



Three of PC Candidate Scott Armstrong's election signs were burned shortly after they were erected in Debert, Belmont and Masstown. Fire brigades were called to each scene. RCMP are looking into the situation. (Harrington Photo)

School Bus Safety

By Marc Rose, Cpl

As children across Nova Scotia prepare to go back to school, the RCMP would like to remind students and motorists about the importance of understanding school bus safety.

Flashing lights on a school bus are a signal to drivers that the bus is either about to stop or is stopped. Children looking to board the bus, or whom are getting off the bus, may dart out onto the street and into oncoming traffic without warning. This is why motorists must use extra caution when driving through areas where school buses are operating.

During the first week of school, police often receive reports of drivers passing school buses while their flashing red lights are on. While tickets are usually issued in these cases, police are more concerned that this situation could result in a tragedy.

As a result, police are also

asking parents to talk with their children about the importance of paying attention and being safe at the bus stop. Safety Services Nova Scotia's 2015 School Bus Safety Campaign share the following safety tips:

Morning: When the school bus approaches, line up in single file and stand back from the edge of the road. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop, and walk (don't run) to the bus. If you must cross the road in order to board a bus, wait for the bus driver's signal to cross the road. Always look both ways for traffic. Cross the road about 10 feet (10 "giant steps") in front of the school bus where the driver can see you. Never walk behind the bus.

Afternoon: When you get off the bus, take "10 giant steps" along

the shoulder of the road, then stop and look at the bus driver. The driver will signal when it is safe to cross. When the driver signals, walk straight across the road in front of the bus, and then stop at the outer edge of the bus. Look both ways, and if no vehicles are approaching, continue across the road.

Throughout the month of September, the Nova Scotia RCMP Traffic Services Unit will be patrolling school zones across the province to educate motorists and enforce Motor Vehicle Act regulations. Below is a chart listing MVA violations and their applicable fines.

Marc Rose, Cpl, Colchester District RCMP, Bible Hill



Will Parrsboro Amalgamate?

By Maurice Rees

Parrsboro is seriously considering amalgamating with Municipality of Cumberland. A public meeting was held on August 8th and in a CBC Radio interview last week, Mayor Lois Smith said that amalgamation considerations are not because of current debt, but because by 2020 the town would have to cease pumping its untreated sewage into the Bay of Fundy in order to meet Federal wastewater regulations. The town of approximately 1300 residents would be facing a mammoth expenditure to install a sewage treatment plant to eliminate dumping raw sewage in the harbour. Raymond Hickey, Parrsboro's Chief Executive Officer, has stated the town does not have any debt, but would face an expenditure of approximately \$5-Million to meet Federal Wastewater regulations in 2020.

Amalgamation with another municipality, for a variety of reasons, is already sweeping across the province. Bridgetown, Springhill, Hantsport and Canso have taken the plunge or a already seriously involved with amalgamation activity.

If the town decided to stay it's current course, taxes would take a big hike within a few years. Currently the town with 10 employees, does not have any debt and offers a residential rate of \$1.75 and \$1.85 for commercial property, which equates to 1.75% and 1.85% of the property's

assessed value. With a declining population and constant contraction of the commercial tax base handling a large expenditure of approximately \$5-Million for a wastewater treatment plant would have a significant impact on increasing property taxes.

In the dissolution of Town of Springhill into the Municipality of Cumberland, the province contributed \$5.2-Million for infrastructure improvements over the next five years; contracting the RCMP to replace the town's police force and some staff reductions at former town hall, Cumberland was able to reduce the commercial tax rate by 72 cents and knocking 25 cents off the residential rate.

Reducing municipal costs, while maintaining value for service; and mounting debt loads has caused other amalgamation discussions to be held in Pictou County, Mulgrave and Lunenburg County. Originally considered a taboo subject municipal amalgamation now seems to be gathering momentum, primarily as a result of the province's economic woes and fear the economy is heading into a deep recession.

An AIM's report released earlier this winter outlined that Atlantic Canada, particularly Nova Scotia has the highest rate of public employees in all of Canada.

Keeping federal employees out of the calculations, and calculating only on local and provincial staffing there are

84 employees per 1,000 population nation-wide; 96 in Atlantic Canada, while Nova Scotia tops the list with 99 per 1,000 population.

The report concluded if governments in Atlantic Canada adjusted the provincial and municipal staffing levels to the national average, based on population, annual savings of \$1.9- billion would be achieved. The combined deficit in Atlantic Canada was \$1.1-billion on 2012-2013. Mathematically, that would leave \$800-Million to go to reduce debt, or invest in additional infrastructure projects to help improve the economy. Combine that with contributions from Ottawa for major projects, the resulting annual investment could be over \$1-billion.

Many taxpayers feel we are over represented with elected representatives and staffing in government offices is far too high, which essentially is the same conclusion as the AIM's report. If the economy continues to decline and taxpayers are being pinched even more, it's likely there level of frustrations will be directed at municipal politicians in 2016.

Deadline for the October issue of The Shoreline Journal is September 22

CTCL Receives Funding

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appointments and shopping. They are wheelchair accessible but they are not the only use," she says.

MLA Karen Casey was pleased to be able to present the funding to the CTCL. "These buses are not meant to compete with commercial transportation but to complement and make transportation more affordable," says Casey, who discussed the importance of this service for those on fixed income or for those who have no vehicle. "For some people it means the difference of being able to get a job or not."

Sue Taylor would like to see more people in the outlying areas of Colchester County utilizing the transportation. "It is possible for groups to charter the bus and making a run from up the shore into Truro, with the riders all sharing the cost, making it an affordable option."

The buses are available Monday- Friday from as early as 6:30AM during school hours, until 5PM.

It is recommended to book 24 hours in advance, with office hours of 8:30-4:30.

Charters are also available for weekend bookings.




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Authorized by the Official Agent for Scott Armstrong