

Working Together to Save An Osprey Family

By Richard Bell

Employees of Nova Scotia Power, the Department of Natural Resources, and Hope for Wildlife combined forces in a unique effort that saved a family of ospreys on Jeddore Harbour at the end of June.

The problem began with an osprey nest on a NS Power pole overlooking Jeddore Harbour. Something set off a small fire that burned up half the nest. When NS Power workers got up to the nest, they found three chicks, two of which were still alive. The two remaining chicks were taken to Hope for Wildlife.

Meanwhile, DNR staff from the Jeddore office began working with Nova Scotia Power on an innovative plan to get the osprey family back together. Kris Lambert, a DNR wildlife and forest technician based out of the Jeddore office, led the effort. Lambert described the rescue effort in an interview with the *Cooperator*.

“The adults were hanging around, still trying to nest on the burnt platform,” Lambert said. “We checked with Hope for Wildlife, and the chicks were doing well. The best chance the chicks had for living a normal life was to get them back together with their parents. We thought about building a nest, even though we found that no one had ever tried this approach before.”

“We worked with Nova Scotia Power to put in a new nesting pole next to the one that burnt. They also put some hardware on the burnt pole to discourage the nest.”

“I looked at photos of osprey nests and got the fire crew to bring a truckload of dead branches and other material. Nova Scotia Power put together a platform, and over the next few days, we built a nest. It had to be big enough to contain the chicks when we put them up there, so that the wind wouldn’t blow them out.

“We got the new nest installed on the pole, Hope for Wildlife came out with the two chicks, and a Nova Scotia Power lineman took the chicks up to the new nest. We didn’t know what was going to happen.”

“Around 5pm, the parents showed up. At first they ignored the new nest and kept trying to build on the old burnt



pole. They took turns circling over the new nest, and then went back to the burnt pole. Around 6:30, the female perched on the rim of the new nest. A half-hour went by, and the male came by and hung out on a nearby birch tree. Then they both left for an hour-and-a-half.

“Around 9pm, the female showed up with what looked like a fish. She landed, took off, came back 10 minutes later, and then flew off. We didn’t see her come back.

“But she did come back at 6am, shuffling some of the sticks around and moving the chicks. And at 6:30am, the male arrived with a fish, which the female pulled apart and fed to the chicks.

“This was a great project. Everyone worked well together. We had the resources to do it, we put it together, and it couldn’t have worked out any better.”

Akoma Holdings Incorporated is leasing land to Northwood to build and operate 96-bed long-term care rooms near the historic African Nova Scotian communities of North Preston, East Preston Lake Loon, and Cherry Brook. In a July 5 press release, Kathleen Mitchell, Board President, Akoma Holdings Inc., said, “In consultation with the community, it was evident that a long-term care facility was needed. A new long-term care facility at Akoma will be a welcoming home for all, with opportunities for Africentric programs and services, and employment for at least 200 people within the Preston Township area.”

Residents Resist Clam Farm

By Richard Bell

Residents of Three Fathom Harbour are taking their opposition to a proposed clam farm in their back yards to new levels. August 1, 2023 is the deadline for the provincial Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture to decide whether to renew the license for this “special experimental license” for 14.2 hectares for another year (Aquaculture License and lease AQ5001).

In their effort to persuade DFA to refuse this license renewal, members of the Causeway Road Beach Action Community (CRBAC) have gathered hundreds of signatures on a petition, raised \$3,000 and retained an attorney, and researched a detailed analysis of social and scientific issues which they believe DFA failed to consider in granting the original license.

In a letter to DFA, the CRBAC has requested a moratorium on any further work on the site “until all coastal access, environmental and community impacts of the experimental/operational soft-shell clam aquaculture in Three Fathom Harbour are fully assessed and published.” They emphasize that they are not opposed to aquaculture in principle but had strong objections to a “lack of transparency in the site selection process,” especially with regard to “the assessment criteria that were being used in the site selection process.”

Government regulation of clam aquaculture is fractured between many federal and provincial agencies, ranging from the obvious (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Nova Scotia Dept. of Fisheries and Aquaculture), to the not-so obvious (Canadian Food Inspection Agency). To learn more about what assessments

were done before the original granting of the license, CRBAC asked ten federal and provincial agencies for “Documentation of any agency review (e.g., technical reports, internal review process, correspondence, scientific studies, etc.) that has been conducted on the ecological, environmental, cultural and community impact.”

Susan Cakmak, a CRBAC member whose small pier stands on the edge of the proposed “special experimental license,” told the *Cooperator* in an interview that the group was especially concerned about whether NSDFA had considered the potential impact on the area’s eelgrass areas.

In a news release, CRBAC reports that “two scientists in our action committee recently discovered that around four hectares (or 30% of the licence area) is covered in dense or sparse eelgrass beds.... eelgrass is an ‘Ecologically Significant Species’ (ESS) protected under federal legislation (Section 35 of the Fisheries Act) which prohibits a harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction (HADD) to eelgrass and other fish habitats.” Given the presence of this eelgrass, “it’s clear that the AQ5001 license should never have been approved.

CRBAC has also been conducting a parallel investigation to identify what it considers more suitable sites that “do not contain significant eelgrass cover,... are not in proximity to a public beach,... and are in lower population density.”

Cakmak said CRBAC was planning to submit the complete version of its report to NSDFA early in the week of July 17.

Ice Cream Social

Harbour Lites Senior’s Club is holding an Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social!

Edyth Shuman, President of Harbour Lites, was surprised to hear most of the members had never heard of an Ice Cream Social. She grew up on a farm in PEI and each year there would be a number of these events in each community. They would be sponsored by the churches, women’s institute and/or the local school.

Harbour Lites, 167 Hwy #357, Musquodoboit Harbour will hold their Ice Cream Social at 2-4pm on Sunday, July 30. It will consist of all the favourites – sundaes, homemade cookies and squares or our old favourite ice cream cone.

There will be music as well as a Silent Auction and a New to You Table.

Adults \$5 and children 12 and under \$3.

Look forward to seeing you.

Special thanks the Polar Bear Express for donating the ice cream.



Preston By-Election Overview

By David Shuman

Election Day for the Preston by-election is August 8.

After Liberal MLA Angela Simmonds stepped down on April 1, Premier Tim Houston called the byelection to replace her seat on July 7. This election will be the first one in which voters will be using an electronic voting system, which in theory should make tabulating the results when the polls close much faster.

At this writing, three candidates have completed the official nominating process. Liberal candidate Carlo Simmons is the owner of Simmons Paving Company. New Democratic Party candidate Colter Simmonds is a youth advocate and basketball coach. Progressive Conservative candidate Twila Grosse spent 35 years in finance at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport.

Bobby Taylor registered to run for the Nova Scotians United Party. By the time of publishing, he had yet to file his nomination papers. (The deadline for filing is July 19.)

Currently, Nova Scotia has a majority Progressive Conservative government. The seat was most recently represented by the Liberal Party and has been since 2003.

Voting

Elections Nova Scotia has extensive information about how to vote, and the entire electoral process, on its website, <https://electionsnovascotia.ca>.

Am I Registered to Vote?

To find out if you are on the voter registration list or that your information is correct, call Elections Nova Scotia at 1-800-565-1504 or TTY 1-866-774-7074.

How Do I Register to Vote?

To vote in a provincial election, you must be a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years old on election day (August 8, 2023) and have lived in Nova Scotia for at least six months.

You can register on Election Day at our polling station if you have not already done so. To register on Election Day, the poll clerk can add your name to the list,

if you have the appropriate ID (the list of appropriate IDs is on the Elections Nova Scotia website.)

There are several methods for registering before Election Day through the mail, by email, or through an online voter registration service. You can also go to the returning office in your electoral district and apply in person.

E-balloting

On Election Day, voters will use traditional paper ballots. But for the first time, voters can use e-balloting to vote in a Provincial election before Election Day. After changes to the Elections Act in 2021, Elections Nova Scotia started development of an electronic voting system that will allow in-person balloting on a tablet.

E-balloting will open after nominations close on July 19. This is not internet voting and must be done at voting locations. For more information, please go to electionsnovascotia.ca/Preston2023.

E-voters will receive a voting card with a barcode from an elections officer. Then, they go to a voting booth with a privacy screen. The voting booth has a barcode scanner, a tablet, and a receipt printer.

When the voter scans their barcode, the tablet will show all nominated candidates on the screen. The voter will tap their preferred candidate and the tablet will ask for confirmation of their choice.

When the voter confirms their choice, the vote is sent to an encrypted, isolated system that can be tabulated after polls close on election day. At the same time, a receipt is printed with visual confirmation of the vote. Elections officers will instruct voters to put the receipt into an envelope, and then into a traditional voting box. This receipt will be used to verify in case of a recount.

Because of the digital system, elections officials expect pre-vote counting to take minutes, rather than hours.

Twila Grosse – PC

By David Shuman

Twila Grosse has been tackling tough issues throughout her 35 years working in business planning and budgeting at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport.

In an interview with the *Cooperator*, she said she brings what she learned managing problems at the airport to working with the people of the Preston riding as their next MLA.

“How do you eat an elephant?” Grosse said. “One bite at a time.”

Grosse credits her late sister with inspiring her to prepare for taking on a big new challenge after she retired. “I remember, before my sister passed some three years ago, she said: ‘You know Twila, I think that there’s still something else for you,’” said Grosse. “She sort of laughed, but she told me to stay open because I might not know what that challenge could be.”

Grosse grew up in a large family and has lived in Cherry Brook her whole life. She says her family is built on service, with teachers, ministers, and community leaders. Her brother, Russell Grosse, is the executive director of the Black Cultural Centre. Her says her faith plays a major role in who she is as a person.

When she stepped forward to run for the Progressive Conservatives, there wasn’t a moment that decided it for her—her years of experience pushed her to want to serve.

She says getting a seat in the legislature would be her chance to give back after a life of being blessed. Because her community is under-represented, she wants to be a “a voice and a choice at the table.”

Grosse has knocked on doors across the riding and says that she sees a lot of differences over the urban, suburban, and rural communities that make up this riding. She feels she can be the leader to bring them together.

Preston hasn’t been represented by a Progressive Conservative since 2003, when the PC’s MLA David Hendsbee was defeated by Liberal Keith Colwell, who would go on to serve nearly 20 years in the seat.

“I just look at this as an opportunity— I know the timing is right,” said Grosse.

Live Election
Night Coverage
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Carlo Simmons – Liberal

By David Shuman

Carlo Simmons told the *Cooperator* that he was initially skeptical when asked to run by Keith Colwell, the former Liberal MLA who represented the riding for around two decades. But after talking things over with his wife Loretta, he decided it was time to give back to his community.

Simmons has deep roots in North Preston. He was born and raised in North Preston, where he now lives with his wife and two daughters. One daughter is a nurse and the other is studying to be a veterinarian in Prince Edward Island. His wife works in the provincial government.

Simmons has been involved with community organizations for years. He serves as associate pastor at Word in Action Ministries in Dartmouth and has worked with the Preston Area Housing Association and the Back to School Initiative, providing supplies to students in the Caledonia area.

Simmons owns Simmons Paving Company, a business his father started nearly 50 years ago. Simmons said he admired his father’s example of serving the community. “Folks say ‘you have some big shoes to fill,’” Simmons said. “No, I don’t think so. I don’t think I’m

going to fill those shoes. I have to start my own footsteps.”

He cited his business sense and experience as an important quality setting him apart from the other candidates in the race. He’s been campaigning in the riding since the middle of May and said he has heard lots of concerns around affordable housing and senior care. “I’ve been talking to constituents that are having their grandkids living with them,” Simmons said.

“There are folks that are married living with them and their kids because they can’t afford housing – it’s too expensive.”

Simmons says his biggest goal for his riding is to bring people together over housing solutions. “There’s so many different communities and I know it’s going to be hard, but it’s a challenge that we all can work together.”

As MLA he says he would work on bringing the community together to discuss topics that impact them. He suggested working with leaders of different community groups across different areas of the riding to coordinate resources and plans.