



Speaker Kowalski presents Sarah Monkman with a bursary for her participation with the Alberta Girls' Parliament.

# Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

*The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an association of members of Commonwealth parliaments who, irrespective of race, religion, or culture are united by community of interest, respect for the rule of law and individual rights and freedoms, and by pursuit of the positive ideals of democracy. Canada was one of the six original member countries of the CPA when it was formed in 1911 under the name the Empire Parliamentary Association. Each provincial and territorial Legislative Assembly in Canada as well as the federal Parliament comprises a branch of the CPA. All Members of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta are members of the Alberta branch of the CPA.*

## President's Report

*Speaker Ken Kowalski, President of the Alberta Branch of the CPA*

The theme of the 49<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference was "Partnerships for Global Peace and Security." Interparliamentary opportunities enable Members to share experiences and points of view with their counterparts across Canada and around the world, providing an awareness of the global context in which decisions are made. It is partly from the knowledge gained through liaising with others that we draw upon when considering improvements within our system. It is also through building relationships with parliaments across the globe that we gain insight and tolerance.

Often issues at the forefront for Alberta are also top priority for other parliaments. As the National Conference of State Legislators in San Francisco, California, proved, many parallels can be drawn between the Canadian and American systems. Health care and education hold challenges for both our nations. As well, energy issues such as electricity deregulation are common themes. Because the United States is our most important trade partner, this conference in particular proved an effective forum for discussion of trade issues such as BSE. As there are many cultural, economic and political similarities between us and our closest neighbour, the continued fostering of positive relations and understanding between our nations is essential.

It is always necessary to question whether or not we can improve the ways in which we represent the concerns of our constituents. At

the 42<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Regional Conference, held in Victoria, British Columbia, electoral reform and political reforms were discussed. As well, a session dealing with public perception of parliamentarians and strategies for improvement showed that perception is often more important than reality. These conferences help to uncover ways in which parliaments can work together for the betterment of their provinces.

Technological advancement and the challenges that it brings continue to be a never-ending reality for parliaments throughout the Commonwealth. In fact in 2003, our Legislature Chamber was equipped with an upgraded audio system, and video streaming of Oral Question Period was introduced to allow the public to view the proceedings online.

Alberta continues to play a leading role in interparliamentary relations. As I have always encouraged Member development, I was pleased to see several Alberta delegates chairing sessions and becoming actively involved in the conferences they attended. The work of Members and support staff at conferences ultimately benefits the people of Alberta. We come together without the constraint of party lines. We are parliamentarians looking to listen and learn so as to foster cooperation and understanding across this broad world in which we live.

## Secretary's Report

*W.J. David McNeil, Secretary of the Alberta Branch of the CPA and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly*

There are over 183 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branches in national, state, provincial and territorial parliaments with over 15,000 parliamentarians involved. The Alberta Legislative Assembly has always considered interparliamentary relations a priority and this year over 40 delegates participated in 14 parliamentary conferences, visits or meetings.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Canadian Regional Conference was held in the majestic setting that is Victoria, British Columbia. The topics covered included:

- Electoral Reform
- The Emerging Role of Private Members in B.C.
- Health Care: Policy and Reforms: Current Experiences and Perspectives
- Public Perception of Parliamentarians: Strategies for Improvement
- Educating our Children: Measures of Effectiveness and Efficiency
- Polling: Legitimacy and Impact on the Public Policy Process
- The News Media and Parliament: The Role of the Fourth Estate
- Making Parliament Work for Parliamentarians: The Case for Political Reforms

I, along with the delegate party, enjoyed the parliamentary visit to Europe and State Legislative Leaders Foundation/Europe in which we visited Cracow and Warsaw, Poland; Berlin, Dresden, Munich and Frankfurt, Germany; Prague, Czech Republic; and Vienna, Austria. During our stay we managed

to balance meetings with delegates and parliamentary officials from each region with a delightful taste of culture and history. In 2003, Alberta once again eagerly sent representatives to Germany to participate in the Partnership of Parliaments, Study Tour. Four Alberta delegates attended the tour, which provided the opportunity to meet with German state and municipal leaders as well as delegates from Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador. Many topics were discussed during this visit, among them the challenges Germany faces with regard to their energy and educational programs. The opportunity to establish educational exchanges between university students in Germany and Canada was discussed.

It is always enlightening to see that parliamentary challenges abroad and even across Canada are often quite similar, but the ways in which the challenges are dealt with are often slightly different. It is because of the added perspective that interparliamentary relations provide that makes the experiences so rewarding and educational.

As with Members of the Legislative Assembly, staff of the Assembly are encouraged to participate in interparliamentary relations, and I have been very impressed with their level of participation.

*Mr. Bob Maskell, MLA Edmonton-Meadowlark, presents a bursary to Robin Weimer.*



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## Bursaries

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Bursaries are presented to nominees from TUXIS Parliament of Alberta and the Alberta Girls' Parliament to increase interest in the parliamentary process among young Albertans. On May 29, Speaker Kowalski awarded bursaries

to Karl Bossler of the Calgary-Cross constituency for TUXIS and to Sarah Monkman of Sherwood Park and Robin Weimer of Calgary -North West for the Alberta Girls' Parliament.

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## Grade 6 Essay Contest

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To encourage greater awareness of the Commonwealth and the parliamentary system, a province-wide essay contest is

held annually for Grade 6 students. Joseph Boissonneault of Calgary-Varsity was the grand prize winner for 2003.

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## Conferences

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### Canadian Regional Presiding Officers' Conference

Toronto, Ontario January 23 – 26

#### Agenda

- 1) Address by CPA Secretary-General
- 2) Relocating Legislatures for Special Sitings: The New York City Session of U.S. Congress
- 3) Security at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario
- 4) Parliamentary Reform: Responding to Concerns of a Democratic Deficit
- 5) Parliamentary Assemblies and New Technologies: Issues, Pitfalls and Future Prospects
- 6) Masters of Our Own House—Judicial Consideration of Parliamentary Privilege in the Northwest Territories
- 7) Parliamentary Privilege and the Courts in Canada
- 8) New Executive Secretary to the Canadian Branch of CPA

#### Alberta Delegation

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker  
Shiraz Shariff, MLA, Calgary-McCall

Don Tannas, MLA, Highwood  
David McNeil, Clerk

#### Delegate Report (*edited for length*)

I have always found this conference an excellent and timely forum for the issues facing Presiding Officers. It also provides an opportunity to re-establish contacts with interprovincial counterparts to review areas of interest and concern. This year's sessions provided insight into several issues.

I found the topic of temporary relocation of the legislature site in response to a social, political or disaster situation most interesting. As well, security issues faced by Ontario's Legislative Assembly, fixed election dates and issues regarding the use of lap tops, palm pilots and cell phones in the Chamber were covered.

Katherine Peterson, Q.C. presented issues related to Parliamentary Privilege in the North West Territories and the issue of Parliamentary privilege and the courts in Canada presented by Neil Finkelstein was the highlight of the conference.

Don Tannas, MLA, Highwood

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## Partnership of Parliaments

Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Baden-Württemberg and Berlin, Germany

June 23–July 6

#### Agenda

##### Rhineland-Palatinate

- 1) Presentation: The Structure of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Work of the State Parliaments
- 2) Discussion with Members of Parliament
- 3) Guided tour of UNESCO World Heritage site
- 4) Discussion with the administrative body of Rhineland-Palatinate

##### Saarland

- 1) Opening Ceremony of the Borderlands: New Brunswick and the Saarland Conference  
Session 1 Topic 1: Reflections on Geographical Peripherality and Cultural Centrality  
Topic 2: Surviving or Thriving? New Brunswick's Position in Canada and North America in the New Millennium  
Session 2 Topic 1: New Brunswick and the Saarland—Two Provinces on the Periphery. An Economic and Socio-geographical Comparison  
Topic 2: A Re-Evaluation of Social Capital Theory: New Brunswick as a Test Case Presentation  
Session 3 Topic 1: Innovation and Strategies in the Saarland  
Topic 2: Saarland University as an International Construct  
Session 4 Topic 1: Literature in Saarland. A Brief Overview from 1946 until today  
Topic 2: Bakeries and Bratwurst? The Image Problem of Germany and Germans in Neubraunschweig
- 2) Signing of the Agreement of Co-operation between the University of the Saarland and the University of New Brunswick

##### Baden-Württemberg

- 1) Visit to the Vogtsbauernhöfe Museum
- 2) Guided tour of Ludwigsburger Castle
- 3) Tour of the Parliament
- 4) Welcome and Greeting by State Secretary of the Economic Ministry
- 5) Topic: Economics and Politics in Baden-Württemberg

##### Berlin

- 1) Guided city tour
- 2) Speech by Mr. Roman Washuk, political advisor to the Canadian Ambassador
- 3) Partnership of Parliaments Grand Event

#### Alberta Delegation

Ian McClelland, MLA, Edmonton-Rutherford  
Luke Ouellette, MLA, Innisfail Sylvan Lake

Doug Griffiths, MLA, Wainwright  
Lloyd Snelgrove, MLA, Vermilion-Lloydminster

#### Delegates Report (*edited for length*)

It is my pleasure on behalf of myself and the other Alberta delegates to report the events of the 2003 Partnership of Parliaments Study Tour of Germany. Canada has participated in this parliamentary exchange since 1993 and is represented by Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador.

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There were two elements to the experience. One was the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with German state and municipal leaders both elected and appointed, and the other was an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other Canadian parliamentarians. Both opportunities were extremely valuable.

The delegation was fully occupied each day of the exchange. We were exposed in a forthright and direct fashion to both the successes of German technology and work ethic as well as some of the challenges Germany faces at integrating, then bringing to western standards, the former East Germany. As well, German states participate in a revenue sharing scheme similar to our equalization program, a program not without some problems. The states we visited are making the transition from nuclear and fossil energy to hydro and wind power at great expense and with more internal controversy than we see here. Additionally, the education system lags Canada in international testing, and the state of Baden-Württemberg is sending a delegation to Canada to see what we do right.

The opportunity to meet legislators and industry leaders personally, to learn something of their country, was most valuable and rewarding.

Ian McLelland, MLA, Edmonton Rutherford  
Luke Ouellette, MLA, Innisfail-Sylvan Lake

Doug Griffiths, MLA, Wainwright  
Lloyd Snelgrove, MLA, Vermilion-Lloydminster

## Europe and State Legislative Leaders Foundation

*Poland, Germany, Czech Republic and Austria July 2 – 25*

### Agenda

#### *Berlin, Germany*

- 1) Briefing
- 2) Courtesy call on Speaker of the Berlin Legislature, Walter Momper
- 3) Tour of German Federal Parliament
- 4) Luncheon hosted by Ambassador Marie Bernard-Meunier
- 5) Courtesy call on President of the Bundesrat, Dr. Wolfgang Böhmer
- 6) Courtesy call on the President of the German Federal Parliament, Wolfgang Thierse
- 7) City tour
- 8) Briefing luncheon at Partnership of Parliaments Office

#### *Warsaw, Poland*

- 1) Meeting with Ministry of Economy, Labour and Social Policy Director, Department of International Bilateral Cooperation, Mr. Zbigniew Kubacki, Senior Specialist
- 2) Visit Polish Chamber of Commerce
- 3) Courtesy call on Speaker of the Provincial Parliament, Adam Struzik
- 4) Briefing by Ambassador Ralph Lysyhyn
- 5) Meeting with Polish Oil and Gas Company
- 6) Courtesy call on Deputy Speaker of the Senate, Jolanta Danielak
- 7) Tour of the Parliament
- 8) Lunch hosted by Chair of the Polish-North American Parliamentary Group, Mr. Pawel Piskorski

#### *Cracow, Poland*

- 1) Guided tour of Cracow
- 2) Transatlantic Forum of the State Legislative Leaders Foundation
- 3) Tour of the Salt Mine in Wieliczka
- 4) Visit to the Concentration Camp Museum Auschwitz or visit to the Silesian Castle in Pszczyna

#### *Dresden, Germany*

- 1) Tour of Dresden
- 2) Meeting with the President of Industry and Commerce, Mr. Hartmut Paul and Deputy Managing Director, Mr. Schnell and other Chamber representatives
- 3) Meeting with the Lord Mayor, Mr. Ingolf Roßberg
- 4) Welcome by the President of the Saxon State Parliament, the Hon. Erich Iltgen, MdL
- 5) Tour of Leipzig
- 6) Lunch with the Mayor of Leipzig, Mr. Kaminski
- 7) Meeting with the Mayor of Grimma, Mr. Matthias Berger
- 8) Town Hall-Tour of Grimma
- 9) Visit to Semper Opera House *The Nutcracker* ballet production
- 10) Meeting with the Saxon State Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Horst Rasch

#### *Prague, Czech Republic*

- 1) Meeting with the Chairman and Members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security
- 2) Meeting with the Committee on Public Administration, Regional Development and Environment
- 3) Lunch hosted by the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Brydl
- 4) Meeting with the Deputy Speaker of the Senate, Mr. Ruml
- 5) Tour of Wallenstein Palace – Seat of the Senate
- 6) Meeting with the Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
- 7) Vienna, Austria
- 8) Meeting with the Second President of the Landtag Rathaus, Prof. Erika Stubenvoll (SPO)
- 9) Guided tour through the Rathaus

#### *Munich, Germany*

- 1) Breakfast meeting at the Bayerischer Landtag with the Speaker of the Bavarian Legislature, Herr Johann Böhm and Frau Mathilde Stamm from the Protocol Office
- 2) German Canadian Business Club Luncheon presentation by the Hon. Ken Kowalski: Alberta's Economy

### Alberta Delegation

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker  
David McNeil, Clerk

Thomas Lukaszuk, MLA, Edmonton-Castle Downs

## 42nd Canadian Regional Conference

*Victoria, British Columbia*

*July 12 – 18*

### Agenda

- 1) Electoral Reform
- 2) The Emerging Role of Private Members in B.C.
- 3) Health Care: Policy and Reforms – Current Experiences and Perspectives
- 4) Public Perception of Parliamentarians: Strategies for Improvement
- 5) Educating our Children: Measures of Effectiveness and Efficiency
- 6) Polling: Legitimacy and Impact on the Public Policy Process
- 7) The News Media and Parliament: The Role of the Fourth Estate
- 8) Making Parliament Work for Parliamentarians: The Case for Political Reforms

## Alberta Delegation

Yvonne Fritz, MLA, Calgary-Cross (Head of Delegation)

Tony Abbott, MLA, Drayton Valley-Calmar

LeRoy Johnson, MLA, Wetaskiwin-Camrose

Tony Vandermeer, MLA, Edmonton-Manning

Debby Carlson, MLA, Edmonton Ellerslie

Gary Masyk, MLA, Edmonton-Norwood

## Delegate Report (edited for length)

The official ceremonies took place in the beautiful B.C. Legislative Assembly with the Hon. Claude Richmond, Speaker of the Assembly and Conference Chair, presiding. Addresses were given by MP Robert Speller, Chair of the Executive Committee, and Hon. Denis Marshall, QSO Secretary General, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. All business sessions were held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Empress Hotel.

### Electoral Reform

An overview of recent developments in B.C. featuring three presenters: Gordon Gibson, the architect of the new Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. Nick Loenen, co-founder of Fair Voting B.C. and strong advocate of proportional representation and Hon. Ronald I. Cheffins, who discussed several types of electoral systems found in democratic jurisdictions.

### The Emerging Role of Private Members in B.C.

Ralph Sultan, MLA (B.C.), and Jack Weisgerber, former MLA (B.C.), offered informed perspectives on actual and potential reforms that enhance the role of the private members in B.C. For example, Government Caucus Committees—something that has been done in Alberta for the past 10 years.

### Health Care: Policy and Reforms – Current Experiences and Perspectives

Common themes in health care across the country are regionalization, shifts from acute care, primary care reform, home and community reform and information technology reform. Debby Carlson, MLA, chaired this session and surmised: The topic of health reform was very interesting this year because we were given an excellent overview of challenges across the country. These challenges have common themes with unique regional differences.

### Public Perception of Parliamentarians: Strategies for Improvement

There is a high level of cynicism among the Canadian public about integrity of elected officials and the importance of their legislative work. Perceptions become reality, so there is a role for Parliamentarians in educating the public on the workings and importance of parliament.

### Educating our Children: Measures of Effectiveness and Efficiency

Yvonne Fritz, MLA, presented a paper at this session. Some of her comments on the discussion are as follows. Ensuring our students have the skills and knowledge they require for a changing world is the foundation for the future of our country. In order to measure the performance of the education systems, several jurisdictions have recently introduced new accountability benchmarks. There was a high level of interest in Alberta's three year business plan process. The effectiveness of setting goals, performance measures and financial targets was thoroughly discussed. Annual reports being produced each fiscal year containing both financial statements and comparisons of the actual performance results to the desired results in the business plan were well received.

### Polling: Legitimacy and Impact on the Public Policy Process

Public opinion polls are important because they give legislators a map of people's thoughts. They can reflect both short and long term thinking on issues. Good politicians will set out a clear vision and only use polls to gauge how people are catching on rather than using polls to shape public policy. Polls are a valuable tool if used carefully in the political process.

### The News Media and Parliament: The Role of the Fourth Estate

The media helps in the accountability process for government. The modern press gallery openly admits that their role has changed to a more controversial and sensational reporting style since the expansion of the Internet.

### Making Parliament Work for Parliamentarians: The Case for Political Reforms

Dr. John Weisbeck, MLA, British Columbia, and Ben Heppner, MLA, Saskatchewan, presented views on reform and ideas for improving the current system. Parliament must work independent of government.

LeRoy Johnson, Tony Abbott, Debby Carlson, Yvonne Fritz, Gary Masyk and Tony Vandermeer

## Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER)

Calgary, Alberta

July 13 – 17

## Agenda

### Sunday

- 1) Registration
- 2) Calgary Stampede
- 3) PNWER Executive Committee Meeting

### Monday

- 1) PNWER Working Groups
  - Transportation
  - Energy I – Oil
  - Environment
  - Trade and Economic Development
- 2) Luncheon Keynote – Hon. Ralph Klein, Premier of Alberta
- 3) PNWER Working Groups
  - Sustainable Development
  - Transportation II
  - Energy I – Gas
  - Trade and Economic Development
- 4) Opening Reception

### Tuesday

- 1) Stampede Breakfast
- 2) PNWER Working Groups
  - Energy I – Electricity
  - Agriculture
  - Border Issues
  - Forestry
- 3) Luncheon Keynote – Hon. Spencer Abraham, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
- 4) PNWER Working Groups
  - Energy I – Clean Coal
  - Agriculture II
  - Workforce Development

### Wednesday

- 1) PNWER Working Groups
  - Healthcare
  - Energy I – Strategic Planning
  - High-Tech
  - Tourism
- 2) PNWER Working Groups
  - Homeland Security
  - Energy II
  - Infrastructure Finance
- 3) PNWER Executive Committee Meeting

### Thursday

- 1) Alberta Oil Sands Tour

## Alberta Delegation

Alana DeLong, MLA, Calgary-Bow  
Drew Hutton, MLA, Edmonton-Glenora  
Hon. Ty Lund, Minister of Infrastructure  
Richard Marz, MLA, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills  
Doug Griffiths, MLA, Wainwright  
Hon. Shirley McClellan, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development  
Hon. David Coutts, Minister of Government Services  
Hon. Clint Dunford, Minister of Human Resources and Employment  
Hon. Halvar Jonson, Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations

Karen Kryczka, MLA, Calgary-West  
Rob Renner, MLA, Medicine Hat  
Cindy Ady, MLA, Calgary-Shaw  
Mel Knight, MLA, Grande Prairie-Smoky  
Albert Klapstein, MLA, Leduc

## National Conference of State Legislatures

San Francisco, California

July 21 – 25

### Agenda

#### Topics

- 1) State and Economic Outlook: When Can States Expect Relief?
- 2) Streamlining Sales Taxes
- 3) Cyber Security: Protecting Technology
- 4) Implementing No Child Left Behind
- 5) New Funding Strategies for Higher Education
- 6) Reducing Dependence on Foreign Energy Supplies
- 7) Medicaid Crisis
- 8) Ethics
- 9) Predatory Lending
- 10) Preferred Drug Lists
- 11) Terrorism Preparedness
- 12) Child Care
- 13) Medical Malpractice
- 14) Can Sentencing Be Tough When Times Are Tough?
- 15) TEA-21 Reauthorization

#### Sessions

- 1) Technology and the Legislative Process
- 2) The New Legislative Agencies
- 3) The Art of Parliamentary Procedure
- 4) Keeping a Sense of Humor When the Legislature is Derailed
- 5) Help! I'm Drowning in Information
- 6) Demographic Trends That Shape Policy

## Alberta Delegation

Barry McFarland, MLA, Little Bow  
Hugh MacDonald, MLA, Edmonton-Gold Bar  
Julius Yankowsky, MLA, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview

Cindy Ady, MLA, Calgary-Shaw

## Delegate Reports (edited for length)

The conference agenda was extensive, but I found the most interesting seminars and debates to be focused on energy issues. Electricity deregulation was a topic of intense discussion, with standing room only at all the workshops by delegates from across North America and Europe. The discussions with the international delegates certainly were informative but I found the public policy discussions with the American state legislators to be more beneficial. The problems they face are similar to those we have in Alberta and the solutions they proposed were certainly of interest. However, I was disappointed with how little information was available on BSE. Many American legislators that I talked to were not even aware that the border with Canada had been closed. BSE is a North American problem, and the conference was an excellent forum to explain Alberta's integration with the entire North American beef market.

Hugh MacDonald, MLA Edmonton Gold Bar

North American issues on health and education seemed to dominate the interactive sessions. Many of the sessions were highlighted by keynote speakers. The largest and most informative session was an explanation of the American Health Care System and 20 ways to access it. Dr. Uwe Reinhardt presented to a large crowd and on a number of occasions, complimented the Canadian Health Care System.

Keeping with current issues, BSE was discussed. Surprisingly, and very unfortunately, few people at the convention were aware of the issue, and fewer still were aware of the border closures.

The once-in-a-lifetime highlight had to be the recall of Governor Gray. During our time in San Francisco, the first recall under state legislation took place a mere eight months following the election of Governor Gray. He was recalled by the requisite number of Californians, and a new election will take place in October 2003.

History will tell us how recall ultimately works. In the meantime, we should be very proud to be legislators in the best province in Canada.

Barry McFarland, MLA, Little Bow

This is an important conference attended by state legislators and staff from every U.S. state, as well as international delegates from throughout the world. Decisions made at this conference are sent to the President and Congress for review and possible implementation.

Almost every issue imaginable was discussed. I spent the majority of my time at sessions dealing with current issues common to Canada and Alberta. Issues such as education, healthcare, renewable energy and public/private partnerships were topics of great interest. It was interesting to discover that the issues we are struggling with here in Alberta and Canada are common to the United States as well as worldwide. Delegates not only discussed issues but also offered solutions and some were backed up with case studies.

I have returned with notes, literature and CDs filled with ideas on ways to do things better. I am excited about sharing these ideas with our Ministers and municipal officials. Ideas for water conservation, public/private partnerships for roads, buildings and even social services were presented. Melinda Gates had a very interesting presentation regarding what she and her husband Bill Gates are doing to promote a smaller schools concept and it's exciting! I really want to share this information with our Minister of Learning.

Overall the conference was time well spent, and if I can promote even one of the great ideas I learned about on doing things better here in Alberta, the benefits could far outweigh the time and cost of attending the conference.

Julius Yankowsky, MLA, Edmonton-Beverly-Clareview

## Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees (CCPAC)

Winnipeg, Manitoba

September 14 – 16

### Agenda

- 1) The John J. Kelly Forum (joint session with CCOLA delegates): Reporting Principles and Parliamentary Effectiveness
- 2) Round Table on Calling Federal Witnesses to Provincial Public Accounts Committees
- 3) Best Practices: Lessons Learned from Public Accounts Committees around the World
- 4) Reports from Jurisdictions
- 5) Round Table on the Relationship between Public Accounts Committees and the Office of the Auditor
- 6) Observation of Question Period, Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

### Alberta Delegation

Dave Broda, MLA, Redwater  
Corinne Dacyshyn, Committee Clerk

Shiraz Shariff, MLA, Calgary-McCall

### Delegate Report (*edited for length*)

The Canadian Council of Public Accounts Committees Conference was attended by parliamentarians, researchers and committee clerks from across Canada and the Canadian House of Commons. A delegate from the Parliament of Tasmania, Australia, also attended.

The reports from jurisdictions focussed on innovative practices of public accounts committees and were extremely informative. As always, the opportunity to meet counterparts and Auditors General from around the country and Australia is worthwhile and appreciated.

Further, the round table on the relationship between public accounts committees and provincial auditors general outlined interesting differences in each province. Of particular note was the way in which each province held competitions for the position of Auditor General. Alberta's selection process (appointing a select special committee specifically for the task) seems to be unique.

Shiraz Shariff, Deputy Chair, Standing Committee on Public Accounts

## 12th National Speakers Conference

Honolulu, Hawaii

September 17 – 21

### Agenda

#### Wednesday

- 1) NSC Executive Committee Meeting
- 2) Opening Reception

#### Thursday

- 1) Golf Tournament and lunch
- 2) Michigan Preview Reception
- 3) Reception and Luau

#### Friday

- 1) Plenary session (Speakers, Sponsors and Chiefs of Staff)  
Panel on Asian Economic Opportunities
- 2) Speakers-only Session  
Camp Smith: Briefing by Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command
- 3) Chiefs of Staff only session

#### Saturday

- 1) NSC Executive Committee Meeting/Buffer Breakfast
- 2) Plenary session (Speakers, Sponsors and Chiefs of Staff)

### Alberta Delegation

Hon. Ken Kowalski, Speaker

## Regional Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie

Lafayette, Louisiana

September 17 – 21

### Agenda

- 1) The Education of Children in a Minority Setting
- 2) Election Observation Missions by APF members
- 3) The State of Francophonie in America
- 4) Guest Speaker: Dr. Aldy Castor, President of the Haitian Resource Development Foundation
- 5) Resolutions

### Alberta Delegation

Denis Ducharme, MLA, Bonnyville-Cold Lake  
Denis Herard, MLA, Calgary-Egmont

Hector Goudreau, MLA, Dunvegan  
Louise Kamuchik, Clerk Assistant

### Delegate Report (*edited for length*)

The theme of the first working session, entitled The Education of Children in a Minority Setting dealt with the difficulties faced by francophone communities trying to provide young children living in a minority setting with quality educational and social programs in French. With few exceptions, francophone families live in communities where English is the dominant lan-

guage. It was noted that the number of exogamous couples is increasing and that most of these individuals speak English at home. Mrs. Claudette Boyer from the Ontario section reviewed the document entitled *Early Childhood: Gateway to French Language Schools*—a National Vision produced by CIRCEM (Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Citizenship and Minorities, University of Ottawa in partnership with the Canadian Teachers' Federation). An extensive discussion followed on this issue. It was observed that because responsibility for education was spread throughout various ministries, it was difficult to obtain federal financing for various programs from one source. A round table discussion of what services were available in the respective provinces and states followed.

The theme for the second session of the conference dealt with the election observation missions by APF members. Senator Gerald Comeau chaired the meeting, which reviewed Dr. Patry's report on the Formation/Information Session on Election Observation Missions held in Ottawa in February of this year.

Mr. Bordeleau was the guest speaker for the third business session. He discussed the State of Francophonie in America. He reviewed a summary prepared by the Quebec section based on the results of a questionnaire sent to the various sections following the September 2002 APF meeting in Halifax. The summary covers the status of French in particular regions, the percentage of the population that is francophone, whether the use of French is decreasing or increasing, legislative laws governing French language, the department/ministry responsible for Francophone Affairs, francophone associations at work in each jurisdiction, and access to medical services in French.

Six resolutions stemming from the business sessions were drafted, discussed and carried. One of these resolutions was introduced by the Alberta delegation urging all sections of the America Region to pressure their respective governments to collaborate with the Canadian government to ensure the complete and immediate opening of foreign frontiers for Canadian beef and beef by-products. The motion was agreed to.

Mention should be made of the great strides made by Louisiana Francophones in revitalizing the French language in the state given the incredible obstacles faced by its inhabitants in recent years. At one point in their history, as recently as the '50s and '60s, the teaching of French in the school system was strictly forbidden.

Attendance at these gatherings provide immeasurable opportunities to learn and exchange information with elected members from other jurisdictions and to stay informed on francophone issues.

Denis Ducharme, MLA Bonnyville-Cold Lake; Hector Goudreau, MLA Dunvegan; Denis Herard, MLA Calgary-Egmont

## 8th Ministerial Conference on Francophone Affairs

Winnipeg, Manitoba

September 18 – 19

### Agenda

#### Thursday

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Interprovincial/territorial cooperation on francophone affairs
  - (a) Leadership and setting of directions for francophone affairs
    - Intergovernmental Action Plan – for collective initiatives
    - Frame of reference and Guide – for individual government initiatives
  - (b) Agreements and projects
    - Bilateral agreements and their results
    - Intergovernmental Project 2004 – Poster on Francophone Development in Canada
    - Coordination of Intergovernmental Francophone Affairs project
- 3) French Language health services – networking, training and services

- 4) Renewal of Promotion of Official Languages agreements
  - Report on the discussions on this topic since the last Ministerial Conference
- 5) Review of the September 19 Session agenda

#### Friday

- 1) Greetings and introductions of delegates
- 2) Written record of the 2002 Ministerial Conference on Francophone Affairs
- 3) Federal-provincial/territorial cooperation
  - (a) Federal Action Plan on Official Languages
    - Presentation by Federal minister and discussion on:
      - Objectives and importance of the plan
      - Interdepartmental and intergovernmental aspects of the plan
      - Implications for provincial and territorial governments
  - (b) Agreements on Promotion of Official Languages
    - The next generation of agreements
    - Points to take into consideration in the renewal of the agreements
- 4) The vitality of Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities
  - Demographic situation of the communities
  - Strengthening the communities – regional strategy and national reflection
- 5) Bilingual service centres (single windows)
  - Implementation of important principles for French language services
- 6) Update on current files
  - Health Services in French
  - Early Childhood Development
  - Francophone/Acadian Community Economic Development
  - French Visibility, Dialogue with Community and Government Commitment
  - Francophone Immigration
- 7) Other important files to consider at the Ministerial Conference level
  - Francophone Cultural Development
  - Access to Justice in French
- 8) Ministerial Conference on Francophone Affairs in 2004
- 9) Closing remarks

### Alberta Delegation

Wayne Cao, Calgary-Fort

## Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL)

Austin, Texas

September 21 – 24

### Agenda

- 1) Electronic Filing
- 2) Municipal Ethics Roundtable
- 3) The Kay Williams First Timers' session
- 4) Opening Ceremony
- 5) Plenary Session: The Honourable James Douglas, Governor of Vermont
- 6) Campaign Finance Update
- 7) Municipal Regulation of Lobbying and Campaign Finance

- 8) The Web as a Cost-effective Communication Tool
- 9) The Role of FOI Agencies and the News Media in an Era of Heightened Security
- 10) What Does it Mean To Have a Good Ethics Program?: Successes and Vulnerabilities of Government Ethics Programs
- 11) Ethics Update
- 12) Electronic Voting
- 13) Proven Strategies in Compliance Education and Assistance
- 14) The Impact of Technology on Access to Government Records and Meetings (Part1)
- 15) Lobbying Update
- 16) Understanding the Help America Vote Act
- 17) Effective Media Relations
- 18) The Impact of Technology on Access to Government Records and Meetings (Part 2)
- 19) Breakfast and Table Topics
- 20) Plenary Session: Juan Hernandez, Cabinet Minister, Mexico
- 21) Electronic Filing Update
- 22) Professional Development
- 23) Interaction Between the Regulated Community and the Regulators
- 24) Freedom of Information Litigation/Legislation Update
- 25) Lunch/Plenary Session: Jim Hightower, National Radio Commentor/Author
- 26) Ethics Enforcement Actions
- 27) Appointed vs. Elected Judges
- 28) The Impact of BCRA on Regulating Committees and Donors
- 29) Freedom of Information Roundtable (Part 1)
- 30) A Study of Public Financing Acts in Maine and Arizona
- 31) The Wide, Wide World of Election Litigation: Who's Suing, Who's Threatening, Who's Winning?
- 32) Creating Positive Working Relationships Between Your Agency and Legislators
- 33) Freedom of Information Roundtable (Part 2)
- 34) Open Government Beyond Our Borders
- 35) COGEL Business Meeting

### Alberta Delegation

Janis Tarchuk, MLA, Banff-Cochrane

Marlene Graham, MLA, Calgary-Lougheed

Laurie Blakeman, MLA, Edmonton-Centre

Mary O'Neill, MLA, St. Albert

### Delegate Report *(edited for length)*

Laurie Blakeman, Marlene Graham, Mary O'Neill, Members of the Select Standing Committee on Legislative Offices and I attended the 2003 Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL) Conference in Austin, Texas, from September 21 to September 24. As in previous years, there was representation from the Offices of the Chief Electoral Officer, the Ethics Commissioner and the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

The host for this year's Conference was the Texas Ethics Commission, and the extensive program covered topics ranging from elections, campaign finance, freedom of information and protection of privacy, and ethics issues. There was a particular emphasis on freedom of information and protection of privacy, and senior staff from the Office of Alberta's Information and Privacy Commissioner participated as panelists and moderators in a number of sessions.

There were two keynote speakers: Mr. Juan Hernandez, Cabinet Minister from Mexico; and Mr. Jim Hightower, National Radio commentator and author. The keynote addresses were insightful, entertaining and sometimes provocative. Mr. Juan Hernandez highlighted the unique status of Mexican/USA residents and their cross-nation voting and financial issues. His talk prompted one delegate to attend the University of Texas campus to explore its cultural and educational program offerings. Mr. Jim Hightower called for dramatic disclosure and legislative accountability to the electorate. The protection of privacy for individual citizens is very much a cross-jurisdictional challenge. Workshops offered some suggestions.

There were a number of informative sessions relating to freedom of information, with the Canadian and American systems highlighted as among the best in the world. There was a session dealing with conflict resolution in the workplace and interesting discussions relating to the roles of elected officials, ethics agencies and information and privacy bodies with the media. A number of sessions provided updates on ethics and information and privacy issues in various jurisdictions.

COGEL is an international organization, and this conference attracts delegates from all over the world. The conference provided opportunities to discuss current ethics, elections, and information and privacy issues with delegates who attended from Canada, the United States, and from a number of other countries, including Mexico and Australia. Delegates also attended the COGEL Annual Awards Banquet at the Bob Bullock Texas History Museum, where President Jimmy Carter was awarded the COGEL Award in recognition of his work with the Carter Center, which he founded in 1982.

Janis Tarchuk, MLA, Banff-Cochrane

## Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference and Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians

Dhaka, Bangladesh

October 4 – 13

### Agenda

#### Saturday

- 1) Meeting of the Working Party

#### Sunday

- 1) Meeting of the Executive Committee
- 2) Opening and meeting of the Small Countries Conference
- 3) Arrival of Members of the CWP Steering Committee

#### Monday

- 1) Meeting of the Executive Committee
- 2) Small Countries Conference
- 3) Meeting of the CWP Steering Committee
- 4) Arrival of Delegates, Observers etc.

#### Tuesday

- 1) Briefing for workshops (Moderators, Discussion leaders, Rapporteurs and Session Secretaries)
- 2) General Briefing for Delegates, Observers and Secretaries
- 3) Briefing for Spouses
- 4) Official Inauguration of the 49th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference by the Hon. Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Vice-Patron of the CPA, H. E. Begum Khaleda Zia, MP.
- 5) Regional Group Meetings
- 6) Plenary Session: Addresses by the CPA Secretary-General and Commonwealth Secretary-General followed by Question and Answer Session

#### Wednesday

- 1) River Cruise on the River Meghna or a trip to Jamuna Bridge

#### Thursday

- 1) First Plenary Session
- 2) Meetings of Society of Clerks at-the-Table
- 3) Workshops (A,B,C)
- 4) Workshops (D,E,F)

#### Friday

- 1) Breakfast-CWP Business Meeting
- 2) Plenary Session (on Gender Related Theme)
- 3) Meeting of Society of Clerks at-the-Table
- 4) General Assembly
- 5) Final Plenary
- 6) Meeting of the new Executive Committee

#### Alberta Delegation

Mary Anne Jablonski, MLA, Red Deer-North

#### Delegate Report (*edited for length*)

On October 6, 2003, I attended the sixth meeting of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Committee for the 49th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference 2003. The meeting was chaired by Begum Khurshid Zahan Haque, MP, Minister for Women and Children's Affairs, Bangladesh.

The meeting was attended by representatives from Africa, Australia, British Islands and the Mediterranean, Canada, the Caribbean, Atlantic and the Americas, Pacific and South East Asia. It was a colourful and dynamic meeting with very assertive and determined representatives who felt that reform of the Steering Committee and the position of Chairperson were overdue.

Eight recommendations were presented to the steering committee by the Secretary General to reform the structure of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP). The CWP Chairperson will now be elected, for three years, by women members attending the CWP Business Meeting. The elected Chairperson will also become an ex-officio member of the CPA Executive Committee.

The official inauguration of the 49th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference took place in the Bangladesh China Conference Centre in Dhaka on Tuesday, October 7, 2003. Plenary Sessions and Workshops were offered until October 11. The theme for this year's conference was Partnerships for Global Peace and Security.

There were 32 other Canadian representatives. By sharing information and getting to know each other, we were able to contribute to global peace and stability. I especially appreciated having the opportunity to meet people from the Commonwealth and learning about their cultures and ways of life. This was a journey that reinforced the value of democratic governments free from corruption and the value of a good education for everyone.

All Canadians should be very proud of our quality of life and the commitment of the provincial and federal governments to serve the people of Canada.

Mary Anne Jablonski, MLA Red Deer-North

## 27th Canadian Regional Seminar

Iqaluit, Nunavut

October 16 – 19

#### Agenda

- 1) E-Democracy and Parliament
- 2) Seniors Benefit Plan
- 3) Casting Vote
- 4) Long-term Care Accommodation

#### Alberta Delegation

Karen Kryczka, MLA, Calgary-West  
Jon Lord, MLA, Calgary-Currie

George VanderBurg, MLA, Whitecourt-Ste. Anne  
Wayne Cao, MLA, Calgary-Fort

#### Delegate Reports (*edited for length*)

Visiting this part of Canada and meeting Nunavut elected officials joined by other parliamentarians from across Canada broadened my knowledge and views of issues throughout the country.

No doubt the most interesting education session for me was presented by Nunavut's Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Kevin O'Brien, on Consensus Government. In my view Northern Canada is being well served by this form of government and through discussions with MLAs and local citizens from Iqaluit the system has wide support. Voter turnout is high as well as general knowledge of issues.

I was very proud of our delegation. Without doubt a major role in the conference, both in attendance and participation, was contributed by Alberta. I do believe that we should meet with Minister Mark Norris to discuss economic benefits that Albertans could have through stronger political ties with the north. Mining, tourism, health services and educational opportunities abound. We should not miss the economic boom that the North is facing—eastern Canadian provinces are already paying attention.

If all Albertans traveled to this part of Canada, Alberta would be an easier province to govern. We truly live in a province with endless opportunities and we should all be more thankful for what we take for granted each and every day.

George VanderBurg, MLA Whitecourt-Ste. Anne

Not having ever traveled to Canada's north before, I was not sure what to expect. However, by the end of the conference I was sad that we had to leave so fast. I am very pleased to say that I enjoyed the trip immensely, and definitely came away with a much better understanding of some of the issues and problems faced by the north.

Clearly, economic development is very high on the list of things needed to be done in Iqaluit and Nunavut. It would appear that there is a lot of opportunity, just not enough people, resources and basically organizational effort. The new parliament and government of Nunavut are clearly forward-thinking people, well travelled and experienced and no doubt will be making great strides in the coming years.

I was very impressed by the spirit of Iqaluit and can certainly see that with proper government and guidance, much good will be coming out of this desolate part of Canada in the coming years—and we were certainly impressed with the calibre of the people involved in the new government. I do think that we learned more about the people there than they learned from us, although I do think our team made some excellent contributions to the discussions in the business conferences.

Jon Lord, MLA Calgary-Currie



The subjects of discussion:

**E-Democracy and Parliament**

- Ease of electronic communication between elected officials and their constituents.
- Information accessibility for elected officials and public at large.
- Issues of reliability and accuracy of information and data posted in Internet
- Issues of misinformation or disinformation via mass electronic communication
- I expressed a vision of a futuristic direct democracy where constituents participate through electronic communication in policy and legislative development without the need of elected officials.

**Seniors Benefit Plan**

- Issues of aging population and the health care and social support required
- Issues of home care and seniors residence
- Alberta seniors' benefit program is the envy of other jurisdictions
- Consensus Government
- Consensus is an agreement on the alternative
- Caucus team playing
- Collective wisdom
- Election of the Speaker
- Election of Government Leaders and Ministers

**Casting Vote**

- Free vote in the Chamber
- The role and experience of the Speaker's votes
- Elected Members' vote related to constituency, party, public majority and conscience

**Long-term Care Accommodation**

- Separation of Health Care Services from Accommodation
- Choices of care services and accommodation, beyond the public funded standards

**What I have learned about Nunavut and Iqaluit:**

- Official languages are Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun and English
- The Legislative Assembly is non-partisan
- The Speaker, the Premier and the Ministers are elected by and from the Members of the Legislative Assembly

Nunavut, Canada's most northern territory, has been home to Inuit for millennia and part of Canada for more than a century. Embracing both traditional knowledge and values and the new opportunities presented by technologies like the Internet, the Government of Nunavut now provides a wide range of services tailored to the unique needs of approximately 29,000 residents. Nunavut's capital city is Iqaluit (formerly Frobisher Bay), a small, isolated community on the bay.

Wayne Cao, MLA Calgary-Fort

# Interparliamentary Relations

The Honourable Ken Kowalski, Speaker; Mr. Don Tannas, Deputy Speaker; Mr. Shiraz Shariff, Deputy Chair of Committees and the employees of the Legislative Assembly Office are involved in ongoing liaison with Members and employees of other parliaments and other representatives of foreign countries. In 2003, they hosted the following events and/or met with the following visitors:

**January 29**

Her Excellency Fanny Kertzman Yankelevitch  
Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia

**February 20**

His Excellency Ki Ho Chang  
Ambassador of the Republic of Korea

**February 27**

Minister Monika Hohlmeier  
Minister of Culture and Learning  
Free State of Bavaria

**March 5**

Mr. Robert Helfenstein  
Consul General of Switzerland

**March 11**

His Excellency Wade Armstrong  
High Commissioner for New Zealand

**April 9**

His Excellency Aydemir Erman  
Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey

**April 14**

Her Excellency Shashi Uban Tripathi  
High Commissioner for the Republic of India

**April 24**

His Excellency Denes Tomaj  
Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary

**April 30**

Mrs. Binarti Fadjar Sumirat  
Consul General of Indonesia

**May 7**

His Excellency Eric John Hayes  
Ambassador of the European Commission

**May 5**

Mr. Joao Luis Laranjeira de Abreu  
Consul General of Portugal

**May 28**

His Excellency Vladimir Kotzy  
Ambassador of the Czech Republic

**June 11**

Mr. Raul Elias Chavera  
Consul General of the United States

**June 12**

His Excellency Arnold Piggott  
High Commissioner for the Republic of  
Trinidad and Tobago

**August 19**

Governor Francisco Ramirez Acuna  
State of Jalisco, Mexico

**October 15**

His Excellency Suvithya Simaskul  
Ambassador of the Royal Thai Embassy

Mr. Surapit Kirtiputra

Consul General of the Royal Thai Consulate

**November 17**

Mr. Jiri Parkmann  
Consul General of the Czech Republic

**November 26**

Dr. George Joseph  
Consul General of India

**December 1**

Mr. Hans-Michael Schwandt  
Consul General of Germany

*Left to right: Speaker Kowalski, Herr Johann Böhm, Speaker of the Bavarian Legislature, and Mr. Lukaszuk, MLA Edmonton-Castle Downs. Speaker Kowalski and Mr. Lukaszuk visited the Bavarian Parliament during their Europe and State Legislative Leaders Foundation trip.*

