

Rising flood waters on March 3rd, along Robie St in Truro, resulted in the closure of the main entrance to the Fundy Trail Mall. The parking area was also reduced for a few days. (Harrington Photo)

Nikiforuk Discusses Tar Sands

By Linda Harrington

Andrew Nikiforuk made a stop at the NSAC in Bible Hill on March 4th to give a noon hour lecture on Canada's largest energy project, the Alberta Tar Sands. He was in Nova Scotia on a promotional tour for his new book.

Mr. Nikiforuk, an award winning nonfiction journalist, based in Calgary has just written a book called "Tar Sands: Dirty Oil and the Future of a Continent". This was his third visit to the NSAC and his popularity was evident by the large number of interested persons in attendance.

The 40 minute lecture centered on what he calls our "addiction to oil" and his first hand knowledge from what he has witnessed right in his own back yard.

The Tar Sands is a term used to describe the naturally occurring mixtures of sand or clay, water and an extremely dense and viscous form of petroleum called bitumen. They are found in large amounts in many countries throughout the world, but are found in extremely large quantities in northern Alberta, especially in the area north of Fort McMurray. The deposit is approximately the size of the state of Florida.

Nikiforuk says that Canada has become the number one supplier of foreign oil to the United States. Our dollar has become a petrol-dollar which fluctuates with the price of oil. Back when oil hit \$147 dollars a barrel, our dollar surpassed the value of the US dollar but now that the price of oil has fallen below \$50 our dollar has fallen dramatically, as well. The value of the dollar is felt throughout all Canadian industries.

The oil reserves in north-



Photo courtesy
www.andrewnikiforuk.com

ern Alberta are what Nikiforuk says the industry calls "difficult oil". Brute force is required to remove the oil from the ground.

He says that the large expanses of open pit mines remove enough earth to fill Yankee stadium every day, totally destroying the forests and wetlands. The steam extraction plants leave the largest carbon footprint. One and a half barrels of toxic waste are created for every barrel of oil produced and it takes three barrels of fresh water in the steam extraction process for each barrel of oil produced. This is enough fresh water to supply two cities the size of Calgary.

The waste is stored behind earthen walls forming toxic lakes covering 60 square kilometers. Nikiforuk questions the monitoring systems in place to prevent pollutants from reaching our natural waterways and what environmental catastrophes could be threatening the Athabasca watershed.

The extraction of oil also burns large amounts of natural gas, enough to heat 6 million homes every day, says Nikiforuk. The machines, trucks, etc add to emissions and bring the total emissions in that area of Canada to more than that of all of New Zealand.

As many as 14% of Atlantic Canadians have moved west to support the rapid development of the Tar Sands. Some have been directly involved in the oil extraction but others have found jobs in support areas such as teaching, nursing and retail. Nikiforuk says that the huge increase in population in places like Fort McMurray has led to issues with housing and more importantly with alcohol and drug abuse. "The community has been blown apart. Most people are there to just make money and they have no long term goals. There is a great deal of moral carelessness."

He says that there are social issues when workers return home, also. They find it hard to integrate back into their families.

Nikiforuk says that it is time for Canadians to start asking questions, especially here in Atlantic Canada where we are dependant on European and Middle Eastern Oil. He hopes his lectures will help start conversations that are long overdue.

"Energy consumers need to ask questions of the government. We can not continue to make such a huge carbon footprint. We must retool and refine our way of doing."

Nikiforuk encourages Canadians to look at localizing our food production to secure our population for the future. He says we need to encourage local food sources by providing incentives to these local producers and small farms. This will in turn help decrease the added fuel costs of transporting food from around the world and prepare us for the future.

A question period followed the informative lecture.

Work Out Your Stress with Physical Activity

By Matt Pryde

There are so many benefits to physical activity: stronger bones and muscles, more energy, better resistance to illness. But did you know it's also a great stress reducer?

A brisk walk, shooting hoops, or fitness class can help to distract you from the source of your stress, and improves your mood. It also relaxes and re-energizes your body while letting off some steam. Remember that people who are routinely active tend to eat better- it's automatic. And a healthy diet also helps your body manage stress better. In addition, physical activity can help you lose weight and keep it off, and feel better about yourself.

I bet you're wondering what kind of physical activity works best for beating stress? Well, that depends on the type of person you are, what you enjoy doing best, and what triggers your stress. The important thing is to get moving!

Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day, at least five days a week. Doing more is better, but take your time building up to that level. If you are not sure what moderate means, chances are it represents something you already enjoy doing; like hiking, skiing, dancing or gardening. Suddenly it doesn't seem like so much work.

Make sure you set realistic goals, go with a friend, give yoga a try or really let loose with some kickboxing lessons. Whatever your taste, you'll find that your body mind and soul will start to feel a hundred times better in no time.

If the thought of trying to squeeze one more thing into your life is enough to make you break a sweat; relax. With some planning and rearranging, you can build more activity into your routine. Try getting your physical activity in small spurts. For every 90 minutes you sit at your desk, spend 10 minutes taking a walk, stretching your muscles,

or climbing stairs. Walk the dog for 15 minutes before and after work.

Now I keep saying that you don't need to sacrifice much to be healthy, but there are some things you can give up while changing your lifestyle for the better. Give up or limit something like television. You might find you miss it less than you think.

Physical activity is great for fighting stress. But sometimes, in spite of our best efforts, we still need help coping with stress, anxiety, depression, and other emotional problems. In these situations, there are people who can help, like mental health professionals, social workers, and clergy. Don't let stress ruin your health. There's a lot you can do to control it.

As always, if there are any topics you would like covered, please feel free to contact me and let me know.

Matt Pryde is Fundy Active Communities Coordinator. He can be reached at: matthew.pryde@gov.ns.ca

Great Village Garden Club News

By Linda Shears

Members of the Great Village Garden Club met on Tuesday, February 24th, at 7:30 p.m. in Faith Baptist Church. Plans are being made for our annual fundraiser, the Perennial Sale, to be held at the Great Village School Gym on Saturday, May 16th.

In celebration of Earth Day, and of our desire to foster a love of gardening and nature in young people, we have decided to make a donation of nature/gardening books to four nearby schools. A sum of \$250 was approved for this purpose.

Exciting upcoming events were noted, including the Nova Scotia Association of Garden Clubs annual meeting on June 5th and 6th in Pictou, the Central District Meeting on May 9th in Hilden, and the "Seedy Saturday" event at St. Andrews United Church on

March 27th and 28th.

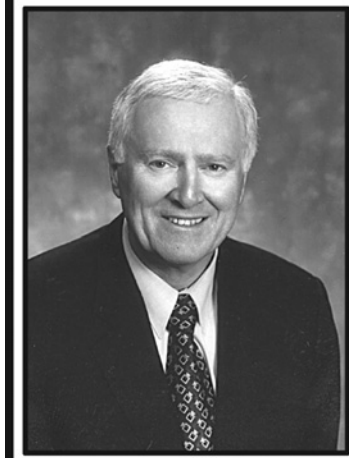
It is becoming a tradition in our club to choose an annual which we would like to grow in our gardens. In early spring, members are provided a small package of seeds to plant in our gardens and in the fall we bring in sample flowers and compare notes. We have tried our hand at growing sunflowers, asters and marigolds in this way. This year, we have decided to try calendula and were provided with a choice of three varieties. We selected one by voting.

It was noted that Lowland Gardens has a new website and we were encouraged to check it out at www.lowlandgardens.com.

The program was provided by Arthur Haskins, who presented a slide show on hostas. Using samples from his garden as well as many others, he

introduced us to dozens of colourful varieties, telling us their names and characteristics. He provided us with many useful tips for growing hostas and some tips on what to look for when buying hostas. To discourage the slugs which delight in eating hosta leaves, Arthur recommends a commercial pellet designed to kill slugs and snails. Arthur makes use of pine needles as a mulch for his hostas and finds that the needles soften the impact of raindrops. At the end of the interesting presentation, Arthur was thanked by President Patti Sharpe for presenting two very interesting programs for our club, in two consecutive months.

The Great Village Garden Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month and new members are always welcome.



Bill Casey, M.P.
Cumberland Colchester Musquodoboit Valley

Amherst:
103 South Albion Street
Amherst, Nova Scotia
B4H 2X2
Tel: (902) 667-8679
Fax: (902) 667-3489

Truro:
28 Esplanade
Truro, Nova Scotia
B2N 2K3
Tel: (902) 893-2455
Fax: (902) 893-1959

Toll-Free in the Riding - 1-888-752-0552
Email: caseyb@parl.gc.ca
or visit the website: www.billcasey.ca

COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD NEWS

Along the Shore Community Health Board is a group of dedicated volunteers made up of local citizens who share a commitment to improving the health of our communities. Community Health Boards are an important partner of the Colchester East Hants Health Authority and serve as the eyes, ears and voices of the communities in Colchester East Hants. Community Health Boards play an important role in helping to guide Nova Scotia's health care system. The responsibilities include:

- Identifying factors that influence health
- Consulting with the community to collect information on local health concerns and needs
- Annually developing a Community Health Plan which outlines local health issues and suggests ways to improve health and health care services
- Encouraging participation in local health planning
- Participating in the management of Wellness Funds
- Providing advice to the local Health Authority as requested

Interested in promoting health in your community! Please consider volunteering as a board member with the Along the Shore CHB. Contact us for more details.

WELLNESS FUNDS

Community Health Boards (CHBs) are committed to improving the health of their communities. The Wellness Funds are a valuable resource which allows the support of new and innovative ways of addressing the underlying determinants of health and promote health / prevent disease in their community. The goal of the Wellness Funds is to support the work of the CHBs; promote community capacity, create partnerships and raise the profile of the Community Health Board.

Considering Applying? Your Community Health Board wants to help! Please contact us if you would like more information or have an idea you would like to discuss. No project is too small! Deadlines: **Oct 31st and Jan 31st.**

For more information, please contact:

Sue Taylor, Chair, Along the Shore CHB
alongshorechb@hotmail.com

Luanne Schenkels, CHB Coordinator, CEHHA
Luanne.Schenkels@cehha.nshealth.ca

Phone: 662-3875

Phone: 893-7311

Our Community Health Board covers the geographic area and communities in and around West Colchester, Onslow, Debert, Belmont, Glenholme, Great Village, Bass River, Portapique, Five Islands, Economy, Londonderry, Masstown. All communities between Onslow and Five Islands.