



CPA Activities: The Canadian Scene

Thirty Fourth Canadian Regional Seminar

The 34th Seminar of the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was held in Edmonton from October 11-14, 2012. Twenty-nine legislators from most Canadian jurisdictions attended. Only Quebec, Yukon and the federal Parliament were unable to send delegates.

The Seminar was hosted by Alberta Speaker **Gene Zwozdesky** and Deputy Speaker **George Rogers**. Other Speakers in attendance were **Bill Barisoff**, British Columbia, **Daryl Reid**, Manitoba, **Gordie Gosse**, Nova Scotia, **Carolyn Bertram**, Prince

Edward Island, **Dale Graham** New Brunswick, **Jackie Jacobson**, Northwest Territories and **Hunter Tootoo**, Nunavut.

The first session featured a presentation on the courts and legislators with the former Chief Justice of Alberta, **Allan H. Wachowich**.

The second session was on redistribution and effective representation. The opening presentation was given by **Christopher d'Entremont** of Nova Scotia House of Assembly.

The third session was on new media and information technologies. The presentation was by **Steven Patten** of the Department of Political Science at

the University of Alberta

The topic of the fourth session was government involvement in youth sport and the role governments should play. The presenter was **Ron Schuler** of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly.

The final session featured a presentation by **Cheri DiNovo** of the Ontario Legislative Assembly. She spoke on differences in being a legislator in a minority vs a majority government situation.

Every session provided an opportunity for a lively discussion among the members present.

Aside from the business sessions, delegates were treated to some outstanding Alberta hospitality. This included a



lunch at the Glenmore Club with entertainment provided by Pro Coro Canada, a resident choral ensemble at the Francis Winspear Centre for music. There was also a dinner at Fort Edmonton with entertainment provided by folk singer **Stewart MacDougall** and **Asani**, an internationally renowned aboriginal women's group from Edmonton. The closing banquet was held at Government House. Delegates thanked Speaker Zwodzesky, Deputy Speaker Rogers and staff for making the seminar a great success.

By coincidence the next CPA Regional Conference will also be held in Alberta in July 2013.

Myrna Driedger Elected Vice Chair of CPW

At the 16th meeting of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), held in Colombo, Sri Lanka at the time of the 58th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in September 2012, the CWP Steering Committee elected **Myrna Driedger**, MLA for Manitoba as its Vice-Chairperson. The position is elected on an annual basis with the possibility of re-election for one subsequent term only. Ms. Driedger was elected following the completion of a two year term by the Rt. Honourable **Rebecca Kadaga**, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda.



Myrna is currently the Deputy Leader of the PC Party of Manitoba as well as the Critic for Finance, Civil Service and Crown Corporations. She has also held a number of diverse critic roles in the past including that of Critic for Health, Status of Women, Child & Family Services, and Education. During her time in government, she was the Legislative Assistant to the Minister of Health.

In 2011, Myrna was elected Chair of the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) by her peers from across the country. CWP works for better representation of women in legislatures throughout Canada and the Commonwealth.

Both the Canadian Federal and Regional Branches of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association are delighted that Ms. Driedger has been elected to fulfill this important role with the CWP. As Chair for the Canadian Region of CWP, she has been recognized for her work in fostering closer relationships with Canadian women parliamentarians at both the federal and provincial levels as well as internationally, and in looking to increase the representation of women in politics.

President of the Québec National Assembly re-elected

The new President of the Québec National Assembly is the same as the former President.

Jacques Chagnon was born in Montreal and holds a BA in political science (public administration) from Concordia University. He completed his graduate studies in political science and law at the University of Montreal.



He was President and CEO of the Québec Federation of Catholic School Boards from 1982 to 1985 before being elected MNA for the riding of Saint-Louis in 1985. Re-elected seven times since in a riding now named Westmount-Saint Louis, he has held several parliamentary and ministerial positions in the National Assembly.

In addition to serving as a member or chairman of numerous committees over the years, Mr. Chagnon was Education Minister and President of the Council of Education Ministers of Canada in 1994. From April 2003 to February 2005 he was Minister of Public Security. In April 2007, he became Second Vice-President of the Québec National Assembly.

In April 2011, Mr. Chagnon was elected President of the National Assembly, becoming in the process Chairman of the Committee on the National Assembly, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Parliamentary Reform and President of the Office of the National Assembly. He was re-elected President by acclamation on October 30, 2012 despite the change in government following the September 4 provincial election.

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