### Victoria Standard

## Cape Breton Weather **Prospecting for rain!**



by Bill Danielson What do you do if you buy one hundred rain gauges in а moment of weakness?

First, you try to hide the evidence from your spouse. You stash the three huge cartons in a back room or a shed: any place where they won't get

seen and won't get wet.

When your spouse discovers the cartons about 20 minutes after you hide them, you explain that you're going to sell them to the first one hundred Cape Bretoners who have always wanted to own a rain gauge but don't have one. Of course, there are conditions: you'll sell a gauge only if the buyer agrees to install it out in the open, far from the house, and if he or she further agrees to trudge outside to check it every day at the same time, rain or shine, and email you their measurements. Given those simple requirements, I figured my one hundred rain gauges would sell like hotcakes. Our rainfall network would be second to none.

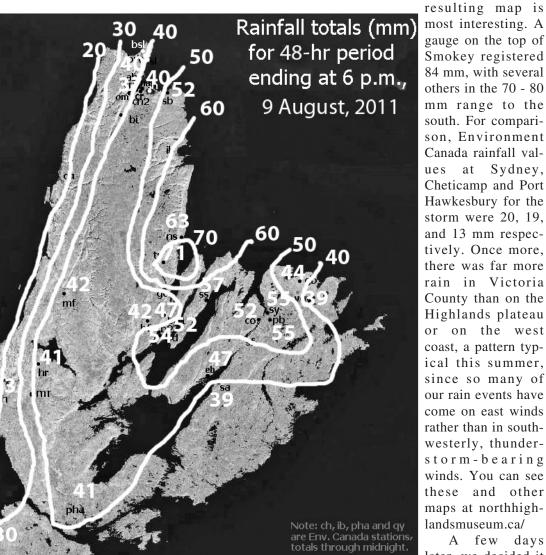
Well, some of this actually came true. tra About forty weather

watchers have joined the network and now check their gauges and report daily, at least when they don't forget or go on vacation. Moreover, their data are terrific! They are mutually consistent, and they reveal clear patterns. For example, the rainfall chart for August 8-9 shows the effect of Cape Breton's topography on the rainfall under an easterly wind flow. Greatest amounts occurred on Island's east side, especially in Victoria County, with diminished amounts to the west. It's also inter-

esting to see the zones of greater rainfall extending southwestward along Boularderie Island and St. Andrews Channel, and southeastward along the Sydney River. Data from Environment Canada's rainfall measuring sites in Cape Breton (Sydney, Port Hawkesbury, Cheticamp and North Mountain) did not reveal this level of detail, of course; in fact the heaviest rain happened to miss all four of those sites.

8

the definitely "unimproved," road up onto the Highlands plateau, eventually descending into Margaree and then returning down north via Cheticamp. Along the way, I installed a number of rain gauges and recorded their locale by GPS. After the rain storm of August 22-23, I retraced my course. At each site I recorded the rainfall and replaced the gauge in the ground (except for one gauge that apparently escaped.) Again, the



The main failure of my rain gauge project lay in the fact that most observers already had a rain gauge, or they bought one locally. For some reason, they seemed reluctant to spent \$16 on postage for an \$8 instrument. As a result, there still are more rain gauges in Smelt Brook than in any other place in the world.

With all that equipment at my disposal, I decided to do a little rain prospecting. Early one morning a few weeks ago, I drove our creaky old car south to Wreck Cove, then west on most interesting. A gauge on the top of Smokey registered 84 mm, with several others in the 70 - 80 mm range to the south. For comparison, Environment Canada rainfall values at Sydney, Cheticamp and Port Hawkesbury for the storm were 20, 19, and 13 mm respectively. Once more, there was far more rain in Victoria County than on the Highlands plateau or on the west coast, a pattern typical this summer, since so many of our rain events have come on east winds rather than in southwesterly, thunderstorm-bearing winds. You can see these and other maps at northhighlandsmuseum.ca/ A few days

later, we decided it was time for a new car. This marked the end of my brief foray into rain prospecting in the Highlands, because we weren't going to take a new car over those dreadful roads! The loyal old, rattly Rav carried me up over the course one more time, and I retrieved the gauges. The rain network soldiers on, thanks to our volunteer observers, but the Highlands instruments are home again.

So once again, I have "a few" extra rain gauges. Anybody need one?

# Funding available for County health grants

#### Special

The six volunteer Community Health Boards (CHBs) within the Cape Breton District Health Authority, including the Victoria County CHB are accepting applications for grants to help fund health related projects.

The grants help to support organizations or community based initiatives that promote healthy eating, active living, mental health, coping skills, healthy child development and improved personal health.

The grant funding is provided to the CHBs from two sources. The District contributes funds that are directed to the "Communities In Motion" and "Healthy Eating" initiatives. Nova Scotia Health and Wellness funds the "Wellness Initiative" grants.

Each CHB reviews applications from the area it represents and awards the grants. No project is considered too small. They can include new programs, pilot projects, onetime events or on-going community initiatives.

The deadline for applications is Saturday, November 5, 2011.

The District's six CHBs include: Central Cape Breton County, East Cape Breton County, Northside the Lakes, North Inverness, Central Inverness and Victoria County.

Information on the CHBs, the areas they cover and the grant application forms are available online by visiting the Community Health Boards section of the District's website: www.cbdha.nshealth.ca

For more information you can also contact the Victoria County CHB representative: Victoria County CHB Laura Dixon at 295-1092 ldixon@seasidehighspeed.com

### LARGE CAPE BRETON **ESTATE AUCTION Baddeck Community Hall** Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> - 11am (viewing beginning at 10 am)

We have been favoured with instructions to sell the contents of the lovely 8-room Carmichael Drive home from Sydney River (Lee Estate) containing fine contemporary furnishings. Also, we will sell partial contents from a local home with many nice old pieces.

Complete list not available in time for this newspaper printing. Please refer to our website week of auction for up-to-date info/photos: www.pidgeonauctions.com A VERY NICE AUCTION!

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