

Hello again. I hope you and your family are well.

This week, I'd like to mention a number of special observances and celebrations soon to take place in our community, starting with a salute to our sailors.

This year, our mariners are celebrating a rather special anniversary - the centennial of the Canadian Navy. To mark this milestone, dozens of events are planned nationally including, naturally, many in the Halifax area.

This weekend marks Battle of the Atlantic Sunday, the commemoration of Canada's contribution to victory at sea during the Second World War. In HRM, this solemn observance will take place in Point Pleasant Park, starting at 11 a.m.

Two days later, on behalf of Council and the Regional Municipality, I will declare May 4 to be Navy Day and grant the Freedom of the City to Maritime Forces Atlantic. This colourful ceremony will commence with more than 1,000 service personnel leaving HMC Dockyard at 10 a.m. and marching down Barrington Street to arrive at the Grand Parade at 10:15 a.m.

This will be one of the largest outdoor military ceremonies ever staged downtown.

Please consider this my personal invitation for you and your family to come and be part of this historic tribute to our Navy.

□□□□

Speaking of public ceremonies, I would like to draw your attention to another important one happening downtown on the same day, May 4.

This one takes place at 4 p.m. at the Dutch Monument at Pier 21 on the Halifax waterfront. It was 65 years ago that Canadians liberated the Netherlands and, at next Tuesday's ceremony, HRM residents of Dutch descent will honour those who fought and died.

It promises to be a very moving occasion. I hope you can make it.

□□□□□

If I may speak as a parent for a moment, I consider young people to be society's priceless investment in its future. That's why I'm pleased to acknowledge National Youth Week, starting Sunday.

This will be a time to celebrate the vigour and energy of our young citizens and let them know just how much they mean to us.

Did you know that HRM has a special Youth Committee? If you'd like to learn more about its programs, events and resources, you'll find details at www.hrmyouth.ca.

The best description I ever read about the importance of young people was by American poet and teacher, Robert Frost. "I go to school the youth," he once wrote, "to learn the future."

□□□□□□□

If you like cartoons - and who doesn't - there's a cool exhibition of them happening at City Hall.

They're the creations of Bruce MacKinnon, the prize-winning Chronicle-Herald cartoonist.

Bruce will have 31 of his originals on display, each an insightful comment on some aspect of life in HRM and beyond. He was kind enough to loan them to help us celebrate the 15th anniversary of amalgamation.

I admire Bruce's skills very much, likewise those of Michael deAdder, another talented HRM newspaper cartoonist. In fact, I have quite a selection of both their cartoons in my office, even though I'm sometimes their target!

I do hope you'll drop by City Hall to see the show. It'll be here until mid-June.

□□□□

And finally, on a personal note, I'm still training for the 10k event at this year's Blue Nose Marathon, now just four weeks away.

I'm managing about 5 kms each time but, frankly, it can sometimes be a struggle to find the time or energy. It's worth it, however, because once I'm actually out there, I enjoy the exercise and the chance to clear my head.

Since this will be my first race, I don't expect to win anything on the big day. Heck, I'll be happy just to finish! Same thing if I can find the oomph to enter the Dartmouth Road Race during this summer's Natal Days.

Well, gotta run...!

Reach me here at City Hall at kellyp@halifax.ca or by phoning me at 490-4010. You are also invited to join me on my personal website www.peterkelly.ca or on Facebook or my Twitter pages.