

CHEBUCTO NEWS, DEADLINE FEB. 19

By Mayor Peter Kelly

Halifax Regional Municipality

Hello again; I'm glad you could join me.

With the excitement of the Vancouver Winter Olympics still buzzing in the air, this is a good time to mention that the countdown has begun for our *own* big sporting occasion – the 2011 Canada Winter Games.



Not only is it our first time as host, this is also the largest sporting event we've ever staged. Eleven months from now, we'll be welcoming more than 3,600 athletes, coaches and members of the media from across Canada, as well as thousands of visitors.

The Games (<http://www.canadagames2011.ca/>) take place Feb. 11-27 at various venues in and around metro, including the new Canada Games Centre in Clayton Park. This evolving structure will stage three of the events: badminton, artistic gymnastics and synchronized swimming. (To get an idea what it looks like inside, go to <http://www.halifax.ca/CanadaGamesCentre/> for an exciting virtual tour.)

Now, let me ask you a question: How would you like to be part of all this excitement?

We need volunteers to make the 2011 Games the best ever. In fact, we're seeking *lots* of volunteers. How many? Try 5,000!

We'll be needing people for a variety of responsibilities; everything from helping with the technical side of things to accounting, accreditation, transportation, translation, mascot support and assisting at the Athlete's Village.

If you'd like to be part of this history-making event, there are several ways to apply. You can write to: Human Resources and Volunteer Division/ 2011 Canada Games Host Society/ P.O. Box 1749/ Halifax, N.S./B3J 3A5 or you can phone (902) 490-2011 or fax (902) 490-5730.

You can also contact us at careers2011@canadagames2011.ca or through volunteer@canadagames2011.ca.

I do hope you'll step forward so HRM can put on a show next winter that the rest of the country will never forget.

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If you take the bus, you may not be aware that Metro Transit has teamed up with Google Transit to offer special trip planners for riders. This free service integrates local transit routes, bus stops and schedules with Google maps.

The service is available in 12 languages, which just goes to show how cosmopolitan HRM has become.

To use it, just go to <http://www.halifax.ca/> and click on the Metro Transit link, then follow the instructions.

A friendly word of caution: the experience is really fascinating and you may get so involved, you just might miss your bus!

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Good news for everyone who uses the Captain William Spry Centre: the extensive renovations are finished on the inside and should be complete on the outside by summer.

Refurbishing of the 22-year-old centre has created more space for recreational activities, the library, youth areas and meeting places. In addition, items of new furniture and program equipment have been purchased.

Outside the centre, you'll see two striking additions: a 100-foot bridge over MacIntosh Run and a 6,000-sq.ft skateboard/bike park.

What remains to be done outside are improvements to the lighting and landscaping, plus the widening of the Sussex Drive entrance.

Something that will soon catch your eye is a piece of community art work titled "Water Falls," being coordinated by respected artist Miro Davis.

Miro has been holding workshops at which she encourages participants to create clay sculptures using water droplets as inspiration. Using her vision and skills, she will cast

all the contributed sculptures into one finished piece, to be displayed in the centre's lobby for all to enjoy.

A separate piece of public art is earmarked for the new skateboard/bike park. It will be a mosaic done in stone and glass and it, too, will have input from the public.

These two exciting projects are examples of how HRM's Public Art Policy not only supports local artists; it also fosters a sense of community and stimulates social interaction.

If you'd like to learn more about all the improvements, please go to HRM's main web page (<http://www.halifax.ca/>) and enter the Captain William Spry Centre in the search box on the left. I think you'll be very impressed.

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And finally, I'm pleased to report that HRM will once again be at the centre of the world stage.

Development ministers of the G8 nations will gather in Halifax April 26-28 to prepare for a forthcoming leaders' summit, to be held in Ontario. In June, Canada will host the heads of France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the U.K. and the United States.

Halifax welcomed the G7 world leaders in 1995.

Among the items on the agenda for Halifax this time are proposals aimed at improving the health of women and children in the world's most-vulnerable regions. This international initiative will include immunization programs, access to clean water and better nutrition.

Our municipality is honoured and proud to host officials who are laying the groundwork for such vital global work.

I'd welcome your input on these and any other HRM items of interest. Reach me here at City Hall at kellyp@halifax.ca or by phoning 490-4010.