

MPs, media to play rugby on Hill June 4, Rae works the room in Montreal, and MPs host Party Under the Stars



By BEA VONGDOUANGCHANH | May 28, 2012

Rugby Canada announced the MP roster for its June 4 game on Parliament Hill recently, and it includes House Speaker **Andrew Scheer**.

Mr. Scheer played high school rugby and will play with eight other semi-experienced MP rugby players. Liberal MP **Massimo Pacetti**, who previously played for Quebec and the Montreal Irish rugby teams, will be playing in the game against Canada's National Senior Men's Rugby team on Parliament's front lawn. "For me, sports has always been and continues to be an important part of my life," Mr. Pacetti told Rugby Canada. "I look forward to being a part of 'the Game on the Hill' to show the country that rugby is still king."

The National Senior Men's Rugby team will be in town for some training sessions before playing some test matches internationally against the United States, Italy, and Georgia, in preparation for the 2016 Olympic Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The test matches will be held across Canada, starting in Kingston, Ont., on June 9.

Other MPs taking part in the Hill game are Conservative MP **Bob Zimmer**, who coached Trinity Western University's varsity rugby team; NDP MPs **Matthew Dubé**, **Paul Dewar**, **Glenn Thibeault**, and **Peter Stoffer**; Liberal MP **Justin Trudeau**; and Minister of State for Sport **Bal Gosal**.

Defence Minister **Peter MacKay**, an avid rugby fan and player, who broke his arm in one of the last matches he played on Parliament's front lawn, will not be in the scrums this time around as he will be out of the country. **Tim Powers**, vice-president of Summa Strategies who was recently elected to the board of Rugby Canada, told **HOH** last week that Mr. MacKay's staff has "been very helpful to Rugby Canada in pulling this event together."

Journalists who have already agreed to participate include CTV's **Kevin Newman**, CTV Ottawa's **Terry Marcotte**, Sun News' **David Akin**, the *National Post*'s **John Ivison**, CBC's **Evan Solomon**, *The Globe and Mail*'s **Shawn McCarthy** and **Sean Gordon**, CPAC's **Peter Van Dusen** and *La Presse*'s **Joel-Denis Bellavance**. **Wayne Scanlan**, *Ottawa Citizen* sports columnist and a former rugby player, will also be in the lineup.

Members of the national team who will be playing in the game include **Nanyak Dala** and **Ciarian Hearn**, who both were members of the Canadian rugby team that won gold at the 2011 PanAm Games. **Chauncey O'Toole**, who was described as one of the best amateur players in the world in 2011, will also be there. "These guys aren't dirt trackers," Mr. Powers said.

Is Rae working on his Grit leadership bid?

As 2013 approaches and the Liberal leadership race speculation heats up, Liberal interim leader **Bob Rae** was seen recently in Montreal at a networking event with staff that indicate he's going to run for the leadership.

More than 800 people showed up to the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee's fourth annual Action Party at a Montreal's Arsenal on May 17, including numerous MPs who worked the room, reports **Mike Cohen**, a columnist with *The Suburban*, a Montreal weekly English paper.

"I asked **Justin [Trudeau]** about the leadership and he smiled and shook his head," Mr. Cohen told **HOH**. "I think it is clear he will take a pass this time."

Mr. Rae, however, "was clearly a man with his eyes on becoming the permanent head of the Grits with many of his handlers working the room," Mr. Cohen wrote on his blog last week.

He told **HOH**: "Rae had a team of Quebec handlers there who made no secret of the fact they are gearing up for the leadership."

Other MP partygoers included: Citizenship and Immigration Minister **Jason Kenney**, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs **Diane Ablonczy**, and Conservative MPs **Deepak Obhrai**, **Rick Dykstra** and **Cheryl Gallant**. NDP Leader **Thomas Mulcair**, who Mr. Cohen said has improved the NDP's profile in Montreal "higher than ever" since he won the leadership, was also at the event, as were other NDP MPs **Tyrone Benskin**, **Pat Martin**, **Isabelle Morin**, **Mathieu Ravnat**, **Pierre Nantel**, **Jamie Nicholls**, **Françoise Boivin**, **Mylene Freeman** and **Jonathan Genest-Jourdain**. Liberal MP **Irwin Cotler** was out of town to attend his daughter's graduation, Mr. Cohen reported, but his chief of staff **Howard Liebman** was there.

Hill staffer **Neil Drabkin**, chief of staff to Natural Resources Minister **Joe Oliver**, also attended, as did Conservative Party national president **John Walsh**, who "was shaking hands and sending a message that the Tories still hope to cash in on some seats next time around."

Mr. Cohen told **HOH** that if the Conservatives do intend to win some seats in Montreal in 2015, they will need to make better use of well-liked Senators **Jacques Demers** and **Larry Smith** to make some inroads. "The Conservatives need a byelection to occur in a Liberal or NDP riding to create some momentum," he said. "They blew that chance in Mount Royal. Irwin Cotler is 72 and there was no guarantee he would finish his mandate. But whoever decided to do those fake polls about a byelection only six months after the 2011 election reinforced his will to stay."

Mr. Benskin told Mr. Cohen, however that "the next election may be three and a half years from now, but we are already working hard to prove to Canadians that we deserve to be the next government."

MPs host Party Under the Stars to raise funds for Canadian Forces

Associate Minister of National Defence **Julian Fantino**, NDP MP **Jack Harris** and Liberal MP **John McKay** are hosting this year's Party Under the Stars, an annual event to support Canadian Forces currently serving in Afghanistan. The party takes place June 4 at the Cartier Square Drill Hall, featuring former CTV anchor **Max Keeping** as the emcee. This year also features a celebrity auction, with Kipity and Tenley from reality TV show *The Bachelor*, and music by Glass Tiger and Valdy. Tickets are \$25 and available on the Hill in the various hosts' offices.

Nothing to see here, move along

Maggie Sutherland's nude painting of Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** sold last week for \$5,000, generating some funny Twitter comments.

Liberal strategist **Rob Silver**, a lobbyist with Crestview, tweeted "Only \$4,750 after the \$250 nude PM painting tax credit!"

The painting, *Emperor Haute Couture*, was hanging in a Kingston Public Library when another media storm hit during the "sexibition" controversy in the House of Commons. *Sex: A Tell-All Exhibition* is running for the next six months at the Museum of Science and Technology in Ottawa, which got opposition MPs to rise to their feet during Question Period asking why Canadian Heritage Minister **James Moore** was making a fuss about the show which received no criticism in Montreal or Saskatoon.

When the nude painting emerged, depicting Mr. Harper on a chaise lounge being served Tim Horton's coffee with a dog sitting beside him, the PMO poked fun of it. **Andrew MacDougall**, the PMO communications director, tweeted: "On the Sutherland painting: we're not impressed. Everyone knows the PM is a cat person."

Jason Fekete tweeted: "Liberal Scott Brison on Harper nude painting: This is a case 'where we really do need a Conservative coverup.' Hilarious."

Ensign's **Jason Lietaer** also tweeted: "The nude painting of Harper is obviously a fraud. It doesn't even include his secret Canada's Economic Action Plan tattoo." Well then.

Government donates \$150,000 to commemorate Prince's Canada tour

The federal government made two charitable donations on **Prince Charles'** and **Duchess Camilla's** behalf to celebrate their recent Canadian tour.

The government donated \$100,000 to the Prince's Operation Entrepreneur program and \$50,000 to the RCMP Foundation. The Prince's Operation Entrepreneur program provides retired Canadian Forces members resources to start their own business. The RCMP Foundation supports youth at risk.

"We're tremendously pleased. What a fitting way to commemorate the royal highnesses' visit to Canada than by supporting this worthy initiative," said **Matthew Rowe**, communications coordinator for the Prince's Charities Canada.

In a press release, Prime Minister **Stephen Harper** said Canada is “honoured” to host the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall during the Canadian Diamond Jubilee celebrations. “We are especially pleased to contribute to these initiatives on behalf of their Royal Highnesses, who support a wide range of charitable causes.”

The Prince’s charitable work is something that’s under reported, especially in Canada, Mr. Rowe told HOH last week.

“We know a lot less about it here. The media tend to focus on the salacious bits of his personal life but I mean, he’s a visionary,” he said. “He was ahead of his time. All these causes that he’s been pushing, he’s been consistently pushing them for 40 years and when he started out, people thought he was crazy and now all these things he talked about, sustainable development, building attractive communities built around people instead of cars, organic farming, these are all fashionable things now, but he was doing this in the ’60s.”

The Prince’s Charities Canada focuses on a number of programs, including U for Change, the Canadian Youth Business Foundation, Learning Through the Arts, Seeing is Believing among others.

“The work of PCC is focused on The Prince of Wales’s core interests which have been well-established in the U.K. for more than 30 years. These include improving the lives of disadvantaged youth, education, responsible business, improving the built environment, regeneration of heritage and environmental sustainability,” Mr. Rowe said. “The important thing is he puts his money where his mouth is. ... The prince is globally recognized as one of the world’s leading social entrepreneurs. He really is making his mark with his charities.”

It wasn’t all work, however, during the Prince’s visit. When he was in Toronto, Prince Charles stopped in at U for Change where he participated in two workshops—one to sew a bag, and the other to learn how to DJ. “He ended up not sewing it. In the next room, he took to the DJ turntables. The kids were over the moon that he had taken this interest. It’s a great charitable initiative. That went really well,” Mr. Rowe said.

Additionally, while in Hogtown, the Toronto Transit Commission created a special metro pass for the Prince. It’s a regular metropass but has his coat of arms on it. “The TTC bus was a really cool choice to take him around. People really seemed to like it. *The Toronto Star* editorial cartoon [last week] had him sitting at a bus stop, with someone asking him, ‘How long have you been waiting? And he says 60 years. So, that was received well,” Mr. Rowe said.

Prince Charles and Camilla were in Canada from May 20 to 23, and made stops in Gagetown, N.B., Saint John, N.B., Toronto, Ont., and Regina, Sask.

Jerry Yanover Scholarship Fund looking for donations, Milliken says

Almost three years after former Liberal staffer **Jerry Yanover** died, friends, family, and former colleagues are remembering his legacy through a scholarship fund they set up last year in his name.

Former House Speaker **Peter Milliken** sent an email recently asking those who knew him to help with donations.

“We are approaching the second anniversary of the reception that I hosted on Parliament Hill to announce the creation of a fund for student initiatives in political science to honour the memory of Jerry Yanover,” Mr. Milliken wrote. “The fund was seen as a tangible way to recognize the many accomplishments that highlighted Jerry’s distinguished career. At the same time, it was and continues to be the vehicle through which we can promote initiatives that develop our students’ skills and interest in the many facets of political and thus encourage them to follow in Jerry’s footsteps.”

Yanover was a Liberal Hill staffer in the House Leader’s Office for almost 40 years. He was known as a procedural guru who had an “encyclopedic knowledge of Canadian politics.” He had a “shrewd” and “innovative approach” to strategy and tactics, Mr. Milliken wrote, which “earned him not only the admiration and unflinching gratitude of Liberals, but also the genuine respect of all political parties, House of Commons officials, the public service, the media, academics and other Parliamentary experts.”

The fund will be for student initiatives in political science to honour the memory of Yanover. Queen’s University, Yanover’s alma mater, and the University of Ottawa have been administering the fund. Donations can be made at <https://alumni.uottawa.ca/sslpage.aspx?pid=1570>.

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