

REES' Pieces

Colchester has water for sale

If Colchester's approximately 40,000 residents knew and understood their county was subsidizing BIG 8 and other brand name water bottlers to the tune of approximately \$81,800 per day (almost 30-Million per year) they would be marching on Halifax and calling their three local MLA's on daily basis.

Colchester council and staff are seeking ways to develop a well drilling program now that summer drought has brought well water problems to several areas of the province in recent years. Discussed most recently at the December 11th committee meeting, staff have searched the province to see what other municipalities are doing.

Colchester could be the provincial leader to develop a program to assist funding for all residents, who are suffering water shortages due to changing weather patters resulting in summer drought which reached its recent peak last summer.

A few moves involving political finesse must happen first. Council and staff must consult with and persuade the three MLA's - Taggart, Ritcey and Armstrong to get onside. Then the MLA's must pressure Premier Tim Houston, cabinet and other MLA's to use Colchester as a testing template.

The province owns and controls underground assets such as minerals and water. Instead of charging \$100-\$200 per year for a water extraction permit to large water bottles such as Big 8 and other brands a simple stroke of Houston's pen he could convert the current problem into a tax generator and become a provincial hero.

Once the template program was developed and perfected, it would be easy to enlarge to a provincial program solving water woes of hundreds of families. I'm not suggesting the solution would pay all costs to solve water woes, but could be a partial grant and source of a low interest loan.

The Shoreline Journal published the background data to solve a well drilling program in December 2015 following a presentation to Colchester Council in November 2015.

The December 20p15 Page 1 story's first few paragraphs said: It would be hard to describe if Colchester Councillors and Mayor were shocked, saddened, upset or flabbergasted, when they were informed 1.636-Million litres of quality ground water is extracted on a daily basis from bottled water wells within the municipality and sold by the province for less than \$1 per day.

The facts came to council's attention on November 10th during a presentation by Gordon Check, Senior Hydrogeologist with Nova Scotia Department of Environment, who provided an update on groundwater resources within the Municipality.

Here are the results of a provincial search by Colchester staff as to what is happening around the province on well and septic programs:

- Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) operates a "Water Supply Upgrade Lending Program" that provides low-interest loans for well or septic upgrades.
- Municipality of the District of Chester offers a "Water Supply and Septic System Upgrades Program." Eligible upgrades include installing a drilled well, among other water- or septic-related work. Loans go up to \$30,000 at ~3% interest.
- Municipality of East Hants has a "Well & Septic Loan Program" for eligible homeowners — loans are repaid via property tax over about 10 years.
- Municipality of the District of Argyle (and in the past also Municipality of the District of Barrington, and some other municipalities) have had similar "Water Supply Upgrade" loan programs allowing homeowners to finance new or upgraded dug or drilled wells.

More recently (late 2025), Region of Queens voted to draft a by-law to offer low-interest loans to residents needing new drilled wells — in response to drought and many dug wells running dry.

The solution to a very serious provincial is right here on our doorsteps. Colchester and local MLA's must be unified and very firm in their demands the province divides any revenue on 50/50 basis with the host municipality.

If water bottlers were charged 5 cents per litre it would amount to 1 cent for the size bottle traditionally bought at a convenience store. Are you happen you are paying \$2.00 or more plus 10 cents deposit for a swig of water and the bottler gets it for free from a well in Colchester?

On 50/50 basis at 5 cents Colchester could receive \$10-15-Million per year. NOW IT'S FREE.

Maurice

Colchester Parks and Trails update presented

Continued from page 3

cians playing at the amphitheater, during July and August. The much-loved playground is currently undergoing necessary maintenance repairs (including replacing a worn-out climbing net) and some upgrades (including a play telescope and wear mats. See photos below).

Cobequid Trail: In August, a contractor replaced the small trail bridge with a culvert beside MC Power in Lower Truro. Walkway wayfinding signs. Staff are designing and installing new wayfinding signs at municipal walkways/trails in Valley and Salmon River.



Multi-purpose Courts: Multi-purpose courts were re-sealed and lines (basketball and pickleball) painted at Oakland Park and Rocky Ridge

Park.

Valley Recreation Park - (Pictou Road ball field): The building (canteen, washrooms), which was in very poor condition, was demolished in September 2025. Temporary washrooms were available on-site during Summer 2025.

Other Items: Recreation services will be working with a new registration system in the near future. The platform is Amelia and it will be launched in the new year. A much more user-friendly platform. The Department has added a 6-month term position to its staff complement to help manage a growing list of responsibilities.

Active Communities - Fun in the Sun Day Camps: Colchester Recreation had another successful summer running physical activity day camps that travel throughout the county in July and August. Through partnership with CCRCE and the Municipality hosts camps for reduced fees in local schools. This provides Colchester County youth with the opportunity to enjoy a fun and active opportunity in their own community which helps

remove transportation barriers for many rural families. In 2025, 300 youth between the ages of 5 and 12 participated in Day Camp.

Ringette: Recreation staff continue to work with community volunteers and Ringette NS toward the development of Colchester Ringette. In September the organization officially registered with Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks.

Colchester Multisport: The Program is offered to Grades P, 1, 2 and 3 with all sessions running twice weekly beginning in September through to June. The Program is facilitated by recreation program coordinators and delivered by volunteer community sport organizations. Each lesson focused on skill development through physical literacy and fun, setting the groundwork for a love of sport.

4 on 4 Women's Hockey League and the Women Learn 2 Play Hockey. These programs are currently running. Learn to Play hockey program is being held in Brookfield and Tatamagouche currently has a women's drop in league. In



Recreation Services update presented

By Paul Smith

On December 10th, Paul Smith, Director Community Planning presented an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since August, 2025. This section deals with Recreation Services.

RECREATION SERVICES - Colchester Art Acquisition - Art Show 2025: The 2025 Colchester Art Show was a great success, featuring 47 entries, including a youth submission. The exhibit ran from November 3-28 at the NSCC Truro Campus Library. This year, an updated, expanded booklet highlighting each artist and their work was created that received excellent feedback.

Congratulations to Donna Vigliucci, whose wood-burning piece "The Watcher" was selected as this year's winner and will be displayed in the Municipal Building.

Colchester - Truro Volunteer: The 2026 Colchester-Truro Volunteer Event is quickly approaching and nominations are now being received to recognize those incredible people who make a difference in our community.

Cobequid Trail Run 2025: This year's Cobequid Trail Run was unfortunately cancelled due to the provincial fire ban. While it was disappointing to terminate the 20th anniversary event, the safety of all participants, volunteers, and partners must be prioritized. Following the cancellation, a large number of deferrals was processed for the next scheduled run. Staff appreciated the understanding and continued support throughout this unexpected change and intend to mark this milestone in 2026.

Non-Profit and Community Event Grants:

Deadline for the nonprofit grants is scheduled for the end of January and staff are encouraging any organization who could benefit, to be directed to recreation for assistance. Post grant report forms are being compiled, and staff have presented to a number of organizations about the funding opportunities offered through the Municipality.

Step into Spring: The Step into Spring Walking Challenge 2026 is gearing up for another year. Registration will be starting on March 21st - first day of Spring. Challenge your neighbors and friends.



The Shoreline Journal (circ. 1650) is a monthly community newspaper serving communities along the Glooscap Trail from Truro to Parrsboro, Nova Scotia serving the communities of Belmont/Debert, Wentworth/Londonderry, Onslow/Masstown along the shore to Great Village, Bass River, Economy, Five Islands and Lower Five Islands. It is published on the last Wednesday of each month (earlier in December) with a deadline of the 20th of the month.

MAILING ADDRESS: The Shoreline Journal, P.O. Box 41, Bass River, Nova Scotia, B0M 1B0.

PHONE: 902-647-2968; **Fax:** 902-647-2194 **Toll Free:** 1-800-406-1426; **Cell:** 902-890-9850 • **E-MAIL:** maurice@theshorelinejournal.com

EDITOR PUBLISHER: Maurice Rees • **ADVERTISING:** Maurice Rees • **CIRCULATION:** Maurice Rees

Canadian Publications Mail Products Agreement #40048924, ISSN #1209-9198

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

LOCAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: B0M / B2N / B6L - \$23.00, PLUS HST = \$26.22 • **OTHER PARTS OF NS:** \$28.00 plus HST = \$31.92

ALL OTHER AREAS OF CANADA: \$30.00, plus HST = \$34.20 • **USA SUBSCRIPTIONS:** \$45.00

HST: #890564404RT001. Printed by Advocate Printing & Publishing Ltd, Pictou, Nova Scotia

All rights reserved. Material published in The Shoreline Journal may not be reproduced in an form without prior approval of the publisher. Material to be returned to sender must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

1996 Heritage Award recipient. Listed with Canadian Advertising Rates & Data (CARD) and Bowden's Media Monitoring Service.

Funded by the Government of Canada | Canada

The publisher is not responsible for minor errors in ads, which do not lessen the value of the item(s). The publisher is not responsible for space beyond that portion of the advertisement containing the item(s) in error. Letters to the editor are subject to editing or rejection, must be signed by the author and contain a phone number.



NEWSPAPERS ATLANTIC
TRUSTED | CONNECTED | TARGETED

January the Municipality will offer two Learn to Skate sessions in Debert, one for adults and the other for families.

Recreation Facility Access: Currently the Municipality continues to work with schools and community organizations within Colchester to provide access to recreation amenities through its Facility Access Program. The Program continues to be well received by the community.

Citizen Survey: The Municipality of Colchester is participating in a third-party Citizen Survey being conducted by the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage. The information gathered will help inform updates to our current Physical Activity Strategy and is one of several regional surveys taking place across the province. The date for the launch of the survey will be circulated as more information is received from the Department.

The Shoreline Journal
Here's where to find us:

BASS RIVER:
Bayside Pharmacy
Dominion Chair Factory Store

BIBLE HILL:
C.W. Fraser Pharmacy
MacQuarries Pharmacy
Kennedy's Deli - Ryland Ave

DEBERT:
Debert Mini-Mart

FIVE ISLANDS:
Masstown Market Five Islands

GLENHOLME:
Double "C" Truckstop

GREAT VILLAGE:
Wilson's Gas

MAITLAND:
Frieze & Roy General Store

MASSTOWN:
Masstown Market
MTM Retail Gas (Petro-Can)

MILLBROOK:
Super 8 Motel

HAMPTON INN & SUITES

NORTH RIVER:
Grant's Grocery

PARRSBORO:
CrossRoads Co-op
Ken's Grocery
Wright's Pharmasave

TRURO:
Atlantic Superstore
Best Western Glengarry
Holiday Inn
MacQuarrie's Pharmasave (Esplanade)
Rath Eastlink Comm Centre
Colchester East Hants Health Centre - Coffee Shop

NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION:

Each classroom at the following schools will receive a copy of the Shoreline Journal:
Bass River Consolidated;
Great Village Elementary; Debert Elementary; Chignosis Elementary; Central Colchester Junior High School; Parrsboro Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High School.

We are interested in placing the Shoreline Journal in additional locations. If you have a suggestion, or wish to have the Shoreline available from your store, please contact:
Maurice Rees, Publisher,
902-647-2968, or E-MAIL:
maurice@theshorelinejournal.com