

309 words, column #45  
Java Talk  
(for March 6 to March 12, 2008)

## **Every Age Is The Best Age**

### *A Choice to Choose Choicer Choices*

We would all do better, if we really knew better. Not too long ago, I listened to a teacher tell his grade nine students, erroneously, how a local mayor told him that politicians knew who voted for them. In a democratic system, politicians might know who votes, but not how they vote.

Once Canadian citizens reach eighteen years of age, it becomes their civic responsibility to vote at municipal, provincial, and federal elections—making their own choices, with an informed opinion, which requires paying attention all along; thinking critically; and accessing information from various sources.

In Al Gore's documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth* (available at the Greater Victoria Public Library after their strike and lock-out actions end), he says, "Political will is a renewable resource."

In *Mobilizing Public Will: Report from the Helsinki Process on Globalization and Democracy* (the first phase initiated as a result of the Helsinki Conference of December 2002), it states that "[t]he cumulative effects of centuries of unsustainable use of natural resources, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions cannot be known for certain but it is already clear that global warming and the loss of environmental resources pose a very serious threat to the future. The failure of this generation to address these issues threatens future generations."

Meanwhile, in her February *Leader's Message*, titled "Principles over Partisanship," Elizabeth May, leader of the Federal Green Party (now celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary), explains how "[t]he Green Party is guided by six core values: ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, non-violence, sustainability, and respect for diversity. These principles—not political opportunism or blind ideology—inform our policies and guide our actions." She continues to be excluded from the nationally-televised leaders' debates. However, there is an on-line petition, also at [www.greenparty.ca](http://www.greenparty.ca), where those who care can add their names, if they agree that this "is an affront to democracy in Canada."

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