

District 3

Warden is cautiously optimistic for County future

by Bruce Morrison, Warden and Councillor for District 3

As the global economy faces challenges I am cautiously optimistic about the future of Victoria County. However, we are not without challenges of our own.

We have to continue to maintain financial accountability by budgeting and managing our resources while not accumulating an operating deficit. As a Council we will continue to monitor the possible effects health care renewal may have on the services of the Buchanan Memorial and Victoria

County Memorial Hospitals.

Economic Development continues to be a priority. We have recently hired a Sustainability Development Officer (Nona MacDermid) and council will be supporting her pursuits.

Solid waste collection and management is a major expense to our County. Municipal Council's decision to take ownership of the collection process has resulted in several positive outcomes. The cost of collection has not increased significantly while we have created six full-time positions.

MLA Keith Bain

Many highlights in 2010

by Keith Bain, Member of Legislative Assembly

Highlights from 2010 include:

- having the honour of being chosen PC Caucus Chair in February;
- over 6km. of St. Ann's Loop reconstructed;
- over 11km. of Trans Canada Hwy. 105 resurfaced;
- section of Route 205 from Baddeck Village limits to Beinn Bhreagh resurfaced;
- various RIM projects throughout the constituency;
- work continues on replacement of Corson Bridge and Little Bras d'Or Bridge;
- St. Paul's Lighthouse was repatriated to Dingwall (the community is to be commended for their tireless efforts); and
- the erection of the new signs at both the Causeway and North Sydney recognizing Highway 105 as the "Mabel and Alexander Graham Bell Way".

During 2010 we also faced challenges as the result of washouts in the Meat Cove area, and just recently in various parts of the Cabot Trail from Ingonish to Margaree and Middle River. Transportation, EMO officials, and all involved are to be commended for their tireless efforts, as well as the communities of Meat Cove and Bay St. Lawrence as everyone worked together during a very difficult time.

Upcoming in 2011: Provincially, the major challenge at this time is the ask by the Department of Education for School Boards to find cuts of up to 22% over three years in their budget. This will have a devastating effect on the education of

our children now and for years to come.

Road improvements continue to be a challenge and, in its 5 year Transportation Plan, the government has identified projects that will be taking place such as the construction of the Cabot Trail from French River to Little River, as well as the completion of Corson Bridge and Little Bras d'Or Bridge. As well the Bay St. Lawrence Bridge is scheduled for replacement.

Victoria-The Lakes has the most paved roads in the Province with 840km. This continually poses a challenge in all areas. Specific areas requiring attention are, but not limited to, West Side Middle River, Bay St. Lawrence, Smelt Brook, Washabuck, Englishtown, Ross Ferry, Frenchvale and Upper Leithches Creek, as well as most of the Cape Breton County portion of Route 223. I will continue to insist that these roads be addressed in a timely manner.

The efforts of the community to complete work on the Northern Victoria Community Centre will continue into the New Year.

Over the past year I have met with Councillors from both Victoria County and CBRM to work together on issues in which there is a common interest and look forward to continuing that this year, as well as ongoing communication I have with the Federal government.

Individual cases such as Community Services and Housing are dealt with on a daily basis in my office.

It is my wish that 2011 brings to each and everyone in Victoria-The Lakes as year of health, peace and prosperity.

The operation of the Keltic Lodge will be scrutinized in 2011 as it is Council's intent to ensure this tourism icon remains a prime tourist destination while being a significant employer in Victoria County.

Infrastructure programs throughout the County have been prioritized will be financed as funding becomes available and the projects are deemed affordable.

National demographic aging studies indicate that Victoria County has one of the oldest populations per capita in Canada. We have designated Victoria County as "An Age Friendly Community". More details on this ini-

tiative will be released in the coming months.

Our council is saddened by the passing of good friend and colleague Robert MacLellan. Robert was the longest serving member of our current council. We welcome John Buchanan to the council table and look forward to working with him.

I am very pleased to serve as Warden of Victoria County and very proud of the contribution our councillors make to their districts and for the betterment of Victoria County.

On behalf of my family, we would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holidays.

District 7

Volunteer Fire Dept. study results ready early in 2011

by David Donovan, Councillor for District 7

As I settle down to compose my wish list for the upcoming year, I reminisce over the year that is fast coming to an end.

We did achieve some success in the County - the purchase of our own collection vehicles and hiring of local staff for the transportation of solid waste was a step forward. We have hired an Economic Development Officer, but this process has not proceeded along as fast as I had hoped; maybe 2011 will bring faster progress.

The County is presently in the process of doing a County-wide study of our Volunteer Fire Departments with the results coming early in the new year.

We have seen the implementation of a yearly heavy garbage pick-up, which is much needed in our County and hopefully this will put an end to illegal dumping.

Council has pushed hard with Minister Jennex to end the unfair practice of seasonal taxation, hopefully with results in the near future. Locally we have seen some movement forward - the return of the St. Paul's Lighthouse, the hugely successful Farmer's Market North and a small light at the end of the tunnel for the North Victoria Community Centre.

On a sadder note, while reminiscing, I think of the great loss to Council with the passing of a wonderful person, Robert MacLellan. Robert was well known, liked and respected by all. The knowledge and wisdom that he shared

with Council during the past 19 years will not be soon forgotten. I feel I was truly blessed to have known Robert and have him call me his friend or as he put it his "Big Buddy". Now, I don't know if the "Big" came from how good a friend I was or maybe just my stature. Anyway you put it, he was a true friend I will never forget.

As we move forward into the new year, I hope that Santa rewards the Neil's Harbour/New Haven Development Association for their hard work trying to get a comfort station/skating park to the local area. An area I feel the County should explore more closely in the future is renewable energy, such as wind and tide. As Council members, we have to pressure Nova Scotia Power for a more reliable service. We also have to be diligent in our pursuit of the Nova Scotia Government bringing our highway system up to acceptable standards and maintain it.

I will once again remind my constituents that I cannot assist you unless you bring your issues forward - I'm always available. I would like to express my gratitude to all the staff of Victoria County for a job well done over the past year, and also to the residents of District 7, a thank you for your support. The past year was a pleasure.

On behalf of my wife Francene, children Krista and Megan, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. Blessings and peace be with you all.



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*Warmest Wishes for a
Happy & Prosperous New Year*



Merrill MacInnes

District 4