

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Bring change to the New Year

#### The Editor

If you are like me and vow to make some changes in the new year, here are some that you can add to your list:

- become more knowledgeable about the leading cause of death due to gynecological malignancy, ovarian cancer, which will be diagnosed in approximately 75 Nova Scotian women next year
- know the signs and symptoms because there is NO test to detect ovarian cancer. See [www.ovarian-cancer.org](http://www.ovarian-cancer.org) for full details, or call toll free at 1-877-413-7970
- add your name to the list of volunteers in NS who have made great strides in raising funds and awareness (only 2.1% of cancer donations go to this disease, and the annual Walk of Hope in September is the leading fundraiser at OCC.)
- book a free "Knowledge is Power" presentation for your community or

workplace

- refer survivors and their families for support

Any of this information can be obtained at the Halifax office of Ovarian Cancer Canada (the ONLY national organization solely devoted to this cause), 404 7070. Emilie Chiasson, Atlantic Regional Manager, and Ally MacQueen, National Walk Director.

In 2005, a striking 12% of Canadian women claimed to have never heard of ovarian cancer, but Ovarian Cancer Canada has significantly improved this number, as in 2011 only 5% claimed to have never heard of this disease. Still, important misconceptions remain, as 1 woman in 4 wrongly believe the Pap test screens for ovarian cancer.

So, make a resolution to help us make important changes.

*Pat McDonald, 9 year ovarian cancer survivor, member Board of Directors, OCC, Bedford NS 902 835 8092*

### Is your cottage safe for the winter?

#### The Editor

The RCMP would like to remind cottage owners to take the necessary steps to prevent their cottages from becoming a target of a crime and that their property is safe and secure during the winter months.

Many break and enters are committed as a crime of opportunity and often, criminals see a vacant cottage as an easy target. Some helpful tips for cottage owners are:

- Remove all valuables from your cottage or at least from plain view.
- Secure all windows and doors. Ensure they are locked.
- Close all curtains and drapes.
- Ensure that your cottage is visited on a regular basis.
- Consider forming a cottage watch program with other cottage owners and take turns checking on each other's cottages throughout the winter.
- Provide your contact information to a friend or known acquaintance who resides in the area all year round and

can update you should something occur.

- If possible, ensure adequate lighting is present. Consider using motion sensors or timers for outdoor lights.
- Ensure all out buildings (garage/shed) are secured.
- Don't leave materials or items such as tools outside that could be used to assist in breaking into your cottage.
- Install an alarm system and provide the alarm company with a contact name and number of someone who lives nearby.

Cottage owners are encouraged to take a walk around their property to identify any areas that could make it easy for a thief to break into the property. It could be a window with a broken lock, or a door not properly secured. The more secure you make your cottage, the more difficult you make it for criminals and the less likely your cottage will be a property of interest.

*Media Relations Officer  
H Division, RCMP*

#### Letters to the Editor Policy

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All letters must bear the signature of the writer and include the writer's address and phone number for verification. Addresses and phone numbers will not be printed. The use of any letters submitted is at the discretion of the editor. The editor reserves the right to edit letters to meet space requirements, for clarity, or to avoid obscenity, libel or invasion of privacy.

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### January is Alzheimer's Awareness Month

#### The Editor

Currently over 15,000 Nova Scotians are living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, a number that is projected to double by 2038. According to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, 71,000 Canadians living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia are under the age of 65.

Dementia is a syndrome consisting of symptoms such as loss of memory, judgment and reasoning, and changes in mood, behaviour and communication abilities that affect their ability to function.

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. It's described as a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain, which causes thinking and memory to become seriously impaired.

January is Alzheimer Awareness Month and doctors in the province encourage Nova Scotians to make brain health a priority. Improving overall health and leading a healthy lifestyle may reduce the risk of developing dementia.

Researchers believe there is no single cause or treatment of Alzheimer's; however living a healthy lifestyle through exercising, eating well, keeping your brain active and engaging in social activities may help reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer's or other dementia. Changes in the brain may start decades before symptoms appear, so it is never too early to adopt brain-healthy habits.

Research increasingly confirms that you can reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or any form of dementia by participating in brain-healthy activities such as crosswords, Sudoku and word search puzzles.

Alzheimer's is not just an "old person's disease" and preventative action should start early in life.

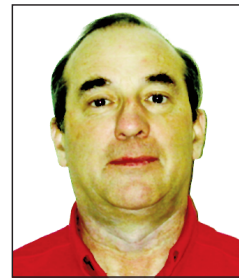
Doctors Nova Scotia encourages individuals to talk to their doctors about dementia and become familiar with the symptoms. For more information about the disease, visit [www.alzheimer.ca/en/ns](http://www.alzheimer.ca/en/ns).

*John Chiasson, BSc, MD,*

*President, Doctors Nova Scotia*

*www.doctorsns.com*

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



When the needles fell off the new artificial Christmas tree, I got bad vibes about the Christmas season that was about to unfold.

As it turned out, there was no need for any trepidation. We spent more time on the road and in different places than the Screaming Eagles. Almost every night found us in a different bed. It convinced me it had been the right decision not to pursue a professional sports career early in my life. A complete absence of any discernable talent also played a part. As it turned out we drove the winter roads as far as you can and still be in Nova Scotia. Christmas morning found us opening our socks on Cape Sable Island, the last spit of land before you tumble into the Gulf of Maine and become an American.

Cape Sable Island bills itself as the lobster Capital of the world and it is a title richly deserved. We were invited to a home for breakfast and the menu was scrambled eggs, bacon and sautéed lobster. The height of decadence. Except there it is the norm. It was good, very good actually, but I still prefer my lobster hot from the sacrificial pot with butter dripping down my chin. But don't get me wrong, I am not complaining, it was a treat unlike any other winter meal I have enjoyed.

Even though it was the dead of winter, boats continued to come and go, unloading their catch of lobster. It was a far cry from the warm water, near shore fishery we have around Cape Breton. Some of the boats had set gear 70 miles offshore and fishing them in the dead of winter is not for the faint of heart.

Although all the folks we met there were almost complete strangers

they, not surprisingly, were just like the folks here at home - welcoming, kind, and thoughtful. It reminded me of the time I was discussing my first move to Victoria County with a colleague from here, and I asked him what the people were like. He wisely asked me what they were like where I came from. I said, "great really, very nice." His so wise answer was "Well, you'll find people pretty much like that here." In other words, people are people and it is up to you to make it work. Those were words that have served me well.

A week of friends, family, and fine food equals fat. By the end of the holidays I was scared to talk to people face-on unless a button let go from a shirt and struck them with the impact of a stray bullet. I think the time has passed for dieting and I will have to go straight to diabetic detox.

There is still a bit of the boy in me and I get a charge out of getting gifts under the tree. Oh, I am reasonably decent at the giving end as well but I so enjoy the getting part as well. When you open up your gifts you often get things that reflect your life in so many ways. There was a finch feeder that was emblematic of my love of the birds and something that said winter. Santa also brought me a pair of chest waders that said fishing, my other passion and the summer ahead. It silently said to push the jellybeans away in order to fully enjoy the summer and the rivers that are so much a part of my life.

The season of indulgence is over now and soon, very soon, it will be back to basics, small sensible meals and salads. I am just worried a hit of broccoli may turn out to be toxic.

All in all it added up to a wonderful holiday season. It is my hope that it was for you as well and that 2012 fulfills at least part of the promise that a new year brings.

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