

From The Editor

WEST ISLAND —
A day late and many dollars short.

Wow, I amaze myself sometimes. I'm going to print a whole day early to be done in time for Thanksgiving. I keep checking the TV and Internet to make sure I have the right day.

We have much to be thankful for this holiday. Three teenage boys (see page 10) had a very close call on Sunday. It's unclear if they realized how close they came to losing their lives, but I assure you the adults around them did. The three were dredging for scallops in windy conditions in a boat too small to handle three people and two scallop dredges.

It was a "good outcome" as Wayne Oliveira said, but it could have been a tragedy. And it would've been a tragedy for the whole community, not just the families of the boys, although they would most certainly have felt it more acutely than the rest of us can even imagine. For us, it was an interesting story, a cautionary tale.

For the families, it is so much more.

Luckily, the boys were close to shore and were able to get back okay.

So, let's remember that one around the Thanksgiving table this week, okay?

On page 16 you'll find a mystery. A mystery to be solved! Right here on West Island we have a ghost gourder. Don't know what that is? Well, see page 16 to find out. At first I was a suspect, but as soon as I was cleared, I helped in the investigation. Now, I know that sounds suspicious, but as the editor and publisher of the local paper, I do have a unique insight into who's who in these parts. Alas, all my leads went cold, too. If you have any information on the ghost gourder, please let us know. We will protect your identity.

Now, to our cover story.

I'm sure you've been seeing those commercials about "small business Saturday." Well, we've got that covered. Just shop the *Neighb News* advertisers and you'll be helping local businesses. See page 12 for some great gift ideas. And be sure to tell them you saw their ads in the *Neighb News*.

And last, but certainly not least, see Jean Perry's analysis of the new wind turbine noise study that the conglomerate across the river wrote about a couple of weeks ago (page 4). I swear, I was not going to touch it because the emailer who sent the link to me compared wind turbines to Agent Orange, and I instantly recognized the names of the authors of the study as the anti-wind guys we've been hearing from all along.

I swear it would be funny if not so annoying and time-consuming (read: expensive). Really guys...you're the ones always saying that we shouldn't believe anything that's written by anyone who ever once said anything good about wind turbines. You've impugned the reputations of nationally respected scientists on the flimsiest of connections. Yet, when it comes to this study, we're all supposed to believe it, even though a judge wrote that the principal author of the study had "no objectivity in respect to the issues," and a few other things, including that he was no expert on the matter.

C'mon, guys. I'm just asking that you take your own advice. Well, that's it for this week.

Everyone, have a wonderful, safe, stuff-yourself-to-the-max kind of Thanksgiving.

See you next week...



Beth David, Publisher

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CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

Latest wind study shows nothing new; authors' bias exposed

By Jean Perry

Neighb News Correspondent

A new peer reviewed study on the health effects of wind turbines undertaken by three anti-wind activists does not reveal any new information on the subject, but the findings support previous studies that have all come to the same conclusion: The negative perception and annoyance of wind turbine noise causes a small number of residents living near them to suffer stress-related effects as a result of sleep disruption.

Knowing who is involved with this study, as members of Windwise have suggested in the past, is just as equally important as the findings.

The three researchers who conducted the anecdotal evidence-based study "Effects of wind turbine noise on sleep and health," published in the September-October issue of Health & Noise, all either sit on the board of directors or on the advisory panel of the anti-wind lobbyist group called the Society for Wind Vigilance.

Two of the three reviewers mentioned in the report also belong to Wind Vigilance and all three have a marked history of being paid to testify against wind energy developments.

These biases were not disclosed in the potential biases section, the conflicts of interests section, or anywhere else in the report.

Wind Vigilance has been advocating a two-kilometer setback of wind farms from residences for some time now, despite any scientifically based evidence to support their recommended setback.

Radiologist Michael Nissenbaum, one of the authors of the study, has conducted similar, if not identical, studies in Mars Hill and Vinalhaven Maine since 2010.

In 2011, Dr. Nissenbaum's affidavit in a wind farm injunction lawsuit in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan was harshly criticized by Justice R.C. Mills in his 24-page written decision dismissing the injunction, as reported in the World Spectator.

The judge deemed Dr. Nissenbaum incapable of being unbiased.

"A review of his affidavit #2 especially shows that he does not take an objective approach to the issues at hand," the judge wrote in his decision. "He passionately believes in the harmful health effects of wind

turbines from his own survey on the Mars Hill project and has made that the basis for his foray into an area that he has little real knowledge of. It is clear from the content and tone... that he has no objectivity in respect of the issues...he makes bold, unsupported statements."

The judge also wrote that Dr. Nissenbaum's information about the subject did not equate to having the knowledge required to make him an expert in the areas the judge deemed necessary in the court case.

Jeffrey Aramini, a veterinarian and co-author of the study, is a "scientific advisor" for Wind Vigilance. He co-authored a 2011 report on a self-reporting survey sponsored by a wind turbine health effect victims



This is one of two wind turbines off the bike path on Arsene Street in Fairhaven that have caused controversy in town. *Neighb News file photo.*

advocacy group WindVOiCe, published in the Bulletin of Science, Technology, & Society.

The Nissenbaum et al study, of which Aramini is a co-author, cited his own previous work in the references section of the published study.

Co-Author Christopher Hanning is an anesthetist who claims he has experience in sleep disorders, and is on the board of directors for Wind Vigilance.

One reviewer of the study, Dr. Carl Phillips, aside from strongly opposing wind power in his online blog called EP-ology, is hired as a consultant to testify against wind energy development.

Dr. Phillips has also been involved in a controversy surrounding his involvement with the tobacco industry.

In 2010, Phillips was asked to resign from his research position at the University of Alberta. Phillips accepted \$1.5 million from the tobacco industry and generated studies that downplayed the harmful effects of smokeless tobacco products.

He was paid to testify on behalf of the tobacco industry, and in one case where the plaintiff was a chewing tobacco user who developed tongue cancer, Phillips testified that there was no evidence that suggests chewing tobacco causes cancer.

The findings of the Nissenbaum et al study fell short in demonstrating that the noise from the wind farms is the direct cause of the health effects the 38 residents living near wind farms reported in the surveys used in the study.

The issue of infrasound is not addressed in the study either, which anti-wind groups like Windwise assert causes a condition known as wind turbine syndrome. There are no peer-reviewed studies confirming the existence of wind turbine syndrome at this time.

As many studies have shown before, the negative perception of wind turbines and annoyance of wind turbine noise is implicated in causing sleep disruption and other symptoms resulting from sleep disruption. The visual impact of the turbines has been shown to increase these effects.

Published in the September 2011 issue of Environmental Health, a report called "Health effects and wind turbines: a review of the literature," by Knopper and Ollson, showed, "To date, no peer reviewed articles demonstrate a direct causal link between people living in proximity to wind turbines, the noise they emit and resulting physiological health effects."

The report results showed, "In peer reviewed studies, wind turbine annoyance has been statistically associated with wind turbine noise, but found to be more strongly related to visual impact, attitude to wind turbines and sensitivity to noise."

It concluded that "self-reported health effects of people living near wind turbines are more likely

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attributed to physical manifestation from an annoyed state than from wind turbines themselves...and not a turbine-specific variable like audible noise or infrasound."

Among several other studies involving Pedersen, the one titled "Perception and annoyance due to wind turbine noise — a dose response relationship" published in the December 2004 issue of the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, concluded that "attitude to the visual impact of wind turbines on the landscape scenery was found to influence noise annoyance."

Nissenbaum et al cited five Pedersen studies and reports in their study, and also disclosed, "Visual impact and attitude are known to affect the psychological response to environmental noise. At both sites, turbines are prominent features of the landscape and were visible to a majority of respondents."

The authors reported that a dose-response relationship was established with sleep disruption diminishing with increased distance from the wind farms.

However, the study concluded that "the data on measured and estimated noise levels were not adequate enough to construct a dose-response curve and to determine an external noise level below which sleep disturbance will not occur."

Simultaneous noise levels were not taken at any point during the data collection, rather "measured IWT sound levels at various distances, at both sites, were obtained from publicly available sources."

Whether or not residents from the control group located far away from the turbines had any visual impact from the wind farms was not

mentioned.

The authors disclosed that data collected for this study included results from a smaller pilot survey of residents at the Mars Hill site. The questionnaire that was used for that pilot study has a pre-suggested symptoms checklist.

Although the study had been hailed in the media both internationally and locally as having shown a link between wind turbine noise and negative health effects, the study has done little more than support a number of previous studies in their conclusion that wind turbine noise annoyance causes some people to experience sleep disturbance.

The study's relevance directly to Fairhaven is questionable, since it was conducted on residents living near a ridge line wind farm of 28 turbines, and a three-turbine wind farm. Fairhaven is home to two 397-foot 1.5 megawatt turbines off Arsene Street.

"It is an important development," said Fairhaven Board of Health and Zoning Board of Appeals Chairperson Peter DeTerra. "But I feel it has to be site-specific in the topography of the land...like water and tree cover... These turbines are

very technical."

Mr. DeTerra said he would be requesting a copy of the study for the BOH to review.

"I hope it will help Fairhaven town officials to start listening," said Louise Barteau, a vocal member of Windwise. "I hope people will start

to acknowledge that here in Fairhaven we have a problem. This study...gives us a way to get to the heart of the problem."

Ms. Barteau stated that she believed in the study, especially since the authors "listen to the people" and are "volunteers."

"I always listen to people who aren't making any money but are doing it anyway."

The journal Health & Noise is based out of Mumbai and has a relatively low impact index® of 1.2., which reflects how often other researchers refer to studies published within the journal. For perspective, the New England Journal of Medicine has an impact index® of 53.298.

References:

- <http://www.noiseandhealth.org/article.aspx?issn=1463-1741;year=2012;volume=14;issue=60;spage=237;epage=243;aulast=Nissenbaum>
- <http://www.saskatoonwindturbine.com/2011/10/09/wind-farm-injunction-is-dismissed/>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.gov/pubmed/15658697>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.gov/pubmed/21914211> •••

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Meat Raffle Every Thurs., 7 pm

Entertainment & Events

Nov. 23: DJ Howie (formerly of Highlander), 9 p.m.-1 a.m.

Nov. 24: Karaoke with Night Flight, 9 p.m.-1 a.m.

Dec. 1: Grand Army CD Release, 9 p.m.-1 a.m.

Dec. 9: Breakfast with Santa, 9-11 a.m., \$5 per person. Pictures with Santa, \$3.



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