

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *Hydraulic fracturing - a dangerous practice indeed!*

The Editor

It would be a happier world if our energy needs came exclusively from the sun, wind, sea and hydrogen. At this moment, mankind is not even close to that. Therefore oil and gas exploration is a necessity, yes a necessity. I drive a car, heat my house with oil, use a snow blower to clean my driveway and use a Chainsaw to cut lumber (fuel oil is expensive) and I am no different than the vast majority of people on this beautiful island. Besides the documented instances of water wells becoming tainted in areas that have allowed Hydraulic Fracturing, what I am also strongly against is the pumping of toxic chemicals into the ground, leaving the majority of them underground to become a potential environmental hazard, if not today or tomorrow, maybe 10 years from now. I quote from the PetroWorth site, "Historical oil shows and seeps to surface from Horton

Group." I agree with that. I can find small pools of oil tainted water on my property all the time. Oh yes, I am the owner of the property right beside the proposed oil well. So if oil seeps up, then doesn't it hold that the toxic chemicals that are pumped into the ground also will seep up. If this happens in a field, we could have nothing or we could have sick and/or dying crops and livestock. If this happens under Lake Ainslie we could have a complete environmental and economical disaster in the making.

The time is now to have an immediate moratorium placed on Hydraulic Fracturing in Nova Scotia. This moratorium would allow careful collection of information and the studying of previous sites in areas similar to this present location: less than 1/2 mile from a large lake and among a pastoral/residential area. This would give all interested parties time to present all the facts

without the present hyperbole, or secrecy that is presently happening with this well site.

PetroWorth present tag line to us has been that there is nothing to worry about. Of course, it is not the lively hood or backyard of Neal Mednick, President of PetroWorth or Chairman Alan Graham that is the issue here. We, the residents of the Lake Ainslie Block, have every right to worry because it is not only our environment and lively hood under threat but that of our chil-

dren and grandchildren.

We need to make sure that this issue gets in the news and stays there. We also have to not only contact our local MLA's but every MLA in N.S. If it happens here in Lake Ainslie Block then the precedent will be set and it could happen anywhere in this province.

"Oil exploration...fine...but keep the frack off our land!"

Robert Parkins,  
West Lake Ainslie

### *Legion's official stance should change*

The Editor

After watching the Minister of Veterans Affairs announce the Privacy Commissioners recommendations regarding the goings on at Veterans Affairs, I urge the Royal Canadian Legion to reconsider their stance with regards to their participation in the Canadian Veterans National Day Of Protest on 6 November 2010 at 1100 hrs.

To know that some veterans rights and medical information was used to smear that veteran and to make Sean Bruyey look "crazy" gives the DVA a black eye.

If the Royal Canadian Legion, even

after the hard work that they have done on behalf of Veterans, still continue to stand beside the Department of Veterans Affairs after seeing what Canadians and Veterans have seen today, the Legion must share in the shame that now emanates from the halls of the DVA.

Join us, show our veterans that the Legion means business. Show those who are charged with taking care of our veterans that what has happened is not acceptable. Show Canadians what the Royal Canadian Legion stands for!

Lest We Forget.  
Robin Brentmall, CD  
Gambo, NL

### *Mental Health Strategy needed for NS*

The Editor

During the recent Mental Illness Awareness Week, Doctors Nova Scotia continued their effort to help remove the stigma that continues to surround mental health in Nova Scotia.

The fact is one in five Canadians will be affected by mental illness in their lifetime. Mental illness doesn't just affect the person experiencing the illness, but their family, friends and communities. An individual's mental health is affected by factors including where we live, their environment, genetics, income, education level and their relationships with friends and family. Doctors know that mentally healthy people are able to better cope with the stress of daily life and have a greater flexibility to rebound from life-changing events. Good mental health requires finding a balance in all aspects of life and is the foundation of overall well-being.

Doctors Nova Scotia recognizes that many families, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and other health care providers make substantial contributions, not only to the treatment

of patients, but also in advocating for investments into the mental health system. Without these champions many of the improvements we've seen in this field would not be possible.

Government has made the important first steps of committing to developing a mental health strategy for Nova Scotia. However, there is still a long way to go in educating the public and health-care providers about identifying and treating mental illness. The association encourages government in making this strategy a reality to improve the lives of countless Nova Scotians who are touched in some way by mental illness.

Physicians in the province encourage Nova Scotians to make mental health a priority. By investing in mental health and identifying challenges in treatment, we will continue to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. For more information, visit the Canadian Mental Health Association Nova Scotia Division's website at [www.novascotia.cmha.ca](http://www.novascotia.cmha.ca).

Jane Brooks, MD, PhD, CCFP  
President, Doctors Nova Scotia

#### *Letters to the Editor Policy*

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### *Chuck Thompson's "Along the Trail"*

## "Sequel-Writer's Festival"



Godfather II was a smash hit, Shrek 2 and 3, less so. Goliath never asked David for a rematch. Fraser-Ali II was flat, uninspiring. Noah

only built one ark.

All of the above proves just how hard it is to capture the same magic the second time around.

With this in mind, I wandered down to the second Cabot Trail Writer's Festival in North River, where a small school held some big names in the writing world.

Time and distance forced me to pick one day of three and I went with the opening night and such luminaries as Sherrie Fitch and Michael Crummy in attendance. Our own Bill Conall did the intros and I thought he was brilliant. Some may have thought his intro of Ms. Fitch somewhat irreverent but I felt his take off on her style was genius.

By 8 pm, the little hall was as full as it was going to get. That was a little disturbing as the back row showed more empty seats than a smile of missing teeth. A quick scan of those in attendance indicated only one person from Baddeck seated in the rows. I couldn't help but wonder why. Was it the heat or the endless construction on the North River Road? Maybe everyone was in an induced coma waiting for Celtic Colors.

The readings were delightful as the authors showed their passion for their works and really tried to convey appropriate emotion while they read.

The good folks who hosted the event flitted about like black flies on a forearm, passing out munchies at every

opportunity and making everyone most welcome. Andy Walsh's opening remarks were as smooth as glass. I have done a bit of speaking in front of people and I always marvel at those who can stand and ramble without wandering and, with nary a note. I can't even go for milk and bread unless I have a list to follow.

Last year they had music, including the legendary Otis Thoms, but not this year. I saw there was musical entertainment scheduled for day II but I missed it as part of the opening acts. I understand why as this year there were three readings as opposed to one last year. Still, it would have been nice.

I bought a book and stood in line for an autograph from Michael Crummy like a kid waiting for Crosby. All the authors went out of their way to "meet and greet" the crowd after the readings.

The whole time I keep marveling how this small group of workers in North River and surrounding area could pull this off. I mean, these are fairly significant writers sitting in the little North River Hall. People need to realize this and make more of an effort to get out and support this endeavor. I have no idea what kind of dollars we are talking here, but this level of talent, I'm sure, does not come cheap. The talented Bev Brett even wrote a play about Alistair MacLeod that I missed, but heard was excellent.

Driving home I kept reflecting back on the fact that so much talent was crammed in such a tiny place. Every hall has bingos and potlucks but this really is unique, if you haven't been, before. For me, I can't wait to see what rabbit from the hat Act 3 brings.

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