

# Tilly O'NEILL-GORDON

Member of Parliament for Miramichi  
[www.tillygordon.ca](http://www.tillygordon.ca)



NEWS FROM JULY!

E-NEWS  
July 2009  
Staying Connected

Dear constituent:

First of all, let's remember that we began the month by celebrating Canada Day on July 1. I had the opportunity to be the Master of Ceremonies for the 2009 parade and to participate in the Lions Club breakfast.

On July 4, I attended the opening of the Beaubears Island Interpretation Centre in Miramichi.

On the 17th, we were at the opening ceremonies for the 26th Miramichi Irish Festival at the Lord Beaverbrook Arena. I really enjoyed getting to meet you and talk with so many of you.

I hope you have been able to take advantage of the many festivals and activities that took place in the riding over the last month.

Don't forget that many more festivals will be taking place in Miramichi over the rest of the summer! I have included a few dates on the right.

Have a wonderful summer vacation!

Yours sincerely,

## *Festivals & Events*

[World Acadian Congress](#)

[Miramichi Folksong Festival](#)

Folksong Festival August 3-7

Garden Club Tour August 8

Rogersville Novena August 6-15

Napan Show August 13 - 16

Acadian Days August 15

Burnt Church Pow Wow  
August 20-23

Scottish Celebration August 21-23

Rogersville Bluegrass Festival  
August 28-30

Pumpkin Festival September 19

Miramichi Country Music  
September 18-19

Acadieville Picnic September 5-6

## CONGRATULATIONS, BLACKVILLE!

Blackville Village will soon see its hundred-year-old community centre replaced by a new \$820,000 multi-purpose facility that will house various recreation organizations and activities.

On July 16, 2009, I was at the Blackville United Church with Premier Shawn Graham, Mayor Glen Hollowood and MLA for Southwest Miramichi Rick Brewer to announce the project funding plan.

The complex will be 4,200 square feet and have two seniors' rooms, a large multi-purpose room for young people and a computer room open to the public. It will be more accessible than the current building, and it meets recognized environmental building standards.

The federal government granted \$250,000 to the project through its Community Adjustment Fund in the 2009 Budget. It has earmarked two billion dollars over two years for economic stimulus in regions dependent on natural resources.

"Our investment in this centre will help unite and support the community as members work together to diversify and revitalize the local economy," Tilly O'Neill-Gordon said of the funding, delivered in Atlantic Canada through the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

Construction will begin before the end of the summer and should be finished by late March 2010.

## SUCCESS IS BECOMING EASIER FOR STUDENTS

As of fall 2009, students and families will be able to benefit from new bursaries and other forms of financial assistance that will make it easier for them to afford post-secondary education. This means:

A new bursary for full-time students from low- and middle-income families. The new measures will also help part-time students and students with a permanent disability.

A new Repayment Assistance Plan (RAP) will help student borrowers who are having difficulty paying their student loans. The Plan will make it easier for student borrowers to manage their debt by ensuring they can make their payments.

*Interested in having your  
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an event in the riding?  
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office at 778-8448.*

To help you meet your educational goals, [www.canlearn.ca](http://www.canlearn.ca) gives you information and services that will help you save for your studies, plan your budget and pay for your post-secondary education. Interactive online tools, including the new Student Financial Assistance Estimator and the Repayment Assistance Estimator, will help you identify the type of assistance available and manage the costs of post-secondary education. You can also download publications from **CanLearn.ca** or order them by emailing [info@canlearn.ca](mailto:info@canlearn.ca).

You can also contact Student Financial Services at 506-453-2577 (Fredericton region) or 1-800-667-5626 or online at [www.studentaid.gnb.ca](http://www.studentaid.gnb.ca).

### HELPING CANADIANS WITH DISABILITIES

The federal government has created the new Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) and a disability savings grant and bond.

Like the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), the RDSP lets Canadians with disabilities who are saving money for the future save money on their taxes.

We have also created a disability savings grant and a disability savings bond to provide additional tax benefits for Canadians with disabilities and their families.

Our government will continue to defend Canadians with disabilities and do more to improve their quality of life.

For more information, please visit [www.disabilitysavings.gc.ca](http://www.disabilitysavings.gc.ca).

*Our photography contest  
is still underway, right  
up until October 26,  
2009. Please visit  
[www.tillygordon.ca](http://www.tillygordon.ca)  
for details.*

## BILL C-201 – CANADIAN FORCES AND RCMP PENSION

In response to requests from a number of residents, here are the details that explain why we voted against Bill C-201. Here are the facts :

NDP MP Peter Stoffer has put forward a private member's bill (C-201) so Canadian Forces and RCMP pensioners can continue to receive the "bridge benefit" which normally disappears when the Canada Pension Plan benefits begin at age 65.

This government fully supports and appreciates the work and sacrifices made by our military and Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The Canadian Forces Superannuation Act (CFSA) and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act (RCMPSA) provide generous pension plans for members of the Canadian Forces and the RCMP. Upon retirement, sometimes as early as after twenty years of service, members begin receiving a pension that is made up of two parts: a lifelong pension which remains the same before and after age 65, and a 'bridge' benefit which is paid from the day of retirement until age 65, at which point members begin receiving full benefits from the Canada Pension Plan (CPP).

The decision to integrate the CPP with the CFSA and RCMPSA was made in 1966 when the CPP was introduced by Parliament. Parliamentarians chose not to "stack" the plans. Virtually all other employer sponsored pension plans in Canada adopted the same model. If a "stacked" approach (CPP paid on top of a continuous bridge benefit) had been adopted, the pension benefits would have been greater. Unfortunately though, the resulting increased contributions by CF/RCMP members and the Canadian Government would also have been significantly higher.

Mr. Stoffer's bill does not state who will provide the funding to enable the new "stacked" approach contemplated under his bill: the Canadian taxpayer or the Canadian Forces/RCMP members through increased pension premiums.

We need to ensure that this issue is fully examined including the financial impact on all Canadians.

Do not hesitate to e-mail me if you want more details on this Bill.

Please feel free to forward this to anyone you think might be interested.  
If you have received this from a friend and would like to sign up to regularly receive  
***Staying Connected***,  
If you have questions or comments, please email me at [oneilt@parl.gc.ca](mailto:oneilt@parl.gc.ca) or call me at  
506-778-8448.