

BLOW·ME·DOWNER

ABOUT THE OUTER BAY OF ISLANDS, NEWFOUNDLAND

ISSUE 98 : 2016-03-04

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

2016 March 04 Friday

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

LH=Lark Harbour YH=York Harbour JB=John's Beach
 HC=Holy Communion MP=Morning Prayer EP=Evening Prayer
 P&P=Prayer & Praise HB=Baptism MHS=Mem Hymn Sing
 ☉ Full Moon

2016 MARCH 2016

2nd Wed LH, 7:00pm, Lenten Service
 6th Sun Lent 4 - LH, 11:00am, MP; JB, 7:00pm, HC
 9th Wed LH, 7:00pm, Lenten Service; JB, 7:00pm, Lenten Svc
 13th Sun Lent 5 - Daylight Saving Time begins, adv clocks 1hr
 LH, 3:00pm - Joint P&P with St Mary's Parish, Curling
 16th Wed LH, 7:00pm, Lenten Service
 20th Sun Palm Sunday - LH, 7:00pm, HC; JB, 10:30am, HC
 Spring begins (Vernal Equinox)
 21st Mon JB, 7:00pm, Holy Week Service
 22nd Tues LH, 7:00pm, Holy Week Service, HC
 23rd Wed ☉ Full Moon
 JB, 7:00pm, Holy Week Service, HC
 24th Thur Maundy Thursday - LH, 7:00pm, HC, Instructed
 Eucharist/Washing of Feet/Stripping of Altar/Parish Service
 25th Fri Good Friday - LH, 2:00pm; JB, 10:30am
 26th Sat Great Easter Vigil (Parish Service) - JB, 7:30pm, HC
 27th Sun Easter Sunday - LH, 9:00am Easter Breakfast
 10:30am HC

2016 APRIL 2016

22nd Fri Earth Day ☉ Full Moon

2016 MAY 2016

8th Sun Mother's Day
 21st Sat ☉ Full Moon
 23rd Mon Victoria Day

2016 ADVANCE DATES 2016

23rd Mon Victoria Day
 Jun 19th Sun Father's Day
 20th Mon Summer begins (Summer Solstice)
 ☉ Full Moon
 24th Fri St Jean-Baptiste - Fête Nationale du Québec
 Jul 1st Fri CANADA DAY
 19th Tue ☉ Full Moon

Aug	18 th	Thur	☉ Full Moon
Sep	5 th	Mon	Labour Day
	16 th	Fri	☉ Full Moon
	22 nd	Thu	Autumn begins (Autumnal Equinox)
Oct	10 th	Mon	Thanksgiving Day
	16 th	Sun	☉ Full Moon
	24 th	Mon	United Nations Day
	31 st	Mon	Hallowe'en
Nov	6 th	Sun	Back to Standard Time, clocks back 1hr
	11 th	Fri	Remembrance Day
	14 th	Mon	☉ Full Moon
	20 th	Sun	International Children's Day (UN)
Dec	13 th	Tue	☉ Full Moon
	21 st	Wed	Winter begins (Winter Solstice)
	25 th	Sun	Christmas Day

BUSINESS & ORGANISATION DIRECTORY

A list of local businesses and organisations. No charge.

Published also on our Website: www.blowmedowner.webs.com

Email: blowmedowner@gmail.com or Phone 681-2256

!!! *Please support local enterprises* !!!

Several local businesses supported the BLOW·ME·DOWNER in the past. Their inclusion here is a recognition of that support.

Other local businesses will be included at their request.

Listed alphabetically :-

- ! **Byrne's Store, Main Street, York Harbour**
groceries, hardware, gas & diesel, souvenirs 681-2040
- ! **Captain Cook B&B & Cottages, York Harbour**
Email: info@captaincookbb.ca 681-2906; 1-877-681-2906
- ! **Curling ONE Stop Service Station, Corner Brook**
automotive repairs, servicing, fuel 785-2619
- ! **Drop In Lounge, 23 Main Street, Lark Harbour**
entertainment, food, licenced 681-2103
- ! **Eddie Joyce, MHA, Bay of Islands, Corner Brook**
Member, House of Assembly. 634-7883
- ! **Sheppard's Clover Farm Store, Lark Harbour**
groceries, hardware, gas, Sears agency, marine 681-2160

OIL EXPLORATION IN NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

THE ROLE OF THE CANADA-NEWFOUNDLAND LABRADOR OFFSHORE PETROLEUM BOARD

WHY IS THERE NO MEMBER OF THE C-NLOPB FROM WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND ?

No doubt the lull in discussion and activity revolving around oil and gas exploration in Newfoundland & Labrador is the result of the huge drop in oil prices over the last year - as of last Friday 2016 February 12 oil closed below US\$29.00/bbl, compared with US\$55 about a year ago and over US\$100 about 2 years ago. Consequently it is no surprise to find that an industry enjoyed such profitability over the past few decades, is being more than cautious about how it spends its vastly reduced revenues now. Imagine if your income fell 70% from what it was two years ago.

As someone not personally involved in the hydrocarbons industry, you might be tempted to say, "So what? It's their problem, not mine. They will do all right anyway." This is no doubt true of the giants like Exxon, Mobil, and Shell, who have inestimable resources at their command. But what of the smaller ones, like those interested in starting exploration and fracking in N&L? They are doing very little in this Province now, but be aware that the consortium interested in drilling in the Bay of Islands has recently renewed an exploration licence covering conventional drilling in this area of the West Coast, including Bottle Cove, no doubt in readiness for the return of higher prices of oil once this recession is over.

This is to be expected, of course. And conventional drilling is not so risk-prone as hydraulic fracturing ("fracking"), but if it occurs, these communities will never be the same. After all, who will want to visit here when they know the pristine scenery has been marred by oil wells and the infrastructure needed to support them?

But this is not the worst. If oil is not discovered in sufficient quantities to satisfy the investors, the wells will be abandoned. Of course, there will be regulations and requirements governing such abandonment, but all the rules in the world are useless if not enforced. Read on and learn of what has been happening in British Columbia and perhaps other parts of North America too.

A report in the *Vancouver Sun*, dated 2016 February 15, ([Oil, gas sites abandoned in B.C. 'like walking in a ghost town': survey](#)), by Bob Weber of the Canadian Press, draws attention to the way in which disused oil wells and discarded gear have been left littering the countryside when they have ceased to be useful to their owners. Last year a British Columbia environmental group surveyed part of the BC back country and found that of 35 abandoned oil wells only 2 appeared to have been cleaned up at all. The rest were found in various stages of decay and neglect.

Such requirements as the clean-up of abandoned or "moth-balled" well sites are regulated by the British Columbia Oil and Gas Commission, the provincial regulating body, but it appears that they have been less than diligent in their work. They are the BC equivalent of the [C-NLOPB](#), the Canada-Newfoundland Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board which has similar responsibility in our Province. This leads one to question whether that body would be any more

diligent than its BC counterpart appears to have been in the oversight of well abandonment.

Such abandonment is a serious topic for the West Coast of the Island of Newfoundland, since we have many attractive scenic locations, and one of these in particular— Bottle Cove, in the Outer Bay of Islands — could, and very likely would, be seriously damaged by any significant industrial activity. The same is true of the Port-au-Port Peninsula, the area around Gros Morne Park, and numerous other areas where local people are working to develop the Tourism Industry as it becomes a significant part of their local economy. What tourists would want to visit a small community whose major industry is oil production?

The Constitution of the Board provides for seven members: three appointed by the Federal, three by the Provincial, and a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson appointed jointly by both governments. There is presently one vacant seat open for provincial appointment, but no information on when or by whom that seat may be filled. Appointments are for a six-year period and reappointments are possible.

Given that the information on the [C-NLOPB website](#) about Board Members provides no specific indication of their regional base, it must be assumed that, with one possible exception, none of them reside far from St John's. That one exception may be Ms Lidija Cicnjak-Chubbs who has had clear connections for some time with Labrador, specifically Happy Valley-Goose Bay. But representation by people from other regions of the Province appears to be lacking. *It seems reasonable therefore that to provide wider input the Provincial appointees might be chosen to be representative of regions outside of the eastern half of the Island of Newfoundland.*

In this connection, a review of the members of the C-NLOPB would be in order. Click on the links below for some details about background and previous occupation and a picture of each member.

[Scott Tessier, Chair & CEO](#) Joint Appointment 2013 Feb 25. Born in St John's, NL, and educated at MUN. Prior to his appointment with C-NLOPB, Mr Tessier was Senior Advisor for Legislative & Regulatory Affairs with Chevron Canada in Calgary, and has previously held senior positions in Ottawa with several federal government departments, including Fisheries & Oceans, and Health.

[Edward Williams, Vice-Chair](#) Joint Appointment 2013 Feb 25. Educated at MUN. Prior to his appointment with C-NLOPB, Mr Williams was Director of Human Resources at Aurora Energy Resources Inc., a UK company based in Aberdeen, Scotland; has extensive experience in Human Resources and Administration.

[Conrad Sullivan](#) Federal Appointment - 2010 June 18. Has owned various fish processing plants in Newfoundland and Labrador and now owns Southern Holdings Limited, a company involved in commercial and residential land development. Mr Sullivan's past activities include serving as Chairman of the Fisheries Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, Director of the Fisheries Council of Canada; and member of the Seafood Advisory Council on International Trade during the Canada/USA Free Trade negotiations.

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[Lidija Cicnjak-Chubbs](#) Federal Appointment - 2013 June 6.

Ms Cicnjak-Chubbs has extensive experience in environmental issues in N&L, in both private and public sectors. She was an Environmental Consultant on the Voisey's Bay Environmental Impact Assessment. She is a former Town Councillor for Happy-Valley-Goose Bay. She is currently the Environment and Loss Control Manager for the Goose Bay location of Serco Facilities Management Inc., where she oversees hazardous waste management, including hazardous material spill response. She holds a Master of Science degree in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Wisconsin, USA, and also a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Zagreb, Croatia.

[Cynthia Hickman](#) Provincial Appointment - 2013 June 6

Educated at MUN. Cynthia Hickman has more than 10 years of experience working in senior management positions with a focus on finance within the health care industry. She is currently an instructor with the College of the North Atlantic, where she teaches accounting and business-related courses. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce from MUN and is a Certified Management Accountant.

[Ed Drover](#) Provincial Reappointment - 2015 Jan 2

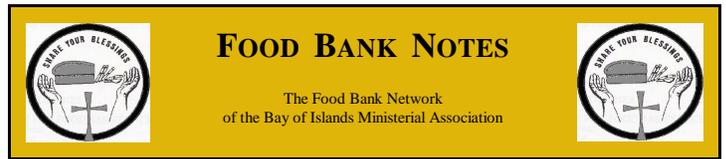
Mr Drover has extensive business experience in N&L, including financial management, commercial real estate, rental properties, and recreational and tourism development. He has also been involved in charities including CNIB, and government agencies such as the National Capital Commission, Statistics Canada, and Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. He is also majority owner of The Wilds Golf Course and Resort at Salmonier River, and was a member of the Board of Newfoundland Power until 2010.

CONCLUSION

During these early months of a new government and the simultaneous lull in oil and gas exploration activity, this is an opportune time for us to press our local concerns before things heat up again.

If we do not want such exploration in our communities (and it seems that most of us don't) then one thing we might do is to press for more direct representation on the Canada-Newfoundland Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board so that the West Coast would have at least one member based in the western half of the Province. This would serve to keep us well informed and also to have some input in decisions of the C-NLOPB.

The Provincial Government has the right to select three of the seven members of the Board, and one of those seats is currently vacant. With a Premier and several cabinet members from Western Newfoundland, this might be an opportune moment to increase our influence on the Board.



FOOD BANK NOTES

The Food Bank Network
of the Bay of Islands Ministerial Association

*The following letter was recently received by our Rector,
Rev Nelson Chatman, who read it in church on Feb 14.*

It is reproduced here in full for your information.

**Food Bank Network of the Bay of Islands Ministerial Assn,
Inc**

**PO Box 171, Corner Brook, NL, A2H 6C7
Telephone (709) 634-2655, Fax (709) 634-6680
Email: foodbanknetwork@nf.aibn.com**

2016 February 2

Dear Rev Chatman:

Please accept our sincere thanks for you church's support in 2015. We received \$308.25 in food donations from your church. We are also very happy to have George Sheppard on our board representing your church.

Because of your support, we were able to help 643 families with 1,652 requests for food, equalling approximately \$15,000 in food distribution each month. Our food bank responded to approximately 138 food requests each month. This is a 3.7% increase over the previous year. In 2015, 103 new families were assisted. On behalf of The Food Bank Network and the families we serve, thank you for helping us respond to those requests!

The Outdoor Summer Services for 2015 raised \$5,463.37 in financial donations and \$260 in food donations. A great success. Please accept our thanks for this annual support.

This entire community is very supportive of The Food Bank Network. This past year we received \$210,536.93 in food and \$1,974 in non-food, totalling \$212,510.43 in product which we distributed to families. We certainly have to thank all our volunteers, especially the volunteers who work in the food bank. They have to weigh, record and sort the food; check the expiry/best before dates on *each* product; continually stock the shelves and pack food requests! *Don't know what we would do without them!!*

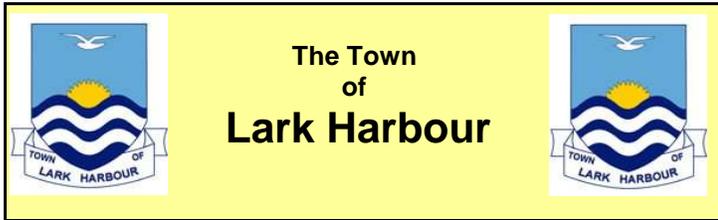
We look forward to your continued support in 2016.

Many thanks,
Joy Connors,
Co-ordinator.

Outlet - Salvation Army,
6 Herald Avenue, Corner Brook.
Tel 639-1719

Hamper Distribution - Mondays 9:00 - 12:00; 1:00 - 3:30
Tuesdays 9:00 - 12:00; 2:00 - 3:30
Thursdays 9:00 - 12:00; 1:00 - 3:30
Wednesdays & Fridays CLOSED

Serving families in: Corner Brook, Bay of Islands, Massey Drive,
Little Rapids, Humber Village, Steady Brook



REPORT ON THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF 2016 JANUARY 19th

Present: Mayor Jamie Park
Deputy Mayor Olivia Spurrell
Councillors: Melanie Joyce, Rose Sheppard,
Dennis Sheppard,
Clerks: Joanna Pottle (Recording Minutes)
Peggy Sheppard

Meeting commenced at 6:30 pm

- ! Minutes of meeting of 2015 December 8 and Special Meeting of December 14 approved.
- ! Water/Sewer Update: Will send a letter to Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr. Eddie Joyce, regarding Phase 2 application. A letter had been sent requesting additional funding for repairs done to the fish ladder.
- ! Motion made to pay West Coast Excavating & Equipment Company Limited the amount of \$26,035.20 out of our Gas Tax account.
- ! Crown Land Applications: Discussion regarding Crown Land applications for Birchy Hill Road. Clerk directed to obtain further clarification before approving applications.
- ! Playground Upgrades: Any surplus funds remaining from \$7,500.00 grant will be used to purchase playground equipment in the Spring/Summer.
- ! Devils Head: Reviewed letter from Department of Fisheries and Oceans Re: Devils Head. Will pursue obtaining ownership of this land and access road. Clerk directed to follow up with Municipal Affairs for approval.
- ! CEEP Grant is still underway and will soon be completed for the 2015-2016 year.
- ! Budget 2016: Review of letter from Municipal Affairs regarding approval of Budget 2016.
- ! Financial Report approved: No accounts payable at this time.
- ! Collections Update: Council reviewed a summary of what is owed to the town as of 2015 December 29. Clerk will follow up with tax payers regarding accounts in arrears.
- ! Building Permits: Regulations on the Town's building permit application from a 10 feet clearance from all property lines to a 5 feet clearance.
- ! Cost of Building Permits will also be increased as follows:
 - New residential structures from \$25.00 to \$50.00
 - New business structures from \$35.00 to \$70.00
 - Renovations, extensions, changes, moving, transporting, and demolition permits from \$15.00 to \$30.00.

- ! Write Off of \$7.81 approved.
- ! Budget Variance Report: A spread sheet has been generated to keep track of monthly expenses that Council will incur over the year. Clerk will update report monthly for Council to view.
- ! Review Commissioner: A motion was made to increase the review commissioner rate to \$100.00 per appeal. If no appeals are made, the commissioner will be paid \$100.00 per year.
- ! Summer Student Grants will be applied again this year as they become available.
- ! Upcoming Training: Motion made for Clerks and Councillors to attend MNL Training in Corner Brook on April 8 & 9.
- ! Review of letter from the Mr. Eddie Joyce re 911 Service.
- ! Review of letters sent to residents in the community.
- ! All correspondence viewed with no follow up necessary.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

PLEASE READ THIS

We should all be concerned about cruelty to animals, and that includes birds also. All living creatures feel pain, and have emotional responses to it. These responses are different from our own, and they vary in both nature and intensity. In general terms, pain seems to be more intensely felt by mammals and other warm-blooded species, including birds and most domesticated animals. But such awareness extends to any creature that has a central nervous system, although reaction to pain may be less obvious the more distant in evolutionary terms from humans that species is.

One group we tend not to consider as much as we should in these terms is poultry: the chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, etc, whose eggs and meat we eat on a regular basis. One badly neglected group relative to the topic of pain and suffering is the millions of hens that produce the eggs we all eat regularly. How many eggs do you eat in a week? How many prepared products containing eggs (such as cake mixes) do you use buy or bake in a week?

About half of the many millions of hens that produce the eggs we use have a life of no more than 2 years before they are slaughtered. That is in most cases a relief from a life equivalent to torture, as those hens spend their lives in cages with a floor space of only 67 square inches of cage space—less space than the 144 square inches of a single 12-inch floor tile. They do not have room to spread their wings, or even to stand up and stretch their legs or their wings. Imagine your life if you could not walk around, or enjoy that luxurious morning stretch as you get out of bed. Imagine the discomfort as you age in that confined space

If this moves you even a little, or causes you to think, please take a look at this webpage: [CAGE-FREE vs BATTERY-CAGE EGGS](#)

URL: http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/confinement_farm/facts/cage-free_vs_battery-cage.html

Another article related to this topic will follow next month.

DONALD JOHN TRUMP

TRUMP OF DOOM
or
ENIGMA OF THE CENTURY

???



EVERY FEW YEARS there emerges on the public stage a character whom no one seems to be able to understand: [Donald John Trump](#), born 1946 June 16 in New York, is one more. He has been [compared to Adolf Hitler](#); and he has been called a [Fascist](#) even by some leading members of his own party, the Republican Party (aka Grand Old Party, or GOP) of the USA. Many of them are quaking in their shoes in fear that his support among a large number of their own voters should win him the Republican candidacy in the Presidential Election of November 2016. For months no one took Trump seriously, but the scene has changed and he has garnered enough support among the rank and file of the Republican Party to make his candidacy a real possibility. The American presidential elections are complicated, prolonged, and confusing, but for Canadian readers a useful explanation can be found at the Wikipedia website [United States Presidential Primary](#).

Trump's beliefs that he is presenting as his election platform seem to be a strange mixture of left wing and right wing ideology. This is an inconsistency that makes it difficult to assess his position in the political spectrum. He has, for example, stated that he would ban all Muslims from entering the USA, and return illegal immigrants to their countries of origin: a notion espoused mostly by members of the political right. Contrast with this his views on universal health care, which he supports in his own way: more of a leftist philosophy. And there are numerous examples of this flip-flop behaviour. Of course, no one should be prevented from selecting the policies s/he prefers, and everyone, oncluded candidates for office, should be unfettered by conventional political notions of left and right. But usually there is a consistency that can be traced through a would-be politician's statements. Trump has little of this.

If there is a name attributable to Donald Trump's expression of his electoral offering, that may be "populist", a very broad definition which has included numerous leaders as diverse as Hitler and Joey Smallwood, both of whom owe their early political success to aspects of populism. A [good working definition of populism](#) may be

"an ideology which pits a virtuous and homogeneous people against a set of elites and dangerous 'others' who are together depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the sovereign people of their rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice".

Most leaders who might find themselves defined as 'populist' may be unwilling to accept this definition, but despite what his own feelings may be, Donald Trump does seem to fit. One website, [On the Issues](#), traces his remarks back as far as 2000 when he entered as a challenger in a brief earlier run at the presidency. The issues listed lend much justification to calling Trump 'a populist'. However, the task of examining his political intentions has been simplified thanks to his own [website](#) which gives a moderate, toned-down, and more rational image of him that may be surprising. While stating clearly his

electoral platform, it removes much of the racist, isolationist, xenophobic stigma that has accrued around his television debates and other public statements. His opinions appear more moderate and thought-out than they appear in the news coverage we have been receiving here in Canada, although it is still hard to explain the huge difference between his sometimes rabid behaviour that we have seen in the debates and interviews, and the measured tone of his [website](#).

The website is certainly worth a look, particularly the section dealing with Trump's wife, the 45-year-old Slovenian-born [Melania](#). They were married on 2005 January 22.

A model from the age of 18, and now a businesswoman in her own right as owner of a cosmetics company, [Melania Trump](#) is no empty-headed bimbo. She speaks several languages (English, French, Italian and German) and eloquently responded about her husband in rather surprising terms. As the interviewer, [Mika Brzezinski](#) of MSNBC, questioned her about why she married Trump in the first place, Mrs Trump explained that it was his mind that drew her, an "amazing mind, and very smart, very charming, [with] great energy". She also remarked that within Trump's own business organisation women are treated on equal terms with men. Is it likely that a woman who is clearly independent financially of her husband, would speak so positively about him if he really was the boorish character he often seems to be in many of his public appearances?



In the meantime, much to the chagrin and even the fear of a majority of Republican Party leaders, a large number of the general public and also of the rank and file of the Grand Old Party are very decisively supporting Donald Trump. Perhaps the best-known of these is Chris Christie, a stalwart right winger now in his second term as the Republican Governor of New Jersey. (Click [here](#) to see his statements on some major issues.) This endorsement by Governor Christie and a few others was met with alarm by most of the Party insiders who began a campaign to counteract what they see as a threat to the very existence of the Party if Trump is not stopped.

Among the suggestions clearly showing the desperation of the Party heads were:

1. to draft an open letter "to the people," disavowing Mr Trump and his divisive brand of politics
2. for the party to unite behind a single candidate
3. have lawmakers (Party members who hold elected positions) break with Mr Trump explicitly in a general election.
4. personal attack on Trump, outlining his unfitness as President.

None of these suggestions worked, due to lack of agreement and fear that failure could cause further division within the Party. The biggest problem facing a concerted effort to Stop Trump appears to be the self-centred refusals of many of those who could join the action, to commit themselves to anything that might hurt their own run at the Presidency or their aspirations to future Party leadership, bringing up accusations of interference in the democratic process.

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So for the moment it looks as if Donald Trump has a pretty clear run at the nomination, and the only thing stopping him might be a blunder of such magnitude that even many of his committed supporters could not stomach and would leave in hordes. But there is a general consensus that unless something of great moment occurs before Super Tuesday, when several more states conduct their primaries, that Trump's nomination is increasingly likely.

Despite Trump's runaway success to this point, he is still a long way from becoming President. Opposing him are Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, both of whom have considerable experience in American Federal politics, and both of whom are seeking the nomination of the Democratic Party. Clinton and Sanders both have much support from moderate voters, and of course from their own Party members. But it will be just as well for Canada to prepare itself for a rather different American president after Barack Obama's term ends in early 2017. Due to American worries over their economy, and their usual xenophobic response to such conditions. Whoever succeeds in November's election is likely to be somewhat less disposed to accommodate Canada, and our new Liberal government under Justin Trudeau will need to prepare for a different approach to accommodate American public opinion. This is an unprecedented election, and as a result of economic conditions and political mood, the new President is probably going to be more nationalistic, causing more difficulty for our Government to make our needs appear even moderately acceptable south of the border to Americans.

Canada needs acceptance by the USA government, and even current acceptance seems to be receiving little consideration by any of the candidates. Americans do not need our oil as they did before they discovered a new large supply of oil available to them through the development of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) within their own borders. Also, they will be even less willing to allow Canadian oil to be exported through the USA to Gulf refineries which would have to be fed by a pipeline leading to the Gulf of Mexico. This pipeline issue is no longer of significant benefit to the USA, and is seen as a serious pollution threat to the number of states it has to cross.

This leaves us faced with finding some kind of settlement on our side of the border to get Albertan oil out to the Far East from British Columbia and/or via our East Coast with a new pipeline leading to Saint John, New Brunswick, which requires passage through Québec. To date, all possible routes are blocked. But a solution has to be found, and quickly, to boost our sagging economy.

Whoever wins this battle, the result can force irresistible changes in Canada. With ten times our population, a small event in the USA can create a tidal wave here : Declaration of Independence in 1776, War of 1812, Civil War of 1861-65, movement of slaves, Vietnam draft dodgers, even American entertainment and tv channels, have influenced life in Canada, and will continue so to do.

The American Presidential Election is not just an entertaining sideshow for us to watch : it can influence life in Canada almost as much as in the USA itself. Don't be surprised when it does.

For more detailed reading, click below:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/28/us/politics/donald-trump-republican-party.html>

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

SPANISH MAN DOESN'T SHOW UP TO WORK FOR YEARS, EMPLOYER DOESN'T NOTICE

From *Associated Press*, 2016 Feb 12

When we don't turn up for work without explanation, most of us would expect some questions to be asked. This man in Cadiz, Spain, failed to go to his work place for about six years, but continued to receive his pay. How his employer finally discovered his long period of absence from work is also rather surprising.

URL:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/spanish-man-no-show-work-1.3445794>

Now read about the final outcome of this bizarre situation

SPANISH CIVIL SERVANT PLAYED HOOKY FOR 6 YEARS, MUST PAY BACK \$42,000 IN WAGES

Alan Clendenning & Ciaran Giles, *Associated Press*

URL:

<http://www.torontosun.com/2016/02/14/spanish-civil-servant-played-hooky-for-6-years-must-pay-back-42gs-in-wages>

MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO KNIFE-WIELDING MONKEY TERRORIZES BRAZILIAN BAR

Washington Post, 2016 February 20

Given the number of vicious attacks with knives, guns, bombs and other weapons known to humankind that are reported daily in world news, it is not difficult to imagine a scenario where other species might begin to emulate what they humans doing. We have always complimented ourselves on the differences that separate us from the rest of animal life, but are we really so different???

Read the news item and make up your own mind.

URL:

<http://www.tampabay.com/incoming/knife-wielding-monkey-terrorizes-brazilian-bar-after-guzzling-some-rum/2266158>

TD BANK CEO RECEIVED 10 PER CENT PAY HIKE LAST YEAR AS BANK LAID OFF STAFF

The Canadian Press, *The Province*, Vancouver, 2016 Feb 23

If you want to receive a pay increase for being less than successful in your job, then become a bank CEO. Apparently the boss of TD Bank, Mr Bharat Masrani, was that lucky. In 2014 his yearly salary was \$8.2million, a salary most of us can only dream of. This year the bank decided to lay off an unspecified number of employees "to reduce costs", but then it raised Mr Masrani's remuneration to almost \$9million, an increase of \$800,000. How's that for being less effective in your job than you were last year?

The actual number of layoffs was not disclosed, but if you figure on an average salary of \$50,000 for each one, then the \$800,000 extra pay to the CEO would use up the savings from the firing of 16 more junior employees. Doesn't this make you angry? In the current difficult economic times one might think that an annual salary of \$8.2million should be enough for anyone. After all, poor Mr Masrani

was already receiving as much as about 160 average Canadians earned in 2013.

(Stats Canada says “*The median after-tax income of Canadian economic families and persons not in an economic family increased 16.8%, from \$45,800 in 2000 to \$53,500 in 2013*”.)

URL:

<http://www.theprovince.com/business/bank+received+cent+hike+laid+year+bank+laid+staff/11738670/story.html>

BEIJING OVERTAKES NEW YORK CITY AS ‘BILLIONAIRE CAPITAL’

The Hindu, India, 2016 Feb 24

It was inevitable, but it has happened. Beijing, China, is now home to more billionaires than New York City. The present score, according to this report, is Beijing, 100, vs New York, 95. Runners-up were Moscow, 66; Hong Kong, 64; and Shanghai, 50.

The USA still has the largest national total, at 536, then China with less than half, at 213. Canada ranks 10th, with 39.

But be comforted. I think most of us would agree we have enough already, as generally they do very little for the country. It would be better if the wealth was distributed more equally, although that is not likely to happen.

URL:

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/beijing-overtakes-new-york-city-as-billionaire-capital/article8276204.ece?ref=sliderNews>

For more detailed information, visit this [Wikipedia page](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_the_number_of_US_dollar_billionaires): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_the_number_of_US_dollar_billionaires
