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“This has been a Beauracratc Nightmare”

By Tom Taggart

Even though Co-Vid-19 has had a significant impact on all of us, I think it is time to provide an update on activities of the Medical Colchester Society for the past 18 months.

Eighteen Months ago we were advised Dr Ewing would be retiring Sept 30 2020 and Dr Rowe, who was also working, I believe 2 days per week would be retiring

as well. As a committee we became active and began bi weekly meeting to form a plan to recruit new doctors.

We presented to the Truro Colchester physician recruitment committee, met and worked with the Nova Scotia Health authority and the Northern Region Doctor recruitment officer among others. We were successful in that we met two different doctors who wished to move to Nova

Scotia and potentially practice in West Colchester. As a result both Doctors agreed to and I understand were advised that they would receive a billing number from Nova Scotia Health. Arrangements were made for each to work with Dr Ewing to determine if our rural practice was acceptable or workable to them, we received tentative dates and even went as far as to arrange for housing for them in our communities. We were very optimistic!! That was in the fall of 2019.

That optimism was short lived! These visits were continually delayed, delay in immigration, delay in work permit, more information needed on this, need this background check, you name it, this has been a BEAURACRATIC NIGHTMARE.

Eventually one Doctor decided to give up the fight so to speak. The second continued and attempted to jump through hurdles to get all the required documents. It is interesting we continue to hear from many different sources how difficult it is to recruit doctors to Nova Scotia because of the very challenging bureaucracy.

Then Covid hit. Everything stopped! Recently we were advised by this Doctor that is still willing to travel to West Colchester. However he has been advised that all the extensive documentation and permitting that he has supplied and applied for, have expired and he must start all over again. UNBELIEVABLE!!!

Meanwhile we were advised early on that we would never be able to recruit a new doctor to practice without having electronic medical records in place. Both our current doctors, who were at the end of their careers, were still using paper documents. As we were working thru this we became aware that when Doctors retired they were mandated to store their records for 10 years, and guess what? They were sent to a company in Ontario that specialized in this. Our society recognized that once this happened those records would be lost forever. Both doctors permitted us access to their records on condition that

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Students Return to Class September 8th

Public school students across the province will return to class on Tuesday, Sept 8. The back to school plan is supported by public health, the IWK Health Centre and education partners.

Developed with survey feedback from more than 28,000 parents and students, and input from union and education partners, the plan outlines public health guidelines and enhanced safety measures for students and staff. It also includes measures to enhance student learning.

While overall, learning at-home during the spring went well, parents said there were some challenges, like access to technology. Government has invested \$4 million to secure 14,000 computers to support student learning for those with limited or no access to technology. In September, students, families and staff can expect: Regional Centres for Education and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial will have plans to support enhanced cleaning, physical distancing and situations specific to schools in their area; classrooms to be reorganized to increase spacing and treating a class as a bubble, to minimize contact with other students.

Other items include: Enhanced cleaning on school buses; school bus riders and drivers will need to wear a mask; all staff and students in high school will be required to wear a mask in school spaces where social distancing is not possible, for example hallways and common areas. Students and staff do not have to wear a mask in class, unless they want to, or if they are working with a student whose individual program plan requires a mask be worn; regular handwashing or hand sanitizing by students and staff before entering school for classes and throughout the day.

In-school assemblies and other large gatherings will not be permitted; cafeterias and school food programs will deliver food to students. Students will eat lunch at their desks and students will have the opportunity to engage in all subject areas, although some subject areas may look different

The plan includes contingencies if it becomes necessary to adjust based on public health advice.

Additional Resources: Nova Scotia back to school plan: <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/docs/back-to-school-plan.pdf>



2020 has not been a good year for area strawberry growers because there is a 40% shortage in foreign workers, due to problems from Co-Vid-19. Curtis Millen indicated he decided to plant 20 acres less, but with a shortage of labour, there will be a loss of 60-80 acres. See story and more photos on page 10. (Harrington Photo)

Review Not Sitting Well

By Maurice Rees

The joint review announced on July 23 by Attorney General, Mark Furey and federal Minister of Public Safety, Bill Blair is not sitting well with what appears to be a majority of people outside the two reigning governments. Many people interviewed and quoted in various media reports since the announcement indicate they will not stop until a public inquiry is announced.

Almost immediately, representative from some victim families slammed the announcement indicating they have consistently requested a public review and had not told Minister Furey, they wanted protection and expediency. Families have been joined by neighbours, fellow Nova Scotians and outspoken colleagues from across Canada. Several MP's and upwards of 40 Senators had written letters requesting the two governments call a "public inquiry".

The review - to be conducted by a three-person panel will operate independent of

government involving a broad investigative analysis of the April 18-19 events. Three members have been jointly appointed to the panel to conduct the review and report back on its findings and recommendations. The panel members are the Honourable J. Michael MacDonald (chair), the Honourable A. Anne McLellan and Ms. Leanne J. Fitch. They will consider the causes, context and circumstances that led to the shootings, the response of police and steps taken to inform, support and engage victims, families and affected citizens.

To date no one had questioned the qualifications of the panel members, but are upset the information will not be part of public hearings; there is no opportunity for subpoena's be served and people compelled to testify under oath.

Even before the announcement had concluded, some family members and supporters, were saying the "fight has just begun".

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UNESCO Approves GeoPark

By Maurice Rees

The Cliffs of Fundy GeoPark finally received UNESCO approval as a member of the Canadian Geoparks Network on July 19th. The announcement which was delayed by approximately five months due to CoVid-19 is a welcome boost the future economy of Colchester and Cumberland Counties.

The area covered by the designation will be from Apple River in Cumberland down the shore to outer edges of Truro to include the former Palliser site which was purchased by Colchester and is now under development at the Fundy Discovery Centre.

Geoparks are sites recognized by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

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Truro's 'Black Lives Matter' parade makes its way down Prince Street in Truro on June 13. Organizers expected up to 300 participants but were delighted to have over 1000 in attendance. Story and more photos on page 11. Above photo by Erin Dorrington.

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