



Kay Lawson

# Local Grit delegates backed Peterson

by Gord Murray  
Acton and area's two delegates to the weekend Ontario Liberal leadership convention in Toronto are confident new leader David Peterson will compare favorably with the New Democrats recently selected leader Bob Rae and Premier William Davis, or whoever carries the Tory banner in the next provincial election.

A 36 year Liberal veteran, Kay Lawson, RR4 Acton, and her daughter, M.Z. Bennett teacher Carol Lawson, backed Peterson on both of the ballots it took him to win the job Dr. Stuart Smith surrendered.

Kay and Carol, like many of the other Halton-Burlington delegates to the convention in Toronto, went as undecided voters and wound up backing the eventual winner.

After hearing the five candidates a couple of months ago in Milton, Mrs. Lawson said she and her daughter were impressed with the two MPPs from Kitchener, Jim Breithaupt and John Sweeney, but were by no means committed to voting for them. The pair simply "impressed" them.

They went to the convention wanting to hear the candidates and meet them before deciding who to support.

They both agreed all five were good candidates, but after Saturday's speeches they were leaning heavily to Peterson and Sunday morning's question and answer session clinched their vote for the new leader. Mrs. Lawson noted Peterson was able to handle questions well and she liked his views and policies, especially on health care. "We felt he could do a good job and would try extremely hard. We both liked his manner too."

Runner-up Sheila Copps also captured their attention. Mrs. Lawson described Copps as being "very friendly and dynamic" and they might have supported the freshman Hamilton MPP this time, but felt Copps needs more experience. Mrs. Lawson observed Copps drew a lot of support, especially from younger party members.

Third place candidate Richard Thomas "gave a great speech" but Mrs. Lawson was distressed with his threats to leave the party unless Peterson adopts his views. She also left the convention believing the two Kitchener MPPs are "fine men" and great to have in the Grit caucus, but they just didn't come across as good potential leaders at the convention.

Mrs. Lawson allowed the fact that local MPP Julian Reed backed Peterson helped sway her vote because he "knows them better than we do."

After the speeches all of Halton-Burlington's 15 delegates got together to discuss the candidates and while a couple had decided to vote for Copps the rest indicated they were inclined to support Peterson. Nobody suggested they'd be voting for one of the other three hopefuls. She noted riding association president Al Wilson, a former Acton school teacher, was impressed with the local delegation and their work at the convention.

Following on the successful NDP convention many pundits were predicting the Liberal affair would be pretty dull. But to Mrs. Lawson and the rest of the over 2,000 delegates it was "anything but dull. It was very exciting."

She feels the party left Toronto "all united", with virtually everyone behind the new leader. The party is also stronger following the convention.

Peterson has strong organizing abilities, a real plus in Mrs. Lawson's book, since one reason the Liberals have been out of power for so long in Ontario has been poor organization. She expects Peterson will have the other leadership candidates as well as critics like Reed out all over the province with him the next couple of years and when people hear the Grit team support for the party will increase. There's no question in her mind Peterson is

"capable" of being the premier of Ontario. Her parents were Conservatives, though her mother was a Liberal before she married. However, Mrs. Lawson converted to the Liberals after she married well known and staunch Esquimes Liberal Jack Lawson. Naturally Carol has picked up her parents' political leanings. Her husband's father was also a Liberal.

Active with her husband in the party at the both the provincial and federal levels, Mrs. Lawson is this year the riding association's director of special events. She has also held other executive positions. This was the first time she was a leadership convention delegate, at the provincial leadership convention won by Smith over Peterson, Carol was an alternate who didn't get to vote. Mrs. Lawson has attended numerous policy conventions and attended other leadership gatherings where Jack has voted.

She doesn't know who she would have supported at the last provincial leadership convention, she didn't get to hear Smith or Peterson very much then.

Besides weak organization, Mrs. Lawson doesn't think party members have worked hard enough in previous elections and that may be why the Liberals

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# The Acton Free Press



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## Davies Truck closes

Davies Truck Equipment Ltd. is closing this Friday after a little over three years of operation here. Managing director Angus Macpherson said the closing was "due to the steadily declining market conditions in our industry."

From a peak of 35 employees about two years ago the firm's work force had shrunk to only four or five in the past couple of months and the last two workers will be laid off Friday. Workers have been gradually laid off for many months now.

Located at 21 Commerce Cres., Davies Truck Equipment moved to town in the fall of 1978. Truck

trailers were being manufactured in Acton. Macpherson would make no comment if the firm hopes to sell or lease its Acton plant.

Davies had operated in Rexdale for 20 years before moving to Acton and a part division continued at that facility. Now truck equipment installations will be carried out also in Rexdale but the firm is getting out of manufacturing.

The firm moved here because of Acton's proximity to main highways and the central location for south-western Ontario.

## Acton has 454 people on unemployment insurance

There are 454 Acton and area residents filing "active claims" for unemployment insurance benefits. Lillian Houghston, branch supervisor for the Canada Employment Centre in Georgetown which takes care of all of Halton Hills, said in an interview the Acton Postal Code, which covers all of town as well as the Acton rural routes, was fed through the computers and it was determined there were 454 people with an Acton address sending in computer cards for claims as of February 14.

She said while there aren't Acton only figures for previous months, she "imagines" and "assumes" the number of people seeking unemployment insurance benefits is up in the last couple of months in this area.

The number of active unemployment insurance

claims for all of Halton Hills soared from 700 at the end of November to 1,177 at the end of January. Of those 1,177 claimants, 1,039 are recorded as people who have been laid off and are looking for work.

She also reported there are 1,094 people currently registered for work at the Canada Employment Centre.

The Branch supervisor says the number of job postings was way down in December, but has picked up a little in January and February, though the number is still far below the peak of last September. The local job situation is "slowly improving" she says. In addition, she noted, while some people who are out of work are finding jobs the levels of local unemployment remain fairly constant since lay-offs continue to mount.

## Ball diamond canned for end of Poplar Avenue

Unless Halton Hills Council has a drastic change of heart at its meeting next week, there will not be a baseball diamond constructed on Beardmore land at the end of Poplar Ave.

General Committee last night (Tuesday) agreed with a recommendation from Recreation Director Tom Shepard that the diamond not be built as originally planned. However, most councillors present pointed out they did not agree with the neighbors' reasons for objecting to the ball diamond, but felt there was not enough road allowance to deal with the increased traffic.

At last night's meeting, both neighbors and ball players were on hand to give their views on the diamond. This was the second such chance for this, as a meeting was held at the Library on February 11 to discuss the matter.

In December 1981, Shepard pointed out in a report to committee, he recommended to council a ball park be constructed on land offered by Beardmore. Pat Pope, 179 Poplar Avenue, last night told com-

mittee members there is only 18 feet between the end of her driveway and the driveway across the road. With the proposed diamond being at the end of a dead end street, Poplar Ave. would be the only access to the park. The traffic would mainly be people who live outside the immediate area.

Mrs. Pope said she was also concerned with the parking problems. She explained that a few years ago there was a problem with midnight parking and partying on the lands. Beardmore erected a barrier at the end of the road to discourage this behaviour. With the park she said, the problem will return.

Mrs. Pope suggested there was not enough interest from those in favor of the park, as not many showed up at the last meeting (February 11).

Councillor Russ Miller wondered if having a park in the area might not be advantageous to the neighbourhood children. Mrs. Pope pointed out there is Sir Donald Mann park within two blocks, with swings, a ball diamond and anything else that could be

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Christine Laughlin, Julie and Roseleen Stull and Lisa Murray worked hard on their snowman at the Legion Winter Carnival on Sunday.

## Group home under attack, Indians, Metis dragged off

by Helen Murray  
A 16-year-old youth is living in stairwells of Toronto buildings, knowing he will be arrested if he returns to the only place he calls home.

His friend, also 16, is afraid to go home, fearing she will be the next person to be dragged away kicking and screaming at a moment's notice, never to see her friends again.

For Brad General and Sheila Bell, what was coming close to being a normal life, for the first time in their lives, has been shattered like fine glass by government agencies designed to look after their welfare.

Both have spent the past year-and-a-half being taken care of by David and Grace Stanley, either in their Milton home, or in a special group home on Highway 25 just south of Acton, D. and G. Care Ltd. The home was opened in June, 1980, specializing in hard to manage and sometimes violent youths with special needs, under the auspices of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Until recently, the operation ran smoothly, with few people even knowing of the business's existence. They received their licence in November and were able to accept more troubled teens.

Youths attended school, most at E.C. Drury School in Milton, and went to church regularly. Most have an Indian background and were taught to

be proud of their heritage.

Now, suddenly, and without provocation, Stanley finds himself in the midst of Ministry and Ombudsman office investigations and is in danger of losing his licence to operate his youth home. Allegations of child abuse have been hurled at him, and he in turn is throwing back accusations of discrimination against Indians.

Two months ago, he and his wife had three foster

children in their Milton home and five at the group home just south of 25 Sideroad.

Now they have just two children at home, and two at the Acton home, the latest being taken away yesterday (Tuesday).

Stanley says his trouble started December 31 when some of his staff quit saying they didn't agree with certain policies and procedures of the home, (Continued on page 2)



Optimist Club held their annual Oratorical Contest Friday night. The topic was You, and I and Tomorrow. Front row, second place winner Susan Lindsay, first place Maria Kril, and first place boys Scott Nowlan. Back row, Cynthia Donstan, first place essay contest, Walter Barlow, of the Optimist. Victoria Mespratt, fourth place, Marnel Maddeaux, runner up, Tracy Flindall, runner up, and Dawn Hilton, third place.

**inside**  
The sentence appeal case of a Burlington man who killed a former Actonian in a car accident has been postponed. Turn to page 2.  
Council is appealing approval of an arcade on the east side of town to the OMB. Details on page 3.  
A police chase ended in Nassagaweya. More on page 3.



Staff of D and G Care Ltd. kid around with two of the youngsters living in the rural Acton farmhouse on Monday. By Tuesday, the boy in the chair was taken out of the group home, another victim of unproven allegations of child abuse. Darlene Negeen, Brent Racette and Rusty Browne are employed at the home.