

The Surveyor

February 17, 2006

Holland College, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

FREE

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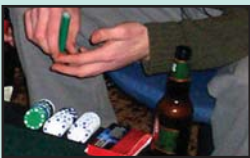
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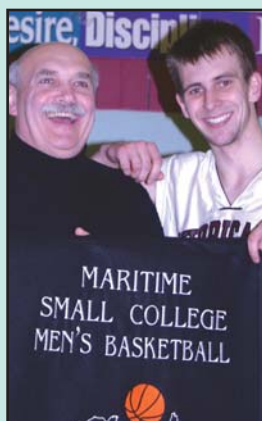


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Organizers of the Jack Frost Festival were relieved when Mother Nature dumped snow across the Island on Jan. 12, just in time for the start of the festival. (Reeves photo)

New bioscience program timely

By James Allison

The bioscience technology program being planned for Holland College in Charlottetown will prepare students for work in a rapidly growing field, the course instructor says.

The introduction of the bioscience program couldn't come at a more appropriate time as far as interest in the topic is concerned, Mike Gibson said.

"There is a great deal of emphasis on (bioscience) right now regionally, nationally and globally."

Bioscience is the application of science onto living things, or parts of living things, often with the intent of changing those things somehow. Many people believe bioscience can be used to improve the quality of our food and agriculture as a whole worldwide.

Students entering the program should expect a lab intensive experience, designed to prepare them for an easy transition to the workforce, Gibson said.

"That's why this new expansion in the college is being put forward, to create lab space for this program as



Work continues on addition to Charlottetown Centre. (Allison photo) well as other programs."

Graduates will be qualified to do work in bioscience and biotechnology labs, including handling samples and carrying out experiments, Gibson said.

"They would be trained to be the technicians and technologists working in a lab under a primary researcher."

Ultimately this program should provide a number of opportunities to the

college and to graduates, Gibson said. "I think it's an exciting addition to the college."

The addition to the college intended to house the new program will be completed next summer, said Dick MacDonald, executive director of special projects for Holland College.

"We plan to be open in July and we plan to be on budget."



Members of the construction crew building the new addition to Holland College continue their work. The Centre for Labour Force Innovation will be completed next summer. (Allison photo)

Got Milk? parody T-shirt helps raise awareness of environmental issue

By Amy Seward

A Cape Breton Junior Achievement group has set tongues wagging about the Sydney tar ponds by selling T-shirts with the slogan Got Tar Ponds?

The shirts, hot sellers across Canada, were made by a group of 34 high school students from three schools in the Sydney area. The junior achiever company CB Outfitters created the shirts to inspire awareness about Sydney's environmental problem.

One hundred years of steel and coke production left more than a million tonnes of contaminated soil and sediment in Sydney.

Residents and their governments have struggled for years to find an acceptable cleanup solution. In 2004, Canada and Nova Scotia signed a \$400-million agreement to finish the job over a 10-year-period.

Joseph Heffernan, 15, is a member of the school group and he's surprised by the broad range of people the T-shirt message is reaching.

"We tried to come up with ideas that were catchy enough, something we would like to wear. Younger kids and even their grandparents are wearing them."

The group has sold almost 400 T-

shirts and is receiving orders from as far away as Nunavut and Virginia.

The company plans to donate part of the proceeds to ACAP Cape Breton. The Atlantic Coastal Action Program is working towards a healthy environment and every shirt comes with a pamphlet on the tar ponds to show organizers are serious about awareness.

"People see the shirts and laugh, it's kind of funny. But we want it to be taken seriously, too. The pamphlets show them the tar ponds really do need to be cleaned up," said Heffernan.

Jenna MacNeil, a volunteer advisor for the group and a CBC Radio employee, said raising awareness wasn't something they were expected to do. As for the media attention, MacNeil said it was based on the product itself and the group is happy to see it doing so well. "They were really impressed with the response they've gotten, they are giddy at times."

The shirts are sold in pink and black and come in the sizes small to XX-large. They are \$15 each. To order a shirt, contact the company through their website: www.cboutfitters.piczo.com

Stratford considers buses

By Jarrod Yeo

Stratford town council wants to look at the need for public transportation, so it voted Feb. 8 to conduct a survey among residents in the coming weeks.

The idea is to look at taking advantage of the public transportation Charlottetown residents have enjoyed since Sept. 30. The service is provided by Trius Tours.

Stratford mayor Kevin Jenkins said public transportation is something that must be examined.

"I think there's definitely a market for it. We have a lot of senior citizens and lot of our residents work in Charlottetown.

"It's also a better choice for the environment."

The proposal is an expensive one. Each bus operates with a subsidy of \$120,000 a year, a number Jenkins calls "significant."

Stratford has made a commitment not to raise property taxes this year, so council will have to look to other sources for money, he added.

"There is federal money available to create our own system and hire our

own drivers, but we're leaning towards joining Charlottetown's system. We still have to discuss it with the federal and provincial governments."

Bobby Dunn, general manager of Charlottetown transit, said based on the "tremendous success" of the bus service in Charlottetown, it was only a matter of time before Stratford thought about signing up.

"Stratford is very serious about this. There are over 200 government workers in Stratford who cross the bridge every day to work.

"With buses, there is less traffic and pollution. It's cheaper and you don't need to pay for parking."

Dunn said while his department still operates with limited resources, use of public transportation has almost doubled since it was introduced.

"We were averaging 60 users a day when it was implemented in September.

"We made some user-friendly revisions Dec. 14 to improve the routes, which increased our average to 81 users in January. And two days this month, we averaged 100 users."

ACOA portfolio a full-time job: MP

By Katie Smith

ACOA is a beneficial institution and deserves a full-time minister in charge, says an Island MP.

Liberal Wayne Easter is concerned with Conservative Peter MacKay's appointment as minister of the development agency.

Economic development in Atlantic Canada is a big business and a big responsibility, Easter said. "To set the foundation for an economic future, we really should have a dedicated minister of ACOA."

The new Conservative cabinet was announced Feb. 6, following Stephen Harper's swearing-in as Canada's 22nd prime minister.

Easter said the agency is important for Islanders. "ACOA is a great institution. We need to keep it."

Political studies professor Peter McKenna agrees MacKay will have a busy schedule, considering he was also appointed minister of foreign affairs.

"I think he's going to be overworked. He will be trying to juggle too many balls in the air."

Both of MacKay's ministerial appointments are full-time jobs, McKenna said.

"Prince Edward Island might not get the representation it deserves," he said. "It will be difficult for him

to accord ACOA the proper time and commitment necessary."

If problems do arise, however, Premier Pat Binns has a direct line to the prime minister, he said.

"They have developed a rapport. If there is difficulty, there is nothing from stopping the premier from expressing his concerns."

Still, the professor remains optimistic. "This is not a case of P.E.I. being ignored or its voice not being heard."

Former ACOA minister Joe McGuire is fine with MacKay as minister of ACOA, but worries he won't be able to devote the proper attention the program needs.

"He has other jobs to go along with it," he said. "Where ACOA will fit in remains to be seen."

ACOA was established as a regional development agency to support the local business community and this won't change, he said.

"ACOA will continue to work to develop projects for communities with the help of communities."

The program is in place for small- to medium-size businesses to gain access to money to be able to start up new businesses, he said.

"I certainly hope our business community and the community at large will continue to apply for the ACOA program."

Liberal P.E.I. will be heard: MP

By James Allison

The voters' decision to elect only Liberals to Parliament will not hurt the Island in dealing with the new Conservative government, says Charlottetown MP Shawn Murphy.

Murphy was at Holland College on Jan. 25 to take part in an event promoting disability awareness. In an interview he commented on the federal election results.

Sitting in opposition won't stop the Island MPs from doing their jobs, he said.

"I don't think there's any big disadvantage. We've got four experienced members. We'll work hard for Islanders."

Murphy was elected for his third term Jan. 23, receiving over 50 per cent of the votes in his riding.

The three other incumbent Liberals on the Island were also re-elected by large margins despite a push by the Conservatives to gain seats in P.E.I.

Across the country, the Conservative party made gains in

most rural areas, including those in Quebec and Ontario.

The lack of P.E.I. representation in the minority government is cause for some concern, said professor Henry Srebrnik of the political science department at UPEI.

"Our MPs are going to have less say than if Paul Martin had been elected, and that's something that's important to P.E.I."

Still, the Island's MPs will have a voice within their own party.

"They'll have some influence with the Liberal caucus," Srebrnik said.

"Other than the big cities, this is probably the most Liberal territory in Canada."

For his part, Murphy knows his role will be different in opposition, but in a minority government it will be up to all the parties and MPs to act responsibly for the people who voted for them, he said.

"I want to just work hard for the people of Charlottetown."

"We have a responsibility as elected members to provide good government."



Talking to Islanders

Rick Mercer has visited P.E.I. twice in the last few weeks. Here he talks to a protester outside the Conservative Party rally at the Rodd Charlottetown hotel during the election campaign. He returned to the Island to harvest and shuck oysters for a feature on his CBC show, the Rick Mercer Report. (Yeo photo)

P.E.I. gets out vote, leads nation again

By Andrea MacRae

Canada's smallest province continued its tradition in the Jan. 23 federal election, leading the country in voter turnout. P.E.I., known as the birthplace of Confederation, had the highest turnout with 73.7 per cent of registered voters casting ballots.

Across the nation, 64.9 per cent of registered electors exercised their franchise, according to the website for Elections Canada. These are initial results for 2006 and do not include voters who registered on election day.

Despite early concerns about turnout for a winter election, voting numbers on P.E.I. were up slightly from the June, 2004 election when 70.8 per cent of voters went to the polls.

For the five federal elections between 1993 and 2006, the average turnout on the Island is 72.6 per cent.

Politics is an integral part of P.E.I. culture, says UPEI political science professor Peter McKenna. "I think politics is in the water that Islanders drink. It's part of their nature."

VOTER TURNOUT FEDERAL ELECTION 2006	
Prince Edward Island	73.7
New Brunswick	69.1
Ontario	67.3
Yukon	66.6
Saskatchewan	65.7
British Columbia	64.3
Nova Scotia	63.6
Quebec	63.3
Manitoba	62.7
Alberta	62.4
Northwest Territories	56.9
Newfoundland & Labrador	56.8
Nunavut	53.3
Canada	64.9

It's also very much related to family structure. Families discuss politics and the players around the dinner tables of the Island. People often vote the way their parents vote, said McKenna.

And size matters.

"Islanders recognize the importance and covet those close relationships with their politicians

because of the small districts on the Island."

In addition, the traditional parties are very well organized on the ground.

They know, poll by poll, where their strengths lie and they have the machinery to get the vote out, McKenna said.

Paul MacNeill, publisher of the Eastern Graphic newspaper, agrees the proximity to politicians makes Islanders more engaged.

"We can walk into Tim Horton's and see our MPs," he said. "We know them and they know us."

Islanders both enjoy and expect ready access, said MacNeill.

He recalled a day he walked into the local coffee shop to see Premier Pat Binns sitting with MP Lawrence MacAulay who was sitting with Gilbert Clements, lieutenant governor of P.E.I. at the time.

Three of the most powerful men in the province were casually gathered, shooting the breeze like any other coffee klatch, MacNeill said. "That speaks to access."

Local filmmakers to showcase work at mini festival

By Charissa Reeves

Island filmmakers disappointed there was no festival last fall will have a chance to showcase their films at an upcoming smaller version of the Reel Island Film Festival.

The festival will be held at City Cinema on Feb. 20-21. It will feature six hours of Island films with two awards available and an after party at Brennans.

Fox Henderson, organizer and local filmmaker, said the festival is being called the Reel Island Film Festival mainly for continuity because people recognize the name.

He wanted a place to show his work and other films he had been involved with.

The owner of City Cinema agreed to rent the theatre for two nights.

"It's more like a showcase, because we're not doing anything else," said Henderson.

Pete Murphy, another local filmmaker helping with the festival, said it's all about the films.

"We were making films before there were festivals and we'll be making films when there aren't any festivals."

There may be a few longer films shown, but most will be under 15 minutes, said Henderson.

"There's nothing wrong with making a five-minute movie."



Jason Alward and Pete Murphy are two of the organizers of the Reel Island Film Festival. Alward did the web design and Murphy is a filmmaker. (Reeves photo)

Jason Alward, the web designer for Reel Island, said people were disappointed when there was no place to show films last year.

"We have been getting a lot of response about people wanting to show their films."

The cost to organize the festival so

far is the \$8 Henderson spent on posters asking for film submissions.

Rental of the theatre will be paid through ticket sales.

Organizers think there will be enough interest, especially because of the time of year, said Alward.

"It's an event too. You don't pay to see a blockbuster, you're going to see a creative work."

There will be advanced ticket sales early on the days of the festival and tickets will also be available at the door on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Islanders support Island films, said Murphy.

"After working the festival for a couple of years there was a big hullabaloo because people weren't coming to see off-Island films."

"It didn't seem people care like they do for Island films. They know someone who's in it or made it," said Henderson.

"The Island's small, the film festival's small," said Murphy.

Two awards will be given out after the festival by Nicole Balderson. She has made the awards for all of the previous festivals and each award is unique.

The awards will be the viewers choice award and the Shaye Reno memorial award for best first-time effort.

For more information go to www.reelisland.com, or email reelislandfilm@gmail.com.

The Surveyor asked...

What do you prefer?

Going to the theatre to watch a movie, or renting and watching at home?



Lisa MacDonald
"Going to the movies, because of the better sound, visuals, and seats."



Brandon Arseneau
"Going to the movies, because I get to go with friends."



Debra Wellner
"Watching movies at home, because of the comfort."



Greg Trainor
"Usually at home because it's cheaper and more comfortable."



Margo MacWilliams
"Always at home, because I have two children and it's easier."



Terry Dempster
"Home, because it's more comfortable."

By Adam Morrison

You can't rush process when making soap: owner

Downtown soapmakers offer all-natural products

By Charissa Reeves

Marcus Lutterman finds his job relaxing at this time of year.

He is a partner with Jennifer Ridgway of Moonsnail Soapworks in Charlottetown. He has been making soap for the past six years.

Moonsnail has been open for about 10 years.

Lutterman likens the soap-making process, especially during this time of year when business is slower, to woodworking.

"It's a relaxed pace, you can't rush it."

Moonsnail soaps are made from all-natural ingredients, using the cold process of soap making.

There are three main steps. The first is the mixing, or tracing process.

It is called tracing because the ingredients must thicken enough on the top so you can draw a picture in it and the design will hold, said Lutterman.

"It comes out like a thick pea soup."

The mixing stage takes about five hours.



Marcus Lutterman displays the Red Clay and Kelp soap at Moonsnail Soapworks in Charlottetown. Lutterman is part owner of the all-natural soap company. (Reeves photo)

The complexity of the mixing process varies among soaps depending on the ingredients. When making goat's milk soap,

the milk must be whipped into the lye using a whisk, Lutterman said. "It's a straight-forward chemical process, but it has to be right on."

The next step takes two days as the soap sets in the mold.

The soap then takes two months to cure, or dry.

"They have a large moisture content when it first comes out and if you use it, then it'll be all mushy, like soap that's sat in water."

Lutterman has learned much of what he knows from the book *The Soapmaker's Companion* by Susan Miller Cavitch.

The store sells two main varieties of soap.

Medicinal soaps feature ingredients such as tea tree oil for acne or aloe for skin care. Soaps that are simply nicely scented use essential oils and other ingredients.

The business does not use any fragrance oils.

The most popular soap during the tourist season is the Red Clay and Kelp, though the clay is not actually Island clay.

Island clay is not very pure and does not mix well, instead the clay comes from France.

Among the medicinal soaps, the Aloe is the most popular.

There have never been any reports of people having any serious allergic reactions to their soaps, Lutterman said.

Most complaints come from people who wear heavy fragrance perfumes, he said.

A woman visited the store once, and she was so sensitive to fragrances and scents that normally she had to wear a mask all the time.

She was only going to stay for a minute or two because she thought the scents would bother her, but she ended up staying and talking for an hour.

Pottery co-op offers helping hand to local artists

By Charissa Reeves

The P.E.I. pottery studio co-op offers not only classes for people learning the art, but all-hours access to its members.

The studio, in Victoria Park, is available to its members as long as no class is taking place, says co-op member Felicity Measham.

If someone doesn't need guidance, then they'll let them purchase a membership, said Measham.

"Basically, you have to have had experience potting at some level."

Memberships are \$240 a year, plus a one-time \$10 co-op fee. This includes firing and glazes. The only other expense the member must cover is the clay.

When someone buys a membership, they give them the combination and they can go there anytime,

said Measham.

"It's a really good idea, and it's perfect for people who work shift work because you can go anytime."

Because it is a co-op they get better deals, and members can also order special tools and glazes through catalogues they have, said Measham.

Clay is available through the studio at \$25 for 20 pounds.

"A coffee mug is about half a pound when you put it on the scale and weigh it."

Donna Lynn Wigmore, the studio's technician, said it doesn't matter if a person has learned through the co-op or another organization as long as they can be self-reliant.

The studio has been in Victoria Park since the fall of 1998.



The pottery co-op studio is accessible any time to members who want to create pieces of art like these by Emily Dunsmore. (Reeves photo)

It was on King Street for about two years before that, said Wigmore.

"We're non-profit, we're totally self-sufficient and have no funding

from the government."

Everybody who works at the co-operative is a volunteer and, although some people join and others leave, membership numbers

remain stable, said Wigmore.

"At any given time we have about 20 to 30 active members."

As the technician, it is her job to run the kiln, but if a member wants to learn how to use the kiln, there is a committee of members who can teach them, said Wigmore.

"We offer workshops to our members throughout the year as well."

Both adult and childrens classes are offered through the studio for people who would like to learn to pot. The classes go for 10 weeks, one night a week for adults and cost \$190.

Adult classes include 20 pounds of clay, which is usually enough for the student.

More can be purchased if necessary and all classes are taught by professional potters.

Cartoon reaction proves tragic

By Daniel Mark Wheaton

The words *outrage* and *cartoon* should never be found in the same headline. But it seems as if society at large has completely lost its sense of humour. Or perhaps people have just lost their ability to distinguish between bad taste and ill intent.

A series of 12 drawings of Muhammad, published on the inside pages of a Danish newspaper over four months ago is now wreaking havoc in over half a dozen countries.

Ambassadors have lost their jobs and businesses are being forced to lay off hundreds of workers. Politicians are working overtime on damage control in a crisis that seems to be worsening, not abating.

Meanwhile newspapers and supporters of freedom of expression within the press are mobilizing to garner support in an unpredictable battle where the press has pitted states against religion in a war neither intended to have.

Muslim organizations, outraged by the blasphemous depictions of their prophet, began organizing protests and by the end of January Saudi Arabia withdrew its ambassador from Denmark, Danish companies reported boycotts on their products elsewhere and masked gunmen stormed an EU office in Gaza City to protest the cartoons.

On Feb. 2, newspapers across the world re-published the cartoons, incit-

ing further violence, protests, flag burnings and at least eight deaths.

Back to the original printing - should the drawings have run? They were probably in poor taste. But they weren't meant to incite hatred. The problem here isn't that they were published. The problem is in the inhumane reaction to the publication.

I'm not for one moment assuming that every Muslim agrees with the violence that's taking place. In fact, I'm willing to wager the majority would prefer these disagreements be handled in a more diplomatic manner. One leading group of Islamic clerics has condemned the cartoons, but called for an end to the violence.

At the same time it seems we hear so often about groups of fundamentalist Muslims who create ties that do not exist.

Just because a newspaper publishes a picture doesn't mean the country in which the picture was published approved.

The Danish prime minister spoke

out against any attempt to "demonize groups of people on the basis of their religion."

And even if the government didn't condemn the pictures, they're just pictures. They're no cause for killing.

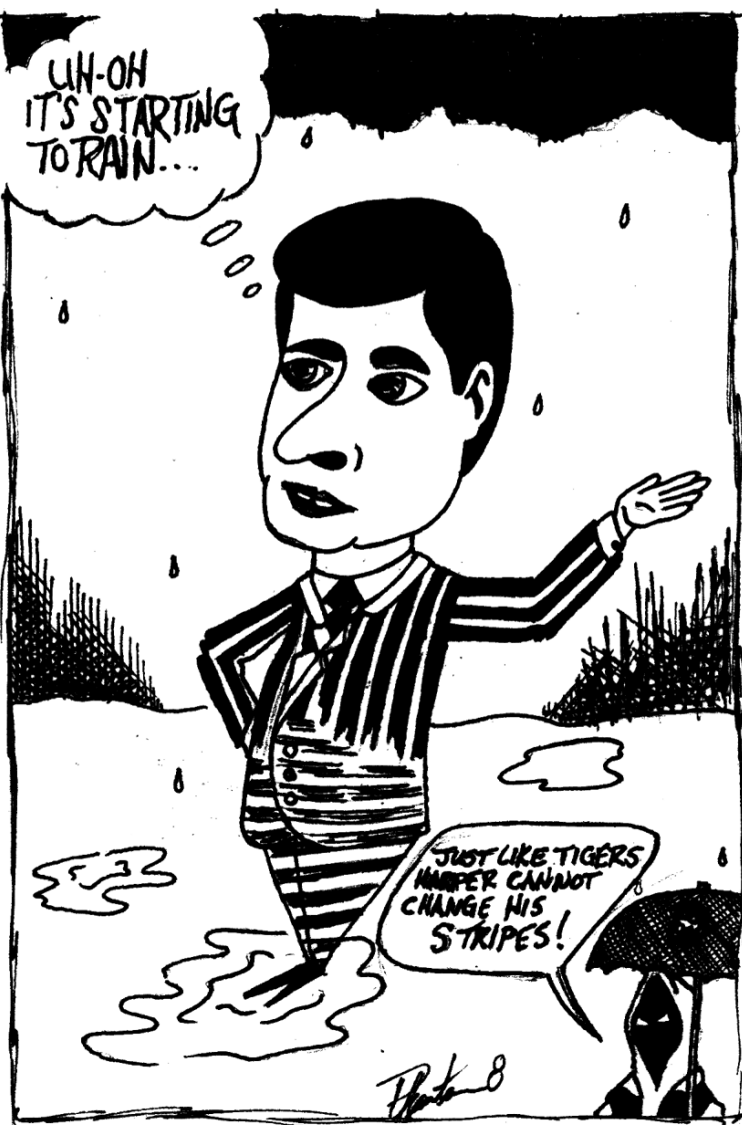
Let's turn the tables for a moment. In Denmark, 95 per cent of citizens subscribe to the Evangelical Lutheran protestant religion. Just one per cent are Muslim.

Now let's imagine for a moment that a prominent newspaper in Afghanistan publishes anti-Christian cartoons.

Perhaps I'm wrong, but I don't think the Danes would start a worldwide campaign of anti-Islamic violence.

French author and philosopher Francois Voltaire summed up my thoughts best when he said in a letter, "I detest what you write, but I would give my life to make it possible for you to continue to write."

I don't know that I'd give my life for any Danish newspaper, but I won't ever condemn it for what it publishes, however distasteful.



New PM plays like seasoned veteran

By Andrea MacRae

Practised politicians know voters have short memories. They do the unpopular stuff early in the mandate and break open the turd polish as the clock ticks down to election time.

Stephen Harper, working on a condensed timeline, got down to business on Day One, governing like a second-term prime minister.

Ethics be damned; expediency rules the day.

Harper started off by poaching a member from the other side before the ink was even dry on the new business cards and he gave a helpful party hack not just one plum job, but two: senator and cabinet minister. This is the same leader who, in campaign speeches only weeks ago, said, "A senate chair should be occupied by someone with a democratic mandate."

Conservative campaign co-chair Michael Fortier didn't get just any ministry. This is Public Works, a department that, due to its nature, is open to charges of porkbarrel politicking. This will be seen as a patronage appointment to a patronage portfolio still stinking from the soiling it took at the hands of Alfonso Gagliano.

"I didn't run in the election because I

didn't want to run in the election," said Fortier to the press the day after being sworn in. All aspiring politicians should have friends like Stephen Harper to save them the time, money and effort of asking the electorate for a job.

Fortier has tried his hand at direct democracy, but it hasn't worked for him. He ran for the leadership of the Progressive Conservative party in 1998 and got four per cent of the vote. In the 2000 federal election, he ran in the Montreal's Laval West riding and finished fourth.

It's a bitter valentine for jilted voters in Vancouver-Kingsway who elected David Emerson because he ran as a Liberal or, even worse, because they didn't want a Conservative representative. Only three weeks ago, citizens in the riding voted against Emerson's new party by a margin of more than four to one.

Grassroots populism is out the window in favour of pragmatism. It seems Harper has evolved after all, into a more instinctual political animal willing to put strategy over principle.

The old Reform guard has grown up too. There was a time when reactionaries in the Reform/Canadian Alliance could be counted on to put hooves in

mouthes if their sensibilities of right and wrong were ruffled. But asked to comment on the ethics of the unorthodox appointments, they provided "sound bites" like "I won't answer that," (Ken Epp); "I understand the pragmatism of it," (Maurice Vellacott) and "I trust Stephen Harper's judgment," from the tell-it-like-it-is Myron Thompson.

Garth Turner dared voice an opinion and got called to the principal's office. The strategy of muzzling dissenters and riding out the storm is straight from the Jean Chretien playbook.

Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose. Some one will have to translate for Ted Menzies.

For now, Canadians can get their milk in small doses, but do they want to buy the cow? It was mad once; will it turn ornery again if it moves into the barnyard? The milk tastes a little sour but Harper plans to sweeten voters with child care cash and five per cent GST.

In his first week Harper may have tripped a little on the shoelaces of his new oxfords, but for a rookie, he played like a wily operator with his eye on the ball: more seats in big cities. It's about power.

The Surveyor

is a learning tool for students

in the Journalism program at Holland College.

Opinions expressed in *The Surveyor* do not necessarily reflect those of the college administration.

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Bored of the Rings: An Olympic journal

By James Allison

OPINION

When does men's hockey start? Seriously.

I, like a lot of other shut-ins and sports fans, spent a lot of my weekend, and a storm day on Monday, watching the best of the best compete in the Olympics. Seventy-two hours and three medals later I'm left asking myself whether I can stand another two weeks of this nonsense.

Things seemed to start well enough. The host Italians have assigned the slogan "Passion lives here" to these games and the opening ceremony looked like it was going to live up to that hype. When four guys wearing helmets that shoot fire start doing laps of the stadium on roller blades, you know you're in for a show.

Unfortunately, from there things went down hill faster than U.S. skier Bode Miller on a bender. Exceptions included a race car doing doughnuts and the spectacular fireworks show that accompanied the lighting of Italy's licorice twist Olympic cauldron.

I'm going to go ahead and rate the entire thing a seven out of 10, bonus points from Team Canada's cool hats.

Saturday morning, I climbed out of bed like a six year old at Christmas with visions of women's moguls skiers and gold medals dancing in my head. I was not disappointed. Canadian Jennifer Heil won Canada's first medal in unspectacular but solid fashion.

But as nice as Heil's run was, I

was more impressed by frequent camera shots of her Norwegian nemesis, Kari Traa. What a looker.

Traa's spectacular second place finish was followed by women's hockey on the CBC, with P.E.I.'s Bruce Rainnie doing the play by play.

I lasted one period.

I heard later Canada won 16-0. If you're looking for a TSN turning point in this one, you're probably going to have to go all the way back to when those poor Italian women decided they liked skating.

Word around the rink now says some of the American women are upset with Canada running up the score. It's probably just sour grapes on their part, but as a viewer I'm not crazy about it either. The best hockey games are 2-1 Leaf wins. Who wants to watch our ladies score more times than Wilt Chamberlain in a single afternoon? Until there's some real competition in this sport, I'm boycotting.

I'm doing the same with biathlon. No reason.

Sunday brought slight disappointment when gold medal favourite and Canadian Cindy Klassen won bronze in the 3,000 metres. Bronze is OK I guess, it even looks kinda gold, in the right light.

Sunday also saw the men's downhill. This used to be the glamour sport of the Olympics, but it hasn't been any fun since Italian folk hero Alberto "La Bomba" Tomba gave up skiing to concentrate on being a full time-international playboy.

Monday was a great day at the Olympics for doctors.

I think most people remember

Austrian skier Hermann Maier's horrific fall at the 1998 Nagano games as one of the stand-out moments of those games. Good or bad, Monday in Turin was like that.

Early Monday morning Canadian skier Allison Forsyth suffered a torn ACL after a fall in the downhill practice runs, followed by a French skier who needed three layers of crash nets to stop her after she fell.

Later, at the women's luge, there were bodies flying everywhere as the athletes struggled to grasp the concept of turning.

The lowlight of the day had to be Canadian speed skater and world champion Jeremy Wotherspoon choking, again. You might recognize Wotherspoon for his other greatest hit, tripping over the starting line in Salt Lake City.

It's not all bad. Monday night, after the carnage that was the downhill qualifying and women's luge, the world watched what I honestly think will be the enduring image of these games.

In the first minute of Chinese figure skating team Zhang and Zhang's long routine, Zhang Den, the female member of the team, fell awkwardly while attempting a difficult throw quad salchow.

She was helped off the ice by her partner, but refused to give up on her routine. The pair returned to the ice, picked up where they left off and won the silver medal.

Finally, an Olympic moment I can get excited about.

Now where do I get one of those hats?

Former College instructor, journalist will be sadly missed

By Chris Wood

A syndicated columnist and former journalism instructor at Holland College died last week after a short battle with cancer.

Sandra Devlin was a genealogy expert whose column, Missing Links, ran in 12 newspapers across the Maritimes and Ontario.

Devlin taught the journalism program at Holland College from 1993 to 1995 before launching a full-time freelance career from her home in Moncton, N.B.

Devlin was well respected within the journalism community. Gary MacDougall, editor of the Guardian in Charlottetown, said she never missed a deadline and she knew how to press "hot-button issues." In addition to Missing Links, she also penned a column published weekly in the Guardian Lifestyles section.

Devlin once wrote a Remembrance Day article that sparked a huge reaction from Islanders. Many letters poured in from veterans angered by Devlin's view. She questioned why veterans are honoured only one day a year

and not all year round.

MacDougall affectionately referred to Devlin as "an opinionated mother hen."

Even while she suffered with cancer she never complained and was always trying to make others feel comfortable, he said.

Island genealogists said Devlin will be missed.

"A lot of people did find a root through her column," said Dave Hunter, webmaster of Island Register genealogy website. "It was informative. It brought genealogy a lot closer to people and she put a lot of her life into it and a lot of work into it over the years until she was forced to retire last year by her cancer."

Elizabeth Glen, president of the P.E.I. Genealogy Society, said Devlin's column brought genealogy into the broader community and helped keep genealogists from all over the region involved and in contact with each other.

"She made genealogy real for most people instead of just names and dates."

She provided an important public venue for genealogy, said Glen.

Bill wouldn't have helped firefighters: MP

Dear Editor:

I would like to provide clarification in regards to the article "Tax break offers help for volunteer firefighter" by Melanie Bernard in the Nov. 25 issue of the Surveyor.

In 2004, I introduced a private member's bill (Bill C-342) into Parliament that would have allowed for an income tax credit for volunteer firefighters.

A previous bill that would have increased the deduction for only those volunteer firefighters *in receipt of honorariums* was defeated. It is true that I, along with the other Island MPs, voted against that bill. The reason for this was it would have no noticable benefit to most *PEI volunteer firefighters as they do not receive honorariums*. My concern was it is those volunteers who need the tax break the most.

The bill I introduced in 2004 would have provided a tax credit for volunteer firefighters who are not paid, but have performed a specific number of hours. However,

that bill died on the order paper when Parliament was adjourned for the election.

I stated clearly during the election I would re-introduce that bill to Parliament. However, as a result of being appointed a Parliamentary Secretary and therefore a member of cabinet, I am not allowed to introduce a private member's bill. I therefore asked my colleagues, Roger Cuzner, MP for Cape Breton-Canso, and Peter Stoffer, MP for Sackville-Eastern, to second the bill, which they did. The bill was entered in the House of Commons as Bill C-273.

In essence, Bill C-273 was introduced to Parliament the same as Bill-342. The bill would amend the income tax act to allow volunteer firefighters, paid or not, to deduct from their taxable income the amount of \$500 if they performed at least 50 hours of volunteer service, and \$1,000 if they performed at least 100 hours of volunteer service.

When the bill came up for second reading, I entered into discussions

with members of the House of Commons from all parties including Rick Casson, MP for Lethbridge, who had introduced a similar private member's bill. The consensus was 50 hours was too low and the thousand dollars was not high enough. As a result, an agreement was made to amend the bill to apply a tax credit where volunteer emergency workers would be allowed, if passed, to deduct from their taxable income the amount of \$1,000 if they performed at least 100 hours of volunteer service and \$2,000 if they performed at least 200 hours of volunteer service. I believe this is a huge improvement and we did receive unanimous consent in the House of Commons for this amendment.

The bill was sent to the Standing Committee on Finance and, following hearings, they agreed in principle to the bill. However it required several measures to be improved.

I will continue to encourage support for the bill.

Wayne Easter, MP Malpeque

Would you trust this man with a shaver?



Paramedic student Peter Tripp cuts fellow classmate Sean Clarke's hair, giving them matching hairdos. When asked why, Clarke replied, "I just needed a haircut." (Smith photo)



Check out the new Holland
College Student Union website!

<http://www.hcsu.ca>

National Defence ad

4 X 140

#A13148

Flag deserves respect: soldier

By Robert MacDonald

Flying a ripped Canadian flag is an insult to the pride and strength the flag represents, says a member of Canada's military.

Sgt. Mike Walsh is a member of the P.E.I. Regiment stationed at the Queen Charlotte Armoury.

He said the state of most flags in Charlottetown is atrocious and having a bare flagpole is better than flying a tattered flag.

It's the national flag, and it deserves respect, he said in a letter that appeared in the Gaurdian newspaper on Jan. 26. The flag has its own etiquette which needs to be upheld, and part of maintaining a flag is following the rules.

"A flag is only supposed to be flown during daylight hours," he said in an interview. "People would double the life of their flag if they followed policy and took it down at night."

Unlike the military, however, civilians have no rules on how they treat the flag. In the armed forces a person could be charged and fined for not showing the flag its due respect.

"If I was to improperly use a flag, draped it at my window in my room or on the wall, that's not allowed."



A tattered Canadian flag flaps in the wind after high winds blew across the Island Jan. 27. The torn flags are upsetting to Mike Walsh, who wrote to the Guardian newspaper urging people to respect the flag. (MacDonald photo)

Canadians should be as respectful of their flag as the citizens of America are of theirs, he said. In the U.S., laws prohibit disrespect of the flag.

Roger Vail, Holland College's facility manager, is getting ready to replace the flag at the front doors of the school. Over the course of the winter,

its edges have become tattered and now it's time to put up a new flag.

He said he changes the flag a few times a year, or whenever it's starting to tatter at the edges. There's no school policy, but it's respect.

"We don't fly tattered flags. Even if there isn't a policy, it's (my) policy."

Program provides cellphones to women fearing for safety

By Amy Seward

In early December, Aliant teamed up with the Charlottetown police department to help those in potentially dangerous domestic violence situations. The program is called Safe Line.

Patrol units are equipped with used cellphones and battery chargers. When an emergency protection order is issued, the woman is provided with a free phone, which is only capable of phoning 911.

"The issues of domestic violence are real and are a part of our day-to-day policing activities," said Paul Smith, Charlottetown's police chief, in a statement released Dec. 7.

"While we wish there was no need for such an initiative, having it may reduce the risk to those in these situations and help them work towards ending the cycle of violence."

Five weeks into the program, Const. Gary Clow, Charlottetown's community policing officer, describes the partnership as a service that provides a security blanket for women who feel they need it.

"Women with EPOs say they feel so

much safer knowing they have the phone with them during this time."

The phones, donated by Aliant, are no longer in service. Because the only number reachable is 911, there is no phone bill or service charges to be paid.

Patrick Campbell, Aliant's community relations manager for Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, said P.E.I. was the testing ground. The police department in Saint John, N.B. is now discussing starting its own Safe Line.

Clow has received phone calls of interest from across

Canada.

The department has eight phones in use.

Over the past year a total of 1,986 women used support services across P.E.I., including Anderson House, which provides 24-hour service for physically and emotionally abused women and children.

Anderson House heard of the Safe Line program and has said it's a great safety precaution.



Stratford will monitor speed, councillor says

By Lorie O'Halloran

After months of waiting, the speed monitor planned for Stratford is delayed.

The mobile speed-monitoring radar ordered by the town was sent back because it was the wrong one.

Robert Hughes, chief administrative officer for the town, said the monitor they ordered is a mobile unit. It will take another couple of months before the correct monitor arrives.

The speed monitor will be set up in Stratford to deal with problem areas and work as a speed deterrent. The monitor is similar to one at the Confederation Bridge that flashes the speed of passing vehicles.

Hughes said if a resident calls and complains about speeding vehicles, the radar can be moved there to help police monitor traffic.

Gary Clow, the councillor overseeing safety service and environment issues, said the monitor will generate a report that will be analysed by the police to determine speed limits and traffic volume.

"It's a tool for the RCMP to use."

Clow said Halifax has five units in place.

Police to review legal issues involving poker tournaments

By Jarrod Yeo

Bar owners in Prince Edward Island can continue hosting Texas hold'em poker tournaments for the time being, but they may be asked to fold the practice in the future, police say.

For \$25, Texas hold'em, a variation of poker, can be played in bars, lounges and Legion halls on most nights of the week.

The main problem police have is bar owners profiting from player buy ins, Charlottetown deputy police chief Richard Collins said.

His department first raised the issue at a P.E.I. Association of Chiefs of Police meeting six months ago.

"We knew this was something big. We're not talking about four guys sitting around the kitchen table playing cards. With so many people involved, we had to at least take a look at the legal aspects of the tournaments."

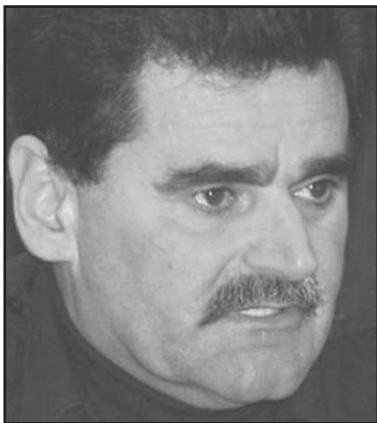
While police aren't taking action at the moment, the matter will be reviewed again at the next meeting in March, he said.

"Pardon the pun, but we're not

putting Texas hold'em on hold. When there are gambling overtones involved, it becomes a very complex issue. We're dealing with potential criminality."

Andrew Nicholson, the manager of the Dooly's on Kent Street in Charlottetown, said he doesn't profit from the tournaments he hosts every Tuesday.

"We give 90 per cent of the buy ins to the winners of the tournament on any given week, the remaining 10 per cent to breast



RICHARD COLLINS

cancer research. We try to donate about \$1,000 a year."

While he can only speak for himself, Nicholson said the financial benefits of hosting poker tournaments aren't significant.

"All we hope to do is bring in customers, so hopefully they'll buy a drink or play some pool while they're here."

But just because games are played for charity doesn't make it legal, Collins said. "If I steal something, sell it and give the money to a charity, it's illegal. Even if they're donating to a charitable cause, it needs to be regulated."

Nic Frost, 24, a Summerside native and self-described poker fanatic, said it was only a matter of time before police looked into it.

"I've heard a lot of rumours swirling around lately. The way I see it, it's probably better morally than when they had those same people dropping \$20 in a VLT every 10 minutes. They can play poker for an hour for the same price, and there's a social aspect that goes along with it."

Summerside needs Ice Fox: GM

Rock'em, sock'em style of play fires up fans in Canadian Elite League

By Jarrod Yeo

The Summerside Wellness Centre will need the money from at least two elite hockey teams if the city expects to meet its operation costs, says Summerside Ice Fox general manager Scott Bridges.

Bridge's team is competing in its first season with the Canadian Elite Hockey League. The Ice Fox, along with the Summerside Junior 'A' Western Capitals, are the highest calibre of hockey the city offers fans.

But reports last fall questioned whether the city and the surrounding communities are a large enough market for both clubs to be competitive.

Low attendance earlier in the season led many to believe it would be the Ice Fox's last.

But a few months have made a huge difference, Bridges said.

"It's taken a while, but the fans are coming around. The first few games of the season, we only had about 200 fans coming out to the games. But last week, we had over 600. People love the hard-nosed style of play this league offers."

Phase two of the Wellness Centre project is scheduled for completion just in time for Summerside's 2009 Canada Games bid, providing it's awarded. A 3,500-seat arena will replace the aging Cahill Stadium that Summerside hockey teams call home.

Bridges used Charlottetown as an example of a city where several elite hockey teams are succeeding in a small-market.

"People can say what they want, but anytime there's a fight, not one person is sitting in the stands."

- Ice Fox GM
Scott Bridges

"They've got the UPEI Panthers, the Abbies and the Major Midget P.E.I. team all playing at the MacLauchlin Arena. And the P.E.I. Rocket are just down the street. Summerside loves its hockey too and, as time passes, I expect our fan base to grow."

The four-team league has produced some intense rivalries, as witnessed in the Ice Fox's 9-7 home ice loss to the Dartmouth Destroyers on Feb. 2 when 147 penalty minutes were assessed.

"That's what the league wanted, a chippy, tough brand of hockey. People can say what they want, but anytime there's a fight, not one person is sitting in the stands. The atmosphere in the Cahill Stadium is really good when we play."

Brad Craig, a 24-year-old Summerside native who has played and coached minor hockey in the city, agreed.

"It's more aggressive and fast-paced compared to the junior league. I've only been to a few games, but I like what I've seen. I like seeing local guys I know playing too. It's gaining momentum for sure."



A group gathers for a regular home poker game in Charlottetown. They say it's cheaper and friendlier than the bar tournaments. (Wood photo)

Poker parties pack them in, and it's cheaper

By Chris Wood

Island police are trying to figure out what to do about illegal poker games springing up at bars across P.E.I.

But bars aren't the only place where gamblers come to put down their money and pick up their cards.

The location of one game in the heart of Charlottetown is found in a multi-level house with an official city-issued no smoking sign about 15 feet from the front door.

Clearly there is no in-house maid. Papers litter the entry. The stairs look like they haven't seen a vacuum in weeks.

At the top of the stairs there are sounds of good times being had, but where?

Another flight of stairs? These are steep. Hopefully no one falls down.

At the top of the last flight there is a cloud of smoke.

Indie rock music fills the air.

There is a mix of boys and girls. Even though they age between 19 and 25, they look very young and calling them men and women would be a little presumptuous.

As the players take their positions around the poker table, their mood is light, until the first hand is dealt.

"What the f***!" shouts host Cory Gavin in disgust.

These players take things very seriously.

The table is a real poker mat. It has a green canvas to play on, with slots for poker chips and drink

holders.

Shots of tequila and spliffs are passed around and everyone is smoking cigarettes.

Five dollars is the cost of a hand of poker at most home games.

This is one reason why home games have become so popular.

"It's only five bucks, so why not play," said Gavin.

One player, who goes by the online pseudonym Gonzo, said playing at home is less stressful.

"The buy in is usually cheaper. At a bar it costs between \$10 and \$20. Some bars have a \$40 buy in."

These players go to at least two games per week, Tuesday and Friday nights, although Sunday has become popular too.

The games are also a night out on the town. The pot, depending on the number of players, is usually between \$35 and \$40.

"If you win the hand before you go to the bar, your drinking is paid for," said Gonzo.

The comfort of being with people you know is one reason some people play at home.

"Playing with friends is good because they are honest. They won't let you put in twice," said Charlene, evidently in a state of drunkenness.

The general rule of gambling is the house always wins. So when the house doesn't win, it makes it all the sweeter for those playing.

"I love it when Cory loses," said Charlene.

"But it's OK to lose to a friend."



A jaywalker, potentially on his way to a \$120 fine. (Wood photo)

Jaywalkers unaware of cost of their crime

By Chris Wood

It's a cold and windy day. The snow is blowing in your face and suddenly you remember you need to be on the other side of the street.

But the crosswalk is too far and the business you need to go to is right in front of you.

You say the heck with it and cross right in the middle of the street. You are jaywalking.

There is one spot in Charlottetown where jaywalking happens more often than not.

Beanz espresso bar and the Confederation Court Mall on University Avenue share a connection. They are a link for most pedestrians. Both businesses fall between crosswalks, but people notoriously jaywalk between the shops.

Lorrie Kays, owner and operator of Beanz, said she has noticed the amount of traffic between the two stores, but doesn't know what can be done to alleviate the jaywalking problem. Kays did jokingly suggest a toll be taken from those who jaywalk and the money given to a community group, or an actual crosswalk be put in between the two stores.

A request to the police committee would have to be submitted in order for such an idea to be put to work.

Police have issued tickets on rare occasions. A warning is usually given to first-time offenders.

Constable Gary Clow of the Charlottetown police said it is the offi-

cer's decision to give a ticket or a warning.

The minimum fine is \$50, plus a \$20 victim surcharge fee.

If a person takes the ticket to court and loses, the judge can order a maximum fine of \$100, plus the victim surcharge.

Most people are unaware of the fine. When told, people said it would be a deterrent.

But an individual, who requested his name not be used, said when it's cold outside, walking all the way to the corner to cross the street just doesn't enter his mind.

Others have a different outlook.

"It's just like wearing a seatbelt. If there is a fine, I'll be more conscious to wear one," said pedestrian Shawn Murray.

Other cities in Canada have recently taken a tough approach to traffic violations. Montreal police have cracked down on jaywalkers and drivers who speed.

The city has added 133 new officers to its police department. Their job is to catch people breaking traffic laws. The campaign is a multi-million dollar effort that will extend over the next few years.

Police in Fredericton are also cracking down on jaywalkers. The city ran an awareness campaign from June through September, 2004. Police conducted a four-week survey and counted almost 9,000 jaywalkers in the downtown area.

Deaths on P.E.I. roads double national rate

By Andrea MacRae

P.E.I. had the highest rate of traffic fatalities in the country in 2004, more than double the national rate, but most of those deaths were preventable, says an RCMP spokesman.

The most recent collision statistics from Transport Canada show P.E.I. had a rate of 20.3 traffic fatalities per 100,000 population. The national rate was 8.5.

Alcohol was a contributing factor in 10 of the 28 Island fatalities and the lack of seatbelt use was a contributing factor in 12 of the cases, said Sgt. Dave Thibeau of the Queens district RCMP detachment.

"Approximately three-quarters of the collisions were preventable."

The RCMP will work to achieve Transport Canada's goal to make Canada's roads the safest in the world, Road Safety Vision 2010, which focuses on impaired driving and seatbelt use, said Thibeau.

"P.E.I. continues to be one of the

lowest provinces for compliance with seatbelts, so we are stepping up our enforcement in that area."

Doug MacEwen said P.E.I. has a small population, so just a few additional deaths from year to year can result in a large increase in the fatality rate.

MacEwen is the acting safety coordinator for highway safety in the provincial Department of Transportation and Public Works.

He said the numbers are high because the province has a higher percentage of drivers in its population compared with large centres where public transportation is available.

However, the fatality rate on P.E.I. per 100,000 licensed drivers is still more than double the national number, 28.8 compared to 12.6.

MacEwen cited other factors affecting the provincial rate including the large number of roads, several motorcycle deaths in 2004, and the fact there were four multiple-fatality accidents

that year.

Seatbelt use is an important factor, he said.

"We're doing what we can to get people to wear seatbelts."

Changes to the Highway Traffic Act to increase fines and the loss of demerit points for non-compliance have helped some, said MacEwen.

"But we're still only around 80 per cent."

Highway Safety continues to offer programs such as Fifty-Five Alive, the novice driver program, the driver education program and the defensive driving course, he said.

Thibeau said it's important to remember the traffic fatalities across the Island each year are more than statistics.

They were mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, productive members of the community, he said.

"And that's a great loss to the community. The key is they were preventable."

Walk single file, or else!

Some people could use an etiquette lesson when it comes to crowded sidewalks

By Chris Wood

OPINION

The sidewalks of Charlottetown are by no means wide. They are constructed to accommodate single-file walking.

If you happen to be a cadet or enjoying walking in marching-band fashion, you'll have no problem getting around the city.

People in groups of two walk side by side. That's fine, but here's where the trouble begins.

Take this common scenario. Two groups of two walking down the street. These groups meet.

What to do?

You can't walk through the on-coming individual unless you're a ghost. If you are and you're reading this, write me and tell me what it's like on the other side.

How do you avoid this confrontation? Try this practice I employ.

When walking with someone and you find yourself in this situation, look ahead and step aside so there is a lane available for the other person.

This may sound so trivial to most people, but you would be shocked at how many don't make way for someone else.

Selfishness does not discriminate. Young and old alike are victims and perpetrators of these sidewalk crimes.

Do people simply not care?

Does it cross their one-track minds to exercise a little courtesy towards someone they do not know?

Here is another problem pedestrians face. The age old question: To jaywalk or not to jaywalk?

Jaywalking is a problem in Charlottetown.

Every day I see people ignoring the rules of the road. These rules apply to pedestrians as well as motorists.

Pedestrians always complain about how drivers don't pay attention to them. I would remind these forgetful fellows it is a two-way street.

It works this way. You may cross the street and have the law on your side if you are

- a) crossing at a crosswalk, or
- b) crossing at an intersection with a neat little hand or stick figure to

guide your way. Any other way of crossing a street is jaywalking.

In this city you are taking your life in your own hands by acting any other way.

The fact is many drivers in this city don't pay close attention to where the pedestrian is going.

The length of Kent Street is a free-for-all when it comes to this ignominous way of street-crossing.

Here is a suggestion. Make Kent Street like Victoria Row, a pedestrian-only street.

I know people will freak out over the loss of parking spaces, but we have to make some kind of change.

This will not only alleviate the jaywalking problem, but will add some colour to a dated part of our city.

There is so much work being done to waterfront property, the city should try and spread it out a little.

Until these changes are implemented, keep your head up and be on the lookout for drivers in a rush to go nowhere, and walk the extra couple of steps.

And please, cross at the crosswalk.

Taking a bite out of crime

Charlottetown police dog a valuable member of the force

By James Allison

P. D. Noble of the Charlottetown police department is like any other cop. The only things separating him from his colleagues are his legs. He has four.

Noble is a German shepherd and Charlottetown's resident police dog. He works with Constable Sid Stead to make up the city's only K-9 unit. When they are not tracking criminals, they live together.

In a way, it's a partnership just like any other on the police force, said Stead.

"He's a police dog and my partner. We're a team. We're validated as a team."

Recently, a police dog named Nitro was killed in the line of duty while pursuing a suspected criminal near Vancouver.

When the suspect attempted to climb over a train to escape the pursuit, Nitro fell underneath and was killed.

A full police funeral was held on to honour Nitro's work on the force.

Noble has been a member of Charlottetown's police force for just over three years. Before joining the force he went through a police dog training school where he learned the skills he needs to do his job.



P. D. NOBLE

The bulk of a police dog's job is tracking either people who've gone missing, or those who have fled a crime scene, said Stead,

"Probably 85 per cent of all the police dog's work is to locate people for one reason or another."

On at least one occasion Noble has tracked a suspect directly from the scene of an armed robbery to his apartment door, just by using his excellent sense of smell.

Work like that is typical of Noble, said Const. Gary Clow.

"This dog has proven to be very successful. He's solved a lot of stuff for us."

In addition to his sense of smell, police forces can also take advantage of a dog's natural athleticism and tenacity, said Clow.

"If you ran, certainly the dog would take you down. He's trained to fight."

With his unique skills, Noble has changed policing in Charlottetown, said Clow.

"I wonder sometimes how we policed the city for so long without a dog, because he's so valuable."

The lifestyle of a police officer can be physically stressful for a dog. In addition to the dangers posed by confronting criminals, police dogs like Noble can be prone to injuries, much like a human athlete. Common injuries include ligament problems, muscle strains and joint trouble.

Despite the workload, police dogs tend to live very long, healthy lives, said Dr. Mildred Drost of the Florenceville Veterinary Clinic in Florenceville, N.B.

"Actually they seem to do very well because they're extremely well taken care of, both physically and mentally."

The nature of the partnership between officer and dog makes it important for the dog to be treated well, Drost said.

"These guys have to be careful to get their dogs to work really well, so they have to take really good care of the dog."



Stratford bound?

Charlottetown bus drivers like Mark Ferguson may soon include Stratford as part of their daily runs. Stratford wants to take advantage of the public transit system on the other side of the Hillsborough Bridge. (Yeo photo)

Eastern medicine joins the mainstream

By Krista MacLean

Over the past 10 years, Charlottetown has seen a significant rise in alternative health care practices, says a local acupuncturist.

A decade ago there were three businesses in Charlottetown that offered acupuncture. Today there are 13, says Mandy O'Connell.

She has practiced acupuncture out of her home for almost two years. In that time she has seen many skeptics, and some of have turned into loyal clients.

The majority of her clients are over 65. Older generations seem to be more open to the idea of non-traditional medicine, she said.

"A lot of the people I see are frustrated with the health-care system. They have been through it and have seen limited success. They almost try acupuncture as a last resort, but end up coming back because they have good results."

Acupuncture is good for almost any ailment you can think of, she said.

"It's basically good for almost anything, except it doesn't cure infection and it doesn't cure diseases like cancer. It can help with the symptoms of most diseases and is particularly good if you have problems in your joints or bones, if you have allergies or sinus problems or if you have gastrointestinal problems."

O'Connell worked as a registered nurse for seven years before becoming an acupuncturist and said her experience in traditional medicine makes her seem more legitimate to some people.

"My background in nursing gives me a lot of credibility because a lot of people still look at this as a little bit wacky."

The results of acupuncture can sometimes be felt instantly, she said.

One day a woman came in to see her. The woman had been dragged there by a friend. The woman didn't believe in acupuncture, but had sinus problems.

"I'll do the sinus protocol for

you, if you like," said O'Connell. "You won't be out anything if you don't feel better."

The woman agreed and O'Connell began to insert the needles into her face.

"Uhh, I'm bleeding," said the woman.

O'Connell looked, but it wasn't blood. Her sinuses had let go. She was oozing sinus fluid out of her nose.

She went to see O'Connell again and has been a loyal customer ever since.

Donna Riley has been receiving acupuncture treatments from O'Connell for two years and describes her as the answer to her prayers.

Riley suffers from pain in her neck and lower back. She attributes the tension to falls and believes sitting at a desk all day contributes to her pain.

Acupuncture relieves the tension in her back and although it is sometimes uncomfortable due to tenseness, the feeling of relief is

immediate, she said.

"The relief is unbelievable and I've learned to really trust Mandy. Learning your caregiver and their technique is very important. Mandy is very gentle."

O'Connell has also helped Riley's husband, who suffered from chronic pain for years.

"She got him off of the painkillers doctors prescribed," said Riley.

"They were bad for his stomach and made him really groggy."

Everyone should try acupuncture for pain relief as it's not expensive for the service it provides, she said.

Riley's husband is working in Alberta and has not been able to find an acupuncturist with the same technique as O'Connell.

"She's brilliant with her technique. She can tell from the lumps and bumps on your back where the tension is.

"My husband keeps calling from Alberta saying, 'I need a Mandy!'"

Acupuncture background

The Chinese have been practicing acupuncture for 3,500 to 5,000 years.

They believe there is a universal life energy called Chi, or Qi, present in every living creature. This energy circulates throughout the body along pathways called meridians.

As long as the energy flows freely throughout the meridian, health is maintained. But once the flow of energy is blocked, the system is disrupted and pain and illness occur.

Acupuncture works to restore normal functions by stimulating certain points on the meridians in order to free Chi energy.

Mandy O'Connell, a local acupuncturist, says she plays down the idea of Chi and the meridians because some people find the idea a little wacky.

"People don't want to think they're getting into some sort of voodoo."

Drunk driver must live with what he did

By Lorie O'Halloran

The newer Mercedes Benz sat crumpled in the middle of the road in a cloud of smoke. Pieces of the car's grill littered the highway. The battery, thrown from the engine, rested in the middle of the road.

Beads of glass from the windshield were everywhere. The stink of gasoline from a dark, wet mark on the pavement hung in the air.

Steven MacInnis thought everyone was dead.

The 44-year-old Covehead man was charged with impaired driving causing bodily harm after he hit a car and injured the three occupants.

It was April 2005, at dusk when MacInnis got in his tractor and drove to his neighbour's house to borrow some welding rods. While there he drank a pint of shine and six shots of rum.

On his way home it was much darker and the roads seemed bare of vehicles. He made a left turn into his driveway. The next thing he knew the front axle of the tractor was lying on the road.

A man was struggling to get out of his car. He had a cut on his head and blood dripped down his face.

"There are kids in the car," he shouted.

MacInnis opened the door and helped two young children get out. They didn't make a sound.

MacInnis's mother called an ambu-

lance and the police, then rushed out with blankets to attend to the injured man and his kids. MacInnis stayed in the house.

"I'm in deep trouble now," he remembers thinking.

He did what he knew best. He downed six shots of rum to calm his nerves.

"Drinking was just killing the pain."

When the ambulance arrived MacInnis was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to be checked for injuries.

He was put on an intravenous, but as soon as he was left alone, he pulled the cord out of his arm, put on his jacket and left.

"I knew I was in a lot of trouble and I was running from it."

One month after the accident, RCMP officers arrived at MacInnis's home to charge him with impaired driving causing bodily harm. MacInnis went to the police station to be pho-

tographed and fingerprinted.

The officer read him his rights, but MacInnis waived his right to a lawyer and gave a statement.

"I didn't need a lawyer. I was guilty as sin."

MacInnis appeared in court two hours after he left the police station.

When MacInnis stood before Judge Nancy Orr she advised him to get a lawyer and adjourned the matter for two weeks.

MacInnis called a legal aid lawyer who reviewed the evidence and told him to plead guilty.

MacInnis's court hearing was postponed and rescheduled two more times for various reasons.

The fourth time, on July 10, 2005, Orr sentenced MacInnis to 11 months in provincial jail for impaired driving causing bodily harm. He also received 30 days in a provincial treatment centre, 200 hours of community service and three years probation. He lost his licence for 10 years.

MacInnis was taken to jail. It was

*"Beads of glass from
the windshield
were everywhere.
The stink
of gasoline from
the dark, wet mark
on the pavement
hung in the air."*

nothing new, he'd been charged with impaired driving on six other occasions.

In jail, inmates watch themselves and other people closely, he said. The days are very long and lonely.

"Jail is scary."

MacInnis did not receive many visitors. He had a lot of time to think.

Today, he wishes he could take back what he's done.

He got what he deserved, he said.

"I have to live with what I did every day."

MacInnis is an alcoholic. He grew up in a house with parents who were alcoholics. MacInnis started drinking at age 10.

When he looks back on his life, he's lost years, friends, family and good jobs.

"The jobs interfered with my drinking time."

He never worried about having food. He worried where his next drink would come from.

From October to December MacInnis was serving his sentence at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital while receiving treatment for a severe case of pneumonia. Just after Christmas MacInnis was transferred back to the Sleepy Hollow Correctional Centre to finish his time.

No matter what you do, you can't take it back once it's done, MacInnis said. "Don't do a stupid thing like drink and drive."



Trying the game

Goalball coach Frank MacIntyre shows blindfolded student Katie Smith which direction to roll the ball. MacIntyre showed students at Holland College how to play goalball Jan. 24 as part of Disability Awareness Day. The presentation was organized by the Sports and Leisure Management program. (MacLean photo)

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More Canadians getting away from it all: Statistics Canada study

By Sarah Thorne

Canadian trips abroad increased 3.3 per cent from November 2004 to November 2005, Statistics Canada reported Jan. 19.

Travel by Canadian residents abroad was at its highest monthly level in over four years in November, with an estimated 3.7 million Canadians travelling to other countries.

Trips abroad are becoming more affordable, said Karen Allison of Florenceville, N.B., who's been travelling for four years.

"The Internet offers great opportunities for discount prices for travel."

Allison, who spent her childhood in Charlottetown, enjoys travelling with her family.

"Four years ago we went to South Australia. Three years ago I went to Florida and two years ago we went to Veradero in Cuba. This February we're returning to Veradero," she said.

The most popular destinations for Canadians are

Cuba, Mexico and the Dominican Republic, as most travel agencies have all-inclusive packages for these places, said Randolph Degooey, vice president of business administration with Maritime Travel.

"The prices are right."

Despite the statistics, the increase is too small to be noticed by the travel industry, said Degooey.

"If it was 30 per cent, you'd notice it right away."

The number of inbound travellers increased in November as well, with just under three million visitors arriving in Canada in November, up one per cent from October.

Canadians are well represented all over the world, Allison said.

"We see Canadians everywhere. Especially in Veradero," she said.

"When I was in Florida we took in a Toronto Maple Leafs vs. Tampa Bay Lightning game and I was amazed at the number of blue and white Toronto jerseys."

Students reach out via podcasts

By Sarah Thorne

More students from UPEI and Holland College should take advantage of weblogs@upeii and radio@upeii, says an Interactive Multimedia student at Holland College.

Jonathan Bearsto contributes content to the site through his personal blog and his online radio show.

Both weblogs and online radio shows are part of what is called the Campus Commons, a site that links weblogs@upeii, weblogs@hollandcollege, The Cadre Online, and radio@upeii.

Bearsto's radio show, and others like it on the site, use a technology called podcasting. A podcast is a web feed of audio or video files posted on the Internet for anyone to subscribe to. Podcasts are different from a download or real-time streaming media because new content is automatically delivered to the subscriber.

The benefits of radio@upeii and weblogs@upeii are endless, Bearsto said.

"It's an amazing tool for collaboration and communication."

Some people think setting up your own online radio show is hard, but it's not, he said.

"It's really simple to do. Basically, if you have a microphone and a computer you can make one yourself."



Jonathan Bearsto talks into the type of mic he uses to create his own radio station at radio@upeii. (Thorne photo)

Second-year Sport and Leisure Management student Stuart Mair doesn't know much about radio@upeii.

"I've heard about it, I've just yet to tune in and listen. I don't listen to much radio," he said.

Radio@upeii was a combined effort between the newly formed UPEI Independent Student Media program and the BEAT program.

BEAT, which stands for

Business Education and Applied Technology, is a program bringing students together from different backgrounds to work on projects for academic credit.

An assistant professor at UPEI's school of business administration, Mark Hemphill, started the BEAT program.

The idea for a campus radio station based on the Internet came together through conversations on

weblogs@upeii.

UPEI had a campus radio station called CIMN that folded during the 1990s. It didn't have a broad reach, but people thought it was a shame no one had done anything to create a new station since then.

The idea of an Internet-based radio station got people excited, Hemphill said. "People started coming out of the woodworks saying 'I'll help, that's a great idea.'"

People from all over showed their support for the venture, from Washington, D.C. to McGill University in Montreal.

It didn't take long for the conversations to go from just ideas to formal planning.

"Literally, we started talking about it in October, and the first sounds of radio@upeii were online in November. It happened that fast."

Podcasting became available in January. Most universities have traditional radio stations but treat the Web as a sideline, Hemphill said. "We value the Internet for its power, it's inclusiveness and its ability to cut across different forms of media," he said. "We treat the Internet as essential to all we do. We're more of an Internet service than we are any kind of radio station."

For more, or to create an account, visit weblogs.upei.ca or radio.upei.ca.

New jobs coming to area

Pub, fish plant, coffee shop bring work to region

By Matthew Somers

Renovations at some West Prince businesses could mean new jobs in the area.

Alberton Arms Pub, under new ownership, is renovating the bar and giving it a makeover with a new name, which is still undetermined.

New owners David and Natasha Adams hope to create up to six new positions when renovations are finished.

"We are planning to hire two full-time cooks, two full-time waitresses and some part-time help," David Adams said Feb. 4.

There's no need to make the bar bigger, but the noticeable wear and tear has to be refreshed, he said.

"We hope to be open by the first week of March and be well established by the start of fishing season."

Also renovating in the area is South Shore Fisheries, which last year employed 25 workers and with expansion can create up to 10 new jobs.

Owner David Dalton said the expansion will enable the plant to do more lobster processing.

"The plant was too small and workers were in tight quarters, hopefully this will make it more comfortable."

Tim Hortons, which opened up for business Feb. 5, is creating 30 jobs due to the coffee shop being open 24 hours a day.

Manager Sue Marsh said Feb. 4 she expected a very busy opening day.

"This place will be very popular."

Employment in West Prince has taken major hits in recent years with a fish factory closing following the sale of Polar Foods, Perry's Rafters company going bankrupt and two American-run call centres shutting down because they were unable to keep workers.

Islanders love chocolate 'comfort food' ... study says it just might be good for you

By Chris Wood

Candace Merkens gets up at 5:30 a.m. to go to work making chocolates for all the little girls and boys

She is a chocolatier at Obsessions in the Delta Hotel in Charlottetown.

At Obsessions there are at least nine to 15 varieties of chocolate to choose from at any time. The kind of chocolate is up to Merkens.

"Whatever takes my fancy."

On one occasion Merkens had an idea for a tequila-lime-white chocolate ball. It was met with some trepidation by staff, but it was developed and was a great success.

Valentine's Day is a big day for chocolate lovers all around the world, but it is not Obsessions' most popular day for the treat.

Mother's Day and Christmas are the two biggest events for chocolate sales for Obsessions.

But Merkens said people want "comfort food," something they

know, but with a twist.

People most often buy caramel and mint chocolates rather than something a little more extravagant.

One of the world's renowned chocolate makers is Godiva. Its chocolates can be found in Charlottetown at the P.E.I. Co. Store in the Confederation Court Mall.

One chocolate costs \$2.25.

"One of these is really all you need," said sales associate Dona Honsberger.

A pound of chocolate will run around \$50. Though some may find it expensive, the store sells a large amount of it.

"I've seen Valentine's Day's where we've run out of chocolates," said Honsberger.

But what if it's 5:30 a.m. and you need chocolate? What could motivate anyone to get out of bed at such an un-godly hour?

What if, when you wake, instead of hitting the snooze button on the



Chocolatier Candace Merkens proudly displays her labour of love. (Wood photo)

alarm clock, you have a piece of chocolate sitting on the night side table? There it sat all night, waiting to be devoured in the morning.

What if you can't let it sit there until morning? What if you are

kept awake all night thinking about getting up to eat the chocolate, but you can't sleep? If you can't sleep, you'll never be able to eat the chocolate.

Is this healthy? Maybe.

Researchers have found dark chocolate can be good for your health.

A recent report on the health benefits of dark chocolate said you can eat up to 100 grams of chocolate that is made of at least 70 per cent cocoa and you can eat guilt free, to a degree.

A study conducted with people with high blood pressure found those who ate dark chocolate reduced their pressure.

People who drank milk and ate white chocolate showed no reduction in their pressure.

Merkens is aware of the new dark chocolate trend, but says it is not a licence to eat to your heart's content.

"Everything is good in moderation."

Appointed Senate vs. elected Senate: views differ widely

By Katie Smith

An appointed Senate does not represent the public in terms of voting and it's time for a change, says Premier Pat Binns.

But Liberal Senator Percy Downe disagrees, saying the Senate does good work and is productive, so it should remain appointed.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said during his election campaign should he be elected, he would change the Senate from an appointed body to an elected one.

While there is support for such change, there are also those concerned with what could happen if both the House of Commons and the Senate were elected.

Binns said in a country like Canada it is important for its citizens to play a role in choosing those who make the decisions that concern them.

"In a democracy it is better to have people elected instead of appointed."

Downe disagrees, saying conflict would arise if both Houses in government were elected.

"If it becomes elected, we will end up with a house of obstruction."

The Senate is designed to provide the House of Commons with checks and balances when it comes to passing bills and creating legislation.

Binns said an elected Senate would make the body operate the way it is supposed to.

"It would bring a sober second thought to debates."

Downe said an elected Senate would feel the pressures of re-election when it came to making recommendations.

"Now they can vote more independently and go against current trends."

UPEI political studies professor Henry Srebrnik said the model of an appointed Senate is outdated and it's time for a new model.

"A upper house whose members are appointed, in most cases as a reward for party service, lacks any kind of legitimacy in a 21st-century democracy."

Elected senators would be able to speak on behalf of the constituents who elect them, he said.

"They could represent the interests of their provinces in Ottawa."

Srebrnik said Canadians have a negative view of the Senate and want to see change.

"The public sees the Senate just as a retirement home for party loyalists and most don't even realize the vast consti-

tutional powers it actually has."

The country would do well with the old Reform Party idea of a Triple-E Senate - elected, effective and equal-but there would be a lot of work to get to that point, Srebrnik said.

"It would require a constitutional amendment, so it could only be done in a piecemeal fashion."

Opposition Leader Robert Ghiz said a change in the way the Senate is assembled can be beneficial for Canada.

"An elected Senate would add to transparency in government."

Although he does believe in the idea of a Triple-E Senate, Ghiz doesn't like Harper's plans for change, adding if Harper does want to change the Senate, it would take some work.

"It would take a lot of negotiations to change the constitution."

Liberal MP Wayne Easter does not see a need for change in the Senate. Canada's model, based on the British system, functions well, he said.

"Many times the Senate has looked at bills and changed them for the betterment of our country as a whole."

An elected Senate would be problematic when there is a drastic change in government, he said.

"When the tide goes out on a political party, we could end up with a full sweep in the Senate."

Senate committees are successful and don't decide matters along party lines the way they would with an elected Senate, he said.

"They are more thorough on issues as a whole," he said. "There is less partisanship."

Liberal MP Shawn Murphy said an elected Senate is a good idea in principle, but in practice it may be challenging.

"Having both the Senate and the House of Commons as democratically elected, we could end up with two competing Houses," he said. "At the end of the day, chaos would reign."

In the long run, an elected Senate would be beneficial, but it will take time to get there, said Murphy.

"First there have to be fundamental changes to the role of the Senate."

After-blizzard clean-up



Snow removal crews worked Tuesday, Feb. 14., to clear snow from the streets of Charlottetown. (Allison photo)

Marijuana Party avoids last place finish in vote

By Jarrod Yeo

The first ever Marijuana Party candidate in Prince Edward Island never expected to win the Jan. 23 election. He didn't, but he is pleased with his performance.

Andrew Chisholm finished fifth out of six candidates with 193 supporters, equaling one per cent of the popular vote in the Charlottetown riding.

The 21-year-old said he did well for a person with little experience in politics and a small campaign budget.

"I'm pretty happy. I didn't finish dead last, so that's a good thing."

Nationally, the Marijuana Party received 9,275 votes, or 0.1 per cent of the popular vote.

Chisholm, who considers himself a responsible marijuana user, decided to run for the party last summer while staying with a friend in Ontario.

"I was browsing around the Internet and came across the Marijuana Party website. It said they were looking for candidates, so I contacted the party leader, Blair Longley. He sent me a nomination form."

The Marijuana Party of Canada was founded in 2000 by Marc Boris St-Maurice, who led the party from 2000 to 2004. Longley became the party's leader when St-Maurice joined the Liberals.

Its only written policy calls for the legalization of marijuana, but Chisholm said that's unlikely to happen while the Conservatives are in power.

The Liberals proposed decriminalizing marijuana in 2003, which is more likely to happen before legalization. If it ever happens, 600,000 Canadians will "get their lives back," Chisholm said.

"They have permanent records against them. For the most part, those are basic possession. In British Columbia in 1999, there were 10,199 marijuana possession arrests."

Chisholm said reception to his candidacy has been positive.

"The majority of the people I keep myself around are people my age. Our generation is free-thinking and open-minded. I get people who step up and talk politics with me and debate, so it's good."

In the future, the party plans on developing a party platform that focuses on more varied political issues, Chisholm said.

At the moment, the party is more of a movement and relies on candidates to make their own platforms.

That's the difference between the Marijuana Party and the traditional parties, Chisholm said.

"Take Tom DeBlois for example. No matter what his personal opinions are on marijuana, he has to vote towards imposing minimum sentences for marijuana users, because that's Conservative policy. It almost hap-



Andrew Chisholm didn't win the Jan. 23 election, but he finished fifth out of six candidates. Look for Chisholm to run again in the next election. (Yeo photo)

pened when Brian Mulroney was in."

One of the biggest challenges faced by the Marijuana Party is a lack of federal funding.

To qualify, a party needs two per cent of the popular vote nationally, and a candidate needs five per cent of the vote in a riding. If a party achieves this, it receives \$1.75 per vote.

"For example, because I ran for the Marijuana Party, I could have gotten eight per cent of the vote here (Charlottetown) and the party could only get one per cent nationally and I wouldn't get a cent."

Chisholm ran his entire campaign on less than \$200, much less than the competition. "I think Liberal MP Shawn Murphy's budget was around \$55,000. I had some business cards and pins, that's it."

UPEI political science student Nathan Beck said the Marijuana Party needs to include more issues in its platform if they ever hope to gain a seat in Parliament.

"I don't think they'll ever get a seat in my lifetime. Some people are turned off as soon as they hear the name of the party and a lot of them vote strategically anyways."

But it's not all bad news for the party, he added. "They may get a few more votes next time as our generation and the one that follows replace the older generation."

Although the Marijuana Party failed to hit the target, Chisholm remains optimistic.

"We have a website now and run more and more candidates each year, so it's growing momentum for sure."

Chisholm said his career in politics is far from over and to look for him in the next election.

"You'll see me running in Charlottetown in the future. I haven't decided who I'll run for, but I'm leaning towards Independent or staying on board with the Marijuana Party."

Holland College Mac expert one of a kind on P.E.I.

By Rob MacDonald

Andrea Vail had used Windows computers all her life. She worked at call centres, teaching people how to use their PCs over the phone.

The job was boring, fixing Windows products all day and going home only to find she needed to fix her own computer.

Then one day at her office Vail found an old Macintosh Apple computer. She'd never used one before and it looked interesting, or different at least. She turned it on and started to play around.

Now, Vail, 25, is the only certified Mac technician on P.E.I. At Holland College, she works as the technical support and maintenance person for all the Macs in the school.

Apple has a test for those who wish to become a certified Mac technician. It covers all the technical aspects of the machines. Just before Christmas Vail decided she would write the exam and, with no formal training, she was going to

have to cram.

She'd planned on studying during the Christmas break, but didn't. She started studying once everyone got back to work in January.

"Hey, why wait? Might as well take the test as soon as I'm finished studying," she thought, and that's what she did.

She wrote one test on the morning of Jan. 24 and one in the afternoon. She was told right then she'd passed. Aside from the credential aspects of her new title, it gives her something to feel really good about, she said.

"It's a good thing to have, because it really shows that, yeah, I really do know my stuff with Apple computers. But right now it's just kind of a bragging right."

She's always been good with computers, said her father, Roger. She taught herself the computer language HTML when she was 14, then started crashing and rebooting computers, making them work again. Eventually she started work

at the call centre.

There were two sections to work in at the call centre: scripted, and non-scripted. In the scripted section, the worker gets a call, enters the callers complaint into a computer and reads off a pre-scripted solution to the caller.

Andrea worked in the non-scripted section. People called her with questions the scripted workers couldn't answer. She really had to know her stuff. Then one day, a caller called in about a problem with a Mac and nobody could answer it. Andrea decided she would do her best to help.

"I'll do it," she said.

They let her tinker around with an old Mac the office had and after that, she spent her time teaching the other workers how to use the machine.

Her dad is extremely proud of her for it.

"I don't know if she realizes, well, she must realize. It's international certification. She can go anywhere with that."



Andrea Vail, 25, hugs one of the computers she works on from time to time. Vail is the only certified Mac technician on P.E.I. (MacDonald photo)

Haphazard parking creates congestion

By Lucas McInnis

Construction is not the reason for the lack of parking spaces in the Holland College parking lot closest to the school, says the facility manager of the Charlottetown centre.

Even with construction and snow on the ground, students should not be parking just anywhere they please, Roger Vail said Jan. 26.

The construction of a \$7 million addition to the school, to be called the Centre for Labour Force Innovation, has eliminated a small parking lot and parking spaces along Kent Street.

The funding for the centre is being shared by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Government of Prince Edward Island and Holland College. The 38,000 square foot building is expected to be completed by spring 2006.

Since the parking lot is so small, it's becoming more difficult to keep all the cars safely in the parking lot, but at least drivers are unable to go fast enough to cause any real damage, Vail said.

Parking problems are nothing new, but construction isn't the issue, the students are, he said.

"People have been parking anywhere since I started here. It has nothing to do with construction or

anything."

Cars are towed from the parking lot, but it's a lot of work to get it done. Sometimes up to eight cars could be towed three or four times a year, Vail said.

"If I have the time to wait hours for tow trucks to come, I have them towed away."

Business Administration student Daniel Jackson said the only good thing about the parking lot is it is close to the school, but while parking isn't great, a fine or towing is too much.

"(Towing) seems kind of harsh. Maybe they could be notified by the school first."

Greater problems become obvious after a lot of snow has fallen. The already difficult to see lines become almost invisible with snow on the ground and students sometimes park three in a row, leaving some cars stuck in the middle.

It's not fair when people park like that, Jackson said, recalling a time he was blocked in.

"We were blocked in from both sides."

Vail said triple parking is never OK, no matter how many cars there are.

"There's no excuse for triple parking."



Drivers, having trouble finding a space, park wherever they can get an open piece of asphalt, even if it means tripling up. (McInnis photo)

Still no support for students with disabilities, says MLA

By Lorie O'Halloran

A task force report on education raises some familiar questions for a local Liberal MLA.

Carolyn Bertram said she was disappointed with Premier Pat Binns' comments on the report released on Jan. 25. "I don't know where they're going."

The 46-page report, *Excellence in Education*, outlines the committee's recommendations on how to improve P.E.I.'s education system.

After a national report put P.E.I. students in last place, Binns established a task force in February, 2005, to recommend ways to improve student achievement. But the government is using the task force to push its own agenda, Bertram said. "The government is on a blitz and glitz."

She was disappointed to see the whole child section was not explored more and she doesn't see the benefits of standardized testing, which the report supports, she said. "You can't fit each child in a box."

P.E.I. has been recognized for the achievements of its students, she said. "P.E.I. has a great sys-

tem and we need to build on that."

Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have three times the number of school psychologists P.E.I. has, she said. "Schools in general are lacking resources. Government needs to act."

Opposition leader Robert Ghiz said P.E.I. has the worse ratios in Atlantic Canada when it comes to providing professionals to help with learning disabilities. "The key to education is looking at early childhood intervention."

Communications officer for the education department Jean Doherty said, "Part of the process is to develop ways to do those things."

One recommendation is faster referrals for children needing assessment for reading difficulties or disabilities. But under the P.E.I. Disability Support Program, learning disabilities, behavior disorders and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are excluded.

Health department deputy minister Jeanette MacAulay said there have been no talks about what they will do with the recommendations.



MacRae photo



Submitted photo

Hurricanes claim titles

The Holland Hurricanes men's basketball team successfully defended its title in the Maritime small college basketball tournament Feb. 11 and the women brought the title to Charlottetown in their first year of play in the tournament. The Hurricanes hosted the sixth Maritime small college tournament at Colonel Gray senior high school.

Photos, clockwise from left:

Matt Reah grabs a rebound.

The Hurricanes women's team with coach Kathy Murray.

Jon Bowen takes a foul shot.

Andrew MacIntosh, left, and Scott Bentley, right, accept the championship trophy.

The Hurricanes men's team with coach George Morrison.



MacRae photo



Submitted photo



MacRae photo