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Chamber hosts informative All Candidates Debate for West Nipissing residents

Sturgeon Falls, Ontario – May 28, 2014

The West Nipissing Chamber of Commerce hosted an All Candidates Debate on May 27, 2014 in preparation of the 2014 provincial election. The debate took place at the Marcel Noël Hall in Sturgeon Falls from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. There was a total of 65 people in attendance, including community members and four of the five provincial candidates. “I was pleased with the turnout at the debate, given the short notice of the election, and happy that four candidates were available to provide their time and speak with the constituents of West Nipissing,” said Mike Bozzer, Project Manager at the West Nipissing Chamber of Commerce.

The provincial candidates present at the debate included Gino Chitaroni of the Northern Ontario Heritage Party, Sébastien Goyer of the Ontario Liberal Party, Peter Politis of the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and John Vanthof of the Ontario New Democratic Party. Absent from the debate was Green Party of Ontario candidate, Cody Fraser.

The moderator for the evening was Neil Fox, who ensured the smooth running of the debate and fairness throughout question period. Mr. Fox introduced the question panel made up of three community members. Panelists included Mike Bozzer representing the West Nipissing Chamber of Commerce, Claude Dubuc representing Collège Boréal and Isabel Mosseler representing the Tribune and West Nipissing Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

The evening began with each candidate being allotted two minutes to briefly introduce themselves. Following introductions, the question panel asked the candidates a total of five predetermined questions that had been submitted by community members prior to the debate. Each candidate had a total of two minutes to respond to each predetermined question. Throughout the debate, audience members were encouraged to submit questions in writing that they would like to have answered. All questions formulated by the audience were placed in a box and reviewed by the box keeper, Jolene Lisk of the West Nipissing Chamber of Commerce.

After being thoroughly reviewed, three of the questions provided by the audience were selected and posed to the candidates. Each candidate had a total of 90 seconds to respond. Following the debate, candidates had the opportunity to meet with constituents and answer questions one-on-one. Each candidate was provided with one campaign table to display promotional material.

The Marcel Noël Hall was graciously donated by the Municipality of West Nipissing for the evening and coffee was generously provided by McDonalds Restaurant in Sturgeon Falls. The event would not have been successful without the support of debate moderator Neil Fox and question panel, Mike Bozzer, Claude Dubuc and Isabel Mosseler.





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The debate provided West Nipissing residents with the opportunity to meet the candidates in their riding and gain insight into each party's priorities. Bozzer concluded that "the Chamber of Commerce is always open to assisting our residents and businesses by informing them of the issues that affect us, locally, provincially, and federally." Bozzer emphasized the importance of hosting this session and providing residents with the opportunity to gain a further understanding of each party's platform, and make an informed decision on June 12th, 2014 at the polls.

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