



January 2018

There are a lot of old sayings that have stood the test of time. One of them goes something like this: there is never a dull moment in politics. On January 24th, in what is often considered to be a quieter time (when the Legislature is not sitting), our party and caucus was faced with circumstances that I am sure no one ever wants to have to deal with.

Allegations of sexual misconduct were levelled against our then-leader Patrick Brown. Within hours, he had resigned as the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario. Subsequent to his resignation the Party Executive voted to have a leadership contest so that the membership across Ontario could choose who will lead us into the June 7th election. The timeline to do this will be a very tight one, with the winner being revealed on March 10th.

The rules have been laid out, and at the time of the writing of this column, there are three contenders for the job. Christine Elliott, a former MPP who has challenged for the leadership on two previous occasions. Doug Ford, a former councillor and mayoral candidate in the City of Toronto (who up until January 29th was committed to once again running against John Tory for the job of mayor). The third candidate to declare is Caroline Mulroney; Ms. Mulroney was already part of our PC Team as the nominated candidate for York-Simcoe; she was chosen in September and has been out campaigning and meeting constituents ever since. I am supporting Ms. Mulroney's bid to lead our party.

I expect it to be a spirited contest—and whoever emerges as the victor—I believe they will be successful at ending the Liberal Government's 15 year reign of waste, mismanagement, and scandal. Leaderships are never easy, but I am certain that we will remain united going forward into the June election. I would like to thank many from the riding, and those with connections to the riding, who encouraged me to take a shot at the leadership myself; I appreciate the confidence shown in me and pledge that I will continue to do my very best as your MPP.

On a personal note, on January 22nd, after enduring a two week episode with bouts of acute pain, I underwent a procedure to have kidney stones removed. That's another experience that if you've had it, you know exactly what I'm talking about. If you haven't, I am very happy for you. In talking to others, it is actually quite amazing how many people have dealt with the same ailment. My procedure was done at the Pembroke Regional Hospital, and I must point out that every aspect of my care was delivered in a way that can only be described as first class. It was done with a level of professionalism, and compassion, that I was most impressed with. I've dealt with kidney stones once before, when I was 30. Being 60, I dealt with them again. If there is a pattern developing here, it must mean I am good until 90—I think I'm okay with that.

The recent snow has certainly been of great benefit to our businesses that depend on snowmobiling, skiing, and other winter activities in what otherwise would have to be described as a not very good year. We live in an area that has a four-season economy, and while we don't like shovelling it nor driving in it, the only thing worse than having too much snow in the wintertime is having none at all. Be safe.