



The bridge repair on Hwy 2 at Cannan/Harrison Settlement Rd was finally able to proceed. On November 28, cranes were pulled from other jobs and the bridge lifted into place. The bridge opened on Monday, December 11th. (Lawrence R Nicoll Photo)

Parrsboro Creative in Transition

By Sandra Stephenson

It's transition time for Parrsboro Creative, one of several hubs for the arts in Parrsboro, and, according to its treasurer, it's the only one not for profit. The group has hosted the June International Landscape Painting Festival (PIPAF) for several years, and worked to attract artists to settle on the Parrsboro Shore. After 5 years in operation and repeated successes, a withdrawal of funding from the province and a string of internal tensions, have caused a transition from its governance model with paid executive director and volunteer Board of Directors, to a member-driven volunteer base.

A shift in personnel at all levels and the provincial decision (delivered after the summer season of 2023), not to fund any staff members this year, have contributed to the change of orientation. Membership has evolved, and is speaking up for more involvement in organizing and staffing activities. More consultation has been requested

throughout the year, not just at AGM's, which most members do not attend according to one Board member. Disillusionment over instability and poor communication have alienated some members, and drawing them back to the fold will present the administration with a challenge.

There is a need for people to plan and spearhead projects. An example of this is a weekly café which has been running since November and hopes to expand its hours and welcome non-members from the community in the New Year. Other ideas for projects which have been proposed already by keen members include Studio tours, Art on the Street, and full-time hours for the café with presentations, music and readings.

Parrsboro is a rich cultural gem, boasting some of the best story-tellers in the province; musicians who perform, sometimes weekly, by donation to raise funds for local causes; painters, photographers, fibre artists, writers, hikers and beach enthusiasts; fishing folk

and tradesfolk, crafters and bakers; gemmologists and geologists and archaeologists and biologists and historians, bibliophiles and the museums, a theatre, a bookstore and small library to support them. Not to mention 4 active churches, a Legion, down-home accommodations, a variety of galleries, and so on. Impressive for a town of just over a thousand souls.

Parrsboro Creative sees its new role in part, as networking among local groups, and contributing to the multi-coloured "fabric" of Parrsboro, especially in the arts. Already its new location has led it to become an important tourist information centre when it is open.

There lies the rub. With no paid staff, except possibly a summer student in 2024, keeping the venue open to display art and receive visitors will rely on available volunteers from the community to give time on site. The Board of Directors is already busy with organizing the annual Plein Air Festival.

Interested volunteers can get in touch via parrsborocreative@gmail.com. Sharrie Decouto has been on the Board of Directors only a few weeks, but is committed to helping the beleaguered organization successfully transitioning to a future of co-operation and enjoyment. An early stumble

which led to artists removing their works from the shop two weeks before Christmas shopping ends, will have to be corrected in 2024.

David Beattie, the group's treasurer, says the original mission of Parrsboro Creative was "outward looking," to invite people across the continent and beyond to participate in the arts here, and to lure some to settle. That mission is, at least in part, accomplished. The movement from 2024 on, is to an "inward-looking" stance, involving and communicating better with and consulting members of the organization in a collaborative manner.

The new Parrsboro Creative wants to support volunteers, artists and art aficionados, patrons, hosts for billeting, and other good-hearted people of the Parrsboro community that has long built on voluntarism and community spirit even through heated and polarized times. "We want to move along with the times," says Sharrie, "and promote the arts and artists." "And create an environment of co-operation," adds Dave.

The café will be open Friday 15th, then every Friday from January 5th 2024, at 223 Main Street, Parrsboro, from 10am to noon. Coffee is \$2.00 or by donation.

Parrsboro resident, Sandra Stephenson, writes exclusive article for the South Cumberland News.

CAO Expresses Concern As Vandalism Continues

By Darrell Cole

The Municipality of Cumberland is growing increasingly frustrated with continued vandalism at transfer stations in the county. Speaking during Cumberland municipal council's December committee of the whole meeting, Dec. 20, 2023, chief administrative officer Greg Herrett said the vandalism may reach a point where the municipality has to look at other options. Earlier this month, a compost bin at the Joggins transfer station was set on fire while vandalism is continuing at the transfer station on the Irishtown Road in Pugwash.

"While there has been some improvement with the level of vandalism in Pugwash, it is continuing," Herrett told council. "Sometimes it's the lock being cut off, sometimes it's the chain being thrown away or the chain stolen. It's happening multiple times."

The CAO said the municipality is in discussion with the RCMP on the continued vandalism. "Those facilities are only open during the posted times and they're not for trespassing when they are closed," Herrett said.

Upon investigating the fire at the Joggins transfer station, it was also noticed the bin was mostly filled with unsorted garbage. "That's equally unacceptable," Herrett said. "That's not sustainable and to those people who are using it to dump unsorted garbage it has to stop or we will have to take other action to control that."

The CAO is also urging residents to "step up their game" when it comes to separating waste into the proper streams after an audit found too much contamination in recyclables with garbage items and/or compost being included in the recycling bags.

Herrett said the municipality intends to work with

GFL Environmental, the owners of the Little Forks landfill, Miller Waste and the Town of Amherst to better educate residents on the waste streams and better source separation of garbage, compost and recyclables.

"We're going to work with our partners to put forward an education campaign to give people some advice on sorting and prompt folks to up their game when it comes to recyclables," the CAO said. "It's not only an education campaign but beginning in February GFL will be rejecting loads at the landfill if they don't meet an acceptable level of contamination."

Herrett said residents will likely begin to see more rejection stickers on their recyclables placed at the curb. That doesn't mean it's to be left there until the next collection day, said Herrett, adding it means they must correct the issue before it will be collected.

"We're urging people not

to look at those as failing grades, but an opportunity for improvement," Herrett said. "The information is out there now and we're encouraging people to refer to them now and take that extra step to sort their recyclables."



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Council to Consider U13AAA Tournament Bid

Cumberland municipal council has voted to forward a request to its Dec. 20, 2023, regular meeting to provide free ice for a provincial hockey tournament in early April.

Council forwarded the request during its December committee of the whole meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2023.

Truro Bearcats U13AAA are planning to host the 2023-24 provincial tournament April 4-7 at the Dr. Carson & Marion Murray Community Centre in Springhill. The team is made up of players from both Colchester and Cumberland counties with seven players and a coach living within Cumber-

land County.

The tournament will include the top six U13AAA teams in Nova Scotia and is a qualifier for the Atlantic championship tournament later in April.

Truro's ability to host is impacted by ice time in Truro with Colchester Legion Stadium continued to be closed following damage experienced during post-tropical storm Fiona in September 2022.

It's felt the tournament would help promote the facility and provide further economic spinoffs within Springhill and Cumberland County.

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