

THE VOTER'S VOICE

Wellington—Halton Hills

31,659 Ted Arnott - PC
14,087 Diane Ballantyne - NDP
7,492 Jon Hurst - LIB

5,066 Dave Rodgers - GRN
320 Jadon Pfeiffer - LTN
58,624 total votes

Conservative MPP Ted Arnott wins eighth straight term handily in 42nd election



Ted and Lisa Arnott

By: Vivien Fleisher

In a surprise to no one, Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott won his eighth straight term by a big margin in last Thursday's provincial election. In fact, when Halton Hills Councillor Jon Hurst threw his hat in as the local Liberal candidate in May, he addressed that very issue, asking rhetorically, "why would I go up against Ted?" It would certainly indicate a lot of passion, which Hurst had in spades, but not enough it would seem in a province where the tide had turned and with it the possibility of unseating Conservatives in particular.

At the Fergus Curling Club, Arnott was beaming, giving a charming and humorous acceptance speech and his account of a campaign laced with a degree of uncertainty. "I actually wrote two speeches for tonight: one if I was successful, and one if I lost. And (wife) Lisa thought the concession speech was actually better." He quipped that the curling club was a great place if he lost because the party faithful could go curling and went on to express "what a month it's been. Our favorite newspaper, The Toronto Star, this morning said this election has been the nastiest and strangest election ever." Arnott said that on some days, "strange" was an understatement: he met a man who was voting for him because he was "the

best of a very bad lot" in a not-so-ringing endorsement. An hour later, another constituent said Arnott would receive her vote because "better the devil you know", which he joked was the first time he'd been compared to Satan. Though he felt the bar had been lowered this election, he expressed the hope they could do better—although in Wellington-Halton Hills, he'd not seen the low level of behavior elsewhere alluded to by the Star, thanking his supporters for their civility, right down to the kids at James McQueen school where his wife teaches, who saw Ted's "signs" everywhere and declared their support.

Arnott spoke eloquently about his campaign opponents, saying they are no longer opponents but friends, having known them all going in. "Now I know them—Lib. Jon Hurst, NDP Diane Ballantyne and Green Dave Rodgers—better and their sincere interest in our community." And he hopes they'll keep in touch, invoking the desire to work together, quoting Martin Luther King's question "what are you doing for others?" Federal MP Michael Chong made his appearance, saying in this province "we elect a legislature, not a leader." He congratulated Ted on running a respectful campaign.

A few days later, when asked if he was eyeing a cabinet post, he replied

that his main focus is his riding, preferring to look forward, not backward. Back in 2003, Ernie Eves approached him about a post, but with three kids under 10 at the time, Arnott declined. Even today he is wistful about his desire to spend more time with his family and is not inclined to speculate on what Premier-elect Ford has in mind. A caucus meeting this week will give some idea, but in the meantime, Arnott went to work straight away, drafting a letter to Ford outlining his four main issues for his riding: The Town of Erin's need for a wastewater treatment plant; the need for bridge infrastructure in Centre Wellington; the need for funding for the 918 kms of roads in the riding; and, in Halton Hills—the one part of his riding in the GTA—a funding partner for a long-term transportation strategy, citing his private members resolution in fall 2017 where he sought specifically support for a truck bypass in Acton, and that Minister of Transportation Steven Del Duca had promised funding, which he hopes the future transport minister will likewise do. He adds that he values the excellent relationship he has with Mayor Bonnette, built on trust.

In parting, Arnott says every issue has a lifecycle, and most are resolved within a year or two. In his case, he hopes to put his experience to work for him now that he's out of the opposition benches and apply them toward a solution.

Jon Hurst reflects on local results

By: Alex Hilson

The Wellington-Halton Hills Liberals under the leadership of Jon Hurst had a tough night during the Ontario Provincial election last Thursday. Hurst with his committee and supporters held an Election Night event at the Red Harp in Acton, Hurst's home community.

During the evening, Hurst's camp not only saw Hurst, as Liberal representative, become the first Provincial Liberal candidate in Wellington-Halton Hills to come third in a race instead of second since the electoral district was created in 2004, he also saw his party decimated provincially with Liberal seats

dropping from a pre-election total of 55 to just seven.

Provincial Conservative Ted Arnott once again won the seat that he's held since the electoral district was formed. NDP Candidate Diane Ballantyne came second.

Despite all the negatives, Hurst and his camp kept positive, cutting a cake and eating hors d'oeuvres. "I'm disappointed but I'm not surprised" said Hurst who is currently a Ward 1 Councillor for the Town of Halton Hills.

"My eyes were wide open going in. I knew that Ted was a tough nut to crack and I'm happy for him. It was an interesting campaign. Everybody was respectful of each other,

and we got along really well. We went from debate to debate. We had a lot of people who volunteered for our campaign, and I thank them for their help. It takes a lot of people to run a campaign and of course I'm appreciative of all those people who worked for me and had confidence in what I thought I could do. But I think people wanted change, and they're going to get it."

Hurst, of course, wasn't the only Liberal who fared badly in the election. All provincial electoral districts in Halton Region are now held by Conservatives, many of which went Liberal during the 2014 election.



Jon Hurst

we create
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