

The Shoreline Journal Tid-Bits

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National Confidence Hits Three-Year Low

Amid ongoing tariff uncertainty and rising fuel prices, Atlantic small businesses are facing some of the highest cost pressures in Canada, adding to an already challenging economic environment for owners.

New research from Zensurance finds three-in-four (75 per cent) Atlantic small businesses say rising gas prices have negatively impacted their business, well above the national average of 58 per cent, while 76 per cent report higher operating expenses and more than half (53 per cent) have considered closing permanently at some point this year.

The findings come as small business confidence nationally has fallen for a third consecutive year, reaching a three-year low of 49 per cent in 2026, down from 70 per cent in 2024.

Additional Atlantic findings from the Zensurance Small Business Confidence Index include: 60 per cent say the economy has negatively impacted their business since the start of 2026; 40 per cent report revenues are lower than in the first half of 2025; 62 per cent are operating without business insurance and One-third (33 per cent) identify customer nonpayment as their most significant business risk.

The realities facing Atlantic small businesses — including how tariff uncertainty, rising costs and broader economic pressures are influencing business confidence, decision-making and resilience.

Research tackling pressing social questions

Research at StFX is tackling pressing social questions, from how children develop a sense of fairness and how Indigenous assessment practices can be reimagined, to reducing food waste, and exploring the ethical use of artificial intelligence. In recognition of this work, 13 St. Francis Xavier University researchers have been awarded funding through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (SSHRC) Insight and Insight Development Grant programs.

Together, the projects span disciplines across the humanities, social sciences, education, health, and science, supporting research that will generate new knowledge while addressing societal issues

The recipients include: Insight Grant - Dr. John Corbit (Psychology); Insight Development Grants - Dr. Alice Johnston, Dr. Lisa Lunney Borden, and Dr. Simon Sylliboy (Education); Dr. Abede Mack and Dr. Katelynn Carter-Rogers (Management), with Dr. Greg Hadley (Education); Dr. Mahasti Khakpour (Health) and Dr. Elvira Prusaczyk (Psychology); Dr. Mendel Péladeau-Houle (Modern Languages); Dr. Ken Penner Religious Studies); Dr. Kailin Wright (English) and Dr. Hailey Murphy (Political Science)

The Forest Market celebrates a decade of advocating for rural resiliency

(Annapolis Royal, NS) — Medway Community Forest Co-op will be celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the annual Forest Market – an event that celebrates Nova Scotia's Wabanaki-Acadian Forests and showcases the people and stories rooted in these forest landscapes.

Medway Community Forest has been hosting the Forest Market for a decade to promote all the benefits that forests offer - from recreational enjoyment, to keeping our watersheds clean, to supplying us with

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Bearcats' Goaltender Sam Berthiaume Wins 2026 Hlinka Gretzky Cup

Truro Bearcats goaltender Sam Berthiaume is a Hlinka Gretzky Cup champion as Team Canada rolled to an 8-1 win over the U.S.A. in Edmonton, AB on Saturday night.

The 16-year-old from Stellarton, N.S. got the start in goal for Canada's first game of the tournament against Switzerland, making 22 saves in a 7-3 victory. Team Canada went undefeated in the three-game round robin and then beat Finland 6-3 to advance to

Saturday's tournament final.

It's the latest accomplishment for Berthiaume after a stellar rookie season with the Bearcats that culminated in a Metalfab MHL Cup championship, Rookie All-Star Team honours, and the Young/Knickle Award as the top goaltending tandem with teammate Louca Connolly.

The MHL congratulates Berthiaume on his outstanding accomplishments.



Sam Berthiaume is a Hlinka Gretzky Cup champion. (Photo: Hockey Canada Images)

Bearcats enter 2026-27 Season as Defending Champions

LOTS OF HISTORY

The 2026-2027 Maritime Junior Hockey League is days away from starting its 60th season.

For the Truro Bearcats, this will be its 30th season since re-entering the MHL in 1997.

The Metro Valley Junior "B" Hockey League got its start in 1967. The original six teams were the East Hants Penguins, Halifax Colonels, Dartmouth Hoyt's Arrows, Windsor Royals, Kentville Riteway Rangers and Berwick Shell Junior Bruins. The Windsor Royals were the first League Champions.

In 1968, the Berwick franchise was transferred to Amherst, and the Ramblers have been in the League ever since. That year, the Kentville franchise came to Truro, and the Bearcats were off and running.

The original Bearcat franchise was immediately successful, winning five championships (1970, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1976) leading to 1997 when the league moved to the Junior "A" level and the opportunity to compete at the national level and the Centennial Cup.

Teams out of the Hali-

fax region quickly became dominant at this level. In November 1983, the Bearcat franchise folded.

In 1997, after a four-teen-year hiatus, the Truro Bearcats returned to the junior ranks, now the Maritime Junior Hockey League (MHL). Over the last twenty-nine years, the Bearcat franchise established an impressive record, winning championships in 2005, 2007, 2014, 2017 and 2026, and making two appearances at the Centennial Cup.

The Bearcats enter this season as defending champions. The MHL's twelve

teams will again play a 52-game balanced schedule, playing eight games against each divisional opponent and two games against each team in the opposite division.

Regular season opens September 10 when the Pictou County Crushers host the Amherst Ramblers. The Truro Bearcat home opener is set for Friday, September 11 when the Bearcats host the West Kent Steamers.

Training Camp for the Bearcats begins on Monday, August 24, at 2:00 pm at the RECC

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