



A meeting will be held on February 9th at "The Peg" at Masstown Market to discuss sponsoring a refugee family to relocate to Colchester County. Pictured at the founding meet of the "Along the Shore Refugee Assistance" committee from left to right are: Jim Wyatt, Sandra Phillips, Janet Maybee, Tony Phillips, Bruce Gray, Michelle Rigby, Judith VanDuren. Missing Joy Laking. (Joy Laking Photo)

Refugee Assistance meeting on February 9th

By Tony Phillips

The Syrian refugee situation prompted a group of West Colchester friends to try and do something to help. With a view to sponsoring a refugee family eventually, they have formed a group named Along the Shore Refugee Assistance. The group will hold a public meeting at The Peg (Masstown Market) on Tuesday, February 9 at 7:00 pm.

They are keen to expand the group to get more West Colchester people involved through donating money, and (when a family arrives and needs help) assisting in the way of driving, providing furnishings and equipment, extending friendship and support, language coaching and practice, assistance in navigating Canadian rules and customs, etc.

Refugee sponsorship can

be done in several ways, but the way the group chose involves raising money - \$17,000 to \$25,000 depending on family size and turning it over to ISANS (Immigration Settlement Association of Nova Scotia.) ISANS will receive matching dollars from the federal government and will administer the pot of money, giving the refugee family a monthly allowance for a full year, after which time it is assumed the family will be financially independent.

Tax receipts will be issued by ISANS for use on the contributor's 2016 tax return.

There are a number of groups in northern Nova Scotia interested in refugee sponsorship. Some of these groups have joined an umbrella group in Truro called Cobequid Refugee Sponsorship. It is thought

that by cooperating with other groups more or larger families or families with special needs might be helped. The Along the Shore group has decided to join the partnership (CRS).

Though it would be nice to have our "own" refugees, we believe it would be better for the refugee family to be located in an urban area (Truro) where more services, interaction, contact with speakers of familiar languages, and more employment opportunities exist and transportation is easier. It was a hard call, but we believe that helping a family achieve independence is the key goal and that goal is more likely to be achieved in an urban setting.

For ISANS to link us with a family we (Along the Shore and/or CRS) must remit to ISANS the full amount of money for the year's sponsorship. To that

Alton Gas Storage Project receives Approval

By Maurice Rees

The next phase of the Alton Natural Gas Storage facility project in Alton, Colchester County has been approved and will receive several government permits enabling it to proceed. The \$Multi-Million project is not expected to be completed until 2019, maybe 2020.

Once completed the facility will be a major tax payer to the Municipality of Colchester and will create approximately 100 jobs during construction, have an ongoing workforce of approximately 12 people, plus many more jobs for suppliers and maintenance firms.

The provincial government has granted the company, Alton Natural Gas Storage

Facility LP, the following permits: the industrial approval to operate the brine storage pond from the Department of Environment; the lease of submerged Crown land to complete the dispersion channel from the Department of Natural Resources and an agreement to construct a dyke on Crown lands from the Department of Agriculture.

The project has the potential to save natural gas customers \$17 million each year and ensure there is enough gas to meet customer needs when energy demands are highest. The approvals come after an additional extensive aboriginal consultation of the proposed project to develop a series of salt caverns to store

natural gas.

As a result of concerns raised by the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs and Sipekne'katik Band about potential environmental impacts of the project, an independent third-party scientific review of the project was commissioned by the assembly in April 2015.

A technical working group involving the provincial and federal governments, Alton and representatives of the assembly completed additional analysis of the potential environmental impact on traditional fish species, including salmon, sturgeon and eels. The project is not expected to have a significant environmental impact.

end, Tony Phillips is acting as treasurer for Along the Shore and is collecting and depositing donations that will be turned over to ISANS. You may contact Tony at 902-662-3399, philbee@ns.sympatico.ca, and 159 George Weatherby Road, Debert B0M 1G0. Tony will give you a receipt for your donation; a tax receipt from ISANS will follow later in 2016.

We must deal with the Money issue now. The personal and human touch will come later. Along the Shore Refugee Assistance will hold a public meeting at The Peg (Masstown Market) on Tuesday, February 9 at 7:00 pm where practical and personal ways people from the shore can volunteer to support a family will be shared. The earliest a family might be settled here is March.

I Heard It At The Company Store

By Wendy Cox

Do you know what I heard ... I heard that there is volleyball for everyone at WCCS on Wednesday evenings 7-9... if you're interested go have some fun and get some exercise. If you're not into team sports then the Economy Rec Centre has exercise mornings and nights. Give Anita McLellan or Tom Beaton a call for more info.

The Bass River Victoria Hall had a great Christmas Variety Show with lots of talent. It was just like an old fashioned variety show with Christmas carols being sung, a bit of fiddle music and even a Christmas skit. A lot of laughs and a lot of bake goods for a family friendly day.

A music jam has been scheduled for Sunday January 31 at 1pm at Bass River Victoria Hall. Come out and play or just sit and listen. It should be a great afternoon. Any questions call Wendy at 647-2720 or 647-2210. Any one wanting to rent the hall for an event contact Wendy.

The Victoria Hall Association is planning a big weekend in May at the hall with another community variety show and bbq, and a Matt Minglewood concert, watch for posters.

The Economy Rec Centre is hosting a games night on Saturday Feb. 27th at 7pm. There will be shuffleboard, badminton, cards, darts or BYO game to share. It costs \$2 to participate and the bar will be open.

Get out and participate in one of these events and try and get rid of those cold day winter night blues. Until next time, keep your skis on the trail and play safe.

Peter Kohler

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