



City of Peterborough

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 16, 2008

Peterborough, ON --

The City of Peterborough will host the Lieutenant Governor's New Year's Levee on January 1, 2009. The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, together with Mayor Paul Ayotte will welcome the public to City Hall from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon on January 1st.

This event offers people a unique opportunity to meet Ontario's Vice-Regal Representative in a seasonal setting to welcome in the New Year. In addition to meeting the Lieutenant Governor and Mayor Paul Ayotte, visitors will be provided local entertainment and light refreshments.

Mayor Ayotte states, "I am very pleased that the Lieutenant Governor has selected Peterborough as the venue for his 2009 Levee. We are honoured to host this event"

Before the Levee begins, the Lieutenant Governor, a champion for accessibility and for people living with disabilities, will meet privately with Peterborough's Council for Persons with Disabilities to be briefed about their current initiatives.

Following the levee, Lieutenant Governor Onley and Mayor Paul Ayotte will proceed to the Peterborough Memorial Centre where His Honour will drop the puck at the Peterborough Petes' game at 2:00 pm.

This information is also available on our City of Peterborough website at www.peterborough.ca.

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For further information please contact the undersigned:

Nancy Wright-Laking, B.A., CMO, CMMIII
City Clerk
City of Peterborough
500 George Street N.,
Peterborough, ON K9H 3R9
(705) 742-7777 ext. 1816

Ms. Nanda Casucci-Byrne
Chief of Staff and Private Secretary
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A1
416-325-7780



City of Peterborough Backgrounder

THE ROLE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

The Lieutenant Governor is the representative of Her Majesty The Queen in Ontario.

In his constitutional role, the Lieutenant Governor:

- facilitates the functioning of the Constitution, ensuring that the democratic will of Ontarians and their elected representatives is upheld and that the unwritten constitutional conventions of responsible parliamentary government are respected
- summons the Legislative Assembly to meet and outlines the Government's legislative plans in the Speech from the Throne, provides Royal Assent to bills to signify that they have completed all the parliamentary steps to enable them to become law, and prorogues the Assembly to end a sitting or dissolves the Assembly, which results in a provincial election
- appoints a Premier by determining which party has the support of the majority in the Legislative Assembly, officiates at the swearing-in of cabinet ministers and officials nominated by the Premier, and accepts the resignation of an outgoing Premier
- ensures that the will of the elected Legislative Assembly is respected in the event that a Government has lost the support of the House or the electorate, and ensures that a Premier and Government are in place in the event of parliamentary stalemate
- approves Cabinet decisions and various appointments to give them the force of law, thus signifying the end of an approval process started in Government of Ontario ministries

In his community role the Lieutenant Governor:

- welcomes The Queen and members of the royal family, world leaders and their diplomatic representatives, and as their official host in Ontario, provides opportunities for them to gain an appreciation of this province and its people
- hosts significant events in the life of Ontario at Queen's Park, and attends events organized by communities and groups throughout the province, speaking publicly to honour citizens, celebrate milestones, and reflect the diversity of the province
- provides leadership by lending the dignity of the office to worthwhile causes to encourage volunteers and others whose contributions add to the quality of life in Canada
- recognizes outstanding Ontarians by presenting the Province's honours and awards, national honours at the request of the Governor General, various Lieutenant Governor's awards, and other awards presented on behalf of organizations in Ontario
- congratulates individuals and organizations on important occasions, sends greetings to mark significant birthdays and anniversaries, provides messages for special community events, and conveys condolences on behalf of all citizens
- represents the people of Ontario and the characteristics of the province, rather than the policies of the government of the day.

THE HONOURABLE DAVID C. ONLEY, O.ONT.

When David C. Onley was appointed The Queen's representative in Ontario, his concern for people with disabilities became front page news. And when he took office on 5 September 2007, Ontario's 28th Lieutenant Governor became a highly placed champion for accessibility. The Honourable David C. Onley has championed disability issues on many fronts and for many years. Having lived with polio and post-polio syndrome since the age of three, he has broken through social barriers and become a role model.

In his 22-year career with Citytv, he was Canada's first senior newscaster with a visible disability. A popular news anchor, host/producer, science and technology specialist, and weatherman, he showed that ability outshines disability.

Mr. Onley has worked tirelessly to improve accessibility for all. He has chaired the Government of Ontario's Accessibility Standards Advisory Council, and served on the SkyDome Accessibility Council and the Air Canada Centre Accessibility Committee. He has assisted the Muki Baum Association for Multiple Disabilities, the Ontario March of Dimes, Variety Village, the Canadian Foundation for Physically Disabled Persons, and the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto.

For his public service, Mr. Onley has been honoured with the King Clancy Award for Disabled Persons, the Courage to Come Back Award, and the Positive Impact Award. He was inducted into the Terry Fox Hall of Fame and the Scarborough Walk of Fame, and received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Canada Christian College.

His best-selling novel *Shuttle* was nominated as Book of the Year in 1982 by the Periodical Distributor's Association, and he has contributed to television, radio and publications, often with a focus on science, technology, and faith. He co-founded and was president of the Aerospace Heritage Foundation.

Born on 12 June 1950 in Midland, Ontario, David Onley attended local schools then graduated from the University of Toronto in 1975 with an Honours B.A. in Political Science. He worked as an intern at Queen's Park and attended the University of Windsor Law School. In view of his success in life, Mr. Onley credits his Christian faith and the ongoing support of his wife, singer and Christian recording artist Ruth Ann Onley, and their three sons, Jonathan, Robert, and Michael. The Onleys live in Scarborough and are active members of the Safe Haven Worship Centre in Pickering.

HISTORY OF THE NEW YEAR'S LEVEE

The first recorded levee in what is now Canada was hosted by the Governor of New France, Charles Huault de Montmagny, in 1646. This custom originated in Europe, where formal morning assemblies were held by princes or persons of distinction. The word *levée* derives from French and means rising (as from bed).

In Canada, levees are traditionally hosted by representatives of the Crown. During the French regime, governors greeted citizens at their residence, the Château Saint-Louis in Quebec City, to wish them a happy new year. This custom of hosting levees at vice-regal residences

was continued by British governors, and later by Canada's Governor General and provincial lieutenant governors. In recent years, many mayors and military commanders have hosted levees, on or after January 1st.

The first vice-regal levee to be held outside a capital was hosted by then Governor General Roland Michener in Charlottetown in 1973. Subsequent governors general have hosted levees at Quebec City and in cities such as St John's and Winnipeg. The past Governor General (the Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson) hosted levees across the country on various occasions. Several lieutenant governors are now moving their levees outside their provincial capitals as well.

In keeping with this trend, recent Ontario Lieutenant Governors have held their New Year's Levees in regional centres outside of Toronto in alternating years.

For many years levees were only for invited gentlemen and members of the military and uniformed services. In Ontario, the Hon. John Keiller MacKay (Lieutenant Governor 1957-63) invited the public for the first time. The Hon. Pauline McGibbon (Lieutenant Governor 1974-80), the first female representative of The Queen in the Commonwealth, began the practice of inviting women in 1976, at the same time as then Governor General Jules Léger.

Over the years the traditional levee has evolved into a popular public event, attended by men, women and children from many backgrounds and locales. Yet its essence has remained unchanged. For over 350 years, the New Year's Levee has offered people a unique opportunity to meet Canada's vice-regal representatives in a festive setting to welcome in the new year.

Everyone is welcome to enjoy family entertainment and refreshments!