

Our Kitchen Korner Is Winter Over?



Effective today, March is behind us. Just because it is April Fools Day, we don't need the weatherman to play a trick on us by providing another major snowstorm. We've had enough and we're done with it!! Yes, we had some undesirable days, but in an overall aspect, this winter was not as cold as it could have been. Occasionally the snow has helped insulate us and we've probably burned less furnace oil than last year, which is good because the price was higher than last year.

March was horrible in a way we have not seen before. It started in February, but the Covid-19 virus shut down most of North America. Schools were shut down for at least two weeks following March break. Most pundits and parents agree it is unlikely students will see the inside of a classroom until September, maybe longer.

Premier McNeil became dedicated to updating the public every day at 3:00 pm with a news conference. Even though his messages were not good news, he provided a lot of information and it sure instilled calmness across the province. Naturally people did not like having to self isolate; non essential businesses were mandated to close. Any eatery with sit-down seating was closed, but those with drive-thru or take-out services could operate. When barber shops and hair salons are not allowed to open their doors, we are liable to look like hippies from the 60's when this is over. Closing the provincial borders and requesting people separate themselves from others by at least six feet shows the seriousness and potential disasters.

Two things come to mind, with staying home will we have a population explosion in November and December? For those who were not proficient, many people have had to take a crash course in home cooking. For those of us who are long in the tooth, preparing family meals was life as usual. With many people hoarding there were a number of things not available on Saturday, March 21st: flour, evaporated milk, pasta noodles, envelopes of yeast; chicken leg quarters or breasts, and hamburger.

Here's a tasty and healthy meal, which is relatively easy to prepare. This month's selection is "Chicken Cacciatore" which can be found on Page 230 of the Five Roses Cookbook. I can't give you the volume number as it's not in the best of shape as both covers disappeared ages ago.

Chicken Cacciatore

- 1-3 lb Chicken, cut up • ½ cup Five Roses Flour
- 3 tbsp Olive Oil • 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped • 14 oz can Tomato Paste
- 1 cup Canned tomatoes • ¼ cup white wine (optional)
- 1 tsp Salt • ¼ tsp Pepper • ¼ tsp Oregano • 1 Bay leaf
- 1 cup Sliced Fresh Mushrooms

Coast chicken pieces with flour (I like to put in bread bag and shake), brown in olive oil over high heat. Remove chicken and set aside. Add onions and sauté over medium heat until tender but not brown. Remove excess fat. Combine remaining ingredients, except mushrooms, in a bowl. Return chicken to skillet and pour tomato sauce on top. Cover and simmer until sauce thickens and chicken is tender, about 45 minutes. Add mushrooms 15 minutes before end of cooking. Remove bay leaf skim off excess fat.

Serve with rice or noodles.

For a vegetable anything is fine, but for colour on the plate something green is recommended. Fresh asparagus, green beans or broccilli fit nicely.

I'm always in need of recipes. I'm trying to be an optimist. Think fiddle heads or BBQ. If you have a favourite family recipe, please send by April 21st, for the May issue. Regular mail should go to:

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September, 2020	August 18	August 26, 2020
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For more information contact us at:

The Shoreline Journal, Box 41, Bass River, NS, B0M 1B0
Ph: 902-647-2968, Cell: 902-890-9850
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Notes from our National Capital

Zann Requests RCMP Assessment Information

MP Lenore Zann has requested that the current Minister of Public Safety, Hon Bill Blair, provide the name of the independent counsel as well as the mandate and time frame for the evaluation of the decision by the RCMP to concentrate both major police 911 emergency communication call centers in Dartmouth.

MP Zann said "This assessment should be an open and transparent process because it affects the safety of all Nova Scotians from Sydney to Yarmouth. All aspects of this examination should be made public and input welcomed".

On June 18, 2019, former Minister of Public Safety, Hon Ralph Goodale told the House of Commons that the RCMP had agreed to engage an independent counsel to review this RCMP decision.

Regarding the same issue, on December 13, 2019 MP Zann tabled a petition calling on the government to provide the identity of the contractor conducting the evaluation but the government answer did not include the name of the contractor awarded the work.

On March 9, 2020 MP Zann again raised the same issue of the

RCMP concentration of services in the House of Commons following two earthquakes which occurred exactly on the location where the Emergency Call Centers will be situated.

She said that as far as she knows, no one in Colchester County has been consulted about the decision to move the OCC and there has been no feedback from anyone. The MP says she wants to ensure that the independent contractor has access to all available information.

"I am looking forward to the opportunity to provide information to the contractors involved with this study. The recent outbreak of COVID-19 highlights the government position which strongly supports 'separation' - while the proposed RCMP move does exactly the opposite."

Lenore Zann is Member of Parliament for Cumberland-Colchester with offices in Amherst and Truro.



Lenore Zann

Notes from our Provincial Capital

5th consecutive year province living within its means.

Each year at this time, the provincial budget is released and it provides the fiscal plan for the next 12 months. As Minister of Finance, I was pleased to table Budget 2020-21 in the Legislature on February 25, and to support the passage of that budget on March 10. Although the release of the budget happens at this time, preparations begin several months in advance.

One of the first steps is to develop a set of economic assumptions on which to build a solid foundation. These assumptions must be challenged by a team of economists from all the major banks in Canada, universities, private sector, and of course, the Auditor General. The results of that challenge showed that our assumptions were "wise and prudent".

The next major step is to consider all sources of revenue available to the province, and to identify expenses required to continue to deliver programs and services that Nova Scotians need and deserve. The completion of that process resulted in a positive financial position, and confirmed, that for the 5th consecutive year, the province was living within its means. This good fiscal management has built confidence in the private sector, both provincially and globally.

Business owners use this information as they determine whether they will expand their existing company here in Nova Scotia, or whether they will locate here from outside the province. It is the private sector that drives the economy. They employ thou-

sands of Nova Scotians. They are the reason our employment rate is the highest this province has seen in decades, and unemployment is at an all time low.

Budget 2020-21 also builds in flexibility, capacity and sustainability. In the face of unexpected risks, we must be prepared and be able to respond. We know that events like the decision of Northern Pulp to hibernate their mill is having an impact on the economy of our province and the personal lives of many of my constituents. The flexibility and capacity in our budget is allowing us to respond to the industry with both short term and long term support.

The potential impact of the COVID-19 virus, as well as railway or highway blockades that disrupt the movement of goods into and out of our province are all risks beyond our control. That makes it critically important that we have a fiscal plan in place that is solid and will allow us to respond as we protect and support all Nova Scotians.

As we move through the months ahead, regular updates on Budget 2020-21 will be shared with the public. Any adjustments required are part of our standard practice, and all Nova Scotians will be informed.

Karen Casey, MLA, Colchester North also is Deputy Premier and President of the Treasury Board.



Karen Casey

We need to support each other

Today March 22 2020 really is a new day with new realities! March 10 2020 a byelection was held in Truro/Bible Hill/ Millbrook. I checked the result that evening with 7 polls left to report less than 20% of eligible voters had even bothered to vote. Very disappointing!

To me it shows a lack of engagement in the process of electing those that will lead and make critical decisions. Apathy, I think it is called.

Low and behold, 12 days later, we should clearly understand the need for Government. Our Government leaders, elected by the people, are charged with making very difficult decisions. Decisions that will in all likelihood save lives. They are in a position where they have had to make a decision to put people out of work in an attempt to protect the residents of our Province and our Country.

Just today our Premier declared a State of Emergency, these are not easy decisions. Times like this show us how important Governments are and why we should be engaged in the election process at a much higher percentage than 20%.

Also, regardless of your political view, ideals or opinions, our leaders need our support at this time. Chances are, we will have some difficult times ahead and you can be sure this will encourage second guessing and criticism. Do not forget, the magnitude and the consequences of every decision made and realize that they have better info and a heavy burden.

Secondly, how are we ever going to thank the medical personal,

who are, in some cases isolated from their families, their children, as they risk their health to protect others. What about the workers at our grocery stores, who are working hard to ensure we can get necessary supplies, all the while some of us set comfortably at home, worrying about if we will have enough food. We need to appreciate them and show them respect. They are some of the people we are putting in danger when we do not self isolate or practice social distancing. It seems there are some people who still do not get the message.

It is extremely irresponsible to say you are healthy, it will not happen to me! Consider others. 5000 people are dead in Italy! We are only two weeks in! When the Federal Government talks about Re Tooling business to produce medical supplies and equipment, we should understand this is not likely to magically go away quickly. Now that I have preached all this doom and gloom, think about how blessed we are to live in these beautiful rural communities.

The one silver lining in this crisis is, I believe, it will once again realize how important our small communities are and how important local business is. We need to support each other.

Tom Taggart is Colchester Municipal Councillor for District 10.



Tom Taggart

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