

# The Mayor's Newsletter

Wolfville's Community Newsletter

Spring 2007

## Canada's first Fair Trade Town

Welcome to life in Canada's first Fair Trade Town.

Wolfville was officially recognized by TransFair Canada at a launch and celebration event on April 17 at the Festival Theatre. More than 200 people attended.

They dipped local apples in fair-trade chocolate, they sampled fair-trade foods from vendors all over Wolfville and the surrounding area, they heard fair-trade leaders talk about a movement that supports the simple, human idea that what we use and consume as a society should be created sustainably, and that those who grow food products deserve to be fairly paid for them.

## \$50K Nature Preserve gift

An ongoing project to forever protect the 600-acre Wolfville Watershed Nature Preserve received a significant boost this spring, thanks to major donations to the Nova Scotia Nature Trust from the Fountain family of Halifax.

Fred and Elizabeth Fountain, longtime members of the Nature Trust, along with Marjorie Fountain, Mr. Fountain's mother, donated a total of \$50,000 to the Nature Trust's Stewardship Endowment Fund for the Wolfville Watershed Nature Preserve.

The funds will provide long-term annual funding for property management and stewardship, enforcement and monitoring to ensure the ongoing preservation of the lands.

These latest donations combine with a major gift from Dr. Curtis Chipman to bring the Stewardship Endowment Fund total to \$75,000 - halfway to its fundraising goal of \$150,000.

Known throughout Nova Scotia for generous philanthropy, the Fountain family has strong ties to Wolfville.

Sheldon Fountain, the late husband of Marjorie Fountain, founded a degree program in business at Acadia, which later

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Norah Coyle-Kenny, 10, of Black River dips a local apple in fair trade chocolate at Wolfville's launch as Canada's first Fair Trade Town.

The Town's launch attracted local, regional and national media attention, and since then, more than 15 other Canadian towns have expressed interest in following in Wolfville's footsteps. St. Anne de Bellevue, Wolfville's twin community in Quebec, is on the road to becoming the first Fair Trade Town in that province.

Becoming a Fair Trade Town was no small feat, says Andrew Fry, Director of Community Services. And it's not just focused on food

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## Grant-in-lieu now 100%

Town finances received a boost this spring, as the provincial grant-in-lieu of taxes on Acadia University residences was legislated at 100 per cent.

The grants are now legislated, and guarantee the equivalent of full tax revenue will be transferred to all municipalities with university and hospital residences.

For Wolfville, it means a total grant-in-lieu of nearly \$805,785, a significant increase of over \$400,000 after two previous smaller increases since grants-in-lieu were instituted in 1980.

"These additional funds give the Town the opportunity to invest in its infrastructure and to meet increased operational demands," Mayor Stead says.

"This change reflects the end of a long-standing discussion with the Province on the issue of property tax revenue on university residences."

He added that the Union of Nova Scotia

Municipalities was a key partner in bringing about the change, keeping awareness of the issue front and centre in Halifax.

University residences are exempt from municipal property taxes, but municipalities provide substantial services, including infrastructure maintenance and fire and police protection.

Ten municipalities across the Province receive similar grants-in-lieu. Wolfville is second only to Halifax, which has a number of universities, in terms of the impact the decision has on municipal finances.

### Grant-in-lieu timeline

1980	Municipal Grants Act sets grant-in-lieu at 25%
1981	Grant-in-lieu is changed to 40%
2005	Grant-in-lieu is changed to 50%
2007	100% grant-in-lieu is legislated



## Nature Trust (from page 1)

became the Fred C. Manning School of Business Administration. Fred C. Manning was Marjorie (Manning) Fountain's father, and the Manning Memorial Chapel is also dedicated to him.

Fred Fountain grew up in Wolfville, and his interest was piqued when the Nature Trust approached him about this unique conservation project in his hometown.

The Town and the Nature Trust are working toward a conservation easement – an agreement that would see the Nature Trust protect the lands forever. It would be the first such agreement with a municipality in Canada.

"We are honoured to receive this kind of support, and that others would feel, as we do, that this land needs to be protected forever," says Mayor Stead. "Generations from now, this gift will still be giving."

Bonnie Sutherland, Executive Director of the Nature Trust, says the Fountain family gifts demonstrate the strong emotional connection Nova Scotians have to place and to landscape.

### Support the Wolfville Watershed Nature Preserve project

To make a contribution to the campaign or to volunteer through the Nature Trust's "property guardians" program, contact the Nature Trust at (902) 425-LAND or visit [nsnt.ca](http://nsnt.ca).

"The Wolfville Watershed Project will protect highly important conservation features, including some of the last old growth forest in the province," she adds.

"It has ecological significance on a provincial scale, but it is also a local community resource, and a place known, enjoyed and treasured by generations of local residents. It is truly a local treasure that the community wants to see protected."

## Waste time: 6 a.m. to 8 a.m.

Set your waste and recyclables on the curb between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. on collection day – never the night before.

Waste must be in acceptable containers, and close enough to the curb to facilitate easy collection.

The rules apply at all times except during special collections.

Violators of the Valley Region Solid Waste-Resource Management bylaw may be subject to fines of \$100 to \$500.

For more information, visit the Valley Waste Resource Management website at [vwrm.com](http://vwrm.com).

## The Mayor's Letter

It's never easy to decide what to write about in this Mayor's Letter. I try to reference a few matters not covered by stories elsewhere in the publication. My aim has always been to expose some of the good news stories throughout the newsletter realizing that some stories go untold. For others I refer to the web site for the Town or invite you to visit us at Town Hall.

Wolfville has taken on the flavour of not only the "little town that could," but the "little town that did." Often, we have not only done so, but have done so before anyone else.

The challenges over the years I've been here range from the fiscal, to the operational, to those that expand the vision and conscience of our town.

Wolfville was the first municipal unit in Nova Scotia to be smoke-free in indoor public places.

We have also been asked to undertake an exploration of the issue of smoke-free cars when children under the age of 16 are present.

Our Town was the first municipi-

pality in the Maritimes to join the Safe Communities Foundation of Canada.

We have recently worked to earn the designation as the first Fair Trade Town in Canada - read more about that in these pages.

We are well underway to signing an easement with the Nova Scotia Nature Trust to preserve, in perpetuity and in its natural state, our 605-acre watershed property on South Mountain. Again, the first municipal unit in Nova Scotia to sign such an agreement to protect land from development. Watch for information on the Watershed Nature Preserve Project in the weeks ahead as we move towards a formal launch and announcement of the signing of the easement, and undertake a fund drive to sustain the property. We will have to raise considerably more to sustain the property through a trust fund, which already has received significant donations from Dr. Curtis Chipman and the Fountain family of Halifax.

These special projects are undertaken in addition to the day-to-day

relatively complex operation of our Town for which our very capable staff is responsible. Several projects also wait in the wings for a place on our agenda.

Financially, we are stable. A major story in this issue conveys the culmination of years of work and discussions with the Provincial government for a major grant-in-lieu of municipal taxes on the residential buildings of Acadia University.

A few years ago, the decision was made to set the goal to be debt free by 2023 and not to borrow money after 2013. We are on target to achieve that goal but to do so will require very careful planning and management every year.

I thank every one of the residents in the 368 households that responded to the recent survey which will act as a significant guide for framing policy in the next few years. The response rate is considered to be very good, and is positive if perhaps not surprising for an engaged community such as ours.

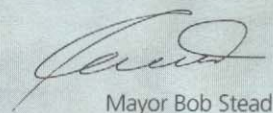
There is much progress in the review of the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw under the umbrella of sustainability.

Wolfville is recognized as a leader in several areas of sustainability policy. We were one of five Canadian municipalities to be invited to participate in a two-day symposium in Stockholm, Sweden in February at the invitation of the King of Sweden. Our Deputy Mayor Robert Wrye, who will be President of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities next year, represented us.

Those of us who work in municipal government in Wolfville are a fortunate lot. This list of achievements, this ongoing commitment, this passion for doing things right is only possible because those who live and work here believe in what we are doing. We in government guide and respond to a public conscience that is already there.

These are your successes, and I hope that you share in them.

If any of these projects whet your appetite and you wish to get involved, just get in touch at Town Hall. I wish you all the best for an enjoyable summer.

  
Mayor Bob Stead