



Sunrises or sunsets along Highway # 2 are an incredible sight. This sunrise in Economy is no exception. (Lawrence R. Nicoll Photo)

Jim & Judy Burgess Inducted into Book of Recognition

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young people named Judy and Jim met while raking wild blueberries. This is because Jim's dad, Bob, hired Judy's family to contract pick some of his fields. Jim and Judy fell in love and were married. For some reason, they chose to be married right in the middle of wild blueberry harvest time on August 21st. So, this has meant that for the past 55 years, Judy and Jim have celebrated their anniversary by taking a load of wild blueberries to the receiving shed. What a beautiful romantic wild blueberry story.

Jim's father, who was inducted into the Recognition Book for his trailblazing contribution to the industry, along with his partners, sold their holdings in Brookland Products, which was a significant wild blueberry operation, to Roy Hoeg and Keith Crowe in the 1960's. Bob kept the home farm in Middle Musquodoboit and Jim and Judy helped with the farm. This 200-acre property with about 70 acres in wild blueberries remained the center of their operation.

Once Jim retired from the Department of Natural Resources in the mid 1990's, Jim and Judy expanded their business, naming it Glenmore

Farms. They acquired some additional fields and leased and managed others. Currently they farm about 200 acres of wild blueberries per year of their own and leased land and do some additional contract work for other growers. They also continue to tap maple trees for syrup and grow and sell Christmas trees.

Jim and Judy were early leaders in fresh fruit sales. They moved beyond the old-style winnowers in the late 1990s when they bought their first modern cleaning line. In four years, they had outgrown the barn housing this and in 2006 built a larger facility with three cleaning lines and secured HASAP certification including traceability functionality.

At their peak they had three 8 hour shifts a day and sold about 100,000 pounds of fresh product through Loblaw's and other markets. It has since been reduced to one 8 hour shift a day. While only about 10% of their overall production, this fresh line diversified the farm income and served to increase the awareness of wild blueberries in this major urban market area.

Jim and Judy are big believers in pollination. Jim served on the joint pollination com-

mittee for many years and helped establish this important ongoing working relationship with beekeepers. They also were very mindful of the habitat surrounding their fields and established Christmas tree plantations around the edges of their fields. This innovative approach means that production goes right to the field edge and adds an additional source of revenue as well as serving as a great habitat for wild pollinators.

Jim and Judy have been very mindful of the importance of field specific treatments to their land. They are well known for small-scale backpack sprayer applications. They also were early adopters of placing softwood bark mulch in bare spots leading to quicker plant rhizome spread. Above ground irrigation, field drainage and land leveling are other strategies they have used to improve the land and its productivity.

Judy has played a key role in managing many aspects of the farm, including on farm logistics, bookkeeping, quality control and the store front and fresh pack. Their partnership in this farm business has allowed this multi-generation Burgess farm to give a lot to the development of the Musquodoboit Valley by employing up to 50 people in the harvest season. Their strong social conscience for others continues to have an impact on the economic and social well being of the region, as they demonstrate what can be done to add value to the land to support local community economic development.

WBPANS is pleased to recognize Judy and Jim Burgess and Glenmore farms for their inspirational leadership in entrepreneurial innovation, sustainable environmental and community economic development through their passion for wild blueberries.



WBPANS Past President Jeff Orr congratulated Jim & Judy Burgess on their Induction into the Blueberry Recognition Book for 2019. See more WBPANS stories and photos on pages 16, 17, 18 and 19.

How Much Insurance Coverage?

By Maurice Rees

What level of increased insurance coverage will Colchester council provide to volunteer firefighters? In reality it's not a matter "if", but rather "how much". Staff will study and report back to council.

Over 500 volunteer firefighters, who each donate many hours to their local fire department, may be getting a substantial increase in insurance coverage. The matter started with a presentation to council by Guy Gallant, chair CFFA Base level insurance committee and Merlyn Smith, President CFFA on November 4th.

The discussion from the November 4th presentation was brought forward to the November 14th committee meeting. Council is being asked to consider increasing base coverage for Accidental Death and Accident Disability coverage of \$100,000 line of

duty death only to \$100,000 - Accidental Death 24/7 Coverage; \$500/week Disability Insurance - line of duty only to \$750/week, Accidental Disability - 24/7, payable to age 70, plus add a Family Employee Assistance Program (FEAP) package.

The current base level coverage costs \$36,000, but would increase to \$103,000 to fulfill the extended coverage of 24/7; payable to age 70, and increasing weekly disability to \$750/week.

General consensus around the table was eagerness to consider for implementation in the next budget cycle. Councillor Taggart, spoke favourably and noted increased coverage is necessary and changing to 24/7, because there are many volunteer firefighters who are self-employed, work seasonally, who don't have any coverage. In some cases, he suggested, enhanced coverage would be a

great recruiting tool. He was of the opinion there are several people with young families might become a volunteer firefighter simply because it would be a way to protect their families.

Mayor Blair, who spoke highly in favour, presented additional information for consideration by council. The suggested plan to provide coverage, as requested, would cost approximately \$202 per volunteer, but if the coverage was increased to \$150,000, 24/7, and \$1,000/ week disability the cost would increase to \$125,000 (\$246 per volunteer).

Mayor Blair provided another example which would cost \$273 per fire fighter or \$138,000 overall to increase coverage to \$200,000 insurance coverage on 24/7 basis and disability increasing to \$2,000/week, payable to age 70, plus FEAP.

Additional information will be brought back to council for action.



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