



## *Message from Queen's Park*



**Monthly Column by MPP John Yakabuski**

**July, 2008**

The Legislature has recessed for the summer but you'd have to ask yourself what has the McGuinty liberal government accomplished in this latest session of parliament. While the Ontario economy is taking a nose dive, McGuinty puts his head in the sand and blames others. Instead of facing the challenges head on, he tries to divert the attention of the people by proposing to ban this or that, hoping that the media will see his government as proactive. I believe that his approach is wrong. While we all know that government alone can't turn an economy on or off, people do expect them to show leadership in the face of difficult circumstances. What we have seen from this government is drift.

Our party proposed a number of things that we felt would help stimulate the economy, particularly during the summer tourist season. The McGuinty gang dismissed them out of hand choosing to do nothing instead. Let's hope this approach changes.

When the Legislature is in recess it gives me more time to join some of my constituents at their local events. I see these as great opportunities to experience what is going on in communities and the lives of those who live there. I believe that in order to do the job of representing your people in the Legislature, you have to be connected to them. It's also the most enjoyable part of being your M.P.P. Canada Day was one of those opportunities. It started by joining folks in Horton for their pancake breakfast. The people were lined up out the door, ready to start the day with some great entertainment and delicious food. The place was decked out in red and white in true Canada Day fashion. From Horton it was off to Pembroke where Branch 72 of the Royal Canadian Legion held a parade and wreath laying ceremony at Pembroke's beautiful waterfront. This reminded those in attendance, that what we enjoy as Canadians is a result of the supreme sacrifice of many.

At this point, I was joined by my wife Vicky and our 7 month old granddaughter May, as we headed to Admaston Bromley for their annual event. The highlight of the day was the honoring of Mackie Pettigrew and Catherine Gallagher as Citizen and Senior Citizen of the year respectively.

From Admaston Bromley it was off to Foresters Falls for the best small town Canada Day Parade around. Floats ranged from one being pulled by a lawn tractor for the Community Health Centre to Ray McLaughlin's Majestic Clydesdales. Members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 550 Cobden marched the colors to lead the parade. This is a long parade

route and it was a hot day. It was moving to see two WWII veterans – Harold Johnston and Ed Stairs as part of the Color Party.

After stopping at the Cobden Legion to enjoy some fellowship and a delicious steak it was away to Killaloe to end the day. I was honored to be asked to lead the singing of O'Canada prior to the fireworks display. It gave me goose bumps to look out at the massive crowd stand in unison and sing so proudly to honour Canada and give thanks for the privilege of living in one of the best parts of the greatest country in the world. Congratulations and thank you to all the organizers who made each stop we made, so special. Looking forward to next year.

I recently had the occasion to visit Bonnechere Baptist Camp for the first time and I must say I was impressed. Board Chair, Brent Hartwig gave me a tour of this spectacular property on Round Lake. He explained the program of activities they offer during a typical week. We then joined over 100 campers for a scrumptious dinner prepared in their own well equipped kitchen. One thing that was very apparent during my visit was that the kids there were having a great time. This and other local camps have a very short operating season but provide a tremendous benefit to our area. This is largely because they rely on volunteers to provide much of the labor and leadership involved in their operation. As government, we need to use common sense when we pass laws so we don't end up legislating them out of existence. That would be a huge loss for all of us.

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