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MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2020

Poilievre seeks to keep convention momentum

Conservatives tout unity after leadership review

CRAIG LORD

OTTAWA — Political analysts say the federal Conservatives and leader Pierre Poilievre have momentum coming off a unifying convention in Calgary, but the party still has a hill to climb in Parliament to one-up Prime Minister Mark Carney and the Liberals.

The Conservatives wrapped up

their three-day national convention on Saturday touting party unity. Poilievre easily passed his mandatory leadership review with 87.4 per cent support from delegates.

Pollster Nik Nanos said Poilievre's result was "quite striking."

He said the test should put an end to talk that the Conservative leader doesn't have a firm grasp of the party after a tough 2025 that saw the party raise its vote share but lose the spring election.

A pair of MPs — Chris d'Entremont and Michael Ma — also crossed the floor from the Conservatives to the Liberals late last year, which Nanos said

suggested there could be more discontent within Poilievre's caucus.

That didn't show up at the convention, he said.

"The convention shows that not only is he in control of the party, the Conservatives — at least today — are united behind him as the leader of the party going into the next election," Nanos said.

Amanda Galbraith, a former adviser to Conservative prime minister Stephen Harper and now partner at public affairs firm Oyster Group, said a well-managed Calgary convention gives the party momentum in the nascent

winter session of Parliament.

Poilievre could have survived with delegate support in the mid-70s, but it would have been problematic, she said.

"But to have such, I think, a resounding endorsement from the party was very good for him and shows the unity there," Galbraith said.

The Conservatives trailed the Liberals by four points in Nanos polling from the week before the convention, but the firm also finds Carney now leads Poilievre by 28 points as Canadians' preferred prime minister.

Nanos said Poilievre's flagging support compared to the prime minister

is less a comment on the Conservative leader and more a reflection of Carney's own surging popularity in recent weeks, capped off by a high-profile speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Canadians might be playing closer attention to internal party conventions than in previous years, Nanos said. Canadians worried over U.S. President Donald Trump's trade aggression and the future of Canada might plug into these forums to get a sense of the leaders' visions for Canada.

● **TORIES, CONTINUED ON A3**

Sash projects weave together school spirit, Métis culture

MAGGIE MACINTOSH
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A MÉTIS artist is taking her loom-weaving kit on the road to teach students about an iconic staple in her ancestors' wardrobe and promote school spirit.

Cassandra Woolever, the full-time creative behind Métis Branded, an apparel company in Winnipeg, has started working with schools this year to help them create custom sashes.

"I'm a little overwhelmed, but in a good way," she said, reflecting on how many teachers have contacted her in recent weeks.

Woolever has shown more than 1,000 students her collection of sashes and how to use her floor loom since the start of the school year. She has 17 school visits scheduled in February.

Prior to each trip, she asks teachers to have their students reflect on their community's values and pick up to five colours to represent them.

Woolever then strings up her 70-pound contraption at home, packs it up, pops it out and resets the tension on site.

"Everyone can add in a line or a pattern or an arrowhead into the sash, making it a part of their story and their stamp on the history in their schools," Woolever said.

It's an activity to bolster awareness about the many historic uses of sashes, from bandaging wounds to communicating one's family identity, and instill pride in Métis students, she said.

Woolever, who was raised by a single and proud Ukrainian mom, discovered she had Red River Métis ancestry when she was in her 20s.

Her brother tracked down a detailed history of their paternal genealogy via Saint-Boniface Historical Society.

In 2015, in recognition of their ancestors' involvement in the Hudson's Bay Company, Woolever named her son Hudson. It was around that time she began immersing herself in Métis culture so she could teach him about it.

She's since taught herself to create traditional capotes, long wrap-style wool coats, ribbon skirts and sashes.

One of her first sash projects sought to tell her family's story. It includes HBC colours, as well as turquoise.

● **SASHES, CONTINUED ON A2**



FIVE-TIME CHAMPION

Skip Kerri Einarson (from left), third Val Sweeting, second Shannon Birchard and lead Karlee Burgess celebrate after winning an all-Manitoba final against Kaitlyn Lawes in an extra end at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts curling championship in Mississauga, Ont., Sunday / C1

Wolseley tenants still waiting for heat to be restored

CHRIS KITCHING

TENANTS of a Wolseley apartment building that has been without a working heating system for almost a month were still waiting for the outage to be resolved Sunday afternoon.

A provincial spokesperson said Friday the landlord of 875 Westminster Ave. told the Residential Tenancies Branch that repairs were expected to be completed that day.

Tenant Raina Enns told the Free Press a Thorwin Properties manager sent an email Sunday that said the installation of a new boiler is going well, and the company hopes to get the heat going Monday.

"It's hard to feel even more frustrat-

ed than I have felt this whole time," Enns said. "It just seems like every day there's another delay. I'm so angry, but what else can I do?"

The update came after building owner Thorwin emailed tenants Friday afternoon to inform them a new boiler would be installed Friday, followed by "initialization and start up" on Saturday and Sunday.

Residents were told contractors may require access to their suites up to and including Monday to troubleshoot an adjust in-suit radiators, if necessary.

A second email said a credit equivalent to one month of rent was applied to tenants' accounts.

"Thank you for your patience and understanding during the recent boiler

issues," the email said. "We recognize this situation was challenging for all parties, and we truly appreciate the co-operation and resilience shown by our community."

Thorwin officials have not responded to requests for comment.

Residents and two commercial tenants — Organic Planet Worker Co-op and Prairie Sky Books — have been relying on portable heaters to stay warm since the building's previous boiler was switched off Jan. 4 for tests and repairs.

Thorwin's previous emails to tenants said a boiler consultant was brought in Jan. 9 to conduct an assessment, and issues continued despite several repairs being completed from Jan. 12-14.

A Jan. 16 email informed tenants that repairs were almost finished and the boiler was expected to be up and running soon. Additional work was required, however, and the outage continued.

The company later said a new boiler would be installed.

Tenants said some temporary power outages occurred while the portable heaters led to increased electricity use, leaving them without heat on some of the coldest days of winter.

Thorwin provided multiple small space heaters to each suite initially. Tenants were then given one industrial heater to use, Enns said.

● **HEAT, CONTINUED ON A2**



WEATHER SUNNY. HIGH -17 — LOW -28



ARTS

SURPRISES, STATEMENTS AT GRAMMYS / D1