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'This is the year the smile replaces the smell for our harbour'



PETER KELLY (TAKE FIVE WITH THE MAYOR) 

Halifax News Net

Welcome to some more of my "This is the Year of ..."

Last week, I noted that 2010 is the Chinese Year of the Tiger and came up with some suggestions of my own as to why this is an equally special year. Here's the rest of my list, from both a professional and a personal perspective:

This is the year the smile replaces the smell for our harbour.

Recommissioning of the Halifax wastewater treatment plant is well advanced and we are on track to bring it back on line in spring, possibly May. Just a few days ago, we took delivery of five new raw-water pumps ahead of schedule and these will be installed shortly. The \$2-million cost of the pumps is covered by the contractor's Builder's Risk Insurance.

Once the Halifax plant is functioning and is joined by the new treatment sites in Dartmouth and Herring Cove, HRM's visionary \$333-million Harbour Solutions effort will really start making a positive difference to the health of our harbour.

Don't forget, once everything is up and running, you're invited to join me for a dip at the Dingle Beach in Sir Sandford Fleming Park. What better way to celebrate restoring our harbour to wellness!

This is the year of HRM solidifying its position as the leading user of geothermal energy in Atlantic Canada.

Last week, we started up our geothermal cold-energy storage system as part of the Alderney 5 energy project. Using natural gas, seawater and leading-edge geothermal technology, the new system will heat and cool five municipal buildings on the Dartmouth waterfront, depending on the season. It will also reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by more than 900 tonnes a year.

This system is unique in the world and has the potential to produce significant operating and capital cost savings. Already, it has saved us \$350,000 in energy costs and contributes to council's commitment to meet a 20-per-cent greenhouse gas reduction target by 2012.

New community centres in East Dartmouth and Fall River, along with one we're building in Prospect, also use geothermal technology. This year, solar hot-water systems will be integrated into the new Canada Games Centre in Clayton Park and the Centennial Pool. The new four-pad rink in Bedford will be heated entirely from the waste heat from the ice-making equipment. In all, HRM has spent more than \$7 million on energy-efficiency projects over the last four years. The result has been less pollution and a saving to taxpayers of almost \$1 million in operating costs.

I'd say that's a worthwhile investment in all our futures, especially that of our children.

This is the year I'm hoping to get a credit or two at Mount Saint Vincent. I'm a supporter of life-long learning and I've been working to complete my tourism degree over the last couple of decades; I believe it's important that I finish what I started.

And still on a personal note, this is also the year of me continuing my efforts to get healthy. For some time now, I've been exercising regularly and trying to maintain a balanced diet. It seems to be working because I've lost a few pounds and I'm feeling energized. Truthfully, my biggest regret has been giving up fried food, especially poutine. It's a meal I really enjoyed, especially extra crispy with added gravy, double cheese, ketchup, salt and pepper.



Ah well, it's a small sacrifice to make for the chance to live longer and be around, doing this job I love so much.

Get in touch with Mayor Kelly at city hall at kellyp@halifax.ca or by phoning me at 490-4010. He's also on Facebook and Twitter.

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