

# Dorothy's Kitchen Korner

Last month I mentioned about feeling safe in rural and small town Nova Scotia. Leave it to me to cause thing to provide a jinx. Within a month vandals destroyed the comfort and feeling of safety for 16 cottage owners in the Bass River area.



What a senseless crime. Breaking windows and smashing doors to rummage through cupboards and dresser drawers only to see a few minor things, which meant more as family favourites than their value on the streets.

Just think of the thousands of dollars spent in boarding up cottages, and the hundreds of hours of RCMP investigative time for a senseless immature act. An even more disruptive problem for thousands of families is the current strike of bus drivers, tradespeople and custodians to CCRSB, which started on Monday morning.

It is a big worry to high school students, especially those in Grade 12 who needed good mid-term marks to complete their applications to university, community college or trade school next fall. The strike also puts a lot of additional stress on parents, as they scramble to juggle getting to work, and transporting students to and from school.

Maurice and I have been watching the cost of beef, chicken, pork and seafood. It is absurd, how little the farmer gets in comparison to what we have to pay at the grocery store.

With the high cost of beef products, we've been eating more pork and chicken, only occasionally sinking our teeth into beef.

We did however, break down and get some round steak the other day, not to BBQ or broil but to see what else we could come up to quench our desire for some beef. After a bit of thought I choose Swiss steak.

## Swiss Steak

- 3-4 tbsp vegetable or olive oil • 4 tbsp flour
  - 1 to 3 lbs round steak (blade or brisket will do)
  - 2 small or 1 extremely large onion chopped
  - 1.5 cups of celery (cut to desire size).
  - Clove of garlic, or use 1tbsp minced garlic
  - 1 cup green pepper chopped (approx).
  - 1 cup fresh mushrooms, or 1 can stems and pieces (including Juice)
  - 1 or 2 cans consommé or beef broth
  - 1 can cream of mushroom soup.
  - 1 or 2 cans tomato soup. (Depending on your taste)
  - Salt (to your taste) • Pinch of black pepper.
  - Steamed rice or Egg Noodles
- Optional:**
- 1.5 cups diced carrots • 1 cup diced turnip.

This dish can be finished in the oven or on top of the stove. (I prefer the oven, so I can do other things and don't have to worry about it sticking)

Heat cast iron skillet, or dutch oven (with thick bottom) add oil and salt and pepper. Coat meat in flour. (I added 4 tbsp flour to plastic container with a top). Dice meet to approx 1/2 in cubes, coat with flour, then add to skillet. Brown on all sides. Scrap bottom of skillet so flour does not stick. When meat is browned on all sides add onions, celery. Saute until onions start to soften. Stir frequently. Now add green pepper and mushrooms. Stir gently while adding consommé or beef broth, cream of mushroom and tomato soup. (Reserve one can of tomato soup to add later if you desire).

If your family is larger and you wish to make this great dish go further add the optional carrots. If you wish it to be more like a stew with a tomato soup base, add turnip. Adding turnip takes over the flavour and you'd think you were eating stew without the dumplings. Cover put in 250 - 300 oven and cook until vegetable are just the way you like them. Serve over steamed rice, or egg noodles.

Please note: Adjust the seasonings to your own taste. If you need to thin it a bit, add water until you reach the consistency you want.

I'm always in need of recipes. Please send to me by February 20th, so I can get in the next issue.

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The **Shoreline** Journal

## Notes from our National Capital

### Record High and Growing Transfers Offer Solid Foundation for Return to Budget Balance

Happy New Year! In mid-December of last year, Canada's Minister of Finance the Honourable Jim Flaherty presented his provincial and territorial counterparts with details on 2014-15 transfer amounts at their meeting at Meech Lake, Quebec.

What does this mean for Canada? With the legislative renewal of major federal transfers now complete, provinces and territories are well positioned to meet our shared commitment of returning to budget balance in the medium term. Returning to budget balance will lower interest payments, foster an environment that encourages more investment, help secure our economic recovery and ultimately allow Canada's governments to invest more in priorities that support jobs, growth and long-term prosperity.

Major federal transfers will reach a record high of almost \$65 billion in 2014-15, an increase of over 50 per cent since 2006 and

a \$2.9 billion increase from 2013-14. Transfers under the Canada Health Transfer (CHT) and Canada Social Transfer (CST) will also both reach all-time record levels in 2014-15 at \$32.1 billion (a 58 per cent increase in the CHT since 2006) and \$12.6 billion (a 50 per cent increase in the CST since 2006), respectively. Here in Nova Scotia, we will see transfer payments rise from \$2.61 billion in 2013-2014 to \$2.79 billion in 2014-2015.



Scott Armstrong

At their meeting, Finance Ministers also reviewed the work done by officials on a potential modest expansion of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Our government's position during this review process has been clear. We must remain mindful of the costs any such expansion would bring to employers and employees and its impact on the economy, particularly as the global

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## Notes from our Provincial Capital

### Liberal Government Makes Education a Priority

As the Education Critic from 2009 - 2013 when this province was under an NDP government, I had written many articles, raised many issues in the Legislature and questioned the Minister of the day continuously about the lack of support for public education in this province. It was during that time it was blatantly obvious that education was not a priority and that funding cuts to education were being implemented without any regard for the students who would be negatively impacted by those cuts. It was very frustrating and disappointing to watch this happen knowing that for many students it was interfering with their learning to a point where some students will have difficulty recovering. That was not acceptable.

As the Minister of Education I am very pleased to be part of a government elected on October 8th that has identified very clearly that education is a priority. We know that there are limited dollars available in this province, we also know that every economist

will tell you that during difficult times one of the last places a government should cut funding is from education. Our Government understands that. To that end we stated clearly in our platform that we would reinvest \$65 million that had been cut from the classrooms by the NDP government.



Karen Casey

As I prepare the Budget for the Department of Education for the fiscal year 2014/15, I am attempting to respond to the concerns that have been brought to our attention by parents and teachers. I have stated that the model for allocating money to School Boards based totally on enrollment does not work. This means there will be funding attached to programs that we know provide opportunities for our students regardless of the enrollment in a school. Some of these programs are related to skill trades, others are related to students with special needs. We will also be implementing

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## News from our Municipal Council - District 10

### Hello folks.

It's that time of year again. Tax assessments are out and like many of you, I am not very happy with mine. Before I start my rant, I want to give a brief understanding of this process.

The Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) is an arm's length branch of the Provincial Government. Their mandate is to access all properties in Nova Scotia and determine their value.

They have 2 categories, the capped value, which is what you actually pay taxes on. Several years ago the Provincial Govt capped all taxes assessment and determined the capped amount could not increase each year beyond the Nova Scotia consumer price index. Last year I believe that was 3.1%, therefore even though the Municipality did not increase the tax rate your taxes would have risen by 3.1%, now this may seem unreasonable but the rational is the cost to operate the Municipality would have

risen by that much, so all things should be equal.

The Market value is what I take so much exception to. Now you may say who cares, as you do not pay based on the market value! Well that may not always be true. Currently, there is a move afoot to have the cap removed.



Tom Taggart

How that will work I am not certain, but you can be sure all calculations will begin with the market value as it is supposedly the true value. Secondly, should you obtain a building permit for improvements to your home your assessment then goes to the market rate, it increases! Should you sell your home both the purchaser will pay a higher tax on your old home and you will pay a higher tax on your new home.

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## News from our Municipal Council - District 9

### Be an optimist think clearly with a positive attitude

Please don't turn the page or start reading another column when you see what I'm writing about this month.

Some people don't find reading or talking about Rural Economic Development all that interesting. I'm not one of those people! Quite frankly it's just the opposite, I could spend hours talking about Economic Development and the opportunities we have before us here in Colchester County.

In a few weeks time every area Councillor will have an opportunity to do just that during a daylong Strategic Planning meeting. These sessions are extremely important to help map out the direction towards sustaining and growing our County. Each Councillor will have an opportunity to express the ideas and voices of his or her constituents. It also allows all of the Councillors a better opportunity to understand the directions taken in the past. As they say, if you don't know where you came from how can you possible know where you are going.

If I were asked to define my idea of Rural Economic Development I would say it's a process of improving the quality of life and economic wellbeing of the citizens in all of our communities. This is usually where a columnist would start to bore you with statistics about out migration of our youth to the west and the aging population of our work force in this Province.



Doug MacInnes

Instead, let's talk about what kind of message is being sent every time someone decides to dwell on all the negative statistics out there on the growth of Rural Economic Development within Nova Scotia. In my opinion, there are more pessimists out there than optimists on this subject in Nova Scotia.

It seems like some folks, even right here in Colchester County, have the attitude and belief we have limitations on what we can accomplish towards Economic Development within our County.

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