

Your



Village Voice

The Village of Bawlf Newsletter
Volume 5, Issue #9 (September, 2008)

Mayor's message



My family and I have been fortunate in that, every two years since 2004, we have had the opportunity to travel to eastern Canada. Some years, this has included Ottawa while, in other years, it has included Québec. Each trip, however, has included significant time spent on the east coast (mostly New Brunswick), since my wife hails from there.

Travelling to other parts of Canada always does several things for me: one is that it makes me appreciate the amazing things each part of the country contributes to the whole; the other is that it makes me a very proud ambassador of small-town Alberta to the rest of the country. Most of all, though, it reminds me that, no matter how different from other Canadians we might think we are, we share a common bond that transcends provincial, cultural, and linguistic boundaries.

We're all taught from an early age what a geographically large and culturally diverse country Canada is, but you understand this idea in its depth, I believe, only when you've travelled from coast to coast to coast (we personally haven't had the pleasure of seeing Newfoundland or any of the Territories yet, but I'm sure that travelling there would only underscore the point). There is something unique about the culture and the history of every single place. On the Miramichi in New Brunswick, for instance, the music, the history, and the culture reflect the Irish settlement there, which began as the result of the potato famine in Ireland in the mid-1800s, and logging, which provided the area's economic base for many decades. Further up the east coast of New Brunswick (and in many places in-between), it's the French-speaking Acadian influence that is felt the most: you'll not find a people prouder of its heritage than are the Acadians, nor will you find a people prouder of being Canadian. Nova Scotia, of course, has a proud Gaelic heritage (the signs in Cape Breton are bilingual: English and Gaelic!) and includes one of the most magnificent historic sites – the fortress at Louisburg – that you'll see anywhere in the country. The whole east coast is a wonderful panorama of history and culture. Oh, and by the way: all those stories we've heard about warm and welcoming Maritimers? They're all absolutely true.

Then, there's Ottawa, which we had the opportunity to visit in late July. In Alberta, "Ottawa" has always been more of an idea than a place. It's often been seen as something negative and almost foreign; yet, it's one of the most interesting cities to visit in Canada. The Parliament Buildings are fascinating enough all by themselves (there's a nightly light show throughout the summer, which uses the Centre Block as the projection screen – if you don't tear up with pride after seeing that, you'd better check your pulse), but there's also the Museum of Civilization, the Museum of Nature, the War Museum, the National Gallery, the Supreme Court, etc., etc. – it would take a full week to see everything. All in all, it's a place that every Canadian who is able to travel should visit at least once. You won't think about Canada quite the same way again.

Yet, in the same way that so many of us know little about the eastern half of our own country, people in eastern Canada are often blissfully unaware of the many reasons we in rural Alberta take pride in calling this our home. I love to tell people about Bawlf ("Do you mean 'Banff'?") and about the excellent education my daughter is getting at Bawlf School, the diverse mix of talented performers who appear at the Daysland, Forestburg, and Holden Concert series, the northern lights, and the sense of (usually) quiet that is part and parcel of small-town and rural life. I often have the sense that people don't really "get it" but, then again, I sometimes have that same sense when I tell these things to my friends in Edmonton!

My point here is that people across Canada are all different in so many ways, yet the Canadian flag proudly flies in front yards in Cape Breton, in Halifax, in St. John, and in Miramichi for the same reasons that it flies in our front yard here in Bawlf: at the base of it all, there is a set of common hopes, dreams, and aspirations. Travelling this country has given my family and me the opportunity to see the Canada as other Canadians see it, and I strongly encourage those who can travel across Canada to do that for exactly that reason. I'm also hopeful that, as a result of such travels, those in other parts of the country might have a better idea why we here in Bawlf are the proud Canadians that we are.

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A reminder that the Village's by-law enforcement officials are ticketing property owners whose premises are considered unsightly according to the definition(s) in By-law 558-08. If you have questions about the by-law or its enforcement, please stop by the Village Office. Copies of the by-law are available either at the Village Office or at www.bawlf.com.

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Please note that, if you would like to address Council at a scheduled meeting, please contact the Village Office to discuss the nature of the presentation and to arrange a specific time. Unfortunately, Council meetings are not able to include drop-in presentations, so please ensure that you make the appropriate arrangements beforehand.

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Highway 13 update. Doug Griffiths, MLA for Battle River-Wainwright, advises the Village in an e-mail dated August 17th as follows: "As it stands now the contractor is behind on another project and has move the date for beginning the highway 13 work to Sept 22nd. After October 15th the contactors pay huge financial penalties if they have not begun work by then." According to information given to Mr. Griffiths by the Minister of Transportation, this scheduled work includes rut fill and overlay in order to address pressing current safety needs, but this wouldn't in any way "delay the reconstruction and widening of the highway in the future."

No by-laws were given first reading at the July 15th or August 19th Council meetings.

Note that By-law 562/08, a by-law to rescind and replace the Traffic Bylaw (and amendments) and the Non-Highway Vehicle Bylaw is slated for second reading at the September 23rd Council meeting (re-scheduled from the August meeting).

The Village invites comments on proposed by-laws after first reading. Copies of the by-laws are available on the Village's website at www.bawlf.com or at the Village Office.

September 2008 Calendar

September 2nd: first day of school

September 23rd: Regular meeting of Bawlf Village Council at the new Community Hall, 7 PM. Note date change for this month.

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Do you have an event or announcement that you would like to have included in a future newsletter? Please contact the Village Office at the number or e-mail address below.

Village of Bawlf Council Members

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Councillor Reta Porter
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Councillor Gord Blatz
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Council meetings are normally held the third Tuesday of every month at the Community Hall at 7 PM.

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