

TownCryer



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Black bear on the prowl

Most homeowners are prepared to deal with the occasional disruption caused by rodents, ants or bats trying to take up residency. But, what if a black bear comes sniffing around the back door?

On May 6, people living on Bayberry Drive and Sibley Road, Middle Musquodoboit, took notice when a black bear toured through their yards.

At one property, a barbecue was taken from the back deck and dragged away. Over the following two weeks, at other properties, green carts and garbage bins were toppled and their contents strewn around.

Since then, a young bear has been removed from the area and relocated in a more bear-friendly neighbourhood: deep woods!

The Department of Natural Resources offers the following information on their website about nuisance bears:

“Bears are intelligent and curious. They are resourceful and persistent when it comes to locating and acquiring food. When enticed by the smell of something to eat, bears will overturn garbage cans, green carts and bird feeders, break into buildings or vehicles, and damage crops, orchards and beehives.

If a bear is successful at obtaining food, it will continue to return and, in the process, will become increasingly less afraid of people.

Relocation of the bears is seldom successful as there are few areas in Nova Scotia where they can be released and not become someone else’s problem.

Homeowners are encouraged to store garbage indoors or in metal bear-proof containers. On collection day, put garbage out as close to pick up time as possible. Meat, fish, bones or seafood shells should never be put in the compost. And, keep your green cart in a shady area away

from forest cover. Put meat or fish scraps in a plastic container or bag and store in the freezer until collection day. And, periodically, rinse the green cart.”

There are several more informative tips available at www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife/nuisance/bears.htm

Proposed tax reform and more

By: Councillor Steve Streach, District 1

As warmer spring weather begins to arrive, the flowers start to bloom, and tourism season approaches, I want to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of the staff and volunteers at the Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association and to commend their efforts with the valley newsletter: The TownCryer.

As your Councillor and representative at City Hall, I am pleased to provide this update on some initiatives currently underway. On April 29, Regional Council passed our 2008-09 Capital and Operating budgets. At close to \$700 million, this year’s budget provides many service enhancements and opportunities that will benefit our rural communities and provides greater relief for seniors and low-income families. This year will see a brand new, state-of-the-art fire station built in the community of Dutch Settlement.

We will also see for the first time, thanks to this year’s budget, permanent funding for the provision of four full-time, paid firefighters here in District 1 to support the efforts of our volunteer forces.

Additional funding will also go towards greater police coverage including the new RCMP detachment in Middle Musquodoboit. HRM will also continue to support the efforts of the Carrolls Corner Community Centre as well as several other community groups and halls throughout the Musquodoboit Valley, including, but not limited to, the Halifax County Exhibition, the Bicentennial Theatre, and the Upper Musquodoboit Community Hall as well as greater support for

Meagher's Grant and a new community playground for Elderbank.

I can also report that Phase 1 of the rural broadband project (high-speed Internet) has been completed and that Phase 2 is currently out for tender and should be approved very soon. I am also very happy to tell you that, on your behalf, I was successful in convincing Council not to fund the costly and unnecessary construction of a new cat shelter under the terms of the soon to be repealed cat by-law.

Another initiative currently being explored by City Hall is the tax reform initiative. Over a year ago Regional Council formed a Citizens' Advisory Committee and tasked them, with consulting with the residents of HRM and bringing back options for Council, to consider, as it related to reducing the tax burden and reforming HRM's tax system. To date, two meetings have been held in District 1; the first in Sheet Harbour on April 30 and the second was held on May 15 in Middle Musquodoboit. People at both meetings indicated they have great reservations, as I do, with the changes currently being proposed. I think we would all agree that everyone wants lower taxes, but in a regime where the Municipality is legislated to deliver balanced budgets and our only source of income is property tax, the math does not allow for the reduction of one family's taxes without an increase to another's. From the beginning, I have felt the majority of residents in our rural communities could be in for tax increases with no corresponding increases to service levels. Council and the residents need to be very careful as this process unfolds.

I will continue to work on your behalf regarding this matter. It is important to remember that the tax reform initiative is currently only at the committee level and has not been discussed or approved in any way by Regional Council. Having said that, it is important for residents to make their views and concerns known to the Committee. An online survey, as well as further information, can be found at HRM's website at www.halifax.ca.

In closing, I want to tell you that it has been a great privilege and honour to represent the residents of District 1 at City Hall and I will continue to work on your behalf for the betterment of our communities.

We all scream for ice cream!

If you like ice cream, be sure to take advantage of this sale. The Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association and Scotsburn Dairy are offering an 11.4 litre container of ice cream for \$25.

Place your order before June 10 and pick it up at the Bicen-



ennial Theatre on June 24 between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. For more information, please contact: 384-2006 or email: info@mvta.net

Check your bookshelves

While planning the Musquodoboit Rural High School Reunion, some school year books were borrowed for research.

Please check your shelves at home to see if you forgot to send these back to the high school.

If you find them, please call Sheila Fisher, Reunion Committee, at 384-2279 or drop them off at MRHS. We would like to make the set complete again. If you have any MRHS Yearbooks that are no longer meaningful to you and would like to free up some bookshelf space, we can find them a new home.

Mosaic for new MRHS

By: Dylan Matthias

People who walk into the new Musquodoboit Rural High School (MRHS) in September 2008 will not only see art on the walls but, will walk on it too.

The art class at the current school has created a mosaic to adorn the floor in the foyer of the new school. It will feature various symbols of the valley and school, from grass and timber (representing the area's lead industries), to the traditional MRHS mustang.

According to Godfrey Kenny, art teacher at the school, the mosaic is mainly a creation of the students in Grades 10-12. Kenny and local artist Cath Rutherford put it together.

The mosaic won't be the only artwork in the new school. Many of the paintings that make the current MRHS' walls a lively affair could make the move as well.

Students will be given the option of taking their work home, but Kenny says any pieces left, will be framed and put up in the new school.

Wellness Show

Mark your calendars now, so you can remember Sept. 20 is the Healthy Connections Wellness Show.

This event will be showcasing services/products accessible to Musquodoboit Valley and surrounding areas that promote good health and well-being. Experience hands-on demonstrations, check out the information sessions, be inspired with a guided nature walk at 10 a.m. and access a wealth of knowledge.

It all takes place at the Natural Resources Education Centre, 12014 Highway 224, Middle Musquodoboit 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission: \$2. Contact Sharon: (902) 384-2948 or Email healthlinks@xplornet.com

Advertising opportunity

By: Alvin Blades

The Musquodoboit Valley Lions Club and the Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association will be participating in the River Oaks Golf Club Four-Person Texas Scramble with Roger Surette's Golf Central at River Oaks Golf and Country Club, Meagher's Grant on Aug. 9 and 10.

We would like to present you with the opportunity to participate in this event and gain some advertisement for your company, group or organization.

We are selling advertisement on golf pin flags (green's flags), approximately 14" x18", with your company's information on both sides of the flag for \$150 per flag.

In addition, we will post a list of donor names on a display board on location at the golf course during the two-day event, as well as two days before and two days after.

Also, the donor list of names will be displayed at the Halifax County Exhibition and the Rally in the Musquodoboit Valley.

The proceeds from this fundraiser will be presented to the Musquodoboit Valley Lions Club and the Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association to be used to support community projects.

Please regard this announcement as an invitation to participate. Cheques should be made payable to the Musquodoboit Lions Club and forwarded to: Lion Alvin Blades, 6483 Hwy. 357, RR #3, Middle Musquodoboit, B0N 1X0

Employment at VIC

Annually, The Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association (MVTA) sponsors the Musquodoboit Valley Visitor Information Centre, Middle Musquodoboit.

Over the past two decades, students and adults have been provided with employment, skill development and the opportunity to promote our area to visitors.

This year, MVTA has employment for a student in Grades 10-12 for 35 hrs. a week from June 30 to Aug. 29. Also, beginning on Aug. 25, there is a position available for an adult for approximately six weeks at the VIC.

If you are interested in applying for either position, please forward your resume to: info@mvta.net or mail: PO Box 162, Middle Musquodoboit, B0N 1X0 or phone: 384-2006 for more details

Stoked in Idol Contest

Band mates, Colin Castle, B.J. McClung, Cody Erskine and Nick Streach are Stoked.

On May 24, the band auditioned at the North Woodside Community Centre for a chance to enter the Canada Day Idol Contest, to be held on July 1, at the community centre.

At the audition, Stoked earned points for performing an original tune, written by Cody Erskine.

On July 1, four judges will decide if this Musquodoboit Valley band should earn the title of Canada Day Idol 2008. Besides the judges' scores, audience members get a chance to vote as well. When the final tally is announced, the band with the most points wins \$1000, plus their performance will be recorded on a CD and aired on Hal FM (89.9)

Be sure to show your support for these local musicians. On July 1, vote for Stoked!

Pockets full of money

The Decorating Committee for the Middleton United Church, Middle Musquodoboit, is starting a unique fundraiser in the form of a Traveling Apron.

The apron has many pockets to hold donations. When it visits your home, you will be asked to consider putting a small donation in a pocket and stitching the pocket shut before passing the apron on to the next person on the list. Further instructions and a list of stops will be with the apron. One thing we do ask is that it moves along as quickly as possible.

The Decorating Committee is responsible for Seasonal Decorating of the Church, for table accents at funerals and events, and decorating a tree at the Festival of Trees.

We are also attempting to create displays of Church artifacts and are in the process of working with the Learning Committee to acquire shelving, etc. for this purpose. We hope that if many are able to contribute a little, it will be possible for us to provide new and different decorations on a rotating basis without using our own monies or having to ask Lyle, who has too little church money and too many places needing it! We want to again thank those who have supported us with donations in the past.

We enjoy doing the decorating and hope that others enjoy our efforts!

A good time had by all

Al and Doreen Blades would like to thank everyone who joined with us, and our family, to celebrate our 50th Wedding Anniversary. Many thanks to our children: Ted, Margaret and Judy and their families for setting up this special day. It was a good day to remember. Thanks again to everyone.

TownCryer donations

Sincere thanks are extended to the following TownCryer supporters: Doris McCurdy, Bev Redden, Sharon McLeod and Dorothy Milne for their generous cash donations.

Auction and Yard Sale

On Aug. 2, the Middleton United Church is hosting its annual auction and yard sale. The yard sale begins at 9 a.m. and goes to 2 p.m. The auction is slated to start the bidding at 10:30 a.m. Hotdogs, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, sandwiches, pop and water will be for sale. All proceeds from this event go to the upkeep of the Middleton United Church.

Thank you

In answer to last month's plea for assistance, the Middle Musquodoboit Cemetery Corporation (MMCC) would like to acknowledge donations from the following people: Robin and Robert Fulton, Doris McCurdy, Ella Rhind, Dorothy Milne and Diane Sibley. If you would like to donate to the Middle Musquodoboit Cemetery Corporation, please forward your donation to the Board's secretary/treasurer at: P.O. Box 17, Middle Musquodoboit, N.S. B0N 1X0. No amount is too small. All monies donated to the MMCC will be used for the ongoing maintenance and improvements of the cemeteries, Pioneer and Hillside.

Card social

Be sure to drop by the Enterprisers Hall, Middle Musquodoboit at 7:30 p.m. and play a game of Auction 45s on June 6. Refreshments are available and admission is only \$3.

Can you help?

The Musquodoboit Valley Co-op is planning anniversary celebrations for this summer. If you have any old photos of the Co-op or stories that could be

written, please call John Tilley at 384-2961 or any Co-op Board member.

Thanks for your help

As a way of saying thank you to the students attending Upper Musquodoboit Consolidated Elementary School and the Musquodoboit Valley Education Centre, for their contribution to Earth Day celebrations, the Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association gave each student a sunflower growing kit.

Also, students were reminded about The King of the Garden Contest, part of the Rally in the Musquodoboit Valley.

This event will be at the Exhibition Grounds, Middle Musquodoboit, on Oct. 5. Prizes are awarded in various categories, including the tallest and the smallest sunflower. (visit www.mvta.net for more information)

Students are also encouraged to draw a picture or write a 200-word story about the King of the Garden. All entries will be judged before the Rally, the winners will be announced on Oct. 5, and their entries will appear in The TownCryer!

Send your submissions to:

King of the Garden Contest

c/o Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association,

Middle Musquodoboit NS B0N 1X0

or email info@mvta.net

Be sure to include your age, name, address and phone number. Good luck!

Records available online

Cemetery records for the Pioneer and Hillside Cemeteries in Middle Musquodoboit and the Riverside Cemetery are now available online at the church web site: www.midmusqpastoralcharge.com

Our thanks to the Cemetery Corporation from Middle Musquodoboit and the Cemetery Committee from Riverside, the staff at MVTA who prepared the records for publishing, and to Karen Sibley of KarSib Graphics for making this possible.

Fire safety tips

By: Kara McCurdy and Debbie MacDonald

Properly preparing your home and community doesn't guarantee that you will not incur fire damage, but it does reduce the risks. Obtain insurance coverage for all property at risk from fire – government disaster financial assistance is limited and only covers uninsurable perils.

Some of these preventative measures not only cost very little and reduce fire dangers by a great deal but assist

firefighters in saving your home; others require planning and a long-term commitment to change:

1. Prune tree branches to a height of 2 metres or more
2. Store fire wood 10 metres or more from the house (avoid down slope location)
3. Remove all trees, long grass, shrubs, logs, branches, twigs and needles within 10 metres of house
4. Thin trees (with 3 - 6 metres between crowns) for at least 30 metres from the house
5. Contact your utility company if trees or branches are not clear of power lines

Remember, homes and forests can be replaced but loved ones cannot. If it becomes too dangerous to save your home evacuate your family and your pets. Having an emergency kit for at least 72 hours of food, water and medications for you and your pets is a good idea (visit www.getprepared.ca for more info).

Call your emergency contact and head for somewhere safe. Don't wait for an emergency to happen, prepare today.

Tarot Connections

By: Mary Boutilier

If you have a question you would like answered by Mary, please email tarotconnections@yahoo.ca Keep in mind, your identity will be kept confidential.

Q: Since my mother's passing last year, I still can't seem to get rid of any of her clothes or personal belongings. She lived in our home so we could care for her and her room is just as she left it. My husband is pressuring me to pack it all up but I just don't want her to be mad at me. What should I do?

A: Everyone grieves in different ways. No one can ever put a time limit on it. Some people grieve for years, some for months. Through my experiences, I know that when we pass, we no longer hold on to our connection with material things. I would suggest that you keep some of your mother's things that were sentimental to you. I'm sure your mother would be fine if you donated some things to the needy or other family members. Hold your mother's memories in your heart and know that she is always with you.

If you find that you are having an extra tough time with the grieving process, there are many support groups that can help. Peace, Mary

From the Cruiser

Submitted by: Const. Bart Leppan

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is on June 15 this year.

Elder abuse is an action or inaction that threatens the health or well-being of an older adult. Abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of age, gender, living arrangement, health, ability, sexual orientation, financial status, education or culture.

Most often, the abuser is someone the senior knows: a spouse, a relative, friend or care-provider. Sadly, much abuse occurs within relationships where there is an expectation of trust.

There are a variety of abuses. Physical abuse includes slapping, hitting, inappropriate medication and physical restraint. Sexual abuse includes unwanted sexual touching or being coerced into sexual acts. Emotional abuse includes insulting, frightening, threatening, ignoring or isolating a senior. Financial abuse includes misusing money or property, or putting pressure on seniors to gain access to their funds or property. Neglect abuse includes leaving a senior without food, adequate shelter, assistance or personal care. Finally, violation of rights includes withholding information, interfering with mail, or confining a senior to an institution or hospital against his or her will.

How can you prevent senior abuse?

If you are a senior:

- be sure to stay active within your community
- keep in regular contact with friends and family
- know your rights
- plan ahead and make your wishes known
- ensure your legal and financial matters are in order

If you know a senior:

- give them the chance to talk about it
- treat seniors with respect
- encourage to seek support and help
- educate yourself about senior abuse

Who to contact for help:

- Senior Abuse Line: 1-877-833-3377
- Police: 911 for emergencies only or local police department for assistance
- Adult Protection: 1-800-225-7225

Every situation of abuse is unique... there is no one single response to senior abuse.

Information provided by: Nova Scotia Seniors' Secretariat. Visit: www.gov.ns.ca/scs for more info.



Upcoming events

June 1 Musical jamboree at Lemmon Hill Community Centre at 2pm. Admission \$5. Call 568-2549.

June 1 Purina Walk for Dog Guides, sponsored by the Musquodoboit Valley Lions Club. Everyone welcome to participate, with or without your dog. Registration 1pm at Bicentennial Theatre, Middle Musquodoboit.

June 3 Bicentennial Theatre AGM at 7:30pm at the Theatre

June 6 Card Social at the Enterpriser's Hall, Middle Musquodoboit, 7:30 p.m. Admission \$3.

June 7 Parks for People event. Meet at Natural Resources Education Centre parking lot at 8 a.m. for a two or three hour hike in the Centre Woodlot to see and hear late migrant and resident songbirds. Emphasis will be on bird song. Leader Verna Higgins.

June 8 Kitchen Party in memory of Verda Mercer (Ross), at the Sharon Presbyterian Church Hall, Dean, between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. Donations will be accepted. All proceeds going to the Sharon Presbyterian Church.

June 15 Submission Deadline for July TownCryer.

June 21 Ham and Salad Supper at Gays River United Church Hall, Gays River between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

July 1 Canada Day celebrations at Bicentennial Theatre from 12 noon to 2 p.m. Activities include face painting, games of chance, and barbecue.

July 1 Canada Day Celebrations at the Upper Musquodoboit Community Hall. Parade through community at 10 a.m. Picnic, games, live entertainment and lots of good food until 4 p.m. at community hall. Fireworks scheduled for 10 p.m.

July 2 July TownCryer distribution

View The TownCryer online!
Visit: www.towncryernews.ca
Be sure to forward the online version to friends and family!

See you in church

Sharon Presbyterian Church (Dean)
Service begins at 11:45 a.m. each Sunday

St. James United (Upper Musquodoboit)
Service begins at 10:15 a.m. each Sunday

Higginsville United Church (Higginsville) and
Riverside United Church (Elmsvale)
Spring Schedule - On alternate Sundays Higginsville United and Riverside United hold services at 10 a.m.

Middleton United Church (Middle Musquodoboit) Service begins at 11 a.m. each Sunday.

Sunday School: The Middleton United church offers a weekly multi-aged (ages 4-18) Sunday school class from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. We teach through fun activities, songs and stories. Stories about God/Jesus help children learn to make good choices. We invite you to come every week or once a month, come when you can. Why not try it? You're sure to have fun!

Holy Cross Catholic Church (Elmsvale)
Service begins at 9 a.m.

Wittenburg Baptist Church (Wittenburg) Sunday school begins at 9:30 a.m. Worship at 11:00 a.m.

St. Andrew's United (Elderbank)
June 8 & 29 - 10 a.m. service

St. James United (Meagher's Grant)
June 1 & 22 - 10 a.m. service. Picnic service on 22nd.

St. Paul's United Church (Antrim)
June 15 - 10 a.m. service

Mobile Public Library

Information provided by Mobile Public Library brochure.

Saturday June 7 and 21

10:45-12:00 Middle Musq, Haverstock Pharmacy
1:30-3:30 Middle Musq, Haverstock Pharmacy

Thursday June 12 and 26

10:45-12:30 Middle Musq, MVEC parking lot
2:00-3:30 Middle Musq, Valley View Villa
4:50-7:30 Middle Musq, Haverstock Pharmacy

Thursday June 5 and 19

11:00-12:15 Upper Musq, school parking lot
2:10-4:00 Dean, Sharon Presbyterian Church
5:30-7:15 Upper Musq, Fire Hall
Contact: 1-800-565-4414 to request materials

Community history

The following are excerpts from the community history of Brookvale that was compiled in 1983 as part of the Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial celebrations.

When Everett Dickie was asked who had given the name of Brookvale to this district, he replied, "Well, I don't know who did, but it was well-named, for it's full of brooks, just full o' brooks!" And it is. There is the Ditch Brook, Bates Brook, Schoolhouse Brook, Jim Reid Brook and others; all these flow into Lindsay Brook, which in time of freshet and flow takes unto itself the power of a rushing river. There are small runlets and rivulets innumerable crisscrossing the pasture land, woods and fertile intervals of the peaceful hamlet. Despite modern drainage, the little waterways have scarcely changed since the early settlers came. Every pioneer made sure that his first dwelling, be it a dugout in the hillside, cabin or cottage, was located close by a running stream to sustain his family and animals. In later times, it was the power of these brooks, which ran grist mills, saw mills and shingle mills. This led to the district being called Mill Village for a time. Before it became Mill Village, however, it was known as Reid Settlement; but for quite a number of years, and in the beginning was given the name of Canada Lot Settlement, in all the official documents for Nova Scotia...

Between 1800 and 1825, Hugh Hanna settled on what is now called the White Road next to the homestead where James Reid, another Scottish pioneer had brought his bride, Jane Whidden, in 1817. This farm is now owned by Leslie Higgins. James Reid and his wife had thirteen children and, when the sons grew to manhood, several settled near their father and that is how the place acquired the name of Reid Settlement...

The first Schoolmaster was James Hanna, the pioneer's son. He taught in a log structure; perhaps his own house, as was often the custom in early days. There were eighteen pupils the first year... The school was supported by voluntary subscription, and every parent paid up. It cost two pounds, seven shillings and sixpence per child for the term which ran from July 15 to Nov. 30 each year...

The roads at this time were called roads by courtesy, as they were for the most part rough trails, to be traversed on horseback or with ox cart filled with produce.

Book of the month

MRHS 40th Anniversary Reunion

Available at the Musquodoboit Valley Visitor Information Centre, Middle Musquodoboit. Price: \$5.00

The 2007-2008 Musquodoboit Rural High (MRHS) graduates mark the end of an era. Since 1950, when the school first opened, youth in our area have had learning experiences to prepare them for a successful future. In 1989, the Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association initiated a 40-year high school reunion celebration for the summer of 1990.

Besides organizing special events, to reconnect past grads, the Reunion Committee published a commemorative year book.

As this year's graduating class joins the remarkable history of MRHS, the 40th Anniversary Reunion year book makes an ideal keepsake.

Just gimme the facts

- MRHS was the first high school built in Halifax County.
- In 1948, it was decided the McCurdy property, overlooking the Musquodoboit River, was an outstanding 16-acre site for the new school.
- The cost of construction was \$426,000.
- The cost to furnish the school with the required equipment was \$56,000.
- Bentley and Archibald, of Middle Musquodoboit, were the successful tenders in supplying the first busses to the school. The total cost was \$32,737.85.
- Mr. C. Jeffrey Moore was the school's first principal.

The MRHS 40th Anniversary Reunion year book provides a complete compilation of graduate information from the first forty years of Musquodoboit Rural High history. If you are interested in learning more about the proud history of our school, please email: info@mvta.net or phone 384-2006.

Bit of a giggle

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?"

The mother replied, "Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"

Memorable grad gift suggestions! The VIC, located at 12390 Hwy. 224, Middle Musquodoboit, has a number of cloth bags with the MRHS logo printed on the side. There are also a number of denim shirts with a MRHS crest as well as MRHS pins and copies of the 40th Anniversary Year Book. Call: 384-2006 or email: info@mvta.net for more info.

Boys and their toys

Canadian winters seem to drag on endlessly. Even though spring officially arrives mid-March, it is not uncommon to have heavy frosts and occasionally snow well in to April and May. Despite this, certain things in nature will appear regardless of the cool, wet, windy days of springtime.

For instance, when songbirds, especially red-breasted robins, announce their return from southern climes they are welcomed as a definite sign that spring must finally be here. Dandelions, a persistent, deep-rooted weed, known for ruining lush green lawns, are also signs of spring, but ones that aren't necessarily welcomed. In fact, most people want to dig them out. Instead, they avoid wanton destruction and they mow.

A lawn mower is a relatively simple tool that requires low maintenance. Most though, get no maintenance. That may explain why they're so difficult to start the first time they're used each spring.

Once, I caught a neighbour having trouble with his little push mower. I listened as he repeatedly pulled the start cord and heard the refusal of it to catch and roar in to action. I couldn't quite make out the words, but I'm certain my neighbour used enough expletives that if any mothers were nearby, they would have covered their children's ears. It wasn't until I saw him grab a large rock and begin smashing the mower again and again that I decided to intervene. As I passed him a cold beer, I made the sign of the cross and declared the mower deceased. There's nothing that can satisfy a testosterone rush quicker than a cold beer and the knowledge something's been killed.

Just like those robins, I'm convinced the appearance of men outside doing yard work is another sure sign of spring's arrival. And with them, they bring their toys. Weed-whackers seem to be a favourite among men. Recently, I had the opportunity to watch a couple of guys attach the finishing touches to one just out of its package. After self-congratulatory praises, perfunctory backside scratching, belly rubbing and belching, one of them decided to demonstrate. Regrettably, it was the fellow who can't tell the difference between expensive hothouse transplants and weeds.

As soon as his wife heard the weed-whacker buzzing, she frantically tried to get his attention with some pretty suggestive girly-girl moves. It didn't work. Lupines were leveled alongside tall grass. Gouges in the lawn pinpointed the place previously occupied by dandelions. Oblivious of what was happening, he focused on the task at hand. With a smile that spread literally from ear to ear, and eyes bright with excitement, it was obvious he was thoroughly enjoying himself.

That's the way it is with men this time of year. I suspect it's the male hormones that are coursing through their veins that make men act the way they do. That would explain why these guys strip to the waist, wearing their low-cut jeans while crunching beer cans on their forehead. Wouldn't it?

Smart women instinctively know the man in her life is incapable of denying his primal urges. She allows him outside to grunt, curse and destroy until it is out of his system.

After all, they've earned a few days outside. Because, typically, these men are the same ones that have spent the winter in splints, casts and doctors' offices as a result of home renovation projects gone horribly wrong. Circular saws, power saws, electrical panels and extension ladders are all toys the boys will, over time, learn to avoid. Meanwhile, summer is just around the corner. By then, with any luck, the boys will have put away all their toys, find the nearest hammock and stay there.

Meet the staff

The Musquodoboit Valley Tourism Association (MVTA) welcomes MaryAnn Parker back as staff supervisor at the Musquodoboit Valley Visitor Information Centre, (VIC) and the Moose River Gold Mines Museum.



The MVTA is also pleased to have two students employed at the VIC this tourist season.

Amber Higgins just completed her first year at Memorial University, Nfld, where she is taking her Bachelor of Nursing Degree.

Kayleigh Brown is attending Acadia University and is majoring in Chemistry.

King's Journalism student, Dylan Matthias, is returning to Moose River Gold Mines Museum this year. And, Dalhousie University Arts Degree student, Eva Burrill, is also working at the museum.

Folks are encouraged to take time to visit the museum or drop by the VIC to meet this year's staff.

Celebrate Father's Day on June 15
Happy Father's Day!