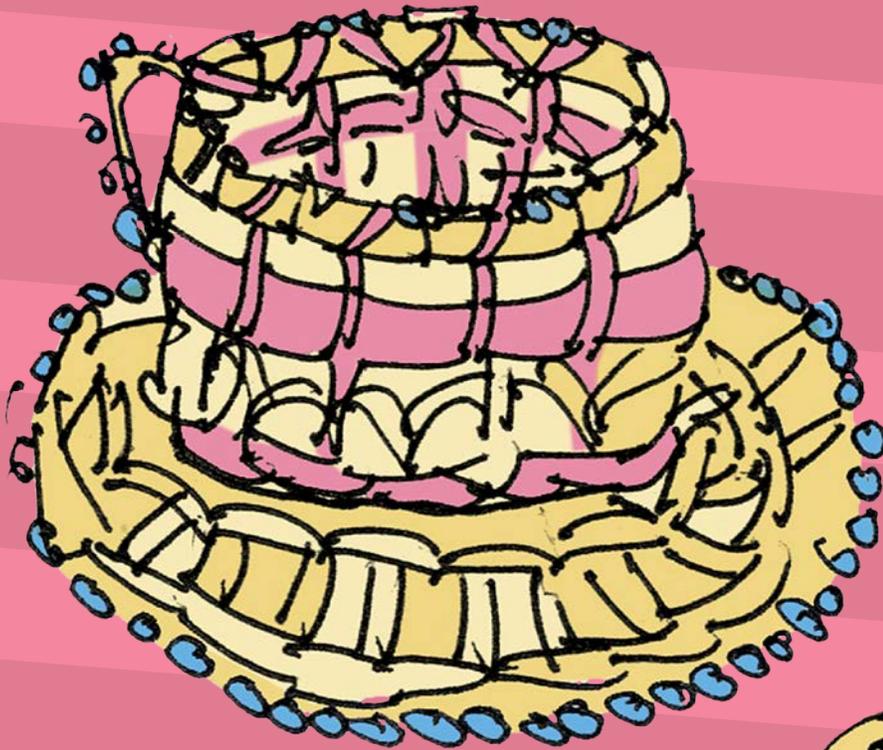


# Ecology & Action

SUMMER 2017



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-  Citizen Science Blitz
-  Money Talks:  
Participatory Budgeting

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The cover image, a sketch of elder Rose Morris' woven teacups, is an image from artist Emma FitzGerald's forthcoming book *Sketch by Sketch Along Nova Scotia's South Shore*, (Formac Publishing) available in September 2017.

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# Letters

WE LOVE HEARING FROM YOU!

EMAIL YOUR THOUGHTS TO [MAGAZINE@ECOLOGYACTION.CA](mailto:MAGAZINE@ECOLOGYACTION.CA)

## To the Centre

I admire Rose's art because it shows how resilient she is. She has been assimilated into Western Culture in such an abrupt and inhumane way, separated from her family and customs while in residential school. In the weavings of the teacups I see someone who has reclaimed her heritage, and acknowledged the reality of how life has changed for her people. Respect for nature is clearly shown through the materials and the subject matter of teacups implies dialogue, community and conversation.

I phoned Rose at her home in Gold River to obtain permission to include her art and story in my book and in this issue of Ecology & Action. She graciously gave her permission.

*In the Liverpool town hall is the Sipuke'l Gallery, an art gallery specialising in contemporary and traditional Mi'kmaq art. I am drawn to two teacups, that look almost ready for high tea, except that they are woven expertly from sweetgrass and ash bark by Rose Morris, a residential school survivor. Rose attended the Shubenacadie Indian Residential school, which operated from 1930-67, separating Mi'kmaq children from their families, language and customs. She is now a respected elder who resides in Gold River on the South Shore. There are photos of her in a binder with information about the exhibiting artists; she is pictured with the moon in the sky in 1969, by a river in 2001, and under a blossoming tree in 2004. I look at her face and wonder at what memories surface for her with each season, and then look again at her handiwork.*

- Emma FitzGerald,

*Sketch By Sketch Along Nova Scotia's South Shore*  
(Formac Publishing, 2017)

## From the Centre

The bustle to celebrate Canada's sesquicentennial is everywhere. But rejoicing in 150 years of confederation doesn't feel quite right here in unceded Mi'kma'ki. After all, this country wasn't an empty swath of land 150 years ago. Mi'kmaq people have been working to steward these lands we enjoy for over 13,500 years, and our natural history extends well beyond that.

As Canadians, we have many things to be proud of, but our relationship with Indigenous peoples isn't one of them. This is a relationship requiring urgent attention, including reflection on the land theft and genocide that are part of the founding history of this country, the legacies of which continue today. Unsurprisingly, many Indigenous people see this anniversary as a whitewashing, a celebration of 150 years of colonialism.

As you'll see in this issue, we have been grappling with some big questions related to Canada 150. We are listening and learning from the broad civic engagement and resistance that this troubled anniversary has prompted, including alternative framings like #Resistance150 and #Canada150+, the latter of which we've used throughout this issue of Ecology & Action. We hope you will join us in these challenging but crucial reflections—so that we can begin to work together to heal these colonial legacies. It is through this reflection, engagement and resistance that Canada can become a place worth celebrating for all sharing their lives on these lands.

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# 5 Ways to Re-Engage the Public

by **JENNY LUGAR** /// EAC Staff



“Public engagement describes the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of higher education and research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.”

- National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement (UK)

## TAKE ACTION

- Contact your councillor for any upcoming public meetings in your area. Many have mailing lists that you can join. You can find out who your councillor is here: [apps.halifax.ca/districtlookup/](https://apps.halifax.ca/districtlookup/)
- Keep an eye on the “Upcoming Meetings” toolbar on the Regional Council’s website: [halifax.ca/council/](https://halifax.ca/council/)
- Read ‘Municipal Governance 101’ to learn about more ways to contribute to decision-making, here: [ourhrmalliance.ca/uncategorized/municipal-government-101/](https://ourhrmalliance.ca/uncategorized/municipal-government-101/)

“Not consultation, public engagement,” an HRM staff planner corrects me for the third time in our conversation about public meetings. The distinction between the two is unclear. The intent behind both is, oftentimes, baffling. But here we are, in what I’m calling the age of really busy, because almost everyone who I catch up with now replies to “how are you?” with “really busy.” News articles and books abound about our off-kilter work-life balance, and increasingly precarious work, and scheduling. In the midst of all this, the duty of government to consult with communities on upcoming decisions is now written into most legislation, whether municipal, provincial, or federal. This is where we run into problems. Public consultations and engagement meetings are notoriously under-attended. Yet we have more opportunity than ever before to impact decisions made in our communities. So what are we doing wrong?

## Call in the Experts

Sophia Horwitz, a community engagement consultant and facilitator at The Co\*Lab, sat down for an interview with me. She explains that, despite appearances, busy schedules are not necessarily the problem. “A lot of the time, the problem is that the process isn’t working for people,” she tells me. It’s less about trying to upend societal work-and-leisure trends and more about creating an engagement style that gives people a reason to fit it into their busy schedules. The “process problem” can be unpacked into five key findings that I have collected from interviews and my own experience.



## Ways That Engagement Is Failing To Appeal To People (Who Have Better Things To Do) And How We Fix That

1

**PROBLEM: Over-engagement.** Halifax Council's website lists 17 different public engagement meetings between April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> this year. That doesn't include council meetings, community council meetings, standing committee meetings, and advisory committee meetings that are all open to the public and are upwards of 2-3 hours long each. Which would you pick?

The root of the problem is that most bureaucracies now function in silos with limited collaboration between them. A working solution (that, admittedly, will take time and effort to establish) would be to encourage teams working on intersecting projects to join forces. These teams could then host collaborative public engagement meetings that paint a more complete picture of the future of the city.

For instance, this spring the public was consulted on both the Integrated Mobility Plan and the Green Network Plan. Both speak to active transportation, but while the Integrated Mobility Plan is focused on the urban centre and inner suburbs, the Green Network Plan looks at active transportation municipally.

**PROPOSED FIX:** Hold open houses for multiple plans at the same time, providing ongoing updates for those interested in a focus area, such as active transportation. At the very least, mention the other plans at the public meeting. Often two very interrelated plans are fragmented from one another, making it very difficult to comprehend connections between the two. As a result, the future of the municipality can appear to lack vision on a large scale.

2

**PROBLEM: "Emergency" engagement.** Horwitz explains that this style of engagement is the one where a plan or decision has been all but made, but the decision-makers are still required to engage the public. In this case, the public is brought into something both too complex to understand and too far along to really be changed.

**PROPOSED FIX:** "Engagement should be ongoing," says Horwitz, "you need to build the capacity through education for people to engage." What does this look like? Oftentimes, better collaboration between government and communities. "Participatory budgeting is a great example of this," Horwitz adds. The idea is that if people are kept informed consistently, they'll be more inclined to participate and will also be able to contribute more meaningfully to the conversation.

If this is done through collaboration with communities, oftentimes the onus for ongoing engagement isn't a protracted task for municipal staff. The community is empowered by initial collaborations and then begins to build capacity for ongoing engagement within itself. Staff are only required to attend and simply explain what projects are ongoing, provide updates, and answer questions. Then when it comes time for the "emergency" engagement, it's less of an emergency and more of a climax.

3

**PROBLEM: Failure to state intent.** "This is often the cause of people losing trust and faith in the process of consultation [or engagement]," explains Horwitz. There is lack of clarity on what the consultant is looking to glean from the engagement, how participants' ideas will be used, and how decision-makers will follow through. "If there are non-negotiables," says Horwitz, "they need to be made clear from the beginning."

**PROPOSED FIX:** It comes down to transparency. In consultations where there is too much diplomacy, participants and consultants are working at odds and not understanding one another. Too frequently suggestions at public meetings are met with a response akin to "we will look into that." This is neither candid, nor educational. If someone's suggestion is implausible for any reason, the best way forward is to explain exactly why. All parties entering engagement should be privy to the same information. "Transparency into the process, the purpose of engagement, and how the information collected at the engagement will be used needs to be clear from the beginning, and part of an authentic invitation to participate," Horwitz says.

## 4

**PROBLEM: Roadblocks within.** “Will everyone involved in the process be open to the engagement?” Horwitz asks. “It could be that decision-makers aren’t really open to any suggestions.” If those conducting the engagement think it’s a waste of time, the public can sense this. Those who do participate will be less encouraged to come out to the next meetings.

**PROPOSED FIX:** “We need to start trusting people more and relying on people more,” says Horwitz. Everyone involved needs to be on board before the public engagement begins. And if those in public service positions aren’t confident designing consultation or engagement? Well, there are always organizations like The Co\*Lab that can help with that!

## 5

**PROBLEM: Failure to communicate ideas.** Bureaucratic language, complex scientific data, and government jargon can cloud the message and cause preoccupation on a few small points, preventing meaningful contribution. For instance, meetings on a new site plan often devolve into questions about community planning in general. Then time constraints mean that questions about the plan itself go unanswered.

**PROPOSED FIX:** Once you’ve arrived at a reasonable engagement timeline and have the proper intent behind this engagement, process becomes paramount. “We need to find a way to cut through the clutter for people,” explains Horwitz.



There are a few key elements in a good process:

- Providing participants with sufficient time to work through complexities and digest information.
- Stating intent and commitment for follow-through up front.
- Being creative in how and where engagement happens: for instance, meeting people where they are rather than asking them to come to you.
- Providing clear questions that present the feasible options for furthering the plan, such as “either we do X, or we do Y. Which do you think would work better for your community?”

Each of these elements holds singular merit. When combined, the process becomes truly engaging.

While these five solutions cannot solve all the problems associated with the age of really busy, they’re an excellent place to start. What’s clear is that we need more meaningful public engagement. This means bringing consultation into our communities, not the other way round. It’s as simple as the old expression, “if you build it, they will come”, because ultimately people want to participate.

“People have a deep urge to contribute to something bigger than themselves, and to see and insert the personal into the everyday and the collective,” Horwitz explains, “Whether that be [speaking about] your ideas on a bike lane or [writing out] your life lesson on a wall, it’s refreshing, it cuts through the clutter and makes the world more related to the self.”

**Jenny Lugar** is the Sustainable Cities Coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre and the Coordinator of Our HRM Alliance.

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# Someone Paved the Path:

## EXPLORING A HISTORY OF RESISTANCE IN LYNN JONES' ARCHIVES

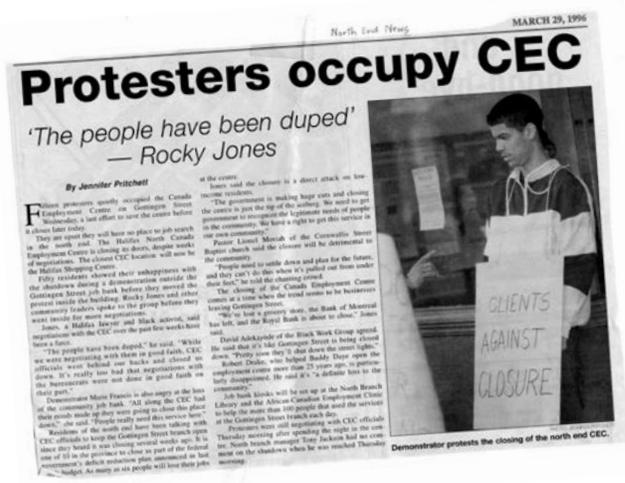
by **SADIE BEATON** and **JOANNA BULL** /// EAC Staff

Did you know that the longest ever occupation of a Federal government office in the history of Canada happened in Halifax? African Nova Scotians have been resisting injustices and fighting for civil rights for as long as they have been living on these unceded Mi'kmaq lands. These are rich histories of resilience, creativity and even humour, with much to teach us – and yet many of us don't know them.

Luckily for everyone, lifelong community activist Lynn Jones has been documenting the vital resistance work of African Nova Scotians for over 50 years. She has religiously collected heaps of newspaper clippings, meeting minutes, and other absorbing bits of paper that document fights against everything from employment discrimination to environmental racism.

Eighteen boxes filled with this history, ingenuity and wisdom have now found a home in the Saint Mary's University Archives, known as the Lynn Jones African-Canadian and Diaspora Heritage Collection. Contained in these boxes are stories that many of us in today's environmental and social justice movements have much to learn from. Here are a few articles we gleaned from the archives, documenting parts of the fight to keep the Canada Employment Centre (CEC) open, and the North Preston community's fight against a landfill siting, both in 1992.

We also had the opportunity to sit down and chat with Jones about her experience of community activism over the years – what leadership means, what has made a difference, and what lessons the current generation of activists can learn.



“ [I believe] every fight has made a difference. When it has not made a difference is when we have done nothing.... You do get discouraged at times, but what keeps me going are people who came before me in this trade. ”



# De-Celebrating Canada 150

by **SADIE BEATON** /// EAC Staff

Sadie Beaton would like to apologize on behalf of Ecology Action Centre for the appropriative title of this piece, which obscures the fact that “De-Celebrating Canada 150” is actually the name of Raven Davis’ multi-disciplinary body of work exploring Canada’s sesquicentennial. Davis is an Indigenous, mixed race, 2-Spirit multidisciplinary artist, curator and activist from the Anishinaabek (Ojibwa) Nation in Manitoba. You can learn more about their body of work here: [ravendavisart.tumblr.com](http://ravendavisart.tumblr.com)



The Canada 150 party is everywhere. It has branded everything from barbeque tongs to sock monkeys to the ever-present Tim Horton's coffee cups.

For anyone not feeling celebratory about this anniversary, it has been difficult to avoid. Many of us feel acute discomfort about Canada 150, which celebrates the founding of this country.

Many Indigenous peoples have outright refused to celebrate the colonial birth of a nation that has worked to erase them far before 1867, choosing instead to celebrate Indigenous resistance (see #Resistance150).



The non-stop Canada 150 party doesn't leave much space for the critical reflection our country needs to undertake to acknowledge harms and move towards reconciliation.

I am grateful to Raven Davis for creating space as part of the Mayworks Festival to "De-Celebrate Canada 150," inviting public reflection and discussion around Canadian history and identity. Davis's provocations posed uncomfortable questions about our roles as either settlers or Indigenous peoples in Canada's continued erasure of Indigenous bodies and culture. Their performance piece asks viewers how we can show up in solidarity with Indigenous people as the Canada 150 party rages on.

I'm sitting there at Cornwallis Park feeling useless. That's not the best way to start off. Here I am already centring my own feelings when I want to tell you about a powerful performance piece by Indigenous artist Raven Davis. Did I mention that I am a white person, a settler, a guest on these unceded Mi'kmaq lands?

Davis is masked and wearing moccasins. The mask is unnerving, and features a kind of reverse Canada Flag, an upside-down white leaf on a red background. Their hands and feet are tied with thick red rope to a statue of Edward Cornwallis. Davis is silent, motionless, and will remain bound in this cheery little park for 1 hour and 50 minutes while Haligonians from all walks of life pass by.

Cornwallis is the nasty British colonizer who carried out what they called "the Pacification" on my ancestors in the Scottish Highlands, a campaign of mass murder and rape to run us off our traditional

lands and replace us with sheep. Afterwards he rode on the coattails of the Doctrine of Discovery and Terra Nullis to help found Halifax on good Mi'kmaq moose hunting ground. That same year, he issued a bounty for the scalps of Mi'kmaq persons.

Halifax continues to celebrate Cornwallis and others like him.

I'm looking at the dozen eggs Davis has set up on a rickety table as a provocation to passersby. They are branded with Canadian flags. They look like invitations, but for what? Will somebody throw an egg at the Indigenous body before us, or will they aim for Cornwallis' smug likeness above? Will viewers like me be egged for participating in this political-looking event? Will the artist break free and start pelting us? Could you blame them?

Davis is provoking us into action but I am feeling anxious and paralyzed. I am feeling aware of some of the pitfalls of hapless white "allyship" right now, like: I want someone to tell me what to do. Did I expect the artist to set up an experience that would be satisfying, just for me??

I am looking at the eggs. The fragile white eggs.

Throwing an egg at Cornwallis feels kind of juvenile and ineffective, but I do it anyway. After all, I am burning with rage thinking about everything he is celebrated for, and what a tip of the iceberg he is in the full story of Canada's genocidal founding that we are supposed to be celebrating this year.

## READ THE TRC SUMMARY REPORT

The first paragraph of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) summary report nails it. "For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada. The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as 'cultural genocide.'"

Egg throwing also feels a little performative. It makes me wonder how much I am motivated by the desire to centre myself in this. To hear someone to say "good job!" My egg misses his haughty face by a long shot and lands unbroken in the grass. My egg feels like a punchline.

Some other folks throw eggs that shatter on Cornwallis' ridiculous cape. It does make a satisfying sound, but the eggs don't inflict any real damage, and they don't do anything to free Raven from the thick red ropes binding their hands and feet to this edifice of colonization.

Another person leaves an egg at Davis' feet before walking away. It is a tender act and I feel moved, but I don't know exactly why. Something about the smell of spring all around us, with its fertility and promise of renewal. Something to do with how delicate all kinds of healing is, and how uncertain and vulnerable any movements towards reconciliation are.

I am sitting there "holding space" but I'm not sure what that means. I am wondering why I don't move to simply untie Raven. My gut tells me not to but I don't trust my gut yet because my gut is colonized.

Davis has also provided a prayer bench with a kneeler upholstered with a Canadian flag. It is also furnished with a Bible called *Look and Live*, a special edition for Indigenous people. Like many aspects of this performance, I find this Bible hard to really look at.

I am thinking about white saviours, coming to Turtle Island with all the answers, the colonial good cops, eternally partnered to the bad cops like Cornwallis. They came here with their Bibles, and set up residential schools to "kill the Indian in the child" – to tell Indigenous children how to 'Look and Live.'

I am thinking about how deeply the white saviour complex is ingrained. How it sometimes shows up in my own attempts to ally with Indigenous people around land and water defence. Sometimes I'm that white environmentalist, trying to show up with "solutions". Even "reconciliation."

Why am I seeing Davis' body as vulnerable and helpless at the foot of the statue, when they are so strong and capable? After all, this intervention is an act of resistance – it is proof of resilience. I have a lot to learn about what solidarity looks like.

I go home feeling stirred up. Self-critical, sure, but also raging at how our government has been willing to spend half a billion dollars celebrating Canada's confederate anniversary while Indigenous peoples across this country continue to fight for crucial services and support in their communities including clean water, housing, mental health support, food justice, and the right to protect their territories from resource extraction and pollution.

The foundation and continued wealth of our nation is built on the premise that Indigenous people are not the original stewards of this land, and that they did not guide our ancestors in learning to survive and thrive on this land. The Doctrine of Discovery and Terra Nullis were self-serving legal fictions that allowed colonizers to declare discovery of an unoccupied "New World," and to proceed with a genocide that continues today. The fiction that this land was empty before our settler ancestors arrived has also helped to build and fuel environmental movements. Conservation, at its core, has always been about saving nature from people, while forgetting the fact that we are part of nature, and many nations lived sustainably on this land before our nation was constructed. We must acknowledge this fractured thinking before we can even begin to reconcile.

The forces and impacts of colonization are everywhere, like the empty Canada 150-themed Tim Horton's cups blowing around. Davis' provocation provided a vital space to reflect on the side-step dance we seem to be doing as a country when it comes to reconciliation. Without crucial reflection and the dismantling work that must come afterward, concepts like these will continue to underlie our country's relationship to the land and to Indigenous peoples here on Turtle Island. And there can be no reconciliation without addressing the issue of Indigenous land dispossession.

**Davis** is an Indigenous, mixed race, 2-Spirit multidisciplinary artist, curator and activist from the Anishinaabek (Ojibwa) Nation. Born and raised in Tkaronto (Toronto) and currently splitting time working between K'jipuktuk (Halifax) and Tkaronto. Raven blends narratives of colonization, race, gender, erotica, their 2-Spirit identity and the Anishinaabemowin language and culture into a variety of contemporary art forms.

# Money Talks:

## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

by **IAN JOHNSTON** /// EAC Volunteer

Participatory budgeting lets citizens make decisions about how government money is spent. Instead of voting for politicians who make financial decisions, citizens vote directly on where to allocate funding. It's an idea that is catching on in North America, with cities like Toronto, Guelph, Chicago, and New York using participatory budgeting. In Halifax, newly elected Councillors like Shawn Cleary, Sam Austin, and Lindell Smith are bringing participatory budgeting to their districts. Councillor Wayne Mason, meanwhile, has been using it for years.





## How Does It Work?

Shawn Cleary was recently elected City Councillor for District 9, Halifax West Armdale. We spoke at The Other Bean on Quinpool Road about his take on participatory budgeting. City Councillors, he explained, have access to \$94,000 in Capital District Funding. It's required to go toward capital development projects that benefit the community. Which organizations get money is, more or less, up to the Councillor's discretion. Cleary decided that he would commit most of the funding to participatory budgeted projects. "My rationale for doing it," says Cleary, "is the community seemed to have a lot of great ideas." Who would know better than the people living in the District?

As of writing, the process is well underway. Cleary held an open meeting to explain participatory budgeting and get the community brainstorming ideas. He set a deadline of May 24<sup>th</sup> for submission of proposals. Cleary and his staff check the proposals to be sure they qualify for Capital District Funding, but otherwise do not vet the projects. The vote happens in June. Each group can set up a table with a presentation and handouts. He likens the event to, "a science fair, you have a walk around and look at all the ideas." The ballot will require voters to choose several projects in ranked order of preference. Voting is open to any resident of the district, including children.

"The thing I love about participatory budgeting," says Cleary, "is that this is a way that people who live in the community can actually have a direct role in getting changes in their community."

## TAKE ACTION

- Live in central Dartmouth? Check out Sam Austin's Councillor page and get involved in participatory budgeting. You can also contact his coordinator Laura Nguyen.
- Get involved! Find your Councillor and get in contact. Find out ways you can help your community. [halifax.ca/councillors/](http://halifax.ca/councillors/)
- Have an idea that will benefit your community? Contact your Councillor. Could your project qualify for funding? Review the District Capital Fund Policy: [halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/070731ca1115.pdf](http://halifax.ca/council/agendasc/documents/070731ca1115.pdf)

## Input and Influence

Cleary explains that, "It's important that you don't confuse input with influence. We have all these opportunities where people can input into the process. They can say, 'I want this or that,' but that's not influence. Influence is getting done what you want done. What I see is participatory budgeting provides that influence." Having your voice heard, but not having any actual impact sounds like a waste of time, especially if the outcome is already pre-determined. Cleary says, "What I'm hoping is people begin to see that there is a reason to be engaged, a reason to get involved in the decisions of our government."



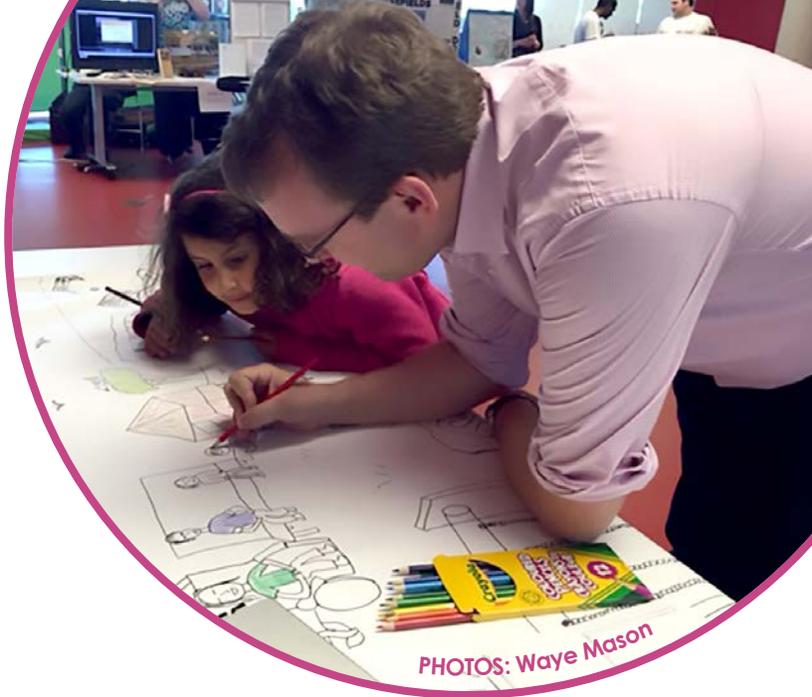
## Limits

Sam Austin is Councillor for District 5, Dartmouth Centre. He plans to use participatory budgeting starting in September 2017, allocating around half of his Capital District Funding to it. Like Cleary, he sees it as a great way to engage people. He says, “the community gets a say and ownership in that decision making in a way that doesn’t otherwise happen.” It also helps to build community networks as groups discover projects where they align. This can show that sometimes the community doesn’t need the government for resources. Sometimes those resources were there to begin with.

There are limits that Austin sees to this budgeting method. He says that often it “rewards groups that are organized, and that feel a sense of engagement already.” This can mean funds are most likely to go to groups that are already doing well, or have an engaged base. An example is school groups. Parents will readily come out and vote for improvements to the playground. “It’s harder,” Austin says, “if you are a soup kitchen and you’re looking for money to upgrade your kitchen. You probably have a dedicated group of volunteers, but the people you serve are more disengaged from the overall process.”

The other limitation that Austin (as well as Cleary) identifies relate to small projects. If a community group asks, “could we have \$300 to buy yarn to knit clothes for the homeless?” it doesn’t make sense to make them go through the participatory budgeting process. Austin is keeping some of his Capital District Funds for these smaller community requests.

There is typically an upper limit set on the amount that can be allocated to each project so more than one group can benefit. Cleary has set \$15,000 as the upper limit for projects this year. Groups must be a non-profit or charitable organization. Capital District Funds may only cover capital (physical) improvements, rather than programming, training, or staffing.



PHOTOS: Waye Mason

## Growing Engagement

Councillor Waye Mason, District 7, Halifax South Downtown, was the first to try participatory budgeting in 2012. In that time he’s seen more and more people getting involved. “We’re up to about 350 people coming to the meetings, which is really good,” he says. “I represent about 24,000 people, so it’s not an overwhelming amount of people. Having 350 people come and vote is a significant amount and gives you a much better idea of what the community really wants.” He’s expecting more than 400 people to vote this year.

So what has this engagement accomplished? Mason says St. Mary’s Elementary School received two rounds of participatory budgeted funds, along with other grants, to do a \$120,000 renovation of their school grounds that had previously been mostly mud. Funds went to purchasing a new search and rescue truck that, even though it wouldn’t be used on the peninsula much, voters wanted to support. Halifax Music Co-op won two grants to transform a gym from a place to store clothes, into a well used community space. These are just a few of the projects Mason has seen completed in the five years he has been doing participatory budgeting.

Participatory budgeting is only one way of getting involved in your community. The municipality is constantly having meetings where you can have influence on city projects. Mason says, “the municipality is super open to having people come and impact policy. If you have a particular passion there is usually an organization that is advocating that you can join.” Austin, likewise, recommends community groups as a means of improving your community. Contacting your councillor is a good place to start.

With an eclectic background, **Ian Johnston** has written on diverse topics including literature, real estate, executive leadership and mental health. He received an Master of Arts from The University of Western Ontario and a Master of Education from The University of Ottawa. He lives in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.



# Citizen Science Blitz

by JEANA MACLEOD /// EAC Staff

Every time I see an Eagle on my way to Cape Breton, I can't wait to tell my family. For me, there is something magical about sharing this observation with others. What if you could share the things that interest and excite you with others, and contribute to scientific research at the same time? With the rise of citizen science opportunities, you can!

Citizen science is the active contribution of people who are not professional scientists to science. A citizen scientist is someone who voluntarily contributes time, effort, and resources toward scientific research in collaboration with professional scientists or alone. The idea behind these projects is that anyone, anywhere can participate in meaningful scientific research.

## Science Affects All Of Us, Science Needs All Of Us

Despite the rise of “alternative facts,” the scientific process is still our most reliable method for interpreting and understanding our world. We start with a question, then collect data that we analyze in hopes of answering or responding to the question in some way (possibly prompting another question!).

In many cases, the most time-consuming part of research is the data collection and analysis. Citizen scientists help support data collection and analysis- enabling investigations at seemingly massive geographic and time scales, leading to discoveries that a single scientist could never achieve on their own. Citizen science allows experts to explore research that would not be possible, or practical, without the help of people like you or me.

Often observations or other information collected by citizen scientists is held as open data, making scientific research accessible to everyone. The collected data could be analyzed and used to answer multiple questions, some of which haven't even been imagined yet! A neat aspect of citizen science projects is that they often cross boundaries of who we might traditionally think



Cloud-gazers and hikers can make valuable contributions to science with the right tools.  
PHOTO: Raymond Plourde

can contribute to scientific advancement. No need for a lab coat, specialized experience, or even a degree! We can all shape science without being a professional scientist.

Every person engaged on a project can be extra eyes, ears, or hands to record observations, collect samples, identify patterns, and many other roles. Many citizen science opportunities can easily be incorporated into activities you may already be doing. Take a look at what hobbies or activities you usually engage in for fun, and research how you can add to these activities through citizen science. For example, online gamers could contribute to a digital pattern analysis study, or avid hikers could contribute wildlife observations to a database.

Those who participate may also benefit from increased knowledge and understanding of the world around them. As a result, citizen scientists may be more informed and better able to contribute to important policy discussions about our environment, economy, and society.



Explore fall beauty and biodiversity as a citizen scientist with *HaliBlitz*.  
PHOTO: Irwin Barrett

## Go Stretch Your Science Muscle

Love watching clouds go by on a summer’s day? Get connected with NASA’s GLOBE Observer app! The app (among other features) can notify you when satellites are going overhead, and ask cloud-gazers to take a photo from the ground in the same timeframe. These cloud observations help validate the corresponding satellite data, and help scientists understand cloud characteristics and distribution – critical info for understanding our global climate system.

Or perhaps you have plans to go back-country hiking next weekend? Take a camera to capture images of all the fun you’re sure to have, along with plant and animal life you see along the way. These images can be uploaded to iNaturalist.ca (or use the app) once you return to the world of wi-fi. The observations contribute to a National/Global database of species observations to build a living record of life around us.

The best part of using iNaturalist – you don’t have to know exactly what you’re looking at to contribute. Observations are confirmed and clarified by other experts and citizen scientists to make them “research-grade.” That wildflower that you identified as a plant will soon be updated to *Maianthemum canadense* (more commonly known as wild lily-of-the-valley) with the help of a global team! Every observation helps to create a bigger picture of Canada’s biodiversity and natural history, and can be a key contribution for conservation decisions.

In the Spring 2017 issue of *Ecology & Action*, we were introduced to a unique project by SeaChoice – a sustainable seafood program which the Ecology Action Centre founded along with the David Suzuki Foundation and Living Oceans Society. Through SeaChoice, the EAC is actively advocating for better seafood labelling in Canada to assist Canadians in making sustainable seafood choices. With the help of LifeScanner ([lifescanner.net](http://lifescanner.net)) and the Centre for Biodiversity Genomics at the University of Guelph, citizens across the country are putting our labels to the test by submitting seafood samples for genetic testing. The DNA data collected will allow researchers and consumers to evaluate the accuracy of seafood labels and will support better labelling regulations for the future.

All of these are examples of citizen science in action. There truly is a project for every interest out there: all you need is curiosity!

## TAKE ACTION

Join us at *HaliBlitz*—a citizen science opportunity to explore our local biodiversity. Activities will run from September 11-17<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Check out [ecologyaction.ca/bioblitz](http://ecologyaction.ca/bioblitz) for more information!

Looking for other opportunities? Check out citizen science websites like [SciStarter.com](http://SciStarter.com), [CrowdCrafting.org](http://CrowdCrafting.org), or [Zooniverse.org](http://Zooniverse.org) to browse existing projects or propose your own research idea!

## Join A Citizen Science Project In Halifax

Luckily for you, you can join in on a project right here in Halifax this fall! Come explore wilderness and coastline spaces in Halifax as part of *HaliBlitz* – an Ecology Action Centre BioBlitz event happening this September as part of Canada 150+ celebrations with support from Canadian Wildlife Federation. *HaliBlitz* will connect expert and amateur Naturalists with anyone interested in our natural world, all working together to identify species in our parks and wilderness spaces and celebrate our local biodiversity. Everyone is welcome to help collect data and participate in a variety of family-friendly activities.

Join us for species identification training and guided hikes at Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes Wilderness Area throughout #HaliBlitz week September 11-17<sup>th</sup>, and for our main festival at Point Pleasant Park on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>! Visit [ecologyaction.ca/bioblitz](http://ecologyaction.ca/bioblitz) to find out how you can participate.

“BioBlitz Canada 150 calls all citizens to be citizen-scientists this year,” said Rick Bates, CEO of the Canadian Wildlife Federation. “Canadians range from very expert to just getting to know our wildlife better. But everyone can truly contribute real scientific knowledge in 2017 for the future of Canada’s natural heritage.”

There is a citizen scientist in all of us – come let your inner naturalist explore and revel in our park spaces at *HaliBlitz* 2017!

**Jeana MacLeod** is part of the Wilderness team at Ecology Action Centre, working to connect people in NS with our parks, protected areas, and other nature spaces. Come on out to meet her at the upcoming *HaliBlitz* events in September!

# Inviting Voters to the Table

by **AMBER TUCKER** /// EAC Volunteer

Active participation in elections is one way that we as Canadians can have a part in shaping where we live. Ideally it lets us all speak up, both as individuals and communities, so we can have our diverse needs met. And yet to many, elections and the voting process are frustrating, inaccessible, and intimidating. It is common to feel that even when we do vote, our voices are not heard and our needs are not met. In light of this, the Dartmouth North Community Food Centre has found a less-expected route to inspiring voter participation.

The Community Food Centre (CFC) is a lively hub dedicated to good food, learning together, and communal empowerment. CFCs provide access to fresh, affordable and local food to many people with dire need in a dignified setting that upholds their self-worth. Visitors of all ages help to tend urban gardens, shop at the CFC's weekly market, cook and share meals, and take part in gardening parties. It's a space where finding your voice, and uplifting each other's health and well-being go hand in hand. Adding to the CFC's positive influence, helping people to feel able, prepared, and eager to cast their votes is a relatively new project.

## Getting Hungry For Change

This path started in June 2016 with a workshop called *Putting Food on The Table*, offered by the Halifax Food Policy Alliance that aimed to get Haligonians talking about how to put food into the conversation for the municipal election. A group of peer advocates from the CFC's Community Action Program attended this training, and immediately noticed connections between food security issues and civic engagement. Already passionate volunteers in support of good food and food security, the peer advocates realized that effecting change around these relevant local issues would be much more likely if the community were politically engaged in the process.

In order to kickstart this engagement, the peer advocates organized the first *Speak Up. Show Up* campaign. As the October 2016 municipal election approached, the Centre hosted a series of special events, including a crowdsourcing of questions to ask candidates, making voting buttons, and hosting a practice voting session with "favourite local fruits" on the ballot (strawberries won and were thereafter served at lunch). *Speak Up. Show Up* culminated in a voting party – complete with voting selfies! – and a parade to the polls on election day where some participants even voted for the first time.

The success of the campaign is especially impressive because voter participation rates in Dartmouth North are historically low – eight to nine times lower than the rest of the district. Many factors contribute to low voter turnout in the area: lack of information about the election (especially for those without access to telephone or internet), lack of awareness of the voting process, feelings of disempowerment, and candidates' lack of interest in Dartmouth North. Thanks to *Speak Up. Show Up*, the percentage of eligible Dartmouth North residents who voted tripled from 2.5% in the 2012 municipal election to 7.5% in the 2016 election.

Throughout May 2017, following the success of the municipal election events, a second *Speak Up. Show Up* campaign was in full swing in preparation for the May 2017 provincial election. The peer advocates and CFC staff refined their approach from the first campaign. They started with a community conversation helping participants to zero in on the key issues that concerned them regarding the election. Food insecurity and access to health care placed high on the list of concerns. This conversation established the focus for the *Provincial and Popcorn* event, a political twist on speed-dating, featuring question-and-answers with candidates from all four major parties.



PHOTOS: Tammy Shields & Laura Yorke



## TAKE ACTION

You can find out more about Community Food Centres Canada, the Dartmouth North Community Food Centre, and how to get involved in food security initiatives at [cfccanada.ca/dartmouth-north-cfc](http://cfccanada.ca/dartmouth-north-cfc)

## Why It's Working

Tammy Shields, Community Action Coordinator at the Dartmouth North CFC, says that it's refreshing for people in Dartmouth North to get to meet with candidates and see them respond to what the community itself names as pressing issues. The welcoming social setting of the CFC, in which so many residents already feel comfortable and empowered to challenge the status quo, facilitates gathering together to speak up for change. "Coming to the food centre, and having conversations with myself or peer advocates as to the importance of having a voice and holding candidates responsible for the promises made, have made a big difference," Shields says.

Shields explains why the CFC is ideally positioned to address these barriers: "First and foremost, we have worked hard to develop a trust and relationship with our community. We had the information. We could provide community members with a phone and the internet to ensure they were registered to vote, and we had the relationship with people to have conversations about voting and having a voice and how we together could effect change." Even for community members below voting age, these events demonstrated how the election process works and why voting matters. Engaging in this process together makes the act of voting – which can feel momentous and nerve-inducing – a little less intimidating.

## Future Food For Thought

Besides getting the community involved in elections, ensuring politicians' ongoing accountability is another goal for the campaigns. After the provincial elections ended, the successful candidate was invited back to the CFC to talk about what has been done to address concerns they discussed with the community during *Speak Up. Show Up*. CFC staff have also planned further events to keep civic engagement on the table. That the CFC has sparked interest in, and keen attention to, local issues in regards to the elections, Shields notes, "has made candidates accountable to Dartmouth North and candidates are campaigning in Dartmouth North more, and are attending events in our community. The last two events we had where candidates were invited, we had all candidates attend, which is rare." She feels that this is due to the CFC's work on *Speak Up. Show Up* and the sense that community members are active participants in the voting process.

The link between the CFC's regular work and its encouragement of voter participation is absolutely essential. A study by University of Toronto's PROOF: Food Insecurity Policy Research team found that in 2014, 15.4% of Nova Scotians experienced varying degrees of food insecurity. This also impacts a staggering 22% of children in Nova Scotia. These are some of the highest rates of food insecurity in the country, although lower than the territories that report statistics. Neither in our province, nor anywhere in Canada, can food be a neutral issue as long as so many do not have reliable access to adequate and nourishing food.

Conditions like these will not change for the better until people experience and exercise their power to unite and speak up for needed changes, as they already do at the CFC. It begins by empowering individuals, families, and friends to learn about and participate in meeting the physical and social needs of the whole community. We can look to Community Food Centres as an exemplary, grassroots way for people to organize with the shared mission of making our communities healthier, happier, and more sustainable.

**Amber Tucker** writes and edits in Halifax. From her role in a university play about a fictional fast food joint, to her work with Halifax Food Not Bombs, Amber has a lasting fascination with the different ways in which food conditions affect us, connect us, and remind us to share with one another.



# National Treasures

by **AMANDA LESLIE** /// EAC Volunteer

PHOTO: Amanda Leslie

Sixteen years after the confederation of Canada, three railway workers stumbled upon an incredible find on the lower slopes of Sulphur Mountain in Alberta: a series of mineral-rich pools, their emerald waters radiating heat. Long revered as a sacred healing site by Indigenous peoples, these hot springs, later known as Cave and Basin, inspired the creation of Banff, Canada's first national park. In the century that followed, our park system has grown considerably.

Today, there are 47 national parks and reserves in Canada, each one helping to protect a distinct natural region. They account for roughly one third of the total landmass in the country and contain a diverse collection of species, including many that are considered at risk. From mountains and prairies to forests and oceans, it is almost impossible to picture Canada without thinking about the vast array of natural treasures contained within its national parks.

Fourteen and a half million people visited the national parks last year. I am one of them. Every summer, my family travels to Fundy National Park in New Brunswick. It is a beautiful place and I have been lucky enough to spend countless days wandering its many trails and beaches. More recently, my work as a journalist has taken me to national parks in many other provinces across Canada and I plan to visit more in the coming months. There is so much to see and do in our park system. I have snorkeled with Atlantic salmon, explored glaciers, observed meteor showers, paddled across lakes, slept in a snow-covered yurt, hiked in the mountains, swam in waterfalls, and toured a fjord. One of my most memorable experiences was camping with Syrian refugees as part of the Learn-to-Camp program last summer in Kejimikujik park.

## TAKE ACTION

Ecology Action Centre is working with others to encourage the protection of important ecosystems across Nova Scotia, and advocate for a large wilderness park near Halifax at Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes. Add your voice to the conversation by writing to your MLA that you support more protected spaces!

This year, Canada marks its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of confederation. As part of the celebration, Parks Canada will be offering free admission to all of their sites. That means there has never been a better time to visit the national parks. There are nine to choose from in Atlantic Canada, including some of the newest additions to our park system, like the Sable Island National Park Reserve off the coast of Nova Scotia and the Torngat Mountains National Park in northern Labrador. More than 6 million people have already ordered their complimentary park passes, which also grants them access to national historic sites and marine conservation areas for the duration of the year. As Canadians from coast to coast prepare to explore our park system, we should consider not only the beauty of the national parks, but also their fragility.

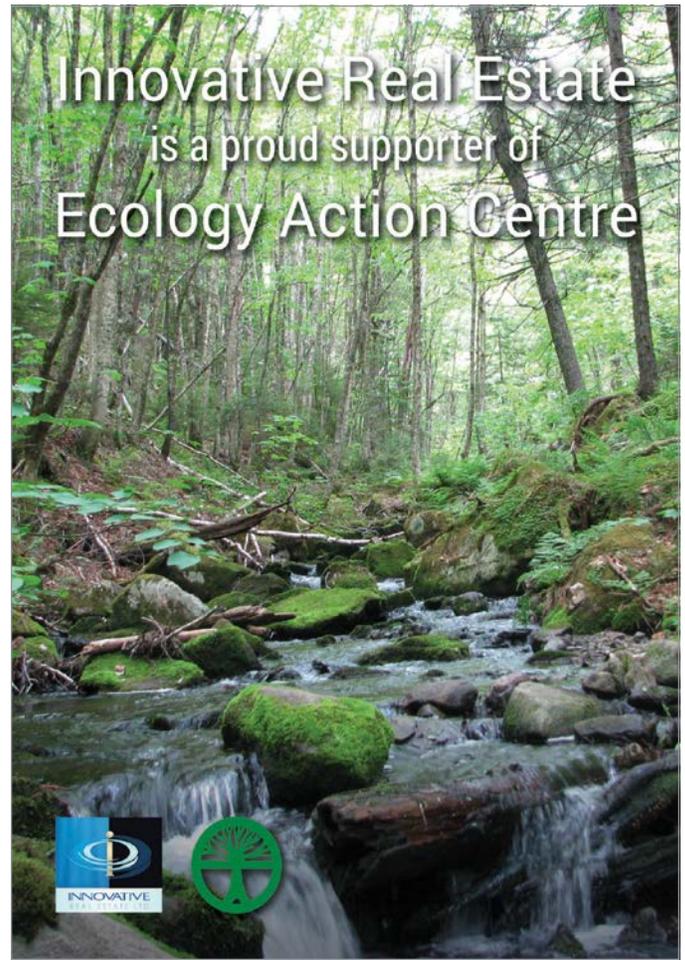
Several months ago, Parks Canada released its most recent State of the Parks report, which revealed that 46% of park ecosystems are in fair or poor condition. That is an alarming number. There are many factors that can impact the ecological integrity of a park; everything from urban development and climate change to transportation and high levels of human use. The last one is probably the most difficult to swallow. I first learned about the effect that visitors can have on the health of the national parks when I was very young. Parks Canada interpreters taught me the importance of leaving the park undisturbed by carrying my garbage out of the forest when hiking and not taking shells or rocks from the beach. My parents told me to stay on designated trails to keep plants intact and avoid feeding the wildlife, which could become dependent on visitors for food. I followed their instructions, determined to do my part, but I remember being deeply uncomfortable at the thought that I could be contributing to the gradual decline of something I cared about as much as the national parks.

Since the beginning of Canada's park system, we have struggled to find a balance between our protection and enjoyment of the national parks. This year, free park passes have heightened the discussion, with some ecologists raising concerns about the number of people that are expected to visit the national parks, citing the impact it could have on park ecosystems. Their points are valid, but with careful planning and education, I believe the benefits of raising awareness about our park system will outweigh the risks.

There are no easy answers when it comes to park management, but making people aware of the challenges is a pretty good place to start. In Banff and Jasper, for instance, a free shuttle service will be offered to try to reduce vehicle traffic during the peak visitor season. These are the kind of programs we need to help manage the increase in attendance, allowing more people to experience the parks while ensuring that we do our best to protect them.

J.B. Harkin, the first commissioner for the Dominion Parks Branch, noted that national parks exist for the people. "All the wealth of beauty and opportunity for enjoyment that they offer are yours by right of heritage because you are a Canadian," he wrote in a promotional brochure in 1914. His words still ring true. The national parks do belong to all who call Canada homes, but I would argue that they are the responsibility of all too. Now is the time to reflect on what we can do to ensure that the park system in this country thrives for generations to come. With pressures on our wilderness growing, creating more parks and ensuring existing ones are well-funded and protected is more important than ever. So let's get out there and see firsthand why these natural treasures deserve our continued support.

**Amanda Leslie** is a journalist, Maritimer, and aspiring photographer. Amanda currently travelling around the country to working on her first book about Canada's national parks.



BioBlitz  
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## JOIN US AT HALIBLITZ, A BIOBLITZ CANADA 150 EVENT!

**September 11-17, 2017 - Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes**

**September 16, 2017 - Point Pleasant Park**

Save the dates for BioBlitz events at  
two locations in Halifax this fall!

From headwaters to headlands, come explore the biodiversity of  
Canada's many habitats with expert naturalists and scientists.

All ages and interest levels welcome!

**#BioBlitz150 | [bioblitzcanada.ca](http://bioblitzcanada.ca)**

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CANADIAN WILDLIFE  
FEDERATION



Ecology Action Centre

# Action is our Middle Name

## MARINE

### Labels, Tuna and Conservation

Members of the marine team travelled to the UN Ocean Conference in June as part of the Canadian delegation (this is the first time an ENGO has done so in Canada), to remind the Canadian government that Canadians are ready for and supportive of strong leadership on marine conservation. We released a report on seafood labelling and traceability through our partnership with SeaChoice that gave Canada a failing grade on its seafood labelling requirements. We also submitted a series of recommendations to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency on how to improve and modernize these labelling requirements. We attended the inaugural NGO Tuna Forum in Washington, DC to discuss how organizations can best work to improve the management of tuna species. We also co-presented on the economic potential of the catch-and-release bluefin tuna fishery with Gardiner Pinfold, an economic consulting firm.

## FOOD

### No Sign Of Slowing Down

In Cape Breton, we've been busy building The Island Food Network (IFN). The IFN hosted regional community engagement sessions to map food assets and set priorities for our food work. The Cumberland Cost-Share CSA Local Food Box Program, that links local farms to low-income households, received a \$2,000 boost in funding during the third Annual Musicians for Local Food fundraiser. Over in New Brunswick, our sister project launched the Southeast NB Regional Food Pledge. The Mayor of Moncton signed the pledge, and the group presented to the City of Moncton council. Last but not least, The Mobile Food Market in Halifax wrapped up their winter pilot. The market was held indoors at some locations, while other locations provided produce packs to reach more communities and seniors' residences. The Mobile Food Market returned to communities in June. Follow us on Twitter [@ourfoodproject](#) for more project updates.

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### All Aboard For The Green Network

The Built Environment team has spent two years advocating for a greenbelt – a protected landscape of forest, green corridors, parks, lakeshores and riverbanks, and rural settlements. Recently, HRM has unveiled The Green Network, a mapped dataset of important corridors and landscapes. This is our greenbelt! The good news? Due to our perseverance, the public engagement in May-June indicated a strong implementation direction. We'd like to see the Green Network Plan adopted into the Regional Plan to protect the key landscapes and give cause to update outdated Land Use Bylaws. The Plan will go to council this summer. Meanwhile, we've been building Our HRM Alliance from 58 member groups, with a special focus on many rural community groups across HRM. The Alliance was consulted as a stakeholder for the Halifax Green Network Plan and the Centre Plan, and we will continue to advocate for directing growth to our existing communities while protecting the natural landscapes that sustain us! For more information on The Green Network or Our HRM Alliance, visit [ourhrmalliance.ca](#).

# COASTAL & WATER

## Daylit Rivers, Coastal Acts, and Peace and Friendship Treaties

The Coastal and Water team has been taking full advantage of recent opportunities to better protect and celebrate coasts and freshwater in the province. Over the last few years we have been a vocal advocate for daylighting the Sawmill River and we are pleased to see that in the final project design plans there is a significant section of the river being daylight! On the coastal side of things, the provincial election period was a great opportunity to bring our collective need for coastal legislation to the forefront of the environmental discussion. With the majority of parties having committed to coastal legislation, we are excited to continue to work with the government to make a Coastal Protection Act a reality in our province. Meanwhile, as part of our involvement in the Community Conservation Research Network, Sadie Beaton presented a webinar highlighting the significance and power of the Peace and Friendship Treaties when it comes to how we work to protect our precious coastlines and who needs to be part of these conversations.

# TRANSPORTATION

## Building Capacity to Move NS

The Welcoming Wheels program is gearing up for another successful year, providing newcomers with cycling opportunities. Since February, we've gifted 22 more refurbished bikes along with new helmets and accessories to newcomers in need. Working with Halifax Cycling Coalition, we ensured that a network of protected bike lanes was proposed at the most recent round of the Integrated Mobility Plan public consultations. But that's not all! We've successfully advocated for active transportation friendly solutions and infrastructure improvements for NS schools. Our work with municipal, regional, provincial and national partners, groups and committees continues to help cultivate and implement active transportation plans, walking and cycling strategies and other initiatives. Join EAC's Sustainable Transportation Action Team the first Monday of every month from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm to help grow sustainable transportation in NS.

# ENERGY

## From Sweden With Love (and Renewable Energy)

In May, the Energy Action Team travelled to Sollefteå, Sweden to take part in a transnational working meeting and seminar about smarter energy communities through the European Union's SECURE project. We presented to project partners from five countries on community energy work and best practices like the Community Feed-in Tariff program here in Nova Scotia. This serves as a great reminder of the important steps Nova Scotia has taken to reduce emissions and create good, green jobs. It also reminds us how important it is to protect and strengthen these achievements, and to not allow them to be cancelled or reduced. The Energy Action team has been planning for our future. We're excited to be doubling-down on our work to ensure Nova Scotia commits to firm climate targets for 2030 and beyond, and that our province has a keen focus on creating good jobs and community development in the prosperous green economy.

# WILDERNESS

## Campaigning For Our Forests

In conjunction with members of the Healthy Forest Coalition, we mounted a renewed campaign against forest clearcutting, herbicide spraying and other destructive harvesting practices following the NS government's abandonment of commitments to reduce clearcutting to no more than 50%, stop taxpayer subsidies for forest herbicide spraying and restricting whole tree harvesting for biomass. As a result, all parties made commitments to improve forestry practices during the recent provincial election campaign, including the winning Liberal party who pledged to an "independent review" of forestry practices by September. Stay tuned... We are also planning for a big Canada 150+ Bioblitz event at Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes and Point Pleasant Park in September (See **Citizen Science Blitz** in this issue).

# The Seasonal Gourmet

by **CHAITI SETH** /// EAC Volunteer

## Eggplant Cannelloni

One of my frequent dilemmas in late summer is choosing which beautiful vegetables to harvest and cook with – this dish is a delicious solution! It brings together many of my late summer favourites including eggplant, tomatoes, and red peppers. These warmth loving plants take care and time to grow in our Nova Scotian climate but are so well worth the wait. This recipe creatively replaces pasta with crisp and juicy broiled strips of eggplant. It has bold flavours and bright colours, and makes a yummy and filling meal served with a side green salad or corn on the cob (or both!).



### INGREDIENTS (SERVES 4)

- 2 large onions, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 large tomatoes, diced
- 4 red peppers
- 2 medium purple eggplant
- 4 oz. goat cheese
- 2 oz. feta cheese
- 3 tablespoons yogurt
- 4 Kalamata olives, pitted and minced
- Small handful fresh parsley, finely chopped
- Olive oil
- Salt and Pepper

### DIRECTIONS

Slice the eggplant lengthwise, into half inch thick slices. Brush on both sides with olive oil and broil on a baking sheet, flipping halfway through, until golden brown on both sides. Cut peppers in half, remove seeds and stem and place flat side down on another baking sheet. Broil for 20-30 minutes until the flesh is soft and the skins are blistered.

In the meantime, heat a little olive oil in a skillet on medium heat. Add the diced onions and garlic and cook until soft. Add diced tomatoes and cook through. Remove the peppers from the oven, roughly chop them up and add them to the skillet. Cook for another 5-10 minutes to allow all the flavours to meld. Season with salt and pepper and blend to form a smooth sauce. Pour the sauce into a 9 by 13 inch (22 cm by 33cm) baking dish.

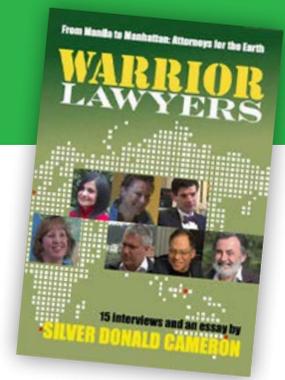
To prepare the cannelloni filling, mash together the cheeses, olives, and parsley. Place about 1 tablespoon of filling on the end of each eggplant slice and roll to close. Lay seam side down on top of the sauce. Return to the oven for 10 minutes at 350°F (170°C). Serve hot or at room temperature.

**Chaiti Seth** is an avid home gardener and cook who loves to grow and eat food! She works on helping build healthy and sustainable local food systems near Wolfville, Nova Scotia.

# Book Review

by **RUTH GAMBERG** /// EAC Volunteer

## Warrior Lawyers: From Manilla to Manhattan, Attorneys for the Earth



Nova Scotia's Silver Donald Cameron brings us his latest book, *Warrior Lawyers: From Manilla to Manhattan, Attorneys for the Earth*. It is both an eye-opener and a source of inspiration for anyone concerned about the ravages being inflicted on the earth. We all know environmental organizations that are active in our communities and countries around the world. But perhaps we know less about the tireless efforts of lawyers in these same communities and countries.

Through a series of fascinating interviews, Cameron provides us with insight into the range and depth of these efforts. He takes us to the Netherlands, Argentina, the Philippines, South Africa, Ecuador and beyond to introduce us to remarkable "warrior lawyers." These women and men are engaged in activities such as suing corporations for polluting the air and water, standing up for the rights of future generations, fighting suits against governments for their poor records on greenhouse gas emissions.

*Warrior Lawyers* offers hope and provides badly needed encouragement. Through the interviews, the reader gains an appreciation of the myriad accomplishments that are possible through legal systems. The work of these green lawyers, actively and often heroically using the law to fight for the sustainable world, adds a critical dimension in our common struggle to avoid planetary disaster.

*Warrior Lawyers* is available in paperback or Kindle formats from [amazon.ca](http://amazon.ca) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and from Cameron's website, [silverdonaldcameron.ca](http://silverdonaldcameron.ca) in paperback or e-book. Cost: \$24.95 plus tax in paperbacks, \$9.99 in e-book forms.



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# Recent Successes

- In April, the Halifax Food Policy Alliance (HFPA) presented to the Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee (CPED). CPED agreed to **continue to support HFPA food security policy work** and be a part of future work to **create a Food Charter** and **Food strategy** for HRM.
- We gained the support of **over 12,700 Canadians** for the submission of our recommendations to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to **improve seafood labelling** and strengthen traceability requirements nationally.
- After over a decade of pushing for coastal legislative change we welcomed the commitment from four political parties to establish and implement a **Coastal Protection Act** that protects people, properties, and coastal ecosystems across our province!
- After years of advocating for **daylighting the Sawmill River**, we welcomed news that a significant portion of the upper half of the Sawmill River will be daylighted and will include naturalized areas!

## WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

Leave a gift to the EAC in your will to ensure a healthy future for generations to come. Please call us at 902-442-0300 or email us at [ryan@ecologyaction.ca](mailto:ryan@ecologyaction.ca)



"As long time proud supporters with passionate concerns for the environment, it was easy for us to decide to leave a gift to the EAC in our wills. We have long respected the work EAC does for the environment and know that its strong voice must continue into the future." - Karen Hollett & Fred Harrington

**WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO JOIN  
WITH 5,500 OTHER VOICES FOR CHANGE?**

*Become a member of the Ecology Action Centre today and find out.*

**HOW?**

*Sign up in person with a member of our membership team.*

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*2705 Fern Lane, Halifax, NS, B3K 4L3*

*[www.ecologyaction.ca](http://www.ecologyaction.ca)*

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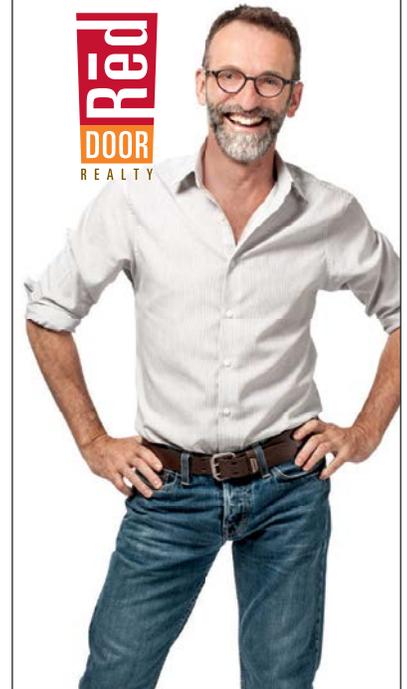
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