

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: More Musings

By Stephen Somerville

Before this column returns to the local themes of people, politics and public affairs, below are some unconnected, stream-of-conscious and (most likely) incoherent musings and observations regarding the last part of the summer season in Aurora. First, although the Party Leaders had already participated in a national debate and they have been crisscrossing the country campaigning since early August, to me the real election campaign started after Labor Day.

And what we have seen thus far are a couple of different themes occurring.

On the one hand, the national media say that there is a large amount of voters who desire change while at the same time the polls don't reflect this dynamic.

A National forum poll released the other day in fact showed the Conservatives at 32% the NDP at 30% and the Liberals at 28% nationally.

Another national poll had all three parties within 1% of each other nationally.

In the 905 area, the Tories still enjoy a slim lead over the Liberals with the NDP coming up the middle.

It could be the case that Canadians might not like Mr. Harper but they are afraid of handing the national seals of high office to the NDP or they are concerned about the inexperience of Mr. Trudeau.

Also, according to most polls our two local races will be close.

Lois Brown, the incumbent Conservative candidate in Newmarket ?Aurora is being challenged by Liberal candidate Kyle Peterson, the NDP's Yvonne Kelly, the Green Party's Vanessa Long and Jason Jenkins of the Libertarian Party.

South of Wellington in the newly created riding of Aurora ? Oak Ridges ?Richmond Hill, Costas Menegakis is the Conservative standard bearer while the Liberal Candidate is Leona Alleslev and the NDP candidate is Brenda Power.

I will be door knocking on behalf of one of the candidates beginning this week. I am interested to hear what local voters have to say.

It should make for an interesting contest all the way to the October 19 deadline.

Second, Toronto Mayor John Tory made the announcement the other day that Toronto would not enter a bid for the Olympics.

Not only was this a wise decision given that Toronto would be up against some stiff competition from the other six potential host cities, but unless the private sector was willing to pick up a large share of the actual event costs, this could have been a financial nightmare.

As we saw with the Pan Am games, the cost of security is extremely high and that was only for a regional event. Imagine what these costs would be for an Olympics.

Second, traffic congestion on the Don Valley Parkway was a big problem during the Pan Am games. Again, imagine the traffic headaches with the amount of people an Olympics would bring.

To this writer, the only possible way that these games could have worked is if they were run like the 1984 Games in Los Angeles when the Corporate Sector basically paid for all of the venues.

From what I recall, these were the only games in history that turned a modest profit. You might recall the \$50B - yes, that is right - \$50B price tag for the Sochi Winter Olympics.

I am not saying that would have happened here, but with cost overruns and security concerns, you never know.

Finally, and on a totally unrelated item, I read back in July that the Southlake Regional Health Centre is closer to building a hospice after the province said it could go ahead with the construction tender.

According to the article, ?the 10 bed residential hospice for patients with terminal illnesses will be built on Queen Street in Newmarket. It is expected to be open in 2017.?

You never think about these things until a family member is in need of it.

My mother spent her remaining days in the tranquil surroundings of a hospice in south Mississauga just over a decade ago. I will never forget the time that our family spent with my mother, sitting in the wonderful garden on those beautiful summer days.

The 24/7 care and support that my mother received at the hospice was tremendous. I hope that this new facility will provide equal tranquility and comfort to what our family witnessed first-hand.

This announcement is very welcome news for our community.

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