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May 2, to May 15, 2011

Victoria County, Cape Breton

Break and Enters

To help protect property

by Jim Morrow

Break and Enters are a constantly increasing crime and the victims of such activity are the poorer for it. The closer it gets to home the more insecure we feel.

As the thieves seem to have little regard for the time of day their brazenness may be their downfall.

The RCMP cannot be everywhere and even if a cruiser was passing the driveway where a crime was being committed, there would be no outward sign or clue to the criminal activity taking place. How would an officer know that the truck/van/car parked in the driveway about to leave with an ATV from the shed, a cash box from the fridge, or a passport from a dresser drawer was not the owners'?

As neighbours and persons familiar with the area we might.

That van wasn't cousin Trudy's and that chap with the funny hat that you don't recognize may be all the RCMP need to know to make an arrest.

RCMP Constable Mark Skinner said if you see anything un-ordinary don't worry about giving the police a call.

"If you can get a license plate number even better."

As for prevention from this frustratingly invasive crime, Cst. Skinner suggests letting reliable neighbours know you will be away.

"Lighting with a timer is usually a good deterrent as are motion sensors

see Public, page two

Heritage Fair



Grade Five students patiently wait for the judges at Baddeck Academy's Heritage Fair. Judges were impressed not only with the displays and their content but with the level of research and the competency of the students' presentations. Grades Five and Six teacher Kevin MacKenzie agreed saying, "The students did a wonderful job." Judge Joan MacInnis said, "It was a very close in the scoring with only one point separating the top three presentations at the Grade Six level." Finishing highest in the scoring at the Grade Six level was Marc Bethune and Maddie Campbell at the Grade Five Level. Judges from the Baddeck Historical Society were Joan MacInnis, Wayne Crawford and Jessie MacLeod.

Doctor shortage hitting home

Grim situation could become critical

by Jim Morrow

The future of professional health care in Victoria County was the topic of discussion at Municipal Council on April 18th when Drs. Buffet and Genge made presentations.

Dr. Buffet, representing one half of the doctors working out of Buchanan Memorial Hospital in Neil's Harbour said the next two to three years will be crucial in terms of recruitment of new doctors for the region as both he and his associate Dr. Murray are both at that age when retirement beckons.

The Cape Breton District Health Authority is responsible for finding and hiring doctors for the region. Dr. Buffet believes that to lure doctors to rural practices requires deep pockets and political clout.

"We have to compete with other jurisdictions in the country that can offer

houses, cars or other bonuses for doctors to relocate to their municipality," Dr. Buffet said.

The reality is that doctors can make more money working part time in the Northwest Territories than they can working full time in Nova Scotia. Dr. Buffet also said that New Brunswick pays their doctors 23 to 28% more than Nova Scotia pays its doctors.

Part of the problem is the number of graduates from medical school who wish to take on a rural posting. Both Drs. Buffet and Genge believe part of the problem is with the admissions procedures for medical school. They believe there is a better chance for graduating doctors who come from rural settings to return to a rural situation to take up their practice.

Dr. Buffet was incensed that Dalhousie Medical School made room for ten new seats but filled them all with stu-

dents from Saudi Arabia. "Those students are not likely to stay in Nova Scotia after they graduate," he said.

Both doctors also concur that the number of support staff as determined by the District Health Authority to treat patients is inadequate and even the nurse practitioners cannot attend to patients who have a serious triage rating and require a doctor's back-up in emergency situations.

Dr. Buffet also believes the ambulance service North of Smokey is wanting as the one of the two ambulances is usually busy doing transfers while the other must service a very large area. There is one Advanced Care paramedic in the north but because of scheduling will only be available for two days per work cycle.

Dr. Genge said that the addition of
 see Municipality, page three

Fire service study final report

Implementation one step at a time

by Jim Morrow

Marathon Human Resources Consulting Group Ltd. which had won the contract to do a Fire Service Study for Victoria County has handed in their final report.

Marathon's preliminary report was presented to Victoria County Council in January.

Mandated to examine all aspects of the fire services, Marathon looked at the current service levels provided; the areas of the County which are covered; the number of calls per department; the cost of the service rendered; the number of firefighters and their training oppor-

tunities; recruitment and fundraising; insurance; and other issues for the departments and the Municipality.

The final report follows the preliminary report with some expansion as to how the changes required may be implemented.

Chief Administrative Officer, Sandy Hudson told County Council on April 18th that the recommendations were well thought out and that the County's best approach would be a step by step process as the implementation of all of the recommendations at one time would not be to any volunteer fire department's

see Final, page two

Baddeck Academy School Advisory Committee

Meetings with Board and Deputy Minister

by Jim Morrow

The alterations and renovations at Baddeck Academy are ongoing but the new addition for the high school has been reduced by some 5,000 square feet.

Baddeck Academy's School Advisory Committee (SAC) was not pleased when the news of the size reduction filtered down to them.

A meeting with Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board's Director of Operational Services, Paul Oldford, was organized by the SAC for April 26th.

SAC member Karen Welton emailed the results of the meeting

explaining that it "was a chance for us all to clarify our situation and to make sure that the school board is on the same page as we are."

The meeting, Ms. Welton said, "was productive, but no progress was really made."

The SAC explained that having the drama room combined with other activities in the multi-purpose room is, as proposed, unacceptable and that there are insufficient spaces to allow administration to implement the PSP (Public School Program) to all students.

"With that in mind, our presentation
 see SAC, page three