

REFLECTIONS WITH DON DOWNE, MAYOR OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF LUNENBURG



"I recall when I was just a boy going to the local park,

across Nova Scotia and Canada better places to live.

As Mayor for the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, I have often stated that we need to continue working towards building healthy communities. A major ingredient in building healthy communities is having communities that have a strong volunteer base. In the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg and in Lunenburg and Queens Counties we are fortunate to have so many wonderful people willing to volunteer. In the two counties we have over 1000 active community groups – amazing!

The quality of life we have come to enjoy is not only because of what Mother Nature has provided us but because of all of the services and opportunities we have available to us because of volunteers. Volunteers are part of the very fabric of Nova

Scotia. Our culture, sport and health are kept at the forefront mainly because of volunteer efforts.

The next time you run into a fire fighter, a coach, a server at a community supper, the person lining up the floats in a parade – anyone volunteering, I encourage you to say Thank You! The next time you go out in your community look around and ask yourself, "Would this opportunity exist if we did not have volunteers?", I think you will find yourself amazed at what is available because of volunteers and the vital role they play in making our communities what they are today. For many of you reading this article, you are likely already a volunteer in your community – if you are not, I encourage you to make volunteering part of your life. You will be rewarded in ways you cannot imagine!

taking a tour of the local fire department, playing sports, attending the school fair, getting excited about the local parade followed by fireworks later in the evening, and attending many of our church events.

I have likely described a childhood many of us can relate to. As a boy I took these opportunities for granted without putting much thought into why they existed in my community. Like many of us, I owe a big thank you to volunteers who have committed their time and energy making communities

VOLUNTEER VOICE

The newsletter of the Lunenburg Queens Volunteer Partnership



BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MAHONE BAY PIRATE FESTIVAL



According to Rick Welsford, the Mahone Bay Pirate Festival began the same way all good ideas do: over a beer in the local pub.

When the Mahone Bay Wooden Boat Festival discontinued in 2009 after 20 years as the town's flagship summer event, many wondered what would take its place - and who would organize it. Over a pint of ale, a small group of volunteers, including Welsford, decided to spice up the traditional regatta weekend by dressing as pirates. They took their inspiration from the city of Tampa, Florida, which has hosted a legendary annual pirate festival for over a century.

When the first Pirate Day took place in July 2010, the volunteers donned pirate costumes (purchased mainly from Frenchy's, Welsford says) and performed skits on the waterfront. But this year, the pirates didn't just attend the regatta - they also organized it.

Sponsored by the Mahone Bay Chamber of Commerce, the 2011 Pirate Festival featured the traditional regatta, as well as buskers, flea markets, and presentations on piratical history. There were also numerous folks in pirate costumes - some of whom faced off against re-enactors from the King's Orange Rangers Society in Liverpool. ...continued on Page 2

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The Lunenburg Queens Volunteer Centre and Partnership is made possible by the generous support of:



The Lunenburg Queens Volunteer Partnership is pleased to have the support of the following organizations as part of the Partnership Committee:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACSBE Aspotogan Heritage Trust Lunenburg/Queens Regional Development Agency Municipality of the District of Chester Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Nova Scotia Dept. of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nova Scotia Dept. of Health and Wellness Region of Queens Municipality Second Story Women's Centre South Shore Public Libraries Town of Bridgewater United Way of Lunenburg County VON Lunenburg County |
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Our Mission and Purpose

The Lunenburg Queens Volunteer Partnership is a collective of like-minded government departments and not-for-profit agencies who have a mandate to support volunteers and community development in the region. The group's mandate is to identify gaps, support volunteer capacity development and advocate services for volunteers and their organizations. The group achieves this by:

- Creating awareness of the value of volunteerism
- Facilitating skill development opportunities for volunteers and community developers
- Providing tools and resources, and
- Undertaking partnership development that will further volunteerism in our community

For more information about the LQVP we invite you to visit our website at www.lqvc.ca.

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WHAT'S NEW WITH THE LQVP

THE LAHAVE RIVER TRAIL ASSOCIATION

A VISION TEN YEARS IN THE MAKING

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As Chief Pirate of the organizing committee, Rick Welsford shared some insight into the festival preparations. His team - a dozen committee members or "pirate captains", each commanding their own dastardly crew of volunteers – organized all aspects of the festival weekend. That included finding sponsors, booking the entertainment, and navigating the choppy seas of insurance and other legal issues.

Altogether, it took around 50 volunteers a full year to plan the festival.

In a non-piratical moment, Chief Pirate Welsford expressed his appreciation for the festival volunteers. "We tried to keep the meetings to a minimum, no more than one a month, and we tried to keep them lively and fun," he says. Managing a large volunteer team effectively was sometimes challenging, but even so, new recruits are welcome for next year.

Unfortunately, heavy rain on Sunday put a damper on the highlight of the festival: a pirate invasion staged from visiting tall ships. Welsford hopes the event will go off without a hitch next year.

But even in heavy rain, there was a dry refuge for festival-goers on the waterfront: a yurt (a kind of round tent) rented from an Annapolis Valley company. "When it was pouring rain, that yurt was dry as a bone," says Welsford. "And in the high heat, we just rolled up the flaps and let the air circulate." It was also a more affordable alternative than traditional tents.

Aside from sunshine, Chief Pirate Welsford has plenty of ideas of how the Pirate Festival can grow and improve. With events such as the Lunenburg Wooden Boat Reunion and Chester Race Week happening around the same time, Welsford believes the region's waterfront festivals could be marketed more effectively as a package.

"It would be a great way to attract boating enthusiasts to the area," he says.

INTRODUCING THE NEW LQVC.CA!

In September the Lunenburg Queens Volunteer Partnership launched a new website to house our virtual volunteer centre. The site is now live at www.lqvc.ca.

The new site is home to our blog, where we will post all the latest news that's relevant to volunteers and volunteer organizations in Lunenburg & Queens Counties. (If you have a suggestion for a blog post, send the Volunteer Navigator a tip at lqvolunteerpartnership@gmail.com.)

Other features of the website include a calendar of local events by & for volunteers, and links to resources for volunteer coordinators.

Organizations looking for volunteers can now post a description of their volunteer opportunities through our **classifieds section**. As we develop this service, we hope it will make volunteerism more easily accessible to more individuals in our region.

Your feedback is welcome as we continue to develop the website!



Baffled by blogging? Timid about tweeting? Register now for our fall workshops series, **THE VOLUNTEER'S GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA**, and find out how using social media can benefit your organization or volunteer project.

"SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY"
November 2, 6:00-9:00 PM
@ Bridgewater Police Station

"NUTS & BOLTS OF BLOGGING"
November 9, 6:00-9:00 PM
@ Forest Heights Community School

Registration is \$35 to attend both sessions, or \$20 to attend only one session. Please register by contacting Conor Falvey at 543-3422 or by emailing lqvolunteerpartnership@gmail.com.

Contributed by: Helen Ferns



On August 8th, 2001 a small group of enthusiasts held a meeting at the West Northfield Community Hall, looking for any interest in creating a trail between Pinehurst and the Town of Bridgewater. There was a large turnout, with opinions both for and against, but ultimately the group decided to proceed. After going over procedures and policies for community-based trail planning and development, the LaHave River Trail Association was formed in February, 2002.

Work initially began at Wentzell Lake. Since then, construction has been completed on the section from the Lunenburg Rod and Gun Club to the Salmon Run Road in West Northfield, with upgrading scheduled for this section. A new trail section, from just beyond the Cookville Bridge to the Cookville Provincial Park, is scheduled to be surfaced by this fall, and improvements will be made to the

surface of the trail to the Town Line. We have also experimented with winter grooming on some sections, and surveying is ongoing for sections north of the Cookville Park and Wentzell Lake. The Best Western Hotel in Bridgewater plans to develop a connector trail.

The Association's vision continues to be the development of a shared-use trail between Pinehurst and Bridgewater, linking to other trails being developed in the area and beyond. We also aim to provide some interpretive information at strategic points along the trail, highlighting natural and cultural activities and history. There are many unique challenges in developing this trail, such as the trail's proximity to the highway and the disappearance of some of the rail bed due to past highway construction. We recently learned that sections of the trail are home to

endangered plant species which must be protected. In spite of these obstacles, we are pursuing the challenge and the journey with enthusiasm and vigour.

We have a small but energetic group of volunteers from the surrounding communities who work with the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Transportation. Our volunteers write grant proposals, work with contractors, make decisions about materials for projects, and do Trail Patrol and trail awareness activities. They also attend workshops and do maintenance work such as spring clean-up, ditching, bush and tree removal, mowing, and grading.

Dedicated annual Memberships are our main fundraising activity, and this number is reflected on funding applications we make to government and other interested organizations. It also helps us to pay insurance as well as our membership in the NS Trails Federation. Metre sales offered by the Trails Federation are another source of support.

We believe we have one of the most scenic trails in the province, with the opportunity for unhindered travel from the Atlantic to the Bay of Fundy.



Further information/
membership forms can be
sought from: Helen Ferns
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Whynot (644-2352), or
Laura Barkhouse (541-
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