



CPA Activities: *The Canadian Scene*

New Speakers in Yukon and Saskatchewan

On December 1, 2011 **David Laxton**, MLA for Porter Creek Centre, was elected as the 23rd Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. He was first elected to the legislature on October 11, 2011.

Mr. Laxton has lived in Whitehorse since moving to Yukon in 1998. During his time in Yukon, he has been employed by the federal and territorial governments doing geomatics work and website development. Prior to arriving in Yukon, he served 22 years with the Canadian Armed Forces, primarily with the Lord Strathcona Horse (Royal Canadians) and the Mapping and Charting Establishment. His military service included three United Nations postings, one in Egypt and two in Bosnia. He also carried out major survey work in the High Arctic and regional gravity surveys across Yukon.



Speaker David Laxton

Mr. Laxton is an active member of the community, having served as Chair of the Child Development Centre, Chair of the Whitehorse Housing Authority, and in various executive positions (including President) with the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 254 (Whitehorse) and National Vice President (Western Arctic) of the Army Cadet League of Canada.

On December 5, 2011, **Dan D'Autremont** was elected Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. Mr. D'Autremont was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1991 and re-elected in 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007 and 2011 representing the Cannington constituency. He is one of the "Original Eight" founding members of the Saskatchewan Party in 1997.

During his tenure in opposition, Mr. D'Autremont served as critic for Highways, Education, Energy and Mines, Health, SaskTel, Information Technology Office, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority and Saskatchewan Government Insurance. While critic for the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, Mr. D'Autremont worked closely with the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority and First Nations.

He served as the Deputy Chair of the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies. Mr. D'Autremont served as an opposition member of the Assembly's Board of Internal Economy. He also was a



Speaker Dan D'Autremont

member of the Assembly's Special Committee on Rules and Procedures, and later the Standing Committee on House Services.

Since the Saskatchewan Party formed Government in 2007, Mr. D'Autremont has served as Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, Minister for Government Services and Minister Responsible for Information Technology Office. Most recently, he served as Government House Leader, Co-chair of the Cabinet's Legislation and Regulation Review Committee, member of the Board of Internal Economy, member of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies, member of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, member of the Standing Committee on Privileges and member of the House Services Committee.

Presiding Officers' Conference

The Presiding Officers from Canada's federal, provincial and territorial legislatures held their annual conference February 2-5, 2012, in Alberta. The host was Speaker **Ken Kowalski** of Alberta.

Since the last Presiding Officers' Conference in Iqaluit, Nunavut on January 20-23, 2011, there are ten new Speakers, all of whom attended. They included:

- **Jacques Chagnon** (Québec)
- **Hunter Tootoo** (Nunavut)
- **Andrew Scheer** (House of Commons)
- **Daryl Reid** (Manitoba)
- **Jackie Jacobson** (Northwest Territories)
- **Ross Wiseman** (Newfoundland and Labrador)
- **Carolyn Bertram** (Prince Edward Island)
- **Dave Levac** (Ontario)
- **David Laxton** (Yukon)
- **Dan D'Autremont** (Saskatchewan)

Other Speakers in attendance were **Bill Barisoff** (British Columbia), **Dale Graham** (New

Brunswick), and **Gordie Gosse** (Nova Scotia).

Following the Official Opening by Speaker Kowalski the Presiding Officers heard a presentation on Canadian-American Relations from **David C. Jacobson**, United States Ambassador to Canada. The first day also featured two sessions on "Jurisdiction Overviews". Each Speaker was allowed up to five minutes to report on recent procedural or administrative developments in his or her legislature.

Another session was entitled "Challenges Facing a New Speaker." It was chaired by Speaker Barisoff and the panel included Speakers Scheer, Gosse and D'Autremont.

A session on "Interparliamentary Associations and Activities" was chaired by **Gary O'Brien**, Clerk of the Senate. Speaker Graham spoke about the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Speaker Chagnon focused on Francophone Interparliamentary Relations and **Alfons Schoëps**,

Director of European Operations of the State Legislative Leaders Foundation spoke about the Partnership of Parliaments and the Foundation.

The final business session was on the "Role of the Clerk in Support of the Speaker." It was chaired by **David McNeil**, Clerk of the Alberta Legislative Assembly. The presenters were **Loredana Catalli Sonier**, Clerk of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly, **Tim Mercer**, Clerk of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly and **Deborah Deller**, Clerk of the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

At one of the working lunches, **Diana McQueen**, Alberta Minister of Environment and Water gave a presentation on "Albertas Oil Sands – Challenges and Opportunities."

Aside from the business sessions the Speakers had an opportunity to attend a musical theatre event and a hockey game at Rexall Place between the Edmonton Oilers and the Detroit Red Wings.