

THE LOOK OUT

FEBRUARY 2015



TO OUR MEMBERS

With the start of a new year, MC² has a new look! Our website and our newsletter are evolving in exciting new directions. We hope you, our members, will enjoy the changes!

MC² is again calling out to our members to renew your annual memberships. The \$30 per household membership fee allows us to continue to provide our many services to the Mono & Mulmur communities. Our very popular Town Hall meetings, our excellent public educational events, our newsletters, website and other activities succeed because our members have decided that supporting our work is an effective way to provide useful

information to all citizens.

We are pleased to be able to offer you a most convenient new option this year. With the cost of a cheque reaching more than \$1 in many cases, and use of the Post Office also becoming ever more expensive, our members can now use our website to renew memberships using a credit card and our PayPal portal. Just visit www.monomulmur.com and click on Become A Member! Easy! We hope you will all give it a try this year!

You will find a membership renewal form with this newsletter as usual. If you wish to continue to pay by cheque, it can be mailed to:

MONO MULMUR CITIZENS' COALITION
P.O. BOX 686 STN MAIN
SHELBURNE, ONTARIO L9V 3M1

THE BOARD GROWS....

At our Annual General Meeting in September, we committed to working to find some new directors to broaden our representation and provide new resources for MC². We are pleased to welcome: Elaine Capes, Bob Mitchell, Rita Reitsma and Ernie Rovet to our Board.

Elaine Capes, a former board director, led our efforts to develop a Strategic Plan for Mono in 2009. She was a Town of Mono councillor for 4 years and continues to be very involved in the community including the Headwaters Hospital Foundation. Elaine runs a riding school in Mono and works as a consultant on engagement processes and general management.

Bob Mitchell, also a former Town of Mono councillor, is retired from a successful career in sales, finance and administration. Bob is involved in many community projects, including a new thrift store in Orangeville benefiting the Headwaters Hospital.

Rita Reitsma has been an integral member of the community for many years. She operates a counselling

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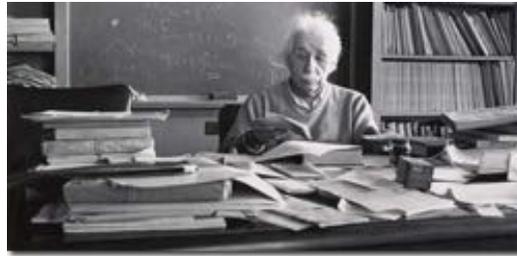
FROM DON'S DESK....

In our last Newsletter we reported on the results of the recent municipal elections. In spite of the very poor turnout, we have Councils in place which feature a mix of experienced veterans and promising new members. We can only hope that these Councils will live up to their promise and that they will work diligently to deliver on the commitments they made during their campaigns. Apart from managing the day-to-day activities of Mono and Mulmur, some of the challenges may well determine how our communities are governed in the future.

Engagement: From what candidates said, we should expect that our Councils will make a strong effort to engage with, and take input from residents, developing mechanisms to hear from voters on a regular basis. Finding effective mechanisms to gain citizen participation and interest is a priority. Citizen apathy is a daunting issue. What mechanisms will each Council put in place to address the need to get citizen input and involvement? There are many talented people in our communities, with a lot to offer. How will Councils engage these valuable resources? The commitments have been made ... now we need to see action. The one thing we know is that getting a high level of involvement won't be easy, but this needs to be a priority.

During the election campaign, some candidates raised the possibility of MC² playing a role in developing approaches to engaging the public. We are pursuing this idea through meeting with Councillors, and if

progress is made we will make presentations to Councils on how we think we could work together on this difficult challenge. We will keep members informed.



If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, then what are we to think of an empty desk?

Albert Einstein

Dufferin County: the Councils will need to develop strategies to deal with the major challenges of our relationship with the County. We are taxed by assessment while our votes at County are based on population. We live in rural communities which are governed by a County Council where the majority of votes are held by urban centres. These issues are complex and will require in-depth thinking, solid strategies and aggressive follow up from our Councillors. One thing we know, from experience, is that doing nothing will cost us money and will perpetuate the view that rural areas don't need to be accounted for. We also need to understand how we as citizens can support the needed changes.

Amalgamation: Most Counties in Ontario faced amalgamation under the Harris government. This featured fewer Towns/Townships and a significant centralization of County decision making. Dufferin, one of Ontario's smallest counties, is currently somewhat of an outlier on this issue, with eight Towns/Townships, plus the County

government. Since the election, the new Mayor of Orangeville has opened the discussion regarding amalgamation. There is a great deal of inertia around this issue and

keeping the status quo is, for many, an attractive option. But this issue is certainly likely to arise, and again, our local Councils, with input from citizens, will need to do some serious thinking on how to face this issue.

Taxation/Budgets:

At the various candidate meetings during the past election, questions were raised about taxation levels and future increases. The common assumption among candidates was that the current level of taxes was the starting point for setting spending priorities. This assumption needs to be challenged as our communities are already highly taxed, and many costs will increase with inflation. A serious discussion needs to take place on how to freeze or lower taxes, and as any cuts may impact levels of service, this approach will need resident input.

Long Term Vision: An important area for consideration focuses on where we think our communities should be in the future. To what degree do we want to urbanize? What type of industry do we want, and where should it be placed? What is the role of agriculture in our communities? How do we manage zoning to meet with our vision? And within whatever vision we set, what services do we need: transportation, internet, health support, job opportunities, etc. Mulmur has

FROM DON'S DESK....

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recently published a strategic plan, which is a good start, and it will now need to implement. If we don't have clear road maps into the future we face the problem of making day-to-day decisions without direction. And it may well be that on some of these

complex issues, joint approaches by Mono and Mulmur might provide the best answers.

These are all difficult challenges! The new Councils will have plenty to keep them occupied. Hopefully, they will face these issues with a view to getting resident involvement. MC² will continue to provide input on key

issues and to work with Councils, as they work through the tough questions. Our primary job will be to keep our members informed about what is going on with the new Councils, and to support the Councils by working to increase resident involvement and interest.



SO.... WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON LATELY?

- Board Director, **Rita Reitsma** has taken over a number of the secretarial duties from MC²'s long-time secretary Cathy Noonan. Welcome Rita and thank you! ...
- **Rachel Noonan** is stepping down from her role as layout editor of our newsletter. Rachel filled in "temporarily" to help us out when we found ourselves in need of someone to quickly take over this role. That was 2 years ago! We thank Rachel for all her hard work, skill and patience on behalf of MC² ...
- We welcome **Felicite Morgan** to our communications team. Felicite will be keeping our website up to date once it's finally completed and has already been instrumental in helping us to develop our new look...

WINTERFEST

- On January 18th, MC² was a presence once again at the Town of Mono's annual family event "Winterfest". Members of our

dedicated **Environment Committee** were on hand to talk to residents about MC² and the Extreme Weather public event planned for March 28th (see the flyer on page 5 of this newsletter). Our contribution to the Town's fundraising Snowflake Raffle at this event was a year's complimentary membership in MC² and two pieces of original artwork by Board Director **Arnold DeGraaff** ...

DUFFERIN COUNTY FOREST PLANS

- Board Director **Lewis Baker** continues to spearhead MC²'s participation in the protest against opening Dufferin County's forest tracts to motorized vehicles (excluding snowmobiles). Last year, the community became very concerned about a sub-committee of the Museum Board working to set policy for the use of the County forests for the next 20 years. The processes used by the sub-committee were open to serious questions and it appeared to many citizens that the only groups who had a significant voice being heard were the organizations of motorized vehicle

users. MC², along with several other community groups, protested in writing about both the processes being used and the idea of motorized vehicles in the forests. Lewis attended meetings and approached participants in the process and was one of the important community voices who combined to have this whole effort set aside until the new County Council was in place. We have nominated Lewis to sit on the newly-structured Council committee dealing with this issue.

As well, MC² has submitted **two suggestions** to Council regarding forest issues – that the policy for the use of County forests should be a 5-year mandate, not the proposed 20 years and that only residents/citizens of Dufferin County be permitted to sit on any Council Committees ...

THE ISSUE OF NOISE & MOTORCYCLES ON PAVED ROADS...

- Last summer, MC² wrote a letter, with a number of constructive suggestions, to Mulmur Council about motorcycle noise on the paved roads of Mulmur. Although Mulmur Council set up a committee to consider options, the problem

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persisted. We have received similar complaints in Mono. We are planning to again bring this problem to the attention of our councils. See the letter from MC² member Greg Boland on the final page of this newsletter...

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

- On January 25th, Don MacFarlane met with Mono Mayor Laura Ryan and Deputy Mayor Ken McGhee to discuss how MC² could support Mono Council in developing ways to improve citizen engagement. The possibility of running joint Town Hall meetings to raise and discuss key issues with the public was proposed. Don is planning to have a similar meeting with the Mulmur Council...

PRIORITIES FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

- As we look at ways to work with the Councils on engagement and citizen participation, we are also looking at

some of the major projects MC² will consider focusing on over the next 2-3 years.

What should be our priorities and how do we better engage our members in setting our agenda? Don and Elaine Capes are working with the Board to develop an approach to this important work ...

- For many years MC² had a group of members who took notes at Council meetings, covering the discussions and decisions with more clarity than was available in Council Minutes. For a variety of reasons we have had difficulty maintaining this practice...

The Board has agreed that re-establishing this practice is a priority. We are developing a format which will make the taking of notes a short and focused job, and we are looking for enough members to support this activity so that each participant would only need to do the task for 3 – 4 meetings per year...

THE BOARD GROWS....

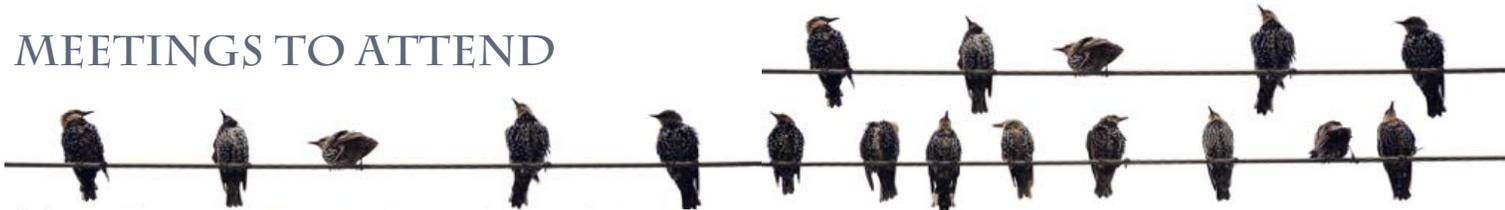
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practice from her home in Mono. Rita is very involved in the expanded and active agenda of MC²'s Environment Committee.

Ernie Rovet is a long-time resident of Mulmur and an "almost-retired" labour and employment lawyer. After a successful career in Toronto, Ernie moved his practice to Orangeville where he is currently wrapping up his final cases. He has been a board member of the Theatre and the Arts Council in Orangeville, and is an avid rider at his Mulmur farm.

We welcome all our new board members and thank them for their interest and support.

MEETINGS TO ATTEND



Dufferin County Council meets the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at the County Office, 51 Zina Street, Orangeville.

Mono Council meets the second Tuesday at 7:00 pm and the fourth Tuesday at 9:00 am of every month at the Town Office, 347209 Mono Centre Road, Mono.

Mulmur Council meets the first Wednesday at 9:30 am and third Wednesday at 6:00 pm of each month at the Township Office, 758070 2nd Line East in Terra Nova.



www.dufferincounty.ca



www.townofmono.ca



www.mulmurtownship.ca

MC² COMMUNITY EVENTS

Extreme Weather...



Are We Prepared?

A Free Community Presentation

Saturday March 28, 2015 ● 10 am to 12 Noon ●

Monora Park (500 Monora Park Drive, Mono)

Find out how to help Ourselves & Our Neighbours

Speakers:

Michael Dunmore (Director of Public Works for Mono)

Steve Murphy (Emergency Management Dufferin County).

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Local Insurance Representative

www.monomulmur.com



Sponsored by the Environment Committee of MC².

THE LAST WORD IS YOURS....

Below is an excerpt from a letter sent to Mulmur Council and to MC² by one of our members, Greg Boland...

“Dear Paul Mills and Council Members,

I am a resident of Mulmur on the south bank of the Pine River. I have been noticing a sharp increase in the amount of motorcycle activity each summer and am very concerned about the trend.

First and foremost there is considerable racing in the section from north 10th line and I think the situation is getting dangerous.

Secondarily, the noise levels are getting unacceptable. I am fairly set back and the noise is almost constant on the weekends. The residents along the roads must be particularly distressed.

Since the paving of Second Line there is a loop that out-of-town bikers like to use. This loop has made its way onto various enthusiasts' (web) sites causing an influx of large groups of bikers.

As a former biker myself I appreciate a country ride as much as anyone. However, when constant groups of 6-10 bikes are riding together the noise problems for residents is terrible. Exacerbating the situation is the fact that there is a significant number that do not have proper exhaust systems such as modified Harley's and sport bikes.

I have watched as friends of mine have been forced to move out of the

Forks of the Credit due to the same problem. The community has responded by putting in noise abatement rules and rumble strips on key parts of the route. Unfortunately, they responded too little and too late and property values have been severely affected. The traffic that used to go there has moved on to other areas such as ours and the rise of internet sites rating various alternatives has made the phenomenon more dramatic.

Here is one example: <http://www.adventuremotorcyclerroutes.ca/terra-nova-ontario/>

Please view the entire letter on our website, along with the links and comments received from some of the riders that frequent these roads.

YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS ISSUE OR ANY OTHER ARE WELCOMED. EMAIL US AT: INFO@MONOMULMUR.COM.

THE LOOKOUT

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY
THE MONO MULMUR CITIZENS' COALITION

Cover Photo: 4th Line in Mono, Credit to Felicite Morgan



Don MacFarlane
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Rita Reitsma
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Elaine Capes
Arnold de Graaff
Bob Mitchell
Cathy Noonan
Ernie Rovet
David Warren