

THE CORD

The tie that binds Wilfrid Laurier University since 1926

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Braid pulls out second victory

Conservative candidate re-elected after narrowly taking the Kitchener-Waterloo riding in the 2008 election

“I wanted not to be the person who lost by 17 votes. I think at the end of the day, the result speaks for itself.”

—Peter Braid
Conservative MP for K-W

JUSTIN FAUTEUX
NEWS DIRECTOR

BREE RODY-MANTHA
FEATURES EDITOR

It didn't have the same suspense, but the result was the same, as Conservative Party incumbent Peter Braid was re-elected Member of Parliament (MP) in the Kitchener-Waterloo riding on Monday night.

In 2008, Braid took the riding from Liberal Andrew Telegdi by a margin of just 17 votes, marking the closest race in the country. This time around, Braid and Telegdi finished first and second once again, however the margin was nearly 2,184 votes based on unofficial

numbers reported early Tuesday morning.

“I wanted not to be the person who lost by 17 votes,” Braid joked. “I think at the end of the day, the result speaks for itself.”

According to Braid, the close results of last election played a large role in his campaign team's approach this time around.

“I said to my campaign team right at the outset, we had a great campaign two and a half years ago, but this time we need to be even better than we were,” he said. “We hit the ground the running. Our primary task through the campaign was canvassing and knocking on doors and we knocked on about 10,000 doors and we just had a great team.”

Braid's volunteer co-ordinator, Chris Howell, echoed the newly re-elected MP's sentiments.

“I think it motivated us extremely well and galvanized all the campaign workers,” said Howell.

Braid credited much of his support to the canvassing he and his volunteers did during the campaign.

Howell felt that this was Braid's strong suit.

“I think it was Peter's hard work out knocking door to door,” he said. Howell also recognized the hard work of Braid's large volunteer team. “It took about seven days a week, 14 hour days just to work hard and organize volunteers [and] get the campaign strategy together.”

Despite winning by a greater

margin than in 2008, Braid's campaign faced its share of challenges, namely at the public debates. Braid, as well as fellow local Conservative incumbents Stephen Woodworth and Harold Albrecht, came under heavy fire from the crowd as well as other candidates on issues such as corporate tax cuts and the purchase of controversial F-35 fighter jets.

Braid however took that criticism, which was at times heated, in stride.

“I think at the end of the day, the result speaks for itself,” he said. “My main barometer all along was the reaction I was getting at the door. That's the key test for me and I knew we were getting a very

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'Surprise, we're voting.'

AMANDA STEINER
LOCAL AND NATIONAL EDITOR

Students across Canada got involved for this upcoming election and spoke out against the accusation that the youth vote doesn't count because young people don't vote.

Based on the decline in youth ballot numbers from last election, politicians assumed that the student vote was a wasted one, since students were considered unlikely to even go to the polls.

Students across the country however, took a stand and made a statement by introducing the vote mob phenomenon.

The idea for vote mobs originated at the University of Guelph when a group of students wanted to retaliate against the wasted youth vote accusation.

Using social media tools such as

Facebook and Twitter, these students gathered a huge crowd at Guelph to cheer and make a statement to the world that they will be voting in this upcoming election. Their banner read, “Surprise! We're voting!”

Credit is given to Rick Mercer for inspiring the idea of vote mobs during one of his rants on the Rick Mercer Report.

In his rant, he stated, “Everyone is targeted except for one group — the youth vote. There are more than 3 million young eligible voters in this country and as far as any of the political parties are concerned, you might as well all be dead It is the conventional wisdom of all political parties that young people will not vote so do the unexpected, vote.”

So, the students of Guelph started up vote mobs and suddenly the challenge was passed onto other universities and colleges across Canada to

do the same; show their spirit and make a statement that there are a part of their democracy. And vote mobs spread like wildfire.

Rick Mercer attended the most recent vote mob, held in Victoria Park, London Ontario, hosted by the University of Western Ontario and Fanshawe college.

Mercer said, “When political parties heard that students were having vote mobs, you know what they said? That sounds very disconcerting. And do you know why that is? It's because they don't know who you're voting for. I just want to say congratulations; you've scared a bunch of old politicians.”

Mercer added that vote mobs like this, “just make you feel good. A vote mob is a tremendous thing and to see something like this, it has such a

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Inside

Hard hit for KW Greens

Despite Green candidate MacLellan's loss, the party celebrates their leader's win.

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Laurier votes

In a city with such a significant student population, the importance of their engagement and the influence of their votes is explored.

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Settling for adequacy

The Cord's Opinion Editor considers the reasoning behind the support for the Conservatives.

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Role of religion declining
 Columnist Andrew Chai looks at statistics on modern worship

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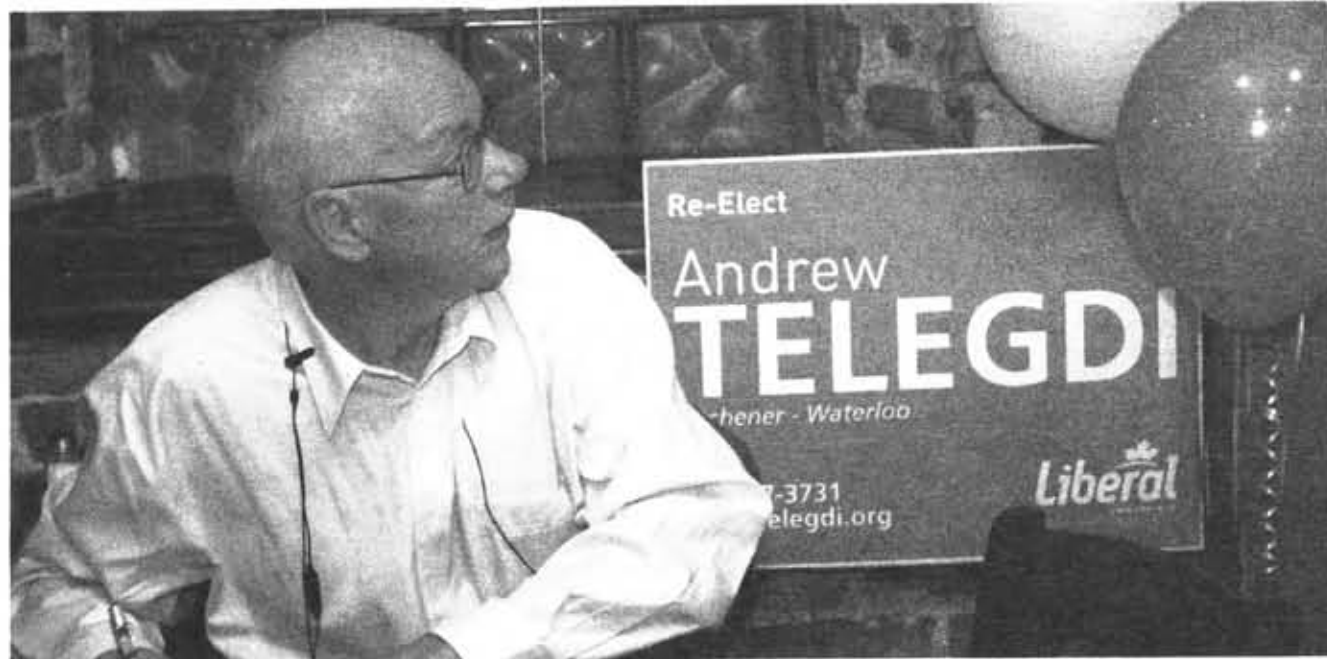


Laurier axes varsity volleyball

Students shocked by cut

thecord.ca

Editor-in-Chief Linda Givetash • lgivetash@thecord.ca



RYAN STEWART FILE PHOTO

Cord reporters were at candidates' election parties in 2008 when the incumbent lost by 17 votes.

Community beyond campus



LINDA GIVETASH
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

When the federal election was called in late March, there was no questioning The Cord's role in covering events in the weeks to follow. Despite our annual transition of editorial staff over the course of April, our website was updated regularly, featuring stories about local candidates and national concerns.

The Cord's involvement in the

broader community as a news source has grown substantially over the years, notably with the addition of the Local and National sections.

Reaching beyond the bubble of campus life is a valued aspect of The Cord's overall content, after learning from years of news reporting that Wilfrid Laurier University and the cities in this region not only affect one another but also face many of the same issues.

Following in the footsteps of previous editors and reporters who covered the 2008 election including the crucial recount and the surprising loss for then-incumbent Andrew Telegdi, this year's team has paid close attention to every moment.

The extent of election coverage

Cord reporters have produced certainly exceeds this small eight-page newspaper.

While we continue to struggle, like most media outlets, for advertising, thecord.ca has provided a new hub for our stories to be published.

Sections not featured in this issue of The Cord have continued publishing new content online, and the aftermath of the election will be generating stories today and throughout the week.

I invite all our readers from Laurier, the city of Waterloo and beyond to continue picking up the paper, reading thecord.ca and engaging themselves through comments and letters to the editor.

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Letters to the Editor

Students don't control rent costs

Re: "Rental regulations polarizes groups" March 23

I am writing to address comments made by Mr. Saad Aslam in a recent article regarding the City's proposed by-law for low rise residential properties.

Mr. Aslam states "Rent is never set by the landlord, it's set by who ever rents it."

Respectfully, I disagree with his comments.

Landlords set rents to cover costs for mortgages, lawn maintenance, snow removal, insurance, property taxes, etc. Also, there are those unexpected costs that arise. I am sure Mr. Aslam would agree that businesses operate to make a profit.

If landlords can't cover their costs, they will not continue to do business. Leaving a house empty is not an option as Mr. Aslam suggested. Mortgages still need to be paid and costs are still incurred.

As smaller landlords go out of business, renters will eventually have one option. High rise apartment buildings where rents are typically more than \$350-\$450/month.

Attending university is a financial strain for many students. Living expenses make up a large portion of overall expenses. Let's face it, prices for hydro, gas, and food are all going up. Eliminating the number of affordable housing options is unfair and I am sure students would agree.

In closing, I leave you with this analogy for consideration. Would Mr. Aslam suggest first year students refuse to pay \$5000 for their residence room for the 8-month term. They should just offer to pay say.....\$3000? Hmmm, how well would that go over????

-Candace Duke, Waterloo Citizen

Conceptions of voting need to change

Our society should change its slogans and attitude from "Get your voice heard by voting!" to "Help us all; cast a well-informed and thoughtful vote for the common good."

We should conceptualize voting as a decision whereby a person selects the candidate who would govern best for the common good. In other words, voting should emphasize quality of votes over quantity of votes.

This new conception of voting means that voting is not an easy duty to carry out. It involves knowing the candidate's effect on all areas of society, domestic and international. It also involves being self-reflective about why you are voting a certain way, insuring you are voting for the common good not out of hatred, greed or a mistaken sense of what is right. It means meeting candidates, asking questions, reading the news and a lot of contemplation on what is the common good. This new conception of voting will not make voting less work but will get better votes.

Adopting this conception of voting will change some important things. Not voting should become far more acceptable. If voting is a time-consuming activity of selecting with the common good in mind then the worse thing someone could do is to cast an ill-thought out vote that does not consider the common good. Therefore, people that do not wish or cannot spend the time needed to make a good vote should not vote. All people voting for a horrible candidate is not better than a few people voting for a good candidate.

If people truly change how they think of voting then they will naturally change how they treat their own vote, how they treat other voters and how they treat our current system. In short, change starts with the mind and spreads to our actions and social systems. If we change our perception of voting to a difficult and time consuming task of selecting a candidate with the common good in mind, then better governments will follow.

-Evan Henry

Letter policy

Letters must not exceed 250 words. Include your full name and telephone number. Letters must be received by 12:00 p.m. noon Monday via e-mail to letters@thecord.ca. The Cord reserves the right to edit for length and clarity or to reject any letter.

must see, very clean, free laundry, gas heated, cheap utilities, 2 full bathrooms, 2 lg. refrigerators, hardwood floors & ceramic tile throughout, finished basement, large private deck, free parking (3) cars, on bus route, 5 min walk to WLU. Email steveahrens@rogers.com or Call (416) 575-2104



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75 University Ave W
 Waterloo ON N2L 3C5
 519-884-0710 x3564

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Advertising
 All advertising inquiries should be directed to Angela Taylor at 519-884-0710 x3560 angela.taylor@wluasp.com

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Editorial Board

- Editor-in-Chief.....Linda Givetash lgivetash@thecord.ca
- News Director.....Justin Fauteux jfauteux@thecord.ca
- Visuals Director.....Wade Thompson wthompson@thecord.ca
- Campus News Editor.....Justin Smiries jsmiries@thecord.ca
- Local and National Editor.....Amanda Steiner asteiner@thecord.ca
- In Depth Editor.....Mike Lakusiak mlakusiak@thecord.ca
- Features Editor.....Bree Mantha bmantha@thecord.ca
- Arts Editor.....Liz Smith lsmith@thecord.ca
- Opinion Editor.....Joseph McNinch-Pazzano jmcninchpazzano@thecord.ca
- Sports Editor.....Kevin Campbell kcampbell@thecord.ca
- Graphics Editor.....Taylor Gayrowsky tgayrowsky@thecord.ca
- Photography Manager.....Nick Lachance nlachance@thecord.ca
- Photography Manager.....Rosalee Eid reid@thecord.ca
- Web Editor.....VACANT editor@thecord.ca

Senior staff

- Lead Reporter.....Marcie Foster
- Lead Reporter.....Lindsay Purchase
- Life Managing Editor.....Katie Flood
- Videographer.....Ian Spence
- Lead Photographer.....Kate Turner
- Copy Editing Manager.....Kelly Burwash

Contributors

Interested in volunteering for The Cord? Go to www.wluasp.com for applications.

Cover Photographs by Photography Managers Rosalee Eid and Nick Lachance, Lead Photographer Kate Turner and Videographer Ian Spence (from left to right)

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Colophon

The Cord is the official student newspaper of the Wilfrid Laurier University community.

Started in 1926 as the College Cord, The Cord is an editorially independent newspaper published by Wilfrid Laurier University Student Publications, Waterloo, a corporation without share capital. WLUSP is governed by its board of directors.



Opinions expressed within The Cord are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board, The Cord, WLUSP, WLU or CanWeb Printing Inc.

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The Cord has been a proud member of the Canadian University Press (CUP) since 2004.



Campus Plus is The Cord's national advertising agency.

Preamble to The Cord constitution

The Cord will keep faith with its readers by presenting news and expressions of opinions comprehensively, accurately and fairly. The Cord believes in a balanced and impartial presentation of all relevant facts in a news report, and of all substantial opinions in a matter of controversy.

The staff of The Cord shall uphold all commonly held ethical conventions of journalism. When an error of omission or of commission has occurred, that error shall be acknowledged promptly. When statements are made that are critical of an individual, or an organization, we shall give those affected the opportunity to reply at the earliest time possible. Ethical journalism requires impartiality, and consequently conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest will be avoided by all staff.

The only limits of any newspaper are those of the world around it, and so The Cord will attempt to cover its world with a special focus on Wilfrid Laurier University, and the community of Kitchener-Waterloo, and with a special ear to the concerns of the students of Wilfrid Laurier University. Ultimately, The Cord will be bound by neither philosophy nor geography in its mandate.

The Cord has an obligation to foster freedom of the press and freedom of speech. This obligation is best fulfilled when debate and dissent are encouraged, both in the internal workings of the paper, and through The Cord's contact with the student body.

The Cord will always attempt to do what is right, with fear of neither repercussions, nor retaliation. The purpose of the student press is to act as an agent of social awareness, and so shall conduct the affairs of our newspaper.

Quote of the week: "Top, Nick Lachance still a winkle." -Photography Manager Nick Lachance, regarding himself.

CAMPUS

Campus News Editor Justin Smirlies • jsmirlies@thecord.ca

Getting Laurier students involved

JUSTIN SMIRLIES
CAMPUS NEWS EDITOR

When the federal election was called, Wilfrid Laurier University students were just about to step into exam season and to head home for the summer months – not nearly a suitable time to get involved. While many students were either focused on studying or leaving campus, various campus clubs and many students still tried to create a movement at Laurier to encourage voting and involvement.

In a riding that was only decided by 17 votes in the 2008 election and in a country where youth voting has suffered in the past, Laurier students are in an important place in terms of youth involvement.

"There are bits and pieces of evidence that suggest that students are taking a renewed interest in this election, part of it because of the vote mobs," said Barry Kay, a political science professor at Laurier.

While youth involvement has appeared to have grown, many students, especially the campus political clubs, feel that this is an inconvenient time for them.

"It's completely wrong to take 30,000 people out of this riding between the University of Waterloo and Laurier, and many people aren't here on May 2nd," said Drew Redden, the president of the Young Liberals. "If you look around campus, it's dead right now."

Scott Blinkhorn, the president of the Campus Conservatives, also stated that it has been a tough situation. "Like right now, I got five or six club members who would be out, but can't be because they moved home. It's a really hard time for us all."

Efforts made by campus clubs

The campus clubs – which include the Campus Conservatives, the Young Liberals and the Campus Greens – used various methods to try to encourage Laurier students to vote. The one obvious method used was setting up booths in the concourse and hall of fame, as well as being interactive outside the Fred Nichols Campus Centre.

According to Blinkhorn, the Campus Conservatives have been campaigning for Kitchener-Waterloo Member of Parliament (MP) Peter Braid and Kitchener Centre candidate Stephen Woodworth. As well, the Young Liberals have been campaigning for Andrew Telegdi.

To encourage more youth votes in this riding, Redden said, "Most of our efforts were focused on getting people to vote early, we really promoted the special ballot vote, I voted almost two weeks ago."

Jordan Epstein, a second-year kinesiology student who has already voted by special ballot, stated that the average student appears to be interested and that Laurier, as a

whole, tends to be heavily involved in many different issues and events.

"From what I've seen in the Laurier community, we're just really involved with everything, so I don't think it's any different for the election," said Epstein.

Kevin Degrujter, a third-year BBA student, echoed Epstein's statement. "We're a smaller school, I understand why Waterloo had a vote mob, they had a lot more people around, but [Laurier] has done a pretty good job from what I've seen, it's all dependent, it's just a tough situation in time right now for students"

As well, Epstein applauded those who set up events across campus, such as the federal debate being aired at Wilf's and the non-partisan presentation made by Bob Rae about youth voting. While noting that more could be done to encourage more involvement among students, Epstein liked the efforts made by the school and the campus clubs.

When the election was called, Redden stated that many students were excited to get involved, "I think it was very positive, we had a booth set up in the concourse and a lot of people were engaged and excited and interested in the fact that they could vote early and wanted to get involved."

Blinkhorn, however, felt that Laurier isn't as active as other university campuses.

"Certainly, if you look at campuses such as York and Carleton, they are much more active than they are at Laurier," he said.

Utilizing social media

As the youth become increasingly technologically savvy, social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook have been important tools during this election – especially with notifying students about events on campus.

"I think it's very important for awareness. That's the biggest thing, because you reach so many people by the click of the mouse," said Redden.

"I think university students are often victims of living in a bubble, where especially during school and exam time, they are only concerned about what's going on campus and don't really watch the national news," continued Redden. "Social media helps you get out of the bubble."

Blinkhorn believes that, while social media is great for awareness, it ultimately doesn't too much to sway votes. He also stated that left-leaning parties, due to their larger youth base, tend to be better at using social media.

Degrujter added that the campus clubs have been helpful in his knowledge during the election but more focus is need on student issues. "Maybe if they summarized issues involving university students, it would be more helpful."



TAYLOR GAYOWSKY GRAPHICS EDITOR

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Laurier candidates go 0-3

Laurier profs Richard Walsh-Bowers and Byron Williston, as well as former WLU president Bob Rosehart ran in local ridings, view their results on thecord.ca

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Results shift from last election

The Cord was present at party gatherings as results were announced in the 41st Canadian federal election

Braid repeats by larger margin

—cover

strong reaction, so I remained confident and I'm honoured to continue to have the opportunity to represent the great people of Kitchener-Waterloo."

With the student vote a crucial component of the election, Braid told reporters that he made a valiant

effort to reach the student population of the riding. "The average age in this riding is much younger than most other ridings," Braid explained. "I from the outset wanted to make sure young people were involved and engaged in my campaign.... I use social media [and] reach out to young people through that."

Braid offered little comment on the surprise finish of the NDP as the official opposition, but he expressed joy at the Bloc Québécois' fall from grace in Quebec.

"With the diminishment of the Bloc in Quebec, this is a great victory for federalism," said Braid.

With the Conservatives winning

a majority government, Braid was asked if he saw any aspirations for a role in Parliament beyond being an MP.

"My primary objective will be to continue to effectively represent the people of Kitchener-Waterloo," he responded. "Your voters are in your constituency, not in Ottawa."



40.86%

27,093 votes



37.62%

24,895 votes

Telegdi comes up short again

AMANDA STEINER
LOCAL AND NATIONAL EDITOR

Liberal candidate Andrew Telegdi lost the Kitchener-Waterloo riding for the second time to Conservative incumbent Peter Braid on May 2 by 2,184 votes.

"You know," Telegdi said to the crowd of his devastated supporters, "I feel more upset for you than I do for myself. But I have to say, in all the campaigns I ran, by far this was the best campaign that I have ever been part of and that's because of you guys."

After the applause had died down, Telegdi expressed his beliefs that a Conservative majority lead by Stephen Harper is a poor change for the country.

"So the challenge for us is going to be to reach out to center left and make sure, come next election, we're not going to go with this kind of division again," he said.

He persisted in stressing the

negative aspects of the Harper majority and possible problems in the coming years. "The issue I think Canadians should be concerned about is we cannot have a Prime Minister who demonizes his opponents for two years, using taxpayer funded money to do it," he said.

"Why haven't we been raising that issue more forcefully?"

"We're going to have to build," Telegdi said, explaining what he believed to be a possible solution to the night's surprising results.

"It really comes down to the kind of Canada that we want, and I don't see the kind of Canada we want reflected in the votes tonight, as far as you folks are concerned."

"We're going to have to reach out and make things happen," Telegdi said.

"We have a great party tradition so please plan to stick around and be involved because we are going to have to get it together, because we have to get our Canada back."



16.03%

10,606 votes

NDP improve slightly

LINDSAY PURCHASE
LEAD REPORTER

Despite historic success for the NDP nationally, candidate Bill Brown fell short behind the Conservatives and Liberals in the Kitchener-Waterloo riding. Brown was unsurprised by Braid's re-election, but remained determined to work toward a strong NDP presence in the region.

"In a lot of ways we did win this evening," said Brown, acknowledging the greater success of Layton and the party. Local NDP advocates gathered at Caesar Martini's and watched in eager anticipation as the party steadily climbed into second place over the Liberals. "It's a stepping stone," said young supporter Dylan Wilson. "Someday they're going to get their shot, but I'm happy with this accomplishment for now."

However, Wilson also echoed the concerns of many that the unprecedented support for the NDP would be largely irrelevant in the face of a

Conservative majority. Brown attempted to dissuade this by focusing on the community's responsibility to pressure the government and "to keep the Conservatives honest." "After tonight we have a greater task," Brown remarked with a touch of humour, "... which is to make sure that Peter Braid does not have one restless night of sleep for the next three years."

Brown cited the Conservative's alleged secrecy and disregard for the rights of Canadians as notable concerns for the upcoming years, though he remained assured of the potential of the NDP in the position of official opposition.

Brown commented, "We could see the NDP exerting a lot of influence in order to make sure that people's views and people's rights are definitely respected."

His sentiments were reiterated by community member Scott Piatkowski. "The Conservatives were in power with a minority before,

but without a real opposition," explained Piatkowski.

He noted that the NDP would be a more effective force than the Liberals in holding a Conservative majority accountable.

Undeterred by the Kitchener-Waterloo results, Brown claimed he would gladly run for MP again if asked. He acknowledged their unavoidably late start as a potential reason behind the low NDP support, and has plans to increase his community involvement and volunteerism in order to become more prepared for the next election.

However, Brown strongly commended his team for their efforts, and felt he had run the campaign to the best of his ability.

With the self-assuredness and positivity that has defined Brown's outlook throughout the campaign, he concluded "Looking back on it now, I don't think I would have changed a thing."



ROSALIE EID PHOTOGRAPHY MANAGER
Liberal candidate Andrew Telegdi, who held the Kitchener-Waterloo riding from 1997 to 2008 awaits results.



KATE TURNER LEAD PHOTOGRAPHER
NDP candidate Bill Brown watched the polls come in from Caesar's.



4.76%

3,147 votes

MacLellan sinks from last election's result

MIKE LAKUSIAK
IN DEPTH EDITOR

The Kitchener-Waterloo Green party team fronted by candidate Cathy MacLellan and supporters camped out at Chainsaw Saloon in UpTown Waterloo for the results to come in. As MacLellan filtered through the bar glancing between her iPad and the regional and national news broadcasts, she appeared at ease, speaking to the many gathered as green beer and poutine were passed around. The Green candidates from Kitchener-Conestoga and Cambridge were also present and introduced.

MacLellan, who first ran for the Greens in the riding in the 2008 campaign and drew 12.1 per cent of the vote, began the evening by addressing the over 100 volunteers who helped out this time around.

"We more than doubled our efforts over the last campaign which was incredible really," she said. "No matter what happens tonight, we represented the Green vision for Canada fully here in Kitchener-Waterloo, we put on a campaign that is as competitive and strong as any other in this region and we can be very proud of that."

In the end though, these efforts garnered little more than a third of

the votes as the last election as the K-W Greens fell from 12.1 per cent to less than five per cent.

Attention and anticipation throughout the evening, as early indications pegged MacLellan's numbers below last election, seemed focused on the late announcement of how Elizabeth May would fare in her B.C. home riding of Saanich-Gulf Islands.

May and the party as a whole hoped to win their first ever seat in the House of Commons and much emphasis during the campaign centered around this goal.

This focus was clear in MacLellan's comments after it was declared

that Conservative Peter Braid had clinched the riding. "We're celebrating Elizabeth May in the House, there's the good news," she said. "Getting [her] in was the main goal. As a national party, this is a successful campaign for us."

"We knew we would be fighting strategic voting all across our ridings, I knew I would," MacLellan continued. "Here I had to fight the strategic vote - obviously people voted strategically - they have every right to but it's not voting for what they want. That's that."

Regarding May's win in light of her disappointing finish, MacLellan noted, "I'm going to focus on that,

I'm happy about it. This is what I expected, I had my expectations set."

She noted that NDP candidate Bill Brown may have benefitted from the late surge that party seemed to gather. "I know enough now that timing is everything sometimes."

"I'm dismantling the office tomorrow, it's onward and we just keep moving forward."

MacLellan's campaign manager Rolf Thiessen seemed more dejected about the results. "For all the work we put in I don't think it paid off," he said. "[The NDP] took some votes away, but I'm glad that they're in the opposition [nationally] as a counterbalance to the Conservatives."



NATIONAL

National Editor Amanda Steiner • asteiner@thecord.ca

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Taking a stance on UBB

The Cord sums up each party's position on the controversial issue

—Justin Fauteux

KW receives extra attention



NICK LACHANCE PHOTO MANAGER

Remember to check thecord.ca later in the week for post-election updates

The man behind the vote mob



NICK LACHANCE PHOTOGRAPHY MANAGER

On Apr. 30 Rick Mercer visited Victoria Park in London, Ontario to support the University of Western and Fanshawe college vote mob.

—cover

positive effect - and it scares the hell out of the powers that be." He continued to stress the importance not only of the vote mobs, but of actually following through and voting.

"What you have to do is find someone who you know who is intimidated by voting," Mercer said. "Is take them by the hand, and take them to vote; it's a great thing for democracy and who knows, you might even get lucky."

The Cord asked Mercer if he thought vote mobs would be as effective as they are if Facebook or Twitter weren't available.

"Absolutely not," he said. "All of these are possible because of social media. Sure the news can cover something but it's because of things like Twitter and Facebook, two guys in their bedroom can access the world, and that's pretty amazing."

In addition to getting students out to vote for this election, Mercer also noted that these vote mobs could have a very positive effect in

“

A vote mob is such a tremendous thing. It has such a positive effect - and it scares the hell out of the powers that be.”

—Rick Mercer, CBC personality

the future.

"No one likes to be taken for granted," he said. "Now students are showing they're engaged, they're

active, they're organized. The best part is, after this election, no political party will take the youth vote for granted again."

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EDITORIAL

Opinion Editor Joseph McNinch-Pazzano • jmcninchpazzano@thecord.ca

NDP rise marks a historic but also irrelevant change

It was only weeks ago that the New Democratic Party (NDP) barely registered 14 per cent of the popular vote in public opinion polls.

On Monday night, in Canada's 41st election, the NDP is projected to easily surpass 30 per cent and reduce the Liberal Party of Canada to a shadow of its former electoral self.

At the same time, the equally momentous decline of the Bloc Quebecois underscores the bittersweet ending for the NDP. Reduced to a handful of single seats, the demise of the Bloc landed Prime Minister Harper his much-coveted majority and severely limited the power Jack Layton will have as Leader of the Official Opposition.

If, together, the Liberals and Bloc had retained just a dozen or so more seats, the NDP would have played the role of parliamentary kingmaker in a minority situation; the essential power-player in the backrooms of Ottawa.

Arguably, Harper would have been forced to move Conservative policy further left and Layton could have delivered on some of his idealistic campaign policies.

Instead, Jack Layton will be left yelling and screaming at a prime minister whose party now has very few checks on its decisions in the next four years.

While the NDP has a conventional role to play as the runner-up, it will have very little real power to stop legislation that Conservatives are adamant to pass. The right wing has the votes and while Layton can put up a fight, it will be relatively moot.

While the NDP result is no doubt historic — and while it is also a clear and harsh rebuke of Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff — the NDP fell far short of the position in could have potentially held in the 41st Parliament.

Still, a Harper majority might be the perfect way for the NDP to settle in as Official Opposition. Having avoided the actual task of governing, the NDP can hammer away at the Conservatives for four whole years and potentially establish itself as a legitimate long-term leader of the left.

— The Cord Editorial Board

Local results need to prompt reflection

The progressive candidacies in Waterloo Region were dealt severe blows in the May 2 election.

Despite running better organized and more extensive campaigns than in 2008, Liberal candidates in Waterloo Region lost by greater margins in the 2011 election. Having lost by 17 votes in 2008, the 2011 margin between Kitchener-Waterloo's Liberal Andrew Telegdi and Conservative Peter Braid will ultimately be in the thousands. In Kitchener Centre, Karen Redman was soundly defeated by almost 6,000 votes.

In Kitchener-Waterloo, this shift to the Conservatives was accompanied by a dramatic fall for Green party candidate Cathy MacLellan who looks to rake in less than five per cent of the popular vote, down from 12 per cent in 2008.

The NDP remained steady with approximately 15 per cent of the vote in Kitchener-Waterloo. This begs the question of whether the outcome would have changed had the NDP put more resources in the riding at the beginning, refusing to cede that the race was between Telegdi and Braid.

Waterloo Region is now clearly without a progressive vote. Those voices were lost in 2008 when the Liberal Party severely over-calculated the safety of Waterloo Region. Yet, they were further silenced in this election even as Liberals put more resources into the ridings and local candidates ran more impressive ground games.

These local results must prompt a discussion about whether this represents a broader ideological shift for the region. Part of the Conservative victories in Waterloo Region is attributable to the broader national shift. However, there must also be a conversation about whether this region is shifting away from the progressive side of Canadian politics for the long-term.

— The Cord Editorial Board

This unsigned editorial is based off informal discussions and then agreed upon by the majority of The Cord's editorial board, which consists of 13 senior Cord staff including the Editor-in-Chief and Opinion Editor. The arguments made may reference any facts that have been made available through interviews, documents or other sources. The views presented do not necessarily reflect those of The Cord's volunteers, staff or WLUSP.

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Contact Erin Epp, WLUSP President and Publisher
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A crisis of complacency



JOSEPH MCNINCH-PAZZANO
letters@thecord.ca

In the political world of harsh realities, the electorate gets what it pays for. By renewing Prime Minister Stephen Harper's mandate, the complacent electorate is settling for a government that is not visionary, inspiring or game-changing.

Throughout this election campaign, scandal after scandal, gaffe after gaffe, Prime Minister Harper's support remained relatively consistent. Harper played it safe. He hammered the economy at every opportunity and delivered the same mind-numbing stump speech.

The seemingly unflappable Harper was oddly matched with a campaign that shook the roots of Canadian democracy while Canadians went along for the ride. The Conservatives decided that their rallies would be open to diehard party supporters. Anyone with a hint of that dangerous lefty blood would be turned away at the door.

That is no way to have a discussion about the issues in this campaign. Even if we don't agree, we need to be able to hear each other out without the teleprompters and colourful preaching to the converted.

While there was noticeable outrage at "rally-gate," while there was outcry at the attempt to disenfranchise student voters at the University of Guelph and while the media paid obligatory attention to the unethical expenditures during the G8 summit, the mighty Harper was shaken but did not fall.

There is a crisis of complacency in Canadian politics. The vast majority of the electorate isn't inspired or even

I don't want to settle for the kid in the class who is barely getting by. I want the kid in the class who is willing to push every single boundary.

mildly excited by Stephen Harper and yet almost 40 per cent of Canadians settle on him because while they aren't throwing confetti in the air, they think he's done a passable job.

I don't want to settle for the kid in the class who is barely getting by. I want the kid in the class who is willing to push every single boundary and strive to soar beyond the expectations bestowed upon them.

I reject this notion that we can't do better. I reject the idea that this country can't rise up to be a leader in the global challenges that we must combat.

And, I reject the idea that we have to settle in any way for a prime minister who doesn't make us feel good about ourselves and our country.

It's time to harness the spark of energy that is igniting on the left. There were Liberals who were genuinely excited by what Michael Ignatieff had to offer.

There were historic numbers of left-wing voters who found in Jack Layton the leader they felt embodied a change from Stephen Harper.

And, just as importantly, there were those who parked their votes with the Green Party, genuinely concerned by the environmental crisis we must face and who were sincerely inspired by what

Elizabeth May had to offer.

The work of this election isn't over. Now that Conservatives have a majority, voters on the left need to have a serious discussion about what unites them instead of divides them. The left needs to think about putting aside the differences that are essentially akin to arguments over dark chocolate or milk chocolate, vanilla or French vanilla ice cream and form a voting coalition in 2015 that re-takes the democracy that has been so sadly mismanaged under Harper.

This country can't afford to settle for the incremental approach that Stephen Harper offers.

Vote-buying tax credits for fitness or children's arts programs or funds for a mind-numbingly boring and visionless income-splitting program don't even begin to crack the surface of the change we need right now.

Canadians have settled on a prime minister who has refused to talk about the serious challenges this country faces; who refuses to be frank with the electorate about the severe spending cuts this country will face.

Canadians need to wake up out of their stupor of complacency and tell Ottawa to start taking charge. Whatever Harper does in the next four years, this complacent electorate asked for it.

The fight for a progressive alternative continues today, away from the spotlight of an election campaign.

It's our duty not to back away and forget about government once the campaign signs are packed away and the leaders' planes are grounded.

Canadians shouldn't have to settle for a government whose best selling point is that it has been adequate.

The challenges we face deserve more attention than a stagnant and uninspiring Harper government can give them. And they deserve more than a complacent electorate unwilling to take a gamble on anything else.

OPINION

Opinion Editor Joseph McNinch-Pazzano • jmcninchpazzano@thecord.ca

Caught in a perfect storm

WLUSU Policy Researcher **Chris Hyde** explores the numerous challenges that students faced in casting their votes this election



CHRIS HYDE
COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

I have had a hard time coming up with an adequate term that accurately reflects the 2011 election, as it relates to students across Canada. I have settled on the idea of a perfect storm.

A perfect storm can be defined as "a particularly bad or critical state of affairs, arising from a number of negative and unpredictable factors." That is probably the best way to describe this election for students: a series of correlated factors that seek to drastically hamper the capacity of students to vote.

Firstly, the election comes at a terrible time for students. The school year is ending, with many students working their way through exams and term papers at the end of April and there is the annual mad rush by students to find or extend meaningful employment or to move home and save money for next year.

"But Chris," you say, "students could have voted in advance polls on April 22, 23 and 25." In fact, there was tremendous turnout in the Waterloo Region during the advance polling periods.

Yet, this belies the underlying difficulties faced by any student voting at the advanced polls. Know anyone who left town to be with family over the Easter weekend?

Lest we forget that the Easter Weekend almost altered the voting patterns around Laurier. St. Michael's Church has been a mainstay

for advanced polling for a number of years near the university. Unfortunately an Easter weekend advanced poll is, well, on Easter.

This means that St. Michael's was in use and student voting was to be moved outside reasonable walking distance for Laurier students. Thankfully I was able to work with Wilfrid Laurier University Students Union (WLUSU) President Kyle Walker and Elections Canada staff to move the advance poll to St. Mike's campus.

"Ok, ok Chris, but you are forgetting the special ballot." No, actually, I'm not. The special ballot is a lifeline for students who may have no other opportunity to vote. A special ballot is used when they are unable to make their local advanced poll or the general election.

The special ballot allowed hundreds of students to vote in the 2011 federal election when they would otherwise not have been able to cast a ballot in the riding of their choice.

However, the special ballot is required to be completed by April 26. There is no flexibility on that date and if students had been forced to use a special ballot to vote, they would have had to have done so a full two weeks before the general election.

This is crucial when you consider that much of the federal campaigning occurred throughout the exam period.

So you can vote at any time via a special ballot, but you won't be given enough time to digest all the elections related campaign information and will have to vote well before the end of campaigning.

Anyone else feel alienated yet? There were, however, a few bright spots out there for students. Firstly, there were a lot of people at WLUSU

It was a perfect storm. For those of you that were fortunate enough to vote — good for you.

who were willing to put in a lot of hours to bring the federal election to students.

Secondly, the local and national staff at Elections Canada went above and beyond in their attempts to engage students at Laurier.

They worked with WLUSU to plan for voter registrations, explained special balloting, provided posters and promotions material and worked to set up a student-focused advanced polling station.

Even at the Elections Canada office in Ottawa, I was very well received when I formally appealed the advanced polling days.

Elections Canada made it clear that if students wanted to vote, they would do as much as they could in order to meet their needs.

See, as I said, it was a perfect storm. For those of you that were fortunate enough to vote — good for you, you had a lot to overcome to do so.

For those of you that could not, I'd love to hear about it. There is another election on the horizon and we'd love to hear your perspective in order to bring out the student vote even more.



NICK LACHANCE PHOTOGRAPHY MANAGER

Harper's Conservatives deserved re-election



KEITH MARSHALL
letters@thecord.ca

The Conservative Party's re-election was based in a series of successes that have solidified their position as the most responsible government to ensure domestic stability while remaining a moral voice internationally.

As the governing party, they have demonstrated that their economic plan is the best suited to promote a strong Canadian economy. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects our economy to grow at the same level as the United States this year, about 2.8 per cent.

Comparatively the United Kingdom is expected to grow by 1.8 per cent. Although government spending under the Conservatives has increased at rates well beyond inflation, they still represent the best means of ensuring the success of Canadian businesses and our job market in the years to come. We are doing well as a country economically, which in part has to do with Conservative policy.

While the Conservatives need to wise up on reporting their spending practices, as do a majority of MPs who refused to allow their office budgets to be audited by the auditor general, this election will in no way solve the problems surrounding parliamentary supremacy in Canada.

After five years the Conservatives finally have a majority of support in the senate, which in the past had stonewalled their efforts towards creating more accountable government. If voters were looking for a stable and responsible government to be formed this election, the Conservatives were the best choice.

Despite the claims of the opposition, their record with respect to democratic renewal and promoting liberty is no better or worse than past Liberal governments. The Conservatives, like the other political parties in power, failed for instance

to spearhead Michael Chong's proposed parliamentary reforms.

With respect to civil and economic liberties the G20 summit in Toronto last year, the Conservatives demonstrated that they were no more competent in managing the civil and economic needs of urban Canadians than the Liberals were in the 1997 APEC summit in Vancouver or Quebec City's 2001 Summit of the Americas.

In lieu of this, urban Canadians should not allow the sensationalism being promoted by the opposition to blind their judgement.

Despite the G20, the Conservative government has shown the least propensity towards federalist thinking with respect to Canadian cities than any other federal government in recent Canadian history. The lower taxes being supported by the Conservatives are part of a larger formula needed to ensure the success of Canadian cities.

Internationally, Canada has been a continued voice of sanity within organizations like the United Nations (UN), which, in a tantrum, gave a financially broke Portugal a Security Council seat over Canada. We rightly opposed binding international climate treaties and, in particular, those that did not require heavy carbon dioxide polluting countries like China to reduce their own emissions.

Canada was also avid in our support of Israel, one of only a handful of democratically elected countries in the Middle East.

Additionally, Canada's treatment towards the passengers of the Sun Sea and its listing of the Tamil Tigers as a terrorist organization have established Canada as a voice for human rights and respect for the rule of law. Anyone who wishes to see Canada continue to promote these two ideals would be wise to continue supporting the Conservatives.

The last five years of Conservative rule have not been without controversy.

Although Canada would do well with a more conservative government, the Harper government has done well in its five years in power. It remains the best choice for Canadians.

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