

South Dartmouth clinics ‘in good stead’ to absorb new patients, Dartmouth doctor says

By Jeremy Hull
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The number of Nova Scotians in need of a family doctor is falling across the province, but with more than 400 new units recently under construction permits in South Dartmouth, there are questions about how much capacity neighbourhood clinics can absorb. A doctor at a new turn-key clinic in Alderney Landing says Dartmouth is prepared for new patients.

“The turn-key clinics have been really good at helping to attract physicians from other countries or provinces,” says Dr. Alison Wiebe, who works out of the Alderney Health Home clinic that moved to its

new location under this new model in May. “They just walk in, everything’s provided, and then if it isn’t a match for them, they can walk out.”

Wiebe says eight family doctors and two nurse practitioners moved into the clinic when it opened, but it’s already expanding. The clinic is adding three new family doctors —

“The turn-key clinics have been really good at helping to attract physicians.”

—Dr. Alison Wiebe
Photo: Jeremy Hull



in August, late fall, and February 2027. Each is expected to take on between 1,300 and 1,350 patients. That’s roughly 4,000 new patient spots opening in the next eight months, says Wiebe.

“I think Dartmouth is in good stead,” she says.

There are 1,861 Nova Scotians on the Need a Family Practice registry in Dartmouth/Southeastern community health network, says Keith Corcoran, a representative for NS Health. He says planning for primary care services is a continuous process but did not point to any specific plans to provide medical services to new residents of Dartmouth South.

The province’s Need a Family Practice Registry peaked in June 2024 when CBC reported more than 160,000 Nova Scotians were without a family doctor, about 16.2 per cent of the population. There were 60,193 people on the registry on May 1. □

Demolition permit issued for former Sobeys building

By Lynnette Alford
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A demolition permit has been issued for the commercial building at 205 Pleasant Street in Dartmouth, the site of a former Sobeys location that was damaged by fire earlier this year.

The Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) issued Demolition Permit DEMO-2026-06673 for the property on June 2, 2026. The permit, submitted May 25, covers the commercial demolition of the property and is set to expire November 27, 2026. □



FINALLY, A CHANCE TO DIG IN: This May, Emma Sanders and Noah Wolfe got the news they’d waited over a year for: they finally had access to a community garden box. Read their hopeful story, the first in our series on community gardening, at southdartmouth.ca or scan the QR code. (Story and photos by Amy Ward, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter)



Regularly on Saturdays at lunchtime, the Dartmouth Common Pizza Oven will be fired up. (Photo: Dartmouth Common Oven/Facebook)

Dartmouth-area summer events offer affordable (and even free) family fun

By Christian Ensslin

Another school year has ended, and now your family doesn’t know what to do? Fear not, South Dartmouth (and surrounds) offers plenty of budget-conscious things to do this July and August, with local attractions now open with their regular summer programming.

The Quaker House on Ochterloney Street – part of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum – is not only Dartmouth’s oldest standing building but also offers exciting tales of whale hunting (and connections to Moby Dick). Come learn how early settler families lived in Dartmouth around 240 years ago. Quaker House is open Wednesdays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Also part of the Dartmouth Heritage Museum, Evergreen House on Newcastle Street continues the history tour of Dartmouth with tales from a grander era approximately 100 years later, and moving into more recent times. This house was also at one point the home of storyteller and folklorist Helen Creighton. This museum is open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Admission to both museum locations is free.

Closer to King’s Wharf, the Back to the Sea Centre is now also open for the summer. With their touch-tanks and displays of local sea life, a visit here is always fun and interactive. Their opening hours are Wednesdays 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and Thursdays to Sundays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; entry is free for children under three, with those older paying between \$5 and \$6 (or \$20 for any group of four).

Easily reachable by Halifax Transit Bus Route 5 (Portland Street), as well as by car, the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum has always been a hit with families. The farm displays traditional farm buildings and gardens and has several live farm animals to see. There

is also a traditional tea room, where almost everything is made from scratch (including the ice cream). Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the tea room is open between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Museum entry is free; the tea room offers affordable options like scones and home-baked cookies, or more complete lunches.

A short distance from South Dartmouth along Bus Route 6 (Pleasant Street) is the Shearwater Aviation Museum, open in summer Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. 5 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 12 p.m. 4 p.m. This museum showcases Canada’s military aviation history, and a large number of aircraft are available for the public to see. There is also an aviation-themed art gallery on site. There is no admission fee.

As usual in summer, all local lifeguarded swimming spots are now open, with lifeguarding hours typically from late morning and throughout the afternoon. Water sampling is also done daily on all beaches where a lifeguard is stationed, with test results available at halifax.ca/beaches. Closest to South Dartmouth are Penhorn Lake Beach and Birch Cove Beach.

Regularly on Saturdays at lunchtime, the Dartmouth Common Pizza Oven will be fired up. Bring your own pizza ingredients, and volunteers at the oven will guide you through the process of cooking in a wood-fired stone oven. There are some picnic tables available, but bringing your own blanket or chairs is a good idea on busy Saturdays.

Finally, the three weekly markets at Alderney Landing are worth visiting any week. The Saturday Farmers Market is packed with fresh local produce from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., while the quieter Artisan Market on Sundays (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and Wednesdays at the Waterfront Market (12 a.m. to 6 p.m.) invite you to browse works from local artists and makers, as well as offering fresh produce. □



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Craig MacKinnon's portable radio unit, which contains four different radios, at the 2026 Field Day on June 28, 2026. (Photo: Lynnette Alford / South Dartmouth Post)

Field Day tests local amateur radio operators' emergency readiness

By Lynnette Alford
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On June 28, members of two local amateur radio clubs gathered at Dartmouth High School for the 2026 Field Day. The annual event — which brings together the Dartmouth Amateur Radio Club and the Halifax Amateur Radio Club and is held in collaboration with the Salvation Army — tests how operators can communicate when traditional systems fail.

“Field Day is loosely based on an emergency situation. So it gets people out of their homes and, as the name suggests, in the field,” Craig MacKinnon, Field Day co-chair, told the Post.

The event requires operators to try and make as many contacts as they can in a span of 24 hours. They operate on backup power to simulate the conditions of an emergency situation.

While Field Day has a competitive side, member Amanda Schreiber said the main goal is preparing for times where regular communications methods may not work.

“We’re here to communicate and pass those messages when cell

phone towers are down, and when the power’s down,” Schreiber said, explaining how the radio gear relies on generators instead of the internet.

“For us, there is the field day part, which is the radio,” said Schreiber. “And then, of course, we work with the Salvation Army and St. John Ambulance for the emergency setup.”

The aim is not only to demonstrate the technology, but also to help people feel more prepared.

“We want them to know what to expect,” she said. “If they see this and see how well we work together, and how relaxed it all is, it makes them a little bit better, and then they don’t panic when an emergency happens.”

For many operators, the sense of connection felt at events like Field Day is what makes the hobby so rewarding.

“This hobby brings together people from all walks of life,” MacKinnon said. “It’s an international hobby. When I turn on the radio, I have no idea who I’m going to talk to, and that’s kind of the fun of it.”

For Schreiber the best part of the weekend was simple. “I think for me it’s the teamwork.” □

As owners consider retirement, Dartmouth pizzeria still offers a slice of fading N.S. culinary tradition

By Jeremy Hull
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Walking into Pizza Tonight reminds me of escaping the tyranny of high school cafeteria lunches when I was 17 years old. This is a pizzeria reminiscent of the teenage diet in small-town Nova Scotia circa 1997, when we dined at places like Pizza Tonight for a slice of the good life.

Owners Nadia and Jim Tohme joined the wave of immigrants who came to Nova Scotia in the 1980s during the Lebanese Civil War. They found a home and a life selling pizza in Dartmouth. After 35 years, Nadia says they are ready to sell the business, but she’s having a hard time letting go of their connection to the neighbourhood.

“Our success comes from our community,” Nadia says. “They became like our families.”

After she prepares a pot of strong Lebanese coffee, she invites me to sit for a cup of the stove-top, espresso-style brew.

“We don’t sell it but all our customers, they try it,” she says.

There aren’t too many places like Pizza Tonight anymore. Their pie is so heavy with cheese and toppings you should stop yourself at one slice, but you force-feed yourself a second. My pizza and garlic fingers both have real bacon, a rarity in the modern pizza landscape where cost trumps product. You can’t compete with a \$5 pie from Little Caesar’s when families, pressed for time and oppressed by bills, need to get food in front of the kids — unless you care enough to reward customers for their loyalty.

The care and customer service need to be as real as the bacon, Nadia says.

“The customers, they help us to make the recipe perfect,” she says.

She and Jim arrived in Nova Scotia from Lebanon in 1988. They opened their first store in 1990 and Pizza Tonight in 1991. Nadia says they didn’t know how to make pizza when they started. Their customers helped them with their patience and feedback while



Nadia and Jim Tohme stand at the counter in Pizza Tonight, the store on Pleasant Street where they’ve served Dartmouth for more than three decades. (Photos: Jeremy Hull / South Dartmouth Post)

they found their way, she says. They prepare their food the same way they built their business; from scratch.

The pizza is dense. The soft, thick dough is the kind that made Lebanese pizza famous for my generation, the same culinary tradition that gave Halifax its official food: The donair.

Nadia says there’s always room in the market for good pizza, but the secret ingredient for success seems to be a lot of hard work. For 35 years, she says they’ve only taken one morning off a week.

“Monday — when my children, they were small, just to have time to sit down with them.”

She and Jim still open the restaurant at 4:00 p.m., even on their “day off.” Nadia says when she wakes up, she comes to the store to feel at home, and the locals are as loyal to the brand as Nadia and Jim are to their business.

“When they come home from Alberta they call from the airport to order,” says Steve Townsend, who drives delivery for Pizza Tonight. “These guys are an institution.”

Jim is busy cooking while I’m at the store. I order the “Big Twin Pizzas” special: A sixteen-inch pizza and a 16-inch garlic fingers for \$40. You can upgrade the garlic fingers to a second pizza for an ex-

tra \$5. I order my pizza with the works and get a large serving of bacon on both, but half the garlic fingers are bacon free — the original recipe celebrated in Pizza Tonight’s online reviews.

My family puts a healthy dent in the food, but the two pizzas feed four adults and four children at an average of \$5 per person with enough leftovers for one or two lunchboxes. Everyone is happy with the product. The kids, who are still afraid of everything except cheese, pick off some toppings, but the food makes the rest of us nostalgic for a style that’s changing. This isn’t the kind of gourmet pizza that’s en vogue with the stone oven, traditional, thin crust crowd. This is the Lebanese-style soft-crust pizza that Nova Scotians of my generation grew up with.

The same quality goes into everything on the menu, says Jim. “Try one thing, I promise you come back for it again,” he says.

They learned about their customers’ lives over the years, Jim says. When they rented movies (before streaming, when a family would watch Back to the Future with their pizza on Friday night) they collected addresses and phone numbers.

“We’re like bartenders, we know everything about our customers,” Jim says. □



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Jeremy Hull, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



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