

Federal Election Wrap Up

What do the results mean for Canada, and what do they mean for the people of Abbotsford. We take a look at the election results from the perspective of the people of Abbotsford and break down what we can expect from the new Liberal Government.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

PROPERTY TAXES ON THE RISE AGAIN

It seems that no matter how much money the City of Abbotsford has in its bank account, they still want more from you. We go over the numbers to let you know what is really happening with your money!

POLICING, CRIME RATES AND YOUR SAFETY

Just where are we with the crime rates in Canada and here in Abbotsford? Do you feel safe in your home and on the streets? We break down the stats and then see how it might affect local government policy.

IMMIGRATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Two hot topics for the election campaign, but we move away from the talking points and offer up two editorials that may change your "thinking points".

BANMAN LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN

Three issues ago, Bruce Banman appeared on our cover. We spoke to him then about what it was like to be back in politics. His enthusiasm continues as he launches his bid for the Liberal Party nomination in the Abbotsford South riding.

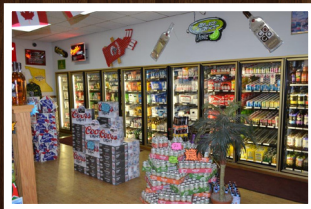
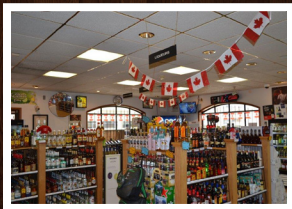
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Conservatives Sweep Abby Ridings! What does this mean for our City?

This issue features a federal election break-down, and a review of the latest Property Tax announcement. Plus we offer up some in-depth editorials on Immigration and the Environment. For those of you who have had enough of politics, we also start a series of stories from the world of Canadian aviation...and more!

Canada hit the polls and re-elected the Justin Trudeau Liberal Government. Abbotsford returned to its Conservative ways by ousting Liberal MP Jatinder Sidhu in favour of Conservative candidate Brad Vis.

This puts our city in an unusual position. A Conservative stronghold in a Liberal country. Yes, it is a minority government, and yes, we “survived” the last Liberal term, but we break down what it will mean for our city.

Be sure to read the column on Refugees submitted by **Richard Belcham, Executive Director, Inasmuch Community Society**. It is a unique perspective on the immigration and refugee experience.

Climate change is now firmly implanted in the top election issues. The two major parties came down very differently on how they want to address it.

In some cases, parties asking for your vote, don’t think it is a problem we need to address at all. For insight into just how people think about climate change, read the latest submission from **James R. Coggins, Anomalies of the Environmental Movement**.

If Federal politics weren’t enough for you, former Mayor and current City Councillor **Bruce Banman** has thrown his hat into the ring, vying for the Abbotsford South Liberal Party nomination. We bring you some pictures and an overview of his campaign launch event.

Not related to politics, we have a great story that kicks off a series featuring tales from **Canadian Aviators**. Give the story a read and then drop us a note at editor@abbotsfordtoday.ca and let us know if you liked it, and if you want more!

We also talk about the safety of our children while going to, and coming home from school. The statistics on school zone injuries will shock you, and we hope it is a wake up call from some. Please read our **Open Letter to the Parents of Margaret Stenersen Elementary**.

Finally, we get stuck into **Policing and Crime rates**. Before you think it is a downer, give it a read as we may surprise you. Even a column on crime can have a happy ending!

The Editor

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What the Federal Election Results Mean for the People of Abbotsford

It's one thing to have an election, form a new government, and move on with life, but it is another thing when that election puts into power a party that few in your city voted for. We break down what this new government will mean for the people of Canada, and also the direct effect it will have on the City of Abbotsford and your daily life.

The number one thing we can take away from the Federal election results is that it was truly about nothing.

Many issues seemed to bubble up, but just as quickly would sink back into oblivion, at least in most voter's minds. On one day, the election would be about housing, another climate change, and on another, infrastructure...but nothing stuck.

None of the parties could even get a good scandal going. Scheer's dual US-Canada citizenship? No one cared. May's disposable cup scandal? No one cared. Trudeau's brown face scandal? No one cared. SNC Lavalin? No one cared.

Absolutely nothing stuck with voters.

That is not to say that certain areas of the country didn't have a keen interest in the outcome. The rest of Canada seems to have forgotten that Trudeau spent more than \$4 billion to buy a pipeline to deliver oil to market, but the people of Alberta, still waiting on those promises, had not forgotten.

Additionally, the people of Quebec voted for a resurgence in the Bloc Quebecois. Does this mean separatism is on the rise again? I think not.

Just like here in Abbotsford, the people of Canada returned to their voting roots. Quebec with Quebec, cities with the Liberals, and suburbs and rural areas with Conservatives.

When people vote along these long standing lines, we often get a minority government. When those governments are inspired to work collaboratively, they can be very productive. The gold standard for that team effort came during Jack Layton's time as leader of the NDP. Holding the Conservatives to account, Jack got a lot of great legislation through the house. He propped up the Conservative government in exchange for environmental protections and much more.

Will we see that kind of deal making in this latest minority government?

Justin Trudeau talks like he wants to be open to that kind of relationship, but I don't see it happening.

A natural ally for the Liberals will once again be the NDP Party. It is very hard for any government to align with the Bloc because they are separatists after all. So, that leaves the NDP, but it is an NDP without many of the seats that Jack Layton had behind him during his most influential time.

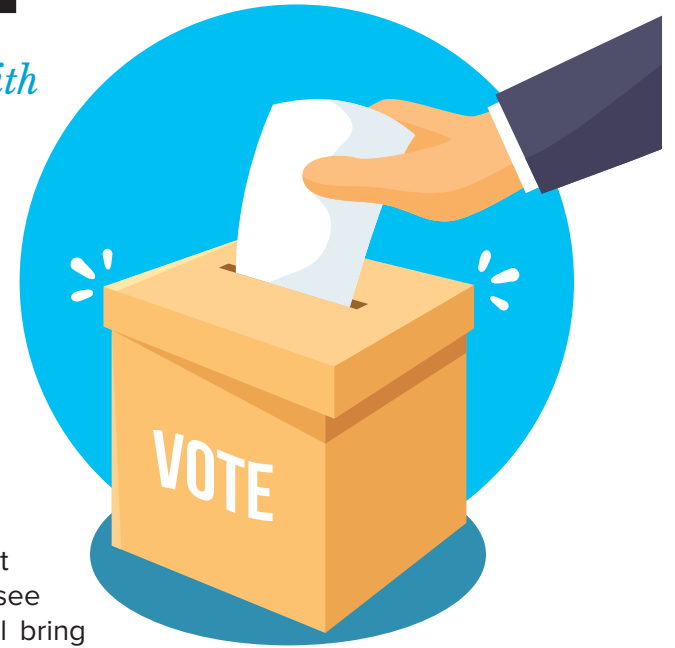
It all comes down to Scheer and the Conservatives. If Scheer can weather the storm and stay on as Leader, the government will last based on his desire to see it do so. I think he will bring down the government as soon as a favourable poll shows that he can. I base that on the fact that I see the same divisiveness creeping into our politics as we see in the US. During the campaign, there was very little debate on policy in the campaign ads. Many ads were based purely on fear. Ads that implied that the country would be lost if Canada voted for the "other" party.

Thankfully, it didn't work with voters. Unlike the US, most Canadians enjoy a pretty decent life. Yes, we can always improve many areas of the country, the economy and the way things work, but no matter who we elect, we don't seem to move that needle very much. Canada has never really been known to "go off the rails" when it comes to decision making. Sure, our governments, even the ones we vote for, make decisions that we don't like, but it never destroys our country. I put it to you that the actions of the US government has more of an effect on our daily lives than our own parliament.

Here in Abbotsford, this can't be more true. I've lived in here for more than 30 years and in that time, I've seen all kinds of Federal Governments. The effect they have on daily life, for the average Canadian, is minimal.

In fact, I would say that sometimes the opposite of what you'd expect is true. For example, when the Conservatives were in power, we received Federal funds to help us build the Clearbrook and McCallum overpasses. However, the money had to be matched and it had to be built quickly. So, we were forced to spend money we weren't ready for, and the designs of those overpasses are absurdly poor.

In my column before the election, I asked if we could skip this one. I foretold that it would mean nothing, and that it was about nothing, and we didn't need it. I predict again, that for as long as the Trudeau government lasts, it will have little to no effect on the people of Abbotsford. Disagree? Send me a note at editor@abbotsfordtoday.ca and we'll publish the best counter-argument in our next issue!



Property Taxes ... on the Rise Again!

You can bet that the latest Property Tax announcement will play out just like every year. The quote will read “staff have worked really hard to keep the increase as low as possible” and yet the increase will come in just under 3%. How do I know this? Simple. You don’t complain, you don’t vote as if taxation is an election issue, and you don’t know the facts around just how much money the City of Abbotsford takes from you every year.



So, I’m going to try and make this column on taxes as simple as possible. **I want you to read it.** It is really important because your local government takes more money from you than anyone else. I want you to care, and that’s why I’ve been hammering away at property taxes for more than a decade.

They are not hard to understand. What makes it confusing is when your local politicians lie, directly to your face, in order to hide the fact that they simply just want more of your money.

This game is no more true than it has been in the last 6 years. Since 2014, property values have skyrocketed, resulting in massive surpluses in property tax revenue for the city. They have then “double-dipped” on this windfall, by raising their overall tax rate (also called mill rate). Over the last 5 years, we have seen property tax increases averaging just under 3%...just like this year. That’s an accumulated 15% increase in property taxes, however, that number is misleading because these increases are “compounded”. The result is that the overall increase is much, much higher.

So, let’s look at the real numbers. Below is a table taken right from the City of Abbotsford’s Financial Statements.

YEAR	CASH ON HAND
2013	\$9,427,000
2014	\$63,389,000
2015	\$103,904,000
2016	\$144,848,000
2017	\$193,038,000
2018	\$225,421,000

https://www.abbotsford.ca/city_hall/finance/annual_reports.htm

As you can see, the City of Abbotsford has \$225 million in the bank. What is it for? We don’t know. During the last election campaign, Mayor Braun was asked what the money was for. He couldn’t, or wouldn’t say. No sitting City Councillor could say what the money was for.

I grant you that we do have a water source issue facing us. The ever-growing price tag for that is the subject of another column, but the top estimate now is \$85 million. So, what is the rest of the money for? Surely with hundreds of millions in the bank, we could try a little harder and maybe not have a 3% property tax increase this year...couldn’t we?

All of this surplus has been accumulated on the backs of increased property values. That is why you see the big jump in cash in hand in 2014. In the previous year, many people in Abbotsford saw the value of their homes skyrocket. What is supposed to happen, and it does happen in other cities, is our mill rate is supposed to go down. That way, the city only collects the same amount of money it has identified in its budget. However, Abbotsford does not, and has never done that. We have always raised our tax rate no matter what has happened with property values.

I want to put this in perspective for you. The City of Abbotsford collected \$143 million in Property Tax revenue in 2018. So, it could give every home owner a cheque for entire year’s worth of taxes, and still have enough cash on hand to build our new water source.

Not clear enough? We still owe \$55 million on our Plan A debt. That project, including the losses of the Heat hockey team, totalled about \$185 million (not including another \$100 million in interest). **Since 2014, your City Council has taken more money from you in 5 years than Plan A will take from you in 25.**

They have also done this in direct contravention to the Community Charter. Remember when we had referendums for Plan A and the Stave Lake Water Project? The City can’t go into debt without your consent, but they also can’t build up a surplus and then spend that money **INSTEAD** of giving you the chance to vote on it. They must tell us what they are going to use the surplus for, or they are taking that money from us illegally.

So, another 3% they don’t need this year...compounded on top of last year’s increase...and rising property values. **Is this an election issue yet?**

Vince Dimanno



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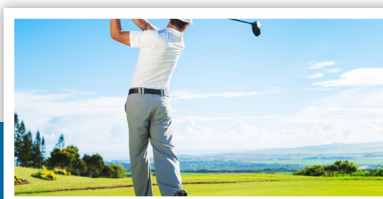
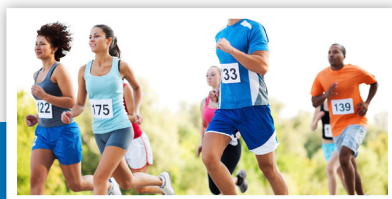
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Refugees Are Like Our Grandparents

There is so much controversy over immigration in our country. Some say we should slow down immigration so that the price of items in demand, like housing, goes down, while others believe that to support a growing economy our population must also continue to grow. Here is a point of view that you may not have thought about!



by **Richard Belcham, Executive Director, Inasmuch Community Society**

Maybe it's easy to look at the folks crossing the border irregularly and claiming asylum and think it has nothing to do with us. Or maybe it's easier to think that these refugee claimants are nothing like us. Or maybe we should simply view it as a modern day phenomenon.

In the Fraser Valley though, and Abbotsford in particular, we'd be wrong.

You don't have to go too far back in Abbotsford's history to find stories of people fleeing persecution. Maybe they're not women's rights activists from the Middle East, or political campaigners from the Horn of Africa, but they were fleeing the horrors of war and persecution for their religious beliefs and identities nonetheless.

And the very real costs of the choices they made are not so very different to refugees we see today.

Take the Mennonites who settled in the Fraser Valley as an example. They left their lives and homes in Ukraine and the Netherlands and Prussia and sought safety and freedom in the relatively new land of Canada.

They too came in search of a better, safer life.

These people – who settled the land in and around Abbotsford, who toiled

and worked to build their new lives, who established the City that we love today – wanted the same things as people who are fleeing their homelands today.

They wanted the freedom to worship in the way they believed to be right, to bring up their children in safety – free from discrimination and persecution – and they wanted to invest in their new community to make it their home.

How quickly we forget those choices our grandparents made though.

We are settled and comfortable and happy. We celebrate the cultures and cooking they brought to Canada in books and at festivals. We often fondly remember our ancestors without recalling the sacrifices they made and their choice to find freedom in Canada.

But the truth is our grandparents and great-grandparents made the same tough choices that refugee claimants make today: the choice to pack what belongings they could carry and venture to a strange country, the choice to leave known dangers for unknown ones and the choice to seek protection in a country that has welcomed the newcomer for generations.

So what are we to think when we see people crossing the border with their families and their belongings and asking for refugee protection? How should we respond to the rhetoric and shouting of the election campaign?

Oscar-winning actor George Clooney said it so clearly when he was talking about his own family’s story of fleeing the Irish famine:

“The simple truth is that all of us here ... are the result of someone’s act of kindness. We all stand on the shoulders of good people who didn’t look away when we were in need.”

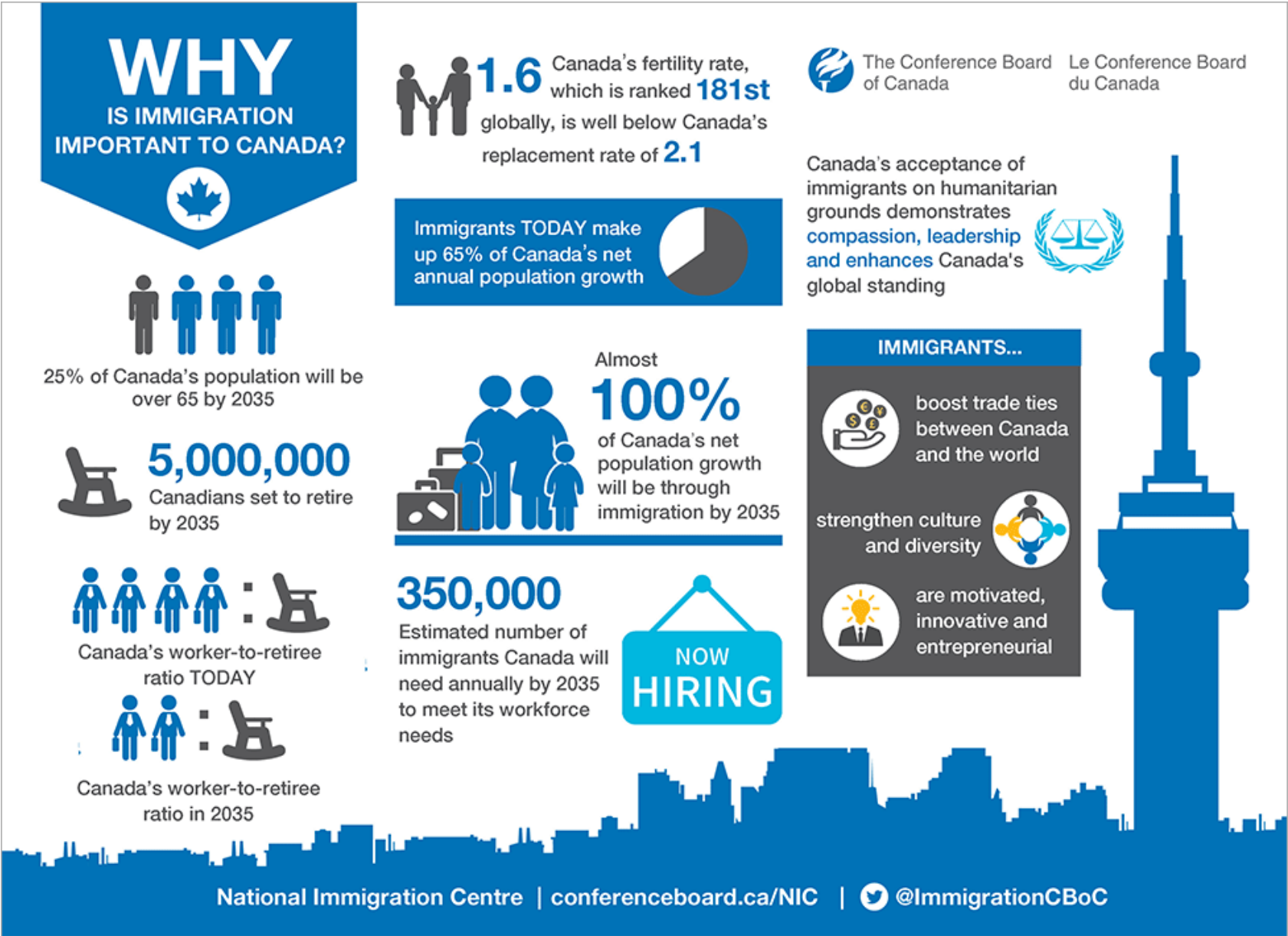
Let’s not forget our shared history and the risks our forebears took. Let’s instead open our hearts and homes to find compassion for the newcomer.

After all, it wasn’t so very long ago that our own families needed the same.



Richard Belcham is Executive Director of Inasmuch Community Society in Abbotsford.

<http://www.inasmuch.ca> - Inasmuch provides transitional housing, settlement services, customized employment counseling, English Language training and basic living support for up to six months following an asylum seeker’s arrival in BC.



An Open Letter to the Parents of Margaret Stenersen Elementary School

School zones are not “safe zones”. My anecdotal experiences driving through the Margaret Stenersen school zone nearly every day, are a horrifying litany of parents making unsafe choices, and passing those examples of bad decision-making on to their children. School zone injuries are on the rise, so my personal feelings are supported by statistics and studies that I hope will inspire the parents at this school, but also schools across Abbotsford, to make better choices. Taking your kids to school, and picking them up, is not to be taken lightly.

It's time for a wake up call.

My conscience won't allow me to wait until a child is hurt before I speak up. Every day, I drive through many schools zones during their peak traffic time. One such school belongs to one of the most dangerous school zones in Abbotsford. That school zone is the one in front of Margaret Stenersen Elementary School.

The crush of traffic around this school is intense. This column could focus on the speeders, it could focus on the people that park in front of the fire hydrant, it could focus on a hundred other relatively small areas of stupidity that could one day cause some real harm. However, there is an urgent need to stop the behaviour that I believe will result in serious injury to a child ... and it is just a matter of time.

Jaywalking. Doesn't sound serious? Let me describe the situation.

Margaret Stenersen is served by 3 crossing guards. 2 at the light on Immel and Old Clayburn and 1 at the light at Saddle. Each of these crossings is somewhere between 40 and 80 steps from the front doors of the school.

On the road is bumper to bumper cars, all backed up at these lights, and, directly in front of the school, there is a double lane for cars headed west.

You can see what is coming right? Parents come out of the school and instead of walking to the corner and crossing with a guard, they walk straight into the street. There is no crossing here. There is no warning to stop cars. They hope for a slowdown and then they dart between cars across 3 lanes, hoping to save a few steps.

Many a time I have watched cars slam their brakes on because they didn't see these walkers between the cars. and were surprised when they jumped out. I have had many such encounters. The closest call came one day when a parent had a younger child in tow who broke free of their grip and ran directly out in front of me. I stopped in time, but took the opportunity to roll my window down and tell the parent that they shouldn't cross here, it isn't safe. Their response? “Everybody does it!” Yes, indeed...every one really does do it, and they will keep on doing it until someone dies.

And someone will die. According to the 2016 BCAA School Safety Report, 80% of surveyed drivers had witnessed dangerous driving behaviours in school zones. Top reasons included congestion, being in a hurry, dis-



tracted driving and poor pedestrian choices. That sounds like the perfect storm that is being created after the bell rings at schools like Margaret Stenersen every single day.

Every year, an average of 72 children are injured in school and playground zones. In a spot survey, in one school zone in Saskatchewan in 2019, 227 pedestrians jaywalked in a single day.

So, parents, when you jaywalk you miss the opportunity to teach your children how to cross safely. Show them the right way, even if it isn't convenient for you. **Their lives depend on it.** Thinking that nothing bad will happen to you and your kids is not enough. They practice what you teach them and the result is alarming. In the US, 5 teen pedestrians are killed each week. While stats like this are not available for Canada, let's not be so naive to think it won't happen to you. How can teens have respect for traffic if their parents don't?

I've done my part and issued this wake up call. Now parents its your turn. The next time someone says “everyone does it”, let's have them mean that everyone walks the 40 steps to the crossing guard. **Simple. Safe.**

Vince Dimanno



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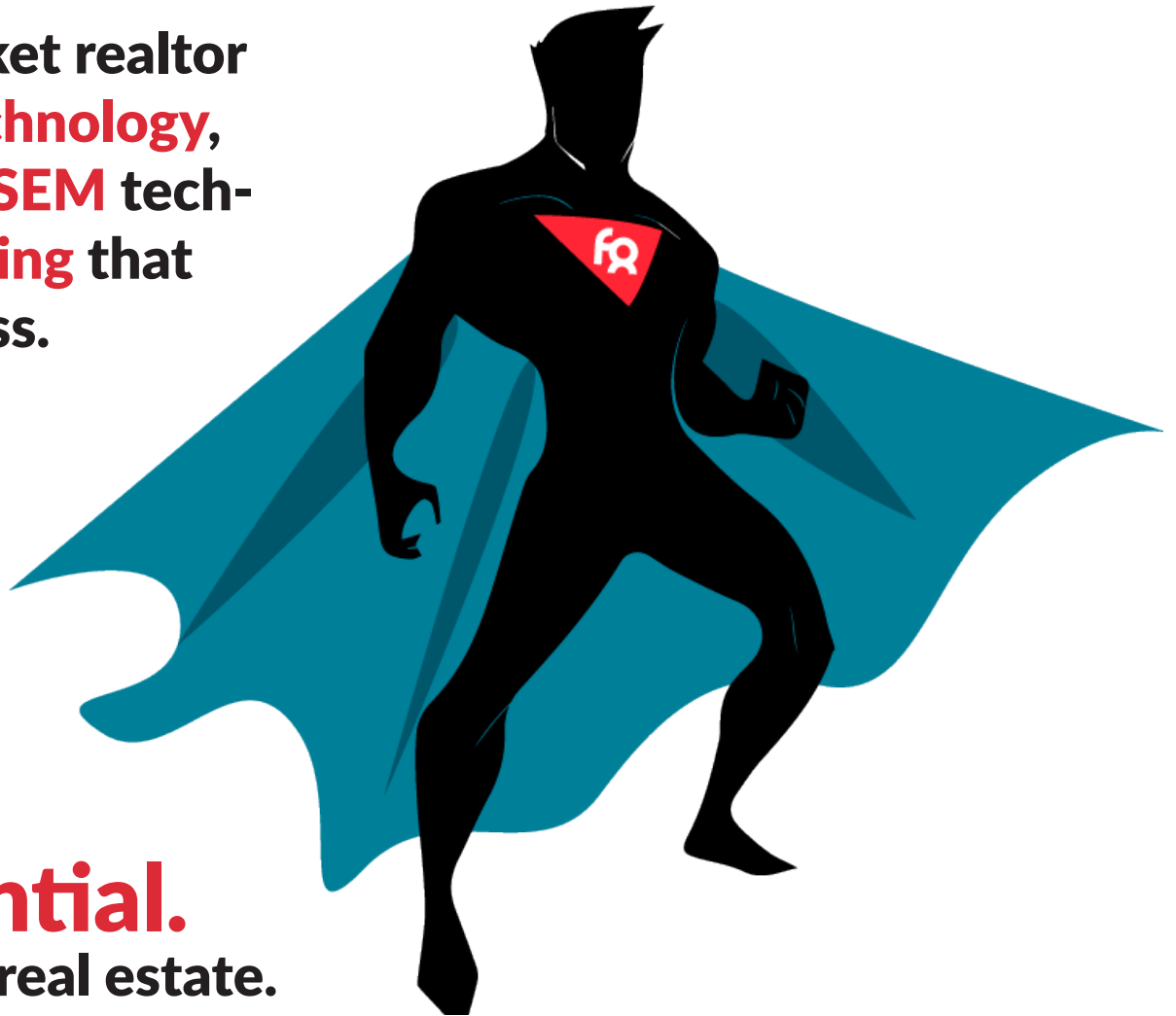


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True Stories of Canadian Aviation

Canadians have a rich history in aviation and the stories of their adventures are amazing. The story of bush pilot Elizabeth Wieben is an entertaining look at some of her time flying in the far north of Ontario.

Submitted by Al Neuman

Elizabeth Wieben was 17 when she earned her pilot's license. The beginning of Liz's flying career, like so many, was flying bush planes in the far north of Ontario. At 19, at the controls of a Beaver aircraft, she had the job of flying mining engineers into remote lakes north of Thunder Bay for their surveys.

On one particular morning she was asked to fly in a 15-man survey crew to Carib Lake. Before landing, Liz circled very carefully over the water and noted the many large rocks jutting out of the lake. She landed safely and the engineers set off into the bush for their day's work. Liz would come back in the evening to return them to camp.

For her take-off, Liz moved slowly out from the dock when suddenly the right side of the plane heaved up and became stuck on a rock that was just under the surface of the water. Liz shut down and got out on the float to take a look. Having been previously stranded in the bush, Liz discovered quickly that getting wet meant spending miserable hours in wet clothing. She decided the smart thing to do is take her clothes off. She threw her clothes into the rear of the plane and with just her heavy socks and work boots, Liz positioned her shoulders between the two spreader bars above the floats and started to heave using the bars as a pivot point.

She heaved and heaved and heaved. Slowly, ever so slowly, she managed to inch the float off the rock. For a five-foot-two woman to move a Beaver aircraft off a rock is nothing short of a miracle. Before Liz could enjoy the moment of her accomplishment, the plane began to sink. Liz jumped into the cockpit and fired everything up.

On full throttle, the plane refused to move with Liz knowing the float is filling up with water and she was in big trouble. Then, slowly, slowly the Beaver began to move but was just wallowing in the water. As the plane was moving at 35 miles an hour, Liz realized she was just about at the end of the lake with trees ahead. With much skill, Liz put both feet on the left rudder and skidded the Beaver around a 90-degree turn, picked up more speed and got her airborne.

Liz was now at 7,000 feet in the air with a big hole in a float and no clothes on. She decided to get on the radio to see if she could get

someone on the air. Luckily a pilot she knew flying a hundred miles north of her responded "Hi Liz, How is your day going? Need some help?"

After explaining that she had holed a float, he suggested that she bring the plane to his base camp where he had beaching gear and a mechanic to repair the float for her. She checked her fuel gauge, checked the compass and set a heading for his base camp.

But now she had another big problem to solve. She just could not image the level of embarrassment she would encounter landing her plane nude at his "men only" base camp.

She had to figure a way to get her clothes from the rear of the plane. Liz decided to trim the controls to put the nose down and get into a slight dive, then she ran back and grabbed some of her clothes.

While she was doing this, the nose came up and the airspeed was decreasing. Liz grabbed the controls, trimmed to a level altitude and put on some of her clothes. A second effort she retrieved the rest of her clothes and finally Liz was dressed again. She put on her lifejacket and undid her boots so she could slip out of them in case the plane sank in the landing. She landed on one float, kept the other float out of the water and ran it right up on the beach. Later in the day the float was fixed and she flew back to Carib Lake to pick up the miners. They had no idea what kind of day Liz had and she wasn't about to tell them.

Photo is of Elizabeth Wieben, now retired in front of her own personal airplane in 2002.

Courtesy Al Neuman



Policing, Crime Rates, Your Safety and Quality of Life... It's Better Than You Think!



If you watch the news, or follow any media, it seems that the world is full of crime, danger and hate. The truth is that it is just the opposite. This column presents the facts and then translates what the real statistics on crime mean for the future of the Abbotsford.

There is one undeniable fact about crime in Canada...over the last 35 years, the number of reported incidents have trended down. Even with a slight uptick in the last 2 years, we are still at crime rates that equal those of the 1970's.

But what does that mean?

We get blasted on a daily basis with stories of violent crime, home invasions and robberies. The truth is that the news media thrive on those stories. Recall the old media trope “If it bleeds, it leads”.

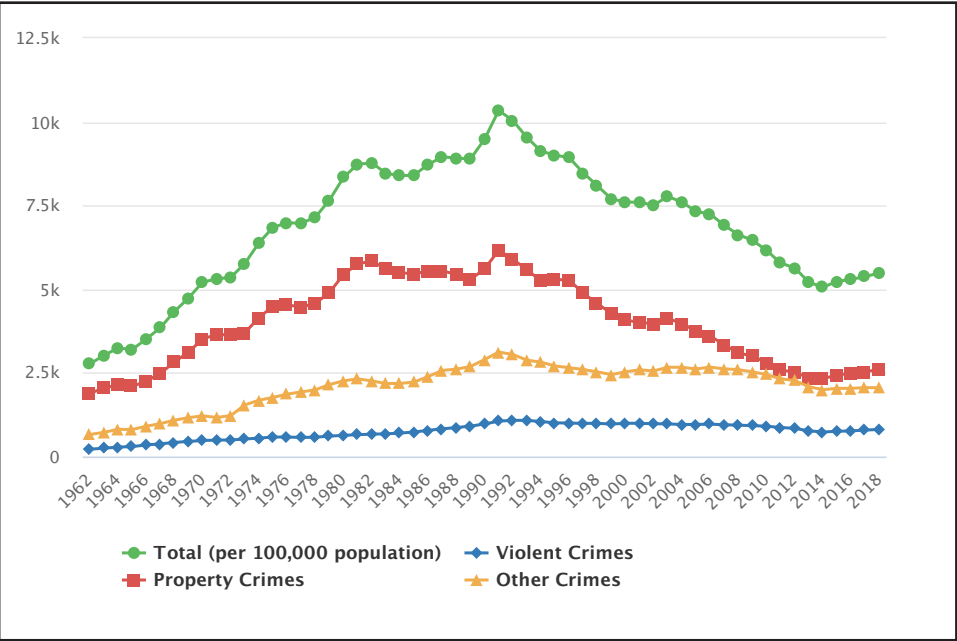
With access to stories and data more readily available because of the internet, each violent incident is picked up and reported on in ways that were historically not available. For example, just last week, a horrible murder of a teen outside their school was reported on nearly every single media platform available to a human being. 30 years ago, it would have been reported by the local newspaper, radio and TV news, but it may not have made it onto the national news media.

So, our perception of violence all around us correspondingly goes up. Even though this incident was in Hamilton, Ontario, the media make us feel like it could be us next, or that it was right next door.

Now, don't get me wrong. Violence occurs all over. We have certainly had our fair share here in Abbotsford. On many an occasion, we have been labeled as the “Murder Capital of Canada”, but even the statistics that support that moniker are circumspect. We've never actually had the most murders in Canada, just the most per 100,000 of population.

Let's look at the raw numbers and do some comparisons. To begin with, in Figure 1 we can see the overall downward trend in crime rate. This trend is even more effective due to population. What I mean by that, is when our population was much smaller, people didn't live as closely packed

Figure 1: Overall Crime Rate in Canada (1962-2018)



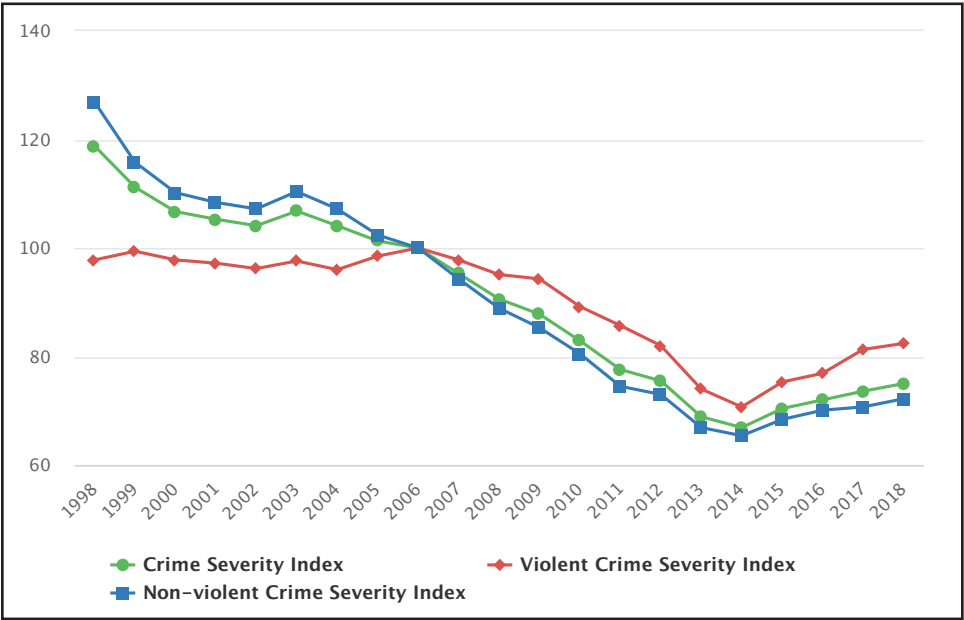
as they do today. Crime concentrates around urban areas and so, as those areas get bigger and populations densify, crime rates go up. So, as our crime rate goes down, it also goes down against the population trend. In other words, people are generally more and more well behaved. This holds especially true for major crimes like murder.

Table 1: Number of Murders in Select Cities

City (CMA)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Abbotsford-Mission	4	3	6	9	6
Halifax	5	8	12	8	7
Saskatoon	8	10	10	5	8

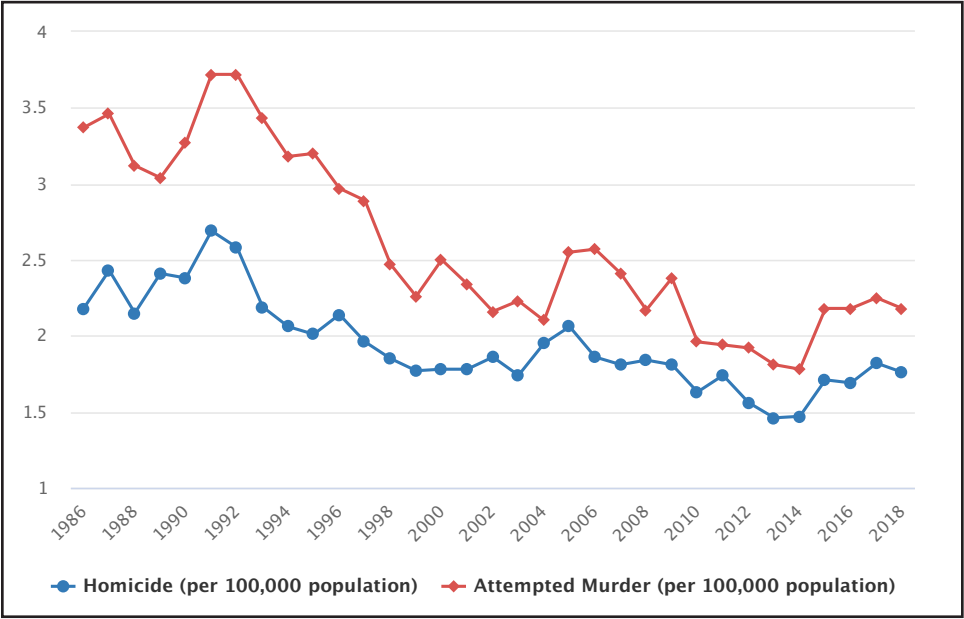
As you can see on Table 1 from the previous page, Abbotsford does not have a many more murders than anywhere else. Additionally, with a few notable exceptions, a large portion of our murders are gang related.

Figure 2: Crime Severity Index in Canada (1998-2018)



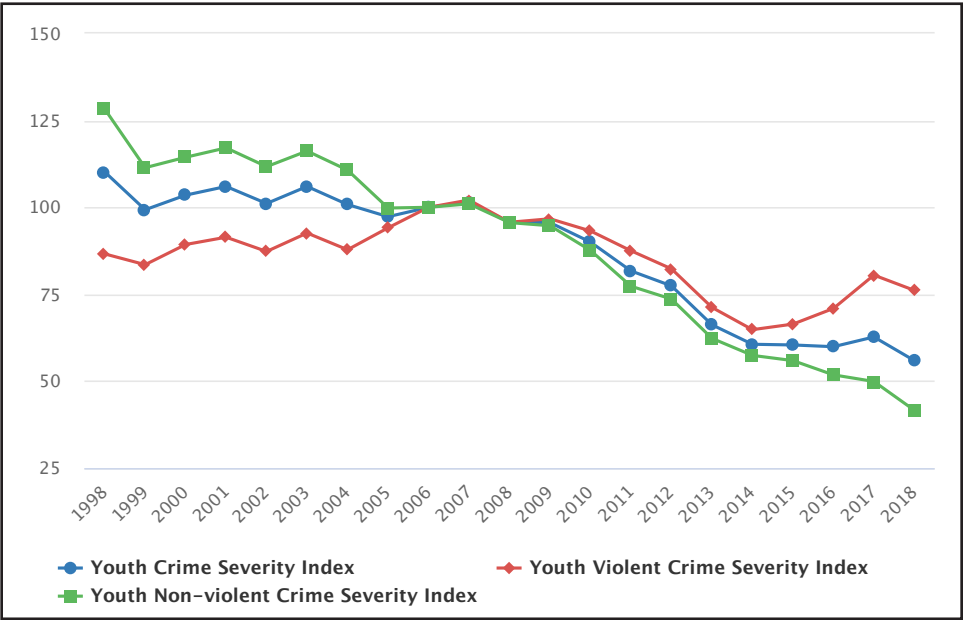
We can follow this decreasing trend in all crime in Figure 2 where we see an a downward trend in the Crime Severity Index. This index is a good indicator of how much safer our communities are. As you can see, this is across Canada, and when we drill down into Abbotsford, our city is leading the downward trend by dropping below both National and Provincial averages in most areas of crime.

Figure 3: Attempted Murder and Homicides in Canada (1986-2018)



It seems that education is the key lower crime rates. As we educate our children to the consequences of their actions, and show them that a life of crime will simply impede them from the life they really want, crime ceases to be an option. This is apparent in Figure 4 on Youth Crime at the top of the page.

Figure 4: Youth Crime Severity Index in Canada (1998-2018)



It is important to note that the raw numbers matter here. In Figure 4, approximately 40 non-violent crimes are occurring per 100,000 youths. In Abbotsford that translates to only about 55 incidents per year. Think of that in perspective. In this entire city, over the course of a full year, Abbotsford youth committed only 55 non-violent crimes. Only 20 years ago, that number was more than double. **So, why am I telling you all this?**

Simply put, it is because statistics and facts like these must start to inform out public policy.

Every year it seems, the City of Abbotsford receives a new request for more police officers, a new police building and more and more budget. In a recent USA Today article (usatoday.com Feb 12, 2019) experts say there is little evidence that more cops mean less crime.

In fact, most increases in police numbers occur only after a rise in crime. Since crime is falling, experts agree that it is the scheduling and deployment of officers that is critical, not the addition of new ones.

New York is a shining example of a city making a conscious decision to reduce the number of officers on its police force, and yet crime continued to go down. James McCabe, a retired New York Police Department official who travels the country as a police staffing consultant, said “It’s not what you have, it’s what you are doing with them.”

The NYPD’s staffing is based on “workload allocation models” which are time-consuming and require statistical skills most police departments lack. However, with the City of Abbotsford facing more requests for officers, and more than \$60 million for a new police building to house them all in, perhaps putting resources into the science of staffing will serve our city over the long run much better than a new police building.

I think it can be boiled down to **“work smarter, not harder”**. I’m sure our friends at the APD will agree with that sentiment and we can rest easy knowing that we are safer than we have ever been, and we might save a tax dollar or two as well!



National Anti-Bullying Charity Needs Urgent Assistance



BullyingCanada is seeking volunteers from across the country to help ensure our services are available for all youth, whenever needed. BullyingCanada receives, on average, more than a thousand requests a day, and to provide our services on a 24/7 basis, and needs volunteers for several positions.

To keep up with demand, **BullyingCanada** is seeking some individuals to assist with administrative and development tasks. In addition to various administrative or data entry roles, **BullyingCanada** is especially in need of people with some amount of experience with grant applications or fundraising.

“With the start of the new school year, we are seeing an increased number of youths reaching out for assistance. To ensure we’re able to serve them best going forward, BullyingCanada needs several volunteers to help with a variety of tasks. We know that many people find working directly with youth rewarding—and we always have opportunities for that—but we have some less glamorous work that is just as vital to our mission. For many people, they prefer it to working with youth directly as it tends to be less triggering—the stories we hear from bullied youth can be exceptionally upsetting.”

*Rob Benn-Fenette, O.N.B.
Co-Founder & Co-Executive Director*

BullyingCanada provides support to all its volunteers to ensure they’re set up for success. Volunteers for the registered charity work remotely but under the close supervision of the organization.

Volunteering with **BullyingCanada** is an exciting opportunity for those looking to give back or develop experience in nonprofit administration or development. If you’re interested in helping, but prefer to work directly with youths, we are always in need of Virtual and SMS Buddies, or you may support us financially with a tax-deductible donation.

Interested adults may apply by going to **BullyingCanada.ca/Volunteer**. All applicants should have a computer with reliable high-speed internet access and a passion for engaging with our mission. Additionally, candidates will be required to undergo a federal, criminal background check, and they must be willing to commit to volunteering regularly.

BullyingCanada Inc is Canada’s premier—and first youth-created—anti-bullying charity. Founded by Rob Benn-Frenette, O.N.B. and Katie Thompson (Neu) in 2006, **BullyingCanada** has served hundreds of thousands of youth across the country by, amongst other initiatives, providing individual support, extensive resources, case management, scholarships, and presentations to schools and organizations.

Bruce Banman Launches Campaign for Abbotsford South Riding

Banman's bid for the Liberal nomination in the Abbotsford South riding kicked off In October at Gian's Sweetshop & Restaurant.



About 130 people dropped by to show their support for Bruce Banman as he kicked off his campaign for the Liberal nomination in the Abbotsford South riding.


Even though we are in the middle of a Federal Election, Banman is starting his bid for the spot early.

The former Mayor and current City Councillor has outlined some of the issues he feels are important and/or have been overlooked by other politicians. Banman is focused on housing affordability, the homeless issue in Abbotsford, and farm land cost.

He is kicking off his campaign with a straight forward appeal:

"I want to be your voice in Victoria. Everyone knows that I love this region. I also have the experience to understand many of the problems we are faced with are provincial responsibilities. I am here, now, proudly putting my name forward as the contestant for the BC Liberal Nomination for the Riding of Abbotsford South.

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What does that mean? I want to be your voice in Victoria. I'm the person for the job. I have the experience and the passion but I can't do this alone. I need the people of Abbotsford to join me, support me and take part in making their community the best it can be."

To find out more about Bruce Banman his bid for the Abbotsford South nomination, visit his web site noted below, or drop Bruce an email at brucebanman1@gmail.com



VIEW BRUCE BANMAN'S WEB SITE

<https://brucebanman.com>

Christmas Entertainment

Be sure to get in the Christmas spirit by checking out the two shows below!

Christmas with Sinatra

Under the Creative Direction of London based Renee James Productions International and Award-Winning International Producer Anthony James comes the much anticipated holiday concert Christmas with Sinatra featuring the music of legendary crooner Frank Sinatra.

Christmas with Sinatra, the holiday concert, features outstanding musical arrangements by the Bruce James Orchestra, elegant staging and lighting by Award-Winning Producer Anthony James, and rich vocals by International Performing Artist, and Vancouver's own, Dane Warren.

December 17th, 2019 at 8pm

Matsqui Centennial Auditorium - 32315 South Fraser Way

Tickets: VIP - \$50, General Admission - \$15 to \$40, Groups 10+ 10% off

(email eliteproducer10@gmail.com for group tickets)

Buy Tickets now at: <http://www.eventbrite.ca/abbotsford>



DANE WARREN

Holiday Favourite, Christmas Presence, Returns December 21st!

Gallery 7 Theatre is proud to partner with Vancouver's Pacific Theatre to bring the Fraser Valley a unique holiday presentation called Christmas Presence, a highly entertaining and festive collage of seasonal music and storytelling fit for the entire family.

"This show is so different and unique," says Ken Hildebrand, artistic director of Gallery 7 Theatre. "With all the hustle and bustle of the season, Christmas Presence gives audiences a chance to sit back, enjoy some outstanding music and listen in on some entertaining stories that gently remind us of the true meaning of the season".

Affectionately dubbed the un-slickest show in town, Christmas Presence in the Valley will feature musical guests Carolyn Arrends, Garth Bowen, Spencer Capier, Rick Calhoun, Michael Hart, Chris Hawley, The Kwerks, and John Ochsendorf. These talented musicians will be joined by Gallery 7 Theatre's Artistic Director, Ken Hildebrandt and actor & director Kaitlin Williams, for the story-telling portion of the evening.

Christmas Presence happens **December 21, 2019 at 8PM** at the **Matsqui Centennial Auditorium**, 32315 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford. Tickets are available online at pacifictheatre.org or in person at **House of James** in Abbotsford.



JON OCHSENDORF



MICHAEL HART

Anomalies of the Environmental Movement

According to most polls, climate change and the environment made it into the top 5 election issues facing Canadians. James Coggins dissects just where this upward trend in awareness may be coming from.

by James R. Coggins

One of the anomalies of the environmental movement is the sources of its strength. Support for the Green Party varied widely in the 2015 federal election, but where it produced its best results was somewhat puzzling.

The greatest area of strength by far was on Vancouver Island, where Elizabeth May won the only Green seat. The other area of strength in British Columbia was Vancouver and its closest suburbs. The party polled poorly in most of the interior of British Columbia.

The Green Party also did poorly in the Prairies. In Ontario, its best showing was in smaller cities such as Guelph, Barrie, and Thunder Bay.

In New Brunswick, its best showing was in the city of Fredericton. The Green Party also did well in Prince Edward Island.

But the Green Party results are not the only indicator of environmental commitment. The Liberal Party under Justin Trudeau also championed the environmental cause. That party's greatest strength across the country was in big cities such as Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. The Conservative Party, which was considered the weakest party on the environment, found its greatest strength in rural areas, the agricultural areas and the wilderness areas.

The strength of the Green Party on Vancouver Island would seem to disprove this generalization, but it doesn't really. The Green Party found its greatest strength in the city of Victoria and along the eastern coast of the Island, including the smaller islands between Vancouver Island and the Mainland. These areas have large populations of retirees (particularly professional people who practised their careers in cities farther east); communities of artists and writers; and people who work in the tourist industry. Opposition to the Trans-Mountain pipeline also boosted environmental concern in that area.



The Urban Factor

The irony, then, is that the environmental movement finds its greatest strength in cities. Perhaps those who live surrounded by steel and glass high rises develop a longing for green forests and open seas.

It is odd that environmentalists are thus more often people with the least experience with the environment. Their food and other goods come to them through stores. They do not have the experience of farmers, fishermen, and loggers, who know that the necessities of life often have to be wrested from the environment by hard work at great cost and even with some destruction. People in rural areas have a more realistic and practical experience of nature, while city dwellers can afford the luxury of maintaining an idealistic view.

Similarly, for city dwellers, electricity comes from an outlet in the wall. This helps explain the popularity of electric vehicles and of wind and solar power in cities. Electricity, whether derived from water, wind, or the sun, is generated in rural areas and mostly consumed in the cities. Electric vehicles and rapid transit work well in cities, but don't make sense in rural areas. There is no transit in rural areas, they don't make electric combines to harvest

wheat, and electric vehicles are impractical in areas such as the Prairies, where there are long distances between charging stations and where farmers have to drive 30 miles on rough roads just to pick up the mail. Besides, with no mountains and waterfalls, hydroelectric power is impossible on the Prairies, and electricity there is often generated by burning fossil fuels.

The Wealth Factor

The urban nature of the support for the environmental movement may also indicate that there is a socio-economic component to that support. For instance, the Green Party's best showing in the Vancouver area was in the wealthy suburbs of North Vancouver and West Vancouver. The upper middle class, including university elites, the media, and other members of the intelligentsia, can afford to pay more in carbon taxes and buy more expensive, electric vehicles. They are also not concerned about the job losses (the loss of working class jobs, that is) that might result from environmental protection. This is not true of the working class, including the working poor. Similarly, environmental activism is a luxury afforded only to those with leisure time. The working classes are often too busy working to take part in demonstrations and too poor to travel to protests and environmental conferences. If you ask what Elizabeth May's job was before she became an environmental activist, the answer is that she never really had one. Similar to Justin Trudeau, she has dabbled in a number of occupations but never seems to have had to work for a living.

It is significant that the early environmental movement in Europe was seen as "a reaction to the urban conditions of the industrial towns." It was often supported by the landed gentry, who were living off the wealth accumulated by their ancestors and who saw the industrial revolution as a threat to their own power and wealth. They did not want the lower classes intruding into their forests and estates to gain food, building materials, and other supplies.

The Romantic Movement

Many supporters of the environmental movement are extremely passionate about the issue, sometimes to the point of obsession. This is partly obscured by the fact that the environmental movement is also strong in universities and intellectual circles. But the philosophical roots of the environmental movement lie in the Romantic Movement of the 19th century, which arose in reaction against the Enlightenment, which valued reason and science. Its emphasis was on "emotion and individualism as well as glorification of all the past and nature." It presented a view of nature that was "unified and organic" (a view that derived from philosophy rather than scientific study of nature) and suggested that understanding nature required "an attitude of admiration, love and worship...a personal response." Theologically, it found ultimate meaning in Deism (the idea that religious knowledge comes from observation of the natural world rather than revelation) and the human spirit rather than in organized religion. In one sense, in spite of the many scientific studies which endorse it, the deep commitment to the environmental movement is based more on emotion than on reason and science. This helps explain why one of the people considered to be a leading expert in the environmental movement is a 16-year-old girl from Sweden.

The Romantic Movement was promoted by some of the radicals who provided the ideology for the French Revolution and by English poets such as

William Wordsworth. They put forth the idea that there is a balance in nature and it will function best if humans leave it alone - even though this belies that fact that many species have gone extinct in the past without human intervention.

As a corollary, early leaders of the Romantic Movement, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, also promulgated "the myth of the noble savage," the idea that indigenous peoples live in idyllic harmony with nature and are more noble and altruistic than urbanized people. It is significant that Rousseau lived his whole life in Europe, mostly in cities, and his understanding of the state of nature was theoretical rather than practical; his knowledge of indigenous people was secondhand. Again, in the modern world, support for indigenous land claims and aid to First Nations people seems higher in urban areas than in rural areas, where people rub shoulders with actual aboriginal people and whose land (and the jobs that go with it) could be taken to settle land claims. In contrast to the Romantic Movement and the myth of the noble savage is Hobbes's view that life in a state of nature is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

One of the great strengths of the environmental movement is its idealism, its desire to restore a more perfect world. One of the great weaknesses of the environmental movement is its idealism, its belief that the industrial revolution can be reversed and we can go back to living in a harmonious state of nature without cost, without pain and suffering, and without severe economic dislocation.



James R. Coggins (www.coggins.ca) is a writer, editor and historian from Abbotsford, BC



VIEW LINKS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS ARTICLE

- 2015 Federal Election:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Results_of_the_2015_Canadian_federal_election_by_riding
- A reaction to the urban conditions of the industrial towns:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_movement
- Romantic Movement:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_movement
- Romantic Movement - Emphasis:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanticism>
- Deism:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deism>
- The Myth of the Noble Savage:
https://www.jstor.org/stable/3983879?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
- Rousseau:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Jacques_Rousseau

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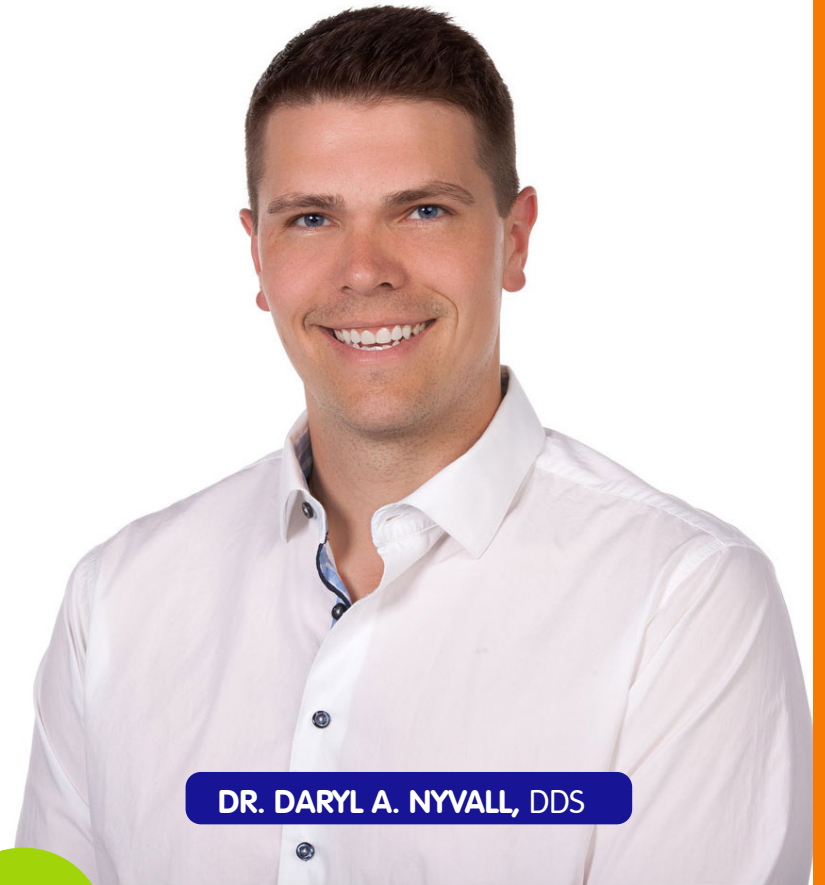


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