

New innovation centre slated to bring jobs, green technology after federal, provincial investments

By Matthew Townsend

A recently opened biofermentation centre may soon bring many hundreds of green technology jobs to the Woodside Industrial Park and its environs.

The Neptune BioInnovation Centre (NBC) made headlines in the spring after the federal and provincial governments both announced \$5 million investments into the public-private venture. The investments will transform the Neptune facility — originally built for Ocean Nutrition but underutilized in recent years — into a contract manufacturing hub where multiple biofermentation companies that have left university incubators can expand their operations before taking the financial risk of building their own manufacturing plants.

According to Dr. Beth Mason, executive director of the centre, these companies — which use microbial fermentation to make products that would otherwise come from petrochemicals — previously had to look outside of Canada when they wished to scale up.

Biofermentation starts with organic inputs, usually byproducts of local manufacturing processes. In Nova Scotia, wood pulp from the forestry industry can supply that fermentation.

The province's announcement about the NBC made reference to what could be the largest impact on the neighbourhood: a projected creation of up to 2,400 jobs and \$175 million in salaries. Mason told the *Post* that the project would bring "high-quality jobs in biofermentation and all associated engineering" and that the numbers were based upon similar projects elsewhere and the pipeline of companies across Canada likely to move into the facility. "When they come, they'll build a team in Nova Scotia, which is the nice thing. Typically that team, as they build, stay here."

Mason said one of the challenges in job creation is ensuring that people in the area possess the needed skill sets. High-level scientists and genetic engineers often arrive with the companies, having been hired in previous stages or part of the

startup process. But expansion means hiring on operational employees: people skilled in electronics, instrumentation, boiler operation, and fermentation.

"One of the things that we've tried to do is grow training programs at the same time as the companies grow. And that way we can take people from our local colleges or universities, and they become part of those companies' growth." Training has been offered twice at Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick, which Mason said has a basic biofermentation lab and a specialty distillation lab.

Mason said businesses will be coming online at Neptune in the next year or two, which means that locals thinking about a career change could pursue college or university studies in electronics, process engineering, or chemical engineering — or even brewery courses. "If anybody's ... done a brewmaster course, they actually are quite a good fit then to up-skill into this kind of fermentation." People who have not completed brewmaster courses could still apply knowledge picked up in other places, with the benefit that the skills are portable. "If you don't come and work for us, there's still lots of micro brews that need people."

The arrival of this kind of innovation centre means a chance for people to pursue jobs "in a cutting-edge industry" and to "repurpose skill sets to be part of that new ecosystem that's just going to keep on growing," said Mason, who began her career focusing on biofermentation of dairy byproducts and didn't expect her work to generate so much economic development.

"I think it will be very positive for the region, and it's a national asset. We don't have this anywhere else in Canada, so you know it will stand to attract companies from all over."

And if you're concerned about what odours biofermentation might attract to the neighbourhood, Mason says not to worry. "Most of these things don't have an aroma," she explained. Unlike living next to a beer brewery, where strong smells of yeast and malt can betray nearby industrial activity, precision fermentation uses high-grade filtration on exhaust air, and containers are sealed. "So, no, you wouldn't expect to have odours in the neighbourhood." □



A crowd begins to gather at the July 30 official opening of a 200-bed dormitory at NSCC's Ivany Campus. (Photo: Colin North)

As NSCC Ivany Campus dorms open, 200 students to join the community

By Colin North

With a smudging ceremony on a sunny day in Dartmouth, the dormitories at Nova Scotia Community College's Ivany Campus officially opened on July 30.

The dorms, which are located right next to the main Ivany Campus building, will be home to 200 students. Students can opt for one-bedroom suites as well as shared three- and four-bedroom units. Full washrooms, laundry, kitchen facilities and utilities will be included in every suite. The average monthly cost for a one-bedroom unit will be \$1136.88. The facility will have 24-hour on-call security.

In the past, Ivany Campus students have faced a choice between renting off-campus housing or commuting from afar. With skyrocketing rental costs and worsening road congestion, the new dorms bring a third option to students struggling under the city's changing dynamic.

This new housing option also marks a change for the neighbourhood: 200 students who may have previously come to Ivany only to

study will now be living here. Education Minister Brendan Maguire said he expects the influx of students living in the Pleasant-Woodside area to have a positive impact on the neighbourhood.

"You'll see more people using local businesses," Maguire told the *Post*. "Students will spend their money locally, and that's a good thing for Dartmouth."

Galone Seto, manager of HFX Games & Collectibles across from the Woodside Ferry Terminal, said the store is excited for the additional students staying in the area. As a games and hobbies store, he said they often see a bump in business from students during the school year, and that hopefully the dorms will bring more customers; however, whether there will be an increase in business remains to be seen.

"We're not planning for a major shift [in operations]," Seto told the *Post*. "But it could very well be that there is a jump and we'll adjust as needed."

Don Bureaux, the president of NSCC, said he recognizes there's a science to integrating student hous-

ing into a local community, and that the college has worked with trained professionals to ensure this process is as smooth as possible.

"We have been very, very pleased with the interaction with their local communities," Bureaux told the *Post*. "Our municipal leaders have come forward in the communities in which we have our facilities now, and they've expressed appreciation for how we take this work so seriously."

There are currently 2,537 students enrolled at Ivany Campus. Per NSCC's website, priority for housing applications is given to confirmed applicants as well as returning students.

The college is planning a community open house of the dorm facility during the final week of August, where anyone can come see the units and get further information about on-campus housing.

The Ivany Campus dorms, which cost \$58.6 million, mark the third of seven planned on-campus housing projects for NSCC, with dorms opening up last year in Pictou and Akerley, with 50 and 100 beds respectively. □

South End Baptist program stitches fabric, community

By Luisa Ensslin

If you're a South Dartmouth resident and find joy in sewing, you're not alone. On Friday mornings from 9 to noon, a small group of ladies come together at South End Baptist Church for the community sewing program, run by Lynda Scott Lunn. During these sessions, Scott Lunn assists the participants as they work on sewing projects, chosen either by the participants themselves or provided by Scott Lunn.

Scott Lunn, who has a Home Economics degree, started the program approximately nine years ago. Aware that Dartmouth South Academy's Family Studies class did not include much sewing, she wanted to help cover the gap. Parents of students in the group also expressed interest in honing their sewing skills, and Scott Lunn started a sewing group for adults as

well. During COVID-19, she told the *Post*, the kids sewing group "went by the wayside;" Scott Lunn decided not to continue it because, as the only facilitator of eight to 10 children, she sometimes "found it really, really difficult." However, she continued working with the adults group, who are more patient. Scott Lunn currently has around eight ladies in the group, though she adds that she would not turn away men who want to learn.

Some students in the group are full beginners; however, most have sewn before but don't have access to a sewing machine at home. The sewing projects range from simpler to more complicated, with zippered bags, aprons, coffee sleeves, traditional quilts, and tactile quilts (which were donated to Oakwood Terrace Nursing Home) being just a few examples.

Scott Lunn gets the sewing materials either from her vast collec-

tion of leftover fabrics or pays for supplies out of her own pocket. To help cover the cost, she has started accepting small donations from members of the sewing program, should they choose to donate. Scott Lunn has also received support from the community: the sewing program's 11 sewing machines were all donated. The machines are stored in a closet, whose shelves were built by one of the church trustees for that purpose. Recently, Scott Lunn was awarded \$1,000 in Sam Austin's June 2025 participatory budgeting for District 5. She plans to use the funds to purchase some new sergers and another basic sewing machine.

"I have a passion for sewing," she said. "I love to sew, and I'm really excited to see the creativity and the enthusiasm that these ladies [in the sewing group] have."

"I enjoy my Friday mornings very much." □

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Storm tips beyond storm chips

Steps you can take to prepare for a hurricane in Nova Scotia — from emergency kits to temporary roofing supplies



A tarp protects a damaged roof — and the house underneath it — following a hurricane. (Credit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.)

By Matthew Townsend

We’re smack in the middle of the Atlantic hurricane season — and now in the time of year when storms escape southern waters and head towards Nova Scotia. Dartmouth is no stranger to hurricanes. Juan and Dorian loom large in the memories of many residents, while long-time Darksiders might recall the substantial flooding triggered by Hurricane Beth in 1971. But with hotter seas and changing atmospheric patterns comes the risk that the next storm might bring heavier rains, stronger winds, and longer outages.

“We know that emergencies in Nova Scotia – like wildfires, floods, hurricanes and blizzards – are increasing in intensity and frequency,” Patricia Jreige, acting communications director for the Nova Scotia Department of Emergency Management, told the *Post*. “We are now in hurricane season, and storms can hit at any time.”

The province maintains an emergency and disaster preparedness website (bit.ly/nsemerg) that offers a preparation checklist, power outage safety tips, and a list of the latest emergency alerts. The checklist gives advice for building an emergency kit, which Jreige described as the best way to prepare for the season. “After a storm, you could be without power or running water for some time, so Nova Scotians should be able to get by on their own for at least 72 hours following a storm.”

Key preparation items on the department’s list include an emergency plan, at least two litres of water per person per day, shelf-stable food (storm chips are shelf-stable,

right?), and extra medication. Copies of important documents and cash in small bills (for when chip-reader machines are down) also make the list. The province’s safety tips address everything from simple tasks like charging your devices to life-saving reminders to cut power before entering a flooded basement and to never use barbecues, camp stoves, or generators indoors. (Halifax has a similar emergency management page at bit.ly/hfxemerg that offers municipal severe weather alerts and emergency kit suggestions.)

Part of storm preparation is preventative maintenance, including something you may not tend to think about: trees. The province recommends that homeowners trim and remove damaged trees and limbs prior to a storm, which can prevent loss of life and property. Scott Lugar, a professional arborist and owner of Crown Arborists in Dartmouth, told the *Post* that a tree inspection can assess the risks related to storms and offer paths to mitigating potential damage. Lugar suggests having a professional come to your property every few years to have a look at the trees and do regular pruning. An arborist can also install special cabling that can stabilize a problematic tree.

With that said, all trees carry risk in wind storms. “Even a perfect tree can be blown over in the right storm, a perfectly healthy tree that has healthy roots and is well maintained,” Lugar explained. However, trees with rot, poor unions, or bad structure are more



Lugar

likely to fail.

Lugar offers free inspections and said that preventative maintenance “can be a lot more cost effective” than letting a tree fall during a storm — which can not only fall on the house but could knock down power lines going to your home, further stymieing your recovery efforts. And after the storm, arborists face demand surges. “There’s only so many tree companies, right? So we do get a backlog of service,” he said. In spite of arborists working around the clock after storms, “sometimes you’re waiting a few days for any tree company to come by.”

Hurricanes can similarly stretch roofers beyond their capacity to respond to damage. Homeowners with shingle roofs may therefore want to consider buying a few items not on the provincial or municipal check lists: a large blue tarp, cap nails, long screws, and some spare lumber. Serious wind storms often blow shingles off of roofs. If any rain follows the storm, that rainwater may enter through damaged parts of the roof and begin to destroy a home’s ceilings, walls, and floors.

Tarps, when properly and safely secured over damaged parts of a roof after the threat of wind has passed, can prevent that subsequent damage. Hundreds, even thousands of roofs in Florida can turn tarpaulin blue after a major storm rolls through. In the States, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides homeowners free tarps through “Operation Blue Roof” as part of American hurricane response. According to the operation’s website, this “protects property, reduces temporary housing costs, and allows residents to remain in their homes while recovering from the storm.”

Nova Scotia has no such program, but Jreige said the Nova Scotia Guard would be able to provide extra support to seniors, for example, during an emergency.

Finally, for hurricane tracking tools, the *South Dartmouth Post* weather page offers up-to-date information from the Canadian Hurricane Centre and the U.S. NOAA National Hurricane Center, as well as links to other helpful storm trackers. □

COMMUNITY NOTES
The Pleasant-Woodside Neighbourhood Association will hold its annual general meeting and neighbourhood forum at COVE on Wednesday, Nov. 5, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. All welcome.

Correction to June’s sidewalk plow piece: sidewalks were long cleared by the municipality in Dartmouth, Bedford, and Halifax County, with property owners in Spryfield, Armdale, and peninsular Halifax responsible for clearing prior to winter 2013.

Got a story to tell? Contact us with ideas for the October issue, or join us at the Woodside Tavern on Sept. 3 at 6:30 p.m. for our next editorial meeting. No prior experience required.

District 5 residents help award \$50,000 to community groups

A participatory budgeting process held on June 17 in Dartmouth has awarded \$50,000 in municipal funds to community projects and organizations — including four in South Dartmouth:

- Bide Awhile Animal Shelter, \$5,000: Surgical procedures and medications for mother cats
- Common Roots Urban Farm, \$4,715: A new shed, tool closet, and water catchment
- North Woodside Community Centre, \$10,000: Upgrades to the women’s bathroom, including replacing stalls
- South End Baptist Church, \$1,000: New sewing machines for the community sewing program

According to HRM District 5 Councillor Sam Austin, 237 district residents came to the Findlay Community Centre to cast ballots for local organizations.

Other recipients included Back to the Sea Society, North Grove, Park Avenue Community Oven, and Dartmouth Players. □



The 10th Annual Halifax Colour Festival, organized by the Indian Festivals Club of Nova Scotia, comes to Alderney Landing on Sept. 6. (Photo: Halifax Colour Festival)

END-OF-SUMMER EVENT GUIDE

The blues (and other colours) coming soon to Dartmouth

By Christian Ensslin

“Canada’s greatest living guitar player,” “true bluesman at heart,” “greatest stuff I’ve ever heard”: those are just some of many descriptions given online to Truro-raised **Garrett Mason**. His skill and virtuosity on the guitar are beyond description, and his music, a mix of blues, folk, and pure energy, is magical. If you want to see his show, now is the time to book your babysitter, because Garrett Mason is playing in the Woodside Tavern on Pleasant Street on Sept. 5.

For music you can enjoy with your kids, the **Dartmouth Sunshine Series at the Sullivan’s Pond Band Stand** ends their season on Monday, Sept. 1, with a performance by **Rankin McInnis**, Nova Scotia’s Entertainer of the Year 2023. This band is folksy, easy, fun, and great for young and old. The concert is free – bring your own lawnchair or blanket, let the kids run, and enjoy the end of summer in style.

A few days later, spend a day filled with family-friendly fun, high-energy DJ sets, live entertainment, and an explosion of vibrant colours to dance in at the **10th Annual Halifax Colour Festival**, held at Alder-

ney Landing on Sept. 6. Kids are free, and tickets come with 100 per-cent biodegradable and non-toxic colour pouches, ensuring full immersion into the festival’s spirit.

Also in September: the indoor theatre season is starting up again, with the Dartmouth Players putting on **Agatha Christie’s “The Mousetrap”** (Sept. 11 to 27 at 44 Hester Street), a classic murder mystery where everybody has a secret to hide... including one murder. But that’s not the only mystery in town. The Eastern Front Theatre is playing **“Coal Bowl Queen,”** a new play about a basketball tournament, a pageant queen, and a decades-long mystery in the Cape Breton Island town of New Waterford (Sept. 11 to 21 at Alderney Landing).

And if you enjoy classic movies, head over to **Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum** on Aug. 31 for a free outdoor screening of the 1973 film *Charlotte’s Web*, projected onto the barn wall. Bring your own lawn chair and blanket; refreshments are available.

If you would like to propose an event for inclusion in this column, email details (incl. date/location) to southdartmouthpostevents@gmail.com.

Wavelengths of South Dartmouth:

Local Music Mixtape

By Trinity Gadoway
Co-Editor, Junkyard Magazine

New releases and more from South Dartmouth residents, NSCC Iwany students/alumni, and Woodside Tavern frequenters.

Apple Music



Spotify






The South Dartmouth Post

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