

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A hike in the Highlands brought us to the mess at Money Point

The Editor
From September 10 through 19, I participated in the Hike the Highlands Festival in the Highlands area of Cape Breton. Participants

were from the Maritimes, elsewhere in Canada, and the United States. On Saturday the 18th I led a hike from Bay St. Lawrence to the Money Point Light at the

northern tip of the island. The 300-meter climb up from Bay St. Lawrence offers a breathtaking view of the northern coast of Cape Breton looking west towards Meat Cove and Cape St. Lawrence. The descent down to the site of the former lighthouse looks out on Aspy Bay, White Point, and St. Paul Island. We were all energized by the rugged beauty.

operational.
What greeted our group as we arrived at the site of the 1906, 1981, and 2010 lights is hard to describe and harder to believe. The massive plywood tower was smashed, lying on its side. The large shed, the size of a small house, had its roof removed and its rooms filled with building debris. Fiberglass insulation, nail-filled plywood, and other debris littered the entire area. It was as if a bomb had gone off. I was speechless and embarrassed. We were all disgusted, and then angry. It has been four months since the Coast Guard demolition crew tore down the building. Here it lies and will probably remain until storms take it out to sea and the weather rots and rusts the remains. What could I tell my hikers? What memory will they take back? What pictures will show up on the Internet—soaring eagles, a bird’s eye view of St. Paul Island, or the devastation at the end of the road?

If this had been at the outskirts of Halifax or Ottawa would the messy remains of the demolition have been left there? The government’s demonstrated attitude here echoes its history of leaving toxic messes in remote areas of the north when military operations pulled out after World War II. Has nothing changed?
David Rasmussen
Bay St. Lawrence

NS Power and the message it is sending

The Editor
The following is an email we sent to NS Power Customer Service after we’d been without power for 3 days. I guess we know the answer to our question - they don’t care. A power failure is bad enough, but the misinformation made it much worse.

North River Bridge, etc. are still victims of Hurricane Earl. My observation, and that of many of my neighbours regards the erroneous information we’ve received since we first lost our power.

Is there anyone amongst the "powers-that-be" at Nova Scotia Power who still cares? And if there are, would they like to meet with some of us to find out just how badly your customer service has declined.
Sincerely Bob & Ann Greer,
RR #4, Baddeck

“Parade of Lights” gearing up again

The Editor
Plans are well underway for the second annual Parade of Lights to be held in Ingonish Beach on November 27th, 2010
If you are a business, organization or group interested in entering a float or being part of the parade, please contact Shelly Coones, Billy Joe Robinson or Lisa MacKinnon at ingonishchristmasparade@hotmail.com. Submissions must be received no later than Saturday, November 13, 2010.
If your group is interested in hosting

Santa Claus on your float we will enter all names interested and do a draw to determine who will be escorting the Big Fella.
Last year was a huge success with 24 entries. We had no idea how great it would actually be. Let’s make this year even better!!!!
This is a great chance to advertise your business or cause, and show some community support!
Shelly, Lisa and Billy Joe
Parade Committee

Census issue obviously a political tool

Editor’s Note: This letter previously appeared in the August 23rd issue of MacLeans Magazine.
The Editor

the Conservative Party?
The Conservatives, inspired by the polling methodology behind the so-called Common Sense Revolution, maintain a well-financed and effective research branch whose main aim is to identify die hard supporters and facilitate the marginalization of everyone else. This identification explains many of their evidence-free stances on issues like crime, drug use and now the census. Like Harris before them, they play to staunch supporters who are driven more by emotion than fact.
Our fragile democracy is being poisoned by people who can’t see past their hunger to dominate any who dare to disagree.
Morgan Duchesney,
Ottawa

While the Harper government’s visceral hostility to the long form census reflects their blinkered cosmology, it is rooted in calculating practicality. In spite of their public protestations about “intrusive questions”, former Mike Harris colleagues like Tony Clement, John Baird and Jim Flaherty are keenly aware of the strategic value of accurate census and/or poll information.
Harper and company are intent on crippling their opposition by weakening the census, a key source of data for social justice groups, academia and of course, the political opposition. Why would Harper support a tool available to his “enemies” when he has his own political census bureau courtesy of

International Walk to School Month

The Editor
October is International Walk to School Month offering children, parents, teachers and community leaders an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of walking. The goal differs from community to community. Some walks promote safer school routes while others promote healthier habits. Whatever, Doctors Nova Scotia encourages you and your school to get walking.
Walking with neighbors, friends, family and classmates promotes healthy habits, increases physical activity, identifies safe walking routes in your neighborhood, and increases your opportunity to socialize in your community. Actively participating in Walk to School Month could also transition into the launch of a year-round program, such as the Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Running for Fun program.

Currently, physical inactivity and an increased rate of obesity has overtaking smoking as the number one health concern in the province. Incorporating activity into your daily routine is the easiest way to increase your level of daily activity.
The association recognizes that walking to school is not practical in all areas across the province. However, we encourage all communities who use school buses to transport students, to participate by implementing walking events at school.
Doctors Nova Scotia encourages everybody to walk a few extra steps whenever they can. International Walk to School Month is a great way to get our youth moving and interacting in our communities.
Jane Brooks, MD, PhD, CCFP
President, Doctors Nova Scotia

What’s the point of the mess at Money Point?

The Editor
I am writing to you concerning the needless destruction of our heritage and culture by a government employee or employees. While hiking with a group of people to Money Point last weekend we were horrified by what we saw. The upper part of the once noble lighthouse had been cut off and was lying on its side on the ground. The lower part of the lighthouse was just as sickening. Side walls missing, wires hanging and exposed, piles of walling and ceiling 5 feet high in places and fiberglass insulation everywhere. The destruction and environmental mess was not the work of vandals, but government employees.

ent that a government employee would order such a terrible thing to be done? Was it because it was in a very isolated place, away from the public eye? Did the people responsible for this think this would not be discovered? The same person or persons that order this surely wouldn’t order the needless destruction of the lighthouse in Peggys Cove. No, because it is a popular tourist spot.
What’s going to happen now? Is this terrible environmental mess just going to be left there, only to remind us of what some government official has done and what we have lost? The fibreglass insulation that is blowing that litters the coastline is a health hazard, not only to birds and animals on land, but also those living in and on the ocean. I am not a biologist, but I am pretty sure eating fibreglass insulation cannot be good for any kind of wildlife.
I have a few questions that I hope can be answered. Why was this done and when will this environmental mess be cleaned up? Is someone going to oversee the clean up to make sure it is done properly? Certainly not the same government department, as we see how they do things when they think no one is watching.
Lisa Dixon,

Lighthouses were an important part of life in northern Cape Breton. They were put into place to save lives and to aid local fishermen. As the lights closed in favor of automation, the old lighthouses have become a very important part of our history. When a local historical society asked about having the lighthouse from St. Paul Island for their museum, they were told that the lighthouse in question was an important part of the culture and heritage of Atlantic Canada and needed to be kept at the Coast Guard facility in Dartmouth. What about the Money Point light? What makes it so differ-



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PO Box 629, Baddeck, Cape Breton
Canada • Nova Scotia • B0E 1B0
902-295-1144 • Fax 902-295-1143
E-Mail: victoriastandard@ns.sympatico.ca

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