



The following article is a daily journal description of the 2019 CCI springtime meeting ... with a bit of Newfie humour sprinkled in.

Submitted by Ed Keenleyside

*I'se the b'ye that builds the condo
And I'se the b'ye that lives there
I'se the b'ye that loves the view
And down the hall lives Lizer.*

It's **Wednesday, May 29, 2019** and I've just registered for a Newfie soiree, otherwise known as the CCI National Leaders' Forum. In recognition of this ominous occasion, I've amended the traditional Newfie folksong (above) to reflect CCI's unique purpose. Our CCI Registrar has just informed me that over 110 attendees are registered to join our Newfoundland hosts for the next four days, and all of these guests have "come from away". Many attendees are combining this conference with an extended holiday in Canada's youngest province. Laurie Hebblethwaite, for example, arrived several days ago and has been exploring the coves and inlets, many stick-to-your-ribs dinners, the friendly and helpful people, and sights such as icebergs in almost every harbour.

Our hosts arranged a meet-and-greet in the hotel, where we connected with many familiar faces, enjoyed delicious food like mouth-watering corned beef on rye and entertainment by a group of mummers, who entered the room singing, "It's Christmas in Newfoundland, so welcome the mummers in." The chatter in our meeting room spilled out into the lobby as some went for a chilly stroll and others retired for a libation in their rooms. This ended my first day on The Rock.

Thursday, May 30th dawned an hour and a half earlier than yesterday. The highlights of today's sessions were reports from various National Committees. I'll focus on the three that deal with CCI certification, promotion, and marketing. For many years, CCI has supported three methods of recognizing the ded-

ication and commitment of its members, these methods were ACCI, FCCI, and DSA. The ACCI and FCCI were exam-based accreditation for professionals, while DSA (Distinguished Service Award) was a way to recognize those not covered by the ACCI and FCCI programs. Changing times, new government guidelines, and the complexities of administering a myriad of exams indicated that change was needed. Therefore, ACCI has been revamped and changed to LCCI (Learning CCI) and will not be exam-based. Instead, applicants must meet five mandatory criteria and one elective criteria, so the new LCCI will also be open to all. The main change to the Distinguished Service Award is that it will be open to all. Applicants will still be nominated by their chapters. Normal applications will be limited to one person per year; however, if a chapter wishes to nominate more than one candidate, the National executive must approve that application.

CCI National is moving ahead with its plan to establish a Library. When implemented, this will provide online access to articles from across the country. CCI National is also in the process of changing its website. This is being coordinated by LS Graphics and should be ready for launch on Canada Day 2019. No cost estimates were provided for these two initiatives. The CCI Marketing Committee presented a detailed report which outlined a proposal for a professionally driven marketing plan. It was hoped that this proposal will be ready to present to CCI National executive at the 2019 Fall conference and trade show in Toronto. This is a far-reaching program that the committee hopes will revitalize CCI and position it for a sustainable future. The estimated cost of this proposal is \$125,000. No suggestions were introduced on how this money could or would be raised.

Thursday came to a close with a dinner at the Rooms of St.

John's. This is a huge provincial multi-functional complex. Some of the departments include an art gallery, a museum, a theatre, a children's learning centre, provincial archives, extensive genealogy records, a library, a book and artisan shop, and a restaurant. Since we were there in the evening, most of the departments were closed. However, its glass open concept design allowed us to peek into many of the otherwise closed areas. The catered 4-course meal was delicious and enjoyed by all. Since St. John's street layout follows the rugged contour of the area, buses were provided so that no one could get lost.

Friday, May 31, 2019 – This morning's program focused on team-building exercises. The participants were divided into groups and given a Lego set to build... Sounds pretty straight forward, doesn't it? However, the first thing we noticed was that some of the instructions had been removed. Periodically throughout the "game", other handicaps were added... like tying a hand of one person to a hand of another person. Confusion reigned as at least ten people of each team frantically grabbed at all the labelled bags, soon mixing the contents into a jumbled mess. Those of you who are familiar with Lego sets will know that the aforementioned melee will lead to failure for all and maybe fun for some.

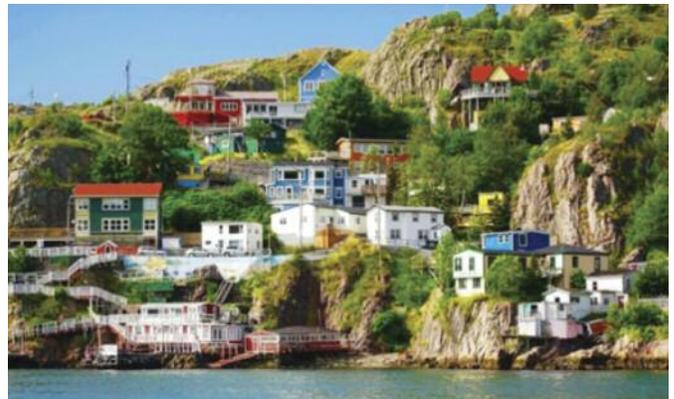
This exercise in frustration was followed by a few timely pointers on creating a podcast. The few of us who are non-techie, know that podcast training will result in a very steep learning curve, while the tech-savvy majority roll their eyes in disbelief at our fumbling around.

Friday ended with a "Kitchen Party" at a local craft brewery. Our reserved room was three floors up... which was OK when we were sober but presented a few challenges at the end of the evening, when several attendees were well lubricated. The food was tasty and plentiful. The music was lively and Celtic, but in order to provide a dance floor, tables were scarce, and several people had to sit wherever they could squeeze a chair in. As the beverages took effect, the inhibitions melted away and audience participation raised the decibel level to that of the engine room of a cod fishing boat.

Newfoundland has a colourful history. Necessity and homeowner affordability have ushered in the age of condominiums. Most condominiums range in size from 25 to 50 units, with some exceptions. In all of the province, there are fewer than 140 registered condo developments, with most located in St. John's. Newfoundland is the only province where over 60% of the population still lives in rural settings rather than cities. The laid-back lifestyle and rugged geography are two factors that have resulted in some interesting condo developments. Newfoundlanders are great recyclers, as evidenced by the two condominium designs that follow. First, we see two developers

pondering an idea for a high-rise condo.

In the photo below, a recently completed stacked-townhouse complex blends the rocky surroundings with colourful and unique unit designs and has won praise far and wide.



While the previous two examples are tongue-in-cheek ideas of the author, this is an actual street affectionately known as "Jellybean Row", in St. John's. This colourful expression of individuality is not a one-off development, but rather is quite a common sight in St. John's as well as elsewhere in Newfoundland. What if condos looked like this?



But now back to the CCI Leaders' Forum summary...

Saturday, June 1, 2019 was billed as the National Conference and Trade Show. The most immediate result was the minimizing of breakfast from a full spread to a continental style layout. The normal buffet area was taken over by exhibitors' booths.

The first seminar was a timely topic entitled "Dealing with an Aging Population". While some condos are geared to seniors, all condos have some senior owners or residents. The speakers stressed the legal responsibilities of a condo board. A board sometimes treads a fine line between concern and care-giver. The next of kin of seniors at risk should be informed, which reflects genuine concern, but condo boards should not take on personal care, which falls into the care-giver category. Fiscal responsibilities should not be ignored even if predominantly older owners wish to put off or ignore necessary expenditures. In larger, more diverse condominiums, it is important to balance the desires of millennials with the reluctance of fixed-income seniors.

The next seminar dealt with the effect of climate change on insurance. Of those present, very few had thought that global warming had any direct effect on their condo corporation. Perhaps the most obvious effect is that weather-related damage claims are resulting in increased insurance premiums and deductibles. Climate changes are resulting in extreme and unusual weather-related damages. This especially true of water infiltration. Highrise condominiums have many places where water can come in. Water damage insurance claims account for twelve times more claims than from fire or smoke. Climate fluctuations make insurance claims unpredictable, and that in turn means that premium increases are difficult to plan for.

Just before lunch, the keynote speaker for the day was introduced. Trent Landon is an educator in Newfoundland and has many years' experience in dealing with bullies. His message is just as relevant in condominiums as it is schools. Trent maintained that there are no easy or "pat" answers to all bullying situations, but he offered several suggestions to an attentive audience. Remember that condo bullies want one of two things: attention or a reward of some kind. Their other object is to demand that everything be done their way.

In dealing with bullies, condo directors should:

- Remember that everyone is entitled to be heard;
- Keep an open mind;
- Check their ego at the door;
- Strive for mutual respect;
- Don't avoid confrontation, but control the dialogue;
- Listen – pause – respond;
- Take the high road;
- Put yourself in the bully's shoes;

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- Ask questions;
- Don't perceive yourself as a super-hero and the bully as simply the villain;
- Be informed/knowledgeable about the topic of concern;

Perhaps the most difficult job for a condo board is to control the use of social media by the bully. Attempts of a board to curb social media use usually results in a "no-win" situation. In most cases, the best course of action is to ignore the bully's social media messages and move on. Trent's keynote address was very well received, and the number of questions were evidence of the keen interest of all those in attendance.

This is where I must close as I had to leave for the airport... But the following two topics were presented in the afternoon – "Cannabis Beyond the Smoke" and "Preparing for the Unimaginable". The printed outline reminded the audience that there are other concerns of cannabis besides legalization and nuisance smoke. For example: How does smoking and/or growing cannabis affect condo insurance, or the physical building or the

owner's property values? The last seminar dealt with preparing for the unknown. Police and Fire Department representatives discussed the importance of an Emergency Preparedness Plan, emphasizing that such a plan is of little value if it sits on a shelf and is not presented to all condo residents and/or owners. Condo boards need to involve their local emergency service providers, including police, fire department, and ambulance personnel.

I can honestly say this was a very interesting and productive Leaders' Forum. I will leave you with a photograph I took from Signal Hill of St. John's and its very busy port. My heartfelt thanks is extended to the Golden Horseshoe Board of Directors that allowed me this opportunity to meet and learn from condominium supporters from across Canada. 

