

\$5,000 for community channel



Barb Rayner/Courier

Mayor John Craig (centre) presents a cheque for \$5,000 to Lee Ann Ward, chair of the board of the St. Andrews Community Channel, to help with operating and production costs as it prepares to expand into N.B.'s first over-the-air independent community television station. Looking on is Brian Dickson, the channel's technical director.

By **BARB RAYNER**
barbrayn@nbnet.nb.ca

ST. ANDREWS – The town has donated \$5,000 to CHCT-TV, the St. Andrews independent community channel, to help with the station's operating and production costs. Last November the Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commissions (CRTC) granted the community channel a broadcast licence and they recently ordered transmission equipment so they can broadcast their television service on UHF channel 26.

Although the transmitter is modest, it is a major step for CHCT-TV and making the channel available to everyone will help launch programs such as TV bingo and TV26 community news. The station's board chair Lee Ann Ward said, "It is really the link between us and the community." Mayor John Craig, who presented the cheque on behalf of the town this week, congratulated the community channel board on being granted an operating licence by the CRTC.

Mayor urges station support

"I am proud to make this presentation of \$5,000 to the St. Andrews community channel to assist them with their fund raising towards a UHF transmitter and antenna array system."

"The town of St. Andrews is not only proud to help with this project, which will greatly benefit our community by bringing it closer together, but we are especially proud to be able to assist in their growth by supplying space at the W.C O'Neill Arena complex for their operations. "I wish the community channel great success and urge everyone to consider giving to this worthwhile project which will raise and enhance the profile of our town." Unlike almost all community television in Canada, CHCT-TV is independent and receives no funding from cable.

The St. Andrews community channel has been operating its television service through cable for 14 years and

will now expand to become the province's first over-the-air independent community TV station.

With added transmission power their goal is to provide programming to a wider audience in St. Andrews and the surrounding area.

Rinnie Plomp, the channel's advertising coordinator, said, "Operating a transmitter and providing regular programming will require more funding and the station will look to new avenues such as membership and commercial advertising."

The community channel is a nonprofit organization made up of volunteers from the St. Andrews area and their mandate is to provide local programming that reflects the town's people, their issues, events and interests. Their goal is to raise \$16,000 for the necessary equipment and plans are to hold fund-raising drives and events.