



# Info Ottawa - Vanier

Honourable Mauril Bélanger, M.P.

Summer 2015



Dear Constituents,

In the next few pages, you will find information on the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award recipients, the redevelopment of the former Rockcliffe Air Base and the push to change the location of the Memorial to the Victims of Communism. You will also find articles on my initiative to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canadian flag, Prime Ministers' Row, the 40th anniversary of Inter Pares and an update on my work as Liberal Advocate for Co-operatives.

Happy reading and enjoy the Summer!

## THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S CARING CANADIAN AWARD

On April 16th, 2015, I visited Collège Catholique Samuel-Genest to take part in a ceremony honoring the recipients of the Caring Canadian Award during *La Semaine de L'Action Bénévole 2015*. Their Excellencies the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada and Mrs. Sharon Johnston were present to bestow the award to Mr. Henri Babin and Ms. Thérèse Desautels, teachers at the school and leaders of "Change My Community".

"Change My Community" was created by students for students to give them the opportunity to participate in remarkable community service experiences. The only school to offer this program in the region, Collège Catholique Samuel-Genest and its director, Mr. Rhéal Charette, seek to introduce students to the values of community engagement and caring through firsthand experience. Students in the program realize the importance of volunteering through their experiences helping others.

As part of *La Semaine de L'Action Bénévole 2015*, their Excellencies spoke with 25 current and former students of the school who were involved in this valuable program. The students explained the diverse set of projects put in place and their positive effects in the community.

Congratulations to Mr. Babin and Ms. Desautels and thank you to everyone involved in "Change My Community" for your continuing efforts.



From left: Mr. Henri Babin, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Mr. Rhéal Charrette, and Mrs. Thérèse Desautels

Photo courtesy of Cplc Vincent Carbonneau, Rideau Hall ©Sa Majesté la Reine du Chef du Canada représentée par le Bureau du secrétaire du gouverneur général (BSGG), 2015

## ROCKCLIFFE AIR BASE REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment of the former Rockcliffe Military Base is one of Ottawa's most anticipated projects. This 125-hectare plot of land is a very significant urban planning opportunity for our region.

It would be useful at this point to review the status of this major project and the exciting opportunity we have to build a new neighbourhood in the heart of our city. In September of this year (2015), the city will likely decide on the Rockcliffe Community Design Plan, based on the Draft Preferred Plan put forward by the Canada Lands Company (CLC). If approved, lots should be offered to builders in 2016 and the first block of homes should be ready for occupancy in 2017, just in time for Canada's 150th anniversary celebrations!

My vision for developing this vast tract of land has always been driven by the need for balance, viability and sustainability, by ensuring the creation of over 5,000 jobs within the community. One point I have continued to insist upon, year after year, is the importance of setting aside sufficient land for non-residential use to ensure a community that is balanced and sustainable, both environmentally and economically.

The CLC plan strikes a good balance between nature and residential, public and commercial buildings. It shows intended sites for different types of housing – detached houses, townhouses, stacked townhouses and apartment buildings – as well as two schools. Several green areas—parks, green roofs and gardens—have been included. Moreover, I am told CLC recently met with Ottawa Renewable Energy Co-operative (OREC), and were impressed by their idea to implement solar energy generation in the area.

Likewise, economic viability has also been considered in the drafting of the proposed plan, including plans to provide for employment within the community as well as access by residents to retail spaces within and outside the community. Discussions are ongoing with the Montfort Hospital and the National Research Council.

Some time ago, I expressed the hope that an artistic element might be introduced into the planning, perhaps in the form of a national sculpture park. A number of people seemed intrigued by the idea.

For more information, you may refer to CLC's Rockcliffe dedicated website [www.clcrockcliffe.ca](http://www.clcrockcliffe.ca).

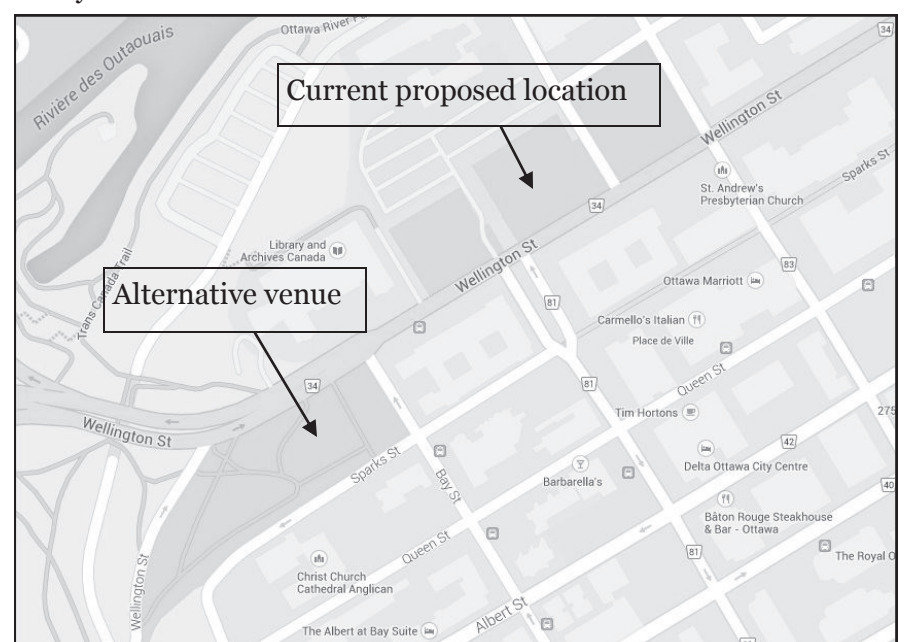
## MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM

On February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015 my colleagues Stéphane Dion, David McGuinty and I, along with Liberal candidates Anita Vandenbeld and Catherine McKenna, indicated at a media conference on Parliament Hill that an alternative site is needed for the future Memorial to the Victims of Communism in Ottawa. This is an issue of concern for many officials and citizens alike including the National Capital Commission, the Mayor of Ottawa and, just recently, the City Council following a motion by Councillor Tobi Nussbaum.

As I indicated to the national media, I recognize that Canada has a responsibility to raise awareness of the millions of victims of communism. So too should we pay tribute to the contributions of all those who took refuge here after fleeing the tyranny of communist regimes.

The primary concern that I have relates to the location of the monument. The Judicial Precinct is not the ideal choice of venue for the memorial. That is where a Federal court should eventually be located.

Suggestions for alternative venues – such as the Garden of the Provinces – have been proposed previously. The Conservative government and the Tribute to Liberty, the proponent of the memorial, should consider it seriously.



## 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR FLAG



Students holding flag posters at Lester B. Pearson High School

Important birthdays don't come by very often but surely the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Canadian Flag was an event worth marking!

In advance of February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015, I took it upon myself to add something extra to Flag Day.

Some 14,000 posters were distributed in 39 schools in Ottawa-Vanier across all four public school boards and some private institutions. In taking the poster to students, I attempted to

relay the story that is our Flag. I also came to know more myself about the origins and significance of the maple leaf as the symbol of our great country.

Across the riding, schools took different approaches to discussing the Flag poster. At Collège Catholique Samuel-Genest, in Carson Grove, students were asked to express their own views of our pennant and then post the Flag side of the posters throughout their school.

At St. Brigid's Elementary School, in New Edinburgh, the information was presented in a lesson on historical timelines.

At École secondaire publique De LaSalle, the entire Flag presentation has been videotaped for posterity.

Congratulations to everyone in the educational community who took advantage of this unique and informative opportunity! I am pleased to hear that many people appreciated this initiative, as evidenced by the following letters:

*I must commend you on the efforts you put into educating people about the history of our flag. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the people of Canada.*

Nilantha Jayamanne-Cairns, Trenton, Ontario

*Thank you for commemorating the anniversary of the Canadian flag. Keep up the good work!*

Roy Christensen, Gloucester

*This is to congratulate you on the excellent newsletter. The flag deserves so much more and you've done this for the people of Ottawa-Vanier.*

John Edmond, Ottawa

*February 15th will always be a special day in my life! Thank you Mr. Bélanger for what you have done for the students in our beloved Canada. Also to remember Mr. Pearson for all his efforts!*

Ellen Losier, Ottawa

Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday to our Flag. We have history to be proud of!



With Joan O'Malley, who sewed the first prototype of the flag on Nov. 6, 1964, and her sewing machine

## CO-OPERATIVES UPDATE

Since I took on the role of Liberal Advocate for Co-operatives in May 2012, I have been fighting for consistent legal frameworks across the country to offer support for further expansion of the sector and remain committed to supporting the co-operative model as a means of mitigating the adverse effects of growing economic disparity.

My first initiative was a motion to set up a special committee of the House. It was approved unanimously. The result was positive with most of the committee's recommendations accepted by the government including the transfer of the responsibility from Agriculture to Industry and allowing housing coops to renew mortgages without having to pay outlandish penalties.

My second initiative was to establish a multi-party parliamentary co-operatives caucus. The idea has been well received, and several Members of Parliament have joined the All-Party Caucus on Co-operatives and held nine productive meetings over the last two years. These meetings have granted representatives from Canadian co-operatives the opportunity to introduce challenges faced by co-operatives in this country and serve to improve our understanding of the co-operative sector. This information contributes to our discussion of potential policy in an effective manner. In addition, many of my colleagues are becoming sensitized to the co-operative model as its positive economic and social effects in our communities become clear.

Over the last three years, I have visited numerous co-operatives involved in several economic sectors and communities across Canada. This past fall, I participated in the 2nd International Summit of Cooperatives in Quebec City, which highlighted the innovative role co-operatives can play in our nation.

The co-operative model is a proven structure that greatly empowers each member, resulting in a wonderful combination of business success and social responsibility. All this plays an important role in the economy and in our communities.

I continue my work to garner support for this important sector and remain committed to the goal of promoting the co-operative model in order to enhance the benefits of the co-operative sector offers to Canadians.

## 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF INTER PARES

Congratulations to Inter Pares for celebrating its 40th anniversary this May! In 1975, Inter Pares was founded by a group of Canadians with the goal of spreading their values of global collaboration among equals, social justice, and feminist thought throughout the world. Recently, the organization has experienced the power of uniting people from across the globe in common cause.

An exchange between women leaders from Guatemala and Burma was initiated in 2002 by Executive Director Rita Morbia and her colleague, Alison Crosby. The women from Guatemala were helping rebuild their communities after years spent as refugees in Mexico, while the women from Burma were refugees in Thailand. After bonding over similar experiences of sexual violence as a weapon of war, the women produced a 'lessons learned' document for returning refugees. In 2014, Inter Pares worker Rebecca Wolsak met with Paw Mu from the Karen Women's Organisation (KWO), which is a counterpart organization in Burma. They were discussing the future return of over one hundred thousand Karen refugees who had spent decades in Thailand camps. Amazingly, the 'lessons learned' document drafted twelve years before was used as a blueprint for this current issue.

Due to the international recognition of wartime sexual violence endured by the Burmese women, those in Guatemala were able to organize a criminal trial for sexual slavery committed by government forces, Guatemala's first such trial on this subject.

It is my pleasure to congratulate Inter Pares on 40 years of positive global impact and I wish this organization the best in future endeavours.

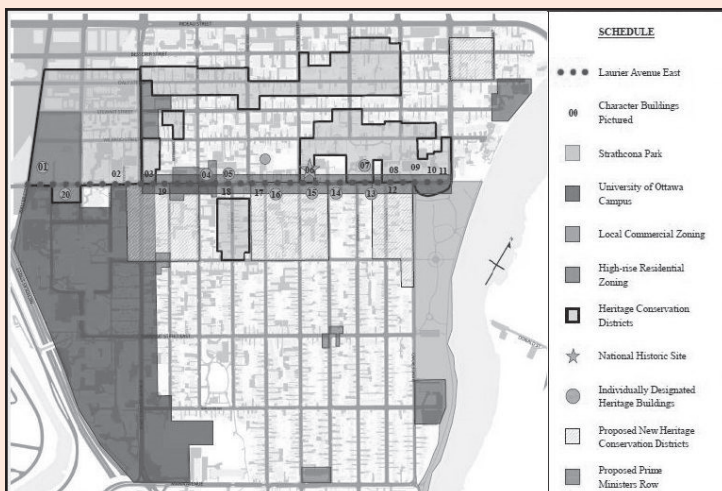
For more information, please visit [www.interpares.ca](http://www.interpares.ca).

## PRIME MINISTERS' ROW

I invite you to join a group of citizens as they work to transform Laurier Avenue into a place that celebrates Canada's past and shapes Canada's future. A place they hope will come to be known as Prime Ministers' Row.

Many people have no idea that Ottawa's Laurier Avenue and surrounding area, from King Edward to Strathcona Park, has been home to 8 Prime Ministers and 7 Fathers of Confederation. This stretch, which once served as a meeting place for our nation's leaders, has been all but forgotten. But if residents have their way, it will soon be recreated as an interactive street museum and gathering place. It will be a lively urban space where innovative programming encourages the exchange of ideas on our nation's future.

In essence, with the sesquicentennial fast approaching, Prime Ministers' Row will offer the literal and figurative meeting point between those who shaped Canada's first 150 years and those who will shape Canada's next 150 years.



You can learn more about this initiative and lend your support by visiting [www.pmr-apm.ca](http://www.pmr-apm.ca). Prime Ministers' Row is a registered not-for-profit welcoming new members.

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