

PC hopeful Farid Wassef (left) and development critic Monte McNaughton at closed Southwire plant in Stouffville Tuesday.



STAFF PHOTO/JIM MASON

Tories job plan 'very ambitious'

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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Advanced manufacturing is where 300,000 jobs can be created within Ontario, according to Monte McNaughton, MPP for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex.

The southwestern Ontario politician made the declaration Tuesday afternoon while standing on the sidewalk in front of the now-closed Southwire Canada plant on Main Street.

"Our plan strives to make Ontario the leading advanced manufacturing location, not just in Canada, but in the world," the Tories economic development critic stated, flanked by Oak Ridges-Markham PC candidate Farid Wassef.

The Ontario PCs just released their 13th white paper in 14 months. This one tackles how advanced manufacturing can revitalize the manufacturing industry within Ontario.

Advanced manufacturing is computer-controlled or micro electronics-based use of design, manufacturing or handling of a product, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development website.

Industries utilizing advanced manufacturing include pharmaceutical, automotive and robotics.

In 2010, the Ontario government gave Teva, a generic pharmaceutical manufacturer on Main Street, a \$6.5-million grant to retain the plant's 182 skilled workers and hire 20 new employees.

Teva also injected \$56 million of its own money for an 8,000-square-foot expansion of its Stouffville plant.

The addition enabled the plant to produce about one billion tablets a year, which was a 20-per-cent increase over its previous capabilities.

Mr. McNaughton said the 300,000 jobs created by advanced manufacturing will offset the exact same number of government workers hired over the past 10 years.

"That sounds like a very ambitious target," Helena Jaczek, MPP for Oak Ridges-Markham told The Sun-Tribune yesterday.

Some of those government employees she assumed Mr. McNaughton referred to were nurses and personal support workers.

Just exactly how do the Conservatives plan on increasing the advanced manufacturing industry?

Reducing the electricity rate charged to manufacturers, thus making them more competitive, is one of the six initiatives the PCs claim could add 300,000 jobs to the sector and make manufacturing more competitive against other provinces and border states.

Currently, Ontario's average industrial electricity rate is \$85 per megawatt hour versus the \$40 per megawatt hour rate being paid by industries in Manitoba, Quebec and Michigan, according to the PC white paper.

Ontario has the highest electricity rates in North America, according to the Conservative MPP.

The Tory plan also includes making investments in plants and equipment immediately fully tax deductible versus having the deductions spread out over 10 years, as is the case right now.

Go to yorkregion.com for the whole story.

Stouffville lad shares big day with new prince

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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"Our Little Prince".

That is what Stouffville's Cheryl and Mike Martin have nicknamed their little boy who shares his birthday with the future King of England.

Joshua Daniel Martin was born at 6:50 a.m. Monday.

Mrs. Martin, 31, isn't an avid royal watcher, but she did admit to watching part of Kate and William's wedding on TV. She was, however, curious how their baby bumps compared.

"I don't think she was nearly as big as I was," Mrs. Martin told The Sun-Tribune Tuesday morning from her room at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Joshua was actually scheduled to arrive via C-section July 24 but "he decided to come early", Mrs. Martin said.

She started to feel contractions around 3 a.m. Monday.

"I tried to convince myself they were false labour pains," she said.

They weren't.

The couple tracked the contractions for about an hour, then drove to Markham Stouffville Hospital. Enroute, her water broke.

Joshua still arrived via C-section because that is how his older sister Claire Elizabeth Martin came into the world two years ago and because "he was quite large (nine pounds, five ounces), so we weren't sure he would make it through".

Mrs. Martin's only advice to new mom Kate is: "sleep when the baby sleeps".

RESIDENTS ATTENDED ROYAL WEDDING

Norma Card, who was in England for the royal couple's wedding two years ago, offered up this piece of sage advice to Kate: "make good use of (your) mother's tips".

"Hopefully, they will be able to lead somewhat of a quiet life," Mrs. Card said.

Mrs. Card, along with Jean Barclay, decided rather last-minute to head to London for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's wedding in April 2011.

They stayed in a friend's flat in Mayfair, just 10 minutes away from the palace. The pair joked about going back for the birth of the couple's first child, but opted to stay in Stouffville.

The women arrived five days before the nuptials and saw the crowds grow daily.

The women ventured out at 7:15 a.m. on the day of the wedding. The streets were already packed. They then headed to St. James Palace, where they saw princes Harry and Charles leave for the church about an hour prior to the ceremony.

Mrs. Card and Mrs. Barclay then headed back to their flat and watched William and Kate say "I do" on television, like the rest of the world, while eating their English brunch.

Their flat's hostess called Mrs. Card Monday with this message: "Congratulations. Our baby is born," Mrs. Card laughed.

Even Oak Ridges-Markham MP Paul Calandra chimed in with a congratulatory note.

"There is nothing as special in a young couple's life together as the birth of a first child..." the father of two girls said in a media release.

"This is an historic day for our great country. Canada now has three living heirs to our throne and the birth of the young Prince of Cambridge, who will one day be King of Canada, continues to strengthen our rich and important cultural traditions," the Stouffville resident said in the release.

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