

Volume 2, Issue 2

This Month...



Message from the Executive Director

A Time for Building

Well, it is the first newsletter since the election. What a ride! I know that we all would have liked a different result - I know I would have. However I believe we accomplished much despite that result. Because of our efforts the government took action they wouldn't have otherwise taken on eliminating health care premiums, on land use, on getting a fairer deal on royalties, in getting serious about looking at ways to save a major portion of those royalties for the future and many other things (like a tax credit for physical activity). Our effort matters and the work must continue - Albertans are counting on us to help make democracy work.

That we stay united after all of this and through the coming months is a major priority for me; that we not become divided into groups based on an Edmonton/Calgary, rural/urban, left/right or any other split. In all my years in politics I've never known a political organization that has become stronger by dividing, but I have experienced the power of making the metaphorical "tent" larger, not smaller. We need to reach out to new people and find new ways of working with and presenting ourselves to people who share our values and dreams for Alberta. At the same we need to remember, as an organization, the lessons learned from the 2008 election. This institutional memory will help us build for next time.

We are going into the beautiful months of summer and we are in real need of funds to keep the work going. Please consider joining the Decore plan or making a one-time donation (see below for information and the tax credit table), we're counting on you.

Enjoy the sunshine everyone and thank you for your support!

Kieran Leblanc
Executive Director, Alberta Liberal Party
www.albertaliberal.com

New Organizational Initiatives

With the election behind us, we need to focus on building the Party from the ground up. Organizationally, we recognize the need to engage Albertans at the grassroots level, and to maximize the involvement of our members. Financially, we directed most of our financial resources towards the election and we are in serious need of new funds to keep the work going. Please consider getting involved in either of these two new and exciting initiatives. Call Tyler Mudrey at the office at 780-414-1124, or email office@albertaliberal.com to get involved.

Two by Two for Democracy – Women Leading Change

Conceived by Jeanette Boman as a way to strengthen the Alberta Liberals financially as well as organizationally, Two by Two for Democracy is a way for women across the province to take the lead in building democratic strength. The idea is simple: each woman contributes \$100 (or another amount) to the party and invites at least two other women to do the same. Women across the province are reaching out to their personal networks and finding support and common cause among the many women who want to see change in Alberta.

Own Your Poll – Lead Change at the Grassroots

The health of democracy depends most of all on the commitment of members at the grassroots of political parties. It is the members who volunteer, provide funds and select the party leadership. With that in mind, a group of party members led by Brent Johner decided to strengthen the foundations of the Party by encouraging individual Albertans to get involved in building the party in each constituency. Please call Tyler Mudrey at the party office to find out more about this exciting initiative.



Alberta*Liberal*

New MLAs

We are proud to welcome two new MLAs to the Alberta Liberal Caucus – MLAs who represent the growing presence of the Alberta Liberals in Calgary.



Darshan Kang--Calgary-McCall

Known for having door knocked every home in his constituency at least twice before the election was even called, Darshan Kang personifies the rewards of hard work and great organization. Born in India, Darshan completed a pre-medical degree before coming to Canada in 1970. He has worked as a journeyman welder and most recently as a highly successful real estate agent (recently named the top performer in his company and fifth top performer in Alberta). His community involvement involves raising money for the Calgary Children's Hospital and the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Representing the constituency of Calgary-McCall on the north east edge of Calgary, Darshan will begin what we hope will be a long career as an MLA with the Shadow Portfolios of Transportation and Service Alberta.



Kent Hehr--Calgary-Buffalo

A top performer who recently worked at one of Calgary's most prestigious law firms, Kent Hehr was chosen as the top graduate of the decade by the U of C alumni association and as one of the top forty under forty by a major magazine. Parlaying his physical disability into a chance for leadership, Kent has taken leading roles in the Canadian Paraplegic Association and Calgary's accessibility committee. A former hockey player, Kent remains an avid hockey fan.

Elected to the central Calgary constituency of Calgary-Buffalo by a wide margin, Kent is the Shadow Minister of Justice and Attorney General and for the Solicitor General and Public Security

UPCOMING ALBERTA LIBERAL EVENTS

Going into the summer, we are seeing a lull in political activity among the constituencies. The big event coming up will be the **annual convention** on October 4th and 5th, in Edmonton. We're working out the details but this will be a big event and we hope to see many of you there. Look for a notice in your mail late July. Also, don't miss the **4th Annual Great Alberta Barbeque** if you are in the Calgary area on June 21!

9 June 2008

Calgary – North West Annual General Meeting

Contact: Joe Boivin by email at president@calgarynwliberals.ca

Location: Uplands Homeowners Association Centre, 20 Hawkside Road NW, Calgary

Start Time: Registration at 7:00 p.m.

21 June 2008

The 4th Annual Great Alberta Barbecue

Join the five “amigos” (the Calgary MLAs) for this free event

Contact: RSVP to rsvp@albertaliberal.com to confirm your attendance and indicate the size of your party

Location: Herb Coburn’s property at 52 Hillcrest Estates in Springbank (just west of Calgary).

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

24 June 2008

Edmonton – Mill Creek Annual General Meeting

Contact: Bryan Kapitza by email at president@millcreekliberal.ca or 780-466-8944

Location: Knights of Columbus Hall, 2947-66 street (just west of the Grey Nun's hospital), Edmonton

Start Time: Registration at 6:30 p.m.

4 October 2008 - 5 October 2008

Annual ALP Convention and AGM

Location: Edmonton

Details to follow

Words of Wisdom - Our MLAs at Work in the Legislature

In this section we appeal to the highest common denominator by highlighting a few of the arguments made by our MLAs this spring session.

Laurie Blakeman On the Trade and Investment and Labour Mobility Act

I know I'm one in a long line of people who wanted to speak to this bill because I think it's one of the most important bills. Not that I agree with it, but I think it will have a profound effect upon our province, and to my thinking it's probably the bill with the most far-reaching effects that we will be doing this spring.

[...]

A [...] part of this is what I consider an imbalance in that we are giving over our ability as legislators to make public policy that we believe would enhance the lives of our constituents, our citizens. And we are. With these agreements we are limiting our ability to make those changes. We're limiting our ability to make land-use bylaws, to have municipalities make certain restrictions on recycling or the height of buildings. It's very interesting what's been included in TILMA and what's been excluded from TILMA. Even when it's excluded, it very clearly says: it's off the list

right now, but we very clearly want to work towards having it on the list, and you shouldn't impose anything that makes it harder to invest in this and have it as a profit-making situation. Hansard, May 13, 2008 (702)

Kent Hehr on smoking in cars carrying children

Although I like to consider myself a relatively fun guy, it seems as of late that I'm trying to ban all sorts of things from cars: carrying guns and drugs to even plastic bags. Although I maintain I'm still a fun guy, I'd like to discuss another measure to improve roadway safety and the health of Albertans. To the Minister of Transportation. Okotoks will vote later this month on a bylaw to ban smoking in cars carrying children. Nova Scotia has already implemented the same. Can we expect action under this dome besides some private member's bill which may likely get hoisted in any event? Hansard, May 22, 2008 (901)

Darshan Kang on Public Education

Mr. Minister, education is not an expense; it's an investment for the future of Alberta. I don't think we should be viewing this as an expense. As far as building schools in suburban areas, we've been talking lots about school closures, and I think we should start planning so that wherever we put up the schools, you know, those school locations should be decided in such a way that we don't have to close those schools for years to come. I think that maybe that should be taken into consideration.

The education portion of the property tax for seniors. I heard a lot about that at the doors. "Why should we be paying the education portion of the property taxes?" seniors said. I think that that has to go.

Another thing is that parents shouldn't have to raise money, you know, for the school activities of the children. We have the richest jurisdiction, and parents shouldn't have to pay any fees for education up to grade 12. That's what I think. Our province, I think, should be picking up the tab on that. Hansard, April 24, 2008 (241)

Hugh MacDonald on Climate Change (referring to the tax on emitters in Alberta and a potential Alberta-only cap and trade system).

When you look at this province and what we're planning to do as far as our climate change policy, I don't know if we have the political will or the commitment that we really need. I have reservations now about this whole process and what it means.

[...]

Certainly, whenever we look at the \$25 million propaganda campaign that we're committed to – and I was noticing in the paper today that there's a lot of public relations outfits that are interested in getting involved in that, Mr. Speaker.

The days of Murray Smith, Mr. Speaker, going to Washington and the days of George Bush and Richard Cheney are coming to an end. That presidency is going to end here in November – or I should say next January, actually, by the time the new individual will be sworn in – and the Americans may take a different look at us.

Now, the Premier may think this is subversive or whatever he suggests, but the rest of the world is watching, and the rest of the world is not impressed, and the rest of the world buys our oil. I think we should pay attention to what the rest of the world is doing. Hansard, May 28, 2008 (1051)

Kevin Taft on the 2008 Election and Voter Apathy

I want to start my comments, though, observing how the government was elected and how we were all elected. I appreciated the comments from the Member for Airdrie-Chestermere that there are serious problems with the electoral process, that when we have only 40 per cent – or perhaps it will turn out to be even 39 per cent once all the voters are counted – of eligible voters turning out, we've got a real problem. By all accounts this last election was the lowest voter turnout in the history of Canada in terms of all provincial elections since Confederation, and it is something that we all ought to be rightly concerned with.

It also sends another message to all of us that we stand here together, all 83 of us, representing less than half of the eligible voters of this province, that if we walk down the street and encounter 10 people, six of those people didn't vote for any of us. The majority of Albertans didn't vote for any of us, and I think it's important, in particular, for government members to remember that only 1 out of 5 eligible voters voted for this government.

Why do I say that it's particularly important for government members? Because government members, the way the system is set up in Alberta right now, get 100 per cent of the power, 100 per cent of the authority, which they are already exercising in this Assembly, through having only 20 per cent of Albertans support them. I think that puts a particular onus on this government to act with perspective, to act with restraint, to act with particular thoughtfulness,

recognizing that the temptation to exercise the enormous power that you have should be tempered by remembering that only 2 out of 10 eligible voters supported you. I would ask you to consider that. Hansard, April 19, 2008 (36)

Dave Taylor on Homelessness

This government assured us and Albertans that their affordable housing plan would work, but the reality is that rents are still skyrocketing. A recent report by a real estate company has concluded that rents will increase by 14.6 per cent this year in Edmonton, the 13th year in a row that rents have gone up. Once again this government's refusal to take necessary action has put thousands of Albertans at risk of losing their homes.

[...]

Will this government take off its ideological blinders and its blind faith in the market, which clearly is not responding the way they think it should, and bring in a temporary rent cap? Will you help Albertans? Hansard April 24, 2008 (217)

Your donation: your investment in Alberta's future

With a generous tax credit (see table below) for donations, a donation of any size is a great deal for you and a great investment in democracy in Alberta.



Donation	Tax Credit	You Pay Only
\$25	\$18.75	\$6.25
50	37.50	12.50
100	75.00	25.00
200	150.00	50.00
250	175.00	75.00
500	300.00	200.00
1,000	550.00	450.00
1,500	733.33	766.67
2,000	900.00	1,100.00
2,300	1,000.00	1,300.00

* 75 per cent tax credit applies to annual donations of up to \$200, 50 per cent for the next \$900, 33 per cent of the last \$1200. See table for additional tax credit information.

Well, that's it for now. Give us a call at 780-414-1124 (remember the new ten digit dialing) or 1 800-661-9201, email us at office@albertaliberal.com or visit us at www.albertaliberal.com.

Have a great summer everyone!