

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Help support local firefighters

The Editor

As Fire Chief for Oakhill Fire and District Department and a past President and past Executive Director of the Maritime Fire Chiefs Association (MFCA), I have seen firsthand the dedication of volunteer firefighters and their positive impact on the lives of residents and businesses around Nova Scotia.

Did you know that more than 70% of all firefighters in Canada are volunteers? They might be your teacher, plumber, home builder, or community leader who gives up their own time to train and prepare for when they are called upon in desperate times of need.

The Canadian Volunteer Fire Services Association (CVFSA), a national organization created to benefit the community by maintaining and strengthening Canadian volunteer fire services, has partnered with Duracell, a company with a dedicated history of supporting fire services while promoting fire safety, to develop a campaign that calls on all Canadians to show their support for the thousands of brave men and women who go the distance to protect more

than 3,000 Canadian Fire Department jurisdictions across the country whenever a fire emergency strikes.

I encourage all Nova Scotians to show their thanks for our Canadian volunteer firefighters by supporting the Power Those Who Protect Us campaign on now by the Canadian Volunteer Fire Services Association and Duracell. All you have to do is buy a specially-marked pack of AA20 Duracell batteries and two batteries will be added to a donation that goes to volunteer fire departments across Canada.

Batteries might seem like a small item but, just as they power many important devices in our homes, batteries are the key power source in a variety of firefighting and lifesaving equipment. Communication devices and lifesaving equipment like flashlights, thermal imaging cameras, chemical detectors, and defibrillators are just some examples of the battery-powered tools that firefighters use to protect the communities they serve.

John D. Robart, Fire Chief,
Oakhill & District Fire Department

Korea: Canada's Forgotten War

The Editor

April marked the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Kapyong – one of the most significant battles fought by the Canadians in the Korean War.

As a member of The War Amps Operation Legacy, a group of committed young people who are dedicated to preserving Canada's military heritage, I would like to highlight this anniversary.

On April 24-25, 1951, the 2nd Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry engaged in the Battle of Kapyong. From their stand on Hill 677, the Patricia's managed to hold their positions and re-open the supply route despite tremendous odds and bitter fighting. The Canadian action at Kapyong stopped the Chinese advance in this sector of the front for the rest of the war and earned the battalion the US Presidential Citation for valour.

Canada sent 26,791 soldiers to battle in Korea. More than 1,200 were seriously wounded and another 516 never came home. After the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed in 1953, the Canadians returned home amid little fanfare. There were no bands playing, and no parades. In fact, the Korean War had very little impact on Canadians, except, of course, those who fought in it or who lost loved ones.

To mark this anniversary, The War Amps has re-released its documentary Korea: Canada's Forgotten War to regular and specialty TV channels. Part of The War Amps Military Heritage Series, it is also available at a cost-recovery price of \$12 by calling 1 800 250-3030 or visiting waramps.ca.

Cara London,
Rothesay, NB

Letters to the Editor Policy

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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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New provincial tobacco strategy will help save lives

The Editor

On April 27th, the province announced its new comprehensive tobacco control strategy, Moving toward a Tobacco-Free Nova Scotia. This strategy couldn't come at a better time as Nova Scotia has one of the highest smoking rates in the country. Twenty per cent of Nova Scotians smoke, two per cent above the national average.

The new strategy has revived government's commitment to reduce smoking rates in our province and we commend the Department of Health and Wellness for taking this important step. The strategy puts forth over 50 actions ranging from focusing on the behaviour of the tobacco industry to exploring legislation to increase smoking cessation.

Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death in our province and the strategy is an excellent blue-

print to reduce this death toll. If health-care providers, district health authorities, government and other stakeholders can work together to implement this strategy we can reduce the rates of cancer in the province and improve the sustainability of our health-care system.

Doctors are pleased that the province has a new tobacco strategy and are hopeful that as our province's financial state improves government will invest additional resources into tobacco control. It's important that we work to prevent illnesses from developing so that less Nova Scotians are affected by cancer and chronic diseases.

Currently in our province there are many resources available to help smokers quit. For more information about how to quit, talk to your doctor or other health-care provider about resources accessible in your area.

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

Chuck Thompson's "Along the Trail"

Spring 2011



The other day I looked out my window and saw two Red-Wing Blackbirds hanging from a limb in the front yard.

This is proof positive that the reluctant season we call spring in Cape Breton is haltingly underway. I say haltingly because one day it is 16° and the next you are humped up against a bitter Nor-East wind that chills the soul.

Another sure sign, unmistakable in its meaning, is the nighttime buzz around your head as the light fades in the Western sky. Yes, I am proud, if not pleased, to report the first mosquito bite of the year. It was a familiar, quick, nasty bite on the Easter weekend and nothing says spring in the country like flies, moths and bats. Soon, very soon, we will go to the garden draped in fly dope, netting, sunscreen to herald the arrival of summer in all its radiant glory.

There has been one difference this year as opposed to other springs. Just as the song sparrows and grackles arrived so too did another bird: the wily, fluffed up, head bobbing, promise spewing politician bird. This is a bird of another feather, erratic, frenzied, self important. Like the snowy owls of the Great North they only appear every four years or so (more often in recent years), then seem to experience a die back. By May 3rd the numbers will be reduced to a fourth of their prime migration numbers. Most will be blue in color, fewer will be red, and if the present migration continues the landscape will see a few more orange ones around.

Campaign 2011 has to be one of the duller ones in recent memory. It has gotten so bad the NDP have enjoyed unprecedented heights of popularity. I suspect this is much more of a migration away from the uninspiring mainstream leaders rather than a flight to a new ideology. Stephen Harper has lurched through a dull campaign looking like the tin man in the Aleve ad. "Canada needs a strong, central government." How

many times can you say that in six weeks? Laureen must be ready for Novocain by now having to sit on every hard chair from St. John's to Victoria listening to the same thing over and over and over!

Poor old Michael. The harder he tries, the more distant grows his audience. It must be so discouraging to a man who all his life has been paid princely sums to have people hear him now have most of a nation turn him off for a hockey game or Wheel of Fortune.

Jumping Jack is going to pass out with his newfound celebrity. I doubt that the NDP war rooms in their wildest dreams thought their campaign would take off like it has.

Lizzie May. Toast. Relegated to the dust bin of history or at the very least the recycle bin of history.

Since this column will be coming out on Election Day it behooves me to prognosticate (when else do you get to say behooves or prognosticate) what will happen. Before you bet the farm remember I predicted great things for Kim Campbell and the Tories in 1993. We all know how that turned out!

The Tories will gain 8 seats overall but still fall tantalizingly short of a majority. They will win both seats around St. John's, NL but lose two in N.S., South Shore and South West Nova. Cecil ("shot in the dark") Clarke will cut sharply into Mr. Eyking's majority but fall 2500 votes short. Close only counts in horse shoes and hand grenades.

The Liberals will continue their freefall to third place but will keep enough of a core to come roaring back next time. Whenever next time is.

Overall the election that inspired few will elect many. Cape Breton, regardless of the color stripe, will pine for the Allan J days when every picket fence got a fresh coat of paint. We will be without influence whoever gets in.

One thing about democracy. You get what you ask for even if you don't realize that is what you asked. It doesn't get any better than that.

charlesthompson47@hotmail.com