



# John YAKABUSKI

YOUR MPP for RENFREW-NIPISSING-PEMBROKE

## REPORT FROM QUEEN'S PARK

### Working for You

#### Dear Constituents:

After another busy and exciting year as your elected representative in the provincial legislature of Ontario, it is my pleasure to report back to you. As you know, our riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke is a truly wonderful part of our great country; its incredible natural beauty and amazing people take me to the provincial capital with a tremendous sense of pride, inspiration and determination.

Among the many accomplishments and highlights of life in our riding this past year was the lighting of the World's Largest Christmas Tree in Cobden on December 9. It was a particularly special event for two reasons: it was dedicated to our brave troops fighting in Afghanistan; and our Prime Minister, Rt. Hon Stephen Harper, was in attendance. I have been asked to sing our national anthem many times before, but never has it been such an extraordinary honour, such a moving experience, with every single word of 'O Canada'. I feel we are privileged to have so many members of the Canadian military living amongst us. They are some of Canada's most upstanding citizens and the Canadian Forces spend \$214 million a year for their operations in our riding.

As you would all know, the forestry industry also plays a major economic role in Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. Yet, a couple of recent provincial government initiatives will be very harmful to this important segment of our community which is already suffering difficulties. Recently passed Bill 184, *The Endangered Species Act*, negatively impacts our forestry industry because it offers no real compensation for losses the industry will surely incur. Another blow to the local forest sector is the government's plan to reduce the scope and scale of logging in Algonquin Park. I feel that this is an ongoing attack on our way of life, coming from groups who know little or nothing about how well logging is managed in the Park. I have further information on this serious economic concern on the last page of this newsletter.

Included again this year is a questionnaire. I would appreciate your response, as the answers provide me with an essential understanding of how constituents feel about crucial issues in our riding. Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke has a history of a high response to these questionnaires, which I take to mean our people are on top of the issues—they care. I look forward to your responses. As always, your comments and feedback are welcome and encouraged.

Sincerely,

John Yakabuski, MPP  
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke

*BELOW: On May 11, 2007, John Yakabuski joined a group of distinguished dignitaries at the Red Friday rally held in Petawawa to show continued support for our military. Pictured with John are Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Defence Minister Hon. Gordon O'Connor and Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Rick Hillier. Each greeted the 5,000 people who gathered to show their support for our troops.*



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*“It is absolutely amazing what a community can accomplish when it works together for the betterment of others...”*



John sang songs from his new compact disc, “To Your Health” at the CD Launch Party in October with drummer Carl Cesare and fiddler Brian Hebert. All proceeds from the sale of the CDs go to the five riding hospitals.

Photo by Steve Newman, Renfrew Mercury



John interacts with volunteers, (top row l to r) Renfrew Mayor Sandi Heins, Amy Vanderwou, Renfrew Reeve Audrey Green, (bottom row l to r) Dakota Dagenais, Leona Dagenais, Bernie MacGregor and Miss Renfrew Ashley Miller, all of whom manned the phones during the Reach for the Rainbow Telethon in October, 2006. The telethon raises funds for the Sunshine Coach.

Photo by Steve Newman, Renfrew Mercury



A ceremony in February marked the beginning of the Valley Manor Rock-a-Thon. Those taking part were from left, John, Rosie Recoskie, Admaston-Bromley Mayor Raye-Anne Briscoe, Helen Dombroskie, South Algonquin Mayor Percy Bresahan, Renfrew County Warden Janice Visneskie, Madawaska Valley Mayor John Hildebrandt, Kathy Marion and Bill Weatherbed.

Photo courtesy of Eganville Leader



On September 17, 2006, John was honoured to attend the very special opening of the Fairfield's Assisted Living Complex for Seniors, a 24-unit, \$3.2-million complex in Eganville. Among the guest speakers at the opening were, from left, Linda Tracey, executive director at Marianhill Inc., Mayor Harold Weckworth of North Algoma Wilberforce, and Reeve Janice Visneskie of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards.

Photo courtesy of Eganville Leader



Barry's Bay was named as a finalist in CBC Television's Kraft Hockeyville. John and Madawaska Valley Reeve John Hildebrandt were two of the town's many supporters who attended Sunday's final episode of the show in Hamilton last summer. Despite the news Salmon River, Nova Scotia was declared the winner of the competition, Reeve Hildebrandt said Barry's Bay has a great deal to be proud of and he praised the efforts of everyone in the competition.

Photo courtesy of Craig Kelly, Madawaska Valley

## Energy for future generations in Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke

Energy and our electricity supply continue to be two of the leading and most discussed issues at Queen's Park and indeed, throughout Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. As we contemplate what our future electricity needs will be, and begin to prepare for increased demand, issues such as sustainability, affordability, and reliability come to mind.

In order to ensure that our supply is adequate, I believe the province needs to look to nuclear energy as our primary baseload source.

*“Strong leadership is required to make the right decisions that will ensure that our lights stay on...”*

Atomic Energy of Canada (AECL) in Chalk River, right here in our riding, is a state-of-the-art facility and a world leader in nuclear technology.

AECL employs 2,500 of the world's most dedicated and knowledgeable professionals in the industry and their nuclear program could be key to helping solve the coming energy needs in Ontario. AECL's advanced CANDU reactor has unparalleled potential and, in my view, is part of the answer to meeting our demands over the long term.

Strong leadership is required to make the right decisions to ensure that our lights stay on and that, as a province, our businesses and industry can remain strong and prosperous.

Ontario's competitive economy, as well as our own local economy here in Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, demands a reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy supply.

It is crucial that we invest in new generation and infrastructure now to ensure that future generations can rely on the abundant supply that we have come to know.



John and the Leader of the Official Opposition, John Tory, view the Adam Beck Generating Station at Niagara Falls, in September, 2006.

## Speaking out for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke

Excerpts from Hansard

### Members' Statements

#### Highway 417

John Yakabuski: "Since my election to this House in October 2003, I have continued to bring to the attention of the Minister of Transportation the importance of prioritizing the four-laning of Highway 417 from Arnprior to Renfrew and beyond.

On Wednesday, I'm going to be meeting with ministry officials to discuss highway improvement plans in my riding of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. I have repeatedly raised this issue in question period. I have been presenting a petition for weeks now. We have made the point that the economic future of Renfrew county depends on the four-laning of this highway. When I talk to mayors and reeves in the county, they say that this project is the number one priority.

I think the minister should hear the words of Reta Adlam, who says, "Please don't just talk about it or make idle promises for the future.... We in this area, the largest county in the province, demand respect and we demand action now.

We demand it now. We want an answer on Wednesday that this will, in fact, be in next year's five-year plan." (December 4, 2006)

### Legislative Debate:

#### Clean Water Act, 2006, Bill 43

John Yakabuski "...The government decided to bring in Bill 43, a vague piece of empowering legislation that gives little answers to the people who are going to be most affected by it.

People who are out here in rural Ontario need to have some answers. First of all, this government wanted to have this bill passed before we recessed for the summer. They wanted it passed without any hearings. But we're going to have hearings. We must have hearings across this province so that people who are concerned about this legislation can have their say.

The farmers in this province are absolutely terrified of what this could mean to them. They are absolutely terrified of what could happen. We met with a group of farmers last week. They were here. They are terrified of what this bill could mean. There are no answers in this bill. The bill contains only guarantees of power to conservation authorities, to municipal permit officials, all kinds of power to come onto one's land without any permits whatsoever.

We need to have some clarifications as to what this bill is going to do here in Ontario and what it's going to do to rural landowners and farmers who have been conducting activities that tomorrow, the day after the bill is enacted, some municipal permit official could come in and say, "I'm sorry, but you know what? You can't farm here anymore." (October 3, 2006)

### Oral Questions:

#### Children's Mental Health Services

John Yakabuski: "My question is for the Minister of Children and Youth Services. Last September, you received an urgent appeal from Greg Lubimiv, the executive director of the Phoenix Centre for Children and Families in my riding, co-signed by Lieutenant Colonel Dave Rundle, the base commander of CFB Petawawa, looking for immediate special funding to deal with the burgeoning increase in the need for mental health services for children in and around the Petawawa base area as a result of the deployment in Afghanistan and the tremendous stress that was placing on families in that area.

Minister, you turned them down flat, citing your reasoning that it's the responsibility of the federal government to provide those services to families of the military. Subsequent communications from Greg Lubimiv indicated that you were wrong. The Ombudsman is now involved in this. You are wrong.

Why do you continue to victimize children in Renfrew County and around Base Petawawa by denying this very, very important funding?" (March 21, 2007)

### Petitions to the House:

#### Long-Term Care

John Yakabuski "I would like to thank Carrol Haywood from Groves Park Lodge in Renfrew for presenting this petition to me.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas long-term-care funding levels are too low to enable homes to provide the care and services our aging seniors and parents who are residents of long-term-care homes need, with the respect and dignity that they deserve; and

"Whereas, even with recent funding increases and a dedicated staff who do more than their best, there is still not enough time available to provide the care residents need. For example, 10 minutes, and sometimes less, is simply not enough time to assist a resident to get up, dressed, to the bathroom and then to the dining room for breakfast; and

"Whereas those unacceptable care and service levels are now at risk of declining;

"We, the undersigned, who are members of family councils, residents' councils and/or supporters of long-term care in Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase operating funding to long-term-care homes by \$306.6 million, which will allow the hiring of more staff to provide an additional 20 minutes of care per resident per day over the next two years (2006 and 2007)."

I support this petition. I sign my name to it and send it down to the table through Cameron." (April 19, 2006)

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## Make your opinion count!

# SURVEY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you think that the Government of Ontario should decentralize some of their public service offices from Toronto to rural towns throughout the province in order to spur economic development in some smaller centres?

yes     no     not sure

2. Do you think that the Government of Ontario should put a 5% per year cap on any increase in Municipal Property Tax Assessments?

yes     no     not sure

3. Do you feel that there are sufficient funds being directed into long-term care facilities to accommodate seniors in our area?

yes     no     not sure

4. The Government of Ontario has provided \$7 million in assistance to offset the cost of complying with the new *Clean Water Act*, which means that some municipalities, businesses and individuals will have to pay a portion of the costs. Do you think that the Government of Ontario should bear the full financial burden of their new regulations?

yes     no     not sure

5. Do you feel that enhanced cell phone service would be of benefit to you, your family, and the residents of Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke?

yes     no     not sure

## Logging in Algonquin Park

The Ministry of Natural Resources has released a report and recommendations from the Ontario Parks Board, aimed at reducing the effects of logging in Algonquin Provincial Park, while admitting that only 1.5 per cent of Algonquin's forest is harvested annually.

The forestry industry is one of the most important industries in Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and thousands of our people directly and indirectly make a living through the harvest of timber in Algonquin Park.

The harvest of resources in Ontario's third largest park predates the establishment of the park itself. It has sustained generations of families in our riding. Some 35 years ago, my father, MPP Paul Yakabuski, was front and centre in the fight to preserve logging in Algonquin Park, which resulted in the Algonquin Provincial Park Management Plan and the establishment of the Algonquin Forestry Authority.

I recently wrote to the Minister of Natural Resources advising him that the management of the park's resources has never been better, asking why we would want to fix something that simply isn't broken. I view this attempt to change what is currently working very well as a thin edge of a very wide wedge which opponents of our way of life in rural Ontario will continue to drive until logging no longer exists. With it would go jobs and consequent economic prosperity. I believe our rural way of life is being unfairly jeopardized in favour of the urban vote and I have joined with our Renfrew County and municipal representatives to fight any movement to eliminate logging in the park.

## Is seamless cell phone service just a rural myth?

The issue of cell phone coverage continues to be a challenge in some parts of my riding and I am working with groups such as the Golden Lake Property Owners to constantly bring the issue to the attention of the service providers. We have coverage along the Highway 60 corridor through Algonquin Park to Wilno, but much of the well-travelled route east of Wilno is still unserved.

I commend all groups throughout the riding for their efforts with this issue and will continue to offer my assistance to help them achieve their goal of seamless cell phone coverage.

In the 21st Century, with the technology that is available today, cell phone service is not only a matter of convenience, but a matter of public safety. It is fact that cell phones now play a major role in bringing emergency assistance to highway accidents throughout the province and I believe that it is unacceptable that rural Ontario continues to lack the same access as urban centres.



## Our community office is here to help!

Assistance and information for any provincial issue are available to you at our Constituency Office. We are located at 84 Isabella St., Pembroke. Call 613-735-6627, or toll-free 1-800-267-2515. You can also e-mail us at: [john.yakabuskico@pc.ola.org](mailto:john.yakabuskico@pc.ola.org)

Some of the information and services available include:

- Anniversary, special occasion and birthday scrolls
- Birth certificates
- Trillium Drug Plan
- Health Card renewal
- Ontario Disability Support Program
- Family Responsibility Office
- Property tax assessment issues
- Information on various government initiatives and programs
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

*...and more!*



*Constituency Assistants, Susan Fynn, Laura Lapinski and Patricia Stewart, at our Pembroke Constituency Office, are ready to assist you.*



*Charlie Lemenchick is presented with celebratory scrolls from the Premier and John Yakabuski on the occasion of his 85th birthday.*

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John Yakabuski, MPP  
Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke



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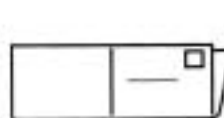


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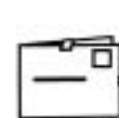
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