

REES' Pieces

Did Houston paint himself in a corner?

If there is only one thing to be said about Tim Houston PC and opposition leader, now Premier Houston is for at least eighteen month run-up to the provincial election, he was consistent in his message health care was broken and had reached crisis proportions.

It worked. At the end of August he was sworn in as premier who along with his MLA's controls 31 of 55 seats in the legislature. It will take several years to determine the answer, but with one consistent message for well over a year, has he effectively painted himself into a corner?

I do not want to play politics, but wish to look at the situation logically. However, logically his success improving healthcare and fixing the broken system should be the only thing he is judged on come next election.

I seem to remember during the campaign he stated over 70,000 Nova Scotians were without a medical doctor and his plan was to ensure everyone had a family doctor.

Within a week of being premier, he fired the Nova Scotia Health Authority administrator and members of the NSHA board. That's a fine first step, because

about two years ago 80% of doctors claimed they did not have confidence in NSHA administration and they must be re-engaged for the system to work.

However, those actions will be nothing more than smoke screen if he doesn't implement a plan appropriate to Nova Scotia's needs. The healthcare system has been in decline for over 30 years starting back when Dr John Savage was premier. Five successive governments under Premiers McNeil, Savage, Hamm, MacDonnell, and MacLellan failed to get it right. Progress was shown by NDP, Darrell Dexter's four year term with the introduction of the Collaborative Health Care Centers.

If he hopes to succeed, Premier Houston's plan must look far beyond politics, bureaucracy and unfounded seat-of-the pants urges. Those without family doctors and the doctors themselves could provide insight into what is needed.

Government's role would be to search out professionals who can develop a workable plan which would lead to success. It will be a long difficult job. Residents must be respectful of the fact significant progress will not be visible for 2-3 years and then we would only be part way there. Sure some limited geographical areas will report success, but it will not be province wide.

As with another hot subject, i.e. - housing crisis and affordable housing, municipalities would be a great source of inputs contributing to successful so-

lutions for healthcare. Municipalities, which federal and provincial governments have overlooked are the one level of government most aligned and knowledgeable with needs in their area.

The ultimate success of Houston's healthcare new plan cannot be the sole responsibility of his cabinet and bureaucrats in Halifax. If left to Halifax alone there will be no solution.

A significant portion of finding solutions must come from local MLA's, which brings me to MLA representation. Locally in Cumberland and Colchester four of five sitting MLA's are part of Houston's team.

Healthcare success in the two northern counties rests primarily with Rushton, Taggart, Ritcey and Harrison. I suggest they immediately collaborate on development of a two county approach. When deciding to run for office, I'll bet none of them considered themselves to be "Weight lifters".

I am positive each of them is sincere in their desire to help their electorate. However, on two subjects: healthcare and affordable housing they need training and professional help.

It is their responsibility to do the heavy lifting on these two matters.

Collectively they must find the "gym", which can provide professional "weight lift training" in plan development for healthcare and affordable housing that is separate and apart from their other MLA colleagues, cabinet, Premier Houston or the bureaucracy to find and implement solutions for the Cumberland and Colchester areas.

Time will tell if they can do the heavy lifting. I think they can, but how they approach the challenges will determine the outcome.

With the right approach, they could become a dominant force of four affecting the entire province.

Perhaps now is the time to start building their legacy.

Maurice

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

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June to September was a Busy Time by the Cliffs

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dial Park to the Old Wife Formation with local knowledge holder Carol Corbett.

Also accomplished in the June to September time frame were a number of public, outdoor special events, including:
• A Sustainability Forum for the NS Gov't with feedback submitted to be considered

in the NS Sustainable Development Goals Act and Clean Plan for Climate Growth;

• The Fundy Food Trail, in conjunction with Food Day Canada on Saturday, July 31st where a number of businesses down the shore offered specials and appeared on an interactive

map for a self-guided food tour of the Geopark!

- Our first ever Bioblitz (also known as a biological survey) where groups went to the Geosites of Ward Falls and Five Islands Provincial Park estuary trail to document the biodiversity of these areas of the Geopark.
- Special days since June were

observed: July 10th: The Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Designation Birthday; July 31st: Food Day Canada; August 09th: International Day of Worlds Indigenous Peoples and August 26th: International Dog Day.

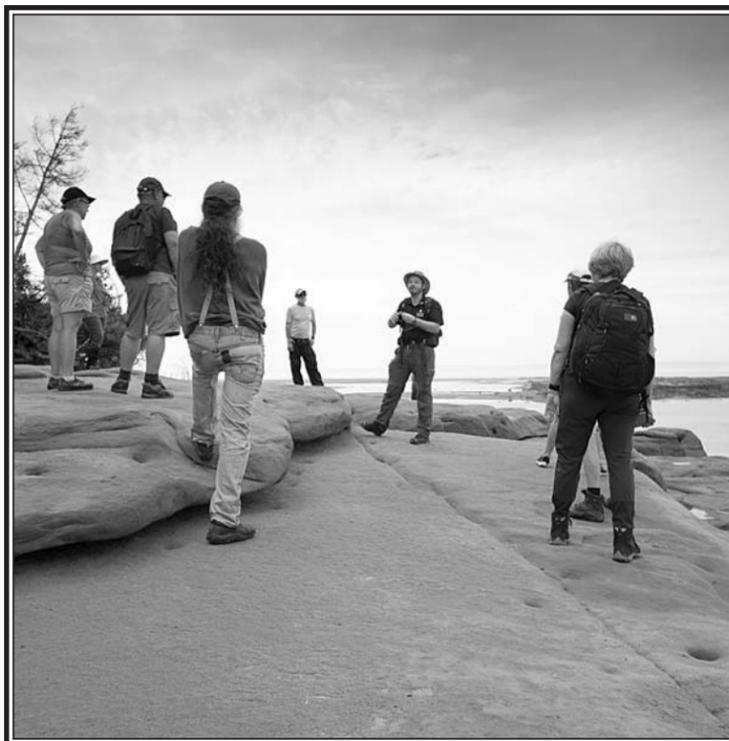
- The Cliffs of Fundy participation in the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup event

was held September 18th 2021, which was National Shoreline Cleanup Day!. This cleanup in Colchester County focused on Little Dyke Beach (at the Bay near Little Dyke Lake); Saints Rest in Bass River, and Five Islands Lighthouse Park.

The events required pre-registration and Municipality of Colchester assisted with the three clean-up projects.



Bioblitz (also known as a biological survey) where groups went to the Geosites of Ward Falls and Five Islands Provincial Park estuary trail to document the biodiversity of these areas of the Geopark. (Cliffs of Fundy photo)



A guided tour was held at Thomas Cover, Economy (Cliffs of Fundy photo)



A guided tour of Ward Falls, Diligent River provided a glimpse of the magnitude of the many waterfalls which line the Bay of Fundy side of the Wentworth mountain range. (Cliffs of Fundy photo)

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.

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