

May the 4th be with you



By Nate Smelle

ELECTION TIME!

Here we go again, time to exercise our democratic right to elect our new leader. Who will it be, Andrea Horwath, Kathleen Wynne, Tim Hudak? More importantly where will these representatives stand on behalf of the things that matter to us? That means before we make our mark on the ballot on Thursday, June 12 we have our work cut out for us. Time to do the legwork necessary to establish which party, and which leader will do the best job representing us. So what are the things that matter to us? Of course the political parties vying for the opportunity to define the next four years for Ontarians will be telling us what we need to value. Not only is it our job to sift through facts presented to us on the orange, green, blue and red pamphlets we will find in our mailboxes, we will also have to consider such suggestions by the unions and other social clubs to which many of us belong. With but a month to go before we have to figure out which party and figurehead will remain accountable for the promises and platforms they will make our job is not an easy one. Making the decision even more difficult is the rapid bombardment of attack-ads on their way telling us how bad the other candidates are. Adding to the confusion we will again see the same promises of jobs and lower taxes offered and then undelivered.

I would like to think that with every election we become a little wiser, and a little better acquainted with the usual deceptions that are thrown our way when the opportunity for democracy arises. Unfortunately I can't say that I am very hopeful that such an understanding has come true this time around.

Sitting down for a drink the other day at the South Algonquin Eatery and Pub I overheard a quite heated discussion by a rowdy table of individuals that reminded me of a discussion I have found myself in on many occasions. Leaving out the valid points made from all four corners of the table the most discouraging part of the conversation went a little something like this:

?My grandfather voted for that party, my father voted for that party so I'm going to vote for them.?

Living in a world so far removed from the reality of the one our grandparents and even our parents lived in, how can blind faith in a political party make any sense at all?

Being May 4, *World Star Wars Day*, I thought it may be interesting to share how an old political science professor of mine once told the class how he decided who to put his vote behind. He said he imagined all of the individuals and political parties throwing their hats into the ring in terms *Star Wars* characters.

?Who are the Jedis?? he asked the class. ?Who are fighting on behalf of the empire, and who on behalf of the Rebel Alliance? What about the rights of the Ewoks and the Wookies?? As a Star Wars nerd myself this lesson really sunk home with me. Now every time an election rears its head I can't help but channel my inner-Jedi and search my thoughts and feelings for who is genuinely looking out for our best interests now and in the future.