

Save a tree, please

The great tragedy with many of our elected officials, or those wanting in, is that they, often enough, cannot get past the glee for the sound of their respective voices to actually do the work of the people.

As a result, we have become so utterly blithe and disenchantedly complacent at returning some of these pols. At our lowest, we consider them again, even though they may have failed to engage us previously.

And so it goes in one of the truest jewels of any riding in the country: Vancouver Quadra. A long-time historical push and pull between the Grits and the Tories could become an anointing of sorts, if likable Conservative Deb Meredith can't make the spread of 10,000 Liberal votes evaporate (or stay at home).

Meet Joyce Murray: previously Environment Minister in the Gordonator's first cabinet; failed candidate for New Westminster and non-existent advocate against the unnecessarily closed hospital in New West years ago. Oh, and Liberal candidate for Vancouver Quadra now.

Ms. Murray is the parachute candidate in this horse race, since the last time she was a resident of Quadra, her high school days were only shortly behind her. Since then, she has spent decades away from Vancouver Quadra, and has had nothing to do with this riding other than having been tapped to service by

her political mentor and close friend, federal Liberal iron fist, Mark Marrisén.

From the moment she beat popular and capable Cindy Grauer for the Grit nomination, Ms. Murray has been furiously trying to validate the caricature of the smitten, endearing, even breathless candidate, worthy of redemption from her seemingly endless list of non-accomplishments. And that list, in part, should have residents of Vancouver Quadra very worried.

Murray labels herself first an environmentalist. But upon closer inspection, that credential is somewhat suspect. In the summer of 2001, when Murray was the freshly minted minister of what was affectionately referred to as 'Earth, Wind and Fire', a 50 per cent spike in clear-cutting in the Quesnel log supply, a renewable forest, was announced by B.C.'s chief forester.

The pine-beetle's nasty dance is all part of the natural evolution of that type of forest. But not a sound from Joyce, the Enviro-Princess, not a peep. This after a significant swath of similar B.C. forests had been previously clear-cut.

A strange silence from Ms. Murray, considering the first line in her master's thesis states that what we now refer to in general terms as climate change is man-made, and that deforestation (clear-cut-

ting) is a contributor.

A convenient environmentalist you say? No, not our Joyce.

When I confronted her about this on OMNI TV's *The Standard* some months ago, she proceeded to call me a liar, when all the information I've just given you is available as a matter of public record.

To add insult to injury, she then proceeded to say that my healthy (and appropriate) disregard for

her well-documented environmental alarmism (think Kyoto on steroids), was because I was a "denier", an epithet I abhor, as it should be reserved for only those ignorant bastards who deny the Holocaust.

I wrote her, thrice, subsequently, asking for an apology.

No response from Ms. Murray, other than to say to me recently that she would respond to me only if "it was worth it".

Thus, I can only conclude that my great friend, a high-ranking federal Liberal organizer, may be right.

"Alex, we could run a donkey in Quadra and win".

Mission accomplished.

Almost.

Alex G. Tsakumis is a freelance columnist who appears every Friday in 24 hours.



alex g. tsakumis
REBEL WITH A CLAUSE