

New game plan

Long-time observers of the political process comment often that the names change but the game remains the same.

Usually when the name changes, the mind and body do, too.

But that is not the case with a game-player by the name of Michael Charette, who becomes the first person to express an interest in running for office in the next federal election.

Charette says he will be going after the Liberal nomination in Mississauga South. It will be his first venture into politics — under his current name.

Charette is better known to Mississauga voters for his political gamesmanship under the name Michael Houlton, the name he used until last year when a federal judge allowed the change.

Houlton ran as an independent candidate in the 1972 federal election in Mississauga, after losing the Liberal nomination. He tried for the nomination in 1972 but was turned down again.

Houlton then tried his game in Ottawa, where he lost political contests at all three levels of government. He has also lost, twice, the leadership of the provincial Liberal Party.

Just when Houlton thought he had his own political party set up in 1977 the federal government changed the rules and he couldn't even get a title that way.

He was also tossed out of the House of Commons twice — and banned for life — for making comments from the public gallery.

And so we may offer a good news and good news report: For those readers who find full-time political losers a bore, we are happy to report that Michael Houlton has moved to Ottawa and won't be back.

For those of you who like to see a new name on the ballot once in a while, we have Michael Charette.

At any rate, you may be certain that the game remains the same.