

Bottle ban bold move

As the NDP government celebrates its first year in power, the Turn on the Tap, Ditch the Bottle coalition would like to commend it for its groundbreaking commitment to ban bottled water in government buildings. Nova Scotia may be the first province in Canada to take this bold step, but we join many other municipalities, campuses and school boards across the country in re-committing to the tap.

There are many reasons to ban the bottle. The environmental impact of the bottled water industry is usually the first to come to mind, but opposing the notion of water as a tradable good (a commodity) and recognizing that access to clean drinking water is a human right are just as important.

At a time when many households and governments are trying to save money, doesn't it make sense to stop buying water and to turn on the tap instead? We have some of the safest drinking water in the world, and it's free! As a next step, we'd like to see the Nova Scotia government extend the ban to hospitals and other provincially owned facilities as well as commit funding to improve access to public water in public spaces.

**Turn on the Taps,
Ditch the Bottle Coalition
(Ecology Action Centre, CUPE Nova Scotia, The Council of Canadians, KAIROS Halifax, Polaris Institute, Canadian Federation of Students - Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Environmental Network, Oxfam Canada: Maritimes, Clean Nova Scotia and Hydro Heroes)**

Major mistake

We at the Canadian Council of the Blind have reviewed Premier Darrell Dexter's evaluation of his first year in office and agree his government has done some very constructive things for Nova Scotia.

However, there is one decision they did not get right at all — the decision to go against what they stood for while in opposition and to not provide funding for Lucentis, the only treatment proven to reverse the vision loss associated with wet age-related macular degeneration, the leading cause of adult-onset vision loss. This decision is a serious black mark against the first year of Premier

making Lucentis available to Nova Scotians, the more people will unnecessarily lose their sight. That's nothing for the premier to be proud of while he celebrates the anniversary of his election.

**Louise Gillis,
VP Nova Scotia Division,
Canadian Council of the Blind**

Will we ever learn?

There is no doubt that the recent explosion of the oil well in the Gulf of Mexico is a catastrophe of monumental proportions, not only because of the oil contamination of the environment, but also because of the people who lost their lives and those who have lost their way of life as a consequence.

The problem cannot be wholly placed on the shoulders of British Petroleum. The former governments of the United States must also be held accountable for allowing oil drilling to take place without demanding that all safety measures available are in place. Only then should companies be allowed to commence drilling.

We, as a society, are also partly to blame because of our constant demands for more and more oil for electrical power and fuel. Until we can move away from our dependence on fossil fuels and utilize more environmentally friendly ones, I'm afraid we can expect more disasters of this kind in future years.

Will mankind ever learn?
Judith Tanch, New Germany

Dare to compare

Your recent detailed comparison of Halifax and Moncton was welcome and well done. Hopefully, this will become a short series contrasting us with, in turn, the other two large New Brunswick cities (Fredericton and Saint John) and possibly St. John's, N.L., as well.

The three New Brunswick cities are of roughly equal size and importance, and St. John's is certainly the metropolis of Newfoundland. Too often, these four Atlantic locales are underappreciated by Haligonians.

Bob Vaison, Halifax

Condescending commentary

Re: "Acts aren't Commons worthy" by

personal dislikes; quite another to contend that Harold McKay is off base thinking that the music produced by these artists might be any good. Why? Because she doesn't like it?

Millions of fans have already voted on that issue — with their cash.

Celine Dion is the biggest draw in the music world. She skipped Halifax largely due to "holier than thou," parochial opinions expressed in pieces just like this. The only thing more distasteful than the tone and content of Ms. Lowe's column is that The Chronicle Herald printed it.

Doug Wheatley, Dartmouth

Personal attack

Lezlie Lowe's June 12 column, "Acts aren't Commons worthy," is reminiscent of the newspaper columnist who called the scheduled Celine Dion concert a "letdown." Her husband/manager Rene Angelil cancelled the concert, initially saying the Commons was not appropriate for her elaborate show. He later said there was only one reason for cancelling the show: negative media and public response.

Well, if any of the bands slated to play the Halifax Rocks 2010 concert see Lezlie's column, I hope they ignore it. It is one thing to have an opinion on what you would consider to be a "worthy act," but it is another when it becomes a personal attack — not only an attack on the bands, but on Haligonians in general. The comments throughout were very insulting. I would like to think that this opinion does not represent the majority of Haligonians.

Besides, if you don't like the bands, then don't buy a ticket. I'm sure everyone who is a fan (there are lots) will appreciate the concert, and not just because someone "plugged in an amp or that we lack civic self-confidence."

Louise Currie, Dartmouth

Pretty Lowe blow

Lezlie Lowe's characterization of the Halifax Commons concerts this summer as acts of "municipal desperation" just because the featured groups appeal to some arbitrary lowest common denominator is a bit harsh. The Black Eyed Peas are by all accounts wildly popular, and