



Winter 2009

## *Working for you...*



Ed Holder is officially sworn in as your  
Member of Parliament for London West

[www.edholder.ca](http://www.edholder.ca)

It is my pleasure to once again write to you as your elected federal representative in London West.

Let me share some thoughts on the drama that has been Ottawa in December, as well as my focus over the next number of weeks.

On December 4 we all saw history made as the Governor General agreed with Prime Minister Harper to prorogue Parliament until January 26. This was an prudent decision. It gives all MPs time to consider the issues facing us and allows our government to do what we promised last Fall; to develop a budget that addresses the tough times Canadians are facing.

As you MP, I have been focused on consulting with many community stakeholders to ensure London's needs are properly heard in the process leading up to the Budget. Second, I've been focused on serving the needs of Londoners through my annual work with the Business Cares Food Drive and the New Year's Eve celebration in Victoria Park.

A key part of my responsibilities has been to assist London West residents on a multitude of issues that come up day-to-day.

If there are issues or information you would like in future editions, please don't hesitate to contact me or my team with your ideas.

For now, let me leave you with this message from my heart ... may 2009 find you and your family blessed with peace, health and happiness.



Ed Holder, Member of Parliament for London West

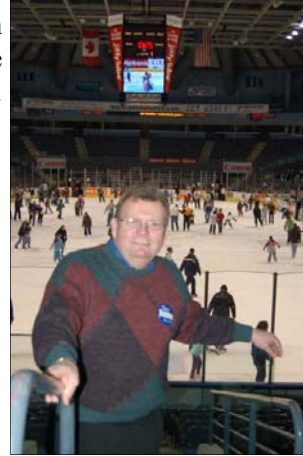


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## SKATE FOR KIDS

**Ed Holder invites you and your family** to join him to *Skate For Kids* at the John Labatt Centre on Family Day, Monday, February 16. Registration for this free event is required.



- ◆ **Date:** Monday, February 16th on the Family Day holiday.
- ◆ **Place:** John Labatt Centre. Enter at Gate 4 on Dundas.
- ◆ **Time:** 2:30PM and 3:30PM
- ◆ **Cost:** Free! Guests are asked to donate a can or box of non-perishable food in support of the London Food Bank.
- ◆ **To Skate You Must Register!** The rink will hold 250 skaters at a time. There are 2 skating sessions. The first starts at 2:45 pm and ends at 3:30 pm; skaters will be able to enter the Centre for this skate at 2:30 pm. The second starts at 3:45 pm and ends at 4:30 pm. To skate you **must** register for one of the two sessions by emailing [holdee1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:holdee1@parl.gc.ca) or calling 519-434-1866. We will accept registrations on a first come, first registered basis, so call today.
- ◆ **The Idea Behind Skate For Kids.** When the first Family Day came our way last year Ed Holder decided to sponsor a family skate at the John Labatt Centre to give families a fun way to celebrate the day and to help bring attention to a number of terrific community groups. This year the focus is on kids. Your food donation will provide much needed support for the London Food Bank which is being stretched during these difficult economic times. In addition, *Skate For Kids* is pleased to be the February event of choice for the new Big Brothers and Big Sisters of London & Area organization.
- ◆ **Important.** All kids age 13 and younger MUST wear helmets when skating. No exceptions.

[www.edholder.ca](http://www.edholder.ca)

### Holder, Pearson offer a glimmer of light

Three cheers for Conservative MP Ed Holder and Liberal MP Glen Pearson. While their colleagues in Ottawa are entwined in a dangerous, destabilizing, partisan and ultimately unnecessary game of political brinkmanship, these two have come together at home for the benefit of London.

Isn't that what politicians everywhere are supposed to do? Isn't that why we elected them? Isn't that why we pay them our hard-earned cash?

There's a lot of talk in Ottawa (though not, regretfully, this week) about co-operation and bipartisanship, but never enough -- if any -- action. The recent shenanigans by the federal Conservative party have been mischievous and irresponsible. Ditto the Liberals and the New Democrats, at least until they united as a coalition for political expediency.

That's why, amid all the furor, it's so refreshing, inspiring even, to see Pearson and Holder come together to put their community first.

Holder, the newly elected Conservative member for London West, and Pearson, the relatively new Liberal from London-North-Centre, are working again on the Business Cares Food Drive, of which Holder has been a long-time co-chair. Pearson has helped Holder with the project as the long-time director of the London Food Bank, a position he still holds.

Feeding people in need at Christmas time. What could be more basic than that? It sounds so simple, and according to Holder and Pearson, it is.

A national economic crisis is not so simple, but it is just as important, and it would be nice if the parties in Ottawa could take a page from Pearson and Holder's book.

What's more, the two MPs also plan to work together to promote the bid by the University of Western Ontario to build Canada's only AIDS vaccine manufacturing facility, as well as a number of other projects.

Do politicians have to get re-elected? Yes. Do they have to play politics sometimes in order to achieve that? Yes. Is British parliamentary democracy essentially combative? Yes. But all of that does not prevent MPs and other politicians from being decent, civil, caring human beings who were elected to put their community, whether it's London or Canada as a whole, before their own petty, personal, partisan tendencies.

At a time of shameful scheming in Ottawa, Holder and Pearson offer us all a ray of hope.

## LONDON FOOD BANK

The Christmas holidays are a distant memory and many of us are still trying to work off the extra pounds gained. Unfortunately, there are too many in our own community who don't have enough food to eat at any time of the year.

Ed Holder is the co-chair, with Wayne Dunn, of the London Business Cares Food Drive and works co-operatively with Liberal MP Glen Pearson and Jane Roy who are the Co-Directors of the London Food Bank. Together they are asking you to consider donating to the Food Bank now.

The London Food Bank supports approximately 2,600 area families, and some 42% of those helped each year are children.

The Business Cares Food Drive delivered 161,000 pounds of food to the London Food Bank in 2008, which will feed 3,572 families of four for **four days**.

While the London Food Bank was successful at collecting food over the Christmas period, the need continues. Please give what you can. Every little bit helps.

You can donate your time, food or other contributions by calling 519-659-4045 or dropping by the food bank at 926 Leathorne Street, London. Those who need to use the food bank are asked to call Monday through Friday between 9am and 4pm.



Pictured above with Ed Holder are the members of the Business Cares Food Drive Organizing Committee, delivering food to the London Food Bank. The annual drive yielded 161,000 pounds of donated food in 2008, thanks to the generosity of employee groups, organizations, associations, as well as small, medium and large businesses.

Photo -Jim Swan

## CANADA BENEFITS

Do you know all the federal benefits you may be entitled to? If not (and even if you think you do), check out the useful Benefits Finder tool at [www.canadabenefits.gc.ca](http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca). You may be surprised at the programs for which you may qualify.

You will need to answer ten basic questions and the program does the rest. It will provide a summary of the programs and how to apply.

If you prefer, you can review benefit programs based on the type of applicant you are, such as a senior, a student, a veteran or an aboriginal. You can also review benefit programs which may address a life situation such as unemployment, retirement, taxes or divorce.

If you are entitled to benefits, you must apply for them.

[www.canadabenefits.gc.ca](http://www.canadabenefits.gc.ca)

### For Seniors — Did you know?

It is reported that up to 300,000 Canadian Seniors are entitled to receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), but do not.

One in five are not receiving this benefit, which is for low-income Seniors, simply because they did not apply for it.

The GIS provides additional money, on top of the Old Age Security (OAS) pension, to low-income seniors living in Canada. To be eligible for the GIS benefit, you must be receiving the OAS pension and meet the income requirements.

You must apply for the GIS. Contact the government for an application form at:

Toll Free: 1 800 277-9914  
[www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca)



# PASSPORTS

A passport is a key piece of identification that proves your citizenship when travelling abroad and is also an alternate piece of identification at home.

There is a modest cost to obtaining a passport, but many consider it a wise investment. Having a valid passport allows you to leave Canada at any time and for any reason. While you may not intend to travel, family circumstances, professional work or any other unforeseen reason could justify having a passport at the ready. Starting on June 1, 2009, you will require a valid passport to drive to the United States.



Thanks to our government, the process for obtaining a passport is different now. No longer do you need a guarantor like before. Now, you can have a valid passport holder vouch for you on your application. This has made the process much simpler and more accessible to all Canadians.

While the process is much simpler, the processing times for a passport (both original and renewals) can vary depending on how you apply and what processing fee you are willing to pay. Passports generally take two weeks when applied for at the Passport Office in-person and four weeks when applied for by mail. Emergency circumstances can allow for processing times as short as 24 hours, but there is an increased fee for this priority service.

**Be prepared. Apply today.**

## What's New?

Starting June 1, 2009, a U.S. law will require Canadians to present a valid passport to enter the United States by water or land. U.S. law already requires Canadians to present a valid passport to enter the U.S. by air. Apply for your passport today to ensure you have it when you need it. Remember, the passport is the recommended travel and identification document for all Canadian travellers.

## *How to apply for your passport*

- ◆ Visit [www.passport.ca](http://www.passport.ca); or
- ◆ Call toll free: 1-800-567-6868 (TTY: 1-866-255-7655).  
Outside Canada and the USA, call 819-997-8338; or
- ◆ You can visit the passport office in person at:

*Passport Canada  
Suite 201, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
400 York St., London  
Mon. to Fri. — 8:30am to 4:30pm*

## REMEMBERING HOLODOMOR

Recently, I was honoured to join the London Branch of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress for a solemn commemoration of the Holodomor. And this was the speech I gave as we remembered and honoured those Ukrainians who suffered horribly under brutal Soviet rule.

“In May of 2008, while Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko was in this country, the Canadian Parliament unanimously passed a government member’s bill recognizing the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933, the Holodomor, as an act of genocide, and establishing an annual day of memorial.

With the creation of a Ukrainian Famine and Genocide Memorial Day, Canada has unequivocally recognized that the Holodomor was deliberately planned and executed by the Soviet regime under Joseph Stalin to systematically destroy the Ukrainian people’s aspirations for a free and independent Ukraine, and caused the death of millions of Ukrainians. Honouring the memories of those who perished in the Holodomor is a crucial step in reconciliation and healing.

As one of the most horrific crimes of the last century, it is necessary not just to recognize those who suffered, but also to actively remember, and to educate. That is why efforts such as the informative display on the Holodomor here today, or the recent national tour of the International Remembrance Flame, which traveled to 17 Canadian Cities honouring those who suffered in the Holodomor, are so important. Our government welcomes and supports these efforts because remembering those who died, and why they died, is our best hope against history repeating itself.

Canada and the Ukraine have long been great friends. Canada was the first Western country to formally recognize Ukraine’s membership in the free world. By following the Ukrainian government’s example, and declaring the Holodomor an act of genocide, the Canadian government has once again demonstrated its shared values with Ukraine.

In an effort to strengthen and develop Canada’s longtime friendship with Ukraine, one of my first orders as a new Member of Parliament will be joining the Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group.

We in Canada are bonded to the Holodomor, to this dark chapter in human history, by more than a million Canadians of Ukrainian descent, many of whom lost loved ones in the genocide. And so, all Canadians join us in commemorating this anniversary of the terrible famine. Because what was done to the Ukrainian people was a mortal offence against the values we hold dearest; freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Through recognition, remembrance, and education, it is our duty to make sure that the memories of those who perished are preserved, and that the horrors that took place are never forgotten, or repeated.”

## NEW PERSONAL TAX MEASURES

<b>Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIF)</b> - Applies to 2008 taxation year only	The 2008 <i>Economic and Fiscal Statement</i> proposed a one-time 25-per-cent reduction in the required minimum RRIF withdrawal for 2008 to help retirees affected by the market downturn by allowing them to keep more of their savings in their RRIFs.
<b>Registered Education Savings Plans (RESP)</b> - as of January 1, 2008	Budget 2008 made RESPs more responsive to the changing needs of families and students by increasing both the contribution period and the number of years RESPs may remain open.
<b>Medical Expense Tax Credit</b> - as of January 1, 2008	Budget 2008 expanded the list of expenses eligible for the Medical Expense Tax Credit.
<b>Donations of exchangeable securities</b> - applied to donations after February 25, 2008	Budget 2008 extended the capital gains exemption on donations of listed securities to gains realized on certain unlisted securities that are exchanged for listed securities that are subsequently donated. (Applies also to corporations.)
<b>Phased retirement</b> - as of January 1, 2008	To provide more flexibility to employers to offer phased retirement programs, and to increase the reward to older workers from full-time work, Budget 2007 amended the income tax rules to permit an employee to receive pension benefits from a defined benefit Registered Pension Plan and simultaneously accrue further benefits, subject to certain constraints.
<b>Meal expenses for truck drivers</b> - Being phased in from March 19, 2007 to January 1, 2011	Budget 2007 increased the deductible portion of the cost of food and beverages consumed by long-haul truck drivers to 80 per cent from 50 per cent over a five-year period.

You can get the latest tax information by visiting the Canada Revenue Agency website — [www.cra.gc.ca](http://www.cra.gc.ca). You can also access all your tax information simply by using the online services there too.

## TAX FREE SAVINGS ACCOUNT



As of January 1st, 2009, you can access the Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) introduced by the federal government in the 2008 Budget.

The Tax-Free Savings Account is the single most important personal savings vehicle since the introduction of the RRSP. It will give Canadians more flexibility than ever in saving for the future. Effective January 1, Canadians 18 years of age and older can set aside up to \$5000 every year in a variety of savings options and never pay tax on the income earned or on withdrawals.

The Government of Canada wants to help Canadian taxpayers better meet their savings goals. We believe that within the next 15 to 20 years, 90 per cent of Canadians will hold all of their financial assets in tax-efficient savings vehicles, either through existing tax-deferred plans or this new savings account.

The income earned within a TFSA and withdrawals from the account will have no effect on eligibility for federal income-tested benefits or credits, such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit, the goods and services tax credit, Old Age Security, or the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

A TFSA can contain different types of investments, similar to those in an RRSP, such as mutual funds, listed securities, and guaranteed investment certificates.

Other important information that Canadians should know about how the TFSA works include:

- ◆ Unused TFSA annual contribution room is carried forward and accumulates into future years.
- ◆ The full amount of withdrawals can be put back into the TFSA in future years.
- ◆ Contributions are not tax-deductible.
- ◆ Funds can be given to a spouse or common-law partner for them to invest in their TFSA.
- ◆ TFSA assets can generally be transferred to a spouse or common-law partner upon death.

**For more information, go to [www.tfsa.gc.ca](http://www.tfsa.gc.ca).**

## REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLAN

The Government announced RDSPs in Budget 2007 to help parents and others set aside funds today to financially support a child with a severe disability when they are no longer able to provide support. The Bank of Montreal is the first major bank to offer RDSPs.

To ensure that as many individuals as possible can establish an account and be eligible for a full year of the Canada Disability Savings Grant, the government is pleased to announce a two month extension to the 2008 deadline for opening an RDSP.

Individuals who qualify for the disability tax credit, their families and others may save for the long-term financial security of a person with a severe disability by contributing to an RDSP. These contributions may be supplemented by matching Canada Disability Savings Grants from the government. The Canada Disability Savings Bond is also available for low- and middle-income families even if no contributions are made.

The RDSP is a tax-assisted savings plan. Contributions to an RDSP will not be deductible, nor will they be included in income when withdrawn. Investment income, grants and bonds are included in the income of the beneficiary when withdrawn from an RDSP.

To maximize the effectiveness of RDSPs and ensure that payments from the plan supplement rather than reduce income and benefits from other sources, amounts paid out of RDSPs will not affect federal income-tested benefits and credits such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit, the Goods and Services Tax Credit and Old Age Security.

The Government of Canada has also worked with the provinces to ensure that RDSP income and assets will not affect income benefit calculations.

Information on the grant and bond can be found on the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada website at: [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/disability](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/disability).

Beneficiary's family income	Grant	Maximum
<b>\$75,769*</b> or less (*indexed)		
on the first \$500	\$3 for every \$1 contributed	\$1,500
on the next \$1,000	\$2 for every \$1 contributed	\$2,000
<b>More than \$75,769*</b> (*indexed)		
on the first \$1,000	\$1 for every \$1 contributed	\$1,000

# CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

Do you know of a special occasion where a message from your Member of Parliament, or perhaps the Prime Minister, Governor General, or even Her Majesty the Queen would be appropriate? Ed Holder may even be able to deliver it in person.

If so, you or any of your relatives or friends can request a congratulatory message to be sent to the celebrants. Here is a list of the occasions that may be recognized by each:



## **Her Majesty The Queen \***

Birthdays: 100 years or more

Anniversaries: 60 years or more

(Please give our office 3 months notice.)

## **The Governor General**

Birthdays: 90-99 years

Anniversaries: 50-59 years

(Please give our office 3 months notice.)



## **The Prime Minister**

Birthdays: 75 or more

Anniversaries: 25 or more (every 5 years)

(Please give our office 2 months notice of the event.)

## **Ed Holder, your Member of Parliament in London West**

Birthdays

Anniversaries

Other Special Occasions



To complete your request, please contact my London office (Contact information is on Page 14) and be sure to have all the contact information for yourself and the celebrants. In addition, please be sure to have the dates of the occasion and the date of the celebration.

**\* Please note that one of the following is required before a message can be sent by Her Majesty the Queen:**

- Copy of the birth/marriage certificate, or
- Certificate from the Registrar General, Vital Statistics, or
- Photocopy from a family bible, or
- Copy of driver's licence or passport

## HAPPENINGS

As your Member of Parliament, I would like to help you promote your free community-based event.

In upcoming editions of this publication, I would like to give a little space to help promote some of the exciting events our community has to offer.

Of course, we don't have the space to promote every event, so I will be giving priority to events based on the following criteria:

- ◆ The event must be community-based
- ◆ The event must be free to attend
- ◆ The event should be family-friendly
- ◆ The event must be welcoming for all members of the community
- ◆ Details of the event must be available 90 days in advance and must include contact details for people looking for further information
- ◆ The event cannot be for the promotion of certain products, services or political matters

Many local events are already well-established and well-attended. By assisting some event organizers to promote their events, I hope to increase the number of successful events in our community.

I will not have space for all the worthy events in my mailings, so please be sure to also check the Events page on my website for a complete listing.

You can visit the page at [www.edholder.ca/events](http://www.edholder.ca/events) to ensure you know of the latest exciting events near you.

### Skate for Kids

Free Family Event  
February 16th

See details on Page 3


**PROMOTE  
YOUR  
EVENT  
HERE**


## CONTACT INFORMATION



### **L O N D O N**

200 - 390 Commissioners Road West  
London, Ontario, N6J 1Y3  
(located between Wonderland and Wharncliffe)

 519.473.5955

 519.473.7333


 [holdee1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:holdee1@parl.gc.ca)


 Fully Accessible

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### **O T T A W A**

409 Justice Building  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

 613.996.6674

 613.996.6772

 [Holder.E@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Holder.E@parl.gc.ca)

(mail may be sent to Ottawa postage free)

[www.edholder.ca](http://www.edholder.ca)

## *Your Opinion Matters...*

As your elected Member of Parliament, Ed Holder will use your opinions and comments to determine how you want to be represented. Your participation in this free survey is appreciated.

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**What are the top three issues that you would like to see your Member of Parliament Ed Holder focus on?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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What do you think of the job **Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party** are doing?

- Excellent
- Good
- Poor

What do you think of the job **Michael Ignatieff and the Liberal Party** are doing?

- Excellent
- Good
- Poor

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What do you think of the job **Jack Layton and the New Democratic Party** are doing?

- Excellent
- Good
- Poor

What do you think of the job your **Member of Parliament Ed Holder** is doing?

- Excellent
- Good
- Poor

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*Thank you for completing and returning this survey.*



No Postage Required

ED HOLDER  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
LONDON WEST  
409 JUSTICE BUILDING  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
OTTAWA ON K1A 0A6

---- FOLD HERE AND TAPE CLOSED - PLEASE DO NOT STAPLE ----

**FROM:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Detach This Back Page And Return.

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