

TAKE A HIKE TRAILS CHALLENGE

October is a colourful and vibrant month to discover our beautiful trails. Whether you are taking the dog for a walk, pushing a baby stroller or hiking with friends, the physical and psychological benefits of walking in fresh air are abundant. Get active on the many municipal trails throughout the Halifax Region. If you want to spend time outdoors be sure to prepare before you to start out. Bring a refillable water bottle, wear closed toed footwear and appropriate clothing for the weather (warm layers, rain gear, sunscreen, and hat.) The 2015 Trail Challenge runs from October 1st to 31st. Enter yourself, your family, a community group or school for a chance to win great prizes. Prizes will be awarded for the following categories:

- Individual or Family: \$100 credit towards Parks & Recreation programs, Adventure Trails book and/or pedometers.
- Community Groups or Schools: \$250 towards an outdoor physical activity initiative.

Prizes will be randomly drawn after Oct. 31st.

For more information call 902-490-4539 or visit <http://www.halifax.ca/trails/index.php>.

Most of the wonderful trails that we have in the Halifax region were developed and are maintained by community volunteers. There are 20 Community Trail Groups located throughout HRM. These groups work hard to plan, build and maintain numerous trail ways. For more information on a local trail association or to learn how you can get involved go to: www.halifax.ca/trails/CommunityTrailGroups.php where you will find these local groups:

- Cole Harbour Park and Trails Association
- Lawrencetown / Cole Harbour Trail Association
- Atlantic View Trail Association
- Musquodoboit Trailways Association
- Porters Lake/ Myra Road Wilderness Area
- Preston & Area Trails Association
- Shore Active Transportation Association

For the more adventurous types, wilderness hiking is a great way to get out and enjoy the outdoors while experiencing nature in its pristine state. To safely make the most of your recreation "in the wild" it is important to follow some basic guidelines:

- Let someone know where you will be hiking and what time you are expecting to return.
- Carry a cell phone. Coverage can be intermittent but it is still worthwhile to have one.
- Check the weather forecast before leaving home and dress accordingly. Check out some awesome wilderness hiking trails at: www.halifax.ca/trails/HRMWildernessTrails.php. And for those who are interested in motorized trails please look up these local ATV Club websites and/or Facebook pages: www.marineriders.com www.lakecharlotteatv.ca www.angelfire.com/ns2/sheetharbour/atv.html Moser River Wheels & Ski's is on Facebook.

FINAL TAX BILL DUE OCTOBER 31st

HRM sends out its property tax bills in two phases and invoices all property owners twice each year. The Final Tax Bill was mailed out in September with a final due date of Saturday, October 31st. The tax calculation is based on the taxable assessed value of the property multiplied by the applicable tax rate. The taxable assessed value is determined by the Property Valuation Services Corporation – www.PVSC.ca. For more details about your tax bill visit: www.halifax.ca/taxes/taxbill/index.php.

CITIZEN EVENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

HRM insurance broker, Aon Risk Solutions, is now offering affordable group liability insurance for organizers of small-scale community events.

Over the years, organizers of community events have had to scale back or even cancel events because they couldn't afford the appropriate insurance. In response to this need, Aon Risk Solutions has created the new Citizen Event Insurance Program (CEIP) which provides event organizers with affordable access to liability coverage when planning an annual strawberry social, a weekly card club at the fire hall, or a monthly community dance. Community groups or associations can also purchase insurance through this program for liability coverage of annual activities, operations and programming. CEIP includes access to a \$2-million commercial general liability policy with additional coverage as required. Coverage may be obtained for community events, family events, as well as a wide range of sporting activities (including organized leagues and sports camps) held on either municipal or private property. Premium costs are dependent on the nature, scope, complexity and risk of the event or the community group's annual activities and operations. It is important to note that inclusion in the program is voluntary. Residents can contact any insurance provider to inquire about coverage that best suits their needs. CEIP is not administered or subsidized by the municipality. For more information about the CEIP and how to purchase this insurance option visit www.halifax.ca/CEIP or contact Aon Risk Solutions directly at 902-429-7310.

INPUT ON ALL REC FACILITIES REVIEW

The 2008 HRM Community Facility Master Plan (CFMP) provided strategic direction and recommendations related to community recreation facility development and shaped the protocol for budget and project development. (www.halifax.ca/facilities/CFMP/documents/CFMPPFINALMay08.pdf) The 2008 CFMP is currently being updated and will be presented to Regional Council in early 2016. It will be utilized as the strategic guiding document to enhance the quality of life of citizens through the provision of sustainable, planned, accessible and appropriate community facilities.

The revised and updated CFMP is expected to provide continued strategic direction for the required investment, resources and decision-making processes related to provision of community recreation facilities. The updated document will build on the recommendations in the 2008 CFMP report and will also include several facility types not previously considered such as sports fields, ballfields, skate & bike parks playgrounds, tennis courts, and splash-pads. From now until November 1st you are invited to participate in the planning process through one or more of the following opportunities:

- Sport user-group and service providers focus group meetings and stakeholder surveys;
- Public meetings in eight community locations for in-person information sharing;
- On-line survey: www.halifax.ca/facilities/CFMP
- Empirical phone survey for data collection;
- Provide e-mail address for personal comments and submissions at: CFMP@Halifax.ca; and
- Provide telephone number to enable personal conversation and comment at 902-490-5713.

SENIORS SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

There is a snow removal program available to seniors (65 years of age or older) and for persons with disabilities throughout all areas of HRM. The program is NOT available to landlords. You must reside in a single dwelling home that you own or rent. The program's mandate is to provide a resource to clients for the removal of snow for safe access. The program is limited to those households with a combined total income not exceeding \$30,000. To learn more about this program please call the 311 HRM Contact Centre or the YMCA at 902-483-3678. Or visit these web-sites: www.halifax.ca/snow/seniorssnow.php and/ or www.ymcahrm.ns.ca. Look for the Community Outreach Program section. Registration deadline is December 1st or sooner depending upon the demand. Applicants will be placed on a list based on a first come, first serve basis.

COMMUNITY WELLNESS FUNDS

The Southeastern & Eastern Shore - Musquodoboit Community Health Boards are two of 37 Community Health Boards (CHB) across Nova Scotia. They actively seek input and concerns from citizens in our district and deliver these expressed issues and concerns to the Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) for action in their annual business plan. CHBs across the province have funding available to support local groups and organizations to improve the health of their communities through activities, events and programs that help promote healthier lifestyles and lead to behavior changes. These Wellness Funds (previously Community Development Funds) are available annually. Non-profit organizations are encouraged to apply now for this year's Wellness Fund grants. The province-wide application deadline is November 1st. As a result of decreased funding, all eligible projects will be considered for funding, but will be prioritized according to projects that focus on the top priorities for this upcoming year which include: Access to Health & Community Services and Information; Mental Health; Healthy Eating and Physical Activity.

For application forms contact CHB Coordinators Denise VanWychen for the Eastern Shore - Musquodoboit CHB at 902-889-4118 or Monique Mullins-Roberts for the Southeastern CHB at 902-460-6869.

ENGAGE NS – SHARE THANKSGIVING

Engage Nova Scotia wants citizens to share our traditional customs with new Canadians. Share Thanksgiving is an opportunity for new immigrant families or international students to get together with established families in Nova Scotia to share Thanksgiving dinner. It's a great way to meet new people and support newcomers in feeling welcome and at home in our province. Last year, during its inaugural launch, more people signed up in Nova Scotia than almost any location in Canada. Engage NS is hoping that you can help them in matching even more families this year! Registration for this year's Share Thanksgiving is now open until early October at www.engage-novascotia.ca/sharethanksgiving.

If you have any questions, email Amy Schwartz: aschwartz@engagenovascotia.ca or call her at 902-220-4520.

