



Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Alberta Greens will be held on Saturday, October 20th, 2001 at the Red Deer Lodge, commencing at 9am. This location was chosen because it is relatively central, and accessible by public transportation (bus).

Please let us know if you will be attending the AGM, so that we can book the right sized room.

Elections

Elections may be held for the positions of Leader and President because their two-year term is up. Elections may be held for the position of Secretary because it is vacant. Elections will only be held if there are two or more nominations for a position.

Nominations

Nominations must be received for open positions by August 1st, 2001 to allow time for a mailout of ballots, if necessary.

Nominations do not require a specific form, but merely a letter signed by the person being nominated, and one other person. Both must be members in good standing of the Alberta Greens.

If a mailout ballot proves necessary, each nominee will be allowed to provide information about their candidacy that will be included with each ballot package.

Voting will be by the "Single Transferable Vote" system if there are more than two candidates for any one position.

Memberships

Since the Alberta Greens do not currently charge a membership fee, becoming a member simply involves notifying us that you wish to be a member. If a mailout ballot proves necessary, it will only be sent to those who register as members by September 1st, 2001.

By-Election in Calgary Southwest

Preston Manning is stepping down so there will be a by-election in Calgary Southwest early in 2002. We have a good chance and have already begun to organize. Some things in our favor are:

- Alliance's Failing Fortunes
This is a strong Alliance riding but the party is in disarray. Stockwell Day's leadership fight has forced them to focus on saving the party rather than making gains. The general public is unimpressed and their ratings are dropping in the polls.
- Low Voter Turn-out
By-elections do not carry the same sort of prestige that a full election does. As a result fewer people vote in them. This means that groups with a strong core message do better than mainstream parties.
- Green Momentum
The Greens have momentum and are gaining ground. The Green Party had an American presidential candidate that was in the news and has just run a credible election in BC. In Alberta our votes increased in the last provincial election by almost 3 times our previ-

ous numbers. The Greens in Calgary are active and we have new members joining all the time.

- Ability to Focus

In both the last provincial and federal election the Greens supported many different candidates. Many times during the elections I heard people wishing that we could just focus all of our efforts on one person. Now is that chance. If you ever thought that if we could all just work together behind one good candidate that we could win – now is the time!

We have enough people to start a riding association in Calgary Southwest. We still need people to step forward and take positions on the executive for this riding. We will be having our first riding association meeting in early fall. This will allow us to collect money prior to the election and make the running of the campaign easier on the candidate.

We still have a lot to do and we need help. We need to raise enough money and volunteers to enable us to deliver a flyer to each of the 35,000 homes in the riding. If we can do it in Alberta we can do in anywhere.

If you want to help please contact:

George Read
1927B 10th Ave NE
Calgary, AB T2E 0Y4
Phone: +1-403-230-9474
email: wightlight@aol.com

Greens Storm BC

The election results in British Columbia showed the growing strength of the Green movement there. It also showed the unfairness of the 'First past the post' electoral system that gave almost all seats to the Liberals with only 57.5% of the popular vote, leaving the NDP with only a tiny rump (2 seats) and the Greens with none, even though over 12% of the population voted for them.

Greens finally got some respect from the press, as their strength was simply too great to be ignored. They were also invited to the leaders' debate for the first time, where Adriane Carr performed extremely well. Obviously, British Columbians have announced that they are looking for an alternative, as the 12% of people who voted Green were probably aware that the chance of the party winning seats under the current system was small.

Overall Results

Party	Votes	%	Seats
Liberal	855,575	57.5	76
NDP	322,259	21.6	2
Green	184,659	12.4	0
Unity	48,546	3.3	0
Marijuana	47,928	3.2	0

Results in Powell River-Sunshine Coast

Candidate	Votes	%
Harold Long, Liberal	9,904	42.3
Gordon Wilson, NDP	6,349	27.2
Adriane Carr, Green	6,316	27.0
Dana Larsen, Marijuana	812	3.5

Results in Nelson-Creston

Candidate	Votes	%
Blair Suffredine, Liberal	8,558	39.0
Corky Evans, NDP	6,981	31.8
Colleen McCrory, Green	4,723	21.5
Stephen Cox, Unity	1,108	5.1
Dan Loehndorf, Marijuana	570	2.6

Ex-Calgarian in BC Election

Pam Munroe was the Treasurer of the Alberta Greens until she, and her husband Don, retired to Vancouver Island. Some retirement! Since moving there, Pam has run as a Green candidate in both the Federal and Provincial elections.

ALBERTA GREENS INFORMATION

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Treasurer Madeleine Oldershaw +1-403-282-4788
Secretary Pat Gidora (acting) +1-403-686-0703
Membership Alan McCreary +1-403-220-4261

MEMBERSHIP - ALBERTA GREENS

Membership in the Alberta Greens is free! Simply send your name, address and other contact information to our mailing or email address above. Members have the right to vote at Alberta Greens meetings and will receive this newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP - GREEN PARTY OF CANADA

Memberships in the Green Party of Canada are available for \$10 to individuals, or \$15 to families from:

Michael Garfinkle
Secretary, Green Party of Canada in Alberta
PO Box 52023
Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 1C9, Canada
Email: abel@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca
Web: green.ca

DONATIONS

If you cannot give us your time, we could certainly use your money! 75% of your first \$150 in donations to the Alberta Greens are returned to you on your next Alberta tax return. You can also receive this tax break on donations to joint projects between the Alberta Greens and other environmental and social action groups. Contact us for details.

MEETINGS

For information on meeting dates, times and locations, call Madeleine Oldershaw in Calgary, or David Parker in Edmonton.

COMMENTS

We welcome submissions for the Alberta Greens Newsletter. Please send them to the editor, Box 133, Station M, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2H6, Canada, by email to crowed@cadvision.com or by fax to +1-403-289-6658.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please let us know your new postal or email address before it changes. Include your name, both your old and new addresses as well as the effective date of the change.

NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS

Thanks to Madeleine Oldershaw, Alan McCreary, Erica Crowe and Julia Crowe for their valuable assistance with the distribution of the newsletter.

According to Pam, “We did extremely well in the Comox Valley with 18.6% of the vote and came within 200 votes of the NDP, and won several polls on Denman and Hornby Islands. The entire campaign was so heartening for all of us here in the Green Party. People supported us with time, enthusiasm, signs, encouragement and lots of money. We have our work cut out for us for the next four years to build on the strength we have gained and be ready to become the opposition or even the government in the next election.”

Proportional Representation Q&A

Proportional Representation (PR) is an electoral system in which the number of party representatives elected to parliament is in proportion to the total number of votes cast for each party (the Popular Vote). These representatives form a government by negotiating a coalition of parties, if necessary.

- Q:** How is PR different to the system we use in Canada and Alberta?
- A:** Canada and Alberta use the Majoritarian or ‘First Past the Post’ system where candidates are elected to represent a district and the party with the most winning candidates forms the government, even if this does not reflect the Popular Vote.
- Q:** Which countries use our system?
- A:** Within the developed world, only the United States and the United Kingdom use systems like ours.
- Q:** Which countries use PR?
- A:** The majority of developed countries, including Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, France, Ireland, Japan, Spain and New Zealand.
- Q:** Why do we use the Majoritarian system?
- A:** We inherited it through our historical ties to the UK.

- Q:** Are all PR systems the same?
- A:** No. In some systems all seats may be allotted in response to the popular vote (Pure PR) and in some systems some representatives are elected to represent specific regions (Mixed), as they are now in Canada. The remainder are “topped up” in proportion to the popular vote from a party list. New Zealand recently adopted the Mixed system and it is likely that we in Canada would choose this system if we adopted PR. There is usually a threshold level of votes required before a party can share in government and this varies between countries.

- Q:** How would PR improve our system of government?
- A:** PR would give greater representation to the opposition and to smaller parties. In Alberta this would provide a greater level of opposition in the Legislature which at present is usually dominated by one powerful party and one governing philosophy. Federally, PR would give greater representation to parties which have an even level of support throughout the entire country and counter the trend towards regional parties. Voter turnout would be greater if supporters of smaller parties knew that their votes would always have an effect. In our Majoritarian system almost half the public do not bother to vote because they know that their votes will make no difference to the result, the majority wins it *all*.

- Q:** Is there a fundamental difference between the styles of Majoritarian and PR governments?
- A:** Yes. The PR system produces parties which create forward focussed initiatives in order to become elected. The Majoritarian system creates parties which are re-elected based on voter approval of their previous record. PR voters vote parties IN, Majoritarian voters vote parties OUT.

Greening Ontario

Green Party of Ontario candidate Richard Thomas won over 12% of the popular vote in a by-election in Parry Sound-Muskoka on March 22, 2001, showing that it is not just in British Columbia where Green strength is growing.

Ernst von Bezold will be the Green candidate for a pending by-election in Vaughan-King-Aurora. The 51 year old research consultant and 10-year resident of Maple will promote education, preventive health care and preservation of Oak Ridges Moraine in his campaign.

The Toronto Star’s Ian Urquhart reported on the larger prospects for the Green Party of Ontario in an article published May. 21, 2001. He believes that the breakthrough result for the Greens in the recent BC election has given new reason for hope to Ontario Greens.

“In the last Ontario election, the Green party fielded candidates in just 58 of the province’s 103 ridings and got 30,749 votes, a mere 0.7% of the total. But in the next provincial election, their leader Frank de Jong plans to run a full slate of 103 candidates and expects to get a significantly higher portion of the vote. And de Jong, a Toronto public school teacher, will demand a spot in the televised leaders’ debate, as was granted to his B.C. counterpart, Adriane Carr.”

Top 10 Reasons Albertans Voted for Ralph (Klein)

Pat Gidora

Top Ten Reasons Albertans voted for Ralph Klein

1. They thought they were voting for Ronald Macdonald.
2. They thought the Old Man Dam was a technique to stop aging.
3. They thought that gas deregulation meant they could break wind without excusing themselves.
4. They saw a Nancy MacBeth ad.

5. They knew they would never have the opportunity to vote against Ujjal Dosanjh.
6. They thought that intensive live-stock operations were emergency surgeries to save abused farm animals.
7. They thought that MLA's were paid by the hour and that closure and short sittings were helping to pay down the debt.
8. They thought Klein was responsible for Stockwell Day moving to Penticon.
9. They thought that private health care meant they wouldn't have to share needles/rooms/nurses/doctors.
10. They thought that developing the Crown of the Continent Castle Wilderness meant building a shrine in honour of Princess Diana.

Joan Russow Resigns

Russ Francis

Turmoil between present and former members of the BC Green Party was only one of the reasons that Joan Russow quit as leader of the federal party in March, 2001. Russow turned in her resignation partly because of her annoyance at the reappointment of Julian West as the federal party Elections Canada liaison officer. "I don't have any respect for Julian West", says Russow. "during the election he did nothing for the federal party. But it's not the main reason."

More significantly was her frustration with Canada's first-past-the-post electoral system, particularly after running against Alliance leader Stockwell Day in an Okanagan-Coquihalla by-election last September (where she won 7.6% percent of the vote), and against MP David Anderson in Victoria (where she won 5.8% percent) in last November's general election.

"I wasn't able to be in debates, so the politics of exclusion was one reason for stepping down", says Russow, who calls the five main federal political parties the

Pentad. "After the election I just felt: Is this really going anywhere?"

The way large news media outlets covered the campaign bothered Russow. Media pools assigned reporters to cover Pentad leaders, and mainstream news outlets used them rather than sending out their own reporters.

"What was happening was that the local media did not cover local meetings", says Russow. "I'm not exhausted - I'm frustrated at being ignored." She is so frustrated, in fact, that she is part of a pending Ontario Supreme Court action claiming that Section 313 of the federal Election Act - which proclaims that candidates with the most votes win - contravenes the Charter of Rights.

"It discriminates against women, it discriminates against First Nations, it discriminates against minority groups, it discriminates against small parties", says Russow, who plans to maintain her Green membership.

The action is in concert with Ontario Green Party leader Frank de Jong and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and is being aided by University of Toronto law professors David Beattie and Ed Morgan.

Besides the Ontario court action, Russow plans to continue her activism in a range of areas, including opposition to genetically modified foods, free trade, and nuclear power. She's also a board member of the nationalist Council of Canadians.

"I am interested in bringing about change", she says. "I'm really moving away from politics for a period of time. My being the leader of the Green Party has excluded me from doing certain things."

Harvey Scott, past chair of the Green Party of Canada executive committee, stated he "wished to extend my deep appreciation for the many significant contributions you have made during your tenure as Leader of the Green Party of Canada. Taking over the Leadership as you did amidst typical Green turmoil, with courage and deeply-principled integrity you gave the Greens the many

benefits of your excellent full-time leadership. I am fully aware of the many hours you gave freely to the development of this important party at considerable cost to yourself and family."

"In the four years you provided leadership, the Party has moved forward significantly in many areas, not all of which may be apparent to people outside the party administration. Your international reputation and work in such areas as human and public interest rights, workers' rights, biotechnology, conservation and women's rights you have provided the Canadian Greens with a global profile as well."

"Your principled public stands on so many issues have given the Greens greatly increased public credibility in the environmental and social justice communities."

"There are many things which could be said about the many, diverse contributions you have made to building the Greens and eco/social justice movement generally. Suffice to say, it was a great pleasure to serve on the 1998-2000 GPC council with you."

"I am pleased to hear that you intend to carry on the good Green fight in electoral reform and other important areas."

Green Party of Canada Leadership Contest

The Green Party of Canada has announced a leadership contest to replace Joan Russow. Russow led the party through two federal elections, doubling the vote count and significantly increasing the number of candidates.

The party executive have appointed Chris Bradshaw as interim leader. Among his other tasks, Chris is keeping the Green Party in the news with his work on the court challenge on the electoral system.

Federal Council has announced a leadership contest for a permanent leader of the party. The contest is open to any Green Party of Canada member who is a Canadian citizen and over 18 years of age. The

leadership contest will culminate in a vote at the 2002 summer GPC conference, location to be announced later.

The new GPC leader will be chosen by one-member-one-vote. Members may vote in person at the 2002 conference or by mail-in ballot. Biographical information, position papers, and vision statements of the candidates will be published. If you are interested in seeking the leadership of the party, contact the Toronto office.

Interim Leader Rejects Unite the Left

The Globe and Mail reported on June 16, 2001 in an article by Mark MacKinnon, that Chris Bradshaw, interim leader of the Green Party of Canada, had rejected a call to 'unite the left'.

The Globe quoted him as saying that while he likes what he's heard of the New Politics Initiative – a movement calling for the dissolution of the New Democratic Party and the creation of a new left-wing entity – he believes the Green party is on the rise in Canada and doesn't think the time is right for it to enter into any sort of merger.

"We're not...willing to enter into any alliance unless we're quite comfortable", he said. "I think we have a great number of ex-NDP supporters coming to us. The Green Party is in ascendance, the NDP in decline."

Fair Vote Canada

Fair Vote Canada (FVC), a national citizens' campaign to change Canada's voting system, was officially launched at the "Making Votes Count" conference at the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa on March 30-31, 2001.

FVC has mounted this nation-wide campaign to educate Canadians about alternatives to our antiquated first-past-the-post voting system, which routinely distorts voter preferences, frequently produces artificial majority governments and continually exacerbates regional ten-

sions. FVC aims to educate Canadians about the alternatives, such as proportional representation, and press all federal political parties to support a binding national referendum in which Canadian citizens themselves choose which voting system is best for Canada.

FVC is a citizen-based, non-partisan campaign involving people from all parts of the political spectrum and all regions of the country who believe voting system reform is a fundamental requirement for revitalizing and strengthening democracy in Canada. The two-day conference featured presentations by noted experts and leading electoral reform advocates, including:

- Judy Rebick, author of *Imagine Democracy*;
- Henry Milner, author/editor of *Making Every Vote Count*;
- Lorne Nystrom, MP, sponsor of a private member's bill on electoral reform;
- Doris Anderson, journalist and activist, former editor *Chatelaine*;
- Jean-Pierre Kingsley, Chief Electoral Officer of Canada
- Walter Robinson, Federal Director, Canadian Taxpayers Federation;
- Nick Loenen, author of *Citizenship and Democracy*;
- Paul Howe, Research Director, Institute for Research on Public Policy; and
- Dennis Pilon, York University, author of *Canada's Democratic Deficit*.

Fair Vote Canada can be reached at:

105-438 Victoria Ave. E.,
Regina, SK S4N 0N7
Phone: +1-416-410-4034
Email: info@fairvotecanada.org
Web: www.fairvotecanada.org

GREEN URLS

The URL for the Alberta Greens website is:

<http://green.ca/ab>

The Green Party of Canada is at:

<http://green.ca>

Mexican Greens Dump Leader

*Carlos A. Macías C.
President National Executive
Committee, PVEM*

On November 24, 2000 the National Democratic Assembly of the Mexican Green Ecological Party (PVEM) voted to remove Jorge Gonzalez Torres as Party President. This decision was made after he was found guilty of embezzlement of party funds (given by the Mexican Electoral Institute to promote democracy) and arbitrarily appointing his son, family members and friends to electoral positions which rightfully belonged to actual Party Members.

Torres did not accept nor acknowledge this decision and, in fact, refused to return the party offices and administration to the new Directive. His case was turned over to the Honour and Justice Committee, where again he was found guilty of embezzlement, fraud and nepotism. He was expelled from the Party effective February 6, 2001.

Mr. Gonzalez Torres still insists he is the Party President. In reality he no longer represents or is supported by the ecologist groups and party members that form the active core of PVEM. Still, defiantly, he argues that the assembly which voted him out was not legally constituted, because under the old party constitution the only person that had the power to call for an assembly, vote for anything or approve anything was of course himself!

However absurd and undemocratic, there is a huge legal loophole by which Mexican electoral authorities are trapped into supporting Gonzalez Torres, a truly shameful event which stains the so called "new Mexican democracy". Nevertheless, the members and ecological associations which constitute our party are actively seeking justice and democracy, using all legal means and appropriate channels to finally bring him to trial.

At the New PVEM, we have received complaints from our international colleagues that Gonzalez Torres has invited a

number of ecological groups and Green Parties to Canberra, Australia. He offers to pay transportation and accommodations in exchange for votes in favour of him becoming President of a new "Green-Ecological" international federation. This marks new highs in Gonzalez Torres crooked power ambitions, because not only is Gonzalez Torres a fraud as an ecologist, but he is misrepresenting himself as party leader in Mexico and lacks knowledge and actions in favour of true green causes.

If you have been invited by him to go to Canberra and have received airline fare or any form of economic sponsorship, we strongly suggest you return it immediately, as he is embezzling party money that comes from public federal funds.

Please contact us at:

nuevoverde@hotmail.com

for more information on this matter. We greatly appreciate your help stopping this crook.

Greens Advance in France

In French municipal elections in March, Greens gained 21 Paris council seats, third behind the Right Wing RPR-UDF-DL and the Socialists. Jacques Boutault became the first Green mayor of an arrondissement, the 11th.

Greens also were a significant part of the left-wing victory in Lyons. In Lille they now constitute 11 councillors out of 61, replacing the Communists as the second partner of the Socialist majority.

Greens Decline in Germany

Greens continued their decline in Germany. In State elections in March 2001, their percentage of the popular vote fell by about one-third to 7.8% in Baden-Württemberg and 5.2% in Rhineland-Palatinate.

Greens Rise Down Under

*Patrick Barkham
The Guardian Weekly*

In April elections in the State of Western Australia, the Greens won 5 upper house seats to hold the balance of power. In the Queensland election a week later they received 7% of the vote in the seats they contested. Then a federal by-election in the Queensland seat of Ryan, loyally Liberal since the second world war, was won by Labor only after Green voters' second choices were directed to Labor under the preferential voting system.

With such preference deals the Greens could emerge as the destroyer of John Howard's Liberal-National party coalition government in the federal election that is due by next autumn.

Greens hope to increase their representation in parliament from 1 senator to 5 in the federal election. "We have reversed the order of the Greens and the Democrats in Australian politics", stated Queensland Greens spokesman Drew Hutton after the party outpolled Australia's traditional third force, the centrist Democrats, in Ryan.

Help Stop Meridian Dam

*Alberta Wilderness Association
AlbertaWilderness.ca*

The Alberta Wilderness Association is strongly opposed to the construction of Meridian Dam in Southeastern Alberta, on the Saskatchewan border. If you share this concern, send a letter to Alberta's Premier and inform your friends.

Alberta's Environment Minister, Hon. Lorne Taylor, is pushing forward with a feasibility study despite objections from Saskatchewan and federal agencies. Canadian Wildlife Service biologist Gary Trottier says the dam would be a disaster for wildlife; destroying some of the most important wildlife habitat in Southeastern Alberta.

The Area

The dam will form a 100 km long reservoir from the Alberta-Saskatchewan border on the South Saskatchewan River, just upstream from the forks with the Red Deer River through the Middle Sand Hills National Wildlife Area, almost to the city of Medicine Hat.

The area to be flooded is a nationally significant wildlife area, home to several species of rare or threatened fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and plants, important wintering habitat for deer, nesting areas for several birds of prey and overwintering snake dens.

Species at risk include amphibians (northern leopard frog and great plains toad), reptiles (plains hognoose snake and eastern short-horned lizard), birds (feruginous hawk and loggerhead shrike), mammals (ord's kangaroo rat) and plants (smooth goosefoot, sand verbena, rush pink, tiny cryptanthus).

One of the deepest canyons on the Canadian prairies will be flooded to irrigate up to 160,000 hectares in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Downstream residents are concerned about negative effect on water in Lake Diefenbaker.

How You Can Help

Please call or write Alberta's Premier and ask that feasibility studies be stopped. Tell him the area is too important for wildlife to even consider constructing an on-stream dam. Express concern that the minister responsible for protecting the environment is proposing to destroy a National Wildlife Area.

Only the Environment Minister is publicly supporting the dam – not the Cabinet. Letters and phone calls will alert the Premier to public concerns and convince Cabinet not to proceed any further with this highly damaging project.

You can contact:

Hon. Ralph Klein, Premier
Legislature Office, #307,
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6
Web: www.gov.ab.ca/premier
Email: premier@gov.ab.ca