



THE VIEW FROM BLUE

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JUNE 2014

FOCUS 5 FOR THE ELECTION

Most of the content in this June Newsletter is from the Candidates who have declared to run for the Municipal Election October 27, 2014.

The BMRA believes the following 5 objectives should influence the campaigns of Candidates 2014.

1. Development approvals and by-law enforcement: TBM planning, engineering and building officials should develop a culture that is genuinely supportive of the phrase "Open to Business". By-law enforcement officers should be firm while treating residents and businesses respectfully.

2. Economic Development: TBM must embrace economic prosperity as a cornerstone to a sustainable community. This starts with a TBM focused ED plan that can be broadened to regional collaboration where beneficial to TBM. We need to strive for prosperity in all sectors: agriculture, real estate development, tourism, industry, new digital entrepreneurial sectors as well as local merchants.

3. Grey County: Optimize TBM's value proposition with Grey County. The TBM Official Plan (OP) is approved by the County but the County politicians are statutory not elected representatives. The (OP) needs to specifically recognize issues applicable to TBM's unique geographic opportunities. We must embrace both our agricultural heritage and our recreation/tourism heritage. We must also optimize the economic and environmental Sustainable Path which is of benefit to the whole Region.

4. OPP, Fire, EMS (First Responder Services): TBM should be supportive of Association of the Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) initiatives seeking a solution to the unsustainable nature of OPP and Emergency Service contracts.

5. Official Plan: All of the above points need to be driven by an Official Plan (OP) that incorporates the direction of TBM. It is time the community knew where it is going with an OP that finds the balance of being Open to Business, yet does not over-expose local taxpayers to development costs that are not adequately covered by either development charges or County assistance with roads etc.

The format for the 2 Mayor Candidates was to ask them to provide us with 3 of their own Questions that they thought appropriate to get their message out and answer them. We then carried on with a regular interview that might happen between a newspaper and candidates. We turned our notes on the interview into a Q and A to make it more readable and confirmed with the candidates that we had properly reflected their thought process.

The interview was based on the Focus Five issues that we would hope all Candidates address over this election cycle and turn those issues into their personal platforms. We have set up a grid below on the Focus Five and will fill it in as we get closer to the election. In our August Newsletter we shall offer to interview the Candidates for Deputy Mayor.

All the Candidates for Councillor have taken the opportunity to submit a write up of how they wish to sell themselves going into this election. The same will be done in August as the issues hopefully become clearer. The BMRA will also host a Meet the Candidates event in September with date and venue to be announced.

Your BMRA Editorial Board hopes you find this Newsletter informative.

CANDIDATES	Development Approvals and By Law Enforcement	Economic Development	Grey County	First Responder Services	Official Plan
FOR MAYOR 1 to be elected John McKean Duncan McKinlay					
FOR DEPUTY MAYOR 1 to be elected Gail Ardiel Paul Mitchell					
FOR COUNCILLOR 5 to be elected Bob Gamble Joe Halos Michael Martin John McGee Michael Seguin					

TO BE COMPLETED IN AUGUST NEWSLETTER

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Please pass it on to your neighbours and encourage them to join the BMRA

MEET THE CANDIDATES registered as of June 1, 2014 for Mayor - McKean and McKinlay

JOHN MCKEAN

Why are you running for Mayor?

I believe to necessitate change you have to have a vision, an implementation plan, and accountability or change is unattainable.



I believe all levels of government: municipal, county, provincial and federal are service delivery points and the sole function is to serve the public at a reasonable cost. In my view no one has seriously looked at the relationship of the county and the town, to examine how efficiently and cost effectively the county services are provided. Alternatives must be looked at with an open mind. With my business background I have the know-how and resolve to lead the initiative.

I have extensive experience in contract administration and management of multi-million dollar projects. I have been involved with numerous municipalities throughout Ontario and Western Canada, and wish to bring some of the solutions and ideas observed to this municipality. I am the right person, for the right reason.

How would you improve administration and accountability at town hall?

Our town staff does their best to be helpful, but we need to streamline the process for when a tax payer seeks information or approvals from town hall. Council needs to give concise and consistent direction to staff.

Where does your inspiration come from?

This area's great mix of urban and rural, natural and beautiful environment, and all the great outdoor amenities. My roots are here; we have a long family history of business and land ownership. There is a sense of community not only for the people who have lived here for generations, but for new comers as well.

In addition, close proximity to larger

urban centers enables residents to access specialist in medical treatment, and cultural diversity. All of these attributes combined make our area truly unique.

You have stated that our 7% population accounting for 25% of the County tax revenues (and on its way to 30%) is unfair. But how would you tackle a County whose other 8 municipal representatives benefiting from this unfairness vastly outnumber the TBM representation?

There are several ways to tackle it. I am an expert on road maintenance, that is my career. We send about \$5 million to the County for roads maintenance budget and receive about \$1.5 worth of maintenance. We should not send the \$5 million and do our own road maintenance thereby saving TBM taxpayer money for other local investment in infrastructure or whatever we decide.

Could you project a timeline on that?

It would take 18 months to get a roads RFP (request for proposal) pulled together, then 6 months for Council and staff to examine it, then a year for execution. It could be done within my term as Mayor. To be clear – this will not result in any layoffs at the county, knowing their work force demographics and normal retirement practices.

In your opinion what is the state of repair of the 100 km of county roads located in TBM?

In my opinion the general state of the repair of the 100 km of county roads is poor. It is stated in the 'Road Needs Study Summary Report 2009 Update' done by Aecon for Grey County that The Town of Blue Mountains has one of the highest percentages of deficient roads in Grey County.

When you say TBMs portion of taxes revenues in the County raising from its current 26% to 30% in the near future, what is that based on?

Several factors but the key driver will be the fact that farmland values are starting to stagnate while urban, "view" and waterfront properties continue to

increase in value. MPAC will start to shift the tax burden toward non farmland. The rest of Grey County is so much more rural than we are.

Can you give us an example of how the County doesn't optimize the taxes TBM sends to it?

I noticed in Grey County Transportation Services Internal Review Summary Report done by Director Mike Kelly that they cleverly experimented with outsourcing from their staff the job of putting in guardrail posts. The County cost had been about \$150 and the outsource contract was \$60 per post. All well and good. But nothing happened to the existing staff, now we carry the same burden of staff plus the outsource cost.

One of your fellow Councillors, Michael Martin, has quipped that it is taking TBM 6 years to do a 5 year Official Plan. What do you think of the OP process?

If I could do it over again I would outsource it. Staff has worked hard on what has been done but sometimes you have to have a fresh perspective.

What do you think of TBM's Development Charges?

Again it is unfair that not all Municipalities collect Development Charges yet TBM does and sends them to the County. The BMRA has asked Council to ask the County for information on this as well as other inequities (all posted on the BMRA web site). You should keep pressing Council to get you answers. I will do what I can to help you. It goes without saying that I could help a lot more as Mayor. In short we need to be "Open to Business".

You mentioned earlier that \$3.5 million could be saved on better Roads management alone. What would you do with the savings?

Some of the roads we would be taking over from the county need repairs now. Another thing I would do would be to sit down with Collingwood Council and figure out better access to and from the base of the Mountain. We have a lot more in common with Collingwood, Wasaga Beach and

Meaford, all part of the Southern Georgian Bay, than we do with some of the remote parts of Grey County. Our Governance structure needs to fit the economic engine closer to home.

Any final thoughts?

Looking forward to the challenge of moving this municipality ahead and looking forward to assisting senior staff in all departments and assisting the ratepayers. I would be hands-on as I am in the business world. I will be a full time Mayor. I will show up every day at the Town Hall.

DUNCAN MCKINLAY

I would like to discuss your Focus Five platform issues:

Do you think that today the Town of the Blue Mountains is "Open to Business" with respect to current development approvals and bylaw enforcement?



Yes, but every organization and process holds room for improvement and a priority for me is to be part of making those improvements. The interim planning director is tasked by council with reviewing processes and identifying opportunities to make improvements and to make service delivery more effective. I believe there is also a great opportunity for the Town to communicate to the public on how to prepare for processes, what are the reasonable timelines and expectations and who to talk to.

What needs to be done to further enhance ED (Economic Development) in the TBM?

As part of our current initiative the Town Economic Development staff have recruited some of the highly qualified town residents to conduct interviews with local business operators, to get a better understanding of their businesses, their goals and the needs that they have which the town might provide help. Working together we can all benefit.

Grey County has been building capacity and relationships with its economic development and local foods support staff. Grey is currently undertaking an economic

development action plan and I am excited to be on the steering committee for that work.

The Western Ontario Wardens Caucus, has identified that a high speed fiber optic network is the top regional priority for economic development in western Ontario and has developed the SWIFT (South West integrated Fiber Technology) model, preparing for applications for support from the Federal and Provincial Government. BMRA members and other residents can support this initiative by contacting their MPP and MP and indicating the need for this technology network for our area to be competitive and prosperous.

What needs to be done to improve First Responder Services and contain the continual and unsustainable increase in First Responder labour contracts?

We get great service from our first responders in Grey County and in TBM. I do believe that the arbitration process needs to be remodeled to reflect the financial realities in rural Ontario. The OPP model of service delivery needs to be brought up to date to the needs of our community at a sustainable cost. I have been nominated by Grey County to seek office as a Director of AMO (Association of Municipalities of Ontario). Arbitration and Policing are top issues that AMO is consulting with the provincial government, and now that the provincial election is over I look forward to being part of making progress through AMO engagements.

It is time for the Official Plan (OP) update to be completed, it's past due, do you agree?

The OP, 5 year review process is nearing completion, with council hoping to consider a final document by this fall. Public participation is critical as the draft is finalized over the summer. A series of public open houses, stakeholder engagements and public meetings will soon be announced to involve the community in the process. Development density and a "Made In Thornbury" solution for Thornbury West is just one of the many important issues under review. As a member of the OP review steering committee along with 2 community members, I urge every person in our community to involve themselves in this very important process.

We need to optimize the TBM value proposition with Grey County. What are your thoughts on this?

For me and our community, the question with the county should not be "are we getting our share?" but "are the needs of our community being served?". The high profile services are County transportation networks, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Social Services, Housing and Land use planning.

We now have excellent service and response times in TBM, in part because we made a case for the addition of an ambulance depot in Craiglieth and because service delivery models and practices are reviewed and updated regularly to meet service needs.

With respect to roads, Grey County has added Grey 119 to the networks of roads in TBM serving regional needs. A major road improving project is scheduled for 2015 for the eastern portion of 119. reinforcing the economic importance to Grey of the economy of TBM and the Road network and maintenance needed to build our economy is a top Priority for me. A Transportation Master plan is underway; to look at transportation networks needed to serve our economy, alternate transportation such as cycling, public transit etc. and to suggest the right roads and services to be in the right places. Some roads and bridges are proposed to be removed from the county system over time so that resources can be focused on the roads which have the greatest priority for tourism, agriculture and business. I believe it is absolutely essential to make the tough decisions required so we may focus resources on the most essential regional road networks.

Social services and social housing are delivered by Grey County on behalf of the province, primarily funded provincially. Grey manages about 1350 social housing units and administers other housing assistance programs. Grey County owns and operates over 300 of 700+ long term beds within the county. While there is a taxation cost, I believe that county needs to remain involved insuring that bed capacity remains available in the county in the future.

The County, especially through WOWC is

well positioned to be a strong voice for advocacy with the provincial government on a broad range of issues. The County also supports me as a Member of Ontario Good Roads Assn, focusing on education of personnel building and maintaining roads, on research, and on advocacy for roads issues.

When space permits I would like to provide further information, "What About Grey County" and "What about Bylaw Enforcement and STA Licensing" which were also presented during this interview. Thanks, please get involved in the Election voteduncanmckinlay@gmail.com or 519-599-6685 at home.

for Deputy Mayor - Ardiel and Mitchell

GAIL ARDIEL

I would like to reintroduce myself to the Ratepayers group, as many of you have known me over the last 17 years however, there may be a few who don't.

- I was first elected to Council in 1997-2003 as Councillor.
- Town/County Councillor, County of Grey from 2003-2006.
- Councillor - The Blue Mountains Council 2010-2014
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) 2005-2006
- Ontario Small Urban Municipalities (OSUM) 2005-2006 and 2012-2014
- Town Representative for BIA and Chamber of Commerce 2013-2014
- Town Representative and also Vice Chair for Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority 2010-2014
- NVCA Agricultural Advisory and Efficiency Audit Ad Hoc member 2013
- Previous Chair of Finance and Planning
- Presently Chair of Finance.

Now, you will remember me as a strong advocate for the town. Previously when at the County I did wear 2 hats; but my allegiance to the Town is utmost. We must communicate to the County in a respectable, but firm manner that we need to have better justification in dollars spent in our town.

The new OPP funding formula is placing hardships on many towns in this province that are unsustainable. Presently I represent all residents in Ontario, through the Ontario Small Urban Municipalities and OSUM and with other caucuses we are all working together to bring fair and equitable solutions to AMO. As a business woman I know the hardships of managing a business, and dealing with a town, county, and province in these hard times. All forms of government must be open for business in all areas of Economic Development.

In closing I am proud to be a strong candidate for the Blue Mountains with many years of experience.

PAUL MITCHELL

Born and raised in Owen Sound. My great, great grandfather settled in Grey County in 1853. I have lived in Thornbury for the past 20 years. Now retired I have over 40 years of business experience in the Automotive After Market and later a retail store on the main street in Thornbury.

First and foremost it is important that the Deputy Mayor reside in the Town of The Blue Mountains. I reside in Thornbury. I will represent all taxpayers of the TBM on Council and at County.

There is no shortage of revenue in the TBM. The problem is that over 62% of our revenue is leaving us and going to the County and Province. Councils of the future will have to find a way to spend more wisely and get better value from the County and the Province in order to give taxpayers fair value for their tax dollars.

Council also needs to send a clear message to all in the community that we are open to business.

Having attended most council meetings since 2003, I have seen our County levy double in 12 years to \$13.5 million and if we continue to make it difficult to do business in our town how can we encourage new residents to come to the TBM? If we want to increase instead of decrease our population we need change in the TBM before it is too late. That's why I am running for Deputy Mayor.

for Councillor - Gamble, Halos, Martin, McGee and Seguin

ROBERT J. (BOB) GAMBLE

I am a long serving council member (35 Years). Married for 51 years to Eileen, 3 children, 6 grandchildren. Chartered Accountant Sept. 1962. Last mayor for Town of Thornbury

Retired from a career as financial manager of a local major industry and offering my expertise gained in my years of service on Town Council to serve the needs and expectations of the general electorate.

Your council must provide the adequate services to meet the needs for security, safety, recreational and transportation needs of the residents.

Council must adequately evaluate requests for increased services against future costs that might burden taxpayers in the form of increased taxation; wants and/or needs must be rationalized.

Through my local political involvement, I have always reviewed increased expenditures on the need for environmental sustainability and do they adequately serve the needs of a majority of taxpayers.

I will continually advocate for County re-investment of services to our community which will compliment the large dollar value of annual property taxation which is directed through legislation to be levied on our town.

As an elected councillor, I must address the needs and concerns of 100% of the taxpayers of our municipality, being commercial enterprises, agriculture, recreational, tourism, retired residents and visitors

I have enjoyed serving the community as your elected representative and look forward to your continued support to re-elect me as your Town Councillor on election day on October 27th, 2014.

JOE HALOS

Fourty per cent (40%) of our property tax dollars go directly to Grey County coffers. The County governance model was last updated in 1849. Major changes are needed and possible but requires political will. Decision making with 18 County Councillors is a daunting endeavour. Our two Council voices tend to get lost in the crowd.

1. There are inequities with the current assessment based model.

2. Each taxpayer should appeal their property assessment every year through a request for reconsideration. Reducing your assessment will reduce your personal property taxes and reduce the dollars we send to the County. If we all did this every year we would definitely impact our assessment and therefore taxes.

3. Filling a council chamber can help guide the decision makers. Yes, the squeaky ratepayer sometimes gets the grease. If we keep our issues in front of our County councillors and send deputations to County Council we will continue to see progress and improvement.

4. Long term strategies could include strategic partnerships with other municipalities in order to have a stronger voice in voting. Amalgamating with another Municipality could be an option. Realigning our municipality with Simcoe County could be an avenue to pursue. We already are aligned federally and provincially, so why not be in that County? We have a lot in common with Collingwood and east and I think a realignment with Simcoe County is possible and makes sense. We enjoy freedom, prosperity and a healthy lifestyle which makes our system well worth the costs. I am a proud and happy Canadian.

MICHAEL MARTIN

Thank you for providing an opportunity for me to give some background information and a few considerations as to reasons for seeking an additional Council term. My prior-retirement background is that of a lawyer corporate executive having acted for various Municipalities, Retail Organizations, Developers of Land, Office Space and Shopping Centers.

I have been a resident since 1994, and prior to that a weekend skier from 1983. I have been on Council for 3 terms, as well as having been Police Board Chair for Thornbury Meaford Board, and served as first Chair of Blue Mountains Committee of Adjustment, former executive on Fair Board and Thornbury Clarksburg Rotary. Other Community involvement: Warden of St. George's Anglican Church and member and Past Commodore of Thornbury Yacht Club, past member of Craigeleith Ski Club.

My reasons for re-election bid include escalating spending impact on tax increases, the never ending problem of the yet to be accomplished 5 year Official Plan Review now spanning 2 full Council terms, Council accountability not only in costs but also responding to resident taxpayer concerns particularly Ratepayer Association and Local Interest Groups, the increasing levels of bureaucracy on all levels of government (Council must learn to get out of the way and not in the way), the impact of development pushing existing taxes ever higher, the major intrusion of County controls over matters of Town jurisdiction and the disparity of financial responsibility among the 9 members of the County with Blue Mountains subsidizing these members through the County Budget of which our share is the largest approaching 30%.

I think the major issues in the election involve Council accountability, tax increases, Town services: manner of delivery and costs.

JOHN MCGEE

As I write this we are in the middle of the provincial election campaign. Party platforms offer us choices but it is difficult to translate the promises into what it means to us on a daily basis. Unlike the upper levels of government your local government has immediate and visible impact on your everyday life. Be it the sidewalks you walk on, the streets you drive on, the water you drink or the safety of your neighbourhood, it is the municipal government that is responsible. Every resident has the opportunity to effect a change in what that impact will be.

Election time is the time when you can help shape the future of The Blue Mountains

through your choices for Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

After the dust settles from the provincial election and the local campaigns get underway I urge you to search out information on all the candidates and determine whose vision for your community best matches yours. Then make sure you VOTE because every vote does count!

MICHAEL SEGUIN

In my April Candidate article I addressed some of my objectives. How will I go about achieving them? Mr. George Czerny wisely says the word 'CHARGE' will provide me ample direction.

C - for clarity. I will work hard to provide and communicate a clearer vision of my objectives and the reasons for my decisions on important issues.

H - for honesty. I have no hidden agendas and will work towards more open and transparent discussions and meetings. I want closed meetings to be more out of necessity and not the norm or routine. No political fiddling.

A - for attitude. My attitude will be to hold each member of Council to the highest standard and make sure each member takes responsibility for his/her decisions.

R - for research and responsibility. I expect to come to all meetings prepared and will base my decisions upon thorough research and discussions with the public. Public participation is very important to me.

G - go for it. I'm a go-getter and will make sure things get done.

E - for enthusiasm. I've worked hard as President of Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association for the past 6 years and now look forward to 'walking' the 'talk'. I want to 'make a difference' and represent the interests of the community.

If you have any questions that you want to ask, please do not hesitate to contact me at mpseguin@rogers.com or call 519-372-6139. Visit my Facebook page - 'Michael Seguin for The Blue Mountains Council' or my website at www.michaelseguin.ca.

My Tribute to Neil Carscadden

By Michael Seguin



As President of the Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association for the past 6 years, I want to express, on behalf of the Board of Directors and all members of our Association, our deepest sympathy to Diane and her family regarding Neil's sudden passing.

When I met Neil back in March of 2007, I had just joined the BMRA Board and had expressed (to anyone that would listen) the need to be more active in communicating our Brand town-wide and the need to get more of our members involved in local and everyday issues.

I knew that we needed to develop a WEBSITE – so where do I start, who do I contact to start the process? Well, the word must have got out somehow and I was approached by Gary Adams and Neil Carscadden.

At the time, both Gary and Neil had developed a website, called the INSIDERS NETWORK, to assist local community organizations in communicating and marketing their brand to interested internet surfers and members. They were offering a free web page and free email blasts. Their basic hope at the time was to attract a large audience and commercial businesses that would be interested in advertising, at a cost.

Although anything for free is suspect, both Gary and Neil were very convincing and I couldn't see any downside. Neil and I started the design of our web page, but I confided in Neil that my goal for the BMRA was to have or establish an independent website. Part of our agreement included an 'Exit Strategy'.

About a year after meeting Neil (in May, 2008), I became President of the BMRA and I was advised that the INSIDERS Network wasn't progressing and would be dissolved. Rather than look at this situation as a "setback", I approached Neil and seized the opportunity to start working on our own website.

The rest as they say, is history. Neil became the BMRA webmaster and over the last 6 years we have worked on a design that, in my opinion, has helped us communicate or reach out on a regular basis to approximately 1,500 voting members, including a large number of condo unit owners in The Blue Mountains.

Although Neil was hired as a website consultant, he was in many ways, my "right-hand" man and what I would call an 'invisible' or 'silent' Board member. In my opinion, he gave us a lot more than we paid for. The website was my voice and he helped educate me in the use of this valuable communication tool. I would call him anytime to send out a blast and no matter where he was (somewhere in North America or with his grandkids), he always said he would get it out as soon as possible (and he did).

Neil – if you can hear me, thanks for all your help in advancing the communication network of the Association and I can honestly say that you will be missed by the Board and the many members and residents of the community who knew you.

Area Events

JAZZ BY THE BAY, Bayview Park
SUNDAYS, 6-8pm, July 6-August 17
www.jazzbythebay.ca

SHAKESPEARE IN THE SQUARE
Tuesday, July 15, Blue Mountain Village

CEDAR RUN CLASSIC Hunter Jumper
July 16-20, Cedar Run Horse Park

ARTSBURG DAY, Clarksburg
Saturday, July 19, 11:00am-5:00pm
Edible Art, Art Shows, Art Demos

RASPBERRY FESTIVAL
Saturday, July 19, 1:00pm - 5:00pm
The Farmer's Pantry, Clarksburg

FAMARAMA
July 19-20, Blue Mountain Village

UGANDAN JEWELLERY SALE
Sunday, July 20, 11:00am - 4:00pm
Holy Crow Beads, 355380 Blue Mt.Townline

ELVIS FESTIVAL AT BLUE
July 25-27, Blue Mountain Village

VILLAGE BEACH PARTY
August 2-4, Blue Mountain Village
It will be the summer's hottest party for all ages – featuring reggae music, Live Music, Magic Shows, Yoga and family fireworks.

WILD WONDERS WEEKEND
August 9-10, Blue Mountain Village.
Unique hands on science education experiences with the Cool Science Caravan and demonstrations with the Great Canadian Raptor Conservancy!

Thornbury Beaver Valley Lions DAY IN THE PARK & DUCK RACE
Saturday, August 16, 10:00am - 3:00pm
Lions Park, Clarksburg. Vendors, animals, BBQ and Lions Plinko with great prizes. Duck Race Tickets at Thornbury Pharmasave, Riverside Graphics and on Duck Race Day
Tickets: \$5.00/Top prize \$1000.

A CELEBRATION OF CANADIAN MUSIC
Saturday, Aug 16, Blue Mountain Village.
Celebrate Canadian music with Bruce Cockburn headlining Saturday night. Opening act is Bruce's fiddle player Jenny Scheinman.

SHORELINE CHORUS
Friday, August 22, 7:30pm
St. George's Anglican Church, Clarksburg
"The Birds and The Bees". Song selection includes Madrigals, Hear My Prayer, Skylark and more. Tickets \$15. Contact: 519-599-2710

News Around Town

By BMRA Editorial Board

Major staff changes at Town Hall

At the end of April, the Director of Planning and Building, David Finbow, was suddenly released from his duties. No details were given. In the interim, the Town contracted Jim Dymont of MHBC Planning to manage the Planning Department, while the Town's CAO, Troy Speck, will fill in as acting Director of the Building Department. In our opinion, David was a responsible, intelligent and caring person who will be missed.

Also at the end of April, the Town hired a new Municipal Licensing Officer, Mr. Luc Proulx. Luc retired in June 2012 as a Staff sergeant after 34 years with the RCMP and extensive enforcement and investigative background. Upon his retirement, Luc assumed the role as Court Services Officer with the Attorney General in Kitchener. We welcome Luc and wish him all the best in dealing with the Short Term Accommodations (STA) Licensing By-law, which is expected to roll-out on July 2, 2014.

At the end of May, the Town Treasurer, Rob Cummings, handed in his resignation to become the Treasurer for the Bluewater District School Board. Rob joined TBM in 2005 and became Director of Finance and IT in January, 2007. He was responsible for the everyday operation of the Treasury Department and more importantly, in guiding Council through rigorous and time-consuming Budgets. Although the search is on for his replacement, Council has decided to appoint the Town's current Manager of Revenue, Ruth Prince, in an interim role effective June 17, 2014.

Stay tuned for more changes, as the interim roles are expected to be filled by more permanent hires prior to the election.

Source: *Simcoe.com news April, 2014, May, 2014.*

Grey County EMS is now known as PS

The Grey County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has been re-branded to Grey County Paramedic Services (PS). Mike Muir, County Director of Paramedic Services, explains that emergency medical services are more about paramedic services than Emergency Management or Emergency Measurement.

Mr Muir also reported that the County's PS achieved a very high performance rating from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care for patient care, level of service,

equipment and training in 2013.

The PS also plans to operate a new community paramedicine initiative in Grey County. Funding in the amount of \$300,000 has been requested for a trial period of one year to provide home care services for patients with chronic conditions and help reduce emergency room visits.

Source: *Owen Sound Sun Times dated May 6, 2014*

The Apple Pie Trail begins it's 6th Award Winning Culinary Tourism Season

A successful tourism product for the local area and the Georgian Bay region, The Apple Pie Trail offers a mix of 37 stops both east and west of the Blue Mountain Village or the 'hub' (Collingwood to Meaford), including restaurants, farmers' markets, retailers and artist studios. The newest additions to this culinary adventure are the Beaver Valley Orchard and Cidery near Kimberly, the Northwinds Brewhouse and Eatery and Bonnie Dorgelo Jewellery and Paintings in Collingwood, Twist Martini Restaurant and Bar and Booster Juice in the Blue Mountain Village and the Bruce Wine Bar in Thornbury.

Congratulations to Patti Kendall, Manager, Marketing & Events for the Blue Mountain Village Association and her team for both the success and growth of this 'culinary adventure'. We note that the Apple Pie Trail has also had an economic impact as trail members have indicated a significant increase in their businesses (both in dollars and employment) since they joined.

Source: *Collingwood Enterprise Bulletin dated June 6, 2014*

Real Estate News Update

The real estate market for first quarter of 2014 in the Southern Georgian Bay Association of Realtors (SGBAR) can be summarized as follows: frigid start, continuing bitter cold temperatures, frequent white-outs and road closures and a shortage of inventory. This all resulted in lower number of sales in the Western District (51 properties less) and lower dollar volume (down 6.4%) over 2013.

The Western District of the Southern Georgian Bay Association of Realtors, which includes Wasaga Beach, Collingwood, Clearview Township, the Blue Mountains, Meaford and Grey Highlands, saw a slight improvement in the months of April and May but overall sales were still down by 5.4% over the first 5 months (785 in 2014 compared to 830 in 2013). Listings are also still down by 3.0% (2,870 in 2014 vs. 2,959 in 2013).

Interestingly, sales volume was up by 2.0% (\$2.48 million

in 2014 vs. \$2.43 million in 2013). However, when we examined the different categories, the greatest gains were in the \$500,000 and up categories with there were declines in the lower price categories (under \$500,000). This was also responsible for a 7.7% increase in the average price now at \$359,638 in 2014 compared to \$333,035 (over 5 months).

In The Blue Mountains (TBM), there were 70 sales in the first 5 months with an average price at \$557,550 (compared 75 sales with an average price at \$505,601 in 2013) reflecting a decline of 6.7%. The Town of Collingwood saw a much greater decline in sales from 139 units in 2013 to 110 units in 2014 indicating a 20.9% decrease, while the average sale price increased by 9.8% from \$305,665 in 2013 to \$335,537 in 2014.

Despite a poor first quarter, it appears that new listings are starting to increase and there will be more choices in the market place. More vendors will start to consider the rising prices, which is averaging \$359,638 for the first months of 2014 in the Western District.

Source: Jane Moysey, Tri-W Real Estate, Karen Poshtar (Clairwood Real Estate), Brendan Thomson, Chestnut Park News, Andres Parra & Karen Willison, Royal LePage.

Quick Area News Flashes:

- Grey County CEIO, Lance Thurston is leaving to take on the role of CEO of the Grey Bruce Health Services on August 5, 2014.
- Georgian College is planning a major \$7.0 million expansion to provide for marine engineering technician and marine technology programs (MED training centre). The College is asking Grey County to contribute \$2.0 million to help build the 6,500 sq. ft. addition (facility). That translates to \$520,000 being paid by TBM. No commitment has given by the Federal and Provincial governments.

Segment 3 on TBM's Sustainable Path

The Town's Sustainable Path Committee devoted its June meeting to a field trip to Ben Caesar's homestead. Ben owns and operates Fiddlehead Nursery located on 235599 Grey Rd 13 near Kimberley. This visit was very appropriate because it fits with the goals of 'Sustainability'. Creating our Sustainable Path means that TBM is committed to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations in our community.

Fiddlehead is in the business of plants and resources for ecological, edible landscapes. Ben offers perennial vegetables, berry bushes, fruiting vines. The focus is on cold-hardy, disease-resistant varieties.

Now if only we could apply these biological principles to our fiscal economics we'd blossom into a perfect world. The trick is to keep trying to make it better and businesses like Ben's in the TBM community are walking the talk on sustainability, see: www.fiddleheadnursery.ca



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Call for membership info, or visit the website and click on JOIN NOW today!

You are important to us and we value our relationship with you as members of the BMRA. We share information, opinions and provide news on various issues of concern in The Blue Mountains.

With Canada's anti-spam law (CASL) in force as of July 1, 2014, we may be unable to send you electronic messages for these purposes after this date. By clicking on Permission below you are providing your consent to continue receiving electronic messages from BMRA and we can continue to keep you on our website email list.