

Community asset

Civic Centre update

by Sam Morrison

As Baddeck and other communities of its size try and cope with such realities of rural as out-migration, declining school enrolment, and the lack of major employers, the institutions that make up our "home towns" must also try and cope with these influences.

With our population declining, the loss of our young people has had a direct impact on the "Rink" and the programs that are offered there.

While the Civic Center is now up and running for another year we should all be concerned about the future of this most valuable recreation center. In trying to understand the current status of the "Rink", perhaps the best place to start is with an overview as to what programs are being offered and how they are doing.

As has long been the case, Minor Hockey continues to be the major tenant at the Civic Center but its numbers have dropped considerably as well. Long gone are the days in the late 70's when fellow *Standard* employee Jim Ryan and myself stood behind opposing Midget House League teams with two other teams (of 15-16 players) in that Division as part of a program that I would guess then featured an enrollment of close to 250 players all of whom were boys in contrast to today's program that features both boys and girls.

Presently, Baddeck Minor Hockey offers programs in the Initiation, Atom, Pee Wee, Bantam and hopefully

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Words and Rhythms



A recent Cabot Trail Writers Festival workshop for students, facilitated by Halifax poet Shautay Grant, was held at South Haven Community Hall. Called "Words and Rhythms" the workshop was designed to help students find and tap into their own unique voices, as writers. Twenty-nine Grades 10-12 students attended from Cabot High, Baddeck Academy, Wagmatcookewey School, Cape Breton Highlands Academy, and Ecole NDA.

Planning for Change

Adapting to climate change

by Mona Anderson

"Planning for Change", a conference on Climate and Infrastructure in Cape Breton, designed to assist local leaders, was held at the Wagmatcook Culture and Heritage Centre Friday, October 14, 2011.

An impressive panel of experts was on hand led by Bob Sandford, Chair of the Canadian Partnership Initiative supporting United Nations "Water for Life" Decade. He is also the lead policy author of ACT (Adaptation to Climate Change Team). Mr. Sandford is the author of 4 books on water policy in Canada and abroad. "Adapting to Climate change" was the topic of the conference. "Follow the Water" was the theme.

Fred Baechler, Chief Hydrogeolo-

gist with exp.com, is based in Sydney and has been studying Cape Breton for over 20 years. With temperatures on the rise and a definite increase in precipitation, in a few short years the effects across Cape Breton are significant.

The waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence do not freeze over as they once did. Westerly winds sweep through picking up moisture and drop it on the highlands in unprecedented amounts of snow. The extra snow melt raises ground water levels saturating the earth, while surface water races off creating flood conditions. Flooding of brooks and streams causes undercutting of their banks, washing out large pockets of sand and gravel, infilling pools, forming new shoals, often changing the course of the

streams. Such changes threaten salmon and trout stocks in rivers like the Margaree. And flooding has disastrous effects on municipal infrastructure, washing out roads, bridges, and culverts.

Current projections on the great forests of the highlands, by Charles Bourque, Professor of Environmental Hydrometeorology at UNB, suggest a decline of balsam fir and black spruce but favour red oak and yellow birch, gradually changing the highland habitat. Food sources may become more abundant for some, die off for others. There are winners and losers all across the natural environmental structure. The great diversity of Cape Breton, with its mountains, sedimentary plains, lakes, and

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Charge under the unsightly premises act?

Petition presented to re-open Plaister Park

by Jim Morrow

A petition was presented at Victoria County Municipal Council on October 24th to have the Plaister Picnic Park at North Shore re-opened.

Lloyd MacInnis presented the petition on behalf of the 300 signators.

The petition reads: "We, the undersigned, petition the Honourable C L (Charlie) Parker, Minister of Natural Resources, to re-open Plaister Picnic Park at North Shore, Victoria County. This park has served our needs the last fifty years, and was built around sink-holes. It has been used recreationally (*sic*) by both tourists and residents throughout the year. We have hiked

and snowshoed its trails, meandered along the beach, and enjoyed picnics and games there. We are requesting you re-open Plaister Picnic Park."

After a geological investigation this spring, the popular Provincial Day Park on the North Shore had to be closed to the public due to safety and liability concerns with subsidence around the sink holes for which the Park was famous.

Some members of the community feel the Karst topography, which is exemplified at the Park, should be highlighted and used for educational purposes.

It is also one of the few public access sites to the Atlantic Ocean along

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Workshop scheduled for November 17th

Port readiness for cruise ships

Baddeck

The Municipality of Victoria, in conjunction with Destination Cape Breton, will hold a workshop in Baddeck to address "port readiness" in the Village.

The purpose of the session is to position Baddeck and area to take full advantage of cruise ship passengers, whether they arrive by vessel at the wharf, or are bused to the community from Sydney.

Municipal Chief Administrative Officer, Sandy Hudson, has written a letter which is being disseminated by the Baddeck and Area Business Tourism Association, in which he states, "If we can develop a program to welcome these

visitors, we then can grow the number of visits in future years.

"We need to develop a program that lets us know that there are cruise passengers coming to town and then develop a unique "Welcome to Baddeck" program that the passengers will enjoy and talk about when they return to the ship. We actually have several thousand passengers visiting our community from cruise ships. We have a reputation as a remarkable tourism destination and if we can instill that reputation with the cruise industry, it will go a long way towards building up this segment of our industry."

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