

Councillor Eli El-Chantiry
Ward 5 West Carleton-March

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El-Chantiry seeks third term on city council

Saving CN line, improving roads among issues for 2011 and beyond

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KINBURN – Eli El-Chantiry walked from his office across the hallway at the Kinburn Client Service Centre on June 2 to plunk his \$100 registration fee on the table.

The incumbent will seek a third term to represent Ward 5, West Carleton-March at Ottawa city council.

To date, there is one other candidate in the race. **Alexander Aronec**, 21, is a political science student who has been knocking on doors in the ward and writing on local issues in the *West Carleton Review* since the beginning of 2010.

El-Chantiry's timing was not particularly strategic.

His assistant, Lisa McGee, celebrated her birthday last Wednesday.

El-Chantiry promised to let her know by that date if he planned to fight to retain her job for the next four years.

"I have been honoured and privileged to serve West Carleton these years," El-Chantiry said, then spoke of two issues he wants to pursue if elected on

Oct. 25.

"We need to preserve the CN rail line.

"This is connecting the community together," he said, adding that a freight line from Renfrew and the Pontiac will create jobs.

He currently represents Mayor Larry O'Brien in talks on saving the line; meeting with influential local politicians such as Conservative MP John Baird and Liberal MPP Bob Chiarelli. "Roads is the other one. We can never say enough about roads. That's where we get the most emails," he said.

El-Chantiry said there is a danger of running out of labour and time (Aug. 10) to spend the money matched by the federal government's stimulus package.

He said having an opponent in the race is "great" and keeps him sharp.

"It's nice to see someone in their 20s interested in the political process."

Aronec said his friends like to point out how it took this long for El-Chantiry to put his name in.

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HORSING AROUND IN CARP



Photo by Derek Dunn

Paule Roger and her partner Levis take a break after warming up before competition began at the first horse show of the season. See more photos and a story about the Carp Fairgrounds event on page 6.

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El-Chantry is surrounded by supporters such as his wife, Maha, to his left, and assistant Lisa McGee to his right. Some near down at city hall were hoping he would take a run at the mayor's chair. Alex Aronec is also vying for the Ward 5 position.

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That while Aronec is a full time student, with two part time jobs, and helping look after a disabled parent was able to register before someone whose job is on the line. "I'm not going to try and take any direct shots here," Aronec said.

"I would like to say I am pleased the incumbent is running. He will be able to be held accountable based on his past actions up to the present by the electorate."

Aronec added that now voters have a chance to question El-Chantry on his handling of the Constance Bay beach issue, the coyote population issue, his handling of community groups (like the Carleton land-owners, community associations), the green box implementation, and snowplowing and removal.

"I believe that now he is officially in the race, and has all his funding given to him by the city (carried over from the previous election) that the residents will be given one of the more intense David versus Goliath situations in the city."

First elected in 2003 and again in 2006, El-Chantry defeated J.P. Dorion last time out with more than 67 per cent of the vote. He has won

on a pro-amalgamation platform, as a known Liberal backer, in a largely conservative ward.

El-Chantry was rumoured to have considered running for mayor on a right-of-centre platform, provided Larry O'Brien opted not to run. It would have made more than a few politicians at city hall happy.

Although not living in the ward, El-Chantry is owner and operator of the Lighthouse Restaurant in Constance Bay, making him likely the only councillor at city hall who flips eggs most Saturday mornings.

Over the years, El-Chantry has volunteered and financially supported many organizations in West Carleton.

As a councillor he has served as chair of the police services board, a member of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee, and Long Range Financial Plan Sub-Committee.

Born in Lebanon, El-Chantry, 53, rarely loses an opportunity to thank Canadian peacekeepers for their work.

He was raised the second of six kids on a family farm, before coming to Canada at the age of 18. He and wife Maha met in Ottawa.



El-Chantry registers for the 2010 municipal race with his wife Maha at his side.

Photos by Derek Dunn

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