

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CED progress being made in Municipality

The Editor

Unlike provincial and federal governments, municipal governments have no "official opposition". Since no form of government always makes perfect decisions, it is up to the public and the media to point out the error of our ways. I thank the editor of *The Victoria Standard* for the recent editorial. (Vol 18, No. 7, May 17 to May 30, 2010).

We are not trying to make excuses but, "waffled ineffectually on sustainable development for far too long" makes it appear that we have done nothing. Shortly after Mr. MacDonald took a job in Halifax, council decided to weigh its options. Rejoining a Regional Development Agency (RDA) was considered. For those who remember, Victoria County withdrew from the Strait RDA in 2001. We met with representatives from CBEDA and the Strait-Highlands RDA. After those meetings it was apparent that we had to do some groundwork and decide what we wanted. Both RDA's suggested that we update our Strategic Plan.

We advertised for outside companies to carry out this work. We interviewed, and hired someone. Shortly after, this individual obtained other employment

and informed us they could not complete our plan. Back to square one, we had to hire another firm to do the plan. The plan was finally completed in June, 2009

As you rightly state Mr. Editor, "Every document emphasizes the need for a development officer." We wholeheartedly agree. In October of 2009, we advertised for a Development Officer, but as John Malcolm stated to council, regarding hiring doctors in rural areas, that the Health Authority wanted the "right person". We as council, feel the same in hiring the right person as a Development Officer. This person was found during the interview process but they declined the position.

No doubt our ultimate goal is to hire an Economic Development Officer and join an RDA. Admittedly, it has taken a long time. In the meantime we are making progress. Some things are being accomplished. As a matter of fact, 3 of the 4 priorities in the "Possibilities" document are being worked on. Mr. Editor, thank you for your comments, and perhaps we can all work together for the betterment of Victoria County

Fraser Patterson,
Councillor, District 5

Nova Scotia Power Inc. and Biomass

The Editor

After years of bad renewable energy policy and planning Nova Scotia Power Inc. now has to meet specific targets by specific timelines that are coming up quickly. NSPI's solution is to spend \$220 million on a biomass project with NewPage. This will result in the lowest value use of our forests (burning) and vastly increase cutting in the northern part of the mainland and Cape Breton.

A better public policy would be to have a solar rollout, also with specific targets and a specific timeline. This would include a rollout of solar units for hotwater and thermal or hot air and be followed by solar photovoltaics (PV) for electricity. Because all three types of solar units are modular they are appropriate for retrofits on existing homes or other buildings as well as new construction AND can be used in singles or multiples to match the need.

Most Nova Scotians are unaware that the NS sun regime is better than in Ger-

many and that our coldest weather is our sunniest weather. NS has the potential to match Germany where small rooftop PV systems dominate the market with over 80% or 4/5 of the 9,000 MW of solar PV installed on buildings. There it has created jobs, increased energy security and allowed individuals to become energy producers. With a proper feed-in-tariff for solar, excess electricity is sold to the utility for a fair price.

The NS Department of Energy's new Renewable Electricity Plan has deliberately chosen to leave out solar PV.

Instead of continuing with short-term solutions by allowing NSPI to burn our forests, write to Minister Estabrooks (energyminister@gov.ns.ca) and request a proper solar policy with a feed-in-tariff so all Nova Scotians can participate in taking back the power.

Peggy Cameron,
Inverness County

Letters to the Editor Policy

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Our 'Masters' continue to tax us to death

The Editor

Went to "Timmies" this morning and ordered my usual blueberry bagel, toasted with butter, medium black, one sugar. Before July 1st it cost me \$2.59 ... today, \$2.64. Big deal, an extra nickel. I go pretty much everyday so over the course of a year... an extra \$18.25.

Doesn't sound like much in an initial flyby? Yet all my insurance needs, (personal, vehicle, home, business, medical, etc), went up by about 12% this year. On top of that various taxes went up and now the HST. We're behind in our taxes so every month the feds and municipality tack on interest and penalty charges which amount to 12% of the outstanding balance yearly. Foods costs have increased while packaging has shrunk, Nova Scotia Power has had its pound of flesh, bank fees up, gas does its thing and the list goes on.

Now there are a couple of things I'd like to bring your attention. First, the items I'm listing are not 'add-ons' one would spend disposable income on. They all fall under the category of basic living necessities. Timmies is not, although I'm sure an argument could be made by some to the contrary.

The second thing is, although I do not consider myself a 'poor' person, I am impoverished. Mainly, if in any given month an unforeseen expense occurs we will not be able to afford our basic living necessities. We live hand to mouth and have for years. We do not have disposable income. We have, and I believe a substantial segment of the population has, reached

the limits of our earning potential. More or less, give or take, age, education, by choice or fate we do not have the ability to earn more money. That is our lot, our reality ... the \$30-\$60,000 per household, with children, wage earners.

So the question I pose to the politicians is this. Where do they think we (this growing number of impoverished people) are going to keep coming up with the monies needed to afford basic living necessities? At what level and when is the cost of living going to surpass our earning potential? Every year these costs increase ... our income does not!

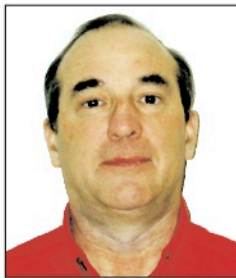
Speaking for my family, we have no savings, no retirement plan, no RRSP or stock portfolio. We don't have holidays or take vacations, or sick days, or maternity leave or spousal maternity leave ... we work nearly every single day. Cause if we don't... we don't have enough money to live hand to mouth. As a matter of fact we're not allowed to get sick ... we have to suck it up and keep going.

There is a growing awareness, not by choice mind you but necessity, that the individuals who manage the affairs of Capitalism and govern the democratic process are intent on helping themselves through profit and maintaining the status quo. Or so it seems. But that would suppose they're all a bunch of crooks. Too easy and too cynical a view for my liking.

Yet the plain and simple truth of the matter is this - they don't fix it because they don't know how and they don't know

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Chuck Thompson's "Along the Trail" **"Terrier Mix"**



As I wade across the river I turn to call her along, "Shad...", the word remains unfinished.

At the end of the day I go for a walk along the road calling her out as I leave "Shad...", the word trails away. For the first time in nearly fifteen years, Shadow, known as "Terrier Mix" is not with me. And I miss her.

I don't know many people who have not had a pet at some point in their lives. It doesn't matter if the pet is a dog, cat, fish or rock, it's the bond that counts.' For all of us that bond is special, if not unique.

It's been over fourteen years since our then young daughter Emily came bursting through the door and said in one long sentence, "Dad, there are a bunch of puppies in Colin's barn and they are so cute and I really like the quiet one, can I get her?" I knew the responsibility would be parental as kids grow up, interests change and the dads or moms get left with the fleeting ideas.

I have not regretted our decision one day. I have had other dogs; dogs that I took fishing and were half way to Baddeck in fifteen minutes. Dogs that ate my camera, peed on the carpet, chewed the requisite slippers, stole food from the counter, tormented the cat. One dog used to bring home the neighbour's milk and any pie or roast left near an open window to cool. I loved them all but Shadow was virtually maintenance free. A scratch behind the ear, maybe a treat, a brisk walk,

she asked for little. She had hardly a sick day until the very end, taught easily, obeyed to a fault. Go fishing and she would spend time close by with tail wagging, rooting out moles or mice or when she was young chasing sandpipers up and down the beach. When I caught a trout she was as excited as me, trying to bite the fish as I brought it to shore. As she aged she learned to keep me and any friend in sight by sitting half way between us. When the years mounted up, she figured out how to cross the river by seeking out the shallow bars rather than plunging headfirst into the deepest parts. Her fishing career ended as it began with me carrying her back and forth across the river.

During her long life she lived in many places but she had an affinity for the cabin. As soon as someone moved in, the brown face was at the door. She had a special friend in Gerald Skinner and spent many a night, head in his lap as he shelled peanuts for her pleasure.

The other night I waded and fished as I always do but something was missing. That something was Shadow.

They say time solves all problems, heals all wounds and no doubt that is true.

So, in your effort to be kind, when you say, "it was just a dog, only a dog, she had a good life", forgive me if I look away. I know you mean well, and you are right, of course you are right but she was my dog and that is what makes the difference.

When Emily brought her home I thought, "I will adopt this little fur ball and steal her heart." Turns out it was the other way around.

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