

## COLUMNS

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# Concerned HRM citizens join forces for Earth Day on April 22

TAKE FIVE WITH



**PETER KELLY (TAKE FIVE WITH THE MAYOR)**   
Halifax News Net

Let's start this week with a plug for upcoming Earth Day.

On April 22, concerned citizens throughout HRM will join forces with more than a billion people worldwide to focus attention on the environment and ways we can address climate problems.

This is the 40th observation of Earth Day and, as in previous years, regional council and I endorse this vital awareness campaign.

Some of the special events which HRM staff is organizing include planting vegetable seedlings to benefit Hope Cottage; a special "waterfront walk" in Dartmouth; and another Earth Day walk, this one late afternoon in the Dingle Park in Halifax.

And speaking of getting around on foot during Earth Day, regional council has approved "The International Charter for Walking."

This is a movement to encourage people everywhere to walk as much as possible. Not only is walking good exercise, it creates healthy, sustainable communities and significantly reduces harmful greenhouse gases.

If we take care of the Earth, she'll take care of us.

Now an update about some developments at Metro Transit.

Effective this month, security at the three ferry terminals and on the vessels themselves has been beefed-up, on the instruction of Transport Canada.

The new measures include the installation of surveillance cameras and more perimeter security.

It appears the changes are having minimal impact on ferry services.

Still with Metro Transit, an Access-A-Bus study is underway to determine future needs.

The study's first round of public-consultation meetings is finished and the next round is about to begin. For details of when and where, please go to <http://www.halifax.ca/metrotransit/> or call 490-4000.

And finally, planning is well advanced for the new Dartmouth transit terminal. It will be built across from the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge, between Nantucket Avenue and Thistle Street in Dartmouth, behind the terminal site.

The new terminal incorporates suggestions resulting from a series of public meetings. These suggestions include: well-lit pedestrian connections to Nantucket Avenue and Thistle Street; that the new terminal blend in with the park, with bus bays built below or into the existing grade, if possible; and that the building should be perpendicular, not parallel, to Nantucket Avenue.

If all goes well, work on the new terminal is expected to begin mid-summer.

Vimy Ridge Day

Last Friday was Vimy Ridge Day and, along with many of you, I paid tribute to all those Canadian men and women who served during the First World War.

Adding special poignancy to this year's observance was the fact Canada's last surviving veteran of that war, John "Jack" Babcock, died in February aged 109.

To honour him, and all those who answered their country's call in 1914-1918, special End-of-an-Era services were held across the country, including one in the Grand Parade. To further mark the occasion, the windows of city hall were decorated with poppies, as were windows in many homes and schools throughout HRM and across the country.

Vimy Ridge Day was declared by Ottawa in 2003, to commemorate the April 9, 1917 battle in France when Canadian and Newfoundland forces distinguished themselves as never before. It was this successful battle which historians consider to be the real beginning of Canada's nationhood.

Last Friday's ceremonies were called Each One Remembered and it was an honour to acknowledge such an incredible generation of military heroes.

On a personal note, I'd like to thank all those HRM employees who responded to my call for ideas to reduce the \$32.4-million shortfall in this year's municipal budget.

I received more than 100 responses and each one is being studied carefully - except those which included the words " . . . where the sun don't shine!" Just joking! I was heartened both by enthusiasm and quality of all the suggestions. Thank you for becoming involved in the prudent fiscal management of our community.

Let me hear from you. Reach me at city hall at [kellyphalifax.ca](mailto:kellyphalifax.ca) or by phoning me at 490-4010. You're also most welcome to join me on my Facebook or Twitter pages.

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