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Meet Ray Bragg - Manager, Cape Breton County Exhibition



This photo was taken during the Cape Breton County Exhibition this year and shows Ray replacing his cell phone after providing assistance to staff on exhibition matters.

Ray Bragg has a long history with the Cape Breton County Exhibition and in his many years of involvement he has been both a volunteer and an employee. He assumed the role as manager in 1998 and has been performing the job as a volunteer ever since. Ray took over the job at what was a financially critical time. During his years as manager, Ray dedicated himself to raising funds and believed that every dollar he could raise was important. This meant that hosting dances and turkey burger sales and increasing winter storage were some of the projects he initiated. His dedication paid off as the short term financial commitments were met and a good relationship was developed with all partners.

Over the years, Ray has made sure that the Exhibition grounds were made available for public use and he has supported community events and organizations. Local food banks, children's sport clubs, Boy Scouts, and many other groups and individuals have benefited from his generosity. The facilities have seen many projects and improvements over the past number of years as Ray has secured funding to continue to upgrade the site. During the past year, he has worked hard to revive live harness racing on the grounds and this activity has been very successful. Ray's dedication and tireless efforts on behalf of the Cape Breton County Exhibition have helped to ensure the future of all the activities held at the Exhibition site and continue to be an asset to Cape Breton for years to come.

FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

Article from: Vol 6 (7); Fall 1996 ~ NS Department of Agriculture Newsletter

Nova Scotia Agriculture, "A Giant Potential"

An article by R. Gary Morton, P.Ag.

"A GIANT POTENTIAL" or should it read "A Potential Giant?" It does make a difference. Nova Scotia Agriculture has always had a great potential but I like to think that we have a potential giant lurking in our midst. I am not talking about one particular "large business," what I mean is that Nova Scotia agriculture has the ability to be a giant in the world of agriculture. To shed some light, let us conduct a brief inventory of our province's competitive agricultural abilities to better realize that potential looming within.

Nova Scotia agriculture has a long history as an exporter of agricultural products and has or used to have strong market ties with the USA, the Caribbean, and European markets. Our land prices for good productive farm land are some of the lowest in the developed world. The climate is moderate, with a limited need for irrigation and is suitable for many types of livestock and crop production. The labour force is educated and still available at reasonable rates so our costs of production can be competitive with most other farm producing areas of the world. More than 30 per cent of our farmers have diplomas or degrees in agriculture making us per capita the most educated farmer population in North America.

Nova Scotia is situated next to the biggest consumer market in the world and has a free trade agreement with them. We are less than 24 hours by truck away from a minimum of 20-25 million consumers. High speed rail freight makes us accessible to the rest of Canada and modern seaport facilities with container ports give us access to many places in the world. We have strong farmer, educational, business and research support through the provincial Department of Agriculture and Marketing, the NSAC, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Technological advances allow us to communicate with the world via modern phones, faxes and Internet. Modern processing industries value-add many of our agricultural products and organized producer groups support most commodities. To top it off, we have many examples of successful Nova Scotia farm businesses marketing their products around the world. So with such a large inventory of "Giant Potential," why isn't Nova Scotia a giant in world agriculture?

The answer may be that farm businesses have difficulty overcoming two major obstacles. The **first** is that most businesses don't recognize their own potential.

The story *Acres of Diamonds* always emphasised to me how easily we overlook the opportunities at our doorstep. The story is about an African farmer who got so caught up with gold fever that he sold his farm and spent his life searching in vain for gold. Finally, broke and in despair he threw himself into a river and drowned. Meanwhile, the farmer that purchased his farm was walking through a stream on his property and tripped over a big shiny stone. It turned out to be the biggest diamond find in African history.

The **second** obstacle, is that many commodities don't work together to maximize their potential. Their marketing efforts are fragmented and very often counter productive. I was recently involved with a study looking at the Nova Scotia Apple Industries competitiveness. It was very clear that successful apple producing regions of the world had one thing in common, a combined industry commitment by all stakeholders (producers, packers, sellers and government) to get the product profitably to the marketplace. Success was based on everyone working together to achieve a common goal.

We all trip over the diamonds at our feet! But by working together, toward common industry goals, we are more likely to bend down and pick up those diamonds that will make Nova Scotia agriculture a world giant.

Petting Zoo Guidelines

Farm animals or pets? It's very important to convey the message that farm animals should not be considered pets. It's often very difficult for people who are not from farm backgrounds to understand how livestock farmers can care for farm animals and then ultimately use them for food. Many visitors will relate to pets, and will compare the farm animals on display to pets or even people. If you take a minute to think of normal production practices such as separating dairy calves from cows, castration, weaning and marketing ages, and tail docking you will see how it might disturb someone who thinks of the animal in human or pet terms. "How would you like to live like that?" and "You would be charged with cruelty if you kept your dog like that" are two examples that illustrate those attitudes. This leaves you with a dilemma of educating the public about agriculture and entertaining them at the same time. A good compromise is to set up a separate area with animals that are chosen for their gentle temperament.

Goats and sheep work well. Geese, rabbits, and chickens are generally not suitable.

Do not allow visitors in with the animals if an attendant is not available. Only allow a limited number of visitors in with supervision. Insurance, health, and safety issues all need to be weighed against the benefits of allowing people in with the animals.

The ideal set up is a fenced in area where people can reach in to pet the animals that want the attention. Put a 'barn' or a straw wall up in the middle where the animals can get away from the crowds.

The maximum length of time an animal should be on display is 8 hours or less, depending on factors such as crowds and temperatures. Any animals showing signs of stress or illness should be removed immediately.

Rotate animals out of the area on a regular basis.

Pens and animals should be kept very clean.

Do not allow people to pick up the animals.

Make sure a regular feeding program is in place, above and beyond the 'kids feeding pellets in a cone' idea. **This is critical to ensure that larger animals that aren't as 'cute' get enough feed.**



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News Release

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Federal Funding for Festivals to Support Arts and Heritage, Build Stronger Communities

HALIFAX, September 12, 2007 – The Honourable Josée Verner, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official Languages, today announced how the Government will implement the \$30 million in new funding per year provided for in the 2007 Budget to support local arts and heritage activities that involve Canadians in their communities through activities that express, celebrate, and preserve local culture.

In addition to initially funding the creation of the Building Communities through Arts and Heritage program, \$30 million annually will enhance funding for Arts Presentation Canada and help fund historical community anniversaries infrastructure.

“I am delighted that this funding is ongoing and that it will benefit both local events and professional arts festivals. With financial support available for activities and events starting this winter, organizers and volunteers who are dedicated to expressing, celebrating, and preserving local culture through arts and heritage activities will be able to further enrich community life and increase community participation,” said Minister Verner. “Canada’s New Government is committed to building stronger communities and to providing opportunities for all Canadians to celebrate Canadian arts and heritage.”

The Building Communities through Arts and Heritage program will provide support for both local arts and heritage festivals that feature local artists and artisans or local heritage, as well as major historical anniversaries of local importance. Applications are now available for local arts and heritage festivals and community historical anniversaries occurring in winter 2008. Details for funding of community historical anniversaries infrastructure costs will be available at a later date.

Supplementary funding for Arts Presentation Canada (APC) will provide additional support for professional arts festivals that encourage community engagement. The APC program seeks to give Canadians more access to direct experiences of the diversity and richness of Canada’s culture through professional arts festivals, presentations of live professional performances, and other arts experiences.

The budget for these initiatives will be expanded progressively, operating at full capacity by 2009–2010.

For more information about these new initiatives and how to apply for funding to the Building Communities through Arts and Heritage and Arts Presentation Canada programs, please visit the Canadian Heritage website at www.pch.gc.ca