

REES' Pieces

TURMOIL The Rising Tide

I can't think of anyplace which is not suffering from turmoil. It has been a roller coaster month.

South of the border, it's been a daily diet of revelations concerning numerous investigations of President Donald Trump by Mueller and legal entities in New York. Then massive wild fires in California, not to forget nearly 600 wild fires raging throughout British Columbia.

British Columbia needed help. Over 20 firefighters from Nova Scotia have gone west. This past weekend haze from BC arrived in Nova Scotia, causing the sun and moon to turn bright orange, and a strong smell of smoke in the air. I was amazed how strong the aroma has been in Maitland, especially in the evening.

The Conservative policy convention in Halifax, which attracted 3,000+ delegates got blindsided by Maxine Bernier, he quit the party and is starting his own. Bernier is not expected to gain many followers east of Quebec. Out west, especially in Alberta, there are many who feel much the same as Bernier on similar topics.

Not that they might follow Bernier, but if his activity gives them inspiration, there could be some discord which could splinter the Conservative movement in ways similar to what evolved with the Alliance, then Reform, then united with the Progressive Conservatives, under Peter MacKay, to form today's Conservative Party.

Some Conservatives suggest, while he was Prime Minister Stephen Harper may have spent upwards of half his time and energy keeping the vocal splinter groups in check and focused on re-election. The same party members have yet to determine if Andrew Scheer has the same strength and capability.

One strong party member feels, if the election were held now, the best the Conservatives could hope to do is have four MP's, in Atlantic Canada.

The thirteen or fourteen months to the scheduled federal election in fall 2019 is a lifetime in politics. There's plenty of time for moods to change, or someone to make a costly mistake that follows them or the party to election day. Even though there is a somewhat established date for the election, legally there is nothing to stop dropping the writ earlier, if surveying reveals a weakening of the opposition.

At the provincial and municipal level the next election will be in 2020. With a volatile electorate and populist movements gaining momentum those who will be running again, or those wishing to run, there are warning signs.

Various levels of government have expressed concern about low-turnout on election day and not enough people are exercising their right to vote. Looking ahead to 2020 and what will happen in Nova Scotia, there might be much more engagement than recent past.

Nova Scotians are becoming much more vocal, whether it be clean up of Boat Harbour and events around the Abercrombie Pulp Mill; fishers becoming vocal and expressing concern about protection of the environment or activity related to tidal power in the Bay of Fundy. There is increased community engagement over health-care; concerns about hospitals and of course the never ending vocal activity over education.

At the municipal level, people in Lunenburg are gaining traction on clean up of the harbour; in Bridgewater there is concern about the LaHave River. Province-wide there is concern about climate change and how our forests are being handled. These two topics are not the responsibility of municipalities, but they do become involved when their areas are affected from rising sea levels, or flash flooding in the rivers, which many claim is result of clear cutting.

A prime example of a volatile electorate is how quickly things "went to the dogs" in Colchester in just over a week. I'm not taking sides, nor do I wish to.

However, there is a message. For anyone who will seek re-election, or "wanna be" the next few months must be spent consulting, reviewing, and ensuring your next move will benefit the community or electorate.

If you hold public office, double check to make sure everyone on your team is committed to moving in the same direction putting constituents first, not your belief or welfare of your party.

Maurice

Letters to the editor

This is an open forum for your opinions and comments.

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Dear Editor:

September is upon us once more and for most 5-year-olds (and some 4s) it is a time of great excitement as they are to go to school for the first time.

This year, the educational system is starting the school year with many changes - no authoritative public representation in the system with the demise of school boards, principals classed as managers not teachers, and, in my area, a large, nearly new school building deemed unsafe for holding classes causing students to be transported elsewhere for the time being.

One thing that has not changed is method by which most children get to school...by bus. Since the time of the great consolidation of rural schools in the late 1950s the bus has played an important part in education. Strange as it may seem, not a lot of thought has gone into how busing affects the learning ability of small children. It is not something you read about in the myriad studies and reports that have been presented to government and released to the public in recent years.

In October 2014, a report entitled "Disrupting the Status Quo: Nova Scotians Demand a Better Future for Every Student" was released which on page 51 mentions the fact that physical activity helps learning and states: "...we also recognize the

unique roles that schools play in building awareness about healthy living through encouraging students to walk or bike to school, ..." I found that a bit of a laugh when the Department was, and is, continuing to close community based schools in rural areas and neighbourhood schools in towns increasing the use of buses.

An Action Plan for Education called "The 3 Rs: Renew Refocus Rebuild" was released in 2015. Again no mention of the time children spend on school buses. Physical health was referred to on page 31 where it is stated that "physical activity and nutrition have always been cornerstones of good health..." and say "To support student health and wellness, we will...create a framework to increase opportunities for physical activity throughout the school day..."

The latest report "Raising the Bar" (2018), commonly known as the "Glaze report", is all about administrative structure, organization and management. In the introduction, Ms. Glaze imagines sitting in a classroom of primary students on the first day of school. She wonders, "How can we help them thrive and succeed during their educational journey?" I would suggest we first ensure these children arrive at school rested, not hungry and with dry bottoms. This is difficult when many five-year-olds spend up to an hour (and in-

creasingly beyond due to continued school closures) on a bus to get to school. In this report the word 'transportation' is found on page 4 under 'areas of administration and operations' as part of the 'four areas of focus', on page 5 as something school boards must provide, page 35 under recommendation 13 in regards to extracurricular activities, and on page 39 under recommendation 20 referring to the Department of Transportation & Infrastructure Renewal. On page 41 Ms. Glaze comments, "...it was important to see and hear the passion of the presenters as they made a strong case for a governance structure that puts students first". Any governance structure that submits five-year-olds to up to (and over) two hours on a school bus daily is not putting students first.

In January 2015, the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies (AIMS) produced a report entitled "Education on Wheels: Seizing Cost and Energy Efficiency Opportunities in Student Transportation" which, as stated, is about cost and efficiency, contains some interesting observations including this on page 6: "Nova Scotia's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Robert Strang, has urged policy-makers to look at the impact of school consolidation and busing on the health of children and youth."

As the school year begins, the 'Big Yellow Bus' will be stopping

for young children all over Nova Scotia. It would be a good thing if our new and improved Department of Education and Early Childhood Development would look at a basic, down to earth issue - the effect of prolonged bus time on the learning ability of young children.

Carol Hyslop
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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

DEBERT:

Debert Mini-Mart

FIVE ISLANDS:

Masstown Market Five Islands

GLENHOLME:

Double "C" Truckstop
Glenholme General Store

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;
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Central Colchester Junior High School; Parrsboro Elementary and Parrsboro Regional High School.

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Masstown Community News

By *Christine Urquhart*

Here we are with summer ending right around the corner. Where did it go? Seems like summer just finally showed up and now the calendar says it's time for it to leave. Some folks are just now getting an "early" harvest from their gardens. The frost in June really put our gardens on to the slow mode for sure.

I want to apologize for missing putting my column in the Shoreline last month. I was on some new medication which made me very forgetful, even more than I usually am! Anyway, I am no longer taking it and hopefully things are back to normal.

I hope you have continued to put out both feeders and bird baths for our feathered friends! Especially the bird baths with our lack of rain most of the summer. The birds, bees and butterflies get thirsty too!

Masstown UCW will meet on Thursday September 6th, 7pm at the home of Irene Gratto on G. Porter road. All ladies are welcome to attend this meeting! Ladies are reminded to bring items for the Food Bank.

The Men's Club, once the DGM Men's Club, is now the Cobquid

Men's Club, and it will meet on Saturday September 1st at the Double C Restaurant in lower Debert. All men welcome.

The next meeting of the Masstown Community Association will be held on Tuesday October 2nd in the restaurant part of the Masstown Market. Everyone is welcome!

Do you feel guilty about snacking? Don't. Snacks aren't necessarily bad. In fact, well-planned weight-loss diets allow for snacks to help manage hunger and reduce bingeing. Eating a healthy snack of fresh fruit or raw veggies may stop you from taking second or third helpings at your next meal, dramatically cutting the total number of calories you consume.

Congratulations go out this month to John & Paula Weatherbie on the birth of their first grandchild, grandson Caleb John Foster Weatherbie, a son for daughter Britany.

Traveling this month: The Molonsons of Springhill, about 13 of them, visited Joan Ewart. Grandchildren, children, nieces and nephews - a whole slew of them! They had a wonderful time at Joan's. Mark Stevenson has been

staying with his mother, Lynda Stevenson but will be heading back to Halifax soon. Bill and Shirley Leeming spent a couple of days camping at Grey Island Provincial Park in East Chester. They enjoyed being close to the ocean and also spent some time window shopping in Mahone Bay. Joan Ewart also had a couple of her in-laws from Saint John drop in for a lovely visit.

Ron and I had a lot of company as we hosted the Hayman Family Reunion - Anthony Hayman from Los Angeles; Jose, Autumn, Isabella, and Sofia Gonzalez and Bonni Carver from San Francisco; Colin & Toni Starratt from Ottawa, Lawrence & Marie Weatherbie from Hamilton Ont.; Alfred & Diane Hayman from Westville; Judy Bodiford from Altha Florida; Terry & Glenda Hagar from Lower Sackville; Doug Hayman and Jane Cowell from Victoria BC and many more family members who live in the Tatamagouche area. There were 40 folks at our reunion!

Condolences go out this month to Michelle Brenton and family on the death of her father, Ron Brenton.

Enjoy these lovely days while we have them, winter shows up too soon and stays too long.

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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