

REES' Pieces

Dog Days of August – Looking back 10 years

(This month's column is entirely different. I decided to do something, I've not done in ages. I decided to reprint a column from ten years ago. Not because it was so special, but rather for myself and you the reader to think about September 2015 column to access: Have we come ahead? Have we slipped back? Or are we similar to a herd of dairy cattle laying in the middle of the field basking in the sun chewing on their cuds? Are we talking about the same things in the same way?) Enjoy September 2015 read!

Weather-wise, it wasn't an enjoyable spring and early summer, but once summer heat decided to come our way, it came with a vengeance. When I was younger and we lived on a farm in Northwestern New Brunswick, it was this type of weather I dreaded the most, because high humidity and it was haying time.

I don't know why, but I remember a couple of days when it was 104F, and we called them the "dog days of August", when everyone was in poor humour.

It was just as hot and uncomfortable last Sunday at the 34th Annual Sussex Flea Market. I didn't check the temperature, but some people said it was 38 with the humidex - try that on for a Sunday afternoon, without any shade and dismantling a couple of large tents and packing up the van, with about 15 large boxes. It was unbearable.

What's unusual about this summer is we have a Federal Election. Called about 40 days longer than the minimum of 37 days. All parties are holding back, fine tuning their team of volunteers, so we are not bombarded with a flurry of election advertising and teams of loyal party workers. Thankfully, the campaign won't really heat up until after Labour Day.

South of the border, the election will not be held until fall of 2016, but with 17 candidates vying to be the GOP's choice to lead the Republican Party it's the hottest news in town. Donald Trump, whom many thought of as a passing fancy has turned the party upside down as he constantly increases his lead over the rest of the field.

What makes watching the USA political system squirm is Trump has brought to the campaign a daily dose of frankness which is appealing to a very mad and upset electorate. Whether or not he can win the Republican nomination, he has shown all candidates just how angry voters are.

What he has brought to the fore-front also applies to all levels of the Canadian political system. Yes, Canadians are in an election campaign, so far all of the candidates are sticking to their party's talking points.

Maybe Nova Scotians hide their anger better than others. However, I assure you if someone spoke about Nova Scotia issues with Trump's frankness, they too would gather a large following very quickly. Within 12 months of disposing of the federal election, we'll be into the "grassroots" of Canadian politics - municipal elections.

With a worsening economy which many suggest will still be upon us this time next year, it's my belief local voters will wait until next year to express their true frustration. That could lead to a flurry of new candidates who gather strength because they speak with some of "Trump's Frankness". Regardless of which municipality, if someone comes out with the intention to build a broad, demographically and ideologically diverse coalition, constructed around personality, not substance, that bridges demographic and political divides, they will garner a lot of support.

In the lead-up to the 2016 municipal election, the Palliser Property might be a central focal point of voter anger. Let me explain why.

Earlier this spring, Colchester Municipal council purchased the Palliser Property, without a defined plan, which is acceptable, but promised to consult with the public to define its use and start developing a plan. Since the initial flurry of activity, little appears to be done, except extensive property clean up, some paint on the visitor centre, and moving the lawns.

Where the Mayor, Councillors and staff may be vulnerable is not because they will have invested nearly \$1-million before any construction activity takes place, but because they have been slack to consult with the public and business community.

There's no honour in going to the public "with a plan" of what should be done with the property. The public deserves the respect of being consulted before there are any plans. Not all the public's suggestions would be workable, but at least they would have the satisfaction of "being heard" and contributing to the development of a plan.

When will the public consultations take place? There should be one in each councillor's district.

Maurice

Preparing Nova Scotia Homes for Severe Weather: Lessons from Fires, Hurricanes, and Storms

By Haley Brown, Founder of Plum Living

Nova Scotians are all too familiar with severe weather events. This summer's wildfire season—still unfolding across the Valley, Halifax, and beyond—serves as a stark warning. In recent years, we have also been navigating hurricanes, winter storms, and even polar vortex conditions that continue to test our resilience. Each of these serves as a reminder: we must take practical steps now to prepare our homes and properties for the unexpected.

Here are key actions homeowners can take this season to reduce risk and restore peace of mind:

- 1. Secure the exterior of your home.** High winds can turn garden tools, patio furniture, and bins into hazards. Secure or store them indoors before a storm.
- 2. Prepare an emergency kit.** Nova Scotia's Emergency Management Office recommends building a 72-hour kit that includes water, non-perishable food, flashlights, extra batteries, medication, and copies of essential documents.
- 3. Protect vacant or seasonal properties.** You may be surprised to learn that many insurance policies require documented inspections of vacant homes—or they might refuse coverage. Regular walkthroughs and maintenance protect your property and your policy.
- 4. Safeguard utility systems.** Check sump pumps, clear gutters, and ensure backup heat or generators are in working order. These preventative measures can save you considerable time and expense amid hurricanes, wildfires, winter storms, or power outages.
- 5. Prepare for multiple threats.** Maintain defensible space around your home to reduce wildfire risk, know your evacuation routes, and be prepared for flooding or outages—especially after hurricanes.
- 6. Build a support network.** Storms and disasters isolate us quickly. A plan with neighbours, friends, or family can make a huge difference when help is needed most.
- 7. Rentals.** Whether you rent out your property short-term or long-term, your tenants must know how to respond in emergencies. Providing copies of provincial and local emergency guides, along with key emergency numbers, helps them stay safe, protects your property, and ensures insurance requirements are met.

Tip for Homeowners:

One of the most common searches people make during a storm or wildfire is for power outage updates in their area. Keeping the Nova Scotia Power Outage Map and the Wildfire Nova Scotia Viewer easily accessible ensures you and your tenants can quickly get information and stay safe.

Through it all, we must acknowledge and thank the firefighters, first responders, and emergency crews across Halifax, the Annapolis Valley, and all across Nova Scotia, who continue working tirelessly under dangerous conditions to protect our communities. Thank you for your dedication and bravery.

Keep These Numbers Handy in Nova Scotia Purpose		Contact
Emergency (Police, Fire, Ambulance)		911
RCMP (Non-Emergency)		1-800-803-7267
Nova Scotia Power (Report an Outage)		1-877-428-6004
Halifax Emergency Info (HRM Call Centre)		311
Halifax Emergency Management (EMO)		902-490-3573
		HRM_EMO@halifax.ca (cdn.halifax.ca)
Nova Scotia 211 (Community Services)		Dial 211
Poison Control Centre (IWK)		1-800-565-8161
Nova Scotia EMO (Provincial Office)		1-866-424-5620
		(Government of Nova Scotia)
Halifax Household Emergency Guide		Refer to Halifax Regional Municipality Emergency Preparedness (Halifax, cdn.halifax.ca)

Director's Report - Regional Transit Study

The following is an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since April 2025, which Paul Smith, Director circulated to council at its August 14 Council Committee meeting. This section focuses on the "Regional Transit Study"

Regional Transit Study

- The Regional Public Transit Feasibility Study is underway. The first round of community engagement wrapped up in June and included a Stakeholder World Café, two public surveys, and interviews with key stakeholders. Due to requested changes by staff to improve the project work plan, the expected date for the completed report has been pushed back from the end of September to sometime in October or November.

Community Solar Garden Feasibility Study

- The Municipality was awarded \$75,000 in December 2024 from the Low Carbon Communities program to commission a feasibility and design study for a



community solar garden. The RFP for consulting services closed on July 18, and six proposals were received. A contract will be awarded in early August, and the study is scheduled to be completed by the end of October 2025. While the

consultant evaluates technical and financial feasibility, sustainability staff will work with Colchester's Climate Lead from the Clean Foundation to engage with the public and design a process for recruiting subscribers and managing subscriptions.

Director's Report: Sustainable Colchester

The following is an overview of activities in the Community Development Department since April 2025, which Paul Smith, Director circulated to council at its August 14 Council Committee meeting. This section focuses on the "Sustainable Colchester"

Solar PV on Municipal & Community Buildings

- The solar farm at the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility was commissioned and started operating in early May. De-

spite issues with a faulty breaker, which was replaced in late July, the solar farm had generated 154MWh and \$17,500 in revenue at the time this report was written. With the issue fixed, the solar farm is expected to be more productive moving forward.

- The solar array at the West Colchester United Arena is scheduled to be commissioned in early August, and the NSRC system is on track to be completed by the end of summer.

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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