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# THE WHISTLE

Newsletter of the Burnaby Teachers' Association

ELECTION  
EDITION

SPECIAL EDITION ELECTION ISSUE

OCTOBER 2019

Dear Colleagues:

In several past Federal elections, we have sent letters by "snail mail" to all BCTF members who lived in our riding. Because of the privacy laws that exist, we are no longer able to identify those members. So, please forgive us for sending this general email so that the members who live in Burnaby North – Seymour all get this message. Wherever you live, we hope that you will be voting on October 21.

Patti Jukes (BTA Treasurer) and Sharon Freeman (Retired)

## TO THE TEACHERS OF BURNABY-NORTH SEYMOUR

Dear Colleague:

We are a group of Burnaby teachers who support the election of **Svend Robinson** as the Member of Parliament for Burnaby North – Seymour. Some of us have been fortunate to have been represented by **Svend** for more than twenty years. We are very excited about the opportunity to have **Svend** represent us again. We know that he has always been hard-working and an advocate for the rights of all of his constituents.

You probably know that, on the Federal level, **Svend** has always championed human rights, multiculturalism, and the environment. You may not know of some of the work he has done in the past to directly support teachers and students. As an M.P., **Svend** attended many school events as a guest speaker, made numerous classroom visits to discuss the role of the M.P. and student understanding of their role in government, and participated in many school functions.

His excellent record on educational issues includes:

- supporting the initiation of an elementary Aboriginal Studies program in Burnaby in the mid 1980's
- standing with Burnaby teachers in protest over provincial labour legislation

- supporting Burnaby's community schools in their pursuit of summer program funding
- working with multicultural groups to lobby the Burnaby School Board in a time when it was cutting funding to many services for students
- supporting a student at Moscrop when they were attempting to start the first GSA at that school long before we had a SOGI curriculum
- attending many BCTF Annual General Meetings and sitting with Burnaby teachers –including the 1997 debate on an anti-homophobia resolution

**Svend** was a Burnaby student, graduating from Burnaby North. When M.P.'s gave themselves a salary increase during the time of restraint, **Svend** put his raise into a scholarship fund for Burnaby secondary school graduates. He continues to provide those scholarships today.

**In short, Svend has always been accessible, interested, and in touch with all members of his community!**

Though many of us do not live in **Svend's** riding, his support of issues concerning the environment, multiculturalism, human rights, and education has been so outstanding that we feel compelled to support his election as Member of Parliament for Burnaby North – Seymour. You are fortunate to live in this riding and have **Svend** as your candidate. We ask for your support for **Svend** on October 21.

**Your vote could make the difference!**

Sincerely,

Kiran Abraham, Rachel-Lynn Baird, Nabil Blaaser, Frank Bonvino, Marjean Brown, Terry Callender, Gwen Chute, Derek Cockram, Ditta Cross, Donna Doerksen, Joan Ezra, Rae Figursky, Sharon Freeman, Antonella Garcia, Karen Gillespie, Tracy

Healy, Jennifer Heighton, Tarnjit Hemer, Jodi Hill, Mary Hotomanie, Sarah Howard, Patti Jukes, Renee Kerluke, Cora Kinoshita, Sara LaBrash, Karen Macartney, Jonathan MacDonald, Katie Marsh, Donna Morgan, Alex Peters, Kevin Potvin, Shanee Prasad, Arnold Sanderson, James Sanyshyn, Krishna Sharma, Shelley Sherwood, Tracy Simmons, Leanne Sjodin, Heather Skuse, Richard Storch, Yasmin Tayob, Robyn Temple, Shelagh Temple, Daniel Tetrault, Paul Thola, Andrej Vlasil

## Federal English Debate

A Personal Opinion Piece  
By Morgan McKee PA/PR Committee

Watching the Federal English debate in a room full of other campaign volunteers, instead of home alone in my fuzzy slippers, was an experience! With so many people dedicated to understanding electoral issues, candidate platforms, and current political dynamics- it was both informative as well as refreshing to be reminded of enthusiastic civic engagement. The inclusive space of the campaign office also attracted four legged furry "Muck", the golden retriever, in his support of the debate.



Some interesting points were made, and the fast pace with so many candidates kept me as a viewer on the edge of my seat. One question that was asked came from UBC, a pleasant surprise. While comments ranged from passive to direct exchanges, laughs from Singh in the confusion of his name kept the tension at bay. While this list is by no means exhaustive, some coverage that may interest educators included multiculturalism, structural violence of Indigenous peoples, environmentalism concerns, household debt and fiscal responsibility. While education is under a provincial jurisdiction, the federal government is responsible for funding that in turn affects the provincial budget. To those interested in supporting your local candidates, please reach out to your representative for campaign help on Sunday October 20th, the day before the election! This is a big day for ensuring that voters are ready and reminded to vote the next day. Happy Campaigning!

## Get To Know Your Candidates for Burnaby South

**Jagmeet Singh**  
New Democratic Party



Jagmeet is a lawyer, a human rights activist and the Leader of Canada's New Democratic Party.

Jagmeet Singh grew up in Scarborough, St. John's, and Windsor, and served as an Ontario MPP from 2011 until 2017. Jagmeet used his platform as an MPP and Deputy Leader of Ontario's NDP to fight for a fairer society. He took on the discriminatory practice of arbitrary police checks known as carding. He spoke up repeatedly on the need for good jobs and an end to precarious work. And he fought for the protection and expansion of public ownership over our utilities and public infrastructure.

On October 1st, 2017, he became leader of Canada's NDP – guided by values rooted in his experiences growing up, Jagmeet is building a fairer, more just Canada where everyone can realize their dreams.

**Neelam Brar**  
Liberal Party of Canada



Neelam Brar is a dedicated community leader with deep roots in Burnaby South, where she lived for over 20 years. As an entrepreneur with a track record of building large communities, she is ready to be a strong advocate for the residents. Neelam has a unique understanding of Burnaby Souths' vibrant character and diversity. As a daughter of humble immigrants, she knows what it takes to strengthen our middle class, create well-paying new jobs, and offer real help to families right here in our community.

Following her graduation from the Richard Ivey School of Business from the University of Western Ontario, she has worked in international business in Canada, the United States, Singapore, Hong Kong and India. Neelam's background and career experience provides her a deep understanding of our local & global economies, and the importance of sustainable growth and innovation in the wake of community and environmental responsibility.

**Jay Shin**  
Conservative Party of Canada



Jay Shin is running for Member of Parliament to advocate policies that will promote prosperity and make Burnaby safer.

Jay moved to Canada with his family at an early age where Jay worked for his family's grocery store, similar to the story of a lot of immigrant families that have worked hard to build better lives for themselves in Canada. Jay grew up in Burnaby during his teen years, where his parents still live today. After completing his studies Jay was called to the Bar in 1997 and has been practicing business law ever since.

Jay specializes in providing strategic legal advice to domestic and international entities involved in commercial transactions across a number of sectors, including real estate, banking, mining, energy, oil & gas, and technology. He has also been active on the boards of S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the Canada-Korea Business Association, as a member of the Hong Kong Canada Business Association, Treasurer for the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association Banking Law Section.

**Brennan Wauters**  
Green Party



Brennan Wauters is an independent electrical contractor and Project Manager for a growing electrical company in British Columbia. Brennan has been a federal Green candidate twice, and has also ran once provincially in the riding of Vancouver-Hastings. Within the next few months, Brennan will gain Project Management Certification from UBC and achieve designation as a Certified Energy Manager with the Association of Energy Engineers .

Brennan's focus has always been on energy policy as it relates to economic and ecological health, and he has worked directly in critical roles on large and small scale alternative energy projects in both wind and solar power generation. Brennan holds a master's degree in communications from McGill University and a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Lethbridge.

# Get To Know Your Candidates for Burnaby North-Seymour

**Svend Robinson**  
New Democratic  
Party



Svend Robinson graduated from Burnaby North Secondary School in 1969. He studied science and law at UBC and received the highest honor, the Sherwood Lett Memorial Scholarship, in 1972. He went on to study at the London School of Economics, and was called to the BC Bar as a lawyer. Svend was elected in 1979 as an NDP Member of Parliament, serving for over 25 years. He had a legendary reputation of service to his constituents, as well as being one of the most outstanding and effective backbench MPs. Svend was particularly active on justice, human rights, environment and international issues, and was the first openly gay MP in Canada.

Svend was often far ahead on important issues:

- He worked in 1982 to amend the Charter of Rights to include the right to a healthy environment. The 2019 NDP election platform includes this in a strong Environmental Bill of Rights.
- In 2004 Svend successfully added “sexual orientation” to federal hate crimes legislation. This fight for dignity and equality for the LGBTQ+ community continues with his opposition to the discriminatory blood donation ban, and “conversion” therapy.
- An outspoken advocate of indigenous people, Svend stood with the Haida first nation in 1985, and with the Nuu Chalnuth in 1993 in Clayoquot Sound, to defend old growth forest ecosystems, and was adopted into the Haida nation with David Suzuki and given the name

“White Swan.” Svend continues this work in solidarity with the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish nations’ opposition to the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, and the NDP’s commitment to implement UNDRIP into federal law.

- In the 1990s, Svend was a leader in the movement for the right to physician-assisted dying, supporting his close friend ALS patient Sue Rodriguez in her advocacy for the right to die with dignity. He continues to fight for strengthening the current MAID law to allow for advance decision-making for example in cases of dementia, and full respect for the Supreme Court Carter decision.

**Terry Beech**  
Liberal Party of  
Canada



Terry Beech is the current Member of Parliament for Burnaby North-Seymour and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transportation. He previously served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Science Fisheries and the Minister of Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard.

Terry Beech is an experienced entrepreneur, educator, and advocate. Terry entered public service 15 years ago when he was elected as a city councillor. While serving as a city councillor, Terry began his studies in Public Administration at Capilano University. He is the recipient of a degree with a joint major in Business and Economics from Simon Fraser University, as well as an MBA from the University of Oxford.

An Adjunct Professor at Simon Fraser and the University of British Columbia, Terry is the

author of “The In-Credibility Factor,” which highlights his desire for Canada to become a global leader in innovation and entrepreneurship. He founded and was both CEO and Chairman of HiretheWorld.com, and is a co-founder of Twinbro, a non-profit organization that has helped over 25,000 students to obtain millions of dollars in scholarships and financial aid. He is a past board member of Lift Philanthropy and currently works with entrepreneurs to launch and grow businesses at Beech Partners.

**Amita Kuttner**  
Green Party



Amita Kuttner is a scientist. She obtained her PhD in astrophysics this past June. The Green Party Critic for Science and Innovation Policy, she plans to implement evidence-based policy aimed at solving the unique problems our communities, country and planet face. Amita has personally experienced the impacts of extreme weather. Soon after she turned fourteen years old, her mother was killed when their family home in North Vancouver was destroyed by a mudslide. Her sense of duty to serve was greatly informed by her mother, a beloved college instructor who was dedicated to diversity and empowerment. Amita has tried to follow in her footsteps by leading the Women in Physics and Astronomy group at her university and co-founding a chapter of 3I4 Action, an advocacy group that works to get scientists into elected positions to enact evidence-based policy. She is deeply concerned about the environment, the effects of job automation, and the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. Amita looks forward to working on behalf of all her constituents to shape a future that is equitable and just.

## Community Debates and Town Halls

### Community Town Hall

**What:** Candidates will "discuss the environment, job creation, housing and how they will help a safer, more sustainable and prosperous community in Burnaby," organizers say. Sachi Kurl, executive director of the Angus Reid Institute, will moderate.

**When:** Tuesday, Oct. 15. Doors open at 8:15 p.m. and the debate starts at 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Ismaili Centre, 4010 Canada Way

**Who:** Conservative Jay Shin, Liberal Neelam Brar, New Democrat Peter Julian (representing Burnaby South incumbent and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh), Green Brennan Wauters and the People's Party's Al Rawdah.

### Burnaby Heights Debate

**What:** The Heights Neighbourhood Association is hosting an all-candidates meeting. Lawyer and local resident Sandy Banister will moderate.

**When:** Wednesday, Oct. 16. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., followed by debate from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Gilmore Community School, 50 Gilmore Ave

**Who:** Green Amita Kuttner, Liberal Terry Beech and New Democrat Svend Robinson have confirmed their attendance, organizers say. As with other debates, organizers have been unable to contact Conservative Heather Leung.

### Community Debate

**What:** Candidates from Burnaby three ridings (Burnaby North-Seymour, Burnaby South and New Westminster-Burnaby) will strive to answer this question: "How can we make Burnaby a community for all residents, including those who are most vulnerable?" The debate is being organized by the Burnaby Interagency Council. For more information and (optional) registration, [click here](#).

**Where:** Maywood Community School gym (4567 Imperial St.)

**When:** Thursday, Oct. 17. Meet and greet, 6:30 to 7 p.m. Debate, 7 to 8 p.m.

**Who:** Organizers have invited candidates in all three ridings from the Conservative, Green, Liberal, NDP and People's parties.

## VOTE and WIN

Once again, the BTA is having a contest to encourage you to get out and vote. We will be giving away two \$50 gift certificates to the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts. All you have to do is take a picture of yourself at a poll proving you voted and post it to social media (twitter, facebook ect.) with the **#btavotes** hashtag. We will be drawing one name after advanced voting and another one after the general election.

This is to encourage you to get out and vote early.



## Student Vote:

Thank you to all the teachers engaging youth in the democratic process through student vote campaigns at their schools. Authentic learning experiences are a part of what makes education meaningful. As one parent has commented, "good questions are being put to us at the dinner table". For more information on student votes, check out:

[studentvote.ca/canada](http://studentvote.ca/canada)

## Website Links:

For more information on the upcoming election, check out the following links:



[Vote Compass - Canada Votes 2019 - CBC News](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada-votes-2019)

<https://votecompass.cbc.ca/canada/>

Advanced voting occurs October 11, 12, 13 and 14. Check out the website below to see where to vote.

<https://www.elections.ca/home.aspx>



[Elections Canada - Home Page for the 2019 Federal Election](http://www.elections.ca)

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