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SCHADENFREUDE TOWERS OVER OUR ATMOSPHERES

by Phyllis Merriam, Rockland, ME

Village Soup Reporter Stephen Betts has informed residents about the Boston-area based Bay Communications III, LLC's one hundred and twenty foot cell tower that will impact Acadia Drive residents. Bay will profit, as will the Topsham, Maine based lot owners, RT Properties, LLC, on which the cell tower would be built. Bay looked at other local sites but landowners were not interested or there were zoning ordinances in other towns prohibiting cell towers in residential zones.

Cell towers have been widely used since the 1980's and many American cities and towns have responded with ordinances protecting residential areas. Rockland's city council is proposing residential zone cell tower restrictions, which may be too little, too late to benefit Acadia Drive. Instead of anticipatory planning for the future, this would seem to be yet another catch-up, reactive response vs. proactive planning by city council. Let's hope for the sake of Acadia Drive and other potential sites in Rockland its not too late.

In the case of the Acadia Drive cell tower issue, the Rockland Planning Board provided those residents, and any interested persons, the opportunity to express their views and concerns at the January 7th well-attended meeting. The Planning Board also conducted a site visit.

Since the Federal Communications Act of 1996 ruled there were no negative impacts to human health from cell towers that would be a futile argument against the Acadia Drive cell tower, even if there may be more recent data to the contrary. Anti-truth and anti-science have, after all, been worshipped to such an extent they even elected a US president whose goals have been to successfully eviscerate climate, environmental and all manner of US citizens' protections.

Acadia Drive residents must feel they are up against a big company. They are. Bay services AT & T Wireless; T-Mobile; Verizon; Sprint; US Cellular and Northeast Wireless. Bay's founder and CEO boasts on the website: "Bay has built a portfolio of highly desirable tower assets in difficult zoning and permitting environments." At the January 7th meeting, Bay's attorney publicly threw shade at Acadia Drive residents and their supporters when he said, "The best way to prevent cell towers is not to purchase and use cell phones."

There may be hope for Acadia Drive residents in Rockland's setback codes. While the prospect of having a cell tower in their front yards is surely upsetting, residents may want to research and focus on the code enforcement rules, which are what Rockland's Code Enforcement officers and Planning Board must use for their decision-making.

Another potentially hopeful step is the city of Rockland's contract with Bucklin Appraisal, LLC of Appleton, Maine to conduct an assessment of Bay's proposal, with follow-up public meeting(s) in February.

Meanwhile, Acadia Drive residents and their supporters may wish to use Bay's website where anyone can fill out an online message form with questions and concerns: www.baycommunicationsllc.com and/or phone Bay directly: 508-337-8000. Mahatma Gandhi, Quakers, Winston Churchill, civil rights and peace activists around the world have, successfully used speaking truth to power, during difficult times.

Contribute yourself to The Buzz & WRFR

We are all volunteers, and you are invited to join us.
email steinberger@gwi.net or call Joe at 596-0731

Whatworks

by Phil Groce

Sitting in the corner booth, next to the fireplace at Waterworks Pub, it was far enough away that Hannah Potter and I had privacy from the customers—regulars at the bar, and young and old and families at the tables. She would be working the bar and tables after the interview. At 24, Hannah has the flush and beauty of youth and the added health aura of a mother of a 3-month-old girl.

"My mother and I moved up here when I finished the 8th grade—I'm an only child. I have to say that moving like that with me, a kid just entering high school, is NOT the thing to do." What do you mean? "Before, I was the social butterfly in my school, into most every activity; but when I entered high school here, I turned inward, introverted—didn't do much except study . . . but I was an honor student."

Why do you think that happened? "It was culture shock. It's not exactly that New Englanders are unfriendly, it's more complicated than that. It's just that they are not that eager to make friends. As an outsider, you have to try to socialize."

You graduated, then what? "My mother was giving me a place to live. She was proud of me, and she didn't interfere. I wanted to go to college, but I was young at graduation, only 17—and I couldn't get loans, and my mother couldn't help. I ended up getting a job at a bakery, making minimum wage. But after a time, I could see there was no future there, and I could make more money at food service. I got a job at Rock Harbor, and I was still shy." Must have been difficult, I said. "The Boss told me to speak up. Smile. Smile all the time. I found the 24/7 smiling difficult, but eventually I got into it and really enjoyed it, enjoyed coming out of my own shell." Congratulations, I said. "Thank you." She replied.

"I worked there two years before I came here. In the meantime, I met my husband. He was a brewer at Rock Harbor. He spent 11 years in the army, service in Iraq and Afghanistan. He's older than I."

How is it here at Waterworks? "I love it here. I love to help people feel better—maybe that has something to do with I went through, but now I take great pride in training the new hires. It makes a big difference, and it's worth knowing that if you try to do the training after the people start, then you hit defensiveness. I know to train right at the start. I like to organize. I'm now helping Vicki Fales [the owner of Waterworks] in her business, Office On The Go. You, know, running a food establishment isn't as easy as it looks. It's a constant worry, always on call."

At pubs like this, being on the service-staff, there's a lot of theater in it. "Absolutely," she replied. I see that the female staff wear some revealing garb. "Yes, that goes with it." Does it bother you when you bend forward to talk with a customer, the male's eyes turn down? "No, I'm used to that." What if they're fresh with you? "I can handle it. I tell them to cool it. If they are disrespectful, it's the other customers at the bar who speak up. When that first happened, I was really shocked—and happy. We do have regulars here, usually come at happy hour. It's a social thing for them—two beers usually."

Alcoholics? "That's a whole different thing: Usually start at Happy Hour--\$4.00 well-drinks. Drink too much, and I stop serving them. They're there to drink—cheapest vodka—not socialize, maybe bring one person with them. I pick that up right away."

Do you have to go to bartender school? "Some do, but at Rock Harbor, the Boss said that wasn't needed. Just look and learn. But I did go to TIPS training [Training for Intervention Procedures]. It is taught by a sheriff, and it's about what to do with problem drinkers, and what the law says about it. Too many bartenders don't know the laws. You can get into real trouble."

What do you get paid? "We all get \$6.00 an hour plus tips. Minimum wage for servers is going up \$.50 a year until \$12.00 is reached. They take the taxes out of the tips. I think that when we get close to \$12 an hour, it's going to put places out of business—too much overhead. Most people won't be able to afford even a hamburger. None of the wait-staff want it. I work 30 hours." I mentioned that her tips are probably something like gambling--sometimes you hit the jackpot, but most of the time, you don't. "Yeah, it is like gambling."

What's it like having a new baby? "I never had experience with babies, but my husband had a younger sister who had a baby, and he helped. It ends up that he is teaching me. He's a very happy stay-at-home dad. Everyone was telling me that having the baby was going to goof up the rest of my life. Not true, in any way. We're organized. We still do what we did before. It is an addition, not a subtraction. I think it's amazing."

I remember last year you and your husband left Maine and moved to Austin, Texas. What was that about? "I wanted to go to nursing school, and they have more options there, and better veteran's benefits. And really, we just wanted to see something different." So, what was the problem? "Big cultural differences there, and it's a large city. I'm a country girl. We moved back. Last month I started school, and I want to eventually become a nurse practitioner. And now we're parents!"

Congratulations, again.

"Thank you."

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 17:

- “Finding Lost Family: One Son’s Journey,” 6:30 p.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 64 Old County Road, Rockport. Professional genealogist Jesse Casas gives a program on how he discovered his father’s birth parents and family and shares the tools and techniques he used, including DNA analysis. Refreshments served.
- Friday Open Mics, in Warren, Saint George River Cafe, 310 Main Street, second and fourth Fridays, at 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18:

- Electric Bonfire at Rock Harbor Pub & Brewery, 416 Main Street, in Rockland, at 8 p.m. The four-man band based in Lincolnville plays original music as well as covers from classic American jam bands. Mitch Markowitz on guitar, Jason Dean on drums, Mike Whitehead on bass and John Luft on guitar. No cover.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19:

- “David Cheever Presents: Ready or Not — Statehood Comes to Maine,” 2 to 4 p.m. at Camden Public Library. Cheever delves into the little-known facts that influenced the formation of the State of Maine. His talk is first in a monthly Sunday series this winter, cohosted by Camden-Rockport Historical Society.
- “Poetry with Strings Attached” at Camden Opera House, 2 p.m. First in the new Literary Salon series, the hour-long program will feature Maine poets Kristen Lindquist and Paul Corrigan reading original poems that celebrate the people and landscape of Maine, interspersed with related musical pieces performed by violinist/guitarist Susan Ramsey and cellist Ruth Fogg. Local student Katharine Kemper will open with a brief poetry recitation. Admission is free; donations will be taken. Snow date: Sunday, January 19.
- Sunday Jams in Rockland, Sail, Power, & Steam Museum, 75 Mechanic Street, 1:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21:

- Pearl Benjamin on “Making Change with Gen Z,” at 6:30 p.m. at Camden Public Library. In the free Camden Conference talk, the Watershed School student and journalist describes the generational divide in modern media and activism as seen from a teenager’s perspective. She’ll discuss the importance of young voices in today’s politics and how every generation can get involved in fighting for a brighter future. Benjamin writes the “Seen and Heard” column for the Camden Herald on issues pertinent to teenagers such as climate change, school policy, gun violence, and more. She is a cofounder of local action network Maine Teen Advocacy Coalition and serves on the Town of Camden’s Energy and Sustainability Committee.
- Tuesday Jams in Thomaston, Federated Church, 8 Hyler Street, at 7 p.m. Folk, country, blues, gospel. FMI: 273-2914.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22:

- “Summering with Vultures,” 6:30 p.m. at Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Rockland. Join birder Don Reimer for an inside look as a vulture pair raises two downy chicks from egg to fledged independence. Maine’s turkey vulture numbers have expanded immensely since the state’s first nesting pair was discovered in Camden in 1982. Reimer’s talk will trace weekly progress and changes at the nest site throughout the 2019 summer season. The talk will be held the next night if the weather is bad. Go to mainecoastislands.org or call 594-0600.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23:

- “The Ammassalik Expedition 2019: Adventures on the East Coast of Greenland and the Arctic Ocean,” at Camden Public Library at 6:30 p.m. Early last June, local businessman Daniel Bookham got a cryptic message from an Icelandic friend asking him to call her. Six weeks later he was bobbing in a 24-foot boat on the Arctic Ocean off Greenland, 500 miles from the nearest humans, and scanning the shoreline for Inuit and Norse ruins. In his talk, Bookham will unveil what the expedition found, saw, and experienced.
- Thursday Karaoke in Thomaston, Threshers Brewing Company, 1 Starr Street, 7 p.m.
- Thursday Jams in Warren, Saint George River Cafe, 310 Main Street, 6 p.m. and Friday Open Mics, second and fourth Fridays, at 6:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24:

- Three-Part Building Confidence Series at Camden Public Library, Fridays, January 10, 17 and 24, from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. New Ventures Maine creates an empowering environment for Maine people to define and achieve their career, financial, and small business goals. Classes are free but require registration: melinda.wildes@maine.edu or 593-7942.

Around Town is compiled by Chuck Gifford.

An expanded listing is online at wrfrr.org

Please submit calendar items to gowrfr@gmail.com

Our thanks to The Free Press for sharing its calendar.



Cheech's Radio Hour
Tuesdays, 8-9 pm on WRFR

Cheech in 2007. She liked DJing so much she is still here 13 years later! Be the next DJ who never leaves.



As a young tax paying Mainer, I am very concerned over the ramifications of LD 798, which is a bill that was signed into law last year by Governor Janet Mills against overwhelming opposition. This law will require all children from daycare to college, whether they are enrolled in public, private, parochial or online schooling, to receive 16 doses of vaccines to access an equal education in our state. A minimum of 7,000 public school children will be excluded (not including private schools and higher education), which will result in at least \$80,000 in lost revenue for public school districts. How will this affect our unemployment rate if parents cannot send their children to school and do not have the ability to homeschool? Many are unaware that this law will also require adults that want to go back to school to receive all necessary vaccinations. How many students that would have considered attending one of our universities, will instead choose another state that has more freedom of medical choice? This law will also affect healthcare and daycare workers and their right to medical freedom. How many young families will be leaving, and how will this affect any families that were looking to migrate here? I own and operate 2 small local businesses, and volunteer for a number of local non profits. I will be leaving this state if this law passes and taking my tax money with me. This law is a violation of our civil rights, as well as gross governmental over reach. My parental rights mean more to me than staying in this state that I love so much. Allowing the government to make medical mandates and violate our rights as citizens is a very slippery slope and should not be taken lightly. It’s important to strip this issue down to the fact that this law is the mandating of pharmaceutical products with known risks. Products that generate a huge profit for the same industry that caused the opioid crisis that cost us so many lives. Do we really want to let Big Pharma have more control in our state? Many still think this law is just about vaccination, but in truth it is more about the right to medical freedom versus submitting to medical tyranny. In addition, Maine cannot afford the mass exodus of young families, or the loss of nurses as we are already in short supply of both. Fellow Mainers, please think past your opinions on vaccination to look at the long term effects that laws like this one will have on our great state, and remember to vote Yes on Question One. Thank you,

Kaleigh Van der Swaagh, Northport

Kaleigh will be on the Rockland Metro Show on WRFR this Wednesday, January 22, from 5 to 6 pm.



Odds and Ends, with John Burns
Fridays from 12 to 2 pm on WRFR

I grew up in the Finger Lakes area of Upstate New York. I worked in accounting and jobs in New York, New Jersey and in the Philadelphia area. Now kind of retired, I'm living in Camden enjoying the hiking, kayaking, biking and following the Red Sox with my wife Natalie and cats Angus and Arthur. I'm looking forward to sharing my music with WRFR. My collection is based primarily of 70's, 80's and 90's rock, pop and blues that consist of some classics but mostly its a little offbeat but mostly upbeat to help you get through the Friday Lunch Hour.

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