

# Raymond Tynes Wins "Rocky Jones Award"

By Maurice Rees

Raymond G. Tynes, former Town of Truro councillor is a co-winner of the Dr. Allan Burnley "Rocky" Jones Individual Award. The award was presented at the 2016 Nova Scotia Human Rights Awards held in Halifax on December 10th. He co-shared the award with Eluned (El) Jones, a Halifax based poet, educator and activist, who is a doctoral candidate at Dalhousie University and teaches in universities around Halifax.

The joint award was presented for their commitment to advancing human rights, equity and inclusion. December 10 is the United Nations' International Human Rights Day. Each year the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission honours

deserving Nova Scotians nominated by their peers for work in the field of human rights, social justice and advocacy.

During the ceremony, his biography was read prior to presentation of the award. It is as follows:

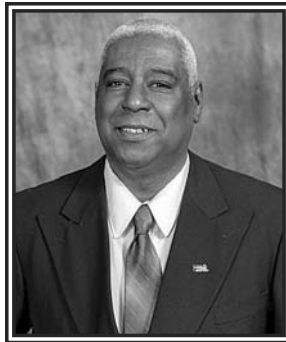
Raymond G. Tynes is dedicated member of his community and has always fought for the rights of marginalized people. He was the first African Nova Scotian to serve on Chignecto Central Regional School Board and the first African Nova Scotian elected as town councillor for the Town of Truro serving for 12 years, including terms as Deputy Mayor.

Mr. Tynes was a guest speaker at the 50th Anniversary of the Civil

Rights Movement in 2013 held in Birmingham, Alabama. He has worked with UNESCO's Coalition of Canadian Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination over the last 10 years and served various organizations promoting and embracing diversity.

He's held positions such as Board Chair and Interim Executive Director at the Colchester Community Workshop, which offers programs to people living with disabilities. Mr. Tynes founded the "Embrace" Truro cultural festival, which is now an annual event. He supported having the Town of Truro raise its first Pride Flag, and lead the town team at the first annual Pride parade.

He helped create



Raymond Tynes, (Photo courtesy Property Valuation Services Corporation)

employment opportunities for African Nova Scotian and First Nations students in Truro, and worked with the Parole Board to provide opportunities to those re-entering the workforce. Mr. Tynes was a recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal.

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## Enjoy Environmentally Friendly, Nice Looking and Smelling Natural Christmas Trees

By Donald Cameron

Over the last 20 years, there has been an increased interest and effort in "being more environmentally friendly". There are numerous examples of acting in a greener manner such as using recycled materials, buying local and less, cutting back on the use of everyday things such as cars or packaging, or retrofitting our homes for more efficient heating systems.

One decision all those that enjoy Christmas trees can make is to go green with real Christmas trees. If you haven't yet done so, it is time to plan for the acquisition and care of a live evergreen tree. There is nothing like the smell and look of a natural Christmas tree. Whether one chooses the Maritime traditional favourite - balsam fir - or a pine, one can't go wrong. When it is lit and decorated in its entire splendor, it helps create that special Christmas atmosphere.

Contrary to what some people believe, real Christmas trees - which are a renewable resource that breaks down naturally into our soil as fertilizer - are much more environmentally

friendly than artificial trees that are made mostly out of petrochemical products. Just imagine how long it takes an artificial tree to break down in a landfill site when people are finished with it, which statistically is about six years. The artificial trees usually come from China and could contain lead as well. The amount of fossil fuels to get the plastic and metal trees from the Chinese factories to North American stores is staggering. A comparative life cycle assessment by Ellipses Strategists of Montreal determined that natural trees are significantly easier on the environment than artificial trees.

There is no question the purchase of a Christmas tree is the best deal of the Christmas season, and perhaps the entire year. Take a moment to consider what it often takes to grow that perfect tree for you: years of planting, shearing and pruning the trees (usually during the heat of summer), fertilizing, pest control, frost, drought and snow challenges, the increasing cost of equipment, the ever-increasing cost of fuel and insurance, marketing, and



Donald Cameron

finally the physically hard work of cutting, hauling, loading and transporting the Christmas trees. It is nothing short of a miracle that if you are purchasing your tree at a tree lot in an urban setting, that you are not paying \$100 per tree. In fact, most trees from tree lots cost between \$25 and \$50 each.

There are always those unforeseen things that occur to throw wrinkles into a tree producers plan such as insect infestations, hurricanes, sudden fuel cost increases and early snowstorms. As you can imagine, there's a big difference between pulling a 10 kg tree versus a 50 kg snow-covered tree out of the woods.

Despite the fact that mil-

lions of dollars worth of Christmas trees are harvested annually in this province, many of those that are involved with producing them are not in it for a big profit. Sadly, when one considers all the time and costs required to produce and market their trees, the dollar value for their time can likely be counted in cents versus dollars per hour; not nearly what it should be for the time and effort required.

The larger the size of the cultivated tree, the more time and effort that is required to grow and shape the tree over the years. Therefore, the larger trees are more valuable than their smaller cousins.

Most average size Christmas trees that are seven to eight feet tall are usually 8 to 12 years old. This is not something you can produce in one or two years. Like maple syrup producers, Christmas tree producers have a love for what they are doing.

*Don Cameron is a registered professional forester and long-time resident of Truro*

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~ ~ ~ ~ ~

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