

THE EASTERN SHORE'S MONTHLY COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

VOLUME 7, ISSUE MAY/2020

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Editorial

Monday morning April 20, I woke up early to hear the boats heading out to sea to “dump” their lobster pots: it’s “dumping day” in this part of Nova Scotia. We live in a small place. The fishers are our neighbors and we have deep respect for them. It is dangerous work made more so by the virus.

The virus has increased tensions in this tiny province of less than 1 million people. So far, from the weekend’s devastation, we can count at least 22 fewer plus one gunman. We may never be able to see inside the mind of the man who did this to find out what he was thinking or not, feeling or not. But what has been lost, in addition to his victims’ beautiful lives, is the idea of calculated risk.

Our fisher neighbors know of the dangers of the sea. Precautions are taken; soon they will return with their catches. We will go to the wharf and welcome them and buy their lobsters and celebrate what this small place offers.

But the danger of random devastation by a single man with a gun was unknown here, until now. It is unspeakably sad because it is counter to the way people live, calculating risks in order to preserve and persevere. It breaks community and reveals how fragile we are, in these virus days.

Our hearts go out to all of those whose lives have been torn apart by this burst of seemingly random violence. But still, the sound of the boats heading out this morning to place their pots was a reminder that despite the sense of loss and fear, and because the people here are focused and brave, there will be lobster, and scapes, and tomatoes, and beautiful crafts, and music, and community. Hearts will ache with loss, but still the boats go out. There will be fish for all.

~ Karen Bradley

Welcome to a Special Edition!

With newspapers going out of business left and right across Canada, we are grateful to all of the businesses that have supported this paper over the years, and to the people who have signed up as monthly supporters. Together, they have made it possible for us to share news and insights from people all along the Eastern Shore and the Valley about the tremendous changes that the COVID-19 virus has forced upon us.

We are heartened by the stories about how people have been coming together in community to tackle the new problems that have emerged as we cope with the difficulties of social isolation and unemployment. Local businesses have stepped up: Musquodoboit Harbour’s Mackenzie Atlantic retooled to start producing one million much-needed face shields for our health workers; small businesses like Uprooted Café, Noor’s, and Sober Island Brewing created safe delivery systems for customers. Sewers dug out their sewing machines, gathered materials, and started cranking out facemasks.

As we waded deeper into the world of lock-down, Karen Bradley and I reached out to a cross-section of people from North Preston to Middle Musquodoboit to Sheet Harbour to find out what lessons they had learned already, and to gather their thoughts about what kinds of things they hoped might be different when we have moved past the current dangers.

On the one hand, as a survivor of the last polio epidemic noted, we had become complacent, despite ample warnings, about the dangers of new pandemics sweeping our totally globalized world. Nor were we as appreciative of, or as generous toward, our poorly paid health care workers. As Shelley Fashan reflected, “How fragile our world is.”

The pandemic has put on painful display an array of the inequities that plague our country, and the world as a whole. The plight of the elderly housed in nursing

...continued on next page

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Oldest Nova Scotian Passes

We are sad to report the passing on April 13, 2020 of Florence Webber, who at age 111, was Nova Scotia's oldest living person. Born in Clam Harbour on July 22, 1908, she lived her entire life on the Eastern Shore, except for a brief foray into Ontario. The *Cooperator* joined in the celebration last summer of her 111th birthday with this lovely picture from her home at the Birches Nursing Home in Musquodoboit Harbour.



According to her obituary, Florence is survived by her daughters, Connie (Mrs. Robert Hillis), Ontario; and Audrey (Mrs. Merlin Crawford), Bedford; grandchildren Trevor, Lianne and Bradley Matheson, Roy Webber, Gail Coan, Lynn Jones, and Lori Crawford; six great-grandchildren and two great great-grandchildren; as

well as many nieces and nephews. Florence was predeceased by her husband, Eugene Webber; her son, Roland; and her granddaughter, Cindy Reynolds; her parents, Susan and Amos Drake; sisters, Evelyn, Miriam and Audrey; and brothers, Harrison, Seldon and Ivan.

Special Edition Continued...

homes with too few underpaid staff has been horrifying. And there were concerns about the inadequacies of the province's already weak mental health programs to deal with the huge increases in stress.

The lock-down, forcing so many people to attempt to work at home or school their children online, has cast a harsh light on the lack of adequate Internet access, either because of cost, or in rural areas, of poor or no service at all. There was broad agreement that fixing this long-standing problem should be a high priority soon.

But almost everyone was both surprised and pleased at the speed and coordination all three levels of government have displayed. There is no question that the crisis has opened the door to policy changes that would never be taking place otherwise, like the letter signed by Senator Colin Deacon and 49 other Senators calling on the Prime Minister to set up a Universal Basic Income program.

Several people touched on the vulnerability of our food supply. But they also noted that families are cooking together more and supporting the re-localization of food, energy and goods.

Along the way, we were especially moved by an essay by the Indian novelist and activist Arundhati Roy. In the final two paragraphs of "The Pandemic is a Portal," she summed things up:

"Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.

"We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it."

~ Richard Bell, Karen Bradley

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Learning Now, Looking Ahead

Barbara Markovits (Clam Harbour)

Barbara Markovits has been a grassroots activist for several decades, including a long stint as head of the Eastern Shore Forest Watch. She and her late husband Hank Burrows spent several years in Haiti, where he became an ordained Anglican minister.

"I'm old enough to remember the last polio epidemic, where every summer families in Winnipeg that could afford it would go off to their cottages and stay away all summer. My parents were both doctors, and they were terrified that they might bring it home and give it to us kids."

"We wrestled all those terrible diseases to the ground, scarlet fever, diphtheria, whooping cough, and people got quite cavalier about the possibility of an epidemic from something new. We have not treated public health with the respect that it deserves."

"COVID-19 is making all the cracks in our country bigger, more visible. What's happening in our nursing homes is unforgiveable. What I'd like

to see is to write long term-care into the Canada Health Act. We need social housing for people who need care, at the level of one person to a room in small facilities. And large facilities, like Northwood, after they've been cleansed of the current virus, should be turned into housing units for the homeless and the poorly housed. And we need to pay the people providing care a decent wage."

"The virus is showing us how inadequate all the programs, such as they are, that are supposed to help the most vulnerable in our society, the elderly, the homeless, the poorly housed, the women in danger of violence. It's time for a guaranteed livable income for everyone."

Or suppose we said that when a person turns 18, they are entitled to housing, like they do in one of the Scandinavian countries. How about that as a baseline! You keep everyone housed, you produce jobs that can't be outsourced, and you create opportunities for innovation in a vital sector. And you get the government putting taxpayers' money where taxpayers actually want it put."

Markovits says she's never forgotten some of the lessons she learned from her family's experiences getting through the Depression. "I learned from my mother to live in a state of preparedness for the unexpected. I can live for a month on the food I've got in my freezer. And like all retired people, I've learned how to make do on a small income. I was amused to find the latest minor amount of money from the government in my bank account. But no one has said anything about permanently increasing the Old Age Pension."

Markovits said that in thinking about the kinds of changes she hoped to see as a result of pandemic, she thought of some words from Dr. Paul Farmer, who has done years of public health work in Haiti. "Farmer says that 'What's wrong with the world is that one life is worth more than another.' That's what COVID-19 is showing us on a small level. That has to change! That's the change we want."

Learning Now, Looking Ahead

Shelley Fashan (Lake Echo, long-time community organizer, now with Inspiring Communities, Seniors)

We are still learning lessons, aren't we? There are SO many unknowns and too much blaming. Try to find solutions!

The pandemic has impacted all of us and there's a sad sense of collective impact. I think we now realize how inter-connected we really are. We also need to be more appreciative of the people who do the physical work — like keeping things clean and providing access to food.

I think we are finding out how important our family is. And we are appreciating the environment and how important it is to care for it.

Without the newer technology coming into play, I wouldn't be able to communicate with those I do. How important that piece is! My new job is a virtual thing now.

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For further information, contact Sheila Spicer, Self Employment Benefits Coordinator, at 902-827-5564 or toll-free at 1-800-565-2773.



How fragile our world is! We have this structure that's been in place forever and a day and it's just fallen apart.

Do we really want an economy that just serves the 1%? Don't we want a more equitable system?

I want to see us explore alternative energies so we are not relying on oil and pollutants — and a more equitable distribution of wealth. And what is wealth anyway? Money is not helping us! I'd like to see us WELL.

I think about what's causing the virus to impact vulnerable communities disproportionately. What creates that? We need adequate housing, water, and health resources. We now have an opportunity to build new systems, IF WE WANT TO....

At least three generations will know about this pandemic as a part of their experience. We can hope this will shape how we come out of it, how we rebuild.

People are the power, not money...I think we are just starting to realize it. People are going back to their communities. The global institutions aren't going to be there to help you; it's your community.

Learning Now, Looking Ahead

Emma Murphy
(Musquodoboit Harbour, Owner of Uprooted Market)

It's been such a whirlwind! I have learned how quickly you can adapt. And that this has been an opportunity. I'm so grateful that the local businesses are working together to support the local food system and keep the province fed.

It hasn't been as difficult to navigate online ordering and delivery as I imagined. People adapted quickly.

One thing I've been noticing: it seems like people are getting a lot more ingredients — cooking more — that should continue! My dried beans didn't sell well until this moment but now I am seeing lots of orders, and also eggs, flour, etc. Clearly, people are baking a lot more! And being in the kitchen and eating together is a great thing. We should continue that togetherness.

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Learning Now, Looking Ahead

Senator Colin Deacon
(East Petpeswick)

It's something to look back ONE month and see how this blew up. March 12 we were debating whether Parliament would shut down; on March 13 we passed CUSMA (The Canadian-US-Mexico Agreement because we didn't want to delay in such uncertainty. The world changed very quickly.

It's interesting to note that the virus itself doesn't spread; people spread it. We spread it because we move around so much.

I am focusing on what's do-able. I think the government of Canada has done a phenomenal job of monitoring and iterating what the public needs. Usually, political parties dig in and hold onto a position. But in this case they all moved very quickly. Now as a large and diverse entity, you can't move quickly without making mistakes. It takes an ability to balance among competing priorities. But I am so impressed with the iterations of policies that have happened. When we started to address how to get funds to people, we were going to use the EI system, but changed to using CRA—much more efficient— for example. I didn't think it was possible but wow—we can do this! Focusing our energy enough opens all sorts of possibilities.

Economically, technology has been hugely important to the Maritimes. In late 2019, the tech sector grew to 65 million dollars a quarter in payroll. We need that growth and job creation to return and continue.

Government can't fix world markets such as the price of lobster, for example. It has been tragic for those who just got into the business. Also investments in other sectors.

especially oil and gas, which are down 90%. But we can mitigate what is related to COVID by providing assistance in a responsible manner.

We are Lesson Learning!

Crisis creates opportunity and we have significant opportunities. We are seriously moving toward Universal Basic Income, and we know we need improved privacy across the country's digital framework, among other needs and opportunities.

I think UBI could be the healthcare of our generation. The gaps across society can be lessened. If given a chance, people can meaningfully change their life. EI has too many controls: it's all about constraint and not empowerment. Whereas UBI would change health and education costs over time.

Learning Now, Looking Ahead

Patricia Auchnie
(East Lawrencetown; founder of Nova Salutem Inc., practicing Clinical Therapist and Daring Way™ Facilitator; MSW, RSW)

What comes to mind is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Everyone's been forced to acknowledge that food, safety, and shelter are required for us to function well. The deep divide between those with and without has put a spotlight on the way we've been operating as a species. I hope and I do see more compassion for others and shared humanity.

As humans, now we can see how fear drives our behaviour. Fear is something designed to protect us, but we have been conditioned to be disconnected from fear. We do everything to not feel vulnerable or helpless.

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COVID-19

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For me: conscious and unconscious fears are coursing thru all of us. Any experience of scarcity of food or safety does not leave you. People can feel lost and confused and be listless and grieving. That speaks to a larger problem of the species. Educating our children about the ways we seek to protect ourselves is important, but can lead to maladaptive behaviours too.

My biggest fear is that we won't take the opportunities for change. The powers-that-be that say we are all in this together: that's bullshit. The ones who want to fix it all now are shaming all those who are not functioning well. We are not yet equitable. In many ways, the expectations of how people are and how fast they can change are astronomical.

We must take care of each other. And the first step is to take care of ourselves. In order to connect with others, connect with yourself. Ask yourself: Who do you want to be in the face of this? Everything comes from that. I hope that the pandemic is allowing space for reflection. But for those trying to survive this: safety and protection come first.

Not yet, but after we have some security, then we can find enlightenment, find peace, reconstruct and revise what we want our communities to look like. I refuse to be shamed out of having a vision of a better world.

Learning Now, Looking Ahead

**Ed Empringham
Mushaboom**

Ed Empringham wears several hats: he's the chair of the Sheet Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce, the board chair for the Harborview Lodge nursing home, and one of the co-founders of Sheet Harbour's FM and online radio station, CHRR, 94.7 FM.

Empringham said he was very concerned about what he believed was likely to be a double blow from a weak lobster season and the loss of the summer tourist season.

"People thought for a while that there could still be a tourist season," Empringham said, "but with the announcement that the border's going to be closed for at least another month, I'm doubtful. We don't have a winter season for tourism. We're going to be losing a lot of seasonal jobs this summer that people were counting on."

The lock-down has also exposed the weaknesses of Internet services in the far-eastern parts of HRM, and the deep connections between poverty and Internet access. "The lack of access to the Internet brings up a whole poverty discussion we need to have that's really important," Empringham said. "It's a fact out here that one-third of families have either inadequate access, or not all."

Empringham said he was encouraged by some of the things local business were doing. He also praised Atlantic Gold, which he said had been replacing lost funding for the food bank, the Lions, the Legion, and Search & Rescue. "None of our restaurants are open, but Fairwinds Motel and Restaurant has limited take-out. The other night, they did a partnership with Sober Island Brewing where you could get two orders of fish and chips and four cans delivered to your door, for \$44.

Empringham said he had been impressed by the outreach efforts of the area's political representatives, MP Sean Fraser, MLA Lloyd Hines, and District 2 City Councillor David Hendsbee. "One of the most useful things I've seen is the COVID-19 benefits calculator on Sean Fraser's website that's helps you work through what programs you qualify for and how to apply."

While living in rural HRM has its problems, Empringham thinks there are also some positive advantages. "We're so lucky we live rurally. People are more self-sufficient to begin with, and there tends to be stronger community support. And we can just go outside! I've already built a new raised bed garden. That's much better than being stuck in an apartment in town."

Empringham noted that one of the complaints he's been hearing the most about recently is the closing of the sports fishing season, which was supposed to start on May 1. Not being able to start fishing is another example of how the virus has disrupted annual rural rituals.

He was skeptical about whether the gig economy would survive. "You've got all these millennials with huge debts. Things were OK when the economy was OK, but now they're hurting. When we come out of this, it's going to be a tough sell to get kids to go back to such uncertainty. They're going to want more permanence—full-time jobs."

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Learning Now, Looking Ahead

Helen Jenson
(Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre)

I'm so happy to see governments are cooperating, working together, and sharing resources. I'm also glad to see how we appreciate the doctors, nurses, and grocery store workers. Everybody has a role to play.

We've learned we don't have the answers. We are all learning how to deal with uncertainty, as it comes

...continued on page 9

HALIFAX

HALIFAX DISTRICT 2 COUNCILLOR'S COMMUNIQUE MAY 2020 — ISSUE #270 — HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS MESSAGE

These are difficult and uncertain times for our communities, province, nation and planet. This COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic has us all on edge. Together, we are facing a very serious crisis. The impacts are far reaching, and we are all feeling personally challenged in different ways. But we all need to listen and act on the directions set out by Dr. Robert Strang, NS Chief Medical Health Officer and our Public Health authorities. All of us should be familiar with the daily advisory messages.

These must be taken very seriously:

- Wash your hands often
- Avoid touching your face
- Keep 2 metres separation from others, and
- If you have travelled outside of Nova Scotia, you must self-isolate for 14 days upon your return.

Remember that you, and others you see, may be a carrier of the virus, regardless of appearance or the lack of any symptoms. If you feel unwell, contact 811. Let's be role models for our family, friends and neighbours. Treat those around you with kindness. Show you care by keeping your distance. And while it is important that we remain physically apart from one another, we've never been stronger together than we are now, at this moment. Social media can span social distancing. Together, we can show compassion and protect those who are most vulnerable. Together, we will meet our collective responsibility to support and care for one another. I am very proud of the volunteers and helpers that have come forth to help others in their communities. Simply put, by doing your part, you will help save lives. If we all do our part, we will get through this—together. **Take Care and Be Safe!**

GRANTS APPLICATION EXTENDED

HRM Community Grants application deadline has been extended to May 15th. On-line applications and program guidebooks are available at: www.halifax.ca/business/doing-business-halifax/community-non-profit-resources/community-grants

ILLEGAL DUMPING FINES

During its April 2nd virtual meeting, Regional Council directed staff to prepare amendments to the HRM Solid Waste Bylaw to get tougher with bigger fines. The proposed amendments will reverse the onus when it comes to illegal dumping. Right now, the responsibility falls onto the property owner to clean up any mess. But if any type of identification can be found in amongst the debris, then that someone will bear the burden for cleaning up the dumped materials. Other municipalities in the Province have changed their solid waste bylaws to reverse the responsibility to hold more people accountable for their own trash no matter where it is found dumped illegally. Amendments will return to Council in the future. The report can be found here: www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/200402rc731.pdf

HRM TAX BILL EXTENDED—JUNE 1ST

The HRM Interim bill was mailed out in mid-March with an original due date of Thursday, April 30th. It has now been extended to Monday, June 1st. The final bill will still be due on October 31st. Instead of having two large payments, you can arrange a payment plan to pay in smaller monthly amounts or apply for a deferral if necessary. If you have any inquiries about your tax bill, please call the Halifax Contact Centre at 311 or go on-line to: <http://www.halifax.ca/taxes/index.php>.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week is May 3rd–9th. Everyone should be prepared and able to take care of themselves for a 72-hour period from any potential harm caused by a significant weather event or incident. However; this COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic has certainly taught us to be even more prepared than ever before. It's important that we follow ALL Public Health Orders that are in place for our own good and protection. Our district is very fortunate to have two Joint Emergency Management (JEM) Teams: Eastern Shore JEM (Cole Harbour to Ship Harbour) and Sheet Harbour JEM (East Ship Harbour to Ecum Secum). Our JEM Teams are always looking for volunteers. For more details about them please go to: www.halifax.ca/fire-police/fire/emergency-management/volunteer-during-emergency. The fourteenth annual 'JEM Jamboree' was scheduled for Saturday May 9th at the Porters Lake Atlantic Superstore parking lot but had to be cancelled due to Social Distancing & Stay Home directives. So please continue listening to state of emergency procedures.

Here are few more EP websites:

www.getprepared.gc.ca
www.publicsafety.gc.ca
<http://novascotia.ca/dma/emo>
or on Twitter @nsemo
www.halifax.ca/fire-police/fire/emergency-management/emergency-preparedness-checklists
or on Twitter: @HRM_EMO

PROVINCE DECLARES FIRE BAN

As a response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Province decided to declare a ban on all open fires in or with 1,000 feet of any wooden area until May 15th. The NS Department of Lands & Forestry will be reassessing this ban in April to determine if it should be lifted or extended. For up to date information and further details, go to: <https://novascotia.ca/BurnSafe/>

NAIG 2020—CANCELLED TO 2021?

The North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) that were to be held July 12th–18th in Kijipuktuk (Halifax), Aldershot and Millbrook, have been postponed due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19. While there is still much more planning ahead, it is their intent to reschedule these Games to 2021.

RECOGNIZED LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

Each year HRM recognizes the extraordinary contributions of individuals and groups who volunteer their time and skills to provide services and programs in our communities. Since the Coronavirus pandemic cancelled the annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony, they will all be recognized at a later date. Here is a complete list of the eleven local honourees from our district for 2020:

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS:

Grace Robinson-Crawley—Lake Echo
Dylan MacKenzie—East Chezzetcook
Gwyn Osborne—Lake Charlotte
Leah Stienburg—Musquodoboit Harbour

ADULT VOLUNTEERS:

Brenda Brooks—East Preston
Kenny Dolomont—Porters Lake
Sha'ondra Downey—North Preston
Rhonda Frank—Head of Chezzetcook*
Kent Smith—Musquodoboit Harbour
Gary Stronach—Mineville
Marilyn Smith—East Preston*+
*denotes Provincial Award recipients
+denotes Provincial Volunteer of the Year

Congratulations & Many Thanks to You All!

HSW MOBILE DEPOTS POSTPONED



Operations at the HRM Household Special Waste (HSW) depot at 20 Horseshoe Lake Drive in the Bayers Lake Industrial Park have been suspended until further notice. Residential CFC removal service from old refrigerators and freezers has also been halted. These old appliances can not be collected for metal recycling while they contain CFC's (Chlorofluorocarbon 'freon' gas). Residents are asked to hold onto these items until the program resumes. Furthermore, all scheduled Mobile HSW Depots have been cancelled until further notice too. In the meantime, please stockpile these HSW items safely. Impacts to HRM's solid waste program are kept up to date online at www.halifax.ca/coronavirus. Residents may also register for service alerts through the Halifax Recycles mobile app, or online at www.halifax.ca/whatgoeswhere.



Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor—Councillor municipal—Comhairlaiche—Wunaqapeme'
District 2: Preston—Chezzetcook—Eastern Shore

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