

Oxford Bargain Bonanza IS BACK

By **Ruthie Patriquin**

Building on the success of last year's event, Oxford Bargain Bonanza Day is back on Saturday, December 7. Many businesses are offering deep discounts. In addition, Sunset Thrift Store & Café will be hosting up to twelve additional vendors.

New this year will be a chance to win a Wild Blueberry Bundle. Entry boxes at participating stores for your chance to win a bundle of Wild Blueberry products, provided by the Town's Community Economic Development Office, sponsor of Oxford Bargain Bonanza Day.

The Oxford Area Lionettes are celebrating a quarter century of Christmas in the Park, and their annual Craft Sale, Dessert & Quiche Cafe will be held on the same day as Bargain Bonanza, December 7, 10-2, at the Trinity United Church Vestry, 5192 Main St. Oxford.

Be sure to get your 3-9 year-olds outside for Reindeer Games on December 6, 3:30-5 pm, at the Oxford Regional Education Centre. The Adventure Therapy Project is offering outdoor activities, hot chocolate and the promise of a "surprise" guest (hmmm-I wonder). There's a small cost and you must pre-register.

Cynthia Hickman Black hasn't forgotten her hometown and the church she grew up in. This year she invites us to "Remember the Magic", another in her series of annual Christmas concerts supporting the Oxford Baptist Church. Cynthia and her family are hosting twenty acts from near and far for what is always an outstanding musical experience. Tickets for December 13 and 14 are available at Oxford Home Hardware.

The Capitol Theatre welcomes a number of seasonal events including a one-act play, "One Christmas Carol" (Showcase Productions) on December 16, Dave Gunning and J.P. Cormier on December 19, and An Orphan's Christmas, featuring students of Ruth Collins Music Studio, on December 21 and 22. And I suspect you'll hear a holiday tune or two at the Capitol's regular Jam Nights, December 6 and 20.

Brenda Melanson's art exhibit, Brush with Life, at the Oxford Riverside Gallery, is open until December 20, during regular Town Hall business hours. Admission to the gallery is always free but donations to the OREC youth art program are gratefully accepted.

New hours for the town office are 10 am - 3:30 pm, Monday to Friday, except holidays. This change is needed to improve overall operations. Staff will maintain their regular working hours.

Free Skates are underway at the Oxford Arena. Sundays from 4-5:30 pm are the regular skates. Something new has been added from 4:00-5:00 pm, Wednesdays and Fridays: Sticks and Pucks Free Skates. Children are to be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Helmets are required and available at the arena if you don't have your own.

By the time you read this, I'm sure there will be more activities planned as we enter the beautiful winter season in the Wild Blueberry Capital. To learn about events in Oxford, check out the paper version of the Oxford Community Calendar and consult the Events Calendar on the Town website for items that have been scheduled after the Calendar is distributed. And remember, we can't publicize your event if we don't know about it.

If you're a business or organization thinking about applying for a grant to hire a summer student - grants are usually announced in December.

Every Wednesday, volunteers at the Oxford Church of the Nazarene serve soup and sandwiches to high school students and community members who drop into the church "soup kitchen" from 11-1. It's free and donations are welcome.

What's your community group doing? Tell us about it.

Ruthie Patriquin is Community Economic Development Officer, Town of Oxford and can be reached at 902 447-2250.



Ruthie Patriquin



A new and improved Oxley has been installed in Oxford. Named after Town of Oxford, the monument, promoting the town as the Blueberry Capital of the World, was repaired and updated this summer. (Submitted)

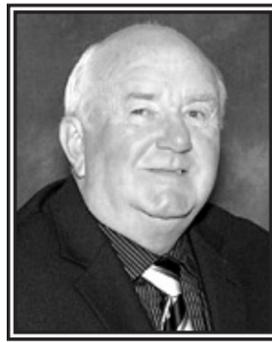
Cumberland Council Chooses Mayor and 8 Councillors

By **Don Fletcher**

Cumberland council held a special meeting on November 4th to deal with governance, mayor versus warden and council size. After a presentation from the planning department, who worked on the governance issue for the past year, each councillor was asked to speak on Mayor versus Warden.

If the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) approve our decision taken at the special meeting the municipality of Cumberland will have an historic change for the next municipal election in 2020. Council with a recorded vote voted seven to four, two councillors were absent, to have a Mayor versus Warden for the first time in history.

This means every eligible voter in Cumberland will vote for a mayor replacing the cur-



Donald Fletcher

rent warden system in the 2020 fall municipal election. According to the Stantac Report from 2015 and the recent report done by staff this is what the public wanted. Once approved the system cannot be reversed so no more warden.

Of 21 Nova Scotia rural municipalities, included in the report, five have mayors and the rest have a warden. Only

time will tell if council made the right decision.

With regard to council size again we went to each councillor and the presentation recommended a council size of between eight and ten. After councillors had voted, the outcome was: six voted for a council comprising eight councillors: one voted for a council of nine and four voted for a council of ten. If the UARB approve council's decision, we will have a council of eight councillors commencing after the 2020 municipal election.

Because Cumberland is the largest county in the province, I see a challenge for the rural areas to maintain representation going forward. At present my District 10 is the largest within the county and second largest within the province. How the boundary changes are implemented

should be interesting.

Establishing new boundaries for the eight council districts is the next process that will be undertaken by the planning department.

For those interested, I voted for a warden and council of ten as this is what was there when I was first elected. Since then we have added Springhill and Parrsboro to the municipality. A report given to us indicated that for the past four years we have operated with a council size of 11.83 councillors so switching to eight could be a challenge.

Citizens need to hold their councillors accountable and become more engaged, which are my thoughts only.

Question: have you considered running for mayor or councillor, start thinking?

Donald Fletcher is Cumberland Municipal Councillor for District 10.

Cape D'or to get Archeological Dig

By **Don Fletcher**

Cumberland Council meeting of November 13th began council at 5 pm in camera with 6 items covered. Public council began at 6 with two dangerous and unsightly properties, one in Wallace and 1 in Port Greville approved by motion for removal.

A special council meeting was held on November 20 a meet and greet style information session regarding electoral boundaries for the next municipal election slated for 2020. A proposed schedule for 2020/2021 operating budget was presented and accepted by our finance director.

Next on the agenda was the deputy warden selection for the next year. Councillor Gilbert and Councillor Van Vulpen were nominated. Councillor Gilbert won. Congratulations Ernie. Thank you to Joe for his work during the past year as deputy warden.

1st reading of the canine control bylaw was approved by motion. The RFP-MCC1905 was approved by motion for economic development strategies for Springhill and Parrsboro.

Discussion followed on the church parking lot in Springhill and the original decision of council stands. The municipality will not be repairing and

plowing the lot.

A motion to approve the audit committee report was approved by motion. At next council on November 27th, the financial statements ending September 30th 2019 will be discussed. We approved the report submitted by our REMO coordinator for reimbursement of costs related to Hurricane Dorian which will be submitted by the Province under the disaster financial assistance fund.

Local councillors will attend the Cumberland public libraries open houses in their districts. They start Monday 18th in Advocate Harbour. A request was received from the MLA from Cumberland North to meet and discuss legislation recently passed. Staff will make it happen.

Approval was given for the CAO to approve the FRP for archeological dig at Cap D'or In order to proceed with the upgrades proposed in the project. A motion to approve sale of a surplus property lot to the

adjoining property was approved by motion.

An information item in our package dealt with the recent closure of Highway 104 on November 1st. The REMO coordinator would like to see the establishment of a committee that oversees the response procedure to hazardous events on the Tantramar Marsh.

Question: What do you think of the mayor versus warden decision? Call your councillor.

Donald Fletcher is Cumberland Municipal Councillor for District 10.



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OFFICE HOURS:
Springhill: Monday-Friday 9 - 4
Parrsboro: Thursdays
River Hebert: Tuesdays
Please call to set up an appointment.



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