



CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene

47th Canadian Regional Conference

The 47th Canadian Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Toronto from July 19-24, 2009. Approximately 90 delegates and observers from every Canadian jurisdiction except Nunavut attended. There were a number of parliamentary guests including Baroness **Lindsay Northover**, from the House of Lords, **Ian Davidson** MP from the British House of Commons, **Neil Parsanlal**, MP from Trinidad and Tobago and **Kashmala Tariq**, Member of the National Assembly from Pakistan.

The Official Opening was chaired by the host of the Conference. Speaker **Steve Peters** of Ontario. The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, **David C. Onley** welcomed the delegates and officially opened the Conference. Also speaking during the opening were the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, **William F. Shija**, the Chair of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (Canadian Region) **Maria Minna** and Baroness Northover.

A number of Canadian Speakers were in attendance including: **Don Toth** (SK), **Roger Fitzgerald**, (NL), **Roy Boudreau** (NB), **Kathleen Casey** (PE), **Kenneth Kowalski** (AB), **Charlie Parker** (NS), **Bill Barisoff** (BC) **Ted Staffen** (YK), and **Paul Delory** (NT).

Speaker **Toth** chaired the first session which featured a presentation by **Art Johnston** of Alberta on Protecting the Public: Alberta's Safe Communities Project.

The second session was on the topic of Immigration, Integration and Intercultural Relations: The Québec Experience with a presentation by **Fatima Houda-Pepin** of Québec. It was chaired by Senator **Raynell Andreychuk**.

The third session was an Update on the Economic Recovery with presentations from **Bev Shipley** of the House of Commons and **Warren Michelson** of Saskatchewan. The chair was **Étienne-Alexis Boucher** of Québec.

The fourth session, chaired by Speaker **Peters**, was a presentation by **Terry Fallis**, Winner of the Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour for his book *The Best Laid Plans*. He read some excerpts from his book and discussed the importance of humour in politics.

The Role of Private Members' Bills was the topic of the fifth session. **Linda Jeffrey** was the presenter with Speaker **Fitzgerald** in the chair. Technology in the Legislature was the topic of the sixth session. **Edward Buckingham** of Newfoundland and Labrador made the presentation. **Bruce Crozier** of Ontario was the chair.

Speaker **Boudreau** chaired the seventh session on Creating Welcoming Communities. The

presenter was **Teresa Woo-Paw** of Alberta. The final session was on Balancing Security and Public Access at the Legislature. Speaker **Casey** made the presentation while Mr. **Davidson** of the British House of Commons was in the chair.

During the week delegates had an opportunity to visit the Niagara Region and to attend a baseball game between the Toronto Blue Jays and the Cleveland Indians. Delegates were effusive in their praise for Speaker **Peters**, Clerk **Deborah Deller**, **Zina Decker** and other members of the organizing committee for a very successful conference.

CWP Meeting

On Sunday July 19, the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians held their annual conference. A Steering Committee meeting chaired by **Maria Minna** MP was held in the morning. It looked at the work done by the Group over the last year and adopted a work-plan and outreach programme for the upcoming year.

It was followed by several business sessions. **Hedy Fry** MP spoke on the issue of Gender Analysis and Budgeting. She looked at what had been done, particularly by federal government departments over the last several years.

Flora MacDonald, a former Minister, discussed her recent efforts to improve education and

build schools in Afghanistan, a country she has visited eleven times over the last several years.

Carolyn Bennett MP, gave a wide ranging presentation on the role of women in making a difference in politics. She related some of her experiences in consulting with constituents and young voters in particular.

Tracy-Lee Eddy of *Equal Voice* spoke about their Youth Engagement and Mentorship programme that will be launched in the fall of 2009. It will establish relationships between female legislators and young women interested in learning more about politics and public life.

Kashmala Tariq of Pakistan, Chair of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians gave a very vivid description of the effect terrorism is having on women in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

New Speaker in Nova Scotia

The new Speaker of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly is **Charlie Parker**, MLA for Pictou West.

Born and raised on the family's farm at Durham, Pictou County, he is a graduate of West Pictou District High School and obtained his Bachelor of Science from Acadia University. He is also a graduate of the Nova Scotia Teacher's College.

Mr. Parker has worked in real estate sales, owned and operated a garden centre business for a number of years, and taught at the junior high and elementary school levels. He served for four terms as a municipal councillor in the Municipality of Pictou County.

He was first elected to the House of Assembly in 1998 and held the seat until the 1999 election. He was re-elected in 2003, 2006 and again in 2009. He is a



Hon. Charlie Parker

former Deputy Speaker and was elected Speaker on June 25, 2009.

A member and Past President of the Westville Rotary Club, he is a past Board member of Riverview Home, and has served on the Board at Valleyview Villa. He currently serves as a director of Landsdowne Outdoor Recreation Development Association – a park for seniors and the disabled. An avid curler he is also a former Boy Scout Leader and has been active in his community throughout his life.

The House also elected three Deputy Speakers. **Gordon Gosse**, **Wayne Gaudet** and the former Speaker, **Alfie MacLeod**.

Charlotte L'Écuyer candidate for Chair of CWP International

During the CWP (Canadian Region) meeting it was announced that **Charlotte L'Écuyer** would be a candidate for the position of Chairperson of the International CPW when the election is held in 2010.

Mme L'Écuyer represents Pontiac in the Québec National Assembly and is Vice-chair of the Committee on Transportation and the Environment.

She holds a Master's degree in social work from the Université de Sherbrooke. She was Director General for the Pontiac CLSC (local community service centre) from 1986-1995 and Director general of the Centre de santé du Pontiac from 1995-2003.

She was first elected as Member for Pontiac in the general election held on April 14, 2003 and re-elected in 2007 and 2008. She has served as a Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health and Social Services from 2006-2007 and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food from 2007 to 2008. She has been Vice-chair, Committee on Transportation and the Environment since January 15, 2009.

Charlotte was elected as the first Chair of the CWP (Canadian Region) and served in that capacity for three years. Under her direction the group increased membership and a number of activities have been launched. She was Vice-Chair of the CWP International from 2007-2008.

On July 20, 2009, the Canadian Regional Council of CPA unanimously endorsed her as the Canadian candidate for the presidency of the International CWP.



Mme Charlotte L'Écuyer