

Kid councillor becomes kid reeve

Queen's student moves up as reeve of Amherst Island

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AMHERST ISLAND

Amherst Island voters decided to inject some young blood into local politics on Tuesday. Very young.

But it wasn't something they hadn't done before.

They elected Steven Willard reeve of the 400-resident township at the tender age of 21 — the same Steven Willard they had elected as a township councillor at the age of 18.

Reeve-elect Willard seems sure to set some kind of record. He is almost certainly the youngest person ever to be elected head of a municipal council in Ontario. Probably in all of Canada.

The Whig-Standard has confirmed that the self-assured young man has beaten out the reigning champion. Retiring mayor Stephen Clark of Brockville held the youngest-in-Canada distinction since election day, Nov. 8, 1982. Born on Nov. 7, 1960, Mr. Clark was 22 years and one day old when elected.

Mr. Willard was born on March 2, 1970. He was therefore 21 years, eight months and 10 days old when he won the election for reeve on Tuesday.

He also seems in line for a second exclusive. He was just 18 years, eight months and 12 days old when elected a township councillor in 1988.

It is not known whether this latter accomplishment ranks as an all-time first.

Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs senior adviser Bob Kearns said the Municipal Act requires office-holders to have reached their 18th birthday by election day.

It follows that the only persons eligible to top Mr. Willard in this category would be those who turned 18 between his birthday, March 2, and any given election day.

There is another extraordinary twist to the Tuesday election.

The winner, who is a third-year



MICHAEL LEA/The Whig-Standard
Twenty-one-year-old Steven Willard is reeve of Amherst Island