

REES' Pieces

Is a plague lurking in our schools?

As a parent or grandparent are you concerned a potential plague may be lurking in our schools?

Statistics show only 71.7% of students have been vaccinated thus creating possibility of tragedy. Even though New Brunswick boasts a vaccination rate larger than 87%, there was an outbreak of 12 cases in 2019.

A bill requiring all students be vaccinated or produce a legitimate medical exemption was introduced in the legislature by Tim Houston, leader of the Opposition. The fall sitting has ended so the bill will not pass.

I am not trying to promote hysteria, but rather give you the facts. If there is a potential of an outbreak, immediate action is required.

Concerned parents should do a lot of soul searching. Most schools have a Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Maybe it's through that organization parents can find greater strength by tossing the ball to the PTA executive and membership to get things rolling.

If concern about a measles outbreak makes it to the agenda for discussion within a month (before the next PTA meeting) education officials or home room teachers can conduct an audit of their class and deliver a report to PTA members. Eventually a report must be sent home to all parents.

Once reports are received from teachers within a particular school, the PTA executive could consult with other PTAs to determine appropriate action and how and to whom they will consult for a solution.

In 1998 measles was all but eradicated, but focus on the problem and due diligence has waned. Some family doctors are pleading with patients to ensure their children are vaccinated and have received the recommended booster shots.

In reality there are three concerns:

No family or community should have to deal with a preventable death of a student, because others were not vaccinated.

Students are the leaders of tomorrow and their potential contribution to their community must be considered.

The 71.7% of students who have been vaccinated should not be placed in danger of catching measles from those non-vaccinated.

How forceful parents become is an individual decision. If they wish to talk with neighbours and bring the matter to the local PTA, they will find strength and wisdom from acting within a concerned group.

Should they decide to push the matter forward communicating with the general public is necessary. If a particular group's actions starts to gain traction, others must be aware.

If the movement spreads province-wide, the Department of Education will be forced to take action. There will be a provincial election within two years. It could become an important item during a campaign.

On a much more positive note, congratulations should be extended to Craig Burgess, Director Recreation Services, Municipality of Colchester for being recognized as Recreation Nova Scotia's 2019 Recreation Director of the Year. CONGRATULATIONS CRAIG, it's much deserved.

Municipal Elections will be held in October 2020. Those thinking of putting their name forward to become an elected municipal representative need to study the matter from all angles. Municipal politics is the grassroots of democracy, and quite often taxpayers "come to you" with provincial or federal matters, because you are more accessible and they know you better. The responsibility of elected office is much larger than attending a couple of meetings per month. Serving in a municipal capacity can be rewarding, but also stressful at times.

All municipalities need the "best people available" serving as "elected". In the past few decades voter inaction has seen far too many acclaimed through Acclamation.

If taxpayers are engaged; asking questions, long before nominations open, there will be more candidates. The pathetically low turn-out for municipal elections goes directly back to taxpayers. It's not that they didn't vote, but primarily because they didn't care enough to make it a matter of discussion throughout the previous year.

Taxpayers need to show more interest by listening; encouraging people to become candidates, possibly participating and then voting.

Elsewhere in this issue we have published Part 1 of 2 based on a comparison of Nova Scotia's forest industry to how forestry is much more successful in Finland. Learn how Finlanders appreciate their forests.

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Dear Editor:

(Note: See story by David Stevenson and Greg Watson on page 2)

Plans are underway to start a new community-based company in northern NS to promote sustainable forestry.

As part of the process, we wish to present people in all your "Shoreline Journal" areas with the picture of a sustain-

able future in forestry.

This contrasts with the difficulties over the Pictou mill and possibilities from gold mining in our shared hills.

Indeed, we need to promote our strengths, occasions to innovate and faith in our community support for future generations.

Attached (page 2) is our first in a series of articles that

put our forest resources in the spotlight. We hope you will be able to share them with your readers.

As always I am available by e-mail and telephone.

David Stevenson, President
Colchester-Cumberland Wind
Field Ltd.
902 657-1064

Dear Editor:

(After listening to a CBC interview with Peter Bush about the Ingram River highway project, this listener wrote to CBC Information Morning and sent a copy to The Shoreline Journal.)

Hello, Portia and Elizabeth:
After listening to Peter Bush's response to Mike Lancaster's evaluation of the area cut for the highway and Mike's determination that it was an old growth forest, I am in awe of how this man keeps his job when he most certainly is not fulfilling the purpose of his department. The fact that he relied upon aerial views of the area in order to determine that it was not an old growth forest, leaves me in a state of disbelief. Not to have on-site inspections to truly get a closeup, accurate picture of

what is in the area is, in my view, negligence in the extreme. For him to feel that this is not necessary is an indication of poor judgment and absolutely an indication that he is not fit for the job.

How else, other than feet on the ground, can it be determined what type of lichens, fungi, mosses, birds, small animals, understory, endangered species, in addition to mature trees, etc. can that be determined?

Mike did what any person wanting his conclusions to be credible should do. He took core samples of nearby trees as well as a ring count of trees which had been felled needlessly. He got to see what was there. He was doing the job that Peter Bush's department people SHOULD have been doing.

To me, that is a matter of common sense. There seems to be a gross lack of that in the government departments responsible for the protection, maintenance, and preservation of our environmental PUBLIC resources. It is obvious that industry supportive government staff should not be charged with such determinations.

An independent third party should be doing the job that Mike did and recommending what should or should not be harvested. These people must be well trained and come from various fields of research done out in the field and not from behind a desk looking at aerial photos. We, the public, whose taxes go to pay these government employees deserve better than this.

Jim Harpell,
Short's Lake, Colchester County

To the Editor:

I'd like to share a letter with you I sent to several officials with the Department of Defence in reference to a message I received from MLA Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin regarding a request to use the Amherst Armouries for a New Year's Gala event:

"Lenore Zann here, the new Member of Parliament for Cumberland-Colchester.

I sincerely ask that you grant Ms Smith-McCrossin's request to use the building for the purposes she sets out in her letter.

I have had the pleasure of visiting the Armouries a few times over the past few years and find it to be quite beautiful. Thanks to former MP Bill Casey, who has been and remains dedicated to saving the building, the community recently had the pleasure of attending a fantastic German concert in honour of the closure of the POW camp in Amherst.

I also attended this concert and can assure you I found it to be world-class. There is absolutely no reason why these kinds of events can't be held there more often. As a 33-year professional performer myself I recognize that it has great

acoustics and is a perfect building to put on many more professional and community performances as well as military cadet reviews etc.

I can also envision its use on weekends as a year-long Farmers Market - just as we have in Truro in a 100 year-old brick firehall. It is hugely successful and self-sustainable - a great gathering place for the community every weekend with various types of delicious food, a café, contests, live local music, artisans selling their creations, and fresh produce from local farms. A win-win situation!

The Amherst Armouries building is over 100 years old and as such is an important part of our Nova Scotian Heritage. It's also a great addition to the downtown core of Amherst. We would very much like to preserve and repurpose the building so that it remains a proud part of our history and our community fabric for years to come.

In Truro where I reside, we managed to save an even older building in our downtown core which was in much worse shape than the Amherst Armouries - the old Normal College, built in 1858. In fact 12 years ago I was able

to help raise \$67,000.00 to do a feasibility study for that building and the final report showed that "If we build it they will come." Meaning that if we invested in repairing the building (including repointing the bricks on the outside) and repurposing of the building for some creative purpose, it would become a draw for people to our downtown.

At that time many older businesses were closing with people fearing that our downtown was dying.

Luckily for us the Town of Truro & Colchester County Council listened to the advice to save and repurpose the old Normal College instead of just sending in the wrecking ball, and now it is the gem of Truro's downtown core - the jewel in the crown - and it shines brightly as our new Library with a skating rink in front and the Farmers Market beside. Many more people of all ages now spend more time downtown which has in turn kick-started local economy and many new businesses have opened and they and our Farmers Market are thriving.

Tourists love the building, artists paint pictures of it which tourists (and locals) buy - and the community is

The
Shoreline
Journal

Here's where
to find us:

BASS RIVER:

Bayside Pharmacy
Dominion Chair Factory Store

BIBLE HILL:

C.W. Fraser Pharmacy
MacQuarries Pharmacy
Kennedy's Deli - Ryland Ave

DEBERT:

Debert Mini-Mart

FIVE ISLANDS:

Masstown Market Five Islands

GLENHOLME:

Double "C" Truckstop

GREAT VILLAGE:

Wilson's Gas

MAITLAND:

Frieze & Roy General Store

MASSTOWN:

Masstown Market
MTM Retail Gas (Petro-Can)

MILLBROOK:

Super 8 Motel

Hampton Inn & Suites

NORTH RIVER:

Grant's Grocery

PARRSBORO:

CrossRoads Co-op

Ken's Grocery

Wright's Pharmasave

TRURO:

Atlantic Superstore

Best Western Glengarry

Holiday Inn

MacQuarrie's Pharmasave

(Esplanade)

Rath Eastlink Comm Centre

Colchester East Hants Health

Centre - Coffee Shop

NEWSPAPERS IN

EDUCATION:

Each classroom at the following schools will receive a copy of the Shoreline Journal:

Bass River Consolidated;
Great Village Elementary; Debert Elementary; Chignosis Elementary;
Central Colchester Junior High School; Parrsboro Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High School.

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Maurice Rees, Publisher,
902-647-2968, or E-MAIL:
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thrilled that "what was old is new again" - cherished as a vital part of the fabric of this town and our community.

So wouldn't it be in everyone's best interests to do the same thing for the Amherst Armouries as Truro has done for the old Normal College? And you, gentlemen, would not only be thanked by veterans, military buffs, and the community, but I'd hazard a guess that you'll be lauded as saviours of this important piece of local military heritage.

Last week I met with the Nova Scotia Heritage Trust and described the situation regard-

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The Shoreline Journal (circ. 1650) is a monthly community newspaper serving communities along the Glooscap Trail from Truro to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia serving the communities of Belmont/Debert, Wentworth/Londonderry, Onslow/Masstown along the shore to Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands and Lower Five Islands. It is published on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) with a deadline of the 20th of the month.

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