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**Bill's
Bulletin
Board**

By Bill Rea

The electoral dust has had a little more than a week to settle over King Township.

In that time, a lot of sleep has been lost, a lot of hands have been wrung and many a water-cooler discussion around King has been dominated by the key question. I could just envision it being asked continuously since last Monday night, be it over coffees or over pillows.

"So," I'm sure many of you have asked, "what do you suppose Bill Rea thinks of the elections?"

Fret no more, my friends. Sit back, relax and prepare to be dazzled by these ensuing pearls of wisdom.

For me, last week's election results featured one major surprise, a couple of minor jolts and some races that went pretty much as I expected.

That included the race for the mayor's office. In the last week of the campaign, I had heard predictions that Margaret Black was likely to win by something in the neighbourhood of 600 to 800 votes. Most of those predictions came from people I knew to be

Black supporters, which led me to conclude, along with other rumblings I was feeling in the community, that they might be a little bit optimistic. While I did expect that she would be victorious over Steve Pellegrini, I thought things were going to be a bit closer. I also heard from people in the Pellegrini camp who predicted things would be very close.

One of the first things a young journalist learns while covering his or her first election is to take such predictions from a candidate and a candidate's campaign with a substantial grain of salt. No diligent and hard-working member of a campaign team is going to suggest (especially in earshot of a local newspaper editor) that their candidate is about to have his or her political head kicked in. So in other words, I didn't take any of these partisan prognostication seriously at all.

I figured Black would be ahead by something in the range of 400 to 600 hundred votes, based on my read of the situation. In fact, the figures provided by the Township put her

529 votes ahead, so chalk one up for me.

In the council races, the big surprise of course was Jeff Laidlaw beating out Peter Grandilli.

With all due respect to Laidlaw, that news saddened me a bit. While he wasn't a particularly active debater at the council table, I thought Grandilli was a very good constituency councillor.

But voters can be fickle at times, and in this case, they have exercised their right to chose a new representative in their local government. More power to them.

As far as the rest of the council races are concerned, the only real surprise was Jack Rupke's margin of victory was as small as it was. Was it a case of some of his supporters being too complacent? The unfortunate thing is we're going to have to wait at least four years before we get another chance at a clear indication.

I think everyone knew that Linda Pabst and Jane Underhill were going to win big,

As for Ward 1, that was the big question mark throughout the campaign, and the one upon which I was most reluctant to make a prediction. The fact is that in my gut, I think I was expecting Cleve Mortelliti to win, although I was far too chicken to go out on a limb. For one thing, I thought Liina Peacock did very well at the two all-candidates' meetings, especially at the second one in King City. But who are we to

second guess the judgement of the voters?

That question actually carries a lot more validity than many people might care to admit.

The official results, issued late last week by the Township, state 7,316 of you marked your ballots in the mayor's race, or 49.84 per cent of the 14,678 who were eligible. For a municipal election in southern Ontario, that's a very good voter turn-out figure. The numbers are slightly less impressive, but still respectable, in the council races. According to the quick number crunching I have done (and I apologize in advance for any arithmetic errors I may have committed in compiling these numbers), the turnout there was about 49.33 per cent. Some of you may have seen the the figures issued by the Township and seen a different number for the council turnout. I think the discrepancy is because I didn't factor in the voters of Ward 4 in the council race because they had no one to vote for — Bill Cober was acclaimed.

As I stated, stand up King's numbers with other municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area, and the Township looks pretty good.

But when you also consider all that went into getting people the right to vote, and the blood that was spilled on battle fields to keep it, those figures stink.

There were more than 7,000 of you who were entitled to vote for mayor and did not, and almost

6,000 of you who had at least two people asking for your vote to be your representative on municipal council, and you chose to ignore them, for reasons which defy logic and common sense.

You say your vote doesn't matter? You're damned right your vote doesn't matter, because you decided not to cast it.

Try this little scenario on for size — factor in all the results that have been released by the Township, and add in all those votes that were not cast. There were more than enough votes to have radically changed every race that I have just commented on. Had all the votes come in, we could be now looking at a King Township council consisting of Stephen Kornblum, Peter Grandilli, Emil Alilovic, Bill Cober, James Durbano and Clayton De Vries, with Mark Healy sitting in the mayor's chair with the chain of office around his neck, and Margaret Black and Cleve Mortelliti having finished dead last in their respective races. And there are plenty of points to spare throughout that scenario.

With the possible exception (note the word "possible") of the Ward 2 race, I don't think much would likely have changed if we had 100 per cent voter turn out.

I might be inclined to ask the people who didn't vote to comment on my scenario. But since they couldn't be bothered getting out to mark their ballots, who cares what they think?

Editorial

Much is to be expected of this new council

Next Monday (Dec. 4) will see the swearing in of the new King Township council.

Although the possibility remains that there might be a recount in one of the wards, for the moment we're going to work of the assumption that the slate will be sworn in as announced.

That will mean two rookie councillors are going to be taking office for the very first time. And while they will be assuming the responsibilities of fully-fledged councillors (and drawing the accompanying salaries), the reality is these two men will need a bit of time to get the hang of their jobs, and we hope and expect their more experienced fellows will allow them that grace.

It's too early to say how this new council is going to play out once it gets down to business. Conventional

wisdom seems to indicate the two rookies, Cleve Mortelliti and Jeff Laidlaw, will align themselves with Jane Underhill on many issues. But that conclusion is both premature and simplistic. We're dealing here with two intelligent men, both capable of independent thought.

True, Laidlaw has been a community activist for years, and his political stripes are both well-known and well defined. But he's going to be on a learning curve, and while he said he understands there's a big difference between sitting in the public gallery and at the council table, even he can't know how big the switch will be until he actually under goes it.

Mortelliti has so far offered the impression that he is seeking reason. That's always positive, but who is to know where reason will

lead one?

Assuming for a moment that these two newcomers are aligned with Underhill, the fact is they represent three of seven votes at the council table; in other words, a minority. If they hope to get anything accomplished during this term of council, then they will really have to be able to work with the other four, and be prepared to give and take in some areas, while standing ground in others.

By the same token, the majority will have to be ready to show some accommodation. Brushing off the opposition simply because they don't have the votes is bad governing and contrary to the desire that each member of this new council has expressed to work together.

That means Mortelliti will have to realize there is more to King Township than just King City, Snowball,

etc., Laidlaw will have to understand the municipality takes in more than Nobleton, Laskay and points in between, Linda Pabst will have to look beyond the rural areas and into the settlements, Bill Cober will be expected to think outside Schomberg, Lloydtown and Pottageville, Underhill will not be able to confine herself to just King City and Kettleby, and Jack Rupke will have think beyond the

**Letter to the Editor
King City results no surprise**

I am not at all surprised with the King City election results.

The success of Cleve Mortelliti and Jane Underhill clearly show that the majority of people in King City believe that they have not been well represented by Margaret Black and her allies, and the suc-

cess of Jeff Laidlaw in Nobleton shows that the folks there are also starting to feel the same way.

I hope that Steve Pellegrini will continue to be involved as he has an excellent chance of becoming mayor next time around.

Cheri Michael,
King City