

Editorial

THE QUEENS COUNTY
ADVANCE

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271 Main Street., P.O. Box 10,
Liverpool, Nova Scotia, BOT 1K0
Tel: 902-354-3441
Fax: 902-354-2455
www.NovaNewsNow.com

Group Publisher
Fred Fiander

Managing Editor
Fred A. Hatfield

News Editor
Nick Moose

Reporter
Aethne Hinchliffe

Sales Manager
Ray Savage
ray.savage@transcontinental.ca

Advertising Sales
Kathy Inness

Circulation Manager
Margaret Wallace
1-800-567-7377

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Kyoto doomed to fail from the start

Canada has finally pulled out of the Kyoto accord. That may not strike a cord with many people, and there is a reason. More on that in a moment.

Whether or not Kyoto was the right idea, it certainly failed spectacularly. Greenhouse emissions have increased across the globe, and few if any countries met their target. It seemed even the countries keen on the idea haven't managed to take it very far.

Canada dropping out no doubt sent ripples of delight through the Conservative party and the big polluters of the world. The Conservatives will get the blame of course, but the reality is the government sees Kyoto as political suicide and rightly so. At least the way things stand now.

Here's why it was doomed from the start: no voter buy-in. Once the Liberal party signed the accord, there was barely any effort to show us why this would be a good thing. The Conservatives didn't do any better.

Governments are there to represent the people of their country. If there was a will to make the Kyoto Accord work, they would have found a way. There wasn't. Instead of facing billions in fines, Canada pulled out.

The problem is it's really hard for us to visualize the consequences. Reducing pollution will cost money. An example right in our own backyard is the efforts of the Medway River Salmon Association, trying to reduce the acidity of the river. To do so will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. The money has to come from somewhere, and you can bet no private corporation is going to put up the money.

Projects to clean up Canada and cut down on emissions are ready to go, but there is no political will to do so. Nor do they have the support of the voters. The Medway River project is a great thing, but it is doubtful many outside the organization are beating down the doors of Vicki Conrad and Gerald Keddy to get it done.

The flip side of course is our Bowater Mersey Mill. There was a lot of will to make sure the mill continued to operate. Hence it got \$50 million to do so. There were those upset about it, but overall the residents are relieved the mill will continue to operate.

Environmental care is unfortunately an abstract concept for most. However it's not like we haven't worked with abstract concepts before. Look at our medical system. At the time it was an abstract concept (equal and cost-free care for all.) No doubt there was resistance at the time, but now most of us can't imagine our community without it.

Most of us know that we should care about the environment. Using guilt, as Kyoto did, to make us fix is was the wrong way to do it. Instead the government needs to convince us that spending money on the environment is a good thing. Only then will some real work get done.



"One year later"

It has been over a year since the 10 to 20 Project began. Started as an experiment to see if we could raise awareness about the benefits of spending money locally, we were never sure if it would work. We gave it a year.

In that year, we've worked hard to spread the word. We had a series of seasonal campaigns, some with horrible puns (Don't Leaf Town being a favourite). We helped fundraise for Queens Place. And we worked with the Provincial Department of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism to bring in business expert Toni Newman for our local businesses.

Along the way we've been asked if we were accounting for every dollar spent in Queens - if we were entering debits and credits into the County's ledger to see if we were getting to the \$20 million. Even if we could have, we haven't been, because, really, it has never been about the \$20 million. It was about rallying Queens to strengthen (and dare we say, save) the community. It was about investing in ourselves and creating a sustainable future for our children. It was about community pride.

This autumn has been the most emotionally

turbulent of recent memory. Blow after blow seemed to hit our County and there were dark days. Our future seemed uncertain. Hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs hung in the balance. It

**The 10 to 20
Project**
Phaedra
Charlton-Huskins

a firestorm of emotion, both literally and figuratively. But through it all, we came together. The combined crises brought us together as the family that we are. We found strength, comfort and support in each other. Things are not perfect - they never will be, but

we've been given a second chance. It doesn't end with the rebuilding of a Lodge, or with the signing of a government cheque. That is only the beginning of our renewal.

We have it in us to band together - we've demonstrated it over these past several weeks. Let us start the New Year with that in mind. Let us work together the whole year through and create a vibrant and thriving community of which we are all proud. We have proven that we are a family - and it is a family our children have entrusted us to preserve.

From the 10 to 20 Project family, we wish you and yours all a very joyous and peaceful holiday season and we look forward to working with you to ensure a prosperous year to come.

LETTERS POLICY I

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