

April 12, 2013 About relaunching e-mail lists, and the war of the bunnies and foxes.

I sent this to my relaunched e-mail list last week

Well, this is back. The "trollbusters" list. Some of you claim to have missed this while this was gone. I have decided to rename it FVC ginger after the web page, which I do not have back up in cyberspace yet. (Now it is back Go see it; www.fairvoteginger.qaz.ca) If there is any interest, I will put up the archives for the first three months of this.

I have a lot going on now. I finished my final exam, but I have been having a great deal of trouble moving my web server. The old server went out of business. I had used them for six years and got used to their system. I had too many domains all linked to each other. I had the idea I wanted to install some new software to organize it all in a different way and to create a kind of social network that works like facebook but protects people's privacy.

So I went looking for a server with my special needs. Ones I can afford are scarce. I tried one but they proved to be a bunch of idiots, crooks, or both. Fortunately I did not spend much of my scarce money on them. I just spent some of my scarce time, trying to figure out their ridiculous file management system. Hint; any software you have to read a manual to be able to use is crap. They should be visible and intuitive.

I finally have what seems to be a pretty good server company. I decided to move my project back to Toronto from overseas. It seems the age of the internet terrorist is passing away. Internet providers are generally a bit more clued in nowadays. Even if they are not, it is getting much easier to move sites around. Besides, if they are in Toronto I can sue them more easily. We will see how it goes.

I should get the FVC ginger page up there pretty soon, for the FVC election. Put I think I will be removing the link to electoral alliance and I will tell you why. I was at their "take back parliament; is PR the way? forum at the 519 center, last night. The format for this event was not well thought out. Maybe I

should have been at the meeting two days before where they planned this, but I have not been feeling well lately.

I had no energy to stand up and denounce the damned fools for giving the Mez bunnies a foot in the door there, too. Two of the presenters, the NDPer and the Liberal, both effectively endorsed AV. Bad, bad, bad. The Liberal thought AV was a good idea for municipal elections and the NDP thought Mez was a great activist.

If either of these people have such a weak understanding of the object of voting reform, it is hard to see how their understanding of the aim of a voting alliance would be any better. This leads me to suspect that their support for both is opportunistic. They may think that both voting alliances and PR are about screwing the conservatives and insuring safe seats for incumbent opposition members; like themselves.

The only really interesting speaker was Jim Harris from the Greens. He had interesting things to say about strategic voting/vote swapping versus voting alliances. He favors the later, but makes the point that to do it effectively you need real time polling information. That is something I noticed was missing in the last election.

Voting alliances will not work, says Harris, because the fanatics in both parties will try to sabotage it. He asked who would run these primaries, which would take a lot of money and organization? He makes the very good point that the fanatical followers of both the Liberals and NDP are a small minority of the total membership, but they want control. Most of the general membership of these parties would accept an alliance to get rid of Harper and get a better system in place, but they lack capacity to carry this out.

My view of it is that a compromise between the two positions is needed. You need to identify the ridings where the Harperites are weak. If you can get the organization on the ground able to hold a primary and enforce the result, that is what is to be done. That is why Joyce Murray said only do it where there is a riding organization in place. Alternatively, run polls that keep up with shifts in opinion in the individual riding and advise strategic voters accordingly.

Vote swapping does not make any sense. It would be hard to administer and as one panelist noted, conservatives could infiltrate it and play various games.

I was not happy to see RaBIT propaganda right where I wanted to park my posterior. Along the wall opposite to the FVC table, was the RaBIT crew and their table. I asked who was organizing this event. I found a woman with a clip board who would admit to being one of the organizers. I told her that the presence of these jokers was not acceptable and I would not be a supporter of their organization on that score.

She did not like that and followed after me, mumbling something about having to accept different opinions. I explained as briefly as I could that the AV thing was a phony reform and RaBIT had been very disruptive within FVC, attacking people and intimidating them from doing their work. She mumbled some more about needing their participation, they put up part of the cost, etc. Then she took off.

I wonder where RaBIT gets the money to buy their way into the voting alliance project so they can pervert it?

So, I went over to June at her table. She had another chocolate treat for me. It was shaped like a bunny. I guess she got them on sale after Easter. I suggested that somebody really should throw the rabbits out of here. I was actually being a bit facetious; hard to do that when the people organizing this event appear to have invited them. June said something about how we could be thrown out, too.

Actually, what needed to be done was to strongly and aggressively denounce AV supporters whenever they got up to speak. I was not about to do that on my own. Nothing would have been better than a tumult of whistles and "shame, shame" from the crowd when whatsername copulated with the canine regarding AV.

By the way, in her opening speech she also said something I did not hear quite clearly about liberal members of parliament being told that support for PR would be a 'career decision'. This might explain her sudden fondness for AV.

They did not have a mike in there at first, so speakers had to talk loud. Of course we had one of these "speak up or sit down" types who always sit way in the back rows at these events. The acoustics were good in there and mikes were not really necessary.

The meeting was a magnet for the usual type of cranks with their crank ideas they want to shove up our noses. Most of them were not too coherent. One thought that electoral alliance was not democratic enough and had some sort of scheme he wanted to sell about how to choose the MP or at least the anybody but conservative candidate.

Meslin was somewhat subdued. He did not talk long at the mike about his civic AV campaign.

All in all, this event was a disaster. If the organizers were intending it to be a pep rally for a voting alliance campaign, it would have been a great downer for supporters of the idea. It was not very informative for people who would have liked to know more, and there were a lot of people attending; they had to bring in extra chairs. Neither did it work well as a discussion of experts on the feasibility and implementation of a voting alliance or strategic vote.

After, I went back to June and told her 'the rabbits are still winning'. They are. This is because we are not seriously taking them on. She had a petition for me to sign calling for an initiative on municipal voting reform but the petition could be just as well interpreted as being for AV.

There is really no alternative to dealing with these people but to go after them hard with our alternative. The people in the present Toronto chapter are just not able to do that. What is needed is a special task force to shut this whole AV thing down.

I have some ideas about strategies for that, but I will not get into them now. I need to think some more on them.

And I have a pile of other stuff to do and I can only spend so much time in front of this word processor before my medical problems start ambushing me. tr

