

Alberta Greens

50 cents for non-members

Newsletter

Volume 4 Number 5

October 1992

Greens Contest Calgary By-Election

Sol Candel ran for the Alberta Greens in the July by-election in Calgary-Buffalo. Sol Candel received about 2-1/2% of the votes. This is a respectable showing for a first campaign by Greens in a riding. More importantly, however, all who worked with Sol received a valuable lesson in campaign strategy and organization. Several different ways to contact voters were tried; mostly we relied on distributing a pamphlet that briefly described Sol Candel and the Alberta Greens without wasting too many natural resources (unlike all of the other candidates!).

Sol soon settled into the role of candidate, and was very well received at a forum on Freedom of Information. His speech is published later in this newsletter. Sol also participated in a TV interview, and managed to briefly turn the spotlight from the 3 'major' candidates bashing each other to environmental issues. However, the attention of voters seemed to be on teaching the current government a lesson, and most of the voters decided that voting Liberal was the way to do that.

For the future, there are now several people that know the basics of running a campaign, what has to be done, who has to sign what, how much the necessities cost, and how much time it takes to cover an area. We expect to do better in the next by-election we run a candidate in. And read on to find out about that!

Another By-Election ... in Three Hills

The next by-election for the Alberta Greens will be in the Three Hills constituency on October 26th, the same day as the constitution referendum. A cynic would say it was to avoid anybody noticing Don Getty's PCs lose another seat. Three Hills contains not only its namesake town but also Airdrie and Trochu, famous because of the dithering of our government over who to give the contract to recycle tires to. We are planning to run a candidate, and would appreciate any help, of time or money. For more information, or to offer your assistance, please contact David Crowe at 289-6609 or Madeleine Oldershaw at 282-4788.

International Green Gathering at Pigeon Lake

Members of the Green Party of Canada met with Greens from the US, Mexico and Europe, for a week of discussion and policy making at the end of August and beginning of September. The final two days were devoted to a meeting of "Canamex", an association of Canadian, US and Mexican Greens. During this meeting plans were made for the election of delegates who, together with representatives of other continents, would attend World Green meetings. Some of the topics covered by the Canada Greens were:

- The Canadian Constitution
- Federal Election Strategy
- Green Economics
- Free Trade
- Eco-Feminism
- Forestry.

Press releases were written on self determination for Quebec and the First

Nations and a National Leaders Debate. A Canamex document opposing NAFTA, the US/Mexico/Canada free trade agreement, was endorsed. A policy on issue funding was approved which will enable the Federal Greens to again make donations to environmental organizations. The accommodations at Pigeon Lake were perfect, and, although the weather was not, delegates from the southern US and Mexico enjoyed the snow. It was encouraging, when every day brings more bad environmental news, for Greens from many countries to meet and share their ideas and concerns. A global green organization may be a powerful force for change in all countries. There are tapes of many of the presentations and discussions. Call the Green office in Calgary for more information (403•269•2384).

Preserve Paskapoo Slopes!

The Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society is dedicated to preserving the north-facing slopes of the Bow River valley in Calgary, from Patterson Hills to Artists View, as a natural park. The proposed park would include a setback along the top of the hill to preserve the natural profile.

The Paskapoo Slopes area is a unique mix of ecosystems within Calgary, containing mixed aspen and balsam forest, spring-fed ravines and native grass ridges. This provides a diverse habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals.

The Slopes are a prominent natural feature of Calgary. At about half the size of Nose Hill Park they are one of the most significant remaining unprotected natural areas in the city. Preservation would provide a critical link in the Bow River wildlife corridor and park system through the

eventual linkage to Edworthy Park, Bowness Park and possibly the Elbow River.

Two companies own large parcels of land between the Patterson Hills development and Canada Olympic Park. United Management is proposing a housing development, while S.C. Properties, an Alberta Crown Corporation, may sell its land to a buyer interested in commercial development. A concept plan for development of the area west of Canada Olympic Park is also being developed and the City of Calgary is preparing an Area Structure Plan.

The Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society is seeking assistance from concerned citizens. You can help:

- Contact the aldermanic candidates in your area, Mayor Duerr and the Director of City Planning, Mr. Parker, to express your desire to preserve the Paskapoo Slopes.
Phone: 268-2445
Write: City of Calgary, PO Box 2100, Calgary, AB T2P 2M5.
- Contact your local MLA, the MLA for the Slopes area (Bonnie Lang), Premier Getty and Treasurer Dick Johnston to stop S.C. Properties from selling the land it owns (we own?) for development and to ask that this land be preserved in its natural state.
Phone: RITE Operator 297-6161 for Edmonton numbers.
Write: Room 132, Legislature Building, Edmonton, AB T2P 2M6

If you are interested in learning more about the Paskapoo Slopes Preservation Society, call Annette at 286-8588 or Jim at 288-6059.

Sol Candel's Address to the Calgary Buffalo All-Candidates Forum

Sol Candel gave the following speech to the only candidates forum in the July Calgary-Buffalo by-election.

“The Green Party of Alberta has the same problem as Canadian Tire or Goodyear. Their problem is that people think they just sell tires. Our problem is that most people think that we are just an environmental party. But we are not, and I hope I can show you how Green thinking relates to today's topic: Freedom of Information.

The Green Party wants to see more political, economic and social decentralization. This is necessary for a sustainable economy based on self-reliance for individuals and the community. For a sustainable economy to work, citizens must be involved in political decision making. That also means that citizens need to have access to information from their government.

We are a long, long way from having a sustainable economy in Alberta. We are still not making the correct economic and business decisions, nor do we have effective citizen participation in political decision-making other than at election time.

When I did my thesis on political decision making at the London School of Economics, I found that the best political decisions were made when information flowed freely. There is the danger of information overload, and it may take longer to make decisions - but the best decisions are made when elected leaders and citizens do take time, and agonize over solutions to their problems. We are faced with complex decisions; if the solution seems easy, then we are probably making a mistake.

The Conservative government of Alberta alienates citizens from decision making. Public hearings are exercises in public relations. The government gives citizens a change to yell and scream so they can go home feeling better. Then nothing needs to be changed. Our government also routinely hides information from the

public. When information is released it is another exercise in public relations to avoid altering decisions which have already been made, and which cannot be altered ... regardless of the facts.

I will illustrate this with two examples of government paternalism and anti-democratic practices. Both examples are of regulatory boards which have enormous power. The first is the Energy Resources Conservation Board. It operates under a mandate that has not changed since 1938. The pro-development bias of this board has led it to approve all but a couple of the tens of thousands of oil and gas applications it has received. And those rejected were not on environmental grounds in spite of the vigorous protests of public interest groups. It is not surprising to learn that many members of this board have come from oil companies. Many go on to sit as directors on the boards of these same companies after leaving the ERCB.

Another regulatory board of government appointees is the Natural Resources Conservation Board. This board is currently holding hearings on the proposed 3 Sisters development in Canmore. The members of this board are not interested in hearing about displaced wildlife. They have a narrow mindset oriented toward development, and have little interest in absorbing all the information and making a rational, balanced decision.

The problem with these regulatory boards is that the members are appointed by the government and therefore are not objective or independent. The members need to be selected by an independent selection committee. Otherwise the outcome is predetermined, and the process is a waste of time and money.

This cynical governing makes for a cynical citizenry. A Freedom of Information Act is one step towards giving the public control over their lives. The Green Party of Alberta applauds the government of British Columbia's proposed Freedom of Information bill. Alberta should follow British Columbia's example. Freedom of Information should apply to municipal governments too, and to their regulatory boards. In Calgary, for example, we have several regulatory boards like Health, Parks & Recreation and Planning. How they select

members is a mystery to ordinary citizens.

In conclusion, the Government of Alberta is treating its citizens as less than children. As a parent, I know that to raise a child to become strong, independent and self-reliant, the child must be given information and some freedom. The Green Party of Alberta wants to see the citizens of Alberta become strong, independent and self-reliant. Freedom of Information and citizen participation are important steps towards this goal.”

Sleep Easier

If you have a bed or mattress that you no longer need, you do not have to send it to the landfill and feel guilty. Sleep easier and phone Sleep E-Z Mattresses at 252-1446 for a free pick-up.

HIV: Scourge or Scam?

When I flicked on CBC radio in November last year and heard someone talking about HIV and AIDS, I almost changed to a different station right away. But, as the commentator took the theory that the HIV virus causes AIDS, and shredded it I became fascinated. Could it really be that so many scientists are so wrong? What are the implications of such a mistake? After listening to the entire program, and then reading the transcript of the radio program, and more books and articles on the subject, I became slowly convinced that the theory that HIV is the sole cause of AIDS, will become the biggest scientific scandal of this century.

The greatest villain in the story is Robert Gallo, currently considered, by most, a hero as the discoverer of the cause of AIDS. However, his past is shaded by many strange incidents in his labs, a penchant for publicity, and perhaps an over-confidence in the ability of his pet retro-viruses to cause *some* significant disease in humans. After trying for years to show that retro-viruses cause cancer in humans, with debatable success, he hit pay dirt with AIDS.

The books and programs being reviewed here do not deny that HIV is highly correlated with AIDS. But correlation is easily confused with causation. It is particularly necessary to prove causation in the case of a deadly disease like AIDS. Some theorize that the correlation of HIV with AIDS is because HIV is a sexually transmitted disease, but one that is by itself benign, and becomes just a marker for a higher risk of AIDS (and other diseases). This could explain why so many are HIV positive, yet so few have actually got the disease. Another theory is that HIV is a very weak virus present in most people, but can only cause an immune response with a weakened immune system. Why, they ask, is the progress of AIDS not associated with a massive increase in HIV infected cells?

The tide seems to be turning against the HIV theory of AIDS. Even Luc Montagnier, probably the real discoverer of the HIV virus, no longer believes that HIV requires a co-factor to cause AIDS. And, if we don't know what the co-factor is, how can we say that the co-factor by itself cannot cause AIDS?

Perhaps Magic Johnson knows more than he is saying. At first he seemed, like many, to be accepting his HIV infection as a death sentence. But obviously his HIV infection has not affected him physically in the least. However, how many millions of lives

have been ruined by a positive HIV test?

Recently, attention has turned to the minority of AIDS patients that are not HIV positive. HIV advocates are talking about a new strain of HIV, but why not consider the alternative; that AIDS is not caused by HIV at all.

Another interesting aspect of this controversy is how the media have accepted the HIV theory of AIDS and are apparently reluctant to give serious consideration to alternatives. It was ironic that the CBC morning news following the broadcast of the Ideas program on AIDS reported that Magic Johnson had announced that he was infected not with HIV, but with the “AIDS virus”. Even more misleading, statistics published in the popular media on the prevalence of AIDS often turn out to be statistics on HIV infection, in which category many times more people fall.

It is not just the media that have apparently stopped considering alternatives to HIV. There are many questions raised about the openness of the scientific community to the work of those that question the collective wisdom. Some claim that grants are impossible to get for AIDS research unless it involves HIV.

Whatever your feelings towards this too-brief summary of the controversy, you should read at least one contradictory book or transcript. It is at least a great way to stir

Alberta Greens Membership Application

(Mail to: Box 133, Stn. M, Calgary, T2P 2H6)

Name _____ Phone(H) _____ (W) _____

Address _____ City _____ Code _____

Interests & Skills _____

Areas I can Help-Elections _ Phoning _ Policy _ Speaking _ Fund Raising _

Membership (\$10) ... \$____.____ (includes newsletter)

T-Shirts (\$15) \$____.____

Donation \$____.____ (75% tax rebate on first \$150)

Total \$____.____

up controversy when missing socially with medical professionals!

The transcript of the CBC Ideas program by Colman Jones "What Causes AIDS? A Second Look" is available for \$10 from CBC Ideas Transcripts, PO Box 500, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1E6. Colman Jones has also written an article called "AIDS and Syphilis: What is the Connection?". It is available, for \$7.95 from Glad Day Books, 598A Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1Z3. John Scythes has compiled a list of papers, letters and newspaper clippings on the progress of the theory that Syphilis causes AIDS. It is available from Glad Day Books. "HIV, the AIDS Fraud" by Jad Adams, available at the Calgary Public Library.

From an Interview with June Kirk - Calgarian of the Year

June Kirk was named Calgarian of the year for 1990 by the Calgary Herald for her leadership in starting the first Grassroots recycling organizations in Calgary. Since then the concept has spread like a grass fire. Much of the increase in awareness of the power of individual Calgarians to change their own lives for the better has come from her efforts. However, June Kirk is not someone who sees recycling as all that significant, it is to her just the first easy step to take toward the process of living in harmony with the planet we call Earth.

The following is an excerpt from an interview with June Kirk by David Crowe. In it June discusses the influence of her travels in the third world on her life.

"I went with two other nursing friends. We were gone a year with backpacks. Just that alone was significant; that you could spend a year with your possessions on your back. It took a long time to let go of fears of going hungry, getting sick or hurt, of being mugged or not finding a place to stay. All those fears of the unknown had to be overcome.

My journal at first focussed on what we ate, what we saw and the local history and

culture. After we got more acclimatised to the Third World my journal started to change. It began to contain more of my feelings, and perceptions of what was going on. I was becoming less self-absorbed and turning more outwards.

We couldn't assimilate it all until we got home. There was an incredible culture shock at first. Everything looked so new and glitzy and different. Yet there seemed to be such shallowness to it all. When we flew from New Delhi to Athens we walked into a department store. In the camping section was a family tent divided into rooms. That was such a vivid contrast to where we had been, where everybody shared the smallest of quarters and yet somehow manages to adapt. There seemed to be more harmony and cooperation among people in the Third World than here, where we seem so alienated from each other.

Calendar

- Sat Oct 17 - Richmond Safeway Recycling
- Mon Oct 19 - Green Party Coffee Shop 7:30-11:00, Green Office
- Thu Oct 22 - Alberta civic elections
- Thu Oct 22 - Alberta Greens General Members Meeting
- Thu Oct 22 - Referendum Day Advance Poll
- Fri Oct 23 - Referendum Day Advance Poll
- Fri Oct 23 - Recycling Council of Alberta Fall Conference 287-1477
- Mon Oct 26 - Three Hills By-election
- Mon Oct 26 - Referendum Day
- Thu Nov 12 - Alberta Greens Coordinating Council Meeting
- Tue Nov 17 - Green Party Coffee Shop 7:30-11:00
- Thu Nov 26 - Alberta Greens General Members Meeting
- Thu Dec 10 - Alberta Greens Coordinating Council Meeting
- Thu Dec 17 - Alberta Greens General Members Meeting

ALBERTA GREENS INFORMATION

Note: changes from last issue are in *italics*

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Comment

We welcome submissions for the Alberta Greens Newsletter. Please sent them to the editor, care of "Alberta Greens, Box 133, Stn. M, Calgary, AB T2P 2H6".

Membership

To obtain a membership in the Canadian or Alberta Green Party, or more information about these political parties, write to "Alberta Greens, Box 133, Stn. M, Calgary, AB T2P 2H6".

Tax Deductions for Political Donations

The Alberta Greens need money to publish this newsletter, run campaigns, maintain an office. You can get the Alberta Government to donate more than you! For every \$4 you donate, up to \$150, the government will reduce you income tax by \$3! And the rebates for larger donations are not much less generous. Donate today!