



# *Pierre Lemieux*

## Glengarry-Prescott-Russell

### **Lemieux's Second Blue Valentine Dinner a Great Success !**

**Wendover, On** - This past weekend, Pierre Lemieux successfully hosted his second Annual Blue Valentine Dinner in Wendover. As with last year's first Blue Valentine Dinner, the dinner was sold out with over 220 tickets having been sold.

The Guest of Honour was Finance Minister Jim Flaherty. Also in attendance were Minister Jason Kenney (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity); MP Royal Galipeau; Mr Bob Hartley - the well-known NHL Hockey Coach from Hawkesbury who coached the Colorado Avalanches to the Stanley Cup; as well 16 Mayors and Counselors from the riding; and the Presidents/Director Generals of 9 francophone organizations representing Official Language communities across Canada.

The Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Glengarry-Prescott-Russell's very own Bobby Lalonde, who also took the opportunity as MC to hoist his fiddle and entertain the guests. Well-known fiddler Ashley MacLeod of Dalkeith and her keyboard accompanist Kelsey McDonnell provided energetic music both before and after the speeches, which kept the atmosphere lively and light. Mr Lemieux commented "One of my aims at the Blue Valentine Dinner is to provide a romantic, fun-filled evening that is high on entertainment and low on speeches."

The evening began with Bobby Lalonde fiddling O Canada as those in attendance sang the national anthem. A high end, 4 course meal was served by La Cuisine Volante Alfred.

During his speech, Mr Lemieux expressed his appreciation to the people of the riding for having placed their confidence in him. He stated, "It is a great honour to be the MP for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell - and I am here to serve the people of my riding." He remarked that in the last two years he had hosted over 20 town halls, 5 passport clinics and attended over 400 events across the riding because he wants to be with people in order to know the thoughts and opinions of those in the riding, and that this allows him to represent them well in Ottawa.

Lemieux introduced Minister Flaherty as "the Finance Minister who, this past October, announced \$60 Billion in tax cuts for Canadians". He went on to add "Last year, Minister Flaherty reduced the GST from 7% to 6%, and on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, he reduced it again to 5%. Keep going Minister - there is no sense stopping now !" Minister Flaherty's speech was light-hearted and entertaining, but he did deliver key messages regarding the Canada's economy and how the \$200 Billion in tax cuts announced in the first two budgets and economic updates would be of great assistance to Canadians and businesses alike. He shared that that very day he had been preparing his next budget and that his work involved much

consultation with Canadians. Minister Flaherty concluded by congratulating Mr Lemieux on the success he has had at securing funding for the widening of Highway 174 (federal contribution of \$40 Million) and for key infrastructure projects within the riding such as the St Isidore and Russell Township water projects and bridge reconstruction (combined federal contributions of over \$10 Million).

Of particular interest during the evening was when Mr Lemieux presented Martine Turpin of the L'Original Foodbank with a \$500 cheque. Mr Lemieux explained that during his last fundraiser just before Christmas, he offered his supporters the opportunity to direct a portion of their donation towards a foodbank. In doing so, he raised \$500, and explained during the presentation "The foodbanks do tremendous work in our communities. I believe that it is essential to help those in our community that are in need and that we do so in very real and concrete ways."

The evening ended with Mr Lemieux presenting a rose to his daughters Rebecca, Julia and Danielle. Mr Lemieux then had his daughters personally present each woman in the room a rose from him in honour of Valentine's Day.

The finale involved three of Mr Lemieux's daughters – Rebecca, Julia and Danielle – joining Bobby Lalonde and Ashley on stage to perform Celtic step dance. They were greeted with enthusiastic clapping and a standing ovation for their performance. Minister Flaherty and Mr Lemieux then joined them onstage for an encore. Those in attendance commented that this was the highlight of an excellent evening.

Mr Lemieux concluded, "This event is open to everyone. I truly wanted people to come together from across the riding to meet the Minister of Finance and to have a good time. It was a wonderful evening and everyone enjoyed themselves."