

# REES' Pieces

## The Times We're Facing

If we go back 24 months, who would have thought the economy would have tanked in late 2008? Would you have convinced yourself the Progressive Conservatives would be replaced with a strong majority for Darrell Dexter's NDP? In the wildest of imaginations could you envision Obama's approval rating would have sunk so low so quickly?

It is hard to imagine that less than a month ago it would be warmer in Newfoundland than it was in central Florida! There are numerous other subjects we could question or debate.

I haven't found the answers, so I chalk it up to "It's the Times We're Facing".

With all the banking troubles south of the border, this time last year, we were nervous about how Canadian Banks would fare. Canadians were losing their jobs as the auto industry got refinanced. Many worried if they would be next to the EI office. We weathered the storm even though it was difficult.

It's the immediate future which I find troubling.

There is a major difference between worrying the cupboard might be bare and realizing there's not even a crumb to be had.

That's the position I suggest we are in.

Budgets - personal, business and government have been stretched so far, elastic is all but not existent.

Even when government says the most is 1%, the strength or strangle-hold held by unionized workers, outside the Capital Region, permitted them to continue getting wage parity with colleagues in Halifax area.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting parity should have been lost. However, I am saying, "What is fair is fair". If 2.9% was there six months ago, it had to be there for the same colleagues in more rural areas.

Labour unrest will be in the headlines for months to come. NSGEU will be bargaining on behalf of its members. The line is drawn in the sand. It will be interesting to see who blinks first.

According to economists and the Bank of Canada, the recession is over. The economy is rebounding. Those at the economic bottom of the scale are still wondering what is next, and when will they see an improved economy.

Now that I've set the stage, here's where I see troublesome areas of a province and its citizens going through all the hoops to rebuild the economy.

The announcements for more stimulus project funding will soon cease. Money to complete the projects will be spent, but the tap has been turned off. The next move is up to the private sector.

But that is not all. The worst is yet to come and come it will this summer.

Community groups rely on governments to approve funding for Summer Student positions. Colleague students working at tourist bureaus, museums get life support employment courtesy of government funding to the local community groups.

For the past 15 years, I've been involved in numerous groups who applied for and received summer student funding. Deadline for application is January 29th. That is not the problem.

The caveat is the following wording: "Applications will be accepted for positions paying a minimum of \$10.50 per hour plus 4% vacation pay and employer costs".

I don't have a problem paying students \$10.50 per hour. The problem exists in that the program wage reimbursement is \$8.50 per hour. Local volunteers must find the other \$2.00 per hour, plus approximately \$1.60 in payroll overheads.

The estimated increase in wage costs for 4 summer students for 8 weeks is approximately \$3,200.00. In order open a tourist bureau, the 12 volunteer members will have to fund raise the funds. \$3,200.00 is a lot of bake sales or 50-50 draws.

According to my sources most summer student funding is directed to employment in rural or semi-rural areas. With the tap turned off on the stimulus projects to larger municipalities is there a move afoot to penalize rural areas even more? Does the Department of Tourism not want to see tourism thrive in rural areas?

How much harder do volunteers have to work to keep a community initiative moving along? No point in complaining, "It's the Times, We're Facing, but we will eventually have our say".

Maurice

# Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Dear Maurice & Dorothy:

On behalf of the Home and School Association, and students of Great Village Elementary School, I would like to extend a sincere thank-you for your donation of a year's subscription to the Shoreline Journal to our annual Christmas raffle.

Funds raised through the Christmas raffle are used to support a variety of school activities. The winner of the subscription was Nellie Rhuland of Belmont.

Best wishes for the New Year.  
Connie Smith, Principal.

Maurice:

Thanks for advertising all our events throughout the year. A special thanks for donation of the Shoreline Journal subscription.

Your support and interest is greatly appreciated.

Great Village  
Community Association.

To the editor:

I am addressing this letter to every Nova Scotian who has questioned the provincial government's decision to cancel the plan to construct a provincial correctional facility in Springhill.

Through documents obtained under Nova Scotia's Freedom of Information Act, we now know that, contrary to what the premier has told Nova Scotians, the Department of

Transportation included costs associated with the construction of the jail in its approved operating budgets for 2009/2010 and 2010/2011.

Cited under 'projects' as 'Cumberland Correctional Facility,' we saw that the department fully intended to spend \$6 million and \$12 million on the construction of the building during those respective fiscal years.

Last month, however, Dexter denied this and essentially shrugged off the corrections plan originally brought forth by the previous Progressive Conservative government: "They may have put some money with respect to land clearing, or something like that, but there was no money in that budget for the building of the facility," he told the Herald.

Bottom line: We were expected to believe the NDP government planned to fund the project (about a \$1 million has already been spent on preliminary design work) but neglected to earmark the money required to complete it.

Less than a year ago, Dexter was promising to make good on all of the previous government's spending commitments. This one would have brought major employment and economic opportunities to our area, and its close proximity to the federal correctional facility

could have saved the province tens of thousands of dollars through shared programs and services. Also, it would have allowed for the use of renewable geothermal energy using Springhill's unique mine water.

Which brings us to the obvious question: Why not Springhill? We will keep asking until all of the facts are in.

Yours truly,  
Honourable Murray Scott, MLA,  
Cumberland South

Letter to Editor

I enjoy the Bass River and Shore News. I pass each issue along to a family in France, who look forward to the Great Village News.

Happy New Year!  
Mrs. Jean Joy, Don Mills, ON

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Rees,

As a member of the Village Follies, I would like to express my thanks to you both. Your placement of our fundraising picture on the front page of The Shoreline Journal was very generous.

The Canadian Cancer Society is a cause which is close to my heart and I am sure the publicity will help us to raise more money for this worthy cause.

Thanks, also, for including pictures of our dinner theatre production in your latest issue. We are grateful for your coverage.

Sincerely Yours,  
Shannon Fielding

Letter to Editor

Enclosed is a cheque to renew my subscription to the Shoreline Journal.

I used to write for the Shoreline and I enjoy it very much.

Wishing you the best in the New Year.

Ursula Lynds, Truro, NS

Hi, Maurice;

In response to the letter to the editor from Belinda Meekins, regarding the "free advertising", in Ruth Thompson's report in the December Shoreline, I must apologize on behalf of Ruth's article, since it was I who gave her the information she submitted.

I, in no way, meant to slight the importance or significance of "Ellis Video". I have always been impressed and amazed by the number of things you can buy at "Gail's"!

I wish continued success and good will to Ellis Video and any other business in the community.

No prejudice was intended in the information submitted, it was merely an oversight on my part.

I hope my apology is accepted with the good will intended.

Thanks,  
Dorothy Carson

## Economy / Five Islands Area News

By Ruth Thompson

New Year's Eve at Mo's. Good food, good friends and good music - the perfect ingredients for a great party. And that is just what happened at Mo's that night. A wonderful hot/cold buffet was served to a full house of over 50 people, many of whom were friends and regular supporters of Mo's giving the party a real "family" atmosphere. Dennis and his staff outdid themselves and had been busy in the kitchen for days to make the meal a memorable one and they succeeded.

Easy listening music was provided throughout the

evening by Merv Henwood on piano, Mike Elliott on Bass, Harland Suttis on Guitar and Polly Suttis, vocals (special thanks to Merv and Mike for sharing their awesome talent with us)

The countdown was led enthusiastically by Ray Dibbon, with everyone joining in to close the evening with Auld Lang Syne. Many thanks to Mo's for giving a special place to go to celebrate the arrival of 2010. I want to thank Polly Suttis for giving me this information. Thanks a bunch Polly.

Economy Greenhouse has re-located to 51 Judge Fulton Road, Bass River. Business as

usual at the new location.

Gordon and Maureen Matthews visited son Michael and family in Torbay, Newfoundland before Christmas. Everyone had a good time.

Sympathy is extended to Ada Welton and family on the death of Donnie, also to Elizabeth MacAloney on the death of James and to the family of the late Laurie Downing.

Weekly Kitchen party has been moved to Thursday evenings at 7 P.M. This is a time for people who enjoy getting together to play and sing to get together and have some fun. It is simply a jam, a person does not have to think

they have to be good to come join us, just come and enjoy the fellowship.

There will be a Valentine Tea at the Economy Recreation Centre on February 10th from 2:00 P.M. until 4 P.M. Cost \$4.00. Sponsored by Economy United Church Women. Everyone invited.

There's also Yoga on Sunday evening and line dancing on Wednesday evenings. Again just come for the fellowship.

You can contact me at 647-2933 or via e-mail at foxy40@bellaliant.net. Would love to hear from anyone with news. If you want to continue to read news from Economy/Five Islands, you will have to contact me.

The Shoreline Journal (circ. 1300) is a monthly community newspaper serving communities along the Glooscap Trail from Truro to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia serving the communities of Belmont/Debert, Wentworth/Londonderry, Onslow/Masstown along the shore to Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands and Lower Five Islands. It is published on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) with a deadline of the 20th of the month.

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EDITOR PUBLISHER: Maurice Rees • ADVERTISING & CIRCULATION: Dorothy Rees

Canadian Publications Mail Products Agreement #4686039, ISSN #1209-9198

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

LOCAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: B0M / B2N - \$23.00, PLUS HST = \$25.99 • ALL PARTS OF NS: \$26.00 plus HST = \$29.38  
ALL OTHER AREAS OF CANADA: \$28.00, plus HST = \$31.64 • USA SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$40.00  
HST: #890564404RT001. Printed by Advocate Printing & Publishing Ltd, Pictou, Nova Scotia

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