

• OUR VIEW •

Divisive politics unCanadian

What are Canadian values? How do we define them? What's in our DNA that indisputably says, 'this is us'?

If one were to pose those questions to 10 different people, we would quite possibly get 10 different answers.

Metroland Media did recently ask people across the county to express what they believe our values are. Answers included: "We try not to offend people." "The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms." "Taking care of veterans." "Owning a house and having a job." "Heritage and democracy." "Respect for our other Canadians, our neighbours."

Leitch, who cheered Donald Trump's win, has actually seen her support grow of late.

If Canada's genetic complexity is such that the values we cherish are so diverse, then what are we to make of MP Kellie Leitch's vow to screen potential immigrants for conformity to those principles?

Leitch, a candidate in the race to replace Stephen Harper as federal Conservative leader, says if she's in charge "every visitor, immigrant and refugee will be screened for Canadian values."

Presumably, these values would be defined by Leitch. Immigrants would have to conform or try somewhere else.

It's a proposal destined to divide rather than unite people, but that is likely Leitch's intent. We just witnessed an anti-immigrant candidate capture the United States presidency in perhaps the ugliest, most divisive campaign we've ever seen.

Leitch, who cheered Donald Trump's win, has actually seen her support grow of late, a development that may embolden her as she works to demonize another group - Canada's so-called political and media 'elites'.

If history and Trump's example teach us anything, it's that politicians can manipulate angry, alienated, fearful people.

It's important that we recognize Leitch's approach for what it is - the same faux populist, obnoxious opportunism that inspired the Harper government to give us the barbaric practices tipline, the attacks on the niqab, and references to old-stock Canadians. (Had Harper instituted a values test, it would likely have screened for conservative, rather than Canadian values).

Divisive politics couldn't extend Harper's reign and we contend that Leitch will also be disappointed as she seeks to divide us for her own ends.

The Republican party could not stop Trump, but federal Tories can certainly send a message that they will not head down the same path as they select a new leader.



• LETTERS •

Thanks to all who came to Studio Tour

The artists of the 16th annual Whitchurch-Stouffville Studio Tour wish to thank all of the visitors who came out to our studios on Oct. 15 and 16. It was very heartwarming to see our friends, neighbours, and new visitors showing so much appreciation for our artwork. It was indeed a great pleasure to share our stories of inspiration and the processes we use to create our pieces.

Thank you to all our sponsors who faithfully support us each year. You, our sponsors, so graciously help make this event possible. The Stouffville Sun-Tribune has done a fabulous job of coverage and promotion, which is greatly valued.

To one and all, come see

● GET CONNECTED

Have a comment on these or any other community issues? Email us at newsroom@yrmg.com

us again next year for our excitingly new work.

Lis Simpson
Whitchurch-Stouffville
Studio Tour

Recently retired editor 'a really cool guy

I attended Jim Mason's Roast the other night. I didn't have the opportunity to actively participate in roasting him. I just listened and enjoyed the feast like everyone else.

I would like to break with protocol, maybe for the first and last time, because this past August Jim referred to me as a romantic, which

caused me a lot of grief, and I want to get even.

That reference got my wife's dander up. She was livid. She confronted me in a Donald Trump tone of voice, and asked what the heck been going on between you and Jim Mason? I mumbled nothing, not realizing I had been publicly outed. I sheepishly admitted that yes, we have had a bromance relationship for about 30 years, and she surprisingly said that's okay; he seems to be a really cool guy.

Jim's fellow scribe, Jim Thomas who once considered him his nemesis, wrote glowingly of his accomplishments in such a short time.

Jim Mason, you have written passionately about your adoptive town. You are also known as the man about town, your late night, early morning telephone calls like: 'Hi man, what time does the beer or liquor store open or close?' Jim, you gave those guys, yes, they were mainly guys, the bum's rush treatment because you were either woken up from your sleep or trying to meet your newspaper deadline.

You have punched and left a gaping hole in the newspaper business with your no-holds-barred, take no prisoners approach to writing. I have never read or seen where you extricated your foot from your mouth, but maybe that's just my selective reading.

I wish you all the very best. Good luck Bro!

Gil Francis
Stouffville

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