

greater Saint John

SON PLEADS GUILTY TO KILLING HIS MOTHER

MIKE LANDRY
TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN • In a surprise move Friday afternoon, a Charlotte County man scheduled to go in front of a jury in February has pleaded guilty to his mother's murder.

Just after 4 p.m., Crown prosecutor P.J. Veniot, in the Court of Queen's Bench, in Saint John, told the court, "As a result

of consultations with defence counsel, which commenced this morning, I think we've arrived at a settlement of the matter involving Matthew Tucker."

The "settlement" involved Tucker agreeing to change his mode of trial and entering a plea of guilty to the second-degree murder of his mother, Dorothy Hattie Tucker.

The situation was vastly different from the one Veniot found himself in a month

ago – when Dennis Oland was found guilty of second-degree murder. In that case, the courtroom was packed and the reaction was dramatic.

For Tucker, the gallery was empty except for two RCMP major crime officers and one reporter. Tucker, in grey, jail-issued sweats, walked into the dock knowing his fate. The only emotion he showed was when Justice Darrell Stephenson read out the indictment against

him: that on or about Nov. 10, 2014, at or near Oak Haven, in Charlotte County, he did commit second-degree murder upon Dorothy Hattie Tucker.

Tucker took a deep breath and hung his head. When Stephenson next asked him to confirm that he would like to elect to be tried by judge alone, he uttered a barely audible "yeah."

Stephenson had to ask him to speak up. "Yes," said Tucker, regaining composure.

At 4:13 p.m., his head down, he pleaded guilty to murdering his mother.

But before Stephenson could confirm the guilty plea, the proceedings nearly derailed when the judge read out the essential elements of the crime.

Stephenson asked Tucker to confirm that he understood the essential

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Brooding over unmet jobs resolutions



Kurt Peacock
the next city

This time of year is always a period of sometimes critical reflection, as the bathroom scale and the credit card bills arriving in the mail both give ample reason to ponder how the year previous turned out. Often, this sort of reflection includes fresh resolutions to somehow improve oneself over the next 12 months, a process of goal setting that often buries deep within the psyche previous goals that were never achieved.

Of course, when you're a city administration that routinely repeats that economic development is a priority and actually sets measurable goals as part of a framework of accountability, burying the old resolutions becomes a lot more difficult. This is especially true as the latest labour force survey published by Statistics Canada – released on Friday by the national agency – shows that the city's own job targets set under its True Growth 2.0 initiative are not being met.

Beyond reminding the mayor and council of their own unmet job targets mere months ahead of the next civic vote, some context should be placed behind the latest job numbers. The December data showed that the unemployment rate for the Saint John Census Metropolitan Area came in at 7.7 per cent, which was actually slightly lower than it was in December of 2014 – at the end of the year previous, the local unemployment rate was set at 8.1 per cent. Yet a marginally better local unemployment rate masks a more troubling problem: both the total number of local jobs and the actual size of the local labour force shrunk in 2015, hardly a sign of a healthy city economy.

To be fair, Saint John had plenty of company in urban centres across Canada who have had less than stellar economic performance in the last year; in fact, the CMA's December unemployment rate places it close to the middle of the pack among the country's major urban centres (for yet another month, Windsor, Ont., had the highest

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Hunting for answers



Stephen Bernard is a Status Indian with the Shubenacadie Band in Nova Scotia, and considers himself part of a Mi'kmaq nation. For the past 20 years, he's been trying to determine whether he can hunt, and where, in the greater Saint John area. The answer to question has been in the hands of the court since 2005. He's now hoping an appeal with the Court of Queen's Bench will reverse his 2010 conviction for violating the Fish and Wildlife Act. PHOTO: ALEX CONSIGLIO/TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

He has a First Nations band card, so why does he need a licence to hunt?

MIKE LANDRY
TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN • More than a decade after Department of Natural Resources forest rangers stopped a Saint John man of Mi'kmaq heritage hunting deer in a wooded area along the banks of the St. John River in the city's north end, an

appeal decision is expected within the next month from the Court of Queen's Bench.

At issue is a question left open by the provincial court judge that sentenced Stephen Bernard for violating the Fish and Wildlife Act five years ago: can one Status Indian resume the practice of hunting in a location after centuries of

aboriginal absence?

Bernard, who was self-represented during the 10-day trial that took place over years, did manage to convince Judge Alfred Brien at trial that Mi'kmaq inhabited the lower St. John River Valley at the time of European contact and had the aboriginal right to hunt for food there.

But Brien ruled he would need evidence showing the original Mi'kmaq "substantially maintained the connection" with the Saint John area. The judge did not say that such evidence didn't exist, only that it wasn't before him. And he found Bernard's family tie

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Multimillion-dollar development to come before council

A request has been made to rezone land off Ashburn Road to create a new shopping area

BRUCE BARTLETT
TELEGRAPH-JOURNAL

SAINT JOHN • A proposal for a new shopping area to be called The Crossing is to come before council on Monday with a request to amend the municipal plan and rezone 180 acres of land off Ashburn Road near the

Rothsay Avenue exit.

Troy Northrup, owner of the East Point Shopping development, is behind the proposal, to be developed by separate company called Horizon Management Ltd.

"I am confident city officials and local citizens will be impressed by the scope and quality of this proposal," he said on Friday in a press release. "I think it's fair to say this will be a one-of-a-kind, international-quality development that will encourage visitors and travellers to stop in greater Saint John."

The developer is asking for the changes to both the municipal plan and

zoning as a first step before investing more time and effort into negotiating a developers agreement with the city.

The proposal also includes details for an eco park closer to Marsh Creek that would open up more green space in the city.

The documents provided to council indicate The Crossing will be built to "high architectural standards, with the East Point Shopping development being the benchmark."

Detailed plans for the development will be released in mid-March when Horizon is scheduled to appear before the city's planning advisory committee.

A portion of the land is already included in the city's primary development area. Horizon is seeking permission in its application to add the remaining land to the primary development area and rezone it from rural to commercial corridor and residential.

Northrup said the project will be a multi-year, multi-phase development that could eventually see some 500,000 square feet of construction. The final result will depend on a number of factors including interest expressed by businesses and tenants attracted to the project.

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