

REES' Pieces

Is it hot enough?

I must be getting older. I can not remember when the temperature has changed so much in such a short time. Seems like three days ago we needed a sweater when going outside. Then almost 90-degree weather. Normally we don't go there until August.

Or am I not getting older and climate change is to blame?

A massive "heat dome" affecting 200-million Americans, plus up to a foot of rain in parts of Florida and the mid-west causing massive flooding. Oh, add in a few tornados and real Bible believers might be suspecting, the world is coming to an end.

There might be some comfort or additional concern the heat dome is not just focused on USA. It is global with similar extensive heat and floods around the globe. The heat domes, also point to another problem suffered in the last 18 months.

For nearly two years, a major battle for all governments has been fighting inflation. In nearly every country around the world, opposition parties have been blaming their government in charge for all the inflation; shortage of supplies and anything they could dream up to cause havoc.

The heat domes and inflation are just like the bad cold or flu in the winter. Once it strikes, it instantly spreads everywhere. Nobody is immune.

In today's disastrous political situation in the United States, Trump and his Mega-right-wingers are blaming everything on Biden. I am not going to say Biden has not make mistakes', but a Global problem is a Global problem and can only be resolved with ruling governments around the world move in unison.

Those trends are also showing up in Canada. Every day, I get the feeling our opposition parties are aligning themselves with right-wing American values and ways. It bothers me, because there are many great politicians elected to serve in Ottawa.

On their own, for the most part, are sane and reasonable. In fact, agree with the rationale of their voters. It is surprising what a couple flights to Ottawa does to corrupt what was originally elected. I guess the Kool-Aid is different. Instead of "strawberry, or orange or cherry, there is one flavour which seems prominent - "herd-mentality".

After about a year of breathing Ottawa's air, many are almost a different person. All you have to do is watch them strut around a shopping mall on a weekend. Also, you used to be able to call or get a return call, but now there are so many barriers it's not worth the effort unless it is an emergency.

That's enough about politicians, except to say we might be making a trek to the provincial polls much earlier than anticipated.

Now I want to focus on a couple of local events that mean a lot to their communities. Debert and Economy Fire Brigades each held an annual banquet and awards /ceremony. The week before Bass River held its open house and treated the community to free hot dogs/ hamburgers and soda/water. Kids sure had a great time crawling all over the engines and pumps.

I started out with this month's writing complaining about then heat domes, tornados, floods in the USA, a bit about here, and stretched out to mention the global situations.

Then ragged on the opposition members who blame the government for inflation, when everyone knows it always a global epidemic and their change of personality and / or beliefs after a few trips to Ottawa.

I do want to end this writing on a very positive note. The Portapique Community Center was officially opened with the Premier and many others in attendance. The opening was a happy culmination of four years of hard work by a great team from Portapique area, bolstered by the support of the Rotary Club of Truro.

We can not forget how the various levels of governments stepped up to the plate with mega-dollars during the fundraising and construction phases.

Last item to mention, we must not forget Premier Tim Houston, who the day prior to the opening announced a five year program of \$745,000 for griefs, sorrow, mental care health help and more. The program will be administered by Municipality of the County of Colchester.

WELL DONE ALL!!!

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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June 21, 2024
429 Little Dyke Road,
Little Dyke, NS B0M 1L0

Hon. Premier Tim Houston
Environment Minister Tim Halman
Deputy Environment Minister Lora MacEachern
Colchester North MLA Tom Taggart
Colchester Mayor Christine Blair
Deputy Mayor Geoff Stewart
Liberal Leader Zach Churchill

Dear Premier Houston, Liberal Leader Zach Churchill and Community Leaders,

Given that you receive letters like mine hundreds of times per month, you may be tempted to hold back on consulting with one another on this major issue. You're possibly assuming someone at the local or provincial level is already looking after this looming environmental and lifestyle-disrupting disaster. I would urge you not to make that assumption, since the issue of OSCO Aggregates expanding its gravel and sand mining quarry to cover 400 acres in my neighbourhood has the potential to become another "Owl's Head" type of boiling point.

OSCO's current gravel quarry location is at Glenholme-Little Dyke Lake in Colchester County. (see attached map) OSCO's paperwork uses the word "extension" to describe the Irving-owned company's plan to gobble up hundreds of tons of sand and gravel in our neighbourhood between now and 2056. It's not an "extension"; it's a full-blown EXPANSION meant to take over several square kilometers of Colchester County. This ongoing life-disrupting plan would leave our lungs susceptible to Crystalline Silica, a known cancer-causing agent produced at gravel crushing operations worldwide. But more recently in Ontario and B.C, it has become closely monitored and controlled for health reasons. (Crystalline Silica causes more than 500 deaths in Canada each year, with millions spent to treat those people while they're still alive)

In addition to this, our pristine spring-fed lake, formed at the end of the last ice age, will be in danger of losing its water source as OSCO puts pressure on its employees to dig gravel faster, in an effort to maximize profits, ignoring our lake-feeding springs.

At our latest public meeting held in Masstown this week, our group saw evidence of sparse monitoring of Irving-OSCO's current operations, thanks mainly to a shortage of personnel in the Truro office of NS Environment and Climate Change.

I could go on for 16 to 20 pages on residents' fears, with ample evidence of what OSCO is already NOT doing to be cited for non-compliance based on its last provincial approval in 2017. But instead, I will summarize.

As a group of committed residents who will be voting as a block on this issue over the next few elections, we need and deserve answers on the following.

1. We require evidence that OSCO-Irving has a solid plan to control the Crystalline-Silica Dust from their new operation by placing the crushing aspect INSIDE, so that it can and will be effectively and professionally monitored until 2056. (the company has a history of non-compliance, which continues as they haul un-tarped gravel through our neighbourhood every day)

Dear Editor

It has been brought to my attention that the Montrose Baptist Church is in severe disrepair. To let this continue is nothing short of a terrible tragedy knowing that my forefathers helped build it as well as my cousin, Lawson Fulton,

lost his life helping to put a new roof on the church back in the 60s.

The staging collapsed that he was on and he fell to his death. Were he alive he'd risk his life again to lovingly care for this beacon of light which represents God, His Son, Jesus,

2. We need a commitment that this expansion WILL NOT import aggregates from outside operators in order for OSCO to process and wash their gravel and sand-based products here. It might produce extra profit for OSCO, but our water, wildlife and land resources could never tolerate that. Despite that, there's evidence from public statements by OSCO showing us that is a distinct possibility. (see allnovascotia.com)

3. The noise and traffic from large, fully-loaded gravel trucks entering our 2 local side-roads every 56 seconds (YES, that's correct - every 56 seconds) must be made more realistic in such a popular recreational lake area. As provincial health costs mount each year, people who are afraid to walk, jog and bicycle on our local side-roads will suffer health setbacks. We know that regular exercise in clean air is a vital treatment for both physical and mental health issues

I cannot understate the threat to that clean air from microscopic shards of Crystalline Silica, leading to lung lesions that help pave the way for lung cancer.

4. A reclamation plan must literally be made the law of this land. No exceptions can be permitted for a company like OSCO, whose record is shoddy, at best.

As a former public servant and broadcast journalist, my recommendation would be that Premier Houston and Mayor Blair co-chair a public meeting on the issue before the 30-day public input deadline comes to an end on July 6, 2024. Perhaps an all-party committee could be set up to examine the issue. We know that Premier Houston has tried to be fair-minded, and an all-party committee would take the politics out of the issue.

As you can see, this is a life and death issue to the hundreds of families who live within a 5 to 10-kilometer radius of the intended aggregate-mining and processing expansion. That's the distance where experts tell us the silica lung threat is greatest. Please help us.

Thank you for your time.

Alan Johnson
(Little Dyke Road Resident
for 26 years.) 902-977-0450
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and the Holy Spirit.

Are there any others willing to meet with me at the Bass River Baptist Church, Thursday, July 4th, @ 7pm to further discuss the future of this precious building that has led countless saints to Heaven.

Signed, George Fulton

Cell Phone Directive for NS Schools

"Our priority is doing what is best for students, informed by what we hear directly from students, school staff, families and communities," said Becky Druhan, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. "We heard their concerns and, through this new directive, are ensuring students are concentrating on learning and building stronger interpersonal relationships without the distraction of cell phones."

With this change, there will

be processes in schools to ensure parents and students can get in touch if needed, including in an emergency. The directive will also be supported by curriculum resources that help students to use technology safely and responsibly as well as resources for school staff and parents.

Throughout the spring, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development consulted with school advisory councils and ministerial advisory

councils, as well as the Public School Administrators Association of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Teachers Union on the use of cell phones in schools. The team also visited schools, spoke directly with principals and teachers and consulted with IWK public health experts. Responses overwhelmingly supported clear, consistent restrictions on cell phone use.

The new directive is available online:

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/cell-phones>

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Great Village Elementary; Debert Elementary; Chignois Elementary; Central Colchester Junior High School; Parrsboro Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High School.

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