

Innis vanquishes Whitehead



Jennifer Innis

By Bill Rea

Richard Whitehead has fought off many challengers in his long political career, but Jennifer Innis proved to be too much for him last Monday.

Innis, former executive assistant to Mayor Marolyn Morrison, cruised to victory in the municipal elections, becoming the next Regional representative for Wards 3 and 4 (Albion and Caledon East) on Caledon council.

According to figures released by the Town of Caledon, declared official Monday morning, Innis collected 2,752 votes, giving her 57.45 per cent of the total cast. The veteran incumbent Whitehead was held to just 1,309 (27.33 per cent). Tony Viola trailed with 729 (15.22 per cent).

Members of Innis's campaign team were in the council chambers at Town Hall in Caledon East last Monday evening, but results were very slow coming in. Wayne Noble, one of her supporters, working a cell phone, was jotting down numbers on a Kleenex box (his figures were pretty accurate, only shorting Whitehead two votes.

"Game on!" a jubilant Noble declared.

Innis herself arrived not long after, commenting she wasn't too surprised with the way things turned out.

"As the time went on during the campaign, I think it became less of a surprise," she remarked.

"I'm very humbled by the support I've received," she added. "I'm very proud of the residents of Wards 3 and 4."

She added she engaged the electorate to get them out to the polls, pointing out the difference was made by "a lot of hard work and volunteers making an effort to knock on as many doors as possible."

"I really did have a great support team," she said.

"I don't know there's much to say about it," Whitehead commented a couple of days later. "People decided."

Whitehead was not willing to say what caused his defeat.

"It's a combination of things," he said. "It's never one thing."

"We got a lot done in the last term," he added.

As far as the future is concerned, Whitehead said he plans to retire, commenting he'll be 71 in January.

"I've got lots to do that I haven't been doing in years," observed, adding he intends to keep busy. He said he likes to write fiction (non-political) and said he might come up with a book or two.

"I think the people of Caledon spoke," Viola commented a couple of days later. "They wanted a change."

Viola was not bitter that Innis got the job instead of him.

"That's fine and dandy," he declared. "They got what they want."

"Good luck to Jennifer," he added, "and hopefully she can do the job that's got to be done."

Viola was appreciative for the support he did receive.

"I will always be their voice, even not being elected," he said.