

REES' Pieces

Can you become a multi-tasker?

As we say farewell to 2020, with the co-Vid-19 pandemic we should not spend a lot of time looking in the rearview mirror. As we spend more time than normal by ourselves or with those in our "very tight" family bubble, we have plenty of time to think about how we should look forward to consider how we can improve our "multi-tasking" skills.

If we don't look ahead we will be caught "blindsided" by the things which are racing toward us. We need to immediately consider paying down Co-Vid debt and climate change.

Nova Scotia has moved from a budgeted surplus to at least a \$778-Million deficit, mostly created by the government's attempts to keep the economy moving and citizens from starving, or homeless.

The increase in the deficit is a change of \$833.9 million from the \$55-million surplus anticipated in February and a \$74-million change from the July forecast. Total revenue of \$11.41-billion is \$186.6-million less than budgeted. Total overall expenses are projected at \$12.32 billion, which is up \$708.7 million.

Additional appropriations were required for 10 government departments for a total of \$298.8 million, with the majority of expenses related to COVID-19. Government had a choice, either increase the deficit or permit those less fortunate to face even tougher situations.

If we forget about looking in the rear view mirror, we need to think about how we will help pay down the debt and what government services we will accept being reduced or eliminated. Just because the pandemic was surging, other global situations continued to head our way at amazing speed.

Protocols surrounding CoVid-19 change almost daily. For months, I have mentioned Premier McNeil and Dr Strang have been on-top of things and are constantly advising Nova Scotians, what is necessary to keep the number of infections as low as possible.

Out of the corner of their eye, McNeil, his cabinet and Dr Strang's team of professionals have also been aware of the onslaught of problems sure to face us about global trade, tourism rebounding, and climate change.

Strengthening our efforts to fight climate change could be an asset for the local economy. If we did less "on-line" shopping from companies remote from us and put more effort into shopping local, even if it is in an "on-line" manner, you will contribute to the betterment of all of us.

If you have become a dedicated or frequent shopper from Amazon, please take this into account. In addition to contributing to the misery and downfall of our local business entrepreneurs, your decision to use Amazon as your favourite on-line retailer, you are contributing to your family or neighbours working less hours at a retail store. That has an immediate negative impact on survival of local businesses and the household income of family, friends and neighbours.

I am not saying local businesses do not contribute to increases of plastics becoming a problem in our oceans, streams and environment. They do. Solutions can be found locally. Climate change problems caused by packaging from Amazon is much harder to control and very difficult to solve.

In 2019, Amazon, a one of the largest global online shopping venues, generated 46.86-Million pounds of plastic, mostly from packaging. Compare that to the 134-Million Pounds of lobster landed at wharves of over 600 communities in Atlantic Canada in 2015-16 fiscal period.

Lobster is not a plastic, but the economic impact is over 2,700 inshore lobster vessels in the 2015-16 season generated revenues of \$876 million for commercial and communal commercial license holders, a record for the region. Nearly a one third of the poundage taken from the oceans via lobster landings was replaced with some form of plastic.

We might claim from an ecology point of view too many lobsters are harvested annually, but it's a regulated resource. You as on-line shoppers are far more destructive.

We need to start multi-tasking to solve the problems created in 2020 and what lies ahead in rebuilding the economy and to stop furtherance of climate change problems.

Happy Holidays and Best wishes for the New Year.

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Thousands Protest Against Farm Reforms in India

By Davinder Singh Mavi

What the government says, The three farm laws have been projected by the government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove middleman and allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country. Until 2020, the first sale of agriculture produce could occur only at the mandis of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC). However, after the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act 2020 came into force it allows farmers to sell out side APMC mandis in India.

Our Centre, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has certainly got into the habit of taking blind decisions. Had the Centre consulted farm unions before passing the new laws, the ongoing protests, where large numbers of farmers are daily having a hard time, would not have taken place. Why is he always worried about benefiting the corpo-



In this picture police try to stop Farmers with Water cannons & tear gas when they were heading to Delhi. (Submitted)

rates? Many years ago, PM had also exploited Sikh farmers in Gujarat by forcing them to sell their land to the corporates, who eventually built factories on their land as also reported by some media houses. He is now experimenting with the same model with farmers of Punjab. In other words, he pretends a lot to be a PM who best thinks of the common public but the reality is some-

thing else. When farmers are feeling threatened with new laws, why can't he scrap them?

Water cannons, tear gas, rapid action force and what not. The way our government is treating them is simply unacceptable. Even the promulgation of the farm Bills during the pandemic was not appropriate. An ordinance is meant for most urgent matters when parliament is not in session.

TCPEP Welcomes David Phillips

David Phillips, an international business leader with 30 years of industry experience developed from key positions with Microsoft, LVMH Moët Hennessy and Acadian Sea-plants has joined The Truro & Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity (TCPEP) Business Development Team.

David's particular expertise is with marketing strategy and analysis, but he brings valuable business knowledge of strategic planning, business operations, new market entry, product development, market intelligence and people leadership.

"David will be an amazing resource for Truro and Colchester businesses in need of professional advice and support," comments Brennan Gillis, CEO. "Similar to the excellent work of Jason Steele,

David will support both start-ups and existing businesses, helping them plan for growth and capitalize on new opportunities."

In fiscal 2019-20, the TCPEP's business development activity supported over 175 businesses, with 25 being start-ups. During the early COVID-19 pandemic, the TCPEP provided business crises counselling to 145 local business. The TCPEP measures its impact on the local economy by tracking key progress indicators such as incremental revenue generation, workforce development, funding access, and other business performance areas.

The Truro & Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity is a Regional Enterprise Network funded by the Truro & Colchester Chamber



David Phillips

of Commerce, the Towns of Truro & Stewiacke, The County of Colchester, Millbrook First Nation, and the Province of Nova Scotia. For more information about supports to business, please visit www.trurocolchester.ca

Nurse Practitioners Assessments for Drivers

Nova Scotians who require medical assessments to drive now have more options to obtain that approval. Amendments to regulations under the Motor Vehicle Act came into effect December 16, allowing nurse practitioners to complete medical assessment forms for commercial driver licence applications, and drivers who have medical conditions requiring assessment.

It also allows for the completion of medical forms for drivers being assessed for accessible parking permits, the Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program and exemptions from seat belt or child restraint systems for medical reasons. "This is

about streamlining the process for motorists who need medical forms to drive," said Lloyd Hines, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal. "Nurse practitioners are an essential part of our health-care system, with the advanced education and competencies needed to complete these medical assessment forms."

There are 238 nurse practitioners in Nova Scotia, about 120 work in primary care. These changes will reduce pressure on physicians who will have more time to focus on patients with more complex medical issues

What was the urgency? The government must recognise the depth of the sentiments of farmers, reach out sensitively and find a mechanism to assure farmers that their incomes will be protected.

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The Shoreline Journal

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- BIBLE HILL:**
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Wright's Pharmasave
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