

REES' Pieces

Stress-filled troublesome times ahead?

Today, I am not sure, what to think, about this, upside-down world. Particularly, how did we get here and where are we headed?

If we have chosen not to be an ostrich and stick our heads in the sand, we have a numerous uneasy thoughts racing through our heads cluttering our minds.

One thing is paramount. Now is not the time to throw up our hands in disgust. We must settle ourselves down; serious thinking about how we are going to cope and successfully make it to the other side.

Here are some of the things which are affecting every human's daily life. These things are not in order of importance, and will affect people to varying degrees. Cost of food; danger to health because of not eating properly; cost of gasoline and heating fuel; condition of roads; racism and bigotry; housing; higher rent prices; climate warming; Nova Scotia families who do not have a doctor - resulting in poorer health; changing weather patterns - excessive amounts of rain and flash flooding; safety of children and what they are going through stress our children are under as a result of extreme stress their parents face.

Once we start to think about things outside normal home life and totally beyond our control, we are dealing with stresses from: global political atmosphere; war Mideast and Ukraine; racial strife; poverty, genocide in many areas; trading wars from China with USA and Canada; aggressiveness of North Korea, Russia, other militant populations; gun violence and rioting.

For many of us, the big worry is how serious is the threat to democracy? Followed closely by the fad or current initiatives by far right or radical groups to upset democratic governments in jurisdictions, especially in Europe and North America. Populist parties have been upsetting the norm in France and Germany and to some extent even in Latin America. The recent USA election voting in Donald J Trump is sending chills of serious concern in Canada, Mexico and throughout NATO.

Canada's economy would be ruined and we could face massive numbers of citizens and immigrants fleeing USA. The influx of millions wanting to flee USA would far outstrip activities that happened with draft-dodgers who fled to Canada during the Vietnam war. His activities might even cause a depression much worse than "the dirty 30's". In Canada and much of the free-world it's going to be one or two years of total chaos if Trump's, desires gain traction.

In Canada we face all of the previously listed concerns, which has had an impact and driven up the stress level of our 40-Million+ residents. There is another thing bothering us, which we are not used to... "self-centered non-caring politicians" (not municipal).

I will admit this is not totally new. The trait has been there for decades and has gradually grown more and more each year or political term of office. Granted, as electors we are partially to blame, because we did not nip it in the bud when first noticed. Very important, it is not unique to one of the three main parties... Liberals, PC or NDP. Their shortcomings include: concern about re-election; do not listen to the public; don't do enough town hall meetings and pay more attention to donors and an inside group of party workers.

Here are a few examples: NDP's John McDonnell (Hants East) when in opposition he was constantly in the small communities. During Premier Stephen McNeil's reign party workers and constituency directors often complained he rarely communicated directly with them, nor did anyone from the caucus. At his first press conference after announcing the election Premier Tim Houston was bombarded with complaints, he had not returned calls from a patient seeking financial assistance for a special surgery performed outside the province. At first there was denial, but he later apologized and did call the patient the next day.

What I am saying is today's crop of provincial and federal politicians must change their ways.

Perhaps a good place to start is adopt the policy Premier Frank McKenna implemented for staff and caucus when he won every seat in New Brunswick: **Every call must be returned same day of the call, before you leave the office.**

Maurice

"Plan It Colchester" Presentation to Council

Continued from page 1

The Green Municipal Fund (GMF) is a program which is administered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and funded by the Government of Canada. Its mandate is to support local governments in their efforts to tackle climate change and reduce greenhouse gases.



Regarding adopting a Code of Conduct, which the province has mandated all municipalities adopt a Code of Conduct, on motion by Mayor Blair, Council Committee rec-

ommends to Council that the current Code of Conduct for Members of Council Policy and the Code of Conduct Complaints Policy be repealed; and, By way of resolution, that Council adopts the Code of Conduct for Municipal Elected Officials Regulations as set forth by the Province of Nova Scotia.

Additional information

items before committee on November 14th included: Updates from Carbon-Free Colchester Implementation Committee and Paul Smith, Director Community Planning Report (see elsewhere thinks issue) prior to committee going in to closed session to discuss two items: Contract and Property Matter.

See also Page 19

Full Tuition for New Accelerated Nursing Program

People in Nova Scotia who want to pursue a career as a licensed practical nurse (LPN) in continuing care can get free tuition through a new pilot program. The Province will cover the full cost of tuition and books for 30 future LPNs who agree to work in continuing care in Nova Scotia for two years after graduating. Students will be enrolled in an accelerated 18-month practical nursing program at Nova Scotia Community College's (NSCC) Ivany campus in Dartmouth.

The pilot program will use the same course curriculum used in other practical nursing pro-

grams. Classes will run from January 2025 to June 2026 in the afternoons and evenings, allowing students to complete a two-year diploma program six months faster. Students will work one to two shifts a month in continuing care while they study.

More information on the program, including eligibility and how to apply, can be found at: <https://www.nsc.ca/programs-and-courses/programs/plandescri.aspx?prg=PNURA&pln=PRACNURACC>

Improving Accessibility in Workplaces

Recommendations from the Accessibility Advisory Board for the Province's accessibility employment standard were released on October 25. The board's Employment Standard Development Committee, which includes people with disabilities and other experts in the field, developed the recommendations. They address

employment barriers faced by people with disabilities in the areas of recruitment, retention, advancement, workplace accommodations and emergency preparedness and will be used to inform an accessibility standard for employment.

The board is recommending that employers have: A workplace accessibility policy

that ensures recruitment practices are accessible; evacuation and shelter-in-place plans to ensure employees with disabilities are safe during an emergency and reasonable workplace accommodations so that everyone has what they need to do their job.

It recommends a phased approach, which may include exemptions depending on employer size.

More Funding for Food Banks

New government funding will help Nova Scotians in need put food on the table this holiday season.

The government is providing one-time funding of \$2 million to Feed Nova Scotia to ensure food banks and food support programs meet the needs of Nova Scotians across the province. This includes

\$400,000 to supplement the organization's Holiday Fund in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) and \$400,000 for holiday-related support outside HRM. The remaining \$1.2 million is operational funding.

Quick Facts: 28.9 per cent of Nova Scotians are experiencing some level of food insecurity; According to Feed

Nova Scotia, more than 57,000 Nova Scotians visited food banks in 2023; more than 21,000 of them were first-time clients and the Province provided \$1.02 million in funding to Feed Nova Scotia in 2023-24

Additional Resources: Feed Nova Scotia: <https://www.feednovascotia.ca> a Nova Scotia School Lunch Program: <https://nslunch.ca>

New Health System Council; NSH Administrator Appointed

The Province will establish a new Health System Performance and Accountability Council to improve health outcomes and experiences for Nova Scotians. The council will monitor the quality and performance of the health system and make evidence-based recommendations to the Minister of Health and Wellness in areas where

there could be improvement.

Areas of focus for the council include acute care, primary care, addictions and mental health, public health and health promotion, emergency health services, and seniors and long-term care. The council will have between three and nine members appointed by the Minister of Health and

Wellness. Members can serve up to a three-year term and can only be re-appointed once.

The council will meet quarterly and report its recommendations to the Minister on or before August 1 each year. The government has also appointed Chris Power as the new administrator of Nova Scotia Health. She will take over from Janet Davidson, who held the position since 2021 and has resigned.

Supporting Locally Healthy Food Initiatives, Food Literacy

Community organizations across the province have received support for existing food programs or new food projects through the Community Food Access and Literacy Fund. The press release accompanying the announcement said, "Government's investment in community programs will help improve food access, promote sustainable practices and provide education to empower communities."

Locally organizations receiving provincial grants included: Cumberland Adult Network for Upgrading Association - \$2,500 to support the

CANU Grow gardening program and hands-on learning in the garden/classroom; Maggie's Place - A Resource Centre for Families Association, Amherst - \$2,500 to support multiple initiatives including a seed/transplant program, kids in the kitchen program, family cooking program, and snacks and recipes for summer playgroups; and North Shore Community Connection Society, Waugh's River, Colchester County - \$2,500 to support food production, preservation and preparation workshops

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