

ECC NEWSLETTER

September 2004

ECC Meeting: September 16, 2004

Dear ECC Member:

We will meet Thursday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room C in the Parsons Building. There will be much to discuss for the coming year, projects like Storm Drains as unfinished business, recycling, pesticide legislation, upgrading our Favorite Walks booklet (which is getting low in numbers), taking on a new project for continuing walking trails, power line issues, etc. We are never at a loss for concern over environmental issues.

The Oyster Festival was rained upon like never before. This must have been a first in all the years that it has been held. Thanks to Christina Swanke, who took over the task in my absence, for setting up our ECC Table and thanks to all the other ECC volunteers, who together saved our materials from being ruined. But like all the other organizations, artisans and nonprofits, which look forward to this day to promote their wares, make some monies to support their good works, and especially for the nonprofits, the opportunity to inform and hopefully recruit more volunteers, the day was a bust.

I cannot help myself, but all I saw were climate changes rearing their ugly heads this past month with the signs of increased intensity of what usually are normal rain showers but with an abnormal increase in rainfall. For example, Richmond, VA experienced 12 inches of rain in a few hours, resulting in 10 feet of flooding which destroyed its historic district, collapsed buildings that date back to the Civil War and destroying many other businesses. And thunder and lightning, tornadoes and hurricanes, not to mention Andrew and the millions of dollars damage again to Florida. Even the man who monitors the salmon by the fish ladder at the falls on the St. Croix River, N.B., told me that he has noticed in the last 15 years an increase in the water temperature. During the summer months it used to reach 26 degrees centigrade perhaps 2-3 times a month, however in the last two or three years. this temperature has occurred 2 to 4 times a

I escaped the storms with my trip to Newfoundland, except for a collapsed tent in the morning after it had endured the aftermath of Charlie's high winds and rain during the night. Yes, at my sister's insistence, we camped out and roughed it during our stay in Newfoundland.

We had phenomenal weather our whole stay in August. We visited the Fogo Islands (northeastern portion of Newfoundland), where we camped on the shore of Sandy Cove in Tilting, which has been designated as a Heritage Village. On the sandy beach and around their campfire, we were welcomed and entertained at the reunion of three native Tilting brothers, with their songs, stories, humor and quick wit. We also attended the music festival in the town of Fogo, which it sponsors each year. This year was special as it marked the end of an era with the cod fishing. As they sang and played the song of farewell, all the fishing boats large and small made their way, one by one into and around the harbor, blowing their horns along with the music for their last hurrah -- a very sad moment indeed.

Our next destination was the Gros Morne National Park, now recognized by the United Nations because of its 1.25 billion year old rocks. "The park has been called a "geologists paradise" for the diversity and accessibility of its different rock types and fossils and its evidence of plate tectonics." "The surprising way that those rocks came together on the west coast of Newfoundland is one of the most interesting stories in the park."

This coastline has a fiord-like mountain terrain that empties down into the ocean, with vistas of multiple layers of hazy blue mountain backdrops that crisscross above the deep blue waters which weave in and out of the multiple protected harbors - - harbors that are frequently homes of small fishing villages -- homes that Newfoundlanders keep in meticulous sparkling white condition. Not one unmainted house did I see.

weather was the result of a climate change or global warming. Below are some quotes from an editorial by a Newfoundlander curmudgeon, Rex Murphy, who does commentary for the **CBC**, and editorials for the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. (Aug. 21st) titled his article, “**B-b-ring on g-global w-warming.**” He said, “It’s been a bad summer for global warming.”

“I was down to Newfoundland for a couple of days in July and it was sunny for both of them. I can’t really say I checked the fossil record, but I believe this was the first time ever: successive - that’s the key word, successive – days of sunshine in Newfoundland.”

“Chatting up a few deliriously happy folks from home, I was informed that for most of July, Newfoundland could seriously be mistaken for Tahiti.”

“Were it not for the native modesty of my fellow Newfoundlanders, which accounts for their unwillingness to adopt grass skirts as the national attire, plus a sturdy distaste for ukulele music, any visitor to Newfoundland during July could very easily have stumbled into that error. South Seas, North Atlantic, Newfoundland, Tahiti - all are one under a clement sky.”

Unfortunately he editorialized, by saying, “Well they cannot have it both ways, weather cannot be used as evidence that we are in warmer times. Unless science has taken a somersault into the idea of paradox as proof.” He, like many others, is unable to grasp that climate change exhibits paradoxically the two extremes, that of increased and decreased temperatures in unexpected areas around the globe.

However, in a letter to the editor on August 23 Dan E. Kelly, associate professor, Oceanography Department, Dollhouse University, Halifax, Nova Scotia wrote to set the record straight on Mr. Muphy’s misinformation, asking him, “If that rare Newfoundland sun made a scrunchion of his noggin?” He wrote, “The short story is that the balance of evidence, studied by hundreds of scientists who would love to make their careers by contradicting their competitors, suggests that we have already changed climate and that the worst (disease and drought, not just sunburn) is yet to come.”

“The long story is there for all to read, in summary and in massive, neutral and vetted detail. Start with the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society (**cmos.ca**) position paper,

and then move on to the World Meteorological Organization (**ipcc.ch**). You’ll find methods explained, caveats unhidden, margins of error emphasized, politics ignored.”

“Your columnist should spend some time on this, and then use his silver tongue to inform as well as to amuse.”

Just to stretch the envelope a little on this subject, please note that the National Geographic Magazine’s September issue has a comprehensive article on Global Warming with many graphs, tables, etc. As always, their photography is outstanding.

Marti Reed called to remind us that we could recycle our old phone books at our Transfer Station. You may put them into the large red bin on your left as you drive onto the lot. And, it will take your magazines and junk mail. Also, note there is a separate bin for your cardboard boxes. On this note of recycling, there was a story of how Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia has done a great job of recycling all kitchen scraps, which can be put into a sealed bin and will biodegrade without odor and will, in a few months, be viable for recycling into your garden. We could very well look into such a product to be incorporated into a program here in Milford. Just another suggestion for us to discuss this coming week.

The winners of the Freedom Lawn Contest are as listed under the new categories:

THE PERFECT LAWN: **Jeff Bouvier**
BEST PUBLIC GARDEN: **Live Oaks School**
MOST INSPIRATIONAL AND PEACEFUL GARDEN: **Ann Moore**
BEST USE OF FOUND OBJECTS IN GARDEN: **Christina Swanke and Gerry Nicholls**
WINNING LAWN & GARDEN: **Judy and Jerry Pfeiffer**

We will present the winners at our ECC meeting in October on the 21st.

Sincerely,

Ann Berman, Chair
Environmental Concerns Coalition