

By Mayor Peter Kelly

Halifax Regional Municipality

With spring here, it's nice to get out in the fresh air and explore everything our community has to offer.

One place I recommend visiting - especially if you like puttering in the garden as much as I do - is the municipal greenhouse.

Each year, HRM's Halifax and Dartmouth greenhouses take turns having an open-house and, this time, it's Dartmouth's turn.

Like its Halifax counterpart, the greenhouse at 62 Caledonia Road contains a wonderful selection of plants and shrubs which will eventually beautify our public areas.

The open house will be Saturday, May 14, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Hope you can come.

And still on the topic of spring, with all kinds of bulbs sprouting, what better time to visit Sullivan's Pond, where the geese are back from their winter home; or maybe a stroll around beautiful Leighton Dillman Park in downtown Dartmouth.

And don't forget, the Halifax Public Gardens are now open daily from 8 a.m. until dusk until at least mid-November.

□□□□

People often tease me about my habit of picking up litter when I see but I don't mind; even one person can make a big difference in how a neighbourhood or a whole municipality looks. With that in mind, please consider this my gentle nudge to do your part in keeping HRM tidy, especially at this time of year when the trash of winter is no longer hidden by the snow.



And speaking of unsightly things, HRM has taken delivery of some new graffiti-removal kits which are available free to the public. Graffiti is a problem in many communities, including ours, and we are going to great lengths, both to prevent it and to eliminate it. For more information, go to <http://www.halifax.ca/corporate/Graffiti/> or phone 490-4000.

□□□□

Nominations are open for the 2011 Mayor's Awards in Literary Achievement and Excellence in Book Illustration.

Both awards, each with a \$1,500 prize, will be presented at the 2011 Atlantic Book Awards on May 19. For details, please contact Christine Lavoie at (902) 490-1989 or at lavoiec@halifax.ca. You can also find out more on the HRM website at [www.halifax.ca/Culture/ Opportunities.html](http://www.halifax.ca/Culture/Opportunities.html). Nominations close at noon on May 4.

Meanwhile, please join me in saluting the winners of the 2011 Mayor's Theatrical Awards. This year, Martha Irving won for Achievement in Theatre and Leesa Hamilton won for Emerging Theatre Artist. Congratulations to both winners.

□□□□

Here's your opportunity to make Metro Transit even better.

There's an important HRM study underway into various accessibility issues relating to the regular bus and ferry services and your input would be appreciated.

Initial public consultations were held in March and others are planned for this month, including one set for Thursday, May 19, at the Dartmouth North Community Centre.

There will be two sessions: at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Among the topics under review are: Existing infrastructure (vehicles, terminals, bus stops, shelters); on-board wheelchair and scooter restraints; customer communication and information; and transit guidelines and policies.

The final report and recommendations will be ready for Council's review this summer.

For more information, please go to <http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/news/index.html> or contact the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000.

You can also offer your comments / questions by contacting 490-4000 or by e-mail at contactHRM@halifax.ca. Please make time to get involved.

□□□□

And finally, attention all cycling enthusiasts: this year's Bike Week is set for May 27 to June 5. Last year, HRM's annual effort to celebrate, educate and increase community involvement in all types of cycling attracted 4,500 participants at more than 30 events.

For more information on Bike Week, go to www.halifax.ca/bikeweek or contact Lauralee Sim at 490-3665 or siml@halifax.ca.

As mayor, I'd really like to hear from you. Reach me at kellyp@halifax.ca or on my personal website www.peterkelly.ca or by phoning 490-4010. You're also most welcome to join me on my Twitter page. Or try my blog at <http://mayorpeterkelly.wordpress.com/>.

