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December 17, 2013 Issue 51 - Volume 17

Status Quo Good Enough in Espanola

By Chloe Kneer - The December 10 Espanola council meeting dealt with a number of items, but the issue residents were particularly concerned with was whether or not the motion to order an external service review for the town would pass.

It's been almost a year since the town initially faced a huge budget shortfall due to Domtar's MPAC reassessment, which resulted in a nearly \$4 million refund in property taxes to the mill. Deputy Mayor Jill Beer hosted a public information session just after the Assessment Review Board's late January decision. During that meeting, residents were promised that the town's bottom line would be watched very closely and that savings would have to be found in the budget. The external service review, which is essentially an independent audit of the town's services and what they are costing ratepayers, along with recommendations for changes, was written into the town's strategic plan, and has also already been budgeted for.

At last Tuesday's meeting, when the motion was brought forward, Mayor Mike Lehoux expressed his displeasure with the price tag of the review, which came in around \$45,000, or approximately \$20,000 more than anticipated. Councillor Jack Macmillan

Continued on page five...

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All The World's A Circus

William Thomas

williamjthomas@gmail.com



Christmas - Pass The Eggnog, Hold The Rum, Kill The Music

I'm trying to work through my issues with Christmas - why I hate this time of year and why I feel so out of place ... like Rob Ford at a truth and reconciliation hearing.

Not even a smash of eggnog and rum could cheer me up at this time of year. I hate rum. My aversion to this particular spirit can be traced directly back to a really bad bus tour in Santiago, Cuba.

"See The Real Cuba," said the sign in the lobby of the Delta Sierra Mar Resort promising excursions to the rum factory, the cigar factory and the Santiago cemetery.

Many people at our hotel took the tour to escape the hotel policy of playing "Guantanamo" non-stop twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Of all the things Cuba needs after the Castro brothers go, a new national song would be an excellent idea.

The tour did not get off to a rollicking start. After a one-hour drive to the city of Santiago, the rum factory was closed due to labour problems. We were, however, allowed into the tasting room, where we sampled seven-year-old rum. I declined, but "No, it ees jess like French Brandy." It didn't matter because even the teetotalers and recovering alcoholics hit the hard stuff after forty minutes of non-stop - you guessed - "Guantanamo" by the rum factory house band. In Cuba, I was learning even shoeshine stands have

their own house bands.

The tour didn't make a rousing recovery from its initial setback because at the next stop the cigar factory was also closed due to labour problems, or staff holidays or possibly a period of national mourning for the house band, who were summarily executed by the previous tour group for playing - everybody now - "Guantanamo."

"Why can't the house bands ever go on strike?" I asked, a little too loudly.

At this point, I was getting disillusioned: After all the disappointments, I thought if we get to the Santiago cemetery and it's also closed due to labour problems, this is really going to ruin my day.

Although most of the sights on this tour couldn't be seen on this day, the trip itself was not uneventful because at 1:30 pm on a narrow street in a residential section of Santiago, Pedro "the best driver in all of Cuba" had an accident. With no more than one hundred cars in the whole country actually operating, at any given time due to the absence of oil and gas, Pedro managed to hit one of them.

Subsequently, Pedro took off in chase of the driver of the car, which didn't stop and twenty of us were stranded at a souvenir shop that sold ceramic ash trays and photos of Che Guevara. Standing outside in the searing sun for an hour, I realized my face was fried and my brain wasn't far behind.

Continued on page three...

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Continued from page two...

Many of us never wanted to leave the place because ... you guessed it - no house band.

On a new bus with a new driver, we pulled up to the famous Santiago cemetery where nobody was having labour problems. You'll find this to be true of any cemetery in any country - no walkouts. I don't know if it was the rum, the heat, or the fact that I hadn't heard "Guantanamo" in almost an hour, but I sort of lost it.

As we passed a crypt that was kind of crooked, Angel explained this was due to years of heat and humidity. As it turns out there was the resting place of a great Cuban patriot and rum maker. Through the fog of alcohol and blinding sun I realized - there he was - the source of my pain, the evil man who invented the very rum that was making me crazy, Don Facundo Bacardi. I'm sorry, but I couldn't resist. I asked if, due to the curvature of the casket, would this be called - "a Bacardi with a twist."

Angel shot me a dagger of a look but as they say in Cuba, if looks could kill, I was at least standing in the appropriate place.

The seven-year-old hard stuff was still making its way through my system when we

passed the tomb of Bacardi's nephew, planted right beside the old man.

"So, Angel," I said, "this a double Bacardi on ice?"

Although no one else laughed, I got quite hysterical. When I inquired about the rum maker killed in that tragic shipwreck, "Bacardi on the rocks," I was politely asked to leave the tour and sit on the air conditioned bus where I would be more comfortable.

My ejection from this famous cemetery did not, however, stop me from rolling the window down on the bus and yelling at Angel to tell the story about the other family member who was shot in the drug deal - "Bacardi with coke!" Anyway, it worked out great because on a Cuban tour bus the air conditioner is so loud, you can't hear - wait for it - "Guantanamo."

And I say with all sincerity, if we as Canadian citizens can't visit foreign countries and make fun of their most revered citizens with stupid little bar jokes, then what good are we as a nation. I guess I actually hate rum more than Christmas and that somehow cheers me up.

For comments, ideas and copies of The True Story of Wainfleet, go to www.williamthomas.ca


Thank You
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Smile Cookies are gone, but the smiles they've left in our community will last forever. Thanks to your support, Tim Hortons will be donating the entire proceeds to the Espanola Helping Hand Food Bank in the amount of **\$6,440.00**




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Espanola Mall

The Mall will be open until 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve. We are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.



Although the Mall itself is closed on Boxing Day, you can still shop at:
FreshCo - 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Jean Country - 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
& Mark's - 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Please use their outside entrance.

There is no time more fitting to say "Thank you for your patronage" and to wish you a Happy Holiday Season and a New Year of health, happiness and prosperity.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for shopping at the Espanola Mall and hope to see you all in 2014.

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Are you a smoker & thinking of quitting?

Starting Monday, January 13 from 1:30-3:00 p.m., the FHT is offering a free 6-week smoking cessation class. Learn how to quit, how to manage your stress without cigarettes & more.

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December 25 at 4:30 p.m. At the Lighthouse in Espanola
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Massey Christmas Dinner, Massey Legion at 4:00 p.m.
 Call Carol 705-869-5304 or Penny 705-865-2467



10 Ways To Save Money At Tax Time



(NC) – It might be the dead of winter, but you can still put a spring in your step as you prepare for tax filing time. Here are 10 ways to save money – and these tips may even get you that refund you’ve been hoping for:

1. Tax-free savings account (TFSA): Using a TFSA is a great way to save on tax. Generally, interest, dividends, and capital gains earned on investments in a TFSA are not taxed—not when they are held in the account or when they are withdrawn.

2. Registered retirement saving plan (RRSP): Pay less tax and save for your retirement at the same time. Any income that you earn in your RRSP is usually free from tax as long as the funds stay in the plan.

3. Charitable donations: Donations of cash, goods, land, or listed securities made to a registered charity or other qualified donee may be eligible for a tax credit. New this year, if you are a first-time donor, you may be eligible to claim the first-time donor’s super credit which gives you an extra 25% credit when you claim your charitable donation tax credit.

4. Parents: All those mornings spent at the hockey rink and afternoons spent at the ballet studio can mean savings—with the children’s fitness and arts tax credits. Child care is also deductible, so keep your receipts.

5. Family caregiver credit: If you have a dependant with a physical or mental impairment, you could be eligible for an additional amount of \$2,040 when calculating certain non-refundable tax credits.

6. Students: Were you a student in 2013? You may be able to claim tuition, textbook, and education amounts, as well as moving expenses if applicable. And if you’ve recently graduated, you can claim the interest you paid on your student loan.

7. Public transit amount: If you are a regular public transit rider, you may be able to save by claiming your transit passes. You can get up to 15% of the amount claimed.

8. Seniors: If you receive income from a pension, you can split up to 50% of eligible pension income with your spouse or common-law partner to reduce the taxes that you pay. You may also be eligible to claim the age amount, medical expenses, and the disability tax credit.

9. Home buyers: You may be able to claim \$5,000 for a 15% non-refundable tax credit if you bought your first home in 2013.

10. Hiring an apprentice: Did your business employ an apprentice? An employer who paid a salary to an employee registered in a prescribed trade in the first two years of his or her apprenticeship contract qualifies for a non-refundable tax credit.

Finally, make filing your taxes this spring even easier by doing it online. It’s fast, easy, and secure and it may give you extra time to take care of that something on your to-do list that’s a lot more fun than spring cleaning.

Last-Minute Online Shopping? Tips To Be Cyber Safe



the beginning of the website address (the “s” means “secure”), an indication that the site is encrypted and safer to use for online transactions.

- Use only secure Wi-Fi to shop online. Don’t use public Wi-Fi to do any kind of financial transaction like banking

(NC)—If you’re like a growing number of Canadians, you love the convenience of holiday shopping online. No wonder.

There are no slippery roads, no long lineups, and you can find something for everyone on your list with just a click of the mouse. But with this convenience comes certain risks.

Cyber criminals see the holidays through a different lens and they often use this busy time of year to target people who might not be watching their cyber security. To help you stay clear of those who are bound to be on Santa’s ‘naughty’ list, the federal government has posted some advice for safe online shopping at GetCyberSafe.ca. This includes tips to keep your identity, plus personal and financial information secure, as follows:

- Look for a lock symbol on a website or “https://” at

or shopping.

- Read the shopping website’s privacy policy and find out how your information will be used.

- Pay by a secure method like a credit card. Do not send cash.

- Check your credit card statements, and if there are any unauthorized charges, call your credit card provider to report it.

- Consider using a separate credit card for online purchases, so it’s easy to track.
- Don’t respond to an email or a pop-up message that asks for financial information. Legitimate companies don’t ask for this information this way.

- Don’t allow auto-fill for your passwords or personal information, like your address, and be cautious with your credit card information – make sure it’s shared on a secure site.

Learn how to protect while you connect at GetCyberSafe.ca

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Espanola Rivermen and North Bay Trappers Take Rivalry to Manitoulin Island



The North Bay Jr. 'A' Trappers and Espanola Rivermen traveled to Little Current Saturday to play a neutral site NOJHL regular season game in the former home of the majestic Manitoulin Islanders.

The former NOJHL team based out of Little Current moved to Kirkland Lake in the summer of 2011. Both organizations were excited to bring Junior 'A' hockey back to the Island.

"The North Bay Trappers were thrilled to move our home game Saturday, December 14 to Little Current to play the nearby Rivermen," said Jr. Trappers President David Beauchamp.

"The people of Manitoulin Island have been without Junior 'A' hockey for a few years, and they were excited to take in the neutral site game."

Trappers former Chairman of the Board and now Team Governor for the Espanola Rivermen, Tim Clayden was

thrilled to have his team be part of this unique event between these two NOJHL rival teams.

"The Espanola Rivermen organization was very excited to support the Trappers in their game venue choice of Little Current," stated Clayden. "The island is a huge resource for talented young hockey players and has a wealth of very

knowledgeable junior hockey fans."

"Back in the day when we started the North Bay NOJHL Skyhawks, Manitoulin Island was at one time one of the best NOJHL supported teams, and myself, I don't see that changing on the North Shore any time soon as we in Espanola have tremendous support now from the Island and many North Shore junior hockey fans.

The league has hosted other neutral site games in the past, and Beauchamp believes it's a great initiative to help build interest in the NOJHL across northeastern Ontario. "This game showcased our great league and was an opportunity to give back to a community who has a strong junior hockey following," added Beauchamp. The teams meet again this Friday night in Espanola. The puck drops at 7:30 p.m.

Continued from front page ...

No External Service Review For Espanola

concurred with Lehoux, saying, "We need to take responsibility for our own budget." Both felt that the advice that would be given would not be beneficial. Councillors Meikleham and McMaster took the opposite view, both supporting the motion. McMaster stated, "The external service review could possibly identify things to [streamline services and save money] that we can't readily see." Beer voted to proceed, after expressing her concern with the higher-than-anticipated price tag, but she

also cautioned, "If we do it, we have to be prepared to make the hard decisions."

In the end, the motion was defeated with Mayor Lehoux casting the decision-making vote. Council did, however, approve a motion to allow resident Bill Foster present his five-month study on policing costs. Foster will be making his presentation to council at the first meeting in the new year on January 14. Residents who are interested in his findings may attend the meeting at the Espanola Municipal offices at 7:30 p.m.

Have a story, photos to share? Call or email Chloe: 705-869-6883 or chloe@aroundandabout.ca

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MASSEY AREA MUSEUM BINGOS - Held the first Monday of every month at the Massey and District Arena. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. Bingo starts at 7:00 p.m. \$1525 in cash prizes. 01/07

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CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SPREE - Last week to buy! Espanola Minor Soccer is selling tickets to win \$250 gift cards for Home Hardware, Canadian Tire, Freshco, and Winkel's. \$2/each, \$5 for 3, or \$7 for all 4. Draws are this Saturday. Call 705-869-5231.

NEW YEAR'S DANCE

WEBBWOOD EAGLES - New Year's Eve Dance Tuesday, December 31, 8:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m. featuring the "BACK ROAD COUNTRY BAND." 50/50 draw at 12:15 a.m. Party favours & light lunch included. An age of majority only event, \$10.00 per person. Advance tickets available at the Club, #3 Centre St., Webbwood. For more info. call 705-869-4269 after 3:00 p.m. 12/30

UNCLAIMED 50/50 TICKETS

Prizes were not claimed for the 50/50 draws on the following dates at the Espanola Rivermen hockey games: September 27, 2013 ticket #442201; November 22, 2013 ticket #825968. If you hold one of the winning tickets, contact Jeff Sheppard at 705-862-1210.



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Recipe

Seasoned saltine crackers that are simple to make and add a special touch to your dips and spreads during the holidays or any party throughout the year. They are delicious and addictive. You can add cayenne pepper to the oil (to taste) for extra heat. Don't let the amount of oil scare you, these are to be shared and are for special occasions.



Fire Crackers

- 1 lb unsalted saltine crackers, (4 sleeves)
- 1 cup canola oil
- 1 (1 ounce) packet dry ranch dressing mix
- 2 tablespoons crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Line crackers on ends (like dominoes) in an air-tight container. In a small bowl, mix oil, dressing mix, peppers, and garlic powder. Stir until all ingredients are well mixed. Continue to stir to prevent the pepper from settling on the bottom of the bowl. Spoon mixture evenly over crackers, like drizzling icing on a cake. Close lid tightly and flip the container over every 5 minutes for about 20 minutes. Lightly shake back and forth to make sure all the crackers are coated. Store in a Ziploc bag. These will keep for at least a week. If you give them a light shake every day they will keep even longer.

Kids Korner

Puzzle Piece Snowflake

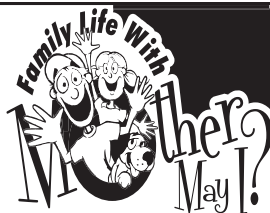
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- Scissors
- Puzzle pieces
- Glue
- White paint
- Glitter
- Ribbon



Cut a circle out of the cardboard. Glue 3 puzzle pieces horizontally and evenly spaced from one another around the circle. Then add 3 more puzzle pieces centered between them. This forms a perfect snowflake. Paint the snowflake white. Sprinkle on glitter while the paint is still wet. Allow to dry. Glue a ribbon onto the back to hang your snowflake.

Mother May I now has her own e-mail address! If you'd like to share a recipe, life tip, or craft idea, or have any questions, you can email me at:

mothermayi@aroundandabout.ca



COMMUNITY NOTES

Free Christmas Dinners – The Lighthouse, December 25, 4:00 p.m. Everyone welcome. Massey Christmas Dinner at the Legion, December 25, 4:00 p.m. Everyone welcome.

Traditional Christmas Eve Pageant - Zion Lutheran Church is hosting its annual Christmas Eve Pageant on Tuesday, December 24 at 7:00 p.m. Come and hear the story of the nativity and sing along to favourite Christmas hymns. All are welcome to join our celebration and any child is welcome to participate. For more information please call 705-865-2020.

Massey Walking Program - Any Massey area residents wishing to walk inside starting in January at St. Mary's school, evenings, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. There will be an organizational meeting December 18, 7:00 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church. If you wish to walk but cannot make the meeting contact Brian Sonnenburg at 705-865-2202 or e-mail mamaburger1@bell.net

Cribbage Tournament – Royal Canadian Legion, Espanola. 2013-2014 dates are: December 22; January 12 & 26; February 9 & 23; March 9 & 23; April 6 & 20; May 4 & 11.

New Year's Eve Fundraiser Dance - for Emily Richer hosted by Railroad Steele at Walford Hall. Call Laurence at 705-862-1201 or Lisa at 705-864-1441 for more information.

Flea Market - The Espanola High School Spartans Cross Country and Track and Field students will be hosting a flea market fundraiser on Sunday, December 22 at the K of C Hall from 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Penny table, antiques, baked goods, crafts, art, sporting goods and more.

Do you have a NOTE for the Community?

We invite not-for-profit organizations to submit information on their upcoming events in writing no later than

Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m. 25 Word Limit.

Fax: 705-869-3342 or E-mail: around@aroundandabout.ca

Franco-Ouest Students Gift-Wrap Christmas Presents To Build A Well In A Developing Country

Students from Espanola's École secondaire catholique Franco-Ouest will offer a friendly Christmas gift-wrapping service at Giant Tiger (270 Center St., Espanola) on Tuesday, December 17, from 4 to 6 p.m. Donations received will go towards the students' fundraising campaign in support of the international charity Free the Children. Community members are invited to have their presents wrapped in exchange for a donation that will go towards this fundraising initiative.

In The Loop

The council meeting last Tuesday night saw decisions being made that will directly impact Espanola's taxpayers.

The Service Delivery Review which is included in Espanola's 5 Year Strategic Plan was defeated. The vote was 4 to 3.

Similarly, the Fire Service Review was rejected by a 4 to 3 vote. Voting for the review: Mayor Lehoux, Councillors Beer and MacMillan. Voting against: Councillors Howard, Meikleham, McMaster and Rose.

Council also amended the Large Industrial Property class tax ratio to 3.603582 and the municipal rate at 0.07643328 for major industries.

According to the agenda these changes were authorized by the Ministry of Finance. No discussion took place nor was any explanation given for this increase.

During an 'In Camera' meeting Council apparently leased 2 lots in the Industrial Park to Helios Whitefish First Nation Partnership. Once again, no additional details were provided.

The Espanola Citizen Group executive wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

We look forward to continue keeping you informed in 2014.

Richard Ellis

Espanola Citizen Group executive member



The information provided in the Espanola Citizens Group are the written expressed opinions, views and facts collected by the ECG. A&A does not agree or disagree with the information provided by the ECG.

Shop Locally For Christmas



If you're still on the search for a unique last-minute Christmas or hostess gift, the Espanola Community Living Craft House may just be the spot you need to visit. The Craft House began as an independent living support program and has become so much more to the area. Executive Assistant Kathy Ainslie explains, "It has been a huge benefit to those at Community Living, many of whom have moved on to work elsewhere. The seven or so CLE clients who are employed

at the store look after everything from cleaning and rearranging to opening, closing, and selling. It is a great way for them to learn these skills that eventually they can take with them."

The Craft House displays work from approximately sixty to seventy artists in the region. Their creations are sold on consignment, with Community Living Espanola receiving a portion of the proceeds. "Our program receives no funding, so every little bit helps," explains Ainslie. "We work very hard at

fund-raising, with car washes, barbeques, yard sales, and of course, the Craft House."

The Craft House also partners with Cambrian College to hire a student worker who offers support, and they look forward to forming a partnership with the LaCloche Foothills Chamber of Commerce in the near future.

There are hundreds of items on display, in all price ranges. Hours for the gift shop are Tuesday – Friday 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and Saturday 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

Wishing You a
Merry Christmas

GIANT VALUE. GIANT SAVINGS
GIANT TIGER
YOUR ALL CANADIAN FAMILY DISCOUNT STORE

*Thank you for supporting
us the way you do.
See you in the New Year*

DECEMBER HOURS:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
15 10 am - 5 pm	16 8 am - 9 pm	17 8 am - 9 pm	18 8 am - 9 pm	19 8 am - 9 pm	20 8 am - 9 pm	21 8 am - 9 pm
22 10 am - 9 pm	23 8 am - 9 pm	24 8 am - 5 pm	25 CLOSED	26 10 am - 5 pm	27 8 am - 9 pm	28 8 am - 6 pm
29 10 am - 5 pm	30 8 am - 9 pm	31 8 am - 5 pm	1 CLOSED	2 8 am - 9 pm	3 8 am - 9 pm	4 8 am - 6 pm

