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Initiatives for Black Students

By Claudette Bouman



Photo: Katerina Holmes/Pexels.com

Within a matter of three days, I attended two good-news events concentrating on Black students in Nova Scotia. On May 13th, the Black Educators' Association (BEA) held its 17th annual spelling BEE championship. And on May 15th, the first ever Black Excellence Day Africentric Summit, supported by the Nova Scotia Education and Early Childhood Development through the African Canadian Services Branch (ACSB), occurred. In both cases, I was struck by the level of province-wide student participation.

The BEA Spelling BEE is a community-based Regional Education Program (REP) located in Nova Scotia's Black communities. It emphasizes English language basics, fosters learning of African Nova Scotian students in English language arts, and encourages students to compete in regional, national, and international spelling competitions. Each year, on the second Saturday of May, scores of elementary and junior high students congregate at Mt. Saint Vincent University to compete. All students under age 16 who attend the Cultural Academic Enrichment Programs (CAEP) in their area, offered by BEA, are eligible to take part.

This year 81 students signed up, many of whom are recent arrivals from various African and Middle-Eastern countries. Soon the audience fell under a spell of anticipation. After the first two rounds and much elimination, an excitement that set hearts racing surged. Silence descended as the pronouncer pronounced, the students spelled, and the judge's bell dinged *or not*. A roar went up whenever the judge announced "that is correct!". Consoling applause signalled encouragement for any student eliminated. Finally, only the top spellers for the championship-round remained. For the first time, three female students took the top 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place spots and everyone walked away satisfied even if not joyous.

The Africentric Leadership Summit, again located at the Mount, this time in Rosaria Hall, brought together dozens of African Nova Scotian senior high school students not for the purpose of competition but to motivate collaboration and cooperation towards developing leadership abilities. Students came from different schools in Nova Scotia but shared a similar experience. They studied some of their subjects, such

as English and Mathematics in Africentric cohorts, classes made up of African Nova Scotian students.

When presenter Dr. Tanya Hudson told students about former Lieutenant Governor Lincoln Alexander and asked them: "Are you standing tall?" she got my attention. The idea of Africentric cohorts for high schoolers in this province began with Karen Hudson, principal of Auburn High in Dartmouth. It inspiring to see the sizeable number of students from her school streaming into Rosaria Hall. It should not come as a surprise to anyone that Ms. Hudson benefitted as a teenager having honed her leadership skills early by participating in local youth leadership programs.

The Africentric learning cohort promotes a learning environment where students have found ample support, thus gaining knowledge and new confidence. One student said the cohort really elevated his learning both inside and outside of school and gave him an overall school-positive experience. Another added learning in such an environment allowed her to find her true voice. What else can an educator ask for?

These students have not just their teachers to thank but also Mount Saint Vincent University for its generous ongoing support of Black students' initiatives and, thereby, our Black communities. Young and older students should forever cherish their memories of having stepped into the halls of higher learning, walking, talking, and competing there in a welcoming university atmosphere. These experiences set the stage for their future educational hopes and dreams.

Claudette Bouman retired after 30 years of teaching in Barbados, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia, mostly at senior high school. Her last thirteen years were spent at Cole Harbour District High School with a wonderful group of colleagues. There she taught chiefly English and Theory of Knowledge in the International Baccalaureate Program (IB). She enjoys writing and is in the process of writing a Memoir title: "Saarland Dream." It's about a year she took off from teaching (2013-2014) to live in Germany with her husband and daughter. She has two adult children and live in Dartmouth with her husband.

INSIDE

- 4 Initiatives for Black Students
By Claudette Bouman
- 7 How Does the Home Buyers' Plan Work?
Submitted by The Sutherland Wealth Management Group
- 10-14 Fun Places To Go
- 10 Crafting Excellence: From Forest to Barrel
By Melanie Munroe, Ross Farm Museum
- 13 Craft Corner –
Summer Time, Fun Time!
By Jenny Joan Larisey, Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies Crafts
- 15-16 Summer Camp Guide
- 17 Health & Wellness
- 17 Does your child need to see an Orthodontist?
By Dr. Sarah Davidson DDS, MSc (Ortho) FRCD (C), The Brace Space Orthodontists
- 18 Education
- 18 Make Learning Part of Your Plans this Summer
Submitted by Oxford Learning

...AND MUCH MORE!

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94 Bayview Rd., Halifax, N.S. B3M 1N9 Business Line: 902-209-4461
The Parent-Child Guide newspaper is published by Rockwell Publishing Incorporated, Halifax

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Design & layout: TC Transcontinental Printing Halifax

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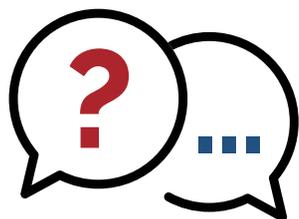


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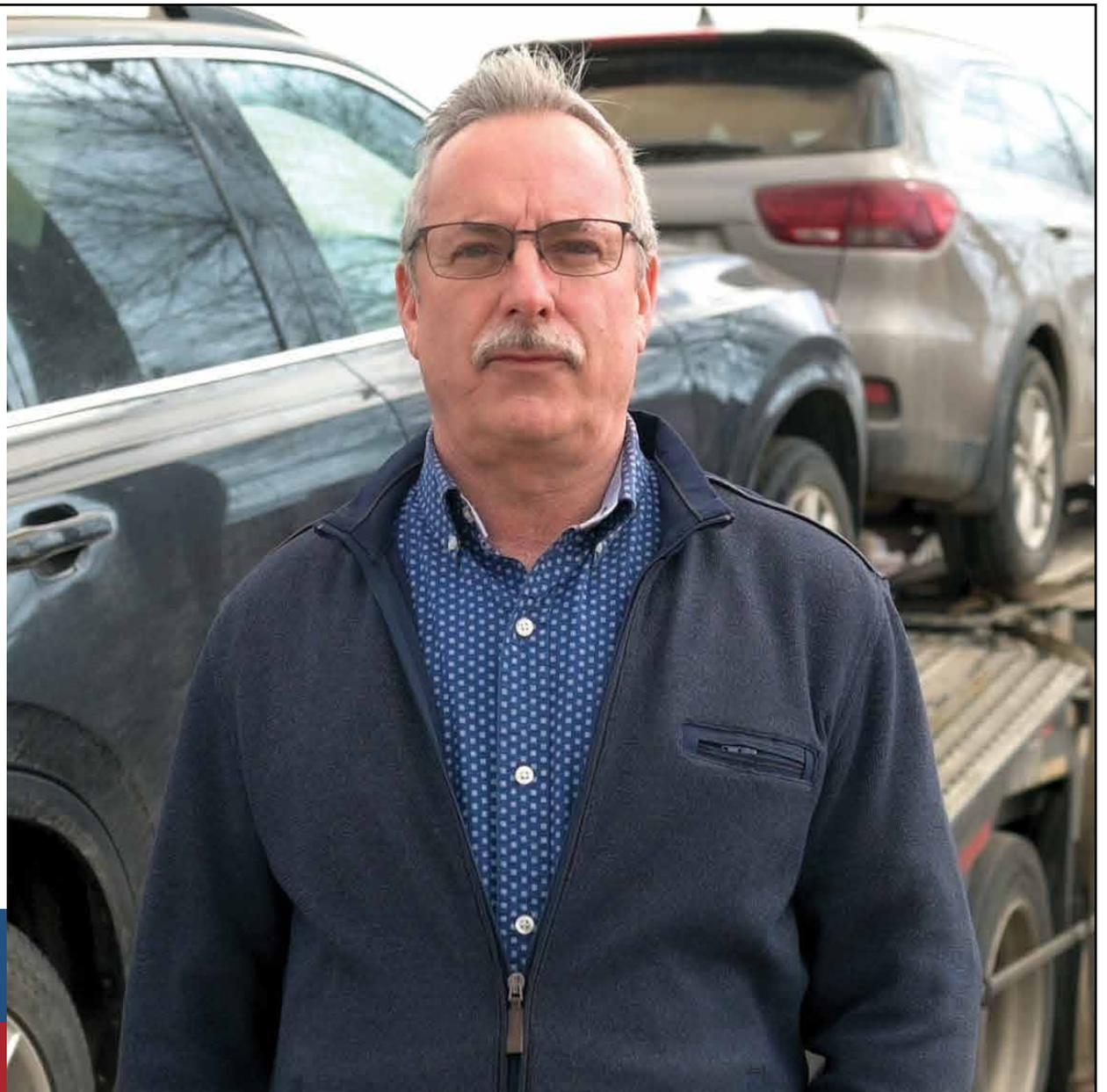
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How Does the Home Buyers' Plan Work?

Submitted by
The Sutherland Wealth Management Group

Are you ready to buy or build a home? If you've found your dream property but don't have enough money for the down payment, you could use the Home Buyers' Plan (HBP) to withdraw money from your registered retirement savings plan (RRSP). Here's an overview of the HBP and our tips on how to use it.



Illustration: Ciker-Free-Vector-Images/Pixabay

Why use the HBP?

If you're a first-time buyer or haven't owned a property within the last four years, the HBP lets you withdraw up to \$35,000 from your RRSP to help purchase a home. You won't be taxed on the money you withdraw (provided that you pay it back on time), and if you're buying a home with your partner you could withdraw up to \$70,000.

By using the HBP, you might be able to make a bigger down payment than would have been possible using your savings alone. Increasing your down payment reduces your mortgage (and therefore your payments) and could also take you over the threshold for mortgage loan insurance.

As a general rule, the down payment must be between 5% and 20% of the price of the home you're buying. For a house priced at \$400,000, a down payment of 20% would be \$80,000.

Mortgage loan insurance is mandatory if your down payment is less than 20%. Though you'll have to pay the premiums, you'll be able to get your foot on the property ladder.

Be aware that the minimum down payment varies depending on the price of the property. For homes over \$500,000, it's 10% of the portion of the purchase price that exceeds \$500,000. For homes over \$1,000,000, the minimum down payment is 20% of the total price.

Here's an example. For a home priced at \$600,000, the portion in excess of \$500,000 is \$100,000, so you'll need a minimum down payment of \$35,000 (5% of \$500,000 plus 10% of \$100,000).

Tapping into your RRSP can be a good way to increase your down payment. The HBP can also help defray other costs involved in buying a home, like the land transfer tax.

Is the HBP right for you?

Here are some rules for the HBP:

- You can only use your own RRSPs for an HBP withdrawal.
- The maximum withdrawal is \$35,000 per eligible person.
- The house you're buying or building must be in Canada.
- You must be a first-time home buyer (or not have been a homeowner within the previous four years).
- You must be a resident of Canada.
- The property must become your principal residence before October 1 of the year following the RRSP withdrawal. (Be careful if your property is under construction, because delays might prevent you from meeting the deadline.)
- The money you withdraw under the HBP must have been contributed to your RRSP at least 90 days before withdrawal.
- You can't use the HBP for a second home, like a cottage. But the property you're buying doesn't need to be a single-family home. You can also take advantage of the HBP to buy a unit in a triplex or a high-rise.
- You have to repay the money you withdraw within 15 years. (The 15-year period begins in the second calendar year after the withdrawal.)

You don't have to withdraw all the money at once. You can make multiple withdrawals under the program during the same calendar year.

Good to know: If you're entitled to the disability amount on your tax return, you (and any related persons helping you with the purchase) are exempt from the first-time buyer requirement.

For more info check us out on the web at www.sutherlandgroup.ca

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HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

A Message from Darrell Samson, the MP for Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook

Summer is Coming!

This month marks the official start of summer!

With the warmer weather and longer daylight hours, we are seeing other welcome signs of the season too, as local food trucks and ice cream shops are opening up for the year in communities throughout Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook.

This month is also the beginning of the many local festivals across the riding, and over the next few months, we will be celebrating Patriot Days in Sackville as well as many others.

After a long stretch of duties in Ottawa and abroad, I am looking forward to spending more time in the riding so I can get out and see as many of you as possible at various events throughout the summer.

Darrell

Congratulations to the Grads!



Later this month, students will finish their school year and get to enjoy two months of no homework and studying. That means school staff will all have a well-deserved break, including crossing guards, bus drivers, custodial staff, administration, teaching assistants and other support staff, and everyone else involved in making our schools a safe and welcoming place for our children to learn.

For those completing Grade 12, this marks an important milestone in your life as you embark on your next chapter of post-education or maybe a full-time job. This is an exciting time that you will always remember, and I wish you much success in whatever you choose to do.

I am looking forward to attending as many of the graduation ceremonies as possible across the riding.

Get Ready for Canada Day!



We have a limited supply of Canada Day lawn signs at our office that are available to constituents for their yard.

If you want a HAPPY CANADA DAY sign, please email us at Darrell.Samson@parl.gc.ca with the Subject: "CANADA DAY!" and include your name and address, and we will contact you to make arrangements later this month.

Childcare

Together with funding from our federal government, it is my understanding that the HRM is benefiting from 500 new and planned childcare spaces. Many of these new spaces have opened right here in our riding!

- At the East Preston Daycare, this includes 8 spaces for infants, 60 for toddlers and 30 for school aged children.
- More spaces are expected to open in the Summer in Fall River with the construction of the new YMCA Fall River Early Learning Child Care Centre, which will have 85 spaces for infants, toddlers,



Photo: Andreas Breiting/Pixabay

and preschoolers.

- The First Lake Early Learning Centre will also see room for 8 new infants as I understand it.

That is 191 new spaces between the three of them!

To learn more about this investment, please visit:

https://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20230421003&fbclid=IwAR2nGfpHw7txZxNqc2aCJCWuuMHxwP_FKMI5vSE8K10XQGk7y_LA2JEigaI

Canadian Dental Association (CDA)

The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) has announced the appointment of Dr. Heather Carr as CDA President for 2023-24.

Dr. Carr is highly experienced in her field, as she is a past-president of the Nova Scotia Dental Association and the Halifax County Dental Society, and her extensive involvement with Dalhousie Dentistry. Her community involvement and dedication to the advancement of the dentistry profession are unmatched, and she will surely be a valuable leader in the CDA's national mandate.

Congratulations Dr. Carr!

Job Bank for Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) has Launched!



The Job Bank for Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) has launched! Over 80,000 jobs are

available for youth between the ages of 15 and 30 in sectors including digital economy, environmental science, green technology and much more!

Find new opportunities in your community today by visiting: https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/youth?fbclid=IwAR2jps-ghRzqebBRaHySlqDck-dAt7AzMKVTZ7Sbr-xSzfTGw-Fr8U_kl-Ylvgb Bank

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HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

A Message from Rafah DiCostanzo, MLA for Clayton Park West—Summer is Around the Corner

Welcoming Summer

The days are getting longer, and the warmer weather is just around the corner. There are so many exciting events happening in Clayton Park West. Our office is busy getting ready for some of these events.



Facebook page for more details.

Keep The Community Clean

I am passionate about keeping our community the beautiful place that it is, and part of that is keeping it clean! Our Litter Prevention Committee had its first clean up on May 13th. We collected 26 bags of garbage and an old bike from locations all around the community. Our Clayton Park Litter Prevention Committee is an integral part of the community. If you are passionate about Litter, and would like to join our committee, please contact our office and we will happily put you on the volunteer list. Our next clean-up is Saturday, June 17th. Hope to see you there! Check out our

Slow Down Signs

As the children are winding down their school year, we are going to see more children in our playgrounds and on our streets. Our “Slow Down” signs are meant to remind drivers of their speed when driving through the community. Studies show that placing three consecutive signs with short distances apart can help reduce the number of speeding drivers. Constituents can access these signs by calling our office by phone or email.

Community Barbecue

One of our most anticipated events of the year, the Friends of Clayton Park Society’s Annual

Barbecue is taking place on Sunday, July 30th from 4-6 pm at Veterans Corner. This year’s BBQ promises to be the biggest one yet. This will be our first barbecue since the pandemic began. This is a fun time for family, friends, neighbors, and volunteers to come together over some delicious food and fun activities. Check our Facebook page for updates.

Coffee and Conversation

Our office is a safe and welcome place for coffee and conversation. Residents of Clayton Park West are encouraged to share issues, ideas, and upcoming events in our community. To arrange a date and time, do not hesitate to contact our office.

I thank you for the honour of serving our Clayton Park West Community. I look forward to meeting so many of you over the summer months.

Rafah Di Costanzo
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A Message from Hon. Tim Halman, MLA Dartmouth East

This season Nova Scotians have been impacted by the worst wildfires, both in terms of total acreage and property damage, ever on record in our province. Our hearts go out to those most affected, and the long journey they now face to rebuild their lives. Many are now returning to their homes, and I urge those who are to follow safe water consumption practices.

If you have a well for water at your home & live in the neighbourhoods evacuated by the wildfires—these are the steps you must take to make sure your drinking water is safe:

Step 1: Drink bottled

water until you have completed steps 2-7 and have your lab results back.

Step 2: Flush and disinfect your well—you cannot skip this step!

Step 3: After you flush and disinfect your well, wait 5 days.

Step 4: Pick up a test kit at one of the locations listed here: novascotia.ca/alerts. We will update this page with any new test pick-up locations.

Step 5: Your test kit package will tell you when & where you drop off your test. On that morning, test your water using the instructions that are in your test kit.



Photo: BreakDown/Pixabay

Step 7: Your sample will be sent to the lab and be tested. Keep drinking bottled water until you get your results back from the lab.

Please follow these steps to make sure you have safe water to drink after a wildfire. Our thoughts are with the families as they continue to rebuild from this tragedy.

Congratulations class of 2023!
BEN JESSOME
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ANDY FILLMORE
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FUN

Places To Go!

Crafting Excellence: From Forest to Barrel

By Melanie Munroe, Ross Farm Museum

Nestled in the picturesque countryside of Nova Scotia, in the middle of Highway #12, lies a beautiful escape from the modern day, allowing you to step back into time and experience life in the 1800's. Ross Farm Museum stands as a living testament to the province's rich agricultural heritage, and amongst the heritage craftsmanship they practice, the process of making barrels stands out for its timeless significance in the beautiful property of the museum.

Barrel making, also known as cooperage, has been a way to transform visitors back to a bygone era, where skilled coopers turn raw materials into functioning works of art. This trade was also a vital component of the agricultural industry in Nova Scotia, serving as the backbone of industries such as the brewing, fisheries, and shipping sectors.

The coopering at Ross Farm Museum requires a blend of skill, precision, and understanding of the wood and its properties in order to craft barrels. These experts serve as guardians to the knowledge keeping this heritage skill alive and well.



Photo: Ross Farm Museum

Visitors to the museum can witness the artistry that comes with creating a barrel firsthand; and the immersive experience offers a unique opportunity to appreciate the craftsmanship, tools, and traditions that have shaped the industry, as well as ask questions to the professionals who work on the barrels.

Additionally, each Wednesday in July (5th, 12th, 19th, & 26th), the stave mill that produces the

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staves (the wood that forms the barrels), will be open and running so that visitors will be able to view and watch the stave wood be prepared to become barrels! This presents an opportunity to enjoy the heritage interpreters perform the task of operating the mill, which is truly a must-see experience!

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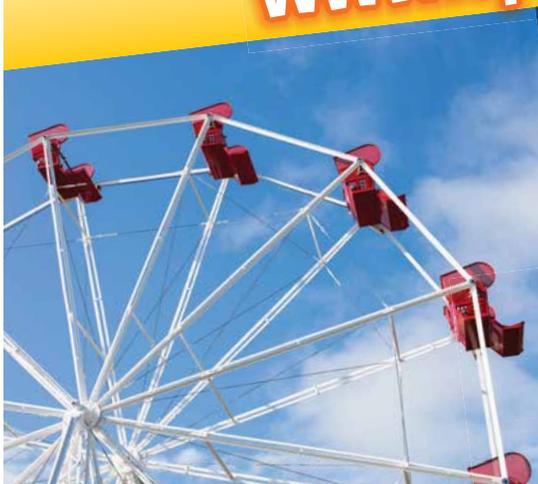
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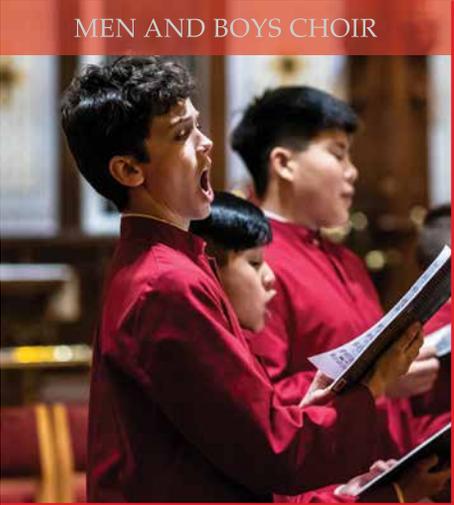
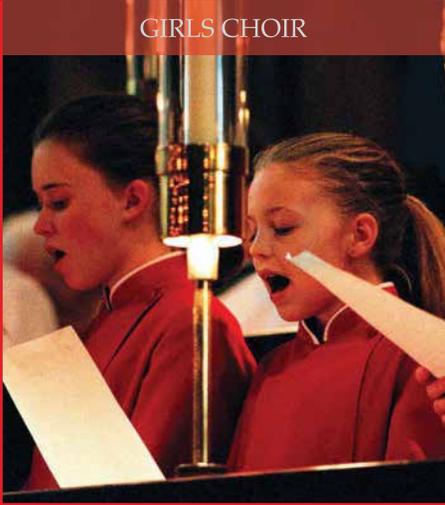
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CRAFT CORNER

Summer Time, Fun Time!

By Jenny Joan Larisey, Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies Crafts

It isn't officially summer until having my first glass of lemonade. It's the quintessential thirst-quencher on a hot summer day, reminiscent to those summer days of lemonade stands and hot days at the beach.

The trick to a really good lemonade is to start with a basic simple syrup. This will allow you to sweeten the lemon juice without having the gritty sugar sink to the bottom.

Start by combining equal parts water (2 cups) with either sugar or honey (2 cups) into a saucepan. Over medium-high heat simmer for about 5 minutes until the sweetener has dissolved and liquid looks clear again. Let cool. This should last 3-4 weeks in the refrigerator.

For the lemon part simply juice a bunch of lemons (or limes) depending on how much lemonade you plan to make. Approximately 3-6 lemons per serving. Mix in some simple syrup and gradually add water until it reaches your desired level of sweet or sour. Serve over a glass of ice and garnish with lemon slices.

What I love most about a classic old-fash-



ioned lemonade recipe is its versatility. Once you have your basic recipe mastered and level of sweetness preferred you can mix in different flavours to take your drink to the next level.

Combine ingredients such as lavender, mint, basil, rosemary or jalapeño to your simple syrup and use this to flavour and sweeten your lemonade. Alternatively you can blend up a handful of fresh or frozen fruit and mix in with the lemon juice and simple syrup before adding the water. If you do not like pulp sim-

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ply strain the fruit through a fine mesh strainer.

Notes:
I love to sweeten my lemonade with a tablespoon of blackberry or raspberry jam and a splash of lavender simple syrup.

For a refreshing summer cocktail simply add your favourite spirit or mix with sparkling wine for a delicious sangria lemonade!

Drop in to Maritime Hobbies & Crafts to see our craft corner and for many craft ideas. 1521 Grafton Street, Halifax, 902-423-8870

FUN Places To Go!

Campers LOVE Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park Campground!

Yogi Bear Jellystone Park Campground, Kingston, NS, located in the beautiful Annapolis Valley is ready for guests to spend another 'beary' fun filled season with Yogi Bear, Cindy Bear and Boo Boo. Here is what a camper had to say...

"Amazing and highly recommended for families, especially families with younger children!!"— Heather M, camper buzz from a guest in 2022

Every weekend is unique, from a county Fair and Ranger Smith heroes themed weekends to Christmas and Halloween. There are jam packed recreation schedules, and activities for all ages. Yogi Bear Campground hosts events, such as live music and entertainment and movies under the stars. We also have a wonderful light show which has more than 3000 lights which dance to the music almost every evening at the campground. Kids can meet with our friendly bears each day OR guests can book a bear visit for a more personal experience.

Yogi Bear Campground has lots to offer, and we are adding new things all the time. In 2023 we will open an outdoor gym and a disk golf Practice location along with a 3 on 3 basketball court. Our campground is truly all about the kids.

We are ready to provide a WOW experience during your stay at Jellystone Park.

"What a great family camping park! They have plenty of activities for kids and, later in the evening, for adults. The staff that welcomed and oriented us were friendly and helpful. Nothing we needed throughout the weekend couldn't be found within the park. With firewood being available from a cart that was always around like an ice cream truck. Most impressive to me, and I can not stress this enough, the bathrooms were clean and well stocked. Even though the park was full, I never waited more than a few minutes. And they are private, shower and all. The cherry on top of one of our young son's first family camping trip. A valued memory made perfect."—Lisa M, camper buzz from a guest in 2022

Join our staff for a water fight, a sing-off, sit by a fire or make a craft. We are here to help make memories.

"It rained the entire time we were there but it didn't matter as there was always something to do, either the arcade which the kid spent alotta time in, or the pool and big bouncy thing that they had. We're going back again rain or shine and we're gonna have a blast."—Twiggy, Camper Buzz from a guest in 2022

Come stay and play at Yogi Bear Jellystone Park Campground, build memories, and find out for yourself what all the Camper Buzz is about. See you this summer!

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REACH FOR THE SKY

Health & Wellness

Does your child need to see an Orthodontist?

By Dr. Sarah Davidson DDS, MSc (Ortho) FRCD (C),
The Brace Space Orthodontists



My brother and his wife recently welcomed their daughter into the world. Watching these first-time parents navigate through uncharted waters, I was reminded of how overwhelming all of those “firsts” are. New parents face such a challenge when trying to make sure all of the appropriate steps are taken to ensure their child’s health. Eye tests, ear tests and examining the bite are so important at an early age. Most parents won’t think about the development of the jaw and bite and whether all of the teeth are forming properly. “Braces” are a far-off burden to be contended with like school tuition or driving lessons. But long before my niece requires braces, she needs to be seen by an Orthodontist. So when is the right time?

My own children are young, however I watch and worry as their little jaws grow (one has a developing underbite.) I want to be sure they are given the absolute best treatment to ensure they have a healthy and functioning bite and a beautiful smile. I know that starts with early monitoring and proper timing of treatment. As an Orthodontist, it’s perhaps not surprising I appreciate how important all of these things are. But what about you? Whether it is for your young child, teenager or yourself, do you understand the importance of Orthodontics for your own or your loved one’s health and well-being?

Orthodontics is a specialized area of dentistry that focuses on growth and development of the jaws and alignment and movement mechanics of the teeth. Although some dentists perform limited orthodontic work, an Orthodontist is a Board-

certified Specialist who is a dentist first, who then completes a 3-year residency and Master’s Degree in Orthodontics following their dental training. The easiest way to verify if a Dentist is an Orthodontist is to ask if they are a member of the Canadian Association of Orthodontists.

The Canadian and American Orthodontic Associations recommend that all children have an orthodontic check-up by age 7. An early exam is an important step in your child’s healthcare as early detection of some problems can be treated to avoid surgery later on. Your Orthodontist can also give you a bit of a prediction, much like a weather forecast, of what may lie ahead. As we all know, a forecast is not always perfectly accurate, but it does help us plan for big storms so that we aren’t caught off-guard.

Although the bites of my own kids aren’t perfect, I’ve got a plan in place that offers them the best result. As an Orthodontist, I design a custom treatment plan for every one of my patients. (If treatment is needed). The end goal is to have the least intervention, resulting in a beautiful, confident smile and a bite that lasts a lifetime.

Dr. Sarah Davidson is a Board-Certified Orthodontic Specialist with The Brace Space. She is a co-owner of The Brace Space in Bedford (Larry Uteck), Sackville, Dartmouth and Halifax, offering conventional braces, LightForce braces and Invisalign for children, teens and adults. For more information, contact 902 455-7222.

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Education

Make Learning Part of Your Plans This Summer

Submitted by Oxford Learning

Summer is almost here! What are your family's plans for filling the long days of July and August? While a family vacation, days at the beach, and lounging by the pool are all likely on your list, summer learning should be as well.

But who wants to waste their whole summer in a classroom? The fact is, staying motivated and keeping your brain active doesn't mean spending your entire summer indoors. In as little as a few hours a week, students can maintain their learning momentum and can head back to school in September ready for the challenges of a new grade from day one.

But why bother? Studies show that students who do not engage in intellectual activities over the summer can lose up to six weeks of learning skills from the previous school year, and can need up to eight weeks to get back into their learning routine in the fall. This equals a slow start, with new material being harder to learn, as past learning skills have been lost. Students fall behind and stay behind, leaving them constantly struggling to catch up and keep up.

But shouldn't students relax and have fun over the summer? True, but an entire summer spent lazing can result in substantial stress come September. And summer learning has additional benefits beyond tackling your child's problem areas: catching up and getting ahead can increase your child's confidence heading into the next grade, making any personal or educational goal achievable!

There is a misconception about summer educational programs. Summer learning is necessary for *all* students, not just those who have fallen behind the previous year. Whether it is one specific trouble area, general catch up in a couple of subjects, or simply keeping skills sharp so success can continue in September, every student can benefit from a summer learning program.

The brain doesn't have an off switch. It needs continuous stimulation in order to remain sharp. Schools may shut down for two months, but allowing your brain to do the same can be detrimental to academic success.

There is no better time to join the team at an Oxford Learning location near you. Oxford Learning is focused and ready to help your child avoid summer brain drain this holiday.

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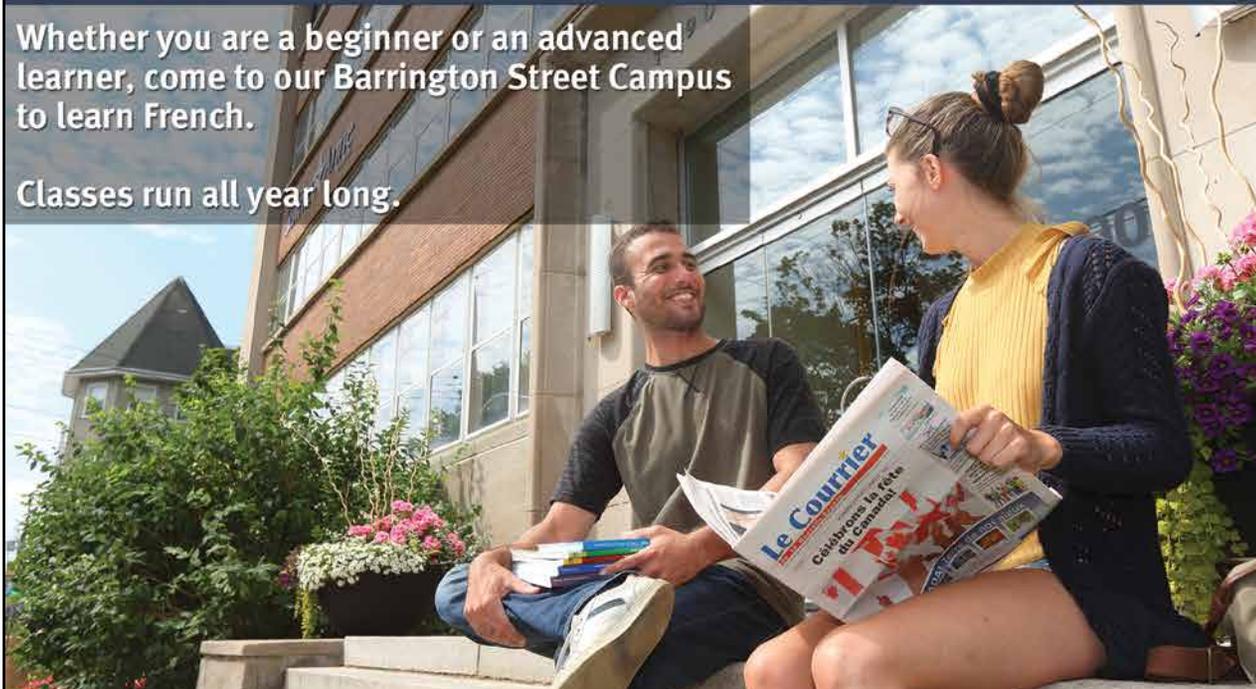
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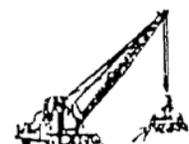
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