

REES' Pieces

This is Ridiculous

In 2007-2008 the economy failed because of a melt-down in the stock market as a result of \$-Billions given out in sub-prime mortgages to people who should never have been granted one. IN Late in the fall of 2015, the real weakness of the economy started to become evident. Sure earlier in the year, the price of oil started to drop bringing a halt to many new construction projects sending many easterners home, or providing a lot of grief to those who moved west to work in Alberta's Oil patch.

Here we are in mid-January with the price of oil is dipping below \$30.00 on its way to the low 20's and the CDN\$\$ dipping below seventy cents for the first time since 2003. When gasoline prices at the pumps were nearly \$1.50/ltr, oil was around \$120.00 per barrel. At that time, we wanted a lower price for a barrel of oil. Now that oil has dropped nearly \$100/barrel, we are not seeing the savings we anticipated.

The low dollar has pushed the price of Cauliflower to \$6 a head, because it's imported from USA. As oil and the dollar roll around to see how low they can go, we'll continue to see the cost of putting food on the table to escalate. The present economy is encouraging to those engaging in local food production. Buy local campaigns started two or three years ago are starting to get traction. As the capacity to supply the local market increases, we need to remember "buying local" will always be our best plan in the immediate or long term.

If we had an 80 cent dollar and 80 dollar oil, we'd be a lot better off.

Just as ridiculous as low priced oil and a low CDN\$\$ is how disrespectful a large number of people can be as they continue to litter our highways. Over the last couple of years, there seems to be an increase in the number of people who are becoming more upset at the amount of litter thrown from moving vehicles or bags of garbage thrown into the ditch.

Last year individuals and groups put forth a valiant effort to clean up in Glenholme, Great Village and Bass River. Their efforts certainly are appreciated. However, we need much more than that. Fines need to be assessed and culprits charged to kick-start a change in attitude; education programs are needed in all schools for all grades. In many cases students have more influence on parents than they are given credit. Once we'd noticed even a slight change in public perception, we need every resident to clean up both sides of the highway a couple of hundred feet on either side of their driveway.

It's not only residents who need to put forth an effort. Business owners and leaders need to raise the bar, but working hard to ensure their place of business is the cleanest on the street. After than they can work for the betterment of all by placing garbage containers on their property to encourage the public to put their litter in the bin, instead of throwing it on the ground.

We'll never totally eliminate litter on our highways, but each of us can help to make a difference. One thing each of us can do it to put forth suggestions to your local councillor on how the problem could be solved in your area. Don't just tell them what needs to be done, get out there yourself and help make it work.

Not sure how one could set the standards, but we should work hard to achieve the reputation as having the "cleanest municipality in Nova Scotia". Just think how proud we would be to achieve that status. Once we achieve that status, let's promote it on all avenues of social media. What a great message to send to potential tourists, who "might" just come to visit us, to see if it's true.

We have less than 10 weeks to develop our plan, then it will be time to get into the ditches to do our part.

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Magic in the Grocery Aisle

If you work or shop at Atlantic Superstore, nofrills, Your Independent Grocer or Save Easy anywhere across Nova Scotia, then this letter's for you. Because something magical happened in your store a few weeks ago, and I want each of you to know the impact. Through the Holiday Food Drive that ran province-wide at all of these stores from Dec 4-24, you brought to

life the very meaning of holiday spirit. As employees, you showed incredible enthusiasm for helping your neighbours. As customers, you gave with all your might. While food donations made at each store location haven't yet been tallied for a provincial total, early feedback suggests they're up from last year. And with financial contributions of \$165,000, this has been our biggest ever provincial holi-

day food drive.

In stores that were matched with FEED NOVA SCOTIA, every \$2 donation at the cash register means that no matter which corner of the province they call home, someone in need will have access to a day's worth of food. And in communities across Nova Scotia where stores were matched with local food banks, it means critical support right in your

back yard. Either way, the impact goes beyond dollars and kilograms. It's the comfort of a nourishing meal, the smile on someone's face, and hope for the New Year. For all of that, please give yourself a huge pat on the back for a job well done, and accept our heartfelt appreciation.

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OP-ED

CALA to Host Letter Writing Workshop

By David Boehm

Colchester Adult Learning Association's Family Literacy Program in partnership with the Truro Branch of the Colchester East Hants Public Library will be celebrating Family Literacy Day by hosting a letter-writing workshop at the library from 1:00 to 4:00 pm on Saturday, January 30th. Participants will be invited to drop in to write and post a Valentine's Day letter to a senior or other participant in the VON Adult Day programs in the area.

The letters from friends and relatives that once punctuated the junk mail and bills have thinned out as email, Facebook, and texting have pushed letter mail to the margins over the past ten years. Many, perhaps most, of us have adjusted. We enjoy the spontaneity of corresponding on the internet or by phone; we send or share photos and files, and stay in touch with people from all around the world. Those under 30 may not even notice that something has been lost.

media to keep them in the loop of our communications. We can show our respect to them by honouring their birthdays with a card; sending greetings on special occasions; and remembering to thank them through the mail for gifts and favours received. Involving our children in these occasional greetings would instill in them a sense of responsibility and good manners while providing opportunities to hone their budding literacy skills. No one is too young or too old to be involved in the conversation between and across the generations—everyone has something to say.

Join us the Truro Library on Saturday, January 30th to send a Valentine greeting to a local senior, or pen that thank-you card to a friend or relative that is still owing from Christmas. Try your hand at calligraphy, various cursive styles, or try out a typewriter. Brighten up someone's trip to the mailbox! As Red Green always said, "We're all in this together."

Colchester Adult Learning Association offers Adult Learning opportunities, Seniors' Literacy and Family Literacy programs in Truro,

greater than ever. Class sizes, complex student needs and the curriculum are among their top concerns.

I understand the complexities and concerns they are facing. That is why we introduced a new approach to developing curriculum. It is designed to ensure curriculum is continuously updated and streamlined to reflect modern trends in education. Grades primary to 3 curriculum has already changed and 4 to 12 will be streamlined over the next few years.

Elementary class sizes have been capped, and more support has been provided in the classroom. We are funding 381 more teachers, expanded SchoolsPlus, added more mental health clinicians, and

continued on page 6

OP-ED

Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education

By Karen Casey

In just three weeks, we will mark the first anniversary of our five-year education action plan, The 3RS: Renew, Refocus and Rebuild - Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education.

Each and every initiative is focused on increasing student achievement and success.

I believe our education plan is unique as it is the result of an extensive consultation with Nova Scotians.

More than 19,000 people told us what they want to see in a modern public education system. More than 4,000 teachers told us about their key concerns. We listened and are responding.

Every decision we make at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is focused on investing in and improving the learning and teaching environment that benefits both teachers and students.

Decisions are informed by what we are hearing from teachers, school boards, parents, students and others along with evidence-based research.

I have met with and listened to the concerns of hundreds of teachers, and I am committed to continuing our response to those concerns.

Teachers have told me that the challenges they face are

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