

The Surveyor

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FREE

Province investing in renewable energy, fuel efficiency, education: throne speech

By Charissa Reeves

The provincial government will invest in renewable energy sources and energy efficiency in response to rising cost of fossil fuels this year, and in education for Islanders, the lieutenant governor told the legislature and the public yesterday.

J. Leonce Bernard read the throne speech opening the Legislative Assembly and outlining the province's plans for the next year at Province House.

Bernard said the province will expand its renewable energy technologies with the 30-megawatt wind farm in eastern Kings County, which will provide 12 per cent of the Island's electricity needs when it is operational.

"To maximize the benefits of this development, landowners and the community will share in the revenues from the turbines. Every Islander will have the opportunity to invest in the wind-farm project and have a stake in their own future."

A \$1.4-million energy plan has been introduced by the government. This will help low-income Islanders with home energy efficiency upgrades and it will give tax incentives and low-interest loans for alternate heating systems, Bernard said.

The speech also tackled poverty issues on the Island.

In an effort to balance the needs of low-wage earners with the needs of business to remain competitive, the minimum wage will go up 35 cents, said Bernard.

"Effective April 1, 2006, the minimum wage in Prince Edward Island will increase from \$6.80 per hour to \$7.15 per hour."

The provincial government will work with federal and municipal governments to help provide affordable housing, ensure fair access to legal aid, and invest in front-line services for family violence prevention with funds going directly to groups that address family violence issues every day, said Bernard.



Members of the P.E.I. Regiment were on hand to welcome Lieutenant-Governor Leonce Bernard during the ceremony marking the opening of the fall session of the P.E.I. legislature. (Reeves photo)

Bernard talked about the importance of biosciences as a future economic development.

In 2004, bioscience business on the Island had sales of \$56.6 million and employed 412 people, and the Prince Edward Island BioAlliance has recently launched a development strategy, said Bernard.

"We must aggressively take charge of our future to succeed in this highly competitive field."

The development strategy forecasts 10,000 new employment opportunities by 2015 for trained workers contributing more than \$1 billion to the provincial econo-

my, he said in the speech.

Bernard talked about what the province will do in education over the coming year.

The province will continue to support adult education and literacy programs, post-secondary financial assistance and it will provide financial support to the campus renewal program at UPEI through a \$25 million gift, said Bernard.

"This year, my government will introduce a new trades training strategy to encourage high school students to explore careers in the trades and to expand core skill development in the trades."

Bernard said the provincial government will continue to make improvements in health care.

The province is starting talks with West Prince on a "state-of-the-art" health-care facility and it is developing a cancer control strategy in response to rising cancer rates on the Island and across Canada, said Bernard.

"This collaborative initiative is designed to reduce cancer incidence, improve the quality of life of cancer patients and contribute to the sustainability of our health-care system."

(Throne speech follow-up on pages 3 and 4)

Convenience store owner concerned about new grocery store

By David MacDonald

It looks like a new grocery store will open in downtown Charlottetown, although local businesses says it's difficult to say yet if it will benefit the area.

The Guardian reported Nov. 11 that two Queen Street businesses, Beyond the Beach and Home Accents, are moving to make way for a new grocery store. The article quoted Sobeys as saying it is in talks about putting a store in the location, but details are not finalized.

Valerie Paynter, owner of P.E.I. Photo Lab on Queen Street, says a grocery store is needed downtown.

"People can't always afford or have time to grab a cab or the transit and go outside of Charlottetown."

Also, the downtown is a densely populated area, she said. She doesn't think a new store will increase the traffic flow to her business, just as the amount of business didn't change when the Co-op was on lower Queen Street.

"People are going to go to this grocery store because it's a real convenience."

A local convenience store across the street, Downtown Convenience, has been doing well with the lack of a grocery store, she said.

"His sales increased dramatically because he really was the only one in the area selling grocery items."

Downtown Convenience owner Sam Yazdani said he doesn't think a new grocery store will help the downtown unless it sells different items.

"I don't really have that much of demand for the grocery line that I have. Unless it's going to be something in different lines (continued on page 2)

A smashing good time proves costly for downtown business owner

By Lorie O'Halloran



A front window at Bean Espresso Bar on University Avenue was smashed the night before Remembrance Day. (O'Halloran Photo)

Late-night bar patrons fighting in the streets is proving costly for a Charlottetown business owner.

A fight outside Bean Espresso Bar, 38 University Ave., resulted in the front window being smashed Nov. 10. The next day the owners, Lori Kays and husband Doug Hurry, who were out of the province, were alerted by city police the front window of their business was smashed.

Kays said this was the first broken window they had all year. But last year they had one window smashed every three weeks. The owners must absorb the cost to replace the windows. Each pane costs \$50 to replace.

"It's part of doing business."

Kays said this past summer was good. There were no windows or tables damaged, although there was minor damage done to the fence.

In the 11 years they have been in business, only once has someone come forward and admitted to breaking a window and paid for the cost of replacement, she said.

They wanted to make their outdoor patio inviting so they had an interesting looking fence installed, she said. They would put potted plants on the patio in the summer but they were always stolen or damaged.

"We don't bother anymore."

The crowds of people coming from the night clubs flood the streets. People hang out on the streets for hours after the bars close. Fights break out and property gets damaged, she said. "It's something that happens all the time."

City councillors in Fredericton, N.B. have the same problem and are trying to do something about it. A pilot project introduced Nov. 3, 2005 is called the good night shuttle. The shuttle provides a free ride home for bar patrons to help accelerate movement off the streets and make downtown safer.

Support grows for seventh statutory holiday

By Chris McGarry

An extra day off will give people more time to spend with their loved ones, says the president of the P.E.I. Federation of Labour.

Carl Pursey said the federation sends briefs to the legislature every year for increased working standards, longer vacation time, and higher minimum wage. The federation is lobbying government to make Thanksgiving a statutory holiday on P.E.I.

"We have fewer holidays than

the other provinces.

"It's better to be on par with our neighbours than at the bottom of the heap."

Kathy Hambly, executive director of the Greater Charlottetown and Area Chamber of Commerce, said out of 640 member businesses, 15 per cent responded to a recent Internet poll about a proposed seventh statutory holiday.

"Two-thirds were in favour for mostly family-related reasons.

"Some said it would nice for

families to have an extra day together and it would increase employee morale," she said.

"Others said they were opposed because of the increased cost of doing business."

Labour Minister Elmer MacFadyen said government has no plans in the near future to add a seventh statutory holiday. However, he did say P.E.I. tries to keep in line with the other provinces by following the Employment Standards Act.

Tax break offers help for volunteer firefighters

by Melanie Bernard

In 1984 a fire broke out on a farm in North Wiltshire.

Wayne Easter watched a blaze engulf his 14,000-square-foot dairy barn, causing \$200,000 worth of damages.

He watched local firefighters try to control the massive fire, but two other departments had to be called in for help.

They worked on the site for about 36 hours and managed to save two houses on the farm, the church across the road and several other buildings.

Easter will never forget those firefighters.

"These folks, many farmers like myself, left their work and their family to assist by way of a most honourable profession and for this I will always be thankful."

Yet, in 2003, Easter, along with the three other Island MPs, voted against a bill that would have given firefighters a \$3,000 income tax break for 200 hours of volunteer service. The bill was defeated by three votes.

Since then, local firefighters have questioned him about his decision and he has reversed his stand. He's in favour of a new bill Nova Scotia MP Rodger Cuzner introduced, Bill C-273, which is more detailed.

The proposal is to amend the Income Tax Act so if a firefighter volunteers 100 hours, he or she would receive a \$1,000 deduction. That would double for those who volunteer 200 hours.

Easter said the bill is supported by many MPs, but the finance department has the last word.

"The department of finance is strongly opposing it," he said.

"My concern is, even if the bill

does pass the House of Commons, the department of finance could still jeopardize its full implementation."

The bill has been sent to the Standing Committee on Finance to be considered.

David Rossiter, chief of the St. Peters Volunteer Fire Department, made a presentation about Bill C-273 on Oct. 31 in Moncton to the committee.

He outlined what distinguishes firefighters from other volunteers.

Firefighters are "called at a moment's notice to respond" and "put their lives on the line and in harms way," he said.

Communities haven't got the money to pay their firefighters, he said, but something has to be done to save fire departments.

"When the fire department disappears from a community, the community dies," he said to the committee.

Fire marshal Dave Blacquiere said the tax break would help recruit and retain firefighters because it would help pay for expenses like gas.

"That's a significant expense. People can't afford it."

But firefighters will not make any money from the tax break, he said.

"It's a remuneration of expenses other organizations don't incur."

Blacquiere said he hopes the bill is passed so he can use it as a management tool.

Firefighters have to meet a quota to get the deduction, so he could encourage them to do more.

"A firefighter has to earn that income tax break. It would give them incentive to get more training."

Store owner concerned

(continued from page 1)

like fruits, vegetables, meat, deli, things like that would help. But what I have is really not moving."

He has been in touch with councillor Kim Devine to find out more about the store, he said.

"She says she doesn't know anything about it and she's just hearing this from me. This was before it was in the paper."

There are lots of rumours going around, he said.

"Every day, everyone walks in here and tells me different stories."

Yazdani, who has been running

his store for over 10 years, said he doesn't know who to talk to about his concerns.

"(The city) has never really done anything for me. They haven't sent anyone over to talk to me at any time."

He said he would like to find out if the city is helping the owners of the new store.

Devine said while she has often said the downtown needs a grocery store, she didn't think it appropriate to comment on the possibility of a store at this time.

"From what I understand there is no deal signed. To me, that's the bottom line."

Bioscience priority for future economic development: throne speech

By Katie Smith

Genetically modified organisms can advance the ability to produce a higher volume of food with less pesticide use, says an inspector with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Toni-Lynn Dehaan, program section leader for Plant Health Diagnostics and Accreditations, explained in an interview some of the positive and negative aspects of genetically modified organisms, also called GMOs.

Scientists have produced a GMO potato plant that, when an insect eats it, the insect dies, so there is no need to spray the

plants with insecticides, said Dehaan. "The negative aspect is that we really do not know the long-term effects this could have on the ecosystem or on us."

Bioscience is a priority sector for future economic development for P.E.I., said Lieutenant Governor Léonce Bernard in the throne speech at Province House on Nov.16. He added in 2004, bioscience businesses had sales of \$56.6 million and employed more than 400 people.

But economic benefits aren't the only reason GMO development could be good for the Island.

Because P.E.I. has a mono-cultured agricultural system where

the primary production is potatoes, the crops are exposed to a lot of chemicals, said Dehaan.

"Other areas try to diversify (their crops) so the addition and requirements of pesticides can be varied. But on P.E.I. we get hit with volumes of pesticides for potatoes."

While some citizens, as well as the government, agree with the development of GMOs, others, such as the group Greenpeace, would like to see the Island become a GMO-free province and focus on natural, organic production.

In a brief submitted to the standing committee on agricul-

ture, forestry and the environment in September 2005, Greenpeace urged the P.E.I. government to adopt a series of provincial regulations to make the Island a GMO-free zone.

"By doing so, the government of P.E.I. shall brand P.E.I. agricultural products as non-GE (genetically engineered), more natural, better for the environment in order to capture new markets and respond to emerging and lasting consumer trends."

Dehaan said although it is fine to say organically grown vegetables are possible, the truth is the natural process is expensive and labour intensive.

"In order to produce the food volume we need, I do believe we need to add unnatural products," she said. "We need to produce cheap food to feed the populations of the world."

There are drawbacks with GMOs, namely in the way introducing unnatural species could affect the soil and the ecosystem.

"The rule of mother nature is if you change one thing, it can affect many others."

People have been eating genetically modified foods for a long time without experiencing any side-effects, she said.

"But we can't ignore the old saying: we are what we eat."

Reduce smoke detector nuisance - don't remove batteries: fire marshal

By Melanie Bernard

Smoke detectors blaring near the shower or kitchen may be a nuisance, but there are things that can be done to minimize the irritation, says P.E.I. fire marshal Dave Blacquiere.

Some people may choose to remove the batteries or remove the device if the alarm goes off when cooking or showering, he said.

Blacquiere said when detectors were first introduced in the 1980s, people were told how and where to place them, but nothing more.

"What we might not have done adequately is tell people how to make good use of them."

Blacquiere said the first step in minimizing the nuisance of a smoke detector is to choose the right kind for the place it's going to be installed.

There are two common types.

Ionization smoke detectors respond to invisible byproducts of combustion.

They have a chamber inside filled with a small source of radiation. The radiation constantly moves inside the chamber and anything that interrupts it, like smoke, causes the alarm to sound.

Most people who have ionization smoke detectors near kitchens and bathrooms find it can be irritating because of the sensitivity they have to small smoke and steam particles.

A photoelectric smoke detector is the best kind to put near a shower or kitchen because it looks for the presence of visible byproducts of combustion in the detection chamber.

It has an LED light aimed at a mirror and if the light is penetrated, it diffuses the light and the



P.E.I. fire marshal Dave Blacquiere holds up two different kinds of smoke detectors at Home Hardware on St.Peters Road. He recommends photoelectric smoke detectors near bathrooms and kitchens, and ionization detectors in bedrooms. Bernard Photo

alarm starts.

Photoelectric smoke detectors cost more, Blacquiere said, but they tend to reduce nuisance and respond quicker to smoldering fires.

Barb Cape of Cois Ferraige Bed and Breakfast in Hunter River, had a problem with an ionization detector placed near a bathroom. It would sound every day so eventually she took it off the wall.

She later found a photoelectric detector was better to place near a bathroom.

"It hasn't gone off once. It's great."

When the battery starts to fail in an ionization detector, the ion current falls and the alarm sounds, warning it's time to change the battery, according to www.chemistry.about.com.

Ionization detectors will work

fine for bedrooms, Blacquiere said. They will not be a nuisance because they would not be near a source of steam or humidity.

"I think you definitely have to have them, the more the merrier. It's just a matter of getting the right one so it's not annoying," Cape said.

Sometimes, Blacquiere gets calls from people to look in a house to make sure there are

"I think you definitely have to have them, the more the merrier. It's just a matter of getting the right one so it's not annoying," - Barb Cape

enough working smoke detectors.

Under the National Fire Protection Association fire code, alarms shall be installed in:

- All sleeping rooms in other than existing one- and two-family dwellings
- Outside of each separate sleeping area, in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping rooms
- On each level of the dwelling unit, including basements

The smoke detector requirements for homes are enforceable by the province.

The fire marshal recommends some things homeowners should do to ensure their safety.

"Detectors should definitely be replaced every 10 years," he said. "At least one has to be wired into the electrical system."

He said fire investigators around the world were finding after fires that people died because they took the batteries out before the fire.

He suggested purchasing smoke detectors that are electrically operated with a battery back-up in case of a power failure.

When choosing what type of detector and where to put it, there are a lot of options, Blacquiere said. Anyone with questions should call him at 368-4869.

National Defense Ad



Students rally against drunk driving

These were some of the many students who participated in the Students Against Drunk Driving rally in front of Province House on Nov. 18. (Wood photo)

Government's lack of planning affects Islanders, Robert Ghiz says

By Lorie O'Halloran

The provincial government should have put funds aside to help Islanders cope with rising fuel costs, says the leader of the opposition.

Liberal leader Robert Ghiz said the government's energy assistance plan is supposed to help Islanders with high heating costs, but he doesn't think this plan will really help.

"This is something we should be doing anyway as a government."

How many people will even use the \$1.4 million program is yet to be determined, said Ghiz. He said the money should go directly to help low and middle-income Islanders.

"I think they could have really put that money to better use."

The program offers up to \$200 to low-income families for things like weather stripping, caulking, programmable thermostats and furnace tune-ups.

Ghiz said he thinks the plan is all about political spin.

"I think they have to say that they're doing something"

They've announced a program they know people aren't going to use. It won't cost \$1.4 million, he said.

"It just gives them an answer when they get asked."

Many Islanders earning less

than \$30,000 are living in apartments and are not paying their own heating bill, he said.

"That's where there is a fundamental flaw here."

The plan is not really going to help this year with the high cost of home-heating fuel and the high cost of gasoline, Ghiz said.

"That's where we have the problem."

Other Maritime provinces are providing direct assistance to low- and middle-income residents.

"Our province is not," Ghiz said.

Premier Pat Binns said the government is not putting provincial sales tax on heating fuel.

But Ghiz said no government before did either. It's not something new Binns is doing, but he's trying to take credit for it.

"It's like saying we've got fresh air on P.E.I. now. Well, we've always had fresh air on P.E.I."

Ghiz said Binns has criticized the federal government for years about having goods and services tax on the price of gas.

Then last April, Binns put provincial sales tax on gas, he said. Now every time the price of gas goes up, the tax goes up as well.

"It's another way to gouge

Islanders out of money."

The government's statement on a regional campaign to address the issue of increased fuel costs is nothing new, said Ghiz.

"It's the same thing all over again."

Energy Minister Jamie Ballem was unavailable for comment.

He said in an interview with the CBC he hopes 3,000 homeowners will register for the program before it wraps up at the end of March.

If the \$1.4 million program is successful, the province may look at offering it again next year.

The Liberal party has a plan of its own for energy fairness.

It proposes a one-year, gradual reduction in property taxes to help compensate for high energy costs for homeowners, renters and businesses, assistance for Islanders to make home improvements and reversal of the Conservative fuel tax increases.

It also includes direct assistance to all those with a gross combined family income of less than \$40,000.

And it promises assistance to those who require transportation for medical reasons; and assistance to non-profit groups struggling to maintain services in the face of rising energy costs.

Northwest Airline returns to city next summer

By Momoko Yoshida

Northwest Airlines flew directly between Detroit and Charlottetown this summer, and it will return next year, says the general manager of the Charlottetown Airport.

Michael Campbell said the airline provided 105 flights from July 1 to Oct. 15.

Prince Edward Island's first daily direct jet service brought 6,400 passengers to the province.

Campbell said the flight schedule hasn't been confirmed, but it is expected to be out in a couple of months.

The airport is on its way to

becoming an international airport that has the ability to provide inspection services, Campbell said.

"Canada Border Custom Agency agreed to process the passengers in the existing space for this year.

"Our plan is to make a decision in a next month or so to build a new part on our building to accommodate transporter services such as Northwest."

Campbell said the airport had a "wonderful summer" this year thanks to flights provided by Northwest Airlines and Westjet Airlines.

He said travellers on the

Northwest flights were mostly from the United States.

A flight making one stop from Japan, through Detroit, to Charlottetown will attract more Japanese tourists next year, Campbell said.

"What we did notice was this flight showed a lot of potential. It's bringing new money into the province because users were predominantly people who are not from this province."

Chris K. Jones, director of policy planning and research for P.E.I.'s tourism department, said the estimate of the number of visitors to the province in 2005 was just under a million, the same as

the 2004 figure.

However, he said the impact the Northwest Airlines brought to the province was "pretty positive." It has changed a traditional market sustained by visitors by automobiles.

"By increasing air access, we just opened it up to tourists who are outside of mobile-driving period."

Rie Mizui, a Japanese tour guide for the Prince Edward Tours, said the Northwest flight benefited a lot of tourists from Japan.

"The best advantage of the flight is they can come to Charlottetown without staying

overnight at any place."

She added Air Canada used to be the only airline that connected Japan and Charlottetown, and passengers had to stay overnight in Toronto or Vancouver along the way.

However, some tourists came to Charlottetown with no Canadian dollars because they expected to be able to exchange at the airport, Mizui said.

"Royal Bank is the only bank which accepts Japanese yen and when it's closed at night or on weekends, the only option tourists could have was using their credit cards."

Hurricanes Christmas draw raises money for teams

by Shane Mountain

Holland Hurricanes is co-hosting a fundraising draw with UPEI, and the grand prize is an SUV.

The 12 Days of Christmas Draw will be held Dec. 14 - 29 and the top prize is a 2005 Hyundai Santa Fe GL.

Tickets can be purchased from Hurricanes athletes or at the student services office.

Across both campuses athletes have been given a book of 12 tickets to sell for \$25 a ticket, said Albert Roche manager of student services and athletics.

Selling tickets with the Holland College Hurricanes name spreads the word about college teams, said Tamara Horner, a Hurricanes basketball player.

The draw is hosted by Holland College and UPEI athletes to raise money for team travel and track suits.

"People will see us around town in our track suits with the Holland College logo on them," said Sarah Grant, a Holland College rugby player.

Holland Hurricanes volleyball player Billie-Jean Mitchel said working with the UPEI athletes was a good experience.

"It puts us on an equal playing field."

Other prizes were donated and they include four green fees at Fox Meadows golf course, a family fitness membership at the UPEI sports centre, Piazza Joes's dining for six and a set of Paderno Pots.

The proceeds from the ticket sales will go to three areas, the cost of the vehicle, to fund varsity sports and to outfit the athletes, said Roche.

"This money will give our teams more opportunities," said Allyson Sanderson a Holland College hockey player.



The grand prize Hyundai Santa Fe GL and Holland Hurricanes athletes (back row) Sarah Grant, Allyson Sanderson, (front row) Tamara Horner and Billie-Jean Mitchel and Albert Roche manager of student services and athletics at Holland College. (Mountain photo)

Charlottetown council briefs

by Melissa Brousseau

APM withdraws application

*APM president Tim Banks has withdrawn his application to build the company's head office in the Charlottetown waterfront.

Coun. Philip Brown chairs the planning and development committee. He said at a recent council meeting his committee, along with the Charlottetown Area Development Corporation, will continue to work with APM

to find another suitable location in downtown Charlottetown.

Group home gets green light

*Council voted 8 - 2 for a city solicitor to present a report to the Island's Regulatory Appeals Commission approving the consolidation of lots at 101 - 107 North River Road.

The report, prepared by city staff and Chris Reddy, saw no reason construction of a group home at the North River Road location couldn't go ahead. Councillors Brown and Melissa Hilton were opposed.

Monument on historic ground

*Councillors voted 9 - 1 for construction to be completed on

a Day of Mourning monument in front of the Coles Building.

The base of the monument had been installed before it was found the proper permits had not been issued by the city.

The Worker's Compensation Board had received permission from the provincial government and Parks Canada to place the statue in Queens Square.

Coun. Kim Devine was against placing the statue in the square because it is a place of national historic significance.

She suggested looking for other locations in the city where the monument may be more appropriate.

Coun. Terry Bernard said, "The other two levels of govern-

ment have OK'd it already, so why should we get in their way?"

But when Parks Canada approved the monument, Devine said, they assumed the city had issued permits, which haven't been issued.

Construction of the monument will go ahead, but city council will meet with representatives from the province and federal government to make sure this situation doesn't happen in the future.

Councillors meet students

* Cecil Villard, chair of the police committee, said council would meet with student representatives at Colonel Gray High

School.

The meeting came after more students have caused problems off school property over lunch hour at the Holy Redeemer Church.

Emergency services concerns

* Ambulance service was brought up again by Coun. Mitch Tweel. Tweel said there have been a dozen incidents in the past few months where city firefighters have responded to emergency calls because ambulances were on other calls.

Villard said his committee is looking into the issue. But, he said, ambulance service is a provincial issue, not a municipal one.

New store will work, if it's done right

By David MacDonald

There's been talk recently about a new grocery store planned for lower Queen Street, after about three years without one.

The Guardian reported two businesses were planning to move because of a new store taking over. It also quoted Sobeys as saying there were talks but nothing final.

A few people, including councillor Kim Devine, mayor Clifford Lee and even some business owners say a grocery store would be a good thing for people in the area.

The owner of P.E.I. Photo Lab said the heavily populated area would benefit from a grocery store.

Yet she also said she didn't think her own business would increase as a result.

As well, the owner of Downtown Convenience said he doesn't believe the store would be a success unless it sold items such as meat, deli products and vegetables, since he said the items he sells don't move very well.

A grocery store, on the face of it, would be a good thing. But it is probably true a grocery store by itself wouldn't bring more people downtown. People are used to the big box stores uptown with their huge selection and good prices - even people who live on, say, King Street and would have to drive for more than 10 minutes to get there.

It's not like years ago when mid-sized and small grocery stores were the norm and where many small communities had decent little shops with local products, a butcher, etc. While you can go to places like North Rustico and get that very thing, most people have no choice but to go, or indeed want to go, to a Sobeys or a Superstore, since there are many items you can get there that you never could at a small store.

Yet a nice, small grocery store, with a good selection of items, would be a good thing for people who either don't want to go that far, or who can't afford to take a cab uptown every time they need a lot of groceries.

When I used to live downtown, I'd sometimes go to the old Co-op on lower Queen Street and pick up a few things, and if I were living way downtown again, I'd certainly use it if it sold more than just canned food and only a poor selection of frozen items.

But this store is going to have to look attractive. One person in my class said the reason people didn't go to the old Co-op was because it looked sort of dirty.

In my view, I wouldn't have gone so far as to say I wouldn't trust the place, but compared to the pristine, well-designed box stores, the Co-op wasn't exactly maintained by someone with a keen eye for décor.

If this store offered more local products, promoted it well, and sold it for good prices, then I'm sure many downtown residents would check it out. Maybe people from the uptown would check it out too.

I'd say if a grocery store were small and compact, well-presented and stocked more than the regular convenience store items, then go for it.

DUTCH & RUSSELL



Gun control proves a failed experiment

by Chris McGarry

Toronto has experienced dozens of gang-related shootings in the past few months.

A city once known as the "good" is getting a bad reputation.

Many Torontonians and Canadians alike are searching for solutions to the violence plaguing the streets of Canada's largest city.

Parliament has just passed minimum sentencing legislation, which could mean a 10-year sentence for anyone who uses a firearm to commit an offence. This is a good start, but we must look at the larger issue.

Handguns have been regulated in this country since 1935. Over the past 70 years, this legislation has not stopped criminals from acquiring pistols.

Since the 1960s, Canada's gun laws have been getting stricter while at the same time our criminal justice system has become more liberal.

Gun control groups began lobbying to strengthen our gun laws in the wake of the Montreal Massacre Dec. 6, 1989. What followed was a crackdown on assault weapons and the registration of all firearms, including shotguns and hunting rifles.

Citizens of countries the world over have bought into the myth

that by controlling guns owned by law-abiding people, you can somehow take a bite out of crime.

Mass shootings in Dunblane, Scotland in 1988 and Port Arthur, Australia in 1996 sparked outrages that led to gun control laws even more stringent than Canada's. The result: After passing their tight gun laws, the rate of home invasions in Australia's cities skyrocketed.

One young woman in Sydney who was attacked by a knife-wielding rapist pulled out a handgun and shot the degenerate. The outcome: She was charged with murder. A travesty of justice you may think. But, this is what happens when you let leftist special-interest groups have their way.

Back in the 1990s when both sides of the gun control debate were battling in Ottawa, the anti-gun groups used anti-Americanism to rally Canadians to their cause.

"We don't want to be like our gun-crazy neighbours to south, now do we?" was a line I heard more than enough times. What many average citizens don't realize is the crime rate in the United States has been falling lower than many other western nations because the people are exercising their God-given right to bear arms.

In at least 35 states, individuals with a permit can carry a concealed handgun for protection.

Law enforcement agencies have stated random attacks and home invasions have greatly decreased. Criminals are less likely to attack a potential victim if there is a chance they may be armed.

There is another reason to support the right to keep and bear arms. During the 20th-century, millions of innocent people were murdered by brutal dictators. Adolf Hitler banned the private ownership of guns after he came into power. Many of the countries invaded by Nazi Germany already had gun registration. The Nazis were easily able to confiscate these weapons. For about 900 years, neutral Switzerland has had a national militia, and all Swiss citizens own many firearms. Because of an armed populace and mountainous terrain, Hitler was reluctant to invade Switzerland.

A federal election may be just over the horizon. If elected, the Conservative Party promises to scrap the \$2-billion, wasteful gun registry and implement a practical licensing system.

The bottom line is no number of gun laws will prevent crime. Stable families and education will keep many young people from entering a life of crime. Canada may have changed a lot in recent years, but at the end of the day, common sense must prevail.

The Surveyor

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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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Apple production up this year, says producer

By Melanie Bernard

It has been a great year for apple production, says an Island orchard operator.

Edie Englehart, who owns the Gaylden Orchard in Clermont, said earlier this fall her trees were sprayed all summer and the weather has been great.

She said they had even taken out every other row of apple trees to open up the rows and let more sun in.

"Everything seems to be going so well, the trees are just loaded."

The Engleharts are retired and decided to buy a house here.

When they arrived at their new home they were told there was an orchard that came along with the

property. They decided to grow the crop and keep the tradition going.

Barry Balsam, a producer and past president of the P.E.I. Commercial Apple Growers Association, said this year's weather was a factor for a good crop of McIntosh apples.

"It likes a warm summer and a cool evening. So they tend to like that so you can grow high quality fruit here."

Englehart said the apples most people are looking for in the fall of the year at Gaylden Orchards are Cortland.

"Everybody is looking for Cortland because they are excellent apples for baking and they're huge this year, just giant."

Production has been up, not

only in his Arlington Orchards, but all across P.E.I.

This is in part because of the federal researchers sent down to help members of the P.E.I. Commercial Apple Growers Association, Englehart said.

No money without association

"One of the reasons we need an association is because federal dollars for that kind of research likes to ignore places like P.E.I.

"So unless you have a body that lets people you actually exist, they don't recognize you for federal research."

Islanders learn about pest control and updated information on

how to grow apples, Balsam said.

Every orchard deals with disease, he said, but they may not be as serious as some problems faced by apple growers in the U.S.

"Some places in Michigan have been devastated by fire blight. That particular disease is unheard of in P.E.I."

Island apple growers deal more with fungal diseases like scab and canker in the orchard, he said.

"But those are things that with integrated pest management we've trained ourselves and we know what the problem is."

P.E.I. has lagged a bit behind in apple production compared to other provinces because of the new systems introduced by federal researchers and adapting them

to the climate, he said.

"But can we keep up, yes we can. If the variety is suitable to our climate."

Both Balsam and Englehart operate U-Picks and Englehart sells some apples to local stores.

Balsam also sends truck loads to New Brunswick.

Arlington Orchards offers wagon rides, face painting, straw jumps and stuffed animals for prizes on the weekend.

Balsam said his orchard targets families and it has been very successful for them.

"We provide more than just a top rate product, we also provide family entertainment so we're a fun place to come."

Hockey fans join campaign to help boost blood supply

By Momoko Yoshida

The Maritime Junior A Hockey League wanted its fans to donate blood.

So the Canadian Blood Services, the non-profit blood service agency, and the MJHL recently organized the second annual Blood for Life Cup.

All fans, friends, family members and team members of the 12 MJHL teams in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island could visit any of Canadian Blood Services blood donor clinic in those provinces and vote for their favourite team by giving blood.

Vernon Doyle, president of the MJHL, said he was pleased the league could participate in the challenge and support its community.

"We just hope to continue to increase awareness and that our fans continue to support to donate blood to CBS."

Sharon Fraser, regional communication manager of CBS, said the Blood for Life Cup is one of the campaigns encouraging people to donate, especially young people.

A survey showed fewer than four per cent of Canadians donated blood last year, even though 52 per cent of Canadians said they or their family members have needed blood or blood products.

Fraser said there's no shortage of blood, but the system is sustained by its regular donors.

"We have very dedicated generous donors who donate five, six time a year. Plasma donors can donate every week and many of them do. Many of them make a



Vernon Doyle, centre, president of the MJHL shows the list of the 12 teams to Ron Toombs, right, while he's giving blood. He voted for the Miramichi Timberwolves and became one of the first voters in the Blood for Life Cup. Looking on is clinic assistant Sheila McKillop. Yoshida photo

habit to donate."

However, to respond to the increasing demand and build a long lasting and sufficient donor base, the organization estimates it needs 80,000 new donors this year.

"Those really dedicated donors started to donate years ago and they are getting older," Fraser said.

"We are still relying on dedicated aging donor base and that's why we're trying to bring some young blood into the system."

Many donors will come back after their first donation.

"We have a donor who donated over 400 times, and 400 times is fabulous, and so is one," Fraser said.

"It's the realization that the donor's blood is a perishable product and if you donate once, it's great. But that blood will only last for certain period of time and then we need more."

Noreen Gillan, one of the regular donors at the donor clinic in Charlottetown, recently made her

200th donation.

She first donated in 1965 when a portable clinic arrived from Halifax.

She has given 80 whole blood donations and 120 plasma donations. something she's now doing almost every week.

One day Gillan happened to go to the clinic in the morning and her blood was directly transported to Halifax where a child waited for blood for an operation.

"When I did that, that drove it home with me how important it

really was. "We kind of thought it was just going into a blood bank. We knew it's going to get used, but this way, we knew it's going to be used right away."

Gillan, who is 120 pounds and 5-2, said everyone can donate.

"I'm not a big brave-brave person," she said. "You would be a little nervous but it's just a fear of unknown."

People between 17 and 71 in general good health with a minimum weight of 50 kg can donate. Donors can donate blood every 56 days. Appointments can be made by calling 1-888-236-6283.

To ensure the safety of the blood system, sometimes donors are deferred, Fraser said.

Donors answer a health questionnaire and have their hemoglobin, temperature, pulse and blood pressure checked. Those who don't meet the criteria can't make a donation.

There are temporary deferrals for people who had a dental work within 72 hours, tattoos, body piercing and acupuncture within six months, or were pregnant in the last six months.

People who had surgery, vaccinations and some medications will be also deferred temporarily.

People who have serious health problems, possible exposure to infectious diseases, or participation in high-risk activities can be deferred indefinitely.

Fraser said the criteria is to ensure the safety for the blood system and donors. "We're in one of the safest system in the world. It's because of that safety, and we'll never compromise that safety."

Large crowd attends final meeting on electoral reform

By David MacDonald

There was a mixed reaction among the 200 people who attended the final public meeting on electoral reform at Charlottetown Rural High School on Oct. 18 concerning proportional representation.

The public meetings, organized by the Commission on Prince Edward Island's Electoral Future, were to get public input on mixed-member representation before the Nov. 28 plebiscite.

Leonard Russell, chair of the commission, presented the findings to the audience before opening the floor to questions.

People from both private and political life gave their opinions to the chair.

Austin Pendergast said it appeared to be a "pretty sure thing" the proposed system would create a minority government every time. He gave the example of Italy, where there are often four to five parties in government and where there has been 21 elections in the last 25 years.

"Is that the kind of system we want?"

He said he would vote for a new system if the party lists were cut down from 10 to five or six. The party list will include 10 candidates chosen by the party to run for the entire province and not a specific district. The number of people on the list who get elected depends on the percentage of the popular vote that party gets.

The results of the plebiscite shouldn't be the final word, he said.

"Just go back to the table and come up with a recommendation that would be more acceptable."

Pat Mella, a former Conservative MLA, does not support the proposed system. She said "two-tier" politics will be in place with the creation of two ballots, one for the party and one for a representative in a district.

"We don't need an elite group."

The purpose of the existing legislative system is for it to be a debating chamber, she said.

"It is meant for the opposition to question or embarrass the government."

The proposed system would



Leonard Russell, chair of the Commission on P.E.I.'s Electoral Future, presents the commission's findings on proportional representation to a crowd of over 200 people Oct. 18 at Charlottetown Rural High School. The meeting was a wrap-up of the commission's public sessions about six weeks before the public votes Nov. 28 on whether to approve the proportional representation system. (MacDonald photo)

move the legislature closer to a municipal government, she said.

"(It's) not the basic foundation on which the legislature is founded."

The new system would remove the right of voters to elect one-third of the legislature's members, she said.

Mella, who once sat as the lone Conservative member in opposition, said if the party list were a smaller number, it would ensure an opposition was a "reasonable" size.

Jean Tingley, who ran as a Liberal candidate in the last provincial election, said the party lists would be "loaded with political hacks" because while people who run in a district will have to campaign for 30 days to win that seat, those picked from the list to sit in the House will be "parachuted" in.

"I feel the only people who should sit as members are people who went through the process on their own merits."

Leo Broderick, who ran as a New Democrat candidate in 2000, approves of the proposed system, said there needs to be an improvement in how the legislature operates.

"For me it's a dysfunctional system most of the time," he said.

"What we've had in the past 25 years is one disaster after another with majority govern-

ments."

A new system would allow for more diversity and more voices, he said.

"I hope we have at least four parties in the legislature," he said.

"Put (in) more voices, different voices, and we may improve democracy and the lives of people in this province."

He said he's been told by "backroom people" from the political parties that those parties are not going to support the proposed system.

Sharon Labchuk, who ran as a Green Party candidate in the last federal election, said the creation of party lists is a "great opportunity" for parties to choose people whose voices aren't typically heard in the legislature.

"They will look at bigger issues like poverty and the environment."

It is also a chance for parties to not be as concerned about geography during an election, she said.

The people against proportional representation like the existing first-past-the-post system, she said.

"The corruption, the patronage, the male-dominated legislature. That suits them just fine," she said.

"P.E.I. can either show the light and lead the way, or sit on their behinds and bring up the rear."

What is your opinion on the Nov.28 plebiscite for proportional representation on P.E.I.?

by Shane Mountain



Jane Dunphy, NDP

"I wish it was going to be run more fairly."



Mark Greenan, Yes Coalition

"I think it is essential that Islanders vote yes for a new electoral system on P.E.I."



Mitch Murphy, PC

"I take an open stance on the subject. I believe a political system evolves over time."



Pat Binns, Premier

"I felt my job was to offer Islanders a choice. I think the people should decide."



Robert Ghiz, Liberal

"I will keep my opinion to myself. I believe Islanders should make up their own minds."



Ron MacKinley, Liberal

"I don't support it and I will be voting no."

Proposed system friendlier to women candidates: Ledwell

by Chris McGarry

Nothing is guaranteed, but a mixed-member proportional system will give Island women more opportunities to become involved in politics, a researcher with the P.E.I. Advisory Council on the Status of Women says.

Jane Ledwell, who has been a member of the council for a year and a half, said they have wanted a change in the Island's voting system for five years.

On Nov. 28, Islanders will vote on whether they want to keep the first-past-the-post system or

switch to proportional representation.

Under the existing system, voting is divided into 27 electoral districts. Whoever receives the most votes wins.

With the proposed mixed-member system, there would be 17 larger electoral districts.

Seventeen MLAs are elected and 10 are chosen from party lists.

Almost two years ago, after extensive research, women from different organizations formed the Coalition for Women in Government, Ledwell said.

"The coalition launched a campaign called It's About Time and showed proportional representation is one good way to elect more women in government.

"The vast majority of countries who have 30 per cent or more women in their lower houses use some form of PR."

The advisory council made a submission to the Carruthers Commission in favour of a change to a PR system, Ledwell said.

Islanders will be given a chance to measure and rank the different political parties' commitment to

gender equality by looking at party lists, she said.

"The problem is women are not running for nominations because government doesn't work in a collaborative way."

The mixed-member system being proposed would make governments work collaborately, Ledwell said.

"There will be more diversity and opposition.

"Members will have to work together to build consensus on issues that matter to Islanders."

But Ivan MacArthur, a member of the No to MMP Coalition, said

nothing in the proposed system guarantees greater representation for women.

"There is no provision that requires political parties to have more women of their lists women already have as good of a success rate as men.

"Our coalition is not opposed to proportional representation, but we do not support the mixed-member system because of a diminishment of direct elections," MacArthur said.

"The 10 people on lists will be appointed by the political parties."

MLAs should respect voters' views in plebiscite, Greenan says

By David MacDonald

The coordinator leading the campaign in support of proportional representation says the upcoming plebiscite is too important for government not to provide the money needed to run the vote properly.

Mark Greenan of the P.E.I. Votes Yes coalition kicked off the group's campaign Oct. 25 with a news conference at the Coles Building. He was accompanied by Kirstin Lund, chair of the P.E.I. Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and Carl Pursey of the P.E.I. Federation of Labour.

The government recently said for the plebiscite it would cut the number of polling stations to two or three per district in order to save money, an action Greenan doesn't agree with.

"I understand the financial constraints government is under, but I think this is important and is something they should find the money for."

Greenan said he wants to have a meeting with the premier to discuss this cut. He said the groups which will benefit the most from the mixed-member proportional system - youth, seniors, women, etc - will be the ones most hurt by the reduction in polling stations.

The government has spent a lot of money over the past few years on this issue, he said.

"It doesn't seem to make any sense not to do this right."

In giving out his reasons for supporting a new electoral system, Greenan said the first-past-the-post system was created in the 13th century exclusively for property-owning males. It awards a seat to whoever gets the most votes, even if it's not the majority.

"Islanders didn't choose to use first-past-the-post. It was given to us."



Kirstin Lund, left, chair of the P.E.I. Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Mark Greenan, centre, coordinator of the PEI Votes Yes coalition and Carl Pursey of the P.E.I. Federation of Labour make their case for voting for proportional representation at a news conference held Oct. 25 at the Coles Building in Charlottetown. (MacDonald photo)

Legislatures have been lopsided over the past number of elections under the first-past-the-post system, he said, with an 8-1 ratio of government seats to opposition party seats.

"Its failings have been all too apparent," he said.

The existing system promotes confrontational politics as two dominant parties fight for majority control of the house, he said. The proportional system will ben-

efit people in a number of ways, such as higher voter turnout and higher satisfaction with government.

Pursey agrees the proposed system is more effective. He said the labour federation supports proportional representation, having passed a resolution at its annual convention in 2000.

Smaller parties would benefit greatly from this system, he said. "Smaller parties have a better

chance of electing MLAs, bringing new ideas and perspectives to the legislature."

A party with at least five per cent of the vote will be able to get one seat in the legislature.

More women could be elected, as parties would be encouraged to nominate more women to create a equal gender balance on party lists, he said.

In the mixed-member proportional system, each party will

offer a list of 10 people who campaign Island-wide, not for any specific district. The number of people on each list who get elected to the legislature depends on the percentage of votes that party gets.

The new system will make legislature more accountable and more representative, Pursey said.

"For the first time, Islanders will be able to vote in elections which will truly represent the will of the people."

Lund said the proportional system will allow more focus on issues affecting women.

She said the current system involves "pothole politics" in which local issues affecting residents of a specific district, such as a bad pothole, are given more attention than issues affecting many Islanders, such as family violence and lack of daycare space, etc.

"There's nothing wrong with dealing in local issues. The existing system rewards only for dealing with local issues and less rewards for dealing with issues on a more Island-wide basis."

The proposed system will give parties more incentive to focus on these Island-wide issues, she said.

Greenan hopes more people will be on the yes side as they learn more about the system's benefits. He also urged MLAs to respect both the commission's findings and the results of the plebiscite.

He said he doesn't agree with Premier Pat Binns' decision to only consider the results of the plebiscite if 60 per cent of voters support the new system, noting that many majority governments, such as Binn's first government in 1996, came into power with less than 50 per cent of decided voters.

"In a democracy, 50 per cent plus one should rule."

Balancing school, sports proves demanding task

By Jonathan Russell

While many people are dreaming of ways to avoid early morning obligations, UPEI's Whitney Clark is up and ready to tackle the day.

It goes like this:

Rugby practice 7 – 8 a.m., conditioning.
Home for shower and breakfast.
Class at 9:30 a.m.
Home to study and prepare for class in the afternoon.
Second rugby practice, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Home.
Hockey from 9:30 – 11:00 p.m.

There's a trick to it, she said.

"It works as long as I stick to a routine."

Clark isn't the only student athlete in the Charlottetown area balancing school and two sports. UPEI has about 215 athletes. Five play two sports. Holland College has 150 athletes and about 20 play two sports.

Lynn Broudreau, coach of UPEI's women's volleyball team, said students who play two sports usually give their all to both.

"If an athlete is elite enough to make two varsity sports, let them play."

The key to success in two varsity sports is good communication, she said.

Clark agreed and said keeping players and coaches in the know is no problem at UPEI.

"The schedules are great," she said. "The coaches talk often."

Broudreau had an athlete a few years ago who played hockey and volleyball.

"She was a kid who played 110 per cent for both sports."

There is no need for a rule limiting athletes to one sport because students understand they can't play two sports that overlap each other, she said.

"The commitment of each sport is too high."

Broudreau also has a way to keep her



Whitney Clark, a UPEI student, hockey and rugby player, balances school and sports with a smile. (Russell photo)

player's grades up.

Her players sign a contract before the season starts to keep their marks at a certain level.

Broudreau had a student once whose grades weren't up to par, she said.

"She came to my office to do her work an hour before practice every day," she said. "I'm very strict about that."

Billie-Jean Mitchell, a second-year varsity athlete at Holland College, said it is difficult playing more than one sport and

going to school.

She plays varsity basketball and volleyball.

"As far as commitment, you try to do your best with it."

Still, Mitchell said first-year students can play two sports - if they can balance them with school.

"Do and learn," she said. "Pace yourself, do as much as you can allow yourself to do."

Her coaches are "pretty lenient," but she would like to see a rule that students can only play one sport.

"It's a waste of commitment for the other sports."

Until that happens, she would like to see coaches set different times for practice because basketball and volleyball are on the same days.

"It just wears you down."

At Holland College there are a number of girls who play two sports because the numbers aren't there, said Mitchell.

"It's hard to get athletes out."

Albert Roche, Holland College's athletic director, said the college has more students who play multiple sports because it's just the second year for the athletics program.

"Internally, you have to grow."

He said the number of athletes on teams at the college is low.

"We're so fortunate to have the interest we have. How can we force players to commit to one sport?"

Roche knows the demands facing those playing more than one varsity sport.

"We had a situation where we're looking at students coming in unsure of the workload."

Communication between players and coaches is important, he said. That may mean playing two sports is out in some cases.

"A coach can say he wants commitment or nothing."

Like Holland College, Colonel Gray High School doesn't limit its athletes to

one sport, but it expects players to make good decisions.

"When they commit to one sport, they have to stick to one sport," said Chris Huggans, Colonel Gray's athletic director and men's volleyball coach.

He loses players near the end of the season to AAA hockey, which is frustrating.

"We ask our players to commit to our sport."

Then again, the AAA hockey coach wants athletes to commit to hockey, he said.

"Some coaches are more flexible than others," Huggans said. "When the coach is less flexible, the player has to choose."

He is "somewhat flexible" at the start of the season, but less so much near the end in November when his team prepares for provincials, he noted.

"We have a very short, but very busy season."

High school teams play and practise six days a week, he said.

Huggans has two volleyball players who play hockey. He said he notices their fatigue and lack of energy.

"It's bad enough to lose an athlete because of an injury within his own sport," he said.

"It's worse, especially if they get injured playing another sport."

Roche added if a school's athletic program is established, it doesn't see as many problems as new programs or young athletes.

He said student athletes are capable of playing more than one sport and going to school if they manage their time well.

"You've got to look for motivation."

UPEI's Whitney Clark agreed.

Playing varsity rugby and soccer is a lot of fun, Clark added.

"As long as you enjoy them you'll have no problem working them in."

"I want to do it."

Cycling club founder launches new magazine

By Jonathan Russell

The founder of the Summerside cycling club has put together an online biking magazine.

Ken Trenholm put the magazine, which is called www.cpei.ca, on the internet this fall.

Anybody willing to write for the magazine is welcome.

It's easy to build momentum from the cycling community, he said.

"People say - I've thought about doing that."

Earlier this fall he was just putting the word out to see how many are interested, he said. At

the time, nine people wanted to contribute.

"It's like the movie Field Of Dreams - if you build it, they will come."

Wes Jackshaw, Cycling P.E.I.'s executive director, added Trenholm's online magazine would be good for P.E.I.'s cycling community.

"I think it will have a positive impact."

The magazine will add its own "personal flavour" to P.E.I. since most cycling magazines are national, said Jackshaw.

Trenholm agreed and said he wants to create a cycling partnership between the Atlantic

provinces.

"What if we could build a community? This is what I'd like."

The most important part of gaining support is to focus on the youth, he said.

"What is the community going to look like when my three little ones aren't so little anymore?"

Jackshaw knows the importance of beginner cyclists.

Recreational riders make Cycle P.E.I. what it is, he noted.

"It's not the pros."

Trenholm added, "You don't have to be an elite athlete. Cycling is something you could do from two years-old to 80 years."

Jackshaw said Cycle P.E.I.'s recent turnout proves that.

"We've had a very successful year."

Organizers are putting more activities and events together, he said.

Sprockids is a Canadian Cycle Association development program that teaches kids skills, safety, beginner and high-end techniques. Trenholm said, "It's a top quality program."

Locally, the Summerside Cycle Association is a volunteer-based program that promotes partnership, community development and self-improvement.

"All it takes is a little encour-

agement from others," he said. "It's therapeutic"

After taking a seven-year break from cycling, Trenholm got back on the saddle last summer and biked 4,000 km.

"Some ride 10,000 km," he said, laughing.

It's hard to balance family, sport and job, he said. He took the summer to get back into shape.

Also, there's an environmental movement attached to biking, he said.

Because of the need to lower green house gases, the cycling community gets more funding. The biggest thing is anyone can contribute.

Lack of funding means no film festival this year

By Charissa Reeves

Disappointed there won't be a film festival this year because of lack of funding, the vice-president of Reel Island Inc isn't giving up on a festival for next year.

Richard Schroeter said there are plans for a small two-day festival in February to keep things going and a revamping of the festival is taking place so it will not rely on funding for next year.

The small festival is being set up by Fox Henderson, a local filmmaker, Schroeter said.

Henderson may still use the

Reel Island Film Festival name, and Reel Island Inc will be involved.

"We'll help in any way we can. It can be difficult to come back with a festival after a year gap."

The Reel Island Film Festival would have been into its fourth annual season this year. In the previous three years the festival was put on through a partnership between Reel Island Inc. and IMAC, or the Island Media Arts Co-op.

The festival, which is a strictly Canadian affair aimed at filmmakers, had films from almost

every province last year, Schroeter said.

"The festival was put together to help showcase Island work along side other Canadian filmmakers. At the same time, we wouldn't put just any film in."

No guarantee

Both major funding parties, provincial and federal had funding cuts this year, Schroeter said.

"They told us that funding is not a guarantee year to year. They did fund us for three years, it seems strange after each year getting more successful that they

didn't continue funding this year."

Schroeter is disappointed there won't be a festival this year, saying it was going to be a lot bigger than previous years.

"There was so much we wanted to bring in, we were sort of cut off at the knees when we didn't get funded," he said.

"This year's festival was going to be a lot bigger. We had workshops lined up with big, industry players."

Some of the things the festival was hoping to offer this year included workshops with Alex Lindsay, who did special effects

for Star Wars, acting courses from Actra, the actors' union, and table discussions with broadcasters such as CBC and CTV, said Schroeter.

He doesn't know if funding will be resumed next year, but plans are being made to move the festival to an online experience where viewers will see films on the internet so that it will not rely on funding, Schroeter said.

"We want to package the winners and take them across country and show them theatrically that way. It's not completely worked out yet."

L. M. Montgomery-inspired play featured at Arts Guild

by David MacDonald

A play based on a story by Lucy Maud Montgomery will wrap up at the Charlottetown Arts Guild on Nov. 26.

The Strike at Putney Church, written by Eliza Jane Wilson, began Nov. 17 and will run until Nov. 26. It is presented by ACT (A Community Theatre) PEI. The show begins at 8 p.m.

The cast includes Ivan Dowling, Corin McFadden, Danny Maloney, Adam Gauthier, John Goedike, Jennifer Campbell, Barbara Rhodenhizer, Margaret MacEachern, Kimberley Johnston, Lana MacAusland and Courtney Francis.

The play is directed by Paul Whelan, who was in the cast when the play was first produced by Theatre PEI in 1989.

The play is set in a rural community during the 1920s. The women invite a famous female missionary to speak at their church.

Trouble arises when the church elders stop the event, saying according to St. Paul women should keep silent in the church. The women go on strike, and stop doing things such as cleaning the church and organizing fundraisers.

The emotions spread to the rest of the community, and between husbands and wives, producer Brenda Porter said.

"The main issue, if you will, is the women, who at this point in history just recently have received the vote, are seen by the men as too modern. The men are afraid other men will say they can't control their wives."

Whelan said working behind the scenes is as "nerve-racking" in its own way as when he played Reverend Daniel Sinclair in the original production.

The original production was on the



Corin McFadden (as Andrew McKittrick) and Kimberley Johnston (as Evelyn Kirby) practise their roles in *The Strike at Putney Church*. The play is at the Arts Guild until Nov. 26. The play by Charlottetown playwright Eliza Jane Wilson is based on a short story by Lucy Maud Montgomery about a group of women in the 1920s who strike after church elders ban a woman missionary from speaking. (MacDonald photo)

Confederation Centre main stage, which he said has all the "bells and whistles" of a stage production. In the Arts Guild, a much smaller venue, "everything is as it is," he said.

"Basically, there's no set as such. We are using set pieces."

But the smaller venue should allow the audience to become a part of the show, he said.

The actors will use the aisles to make their entrances and exits, and

all the street scenes are directly in front of the audience.

"Hopefully the audience buys in and becomes part of the whole strike."

Gauthier, who plays the role of Sinclair, describes his character as a bit of a mediator.

"I try to keep things settled because there's a lot of fighting between the men and the women... and I want everyone to get along."

Maloney describes the relationship between his character, John Wilson, and his wife, Myra, as being an "equal relationship."

"In the 1920s, that's a new thing that not everybody in the community accepts."

Myra plays a role in the strike at the church, which causes some friction between John and the rest of the community, he said.

"All the men and the other elders

blame me for the whole thing because I can't handle my woman."

The two actors agree there are many elements in this show which will appeal to Islanders.

"I think Islanders in general will get a kick out of it. Not being from the Island originally, I see it as a very Island-type of play," Maloney said.

Gauthier said many people, especially those of an older generation who grew up in small rural communities and were familiar with their local churches, will see some similarities between their communities and the one depicted in the play.

As well, the fact the play is based on a Montgomery story will draw people, he said.

"They'll be looking for similarities between her life and what happens in this play."

Porter said the theatre company was approached by the L.M. Montgomery Heritage Society to produce the play near the date of Montgomery's birthday, Nov. 30.

On the final night, the people from Dayboat Restaurant will make a birthday cake to be served to the audience during intermission.

The cake will be made from Montgomery's own recipe, Porter said.

"They may have to adapt it a bit, I think. She probably didn't have a recipe for 120 people."

Gauthier, who performed in a previous ACT production as well as university theatre, said he's had a good time playing alongside other fine actors and actresses.

"It's good to be able to branch out into the community a bit more."

Maloney said the cast gets along very well, which will show on stage.

"You'll be able to tell we're having fun."

Tickets are \$16 for adults and \$14 for students and seniors.

Disease leaves Perry fighting to get active life back

By David MacDonald

Nicky Perry is the sort of person who is always on the go.

As resource development coordinator for the Prince Edward Island chapter of the Arthritis Society, Perry was in charge of developing fundraisers such as the Joints in Motion marathon. She would also have many meetings, and deal with volunteers.

Every day, she'd drive an hour from her home in Souris to Charlottetown for work. In the evening she'd drive back home, have dinner and run for 45 minutes at the gym. Her life was non-stop.

But last summer something went wrong.

Perry was at a conference in Toronto. She felt miserable, and she had a sore foot. She thought she had just sprained it somehow. "I was tired because I worked a lot last winter and I was just worn out."

Sharon Vance, program and services coordinator, was at the conference with her and agreed Perry was busy.

"She was making coffee, running down the street to get food. She was running, not walking."

When Perry returned to P.E.I., she went to see her doctor, who gave her an anti-inflammatory. The doctor told her the pain was probably a sports injury.

"I thought it was odd because I never hurt myself."

The foot pain went away, but a week later, her stomach was sore, and she suffered from diarrhea for the entire week.

She thought she had a stomach bug.

"I figured I ate so many weird things in Toronto, I thought I was paying for it."

By Thursday she was passing blood, and she was "slowing down like an old clock."

"I figured I wasn't going to make it."

Her boss told her to cancel her meetings and get some rest. Co-workers were concerned about her condition.

"I've been concerned about her for a long time. I wondered what it would take for her to slow down and have a life," Vance said.

This was it. "That was the last day I was at work for three months," Perry said.

She went to the doctor, who asked her questions about contacts with people from other countries who may have carried a

virus. She had to go to the outpatient clinic in Montague because the emergency room in the hospital in her hometown of Souris was closed.

There were urine and stool tests, and chest x-rays.

She spent the first week in bed on a diet of only water and pedalyte, a liquid typically given to babies who suffer a loss of fluid from vomiting or diarrhea. She couldn't keep down any other food.

Within that week she lost 10 pounds.

"There was all this extra skin. It was bad."

She still thought it was a virus and expected it to run its course.

"One night I ate popcorn and I was up all night in pain," she said.

"My internal organs, it felt like someone was grabbing them and squeezing them with a tight fist."

She was rushed to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital the next day. That's when she realized it was serious.

"They looked at all the symptoms and they said... it's going to be either lupus, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, or Crohn's and colitis."

She was devastated.

"These are all chronic illnesses and none of them have any cures. I don't want to have any of them," she said.

"I was used to being very physically active, and on the go. All of a sudden, full stop. They said my body was using up more than 50 per cent of my energy to fight off the inflammation inside my body."

By the end of August the diagnosis was in - Crohn's and colitis.

"First my guts were on fire, then my legs became swollen. My joints became inflamed, I couldn't walk without assistance. Then my eye would go wonky."

She also had skin rash and red lumps on her legs.

Perry is one of about 170,000 Canadians who suffers from at least one of these conditions.

There is no known cause or cure.

Nancy O'Donnell, regional director of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, said the numbers have increased over the past number of years, possibly due to better diagnosis.

"That's just speculation, but they do know they are seeing more people with inflammatory bowel disease."

Usually, the condition is found in people from two different age



Nicky Perry must take 10 pills daily to keep her Crohn's and colitis under control. The conditions involve inflammation of the bowels, and other effects include joint pain, skin rash and inflammation of the eyes. (MacDonald photo)

groups, ages 15 to 25 and 45 to 55. Perry is 33.

That's not unheard of, O'Donnell said.

"It does not discriminate between age, race or gender."

Perry said she was lucky, however, because it often takes years for people to find out exactly what they have.

"I got it fast, I got it hard and I got everything on the list."

She responded quickly to medication. At one point, she had to take 14 pills a day, all to deal with the inflammation from different parts of her body, from the large intestine, her joints, her eyes and her skin.

She said her condition may go into remission and she probably won't need surgery.

Perry's experience will not necessarily be like others. O'Donnell said some people who have been diagnosed with an initial inflammation may go into remission for many years, or may never have another flare-up. Others have

chronic flare-ups. People will respond differently to types of treatment or changes in diet.

"It's a really complicated disease. For each person, the journey is very different," she said.

Some people with colitis may need surgery to remove their colon. This stops the pain, but patients will need to use an external appliance.

"That is one way to 'cure' colitis, but obviously that's a huge decision for people to make," O'Donnell said.

And while she didn't have any figures, O'Donnell said some people have both colitis and Crohn's, as Perry does.

"Because it's all about the bowels - colitis affects the colon and large bowel, and Crohn's affects the small bowel - people can, unfortunately, have inflammation of both."

Perry returned to work part-time at the end of August, but another flare-up happened soon after. She had to go on a stronger anti-

inflammatory before returning to work. A couple of weeks after this interview, Perry had yet another flare-up and has been away from work since.

She said is more aware of the need to rest. "Tomorrow is my day off. I'm going to sleep," she said. "If I had to come in tomorrow I'd just get myself in trouble."

She used to get too little sleep and if she was ever tired she'd perk herself up with coffee. Not now.

"Once I get tired, that's it, I'm done."

She sleeps up to nine hours Friday and Saturday nights, and takes naps Saturday and Sunday afternoon. But she still tries to be physically active.

"I went on two or three walks on Saturday. When I needed to go to the store, I walked. I didn't use the car."

Vance said volunteers and people needing the society's services understood Perry was missing for the summer. The other staff were not completely familiar with everything she did, but did their best.

"People were very kind and very patient. We didn't want to call Nicky because we knew she was totally stressed out," she said. "We'd do what we could."

She said many people who do fundraising for non-profit organizations don't last beyond 10 months. Perry has been working at the society since January, 2001.

"She's way past her burnout stage. I think she realized over the summer she needed a life outside of work."

Vance said she often hoped Perry wouldn't come back to work too soon.

"Nicky pushed herself really hard for a long time. Perhaps her body was telling her to slow down."

Perry agrees being tired may have helped triggered the condition, although there were warning signs before. She couldn't eat certain foods because they made her sick.

Perry said Vance and the others suspected what she had before she did and Vance gave her information on the condition.

"She put it all together for me, when I was ready to hear it."

She said she's lucky to have the support of family, neighbours and friends in Souris who are always asking her for updates on how she is doing.

"I'm somebody that's always going to have a lot of support."

Tests at health centre help reduce waiting times

By Tammylee MacKenna

She was scared.

A week after her younger sister discovered she had osteoporosis, Velda O'Brien, 67, didn't think she was at risk of having the bone-thinning disease, but being the same size and having a similar lifestyle as her sister she couldn't be sure.

People suspected of being at high risk of osteoporosis are usually referred by a family doctor to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for a bone density test.

The waiting period is approximately two years.

So O'Brien made an appointment at the Murphy's Health Education Centre and had the test in less than a week. She had the results in hand five minutes after the test.

It cost her \$40. It was worth it. She doesn't have osteoporosis.

"It is peace of mind," she said.

The centre began testing for osteoporosis almost a year ago, a test available only at the QEH prior to that. Many tests, clinics and seminars are offered at the centre - some for a fee.

Murphy's pharmacy clients with an active prescription profile can get the tests and attend seminars for less, sometimes free.

The bone density test offered at the clinic cost \$20 for a Murphy's client, \$40 for others.

The results gave O'Brien peace of mind, but if her results had shown signs of osteoporosis, the report would have been forwarded to her family doctor to make arrangements for a more complex test at the hospital.

The most common bone density test, the bone densitometry, is called dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA).

It involves an x-ray of the hip, spine or both and is done at the hospital. It measures amounts of light passing through bones. The more light that passes through, the thinner the bone.

Sound waves used

The heel ultrasound involves high frequency sound waves pass through the heel.

The sound waves are similar to ultrasounds used to monitor fetal development in pregnant women. The test measures density and quality of the bone.

It is portable and less expensive than the hip test.

They provide a print out of individual results to the family doctor

for follow up treatment if necessary, Ray Murphy said.

These clinics will help get the word out about such things as osteoporosis and help catch people in the early stages, he said.

The ultrasound acts as the first line of detection for this serious medical condition. It can also double as a sign of the movement toward privatized health care.

Murphy said clinics like this help decrease the cost of health care. If people approach these clinics first, they do not use spots on the waiting list for the test and not everyone needs the more costly DXA test at Hospital.

"This is a service we feel is important to the community and helps people assess if they are at risk for osteoporosis."

O'Brien said if she had gone to the hospital it would have wasted

everyone's time and money.

Murphy said people don't even know they have the bone problem until it's too late.

"I don't know if many people are aware of the fact that osteoporosis is such a big concern."

Osteoporosis is the silent killer, he said.

Women in menopause are more likely to develop osteoporosis, a condition affecting one in four women and one in eight men.

"It's extremely dangerous in the sense that fractures, hip, hand or other, can lead to hospitalizations and the complications can lead to death," he said.

"Unfortunately there's not a lot we can do for this, unless we know we are at risk and can slow (the osteoporosis) down and prevent the fracture from occurring with the appropriate care."

Mother struggles with cancer

by Melissa Falls

Linda Falls struggles with the battle of lung cancer each day of her challenging life, she said in an interview in her home recently.

Falls, 46, of Charlottetown, a mother of two children, Melissa, 20, and Joseph, 16, has been living with small cell lung cancer for over three years. She was diagnosed on Nov. 18, 2003, while living in Ontario.

She received six double treatments of chemotherapy, plus the first phase of radiation for the cancer in Kingston Ont. For a total of six weeks.

"Very upsetting, I was very shocked.

Also very depressed," Falls said.

She received 30 treatments of radiation at a centre at the Kingston General Hospital for another six weeks beginning on Feb. 18, 2004.

Falls has been a smoker for over 34 years.

She lived in her hometown of Marmora, Ontario before moving to the Island in October, 2004.

She was a health-care aide for over 17 years and it



Linda Falls at her home in Charlottetown talks about the struggles of having lung cancer. (Falls photo)

was a devastating experience leaving her job, she said. She never thought she would get cancer. She tries to live day by day.

"It was hard on my family. I thought how am I going to tell my kids."

She had a supportive family, but her kids took it hard, her son took it the hardest, Falls said.

She was on anti-nausea medication for a long time while having treatment so she would not get sick.

"I was very fatigued all the time, I also lost 40 pounds and to try to gain the weight the doctors put me on a supplement drink to try to keep my nutrients

up, and my strength," Falls said.

She was on medication for pain but she quit taking the cancer drugs as they made her sick, but now the cancer is not moving.

"There is a history of cancer in our family including bowel, brain, lung and breast," Falls said.

"Think positive, take one day at a time and keep support near and keep a strong mind," Falls said.



Jeff Molyneux jumps his dog Tas over a sign on Richmond Street. (Reeves photo)

Thousands choose homeschool for children

By Chris McGarry

Maureen Colter experienced many difficulties growing up in the public school system.

"With big class sizes, there wasn't much one on one help," she said, sitting in her school's main classroom.

The 17-year-old began Grade 10 at Colonel Gray High School, but was expelled after an altercation with a teacher.

Her parents sent her to Netherwood Private School in Rothesay, N.B. where she finished Grade 10.

"Although I did well in boarding school, I was only 15 years old and found being away from home for the first time very difficult," she said.

Her last option was Full Circle Cooperative School in Charlottetown.

Today, more parents are opting out of the public school system in favour of homeschooling their children or sending them to private institutions.

It is estimated over 80,000 children across Canada are being educated in private homes. In 1997, homeschooling associations said approximately 60,000 Canadian children were being taught at home, up from 2,000 in 1979.

Gertrude DeBoer, the mother of four children, two of whom are grown, said she made the decision to homeschool after she discovered her oldest son had learning difficulties. Her two youngest, Brian, 15, and Stanley, 16, are being homeschooled.

"Even though my son went to a private Christian school, by Grade 7 he had trouble reading and writing," she says.

DeBoer sells homeschooling materials to families. She said private schools such as the one her oldest children attended don't always meet the needs of unique students.

"One system doesn't fit all.

"Homeschooling becomes a lifestyle. It allows a child to progress at a pace that best suits him or her," she said.

"Homeschooling allows a child to develop their interests and hobbies because they have more time and it also strengthens the family unit."

DeBoer said parents remove their children from public schools for various reasons.

"Many schools are not meeting the academic needs of students," she said.

"Schools are also an environ-



Gertrude DeBoer, right, reviews a science lesson with sons Brian, centre, and Stanley (McGarry Photo)

ment full of bullying and unpleasant social interaction."

DeBoer said the problem doesn't lie entirely with public schools, but with society.

"Many children have no respect for authority figures anymore and teachers are spending too much time dealing with problems that at one time were dealt with at home, in the community, or didn't even exist."

DeBoer said moving a student ahead even though they failed a grade is wrong.

"If you don't hold them back and lay the foundation in primary school, you're setting them up for future failure."

DeBoer said opponents of homeschooling condemn the practice because they think there is no interaction with other children.

"Actually socialization is the biggest reason to homeschool.

"Children are in a secure environment having constant interaction with people of all ages," she said.

"Schools are an artificial environment because peers only inter-

act with their own age group.

"In the real world, you have to deal with people of all ages."

Scott Davidson is principal of Full Circle Cooperative School in Charlottetown. He said alternative schools such as Full Circle are returning to the basics of academics, one-on-one contact with teachers and individualized learning.

"Some kids fall through the cracks and cannot be in the public school system," Davidson said.

"These kids are either bullied, are bullies themselves, or have learning difficulties."

Davidson said the school, in a three-storey, century home on Kent Street, has only 12 students and no specific classrooms, but it follows regular school curriculum.

"I teach woodworking, carpentry, music and visual arts," he said.

"We play sports such as ball hockey and basketball. We're all on a first-name basis."

Davidson said Full Circle is run by parents and a board of gover-

nors voted from within the parents. He said the board has a general meeting once a year.

"We're the only non-religious private school in P.E.I.," he said.

"Full Circle is six years old and I have taught here for three years. I believe there will be more schools like this one in the future if parents want it."

Mary Sherry, an administrative assistant with the student services division of the Department of Education, said there are 20 families on P.E.I. who homeschool.

"When parents make the decision to homeschool their children, all they have to do is notify the Department of education," she said.

"They fill out a form and a letter is sent to them from the minister."

Sherry said parents are allowed to use whatever curriculum they want.

"Some parents do research on what to teach their children and decide to use a variety of sources," she said.

"There is no testing by the

department of education."

Sherry said the provincial School Act requires Island children between the ages of six and 16 to attend school but gives parents choices besides public school. "Last winter the act was changed so that parents don't need a letter of approval from the minister of education," she said.

"If and when parents decide to place their children back in the public system, the school board meets and determines what grade level they will be placed in."

Sherry said parents don't need any specific qualifications to homeschool their children.

"Parents are required to have a teacher monitor.

"The teacher monitor visits the family only to assist and not teach," she said.

"Teacher monitors must be either certified to teach or have the proper qualifications."

Cotler is enjoying her first year at Full Circle school. She will graduate next year in January.

"This is a great school and I like the individualized learning."

Jumping on for a ride around town

New bus system proves popular with riders needing a lift in Charlottetown

By Momoko Yoshida

Have a good look... I'm not as old as you think, says the sign.

Actually, it's brand new.

It's polished and reflecting sunlight.

The 10-metre-long trolley, coloured ochre on top and green on bottom, has a bell in front so it can tell people when it starts and stops.

Inside are gold poles, black straps and wooden chairs.

It looks old-fashioned, like something from a 19th-century streetscape.

But it looks new to people in Charlottetown, and it is, it is the public transit bus.

"It just looks like Charlottetown to me," said deputy mayor Stu MacFadyen just after the system started running.

And that's just what Mike Cassidy wanted to hear.

He is a part-owner of Trius Tours, which runs the bus service with support from the city of Charlottetown.

Bobby Dunn, a manager of Trius, said earlier this fall the bus was still in the experimental period and the schedule might change depending on customer needs.

On Oct. 3, its third day of operation, the bus pulled off Queen Street at 2 p.m. right on time, with 16 people on it.

It rounded Grafton Street and rolled onto University Avenue. Passing through the first bus stop, the Atlantic Technology Centre, it picked up a man at the intersection of Euston Street and University Avenue.

A sign saying "Bus" in yellow letters is on a pole.

Dunn and Cassidy were on the bus. Passengers listened to Dunn explain the routes and stops.

People praised their first public transit system.

"I love it. It's a great idea," said Lys Goulet, who lives on King Street, two minutes from the bus stop at the Confederation Centre.

She works at Dairy Queen and used to take a taxi to work five days a week.

"I have been using the bus since last Friday."

As Goulet pulled the yellow string by the window, the red "Stop required" sign turned on with a buzz.

The bus stopped across from the Royal Bank and dropped off



Bus driver Keith Jameson prepares to head out for his bus route. (Yoshida photo)

Goulet.

Bus driver Keith Jameson said he's been getting an "excellent" reaction from people using the bus.

"Everybody is positive."

The former truck driver said it's a big change for him, however, he's enjoying meeting people every day.

"I'd never knew what people are like before. I've been alone almost 13 hours looking at a mirror once in a while and just keep driving, going and going."

The next stop was at curb side in front of Sobeys. Another passenger joined the bus.

The bus turned into Superstore's

parking, passed Indigo and stopped in front of Superstore. The trip took about 12 minutes from the Confederation Centre.

The bus had some runs that stops only at curb side, but it always goes into Superstore, Dunn said.

"We made the decision after seeing a mother with two young children having a walk to the curb, get all the groceries... it's too dangerous."

At 2:15 p.m., the bus rolled onto University Avenue with two new passengers. The bus stopped at UPEI in front of the student Centre and dropped off a student.

An elderly woman who got on

the bus at Superstore beckoned to Dunn. She thought the bus replaced a senior bus. The senior bus takes her to her house but the city bus doesn't. She had some shopping bags and a Pepsi cardboard box. She wanted to get on the senior bus. Cassidy called the senior bus with his cellphone.

The bus arrived at the Charlottetown Mall at 2:25 p.m., on schedule, 25 minutes after leaving the Confederation Centre. The bus stopped at the front door of Zellars.

Then it crossed University Avenue, dropped off passengers at Sobeys, went down a hill and arrived at Wal-Mart. It stopped

next at Old Navy. Dunn told the passengers who got off what time the bus was coming back.

After using his cellphone for a few times, Cassidy arranged for the senior bus to pick up the woman at Sears.

The bus arrived at Sears at 2:35. Cassidy took her to the front door, helped her carrying bags.

Another passenger on the bus was Louise Polland. It was her first visit to Sears.

"I don't have a car. So I never thought I'd go to Sears. But since we got the bus in Charlottetown, it gave me a chance to see the store."

Polland said she was impressed how Cassidy and Dunn helped customers, especially the elderly woman.

"We're very lucky to have them here," she said. "You wouldn't definitely see that in the bigger cities."

Every time a passenger gets off the bus, Cassidy and Dunn always say "See you later," and "Thank you for joining us."

They chat with passengers, answer questions, even remember their names.

"I think we realized that there's besides the economic business, there's social conscience side of view," Dunn said.

He hopes the bus will be part of people's life. He said the bus benefits people economically, enabling them be mobile and provides a chance to have a conversation with people.

"When I think about Charlottetown, people are friendly. But some people will never get to talk to anybody, being downtown by themselves."

After running along Malpeque Road for a few minutes, the bus passed a blue sign saying Welcome to Winsloe. It turned left to Melody Lane right before the final destination, the Petro-Canada gas station, and dropped off two passengers at the corner of Lower Malpeque Road.

The bus came back to the gas station at 2:50 p.m. after around the block. Winsloe - University Avenue is Route 1. There are also three other routes. Route 2, West Royalty- North River Road, opened Oct. 12, Route 3, Sherwood/ Parkdale - St. Peters Road, started Oct. 17 and Route 4, East Royalty - Kensington Road started Oct. 19.

Giant cockroach just member of team for converted bug lover

By Andrea MacRae

Can you imagine your reaction to the sight of a four-inch long cockroach only a few feet away from you?

If you come across one in your kitchen recently, it might have been an escapee from the visiting Newfoundland Insectarium from Reidville.

Happily, insect keeper Danny Goulding hasn't had a critter get away on him yet in six years of taking care of tarantulas, Madagascar hissing cockroaches and six-inch-long emperor scorpions.

"I haven't lost one and I have yet to be bitten."

Nor has he stepped on any.

However, the pain of being stung by a scorpion has been described to him, says Goulding.

"It equals six bee stings. That's about the pain level."

Interestingly, as scorpion species get larger in size, their venom is less potent.

Goulding and the bugs of the Insectarium were at the Confederation Court Mall in Charlottetown on Oct. 29 as a side trip from their tour of New Brunswick schools.

A steady crowd of delighted and disgusted parents, kids and shoppers milled around the mounted insect displays and more than 15 terrariums with a variety of live exotic spiders, beetles, stick insects and other things that crawl.

The huge insects get all kinds of reactions from fascination to fright, Goulding said.

"Bugs are one of those things. Either you love 'em or you hate 'em."



Insect keeper Danny Goulding shows off a wandering leaf insect during a recent visit to the Confederation Court Mall. The Newfoundland Insectarium came to town with its live tarantulas, giant cockroaches, and other huge bugs. (MacRae photo)

People have varied reasons for fearing bugs, including having them thrown at them as kids or being stung at a young age, he said.

"That was my story. That's why I was afraid of them."

When he started working for the Insectarium seven years ago as a landscaper, Goulding never imag-

ined he would get close to the bugs.

"My first year working with them, we have a three-storey building at the Insectarium and three fellas, they couldn't drag me to the second floor where the exhibits were. I just worked outside and that was it. I wasn't going inside."

He's still not sure how he eventually made the step to handling them.

"I have no idea. It just happened," he said. "Now I care for them. I'm the one who keeps all these guys alive."

He feeds live crickets to the arachnids and leaves to the stick insects and wandering leaf insects. The giant cockroaches and land snails had pieces of orange and onion in their cages.

The insects get to know him over time, said Goulding.

"Some of the regular spiders I feed, like I speak to all the spiders. I speak to 'em first and then they aren't as skittish. They don't jump when you get close to them."

He sees them become more comfortable over the course of a year or two. Like other creatures, they have individual characteristics.

"They do have personalities," said Goulding.

"This guy is laid back—this girl, I should say—is laid back," he said, pointing to a curly-haired tarantula in a glass cage next to him. "The tarantula at the other end is very high-strung, either that or a showoff."

"And our toads, of course I mention the toad, and he turns and looks at me. He's a performer. He likes to have all the attention."

Goulding glanced to his left at the toad about 15 feet away and seemed to make eye contact.

Despite this, Goulding says the insects "are displays."

"We don't name 'em. They're not pets."

He doesn't have any at home. Goulding took time to demon-

strate the behaviour of the "high-strung" tarantula by opening her glass cage and reaching in to gently touch one of her legs with his pen. Even though his hand was a pen-length away, he was within range for her to jump at him. Instead she lifted one, then two, then three legs at him. This was her warning to him.

The security guard looking on declined Goulding's offer to try it himself.

The Newfoundland Insectarium grew out of a basement hobby by one of the owners, Lloyd Hollett, a forestry technician, Goulding said.

"As a forestry technician, he studied entomology in his college training and he was always interested in bugs. He started collecting. Then he started writing other collectors around the world and just traded bugs like he was trading hockey cards."

When the Insectarium does school tours, Hollett or Goulding travel by van. It takes about 45 minutes to pack the terrariums and mounted displays into boxes and load them up for the next stop.

He enjoys the school tours more than any other part of his job, said Goulding with a wide smile.

"That's the best part about it. It doesn't matter which grade level. There's always pretty much a consistently positive reaction."

Last February, he covered most of P.E.I. in a two-week school tour. Winter travel in a van full of exotic insects can make for unusual sleeping arrangements.

"They're my roommates at night in the hotel room. The good thing about 'em is they don't snore."



Holland College holds open house

On the left, Eileen Rowe, the clinic co-ordinator for Holland College's dental assistant program, does a demonstration at the college's open house, last week.

On the right, Paramedicine students work on a dummy at Holland College's open house.

(Russell photos)

