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## **OttawaWatch 131: Shoot arrows vs. finish well**

**By Lloyd Mackey**

*With the passing of time, I become increasingly conscious of the way in which leadership passes from generation to generation. It would be interesting to see who the 2021 “35 under 35” would be. As well, I would be interested in knowing who the “senior statespeople” would be – those who have let go of active leadership roles but remain available for consultation or guidance, without obligation.*

*As well, in looking the 2007 list, I was intrigued with the preponderance of men in the recognized “under 35” leadership roles. Today, the breakdown would likely be closer to 50-50.*

In the above headline, I have just obeyed the first rule of combative journalism: Be sure to work some conflict into your story – otherwise you will lose your readership.

Putting “vs.” into the headline, according to that rule, introduces the conflict.

Now, I will tell you how I really feel.

The idea of shooting arrows and finishing well should reduce intergenerational leadership conflict, rather than adding to it.

The reducing of conflict follows Mackey’s first rule of conciliatory journalism: try to find the points of compatibility in an otherwise adversarial political context.

Now that we have these deep philosophical concepts clearly stated, let’s move on to the subject at hand.

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Two weeks ago, the finalists in the “35 under 35 National Recognition Project” were announced.

The project was co-sponsored by Arrow Leadership, ChristianWeek newspaper group, Canadian Council of Christian Charities and Bridgeway Foundation. It shortlisted a total of 200 nominations, with the intention of presenting 35 people under the age of 35 who are viewed as potential leaders-to-watch on the Canadian evangelical Christian scene.

Readers can go to [www.35Under35.ca](http://www.35Under35.ca) for more details. Meanwhile, I have picked out eight of the finalists for mention, today.

The first three are Ottawa residents who are each, in their own right, having some influence on one sector or another in the national capital.

The other five are working in other parts of Canada, in fields that bring their influence to bear in political, advocacy or public service leadership.

Their names, plus a brief bit of information about each, follow. More details will appear in a special supplement to be published within a few weeks by *ChristianWeek*.

The Ottawa-based people are:

**Brenda Bartos**, First Place Pregnancy Centre

Brenda serves as the community education director at First Place Pregnancy Centre, a Christian, non-profit organization in Ottawa that ministers to those facing unwanted or unintended pregnancies.

**Faytene Kryskow**, MY Canada

Faytene serves as the Director of the MY Canada Association, an organization based in Ottawa, focused on mobilizing the “voice” of the Christian youth in Canada to address federal legislators on key issues.

**Christopher Stevens**, The Gathering

Christopher serves as a church planter and pastor of The Gathering in Ottawa.

Those from other parts of Canada are:

**Jordan Bateman**, Langley Township councillor and writer - Langley, British Columbia.

Jordan serves as an elected councillor with Langley township council and as President of Outlawed Wonderings Media Group, a firm specializing in freelance writing, ghostwriting, design, and editing, in Langley, British Columbia.

**Kirk Giles**, Promise Keepers – Burlington, Ontario

Kirk serves as the director of Ministry Advancement for Promise Keepers Canada, a national ministry to men based in Burlington.

**Loren Hagerty**, SALTS – Victoria

Loren serves as the executive director of Sail and Life Training Society (SALTS), a sailing-based non-profit Christian organization in Victoria, that is dedicated to helping young people reach their full potential.

**Jamie McIntosh**, International Justice Mission Canada - London, Ontario.

Jamie serves as the executive director of International Justice Mission Canada, an organization established to educate, empower and engage Canadians in the pursuit of justice for the oppressed.

**Victor Thomas**, Community Leader – Regina

Victor served recently as president of the University of Regina Student Union and currently serves on a number of community boards, committees and councils in the Regina area.

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Each of these eight people are already acknowledged leaders in some sector of the Christian community and have received mentoring from more senior leaders in those communities.

Now, their recognition and potential for effective development as leaders will be enhanced by being named jointly by these four organizations. They stand to benefit by their being willing to allow their mentor base to be broadened. And their ministries and projects will be strengthened, as well, as a broader range of Christian leaders at all levels get to know about them.

As well, it is worth noting that the four *35 under 35* sponsoring organizations, in themselves, have been long committed to passing leadership from one generation to the next, in a way that recognizes the past and provides effective groundwork for the future.

I can illustrate this point by naming names of people who have figured in the founding and/or development of the sponsoring organizations, as well as a number of the key figures in the present leadership – the people, in fact, who helped to shape *35 under 35*.

The founders or key developers of the past generation for the four groups were, as follows:

- **Bridgeway Foundation:** Reg Petersen.
- **Canadian Council of Christian Charities:** Frank Luellau..
- **ChristianWeek:** Harold Jantz.
- **Arrow Leadership:** Leighton Ford.

For the “present generation” leadership, I have named the one or two people to whom the baton has been passed. There are more names closely involved with each of those identified. And it should be noted, as well, that there are both women and men in close to the key named leaders. This represents an evolving development that is reflected in the gender balance of the 35 under 35 finalists. So, in effect, we have a three-generation rollover represented in these developments.

So now, it looks something like this:

- **Bridgeway Foundation:** Mark Peterson.
- **Canadian Council of Christian Charities:** John Pellowe
- **ChristianWeek:** Doug Koop and Brian Koldyk.
- **Arrow Leadership:** Carson Pue.

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Now, let’s consider that reference, earlier, to “finishing well”.

Close readers of the news, over the past couple of weeks, will have noticed some stories about the bulging seniors demographic resulting from the fact that the “boomer” generation is rapidly reaching retirement age – and that members of that generation are healthy and, for the most part, not very ready to retire.

Those who have been emphasizing the need to develop younger leadership might need to adjust their vision a little, in light of this seniors’ development trend.

It is easy to give a sendoff to senior leaders, so they can head for pasture, so to speak. That way, there is room for the younger leaders to grow and develop.

There are two particular examples to illustrate the effect of this new boomer phenomenon.

When we first moved to Ottawa, nine years ago, I became acquainted with Cedric Pettigrew, then minister of the downtown Erskine Presbyterian Church. He was doing some graduate sociology studies at the time. Out of that research, he developed a few models for seniors’ ministries which could conceivably lead to the renewal of churches which had suffered from the effects of aging congregations.

In effect, Pettigrew suggested that aging could equate with renewal, because of the injection of a growing number of energetic, experienced and wise retired people into the life of a congregation.

That was the first point: The second point relates to the concept of finishing well. It had been brought to my attention a few years ago by people like David Mannings, a senior leader in Wycliffe, the Bible translation group, and Jack Charleson, a retired banker, church elder and chair of the 1995 Billy Graham Toronto Mission.

These people pointed out the symbiotic need and importance of keeping senior leaders involved, so they could have the sense of “finishing well.” In so doing, they suggested, the leaders maintained their own spiritual and psychological wherewithal – and became a source of encouragement, through mentoring, to younger people.

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Around here, despite its reputation for sleepiness and a widely-perceived need for renewal, the Senate – the upper chamber of our Parliament – is a good example of a useful role for seniors. The Christian leadership community could well study the Senate, both in its present form and what it might be like if it becomes an elected body, with a view to learning of ways to involve a layer of senior leaders in the nation’s spiritual life.

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Those who know me fairly well are aware that there may be a certain sense of self-serving in encouraging Christian leaders to remember, not only the new generation, but the “finishers.”

Be that as it may, I leave these thoughts with you, not as one model versus another, but as a both/and scenario.

Over the past few months, as I have experienced some sense of renewal as a result of my bypass surgery, I have thought periodically about King Hezekiah of Old Testament fame. Biblical students will recall that he took sick and almost died, but was given another 15 years as a result of his pleading with God.

But, as it turned out, his best years of leadership were prior to his illness. He apparently slackened off, took his extra years for granted and became a somewhat corrupt leader, during the latter part of his life.

By God’s grace, I want, both for myself and for others at my age and in my circumstance, the opportunity to finish well, and to see that the baton is also well passed on.

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