STATE YOUR NAME… Volume1, Issue 1 (September 2012)

The official newsletter of LPC(O)

NAME THIS NEWSLETTER

Win lunch with a member of caucus

Are you creative? Do you enjoy contests? Do you want to name this newsletter? If the answer is yes, then we invite you to submit your name for the LPC(O) newsletter before the end of September to communications@lpco.ca. The winner will be featured in the following newsletter and treated to a dinner/lunch with an Ontario Caucus member.

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

LPC(O) is all atwitter

Howard Stevenson, President, LPC(O)

What's happening at LPC(O)? It is no secret that timely communications are critical to all organizations, let alone one as diverse as LPC(O).

Our vice-president communications, Jason Cherniak, promised to keep us all better informed and with input and support from Judi and LPC(O) Staff, is acting on that commitment. We can now expect to hear regularly, via Twitter @LPC_O, about scheduled events, activities, results from AGMs and Nomination Meetings, and other notices relevant to keeping members and supporters informed. You can also find us on Facebook at http://www.facebook.com/LPCO.PLCO

I am delighted to report that LPC(O) will now have a formal and collective approach to communicate with those who routinely use this social medium to acquire and share information while also responding where appropriate.

Welcome another quiver in our arsenal to help us all **Pound The Ground**!

IDEAS FROM CAUCUS

Why Canada's scientists protested the Harper Government

Ted Hsu, MP

The democratic process requires the ready availability of true and complete information. In this way people can objectively evaluate the government's policies. To act otherwise is to give way to despotic secrecy. - Pierre Elliot Trudeau

On July 10, 2012, the Canadian scientific community banded together to march on Parliament Hill in a rally condemning the government's use of ideology to form policies in lieu of solid, scientific evidence. As a former physicist myself, I was happy to be the one scientist/M.P. who addressed the rally. I joined over 2,000 scientists and supporters who took part in the Death of Evidence Rally to promote evidence-based-policy-making. Why "Death of Evidence"? As one of the rally's organizers, University of Ottawa Biologist, Scott Findlay, said, "[The] federal government has mounted a deliberate and systematic campaign to reduce the flow of scientific evidence to the Canadian public".

Scientists usually prefer to stay behind the scenes, hard at work in their labs. However the current government's rejection of facts and evidence has forced these researchers to take action. On July 10th, they took a break from their labs and took to the streets to fight for the voice of researchers to be heard when policy is decided and for a government that isn't afraid of being embarrassed by acknowledging facts and evidence.

We Liberals believe that policy should be based on evidence, not ideology, and that the Liberal party is the one party that will govern accordingly. Without listening to the scientific community we believe it is impossible for a government to make smart decisions in the best interests of the Canadian people.

Science accepts criticism, admits and corrects mistakes, and becomes stronger each time it does so. The Government of Canada should start to do the same to build a stronger and smarter Canada.

Ted Hsu is Liberal MP for Kingston and the Islands, critic for science and technology, and holds a PhD in physics. He is currently the chair of the Ontario Liberal Caucus.

TABLE OFFICERS REPORT

A riding executive handbook and mentorship

Tyler Banham, Executive Vice-President, LPC(O)

It has been a few months since our well attended LPC(O) convention in Toronto and all members of your new LPC(O) executive are hard at work. I would, first off, like to congratulate our vice-president communications, Jason Cherniak, for his hard work in launching this e-newsletter for our members.

Since the convention I have travelled and met with the members of over a dozen Liberal ridings and spoken to many more riding presidents about two projects: **(1) The Riding Association Handbook** and **(2) The Mentorship Program**.

I am currently working with vice-president organization, Jamie Maloney, on producing a Riding Association Handbook for our Liberal riding executives. The handbook will assist our ridings by highlighting important dates, outlining what each riding executive role should entail, providing

event and fundraising ideas and delivering a reference guide for incoming riding executive members.

During my campaign for executive vice-president, I heard loud and clear from riding presidents and riding executive members that they need guidance to help build a flourishing riding association and it is my hope that the handbook will help in providing that guidance.

How can you help? In the next few weeks, I will be forwarding a draft of the Riding Association Handbook to a few riding presidents in order to receive their feedback and commentary. If you have any advice for the handbook, **please email me at evp@lpco.ca.**

I have also been working with former LPC(O) executive member, Eileen Shuchat, to design a province-wide mentorship program. The goal of the mentorship program is to partner up long-time Liberals, from former members of parliament, to riding presidents, to long-time organizers and fundraisers, with new Liberals looking to benefit from the mentorship of an experienced politico.

Recently, at the Ontario Young Liberal convention in Mississauga, Eileen and I hosted a consultative session with Young Liberals and received some valuable insight from our next generation of leaders on how the mentorship program should operate.

At this point, I am in the process of finalizing the structure of the mentorship program and I need your help. If you would like to serve as a mentor in the upcoming mentorship program, or receive more details on what the role will entail, **please email me at evp@lpco.ca**.

I look forward to hearing your feedback and speaking with you over the upcoming weeks.

Policy in action

Carol Golench, Vice-President Policy, LPC(O)

As we move forward and look to the next election, LPC(O) is committed to a policy development process that is inclusive, democratic and rational; a process that encourages broad citizen engagement and grassroots involvement resulting in policies that reflect the needs and desires of Canadians.

Inclusive = open and consultative
Democratic = consensual
Rational = evidence based

Integrating these objectives into the policy framework will help ensure the development of progressive Liberal Party policy in Canada. As such, the LPC(O) Policy Committee is committed to a process that complements the national model.

Our first step in this process has been the establishment of a provincial Policy Committee with members who fully represent Ontario's six regions. Each region includes three area Policy Representatives. Each representative is responsible for liaising with a number of Electoral

District Associations (EDAs) within the region. While most EDAs have a sitting Vice-President of Policy, one of our committee's goals is to help establish Policy Vice-Presidents in all EDAs. Ensuring that every EDA has an active Policy Vice-President and committee will help strengthen policy development in our ridings and regions.

The next step has been to improve and enhance the level of communication among EDAs and the Policy Committee. Area Policy Representatives have materials that will make accessibility and communication with their EDA Policy Vice-Presidents easier, more efficient and effective. Open lines of communication can improve the sharing of policy ideas introduced by EDAs. Once ideas are collected and organized by the Policy Committee, it becomes easier to identify and bridge lines of communication among EDAs working on similar topics. Policy proposals are most desirable when they can be shown to resonate in a vast number of ridings.

The third step in the process is to foster a culture of involvement and engagement. EDA Policy Vice-Presidents have been sent a role description handout which includes information on holding policy events. Such activities include town hall meetings, panel discussions, debates and policy socials. Discussing issues that are important to individuals on an ongoing basis will give us a deeper understanding of our communities, enhance the quality of our research and engage our constituencies.

Together, these steps are designed to complement the framework for Liberal policy development described in the Liberal Party of Canada policy model.

Communicating with our members

Jason Cherniak, Vice-President Communications, LPC(O)

"I want to hear more from LPC(O)." I have been on the Management Committee since 2007 as Central Region President and I've heard this request time and again. That's why one of my first steps since being elected Communications VP in May has been to get this newsletter started. Liberals in Ontario need to understand what we do and why we do it.

Once a quarter, you will receive reports from Management Committee members. We will also highlight ridings, tell you about the regions and include a bit of editorial content from caucus. Please let me know what you think by emailing me at communications@lpco.ca. Whether you love it, hate it or just have a few suggestions to make things better, I'm all ears.

But I'm not doing it alone. We have an LPC(O) Communications Committee with 21 members across the province. There are members in every region except Toronto (because the region is waiting for its next regional meeting to elect members) and they have all been asked to contact ridings in their regional area.

Unfortunately, we've found that less than 50% of our ridings have somebody other than the president who is responsible for communications. Every riding needs a person who is in charge of communications, even if under the direction of the riding president. If your riding doesn't have one, then I urge you to bring it up at the next executive meeting.

In the coming months, ridings will start to see templates for regular riding newsletters. We have already received a message from Interim Leader Bob Rae drafted for summer newsletters. If you don't have a website, then we'll help you set up your riding's template. We also want you to know how to use Facebook and Twitter and give it a try – some of you might be surprised by how helpful these new tools can be.

In addition, your riding should be contacted by our media sub-committee, led by LPC(O) Secretary Bob Weeks secretary@lpco.ca, in an effort to have the best possible Ontario media on file centrally. I encourage you to share this information. We promise to share what we have right back with you, along with some helpful tips on how best to organize your local media campaigns.

You wanted to hear more from LPC(O)? You've got it!

FOCUS ON A RIDING

Hamilton Centre's Liberal renaissance

Ralph Wilson, Vice-President Communications, HCFLA

Three weeks before the writ was dropped for the May 2, 2011 general election, the Hamilton Centre Federal Liberal Association (HCFLA) still was without a candidate. The riding president, Al Wilson, took action.

"Anne Tennier and I met over coffee and, almost in an instant, I knew she'd be a great choice for Hamilton Centre," he said.

A short while later Al introduced Anne to the members of HCFLA's executive committee. This was the beginning of something of a renaissance for HCFLA, which was once firmly held by Liberals along with the four other Hamilton ridings. The riding's membership had dropped considerably, with precious little in the bank to fight an effective campaign.

"At the time, I knew very little about the riding," Anne admitted, "but it didn't take long for me to realize that Hamilton Centre truly was the heart of the city – and where I most definitely wanted to run. I knew full-well it'd be a tough battle but, with hard work and a sharply-focused organization, I knew we'd give it our best shot.

"One by one, volunteers quickly stepped forward. We built a strong and dedicated team comprising both long-standing and new Liberal supporters, including many supporters who I knew from outside of the riding. With Al's help – and that of a number of seasoned downtown Hamilton Liberals – we reorganized and re-energized the riding association. Many former members who'd walked away from the Party returned to the fold."

Anne hit the ground running. By Election Day, constituents who'd never heard of her were greeting her at the door with, "Hi, Anne." Momentum was building and donations were coming

in, but, despite a hard-fought campaign, Hamilton Centre re-elected the NDP's David Christopherson.

While crestfallen, Anne's team vowed to continue to fight. They may have lost the election, but they won a new and vibrant riding association – one that continues to work hard on reaching out to the electorate and involving its members in a wide variety of community events and activities.

"Running for elected office in Hamilton Centre last year was one of the most challenging, exhilarating, discouraging and fun things I've ever done," Anne said in a recent edition of the National Women's Liberal Commission's newsletter.

"We ran an amazing campaign – a blend of veteran politicos and newbies that worked their hearts out for eight weeks. While the results were not what we wanted, I couldn't have been more proud of our team. Many of the team continued on with the riding association, and this year we had the honour of being named Riding of the Year at the LPC(O) AGM in May."

HCFLA also took top honours as the best riding association in the Golden Horseshoe Region. Anne's husband, Ralph Wilson, was named HCFLA's top volunteer. Ralph, the riding's vice-president, communications, also served as Anne's campaign communication director.

One of HCFLA's most successful and popular campaign tools – its weekly newsletter, "NewsLINE", edited by Ralph – continues to keep members and supporters up to speed on the events and issues shaping and affecting Hamilton. It's sent out to more than 500 subscribers.

Even though the election is over, Anne is still very much in "campaign mode". Despite her full-time job as vice-president of environmental affairs at Maple Leaf Foods, she maintains a full schedule as HCFLA's vice-president of community outreach and special events, attending at least two community events a week.

She's also on the board of directors of the Hamilton Conservation Foundation and the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, and serves with Hamilton's Poverty Roundtable, the Hamilton chapter of the Peace Initiative, as well as chairing a municipal citizens' advisory committee.

She and Ralph, who serves on the Hamilton Arts Council, recently bought a home in "the heart of the city".

Will Anne want to run again? Stay tuned. Whatever her decision, rest assured HCFLA will continue to grow and will be a force to be reckoned with in the next federal election.

FOCUS ON A REGION

Out and about the north

Mike Erskine, President, Northern Region, LPC(O)

The Northern Regional Day at College Boreal in Sudbury came out swinging with a rousing speech by guest speaker PEI Liberal MP Wayne Easter (Malpeque). Wayne pulled no punches when he held onto his own riding under an avalanche of negative attacks during the last election and he strongly advised Northern Liberals to get their elbows up in the corners and start fighting back. Our political opponents have taken politics into a nasty new realm, Wayne noted, and the only way to fight that is to get right down into the gutter with them and give as good, no... better... than you get.

Not everyone in the room agreed with Wayne that this was the way to go, but he made a persuasive argument in that he held onto his seat, while many 'statesmanlike' Liberals rose above the fray and went down to defeat.

Central Region President Jeff May came up from Aurora, where he is also the EDA president, to deliver a SWOT analysis seminar that went over very well. The key element that kept arising as a weakness and a threat to Liberals in the North was communication. The key strength cited was our Liberal values, while the major opportunity that came up was the freedom Liberals are provided by not being in power or even in opposition. There is a unique opportunity to rediscover, or discover our roots; enter into a debate as to who and what Northern Liberals are, going into the 21st century.

The Sudbury Federal Liberal Association held a very successful Canada Day BBQ at Fielding Park where some of the old faithful got an opportunity to meet some new and younger Liberals while munching on some great summertime fare.

The Parry Sound-Muskoka Federal Liberal Association, together with the First Nations Community of Shawanaga, are planning an afternoon with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Critic Carolyn Bennett on September 22.

The Nickel Belt Federal Liberal Association is gearing up for a golf tournament, time and dates to be posted. This will be a great opportunity to get out on the links and help raise the money needed to fight the next campaign.

The next Northern Regional Day was set for Sunday, October 21 after consultation in a teleconference with the Northern EDA presidents and regional area directors. If there are items that any northern Liberals wish to see addressed at the Northern Regional Day, now would be a great time to pass them onto your EDA president, regional area director or Northern President. In fact, anytime is a great time to pass on your thoughts and concerns and to get involved in determining the future direction of our party and our nation.

Current items cuing up for the agenda are a presentation on leveraging social media in the pre-writ and post-writ periods and a discussion on key issues of concern to northern Liberals and

how to communicate northern Liberal solutions to those issues to the public at large and supporters in general.

The new Northern Ontario Liberal Facebook page is up and I encourage everyone to like, join and share with fellow Liberals. (http://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/364135873651737/)