

Cobequid Tides L'Acadie COLCHESTER'S FIRST WINERY



Hans Christian Jost (right), owner of Jost Vineyards, joined Gerry and Linda Simpson at the unveiling of 2011 Cobequid Tides L'Acadie at the Masstown Market.

By Linda Harrington

Lower Debert may seem like a strange place for a vineyard but Gerry Simpson has proof in the bottle, it can be done.

Five hundred and two kilograms of L'Acadie grapes were handpicked from plants growing in Cobequid Tides Vineyard, right next to Gerry and Linda Simpson's home on Shore Road in the fall of 2011.

The grapes were processed by Jost Vineyards in Malagash and the result was the award winning white wine 2011 Cobequid Tides L'Acadie.

"Hans Christian Jost, owner of Jost Vineyards, had the idea to produce small batches of wines made from local grapes," says Simpson. "These grapes were grown in Amherst, Pugwash, Cape Breton, Pictou County and Lower Debert and the individual wines will help promote these areas. Normally smaller grape crops would be combined and bottled under one label. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to present our own label, the first commercially produced wine ever made from Colchester County grapes."

2011 Cobequid Tides

L'Acadie was a silver medal winner at the 2012 Finger Lakes International Wine Competition in Rochester, New York where a total of 3,198 wine entries from 22 countries, 9 states and six provinces were judged.

This award winning wine was unveiled on April 27th at a wine tasting held at the Masstown Market and later at the NSLC in Truro. With one successful vintage behind him, Gerry says he plans to add another ¾ acre of L'Acadie grapes to his vineyard and hopes this will increase the size of the next batch of wine. He also has 2 acres of Marchel Joffe, a red wine variety, which will be harvested this fall.

MLA Karen Casey stopped by the Masstown Market to congratulate Gerry and Linda Simpson on their recent success and told them she plans to present a Resolution in the Provincial Legislature recognizing Cobequid Tides Vineyard for the first commercial wine in Colchester County. "This will be on permanent public record," said Casey, referring to the Hansard printed transcripts of parliamentary proceedings.



A wine tasting demo for the 2011 Cobequid Tides L'Acadie was located at Grapes & Grains, Masstown Market. Eric Jennings (centre) stopped to chat with Gerry and Linda Simpson about their newly unveiled wine.



Grape harvest is a busy time for Gerry Simpson. The fruit is hand-picked and then transported to Jost Winery in Malagash.

“NO DEAL” Say the Members of the Cobequid Branch

Continued from page 1

The following is an unedited text provided by the citizen's committee formed to save the Credit Union branch in Bass River.

Members of the Cobequid Branch Committee are fighting back to stop the proposed closure of their Branch. Members were informed in March of 2012 by the Management of the Community Credit Union of Cumberland Colchester Ltd. that their Branch would be closing on September 30, 2012.

Members quickly gathered almost 200 signatures to request a special meeting be held to discuss this closure.

A meeting was held but in Wentworth. The Management and the Board of Directors deemed this location to be central to all three branches. The Branch being affected though is in Bass River and that would have been the obvious location to hold a meeting so that the majority of the membership of this Branch would be able to attend. The meeting which was held on April 2nd soon turned from an atmosphere of hope to disgust after comments from the Chief Executive Officer, Darrell Kuhn. Mr. Kuhn stated that the closure was a "done deal" and when asked by a member what affect it would have if all of the Cobequid Branch members closed their accounts with this Credit Union, members were told "none". A deal is an agreement between two parties and the members have not agreed to this closure as it was not brought to them for their input and opinions.

Members spoke out though and let Management and the Board of Directors know that they were not happy with the way this whole situation was being handled, that they as members should have been better informed, and that the Management and Board of Directors is failing in its mission, vision, and values.

Even though Chair Charlotte MacVicar tried to adjourn the meeting with a motion on the floor, members did indeed have a motion passed to have an independent financial review done.

Members had many questions regarding the financial report given that evening by Mr. Kuhn and were disappointed in the lack of actual figures and breakdown of income and expenses for the Cobequid Branch. Also the only comparison information given for all three Branches (Truro, Amherst, and Cobequid) was the amount of transactions per day per teller, member card usage, and member direct usage and no actual financial information.

Soon after the Wentworth meeting, the "Members of the Cobequid Branch Committee" was formed. This Committee is comprised of a group of concerned members and is determined to get the answers that as members of the Credit Union they deserve. The Committee is also dedicated to finding a solution to this problem. The Committee recognizes the vital role that the Cobequid Branch plays in the communities that it serves and the devastating effect it would have if this Branch closes.

Committee Members have written a letter of formal complaint to the Office of the Ombudsperson. They have also written to their Superintendent, The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council, Atlantic Central (whose "role is to represent and support the credit unions of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island"), CUDIC (the provider of deposit insurance to credit unions), MLA Karen Casey, Councilor Tom Taggart and many others asking for their support and advice.

This Committee desires to have another meeting held in Bass River to have further discussions with Management, the Board of Directors, and the Members regarding this matter. A presentation of the additional financial information requested as per the passed motion at the Wentworth meeting would also take place at this time.

Committee members believe that all of the members of the Credit Union have rights as member-owners and are entitled to a say in decisions affecting the Credit Union. Recently a proposed amalgamation for this Credit Union and the Valley Credit Union was presented at a meeting of the entire membership, voted on, and passed.

The same was done for the members of the Valley Credit Union where it was also passed. Members were given the opportunity to exercise their rights and have a say in this major decision.

Members' rights have been ignored with respect to the proposed closing of the Cobequid Branch. This major decision was not brought to the Membership. Members were not asked for their opinions or direction. In fact in the minutes from the 2011 Annual General Meeting of the Community Credit Union of Cumberland Colchester Ltd. with regard to the reduction in hours at the Cobequid Branch state that "The Credit Union did not have a public meeting in Bass River as this is a private matter and it would have caused reputational damage should it have become a public matter in the newspapers."

Cobequid Branch members question how such a decision affecting their membership could be deemed private. Also the way the Cobequid Branch Members were alerted to this upcoming problem was by discovering through reading on the Credit Union website that their Branch was not listed with the other branches in the amalgamation information. At first it was thought to be an error but when brought to the attention of the Management, members were then informed their Branch was to be closed. The aim of the amalgamation of these two Credit Unions as per promotional material provided by them is "to create a stronger combined credit union which will focus more resources on customer service, relationship building, and business development".

Also under "Why Amalgamate?" it states "first and foremost, to serve our members better". But Cobequid Branch members question how they will benefit from this amalgamation when their Branch is the only branch being closed out of 11 branches involved in the amalgamation. Not only will they have to travel a much longer distance to be able to access a Branch but the local communities will lose all the economical benefits of having a financial institution available.

At a time when rural communities are facing many challenges this loss will have a tremendous impact. Members of the Cobequid Branch Committee believe that their Branch deserves a "fighting chance" and the opportunity to work with Management and the Board of Directors. The members of this Branch are member/owners the same as all other members of the Credit Union. Members of the Cobequid Branch demand to know why their right to have a say in the operation of the Credit Union is being denied?

Bass River United Baptist Church
presents

CORNERSTONE



June 3RD • 7:00 p.m.

Everyone Welcome

Wheel chair accessible
5692 Hwy 2, Bass River

For more information contact:
Pastor Larry Tirrell
Church: 902-647-2567 Home: 902-843-5941

WOODLOTS WANTED

We are a small and local logging company who would like to harvest any timber from your woodlots.

We offer great stumpage rates and the environment is of the utmost importance to us! Our services also include lot clearing and excavation.

Contact us in confidence for a no obligation inquiry!

Please call Rob at 999-4258!!

LOOKING FOR 8 FOOT FIREWOOD?

CALL 668-2218

