

Greetings:

How wonderful it feels to be enjoying longer days! What felt like an incredibly long winter seemed to suddenly become springlike, in the blink of an eye. I want to shed my winter coat and start wearing open-toed shoes! As a result, my thoughts turn to the garden. Those who know me can appreciate just how meaningful that comment is. I love flowers! When I was growing up, my wonderful Irish father and his elegant wife, my mother, grew vegetables and beautiful flowers in their garden by the sea. That practice has remained an important part of my own life and home, where the garden overflows with fragrant blooms and sweet strawberry rhubarb, and vases inside the house burst with fresh flowers all summer long.

Plans are presently underway to continue work on our community garden. It is meant for you, the residents, to visit and enjoy. I know at least one beautiful wedding was photographed there last year, and I hope that it continues to be a place where special memories are made. Last summer we built a life-size chess board. It was the brainchild of our talented Committee Chairwoman, and this year we plan to build a labyrinth, which we are currently researching. If you are interested in using the garden for a child's party, or a celebration, and would like to borrow the chess pieces, please get in contact with me and we will make arrangements with you.

As planting season creeps up on us, I would like to ask that if you have any extra plants in your garden that you would like to donate to the community garden, please let me know. Plants and gardeners are always welcome!

At this time I would like to remind you that over the next few months, as we approach summer, please check the Beacon for upcoming events and meetings. This year there will be much happening in our community and I can hardly wait to invite you to share in the excitement! While there is much work being done on your behalf as I move important issues forward, including facilities, it is sometimes just as important to celebrate. At this time of economic uncertainty I feel very strongly that there must be opportunities to relax and enjoy where we live. That isn't just our home, it is also the communities and neighbourhoods where we have chosen to live. I will be certain to keep you informed as important decisions are made by your municipal government, as I am sure you will continue to let me know what you deem to be important to you and your family.

As I close my letter to you, I want to take this opportunity to once again thank the volunteers in our community who give so generously to all of us. Their commitment and dedication are very much appreciated. Thank you.

Take care and don't forget your umbrella when you leave the house. April showers bring May flowers...so it isn't all bad!

Warmest regards,

Jackie

Shearwater Sewage Treatment Facility Update

The treatment facility was built in 1974 and provided secondary level of treatment, primarily serving Eastern Passage. In 1986 it was expanded to include lands within Cole Harbour and the level of treatment was reduced to primary in anticipation of it becoming a component in the "Regional" wastewater facility proposed by the Halifax Harbour Clean Up Consortium. However, this did not happen and over time the collection system has experienced increased wet weather flows and regulations have changed related to the level of treatment. As such, the facility needs to be upgraded to accommodate the increased treatment levels and expanded to manage the increased flows.

HRM began the design process and identified the need to buy land to accommodate the increased foot print of the new facility. With the merger of services in August 2007, Halifax Water assumed responsibility for the completion of the project.

The expansion is being sized to meet regulatory requirements and accommodate continued growth within the existing service boundary, with possible future expansion for growth as projected through the Regional Plan. The purchased land is being considered for a rezoning because the current DND zone only permits DND uses. Halifax Water is requesting the zone on the existing facility, C5, be placed on the parcel purchased for the expansion.

Dog Licensing Promotion

Due to the success of last year's Pet Licensing Promotion, HRM is pleased to once again offer responsible dog owners an opportunity to license their dogs for a special \$10 rate or \$5 for seniors, until April 30, 2009. After April 30, owners will be charged the regular rate of \$50 to license an unaltered dog or \$15 for a spayed/neutered dog.

This Licensing Promotion does not negate the legislation in HRM By-Law A-300 that requires all dog owners to license their dogs by April 1 each year or within 10 days of becoming a dog owner. Owners who fail to comply with the licensing provisions of HRM By-Law A-300 may receive a minimum \$222 Summary Offence Ticket or be prosecuted in a court of law.

For more information on pet licensing contact the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000 (toll free in Nova Scotia at 1-800-835-6428) or visit the HRM website at www.halifax.ca/AnimalControl/A-300FeesandFines.html

Heathy Minds

Ourhealthyminds.com is a website about mental health. It celebrates the many ways we can be well, and honours the many ways we can experience mental illness - as an individual, a caregiver, a child or loved one. Our community of support is for everyone affected by mental illness. Visit us at www.ourhealthyminds.com

Regatta for the Cure

It is my honour to support the Regatta for the Cure. Don't miss the first ever Atlantic Canadian sail boat race for breast cancer, taking place at Shearwater Yacht Club on July 11, 2009.

Events include a race, parade of sail, BBQ, and an outdoor dance featuring music by Forty Fingers. All money raised goes to the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Atlantic.

For more information please contact AJ Quarmby-Bennett at ajq@eastink.ca

Library Update

During my time as Councillor, I have met with many members of the community who have expressed a high level of interest in exploring the feasibility of establishing a library in the Eastern Passage area. I have officially requested that the Halifax Regional Library Board consider a needs assessment and community study as a first step in developing this project.

This has been well received by the HRLB and I am encouraged by the quick response to my request.

A library would certainly be a valuable asset to the community and welcomed by residents wishing to utilize HRM's high quality public library service. I will provide updates as this process moves forward.

Mobile Library

Our Mobile Public Library carries a range of library materials for both adults and children, including books, CDs, DVDs, audio books, large print materials, videos and magazines. Mobile library staff can search the library catalogue onboard to assist you in locating materials to place on Hold and borrow from any of our 14 branches. Materials borrowed on the Mobile Public Library can then be returned to any branch. You can also place holds through our online library catalogue and have them sent to your local Mobile Library for pick-up.

The Mobile Library will be in the Eastern Passage area on Tuesday, April 14 and April 28:

2:20 - 3:15 p.m. Eastern Passage - 14 Romkey Drive

3:45 - 5:00 p.m. Eastern Passage - Shoreview Drive and Ainslie Crescent

6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Eastern Passage - 94 Briarwood Drive

For more information on Mobile Library services, to renew materials, or to obtain a complete Mobile Public Library Schedule, call 1-800-565-4414 or (902) 869-4464 or visit the website at www.halifaxpubliclibraries.ca.