoke about urban sprawl and practical solutions during the campaign,

so maybe he'll bring some creative new approaches to old issues.

In Ward 1, Richard Paterak resumes his post as regional councillor, bringing experience and intestinal fortitude with him. He's learned to swim with those same sharks, so his know-how and guidance for Ward 1 is reassuring.

From what we've seen, newcomer Doug Beffort, as Ward 1 area councillor, will bring some down-to-earth common sense to the table, along with a desire to get things done. He's shown his creativity in contacting Transportation Minister Donna Cansfield, in urging her to have another look at the Caledon Village gridlock. His idea of sitting down and having coffee with the minister may be unconventional, but you know, it may just work.

Annette Groves will enter her third term on council, the second as regional councillor. Her support at the polls and at her campaign office was loud and boisterous - a testament to her campaign team.

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Our Readers Write

Heritage supporters thanked

October 14, Heritage Caledon celebrated its 30th anniversary with an impressive gala at the Peel agricultural building on Heart Lake Road.

There are many people to thank when an event like this is so successful; our guest speakers Alex Raeburn and Heather Broadbent; The Credit Forks Garden Club for the amazing arrangements; Sheilagh Crandall and her group of volunteers for their work at the gala; Sarah Haney-Crandall for her sponsorship; Gilles and Adriana Roche of Gourmandissimo for the sumptuous dinner; all the residents and businesses from the community who made generous donations, and the many Heritage Caledon members who donated silent auction items and helped in so many other ways.

The committee raised more than \$7,000 from the gala and \$2,200 from our Heritage booklet, for the newly established Caledon

Heritage Foundation.

In addition, the Town of Caledon council donated \$20,000 to the foundation, proceeds from their annual fund-raising golf tournament.

I would personally like to thank the members of the gala committee: Diana Hillman, Fay McCrea, Sally Drummond, Ray Cowan, Raymond Wand, Doug McLeod, Joan Boyington, Rose Connelly, Wilma Clarke (and her Re-Use Committee) Andy Priede, Paul Johnston, Mike Starr, Merle Middlebrook, Isabelle Bottoms, Jean Proctor and Maureen Baker.

Their hard work and many volunteer hours ensured a wonderful evening for all, as we honoured those who have contributed to 30 years of heritage conservation in the community.

Kathryn Mifsud

Chair, Heritage

Caledon Gala Committee

Who should pay?

Rural Ontarians are not "radicals."

We want clean and abundant water as much as anyone. However, we oppose a law that effectively allows expropriation without fair or timely compensation. Example: a town expands and needs more water so it drills a new well on a rural property. By virtue of the Act, the property owner must pay the cost of application for and establishment of a "risk management plan" and other costs associated with the exercising of power under the Clean Water Act.

In addition, the owner may be obliged to cease or reduce activities (for example, farming) with a resulting loss of income and a certain loss of property value. Compensation is not provided for.

No urban property owner would tolerate this sort of action by the province. Rural Ontario will willingly provide whatever the public is prepared to pay for. The real issue is fairness.

Don Lobb

McNeil says thanks

I would like to thank all the people who supported my efforts to become the area representative for Wards 3 & 4 on the 2006-2010 Caledon council.

Throughout the campaign, my message was very simple: to be the vote of reason at the council table for Caledon taxpayers.

I would like to express my personal thanks to the residents of Ward 3 & 4, who took a chance and supported me with their votes. Your confidence in me is deeply appreciated. Thank you.

The new Caledon "team" will soon be ready to tackle the issues that effect our communities. Best wishes are extended to the new team as you begin your journey towards resolving the many problems that face our growing Caledon community.

Don McNeil
Palgrave

Caledon Citizen



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