



## A Message from the Chair Seniors Take Action Coalition

Each new year brings a time of reflection and renewal. 2026 heralds a time of uncertainty that is concerning. Yet, the resilience of Cape Bretoners can provide the footsteps for us to follow.

We can focus on those things we can control. We can reach out to others to expand or strengthen our social connections. We can learn to live in the moment. We can find ways to be as healthy as we can be (and see kale chips as a comfort food...perhaps). We can share a cup of tea and a moment with another.

When you feel overwhelmed, find another for conversation. Become informed about the challenges we will face. And most importantly, we can realize our lives will always be uncertain and we have the wisdom to accept that.

*Dorothy Barnard*

### Message de la Présidente

Chaque nouvelle année apporte un temps de réflexion et de renouveau. 2026 annonce une période d'incertitude qui inquiète. Pourtant, la résilience des habitants du Cap-Breton peut nous montrer la voie à suivre.

Nous pouvons nous concentrer sur les choses que nous pouvons contrôler. Nous pouvons tendre la main aux autres pour élargir ou renforcer nos liens sociaux. Nous pouvons apprendre à vivre le moment présent. Nous pouvons trouver des moyens d'être aussi en santé que possible (et peut-être voir les chips de chou frisé comme un aliment réconfortant...). Nous pouvons partager une tasse de thé et un moment avec quelqu'un d'autre.

Quand vous vous sentez dépassé, trouvez quelqu'un avec qui discuter. Informez-vous des défis que nous devons relever. Et surtout, nous pouvons réaliser que nos vies seront toujours incertaines et que nous avons la sagesse de l'accepter.

*Dorothy Barnard*

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*Welcome to Better with Age. This newsletter is provided by the Seniors Take Action Coalition to learn more about seniors and their concerns by providing information and opportunities for seniors to contribute to this newsletter. We hope to demonstrate and celebrate the lives and contributions of older adults in Richmond County. As strong advocates for age-friendly communities, we will increase the awareness about, and emphasize the importance of, age-friendly communities for people of all ages who live in Richmond County.*

*Bienvenue à Better with Age. Ce bulletin d'information est fourni par la Seniors Take Action Coalition afin d'en savoir plus sur les personnes âgées et leurs préoccupations, en fournissant des informations et en offrant aux personnes âgées la possibilité de contribuer à ce bulletin d'information. Nous espérons démontrer et célébrer les contributions des personnes âgées dans le comté de Richmond. En tant que fervents défenseurs des communautés Amies des Aînés, nous augmenterons la sensibilisation et nous soulignerons l'importance de cette collectivité pour les personnes de tous âges qui vivent dans cette région.*

# AGE-FRIENDLY communities

## Le conseil d'administration de STAC planifie l'avenir !

Au fil des ans, une grande partie des activités entreprises par STAC a été axée sur les communications, la défense des intérêts, la planification de conférences et la collaboration avec des clubs pour les aînés ainsi que d'autres organisations afin d'offrir des opportunités éducatives aux nombreuses communautés du comté de Richmond. STAC a également collaboré avec des groupes de soutien communautaire pour explorer différentes façons de combler les lacunes dans la prestation des services.

En 2025, STAC a également établi un partenariat avec Bereavement Families Nova Scotia pour offrir du soutien par les pairs aux personnes en deuil dans la région.

Ces derniers mois, les membres du conseil d'administration de STAC ont « retroussé leurs manches » pour :

- passer en revue les réalisations ;
- discuter de l'état actuel et des défis ;
- explorer des options pour continuer à soutenir et à promouvoir des communautés accueillantes pour les aînés.

Pour atteindre son mandat, STAC dépend de bénévoles dévoués, de la soumission de demandes de subventions pour obtenir des fonds et de partenariats avec d'autres organisations.

Le conseil d'administration reconnaît qu'en tant que petite organisation à but non lucratif, STAC ne peut faire que ce qu'il est possible avec ses ressources financières limitées.

Si vous souhaitez faire du bénévolat au sein de l'organisation STAC, veuillez contacter la coordonnatrice des relations communautaires de STAC, Celeste Gotell, via courriel à :

[seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com](mailto:seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com)

Suivez-nous sur Facebook : [Seniors Take Action Coalition \(STAC\)](#)



## STAC Board is planning for the future!

Over the years, much of the activities undertaken by STAC have focused on communications, advocacy, planning conferences, and working in partnership with seniors' clubs and other organizations to bring educational opportunities to the numerous communities in Richmond County. STAC has also collaborated with community support groups to explore different ways to address gaps in service delivery.

In 2025, STAC also partnered with Bereavement Families Nova Scotia to bring grief peer support to the area.

In recent months, members of the STAC Board have “rolled up their sleeves” to:

- review achievements;
- discuss current state and challenges; and
- explore options to continue supporting older adults and continue promoting age friendly communities.

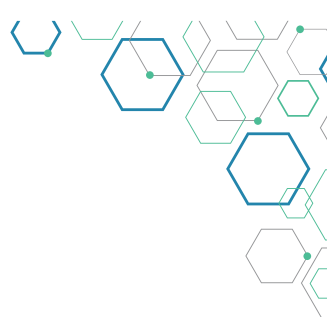
To achieve its mandate, STAC is reliant on dedicated volunteers, grant submissions to secure funds, and partnerships with other organizations.

The Board acknowledges that as a small non-profit organization, STAC can only do so much with its limited financial resources.

Should you have an interest in volunteering with the STAC organization, please contact STAC's Community Outreach Coordinator, Celeste Gotell, at: [seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com](mailto:seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com)

Follow us on Facebook: [Seniors Take Action Coalition \(STAC\)](#)





## Greetings from MLA Trevor Boudreau

As we welcome this new year, we want to take a moment to thank our incredible seniors and dedicated volunteers in our community. Your wisdom, kindness and commitment make a meaningful difference in Richmond County every single day. We rely on the strength and experience of our volunteers to help keep our community festivals and events running smoothly. These events showcase our county and create a sense of community that enriches everyone.

The seniors in our community are the first to participate in initiatives that foster connection and care through social gatherings which support our mental and physical well-being. Through the active engagement of older adults in our community, they are demonstrating that commitment to community is a lifelong endeavour and essential for a healthy and connected society. I want to thank our incredible senior community for your dedication, generosity, and the lasting impact you make in our county of Richmond every day.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to let you know that our office is here to help you with questions you may have about support or grants that may be available to you. We want to ensure that everyone is receiving any benefits that may be available to them. Currently the Heating Assistance Rebate and the Seniors Care Grant are provincial programs that are open with a deadline of March 31st, 2026. Additionally, the Salvation Army Heat Fund opened January 12, 2026. You can apply online or come into the office and Colette or Lori can assist you with your application. Our office can be reached by phone at 902-535-2297 or by e-mail at [info@trevorboudreau.ca](mailto:info@trevorboudreau.ca). Best wishes for a happy, prosperous and healthy 2026!

## Vœux du membre de parlement, Trevor Boudreau

Alors que nous accueillons cette nouvelle année, nous voulons prendre un moment pour remercier nos incroyables aînés et nos bénévoles dévoués dans notre communauté. Votre sagesse, votre gentillesse et votre engagement font une différence véritable chaque jour au comté de Richmond. Nous comptons sur la force et l'expérience de nos bénévoles pour aider à assurer le bon déroulement des festivals et événements communautaires. Ces événements mettent en valeur notre comté et créent un sentiment d'appartenance à la communauté qui enrichit tout le monde.

Les aînés de notre communauté sont les premiers à participer aux initiatives qui favorisent le lien et l'entraide par le biais de rassemblements sociaux, ce qui soutient notre bien-être mental et physique. Grâce à l'engagement actif des aînés de notre communauté, ils démontrent que l'engagement envers la communauté est un effort de toute une vie et essentiel pour une société saine et connectée. Je tiens à remercier nos incroyables aînés pour votre dévouement, générosité et l'impact durable que vous faites chaque jour dans notre comté de Richmond.

Je voulais également profiter de cette occasion pour vous informer que notre bureau est là pour vous aider avec les questions que vous pourriez avoir concernant le soutien ou les subventions qui pourraient vous être disponibles. Nous voulons assurer que chacun reçoive tous les avantages qui pourraient lui être accessibles. De plus, le Fonds de chauffage de l'Armée du Salut a également ouvert le 12 janvier 2026. Vous pouvez faire une demande en ligne ou venir au bureau pour que Colette ou Lori puissent vous aider avec votre demande. Vous pouvez joindre notre bureau par téléphone au 902-535-2297 ou par courriel à [info@trevorboudreau.ca](mailto:info@trevorboudreau.ca). Meilleurs vœux pour une année 2026 heureuse, prospère et en santé !



# AGE-FRIENDLY communities



Information provided by Alzheimer Society of NS

Each January, Alzheimer Societies across the country lead **Alzheimer's Awareness Month** to encourage people across Canada to learn more about dementia and its impact. This year, for Alzheimer's Awareness Month, we're showing up with the Forget Me Not flower as a reminder to Forget No One – because no one should face dementia alone. Too many people don't know where to go for help, but we're raising our hand to remind Canadians that we're here to help.

## Day of Action

Join us on Wednesday, January 28, 2026 to show your support and combat stigma by sharing messages of support and engaging in dialogue around dementia. Be sure to use the hashtag #ForgetNoOne and tag us @alzheimerns.

Together, we can replace silence with support and stigma with hope, ensuring no one faces dementia alone today and a future without dementia tomorrow.

For more information: <https://alzheimer.ca/ns/en/awarenessmonth>  
 Shealene Barrett, Education & Outreach Regional Coordinator, Cape Breton  
 Tel: 902-842-1314 E-mail: [shealene.barrett@asns.ca](mailto:shealene.barrett@asns.ca)

To access 'A Year at a Glance' in French and/or view a larger version, click below.



## 2025 YEAR AT A GLANCE

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BEREAVED FAMILIES NOVA SCOTIA**  
 STAC offered two support programs for persons interested in support to deal with their grief.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS EXPO**  
 At the expo organized by STAC in Louisdale in May 2025, some 35 representatives from community, health, and government organizations were on hand to share information about the many programs and services available to residents of Richmond County.

**ADVOCACY EFFORTS**  
 STAC sent numerous letters to municipal, provincial, and federal government officials to express concerns on issues of significant importance to seniors, such as the closure of emergency services, the reduction of reimbursements to help cover heating costs, dialysis treatments, and the review of grant allocations, to name just a few.

**NEW TELEVISED PROGRAM 'AGE-FRIENDLY CONVERSATIONS'**  
 With guest speakers on a variety of topics, STAC launched its new televised program on Telle, "Age-Friendly Conversations".

**SENIORS CENTRE WITHOUT WALLS**  
 Year two of the "Seniors' Centre Without Walls" wrapped up with almost 1,000 followers on Facebook. STAC promoted virtual learning opportunities, hosted the STAC Virtual Coffee Club, and shared information using various fora, including but not limited to the monthly calendar and Telle broadcasting.

**STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS WITH CLUBS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**  
 In partnership with seniors' clubs, STAC organized monthly meetings with guest speakers on various topics of interest to members. Additionally, STAC established connections with other organizations to expand its program offerings.

**Seniors Take Action Coalition**  
 ...promouvant les communautés âgées

**Coalition des aînés en action**  
 ...soutenant nos communautés âgées des aînés

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**BILINGUAL LOGO**

The STAC logo has been redesigned to include English and French.

**BETTER WITH AGE NEWSLETTER**

STAC celebrated five years of producing its quarterly newsletter, "Better With Age". More than 1,000 people access the newsletter via social media and the Richmond County website via the following link:  
<https://www.richmondcounty.ca/seniors-resources-and-support.html#betterwithage>

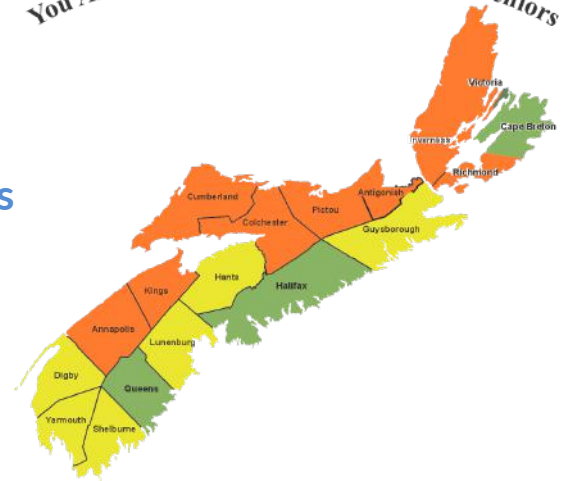
**COMMUNICATION OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES – MONTHLY CALENDARS AND TELEVISED EPISODES**

STAC produced 12 monthly calendars and 52 episodes of "What's Happening", broadcast at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily on Telle.



# AGE-FRIENDLY communities

You Are The Nova Scotia Federation of Seniors



## Update from the Nova Scotia Federation of Seniors

By: Anne Marie, Federation President

"The members of the Seniors' Advisory Committee (SAC) have been working, since June 2025, to restructure our provincial membership to be more inclusive for all seniors. We accomplished a lot with a professional, external facilitator over two full days. We are also determining our focus for the upcoming year." The Federation is one of nine members of the Seniors' Advisory Committee (SAC). The Federation is also going to be launching a new fund raising monthly raffle that will provide clubs and councils who are members an opportunity to participate. More to come.

### Reprinted from the Province of Nova Scotia website - Dept of Seniors and Long Term-Care

"The Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia, formerly called the Group of IX, serves as an advisory body to Government through the Department of Seniors to facilitate the development of government age-related policies, programs, and services. The Council is dedicated to improving the inclusion, well-being, and independence of older adults living in Nova Scotia."

For more information, visit the [Seniors' Advisory Council of Nova Scotia](#) webpage. Watch for future updates from the Nova Scotia Federation of Seniors (NSFS).



### 2025 Year in Review

**Community Development Support:**

- Intergenerational Engagement
- Community Wellness
- Community Infrastructure

2025 was a year for leaning into change, building new approaches for supporting and celebrating senior-serving groups and organizations, and deepening our focus on strengthening community connection.

**In-person and Virtual Events:**

- Aging Well in Community Workshops and Presentations
- Community Hall Transformation & Net-zero Presentations
- Intergenerational Connections Workshops
- Seniors Expos & Community Health Board Info Sessions
- Disrupting Ageism Consultations
- Tea & Talk Round Tables
- Seniors Week Celebration

**"The need for connection & community is primal, as fundamental as the need for air, water and food."**

150 groups & organizations receiving 2026 Year of Aging Well calendars to distribute to community members.

-Dean Ornish

**Enhanced Digital Communications:**

- Updated user-friendly website
- Monthly and special e-bulletins tailored for the CBSS sector
- Using social media to promote CBSS sector programs & events

**Coming up in 2026:**

- Interrupting Ageism in NS workshops
- Mental Health First Aid - Supporting Older Adults
- Intergenerational Impact Partnership
- Dementia Live Experience



A copy of the Annual Report can be viewed online by [clicking here](#).



[Click here to subscribe to the newsletter mailing list!](#)





# WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?

## “L’Ardoise Sally Anne”

By: Julie Freeman

I was looking forward so very much to chatting with Sally Anne Mombourquette, a neighbour of mine in L’Ardoise. Sally Anne graciously agreed to spend time with me at her home, her family homestead as it happens, to share her remarkable story. I pulled into her driveway, admiring the stunning views of the Atlantic, and hoped for a pleasant hour in good conversation. Three hours later, I headed home, knowing Sally Anne a bit better, but only just beginning to really sense what a substantial human being she is. Her quiet modesty, humour and big heart are much more than simply beguiling.

Sally, as she is called with great affection, was the 7th of 10 children born to fisherman Manuel and his wife Sarah (McGrath) Mombourquette between 1924 and 1941. Although she does not have a lot of memories of the oldest two living at home, (having left to find work whilst still in their teens) she does recall how industrious her siblings were and how hard-working that family was, her brothers fishing and her sisters sewing, cooking and tending gardens for the family food supply.

Sally knew early on her calling was to teach and that ambition didn’t lend itself to domesticity. She made the choice not to marry and start a family as she looked at the world around her then. Now, today, she has no regrets about that, and the world has given her no reason to. Her only regret is losing touch with friends and family over the years.

During the summers between grades 9 and 10, she was working at the Inverary Inn, in Baddeck, and thrived on the hard work and camaraderie she found. Even though most of the summer workers were older university students. I sensed it was when Sally began to find her place amongst her peers. Immediately following grade 11, she spent a year working at Simpson’s in Halifax, reveling in the city life and friends she made who are still close today. Sally then returned to L’Ardoise to spend another summer at the Inverary Inn. For Grade 12, Sally moved to Arichat, living at the convent with Les Filles de Jesus Sisters. **“Some of the happiest years of my life, great memories”**, says Sally.

But teaching was calling, and so from 1955 to 1956, it was ‘Normal College’, as Teachers College was called back then, and a life in Truro. With her teaching certificate in hand, Sally returned to L’Ardoise to teach public school for the next 12 years. But Sally has a drive to do everything well, give it her best - and so she enrolled in St. Francis Xavier (St. F.X.) University for a Bachelor’s Degree (BA) in order to ‘do well’, as she says now. The first in her family to achieve a university degree, I might add.

St. F.X. graduation in 1968 was followed by three summer school classes in Halifax, sponsored by the Department of Education. There, she was enrolled in a program to teach remedial reading. We spoke at some length about how meaningful those 20 years were, teaching remedial reading, moving between schools in River Bourgeois and L’Ardoise, as students were referred to Sally and her colleagues. Often, there would be only two or three students in these classes and so the impact of her skills and caring would be so rewarding. Friends made amongst her colleagues are still cherished today, and so many local residents still recall being in Sally Anne Mombourquette’s classes, with some amount of pride and a lot of affection, I observe.



Sally on far right- Grade 11



Sally - Grade 11



Normal College days in Truro



## “L’Ardoise Sally Anne” ... continued

Along the way, Sally lost her mom aged 67, and three of her sisters passed away in their 60s, But it appears she inherited her Dad’s longevity genes, as he was here till he turned 95. Sally Anne, herself, turned 90 in November this year, and the community party was such an incredibly joyful event. It felt like the whole of L’Ardoise and beyond were here to celebrate with her, everyone whose lives she has touched, impacted in meaningful ways, with her caring.

As a tribute to her heading up the L’Ardoise Food Bank for so many years with such grace and good management, the Holy Guardian Angel Parish has officially named it Sally’s Pantry, because helping folks and families in time of need is very personal to her. So appropriate, Sally’s Pantry, like her heart, full of whatever is needed, for everyone.

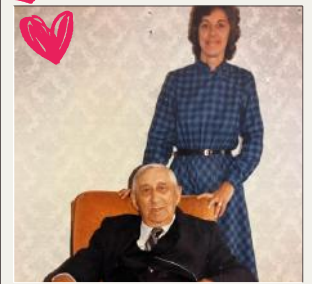
I asked Sally about stories from her own life that made great memories. Stories about her political affiliations brought smiles. As a strong Liberal supporter all her life, it was natural to her to help out with campaigning locally, and her take-charge approach was invaluable to so many. Memories of Richie Mann’s campaigns and time in office seems to have been very memorable, too many stories to tell! She was clearly a valued, and I’m sure tireless, worker on so many campaigns, because several past political friends turned up to pay tribute at her party, attributing her wit and sharp mind to successes in their careers.

Another great story Sally shared goes back to 1977, when she and her good friend Cecile Miller took two summer months to drive across Canada together. Trading the use of her car for a friend’s van, they set off, intending to camp in the van. Because they were welcomed by so many folks who had said ‘if you get out this way, give us a call, you can stay with us!’, they actually spent only a couple of night sleeping in the van. They did, however, manage to dip their toes in two of our three oceans, east and west, in spite of lots of B.C. fog on Long Beach. Sally recalls being in Thunder Bay when the news of Elvis’ death was made known, and was impressed by how folks of every age mourned him in that town.

In many ways, this story could have been written about so many people here, in and around L’Ardoise, who give of their time and talents so freely. But what makes Sally Anne’s story so special is demonstrated by the recent gathering to mark her 90th. It was more, much more, than a birthday celebration to everyone there. It was a single focus, a unified “Thank You”, a beam of pure joy that celebrated this one beautiful individual who gives so selflessly of her time and care. I asked her if there is anything left on her bucket list. She looked at me wryly and said, **“I just hope I can stay healthy enough to keep doing whatever needs to be done.”**

*“Aunty Sally is a remarkable woman who shies away from the spotlight but yet is always there in the background making sure every detail is looked after.”*

*Carolyn Cook, niece of Sally Anne*



**Sally Anne with her father, Manuel on his 90th birthday**



**Sally Anne at her 50 year high school reunion in Arichat. Pictured with her life long friends Idella Boudreau and Shirley (Bowen) Sampson.**



**Sally Anne was presented with the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal. She was one of 15 Richmond County residents who were honoured for their service to others.**



**Sally with her siblings, left to right, Rita Mae Sampson, Sally, Gladys, and Tommy.**



# Spotlight on:

## The Richmond County Artist Alliance- A Community Waiting to Happen

By: Archie Nadon



From the first organizing meeting, it was clear that artists, artisans, and makers in Richmond County were a community waiting to be formed. Those early meetings were well attended. People talked about what they were working on, exchanged ideas, and began forming connections that had been missing. The Richmond Artists Alliance welcomes artists and artisans of all ages and skill levels. Members include hobbyists, professionals, self-taught makers, and people with formal training. Supporters and enthusiasts are welcome as well. When we use the word “artist,” we mean anyone seriously engaged in making things.

Although the Alliance is new, you may already have heard of us. We now have more than sixty members across the county, many of them seniors. During our first year we also operated a seasonal gallery at the D'Escousse Civic Improvement Society Hall, closing in mid-December.

### How it Started

My wife, Elaine Mandrona, and I retired to Petit-de-Grat from Moncton in 2020. We soon started an online publication, The Scrape Magazine, to seek out and write about artists, artisans, and makers across Cape Breton.

Certain themes kept recurring in those interviews. There were few serious venues for selling work. Richmond County was often overlooked by tourists interested in art. And many artists felt isolated, with limited opportunities to talk to others doing similar work.

After a couple of years, Mandrona—who is also an artist—decided it was time to act. Organizing meetings were held in January and February of 2025, and the Alliance grew from there.

The group is diverse. Some members have never taken a formal art class; others have studied or taught at the university level. What they share is a commitment to their work.

We held two show-and-tell events during the year. The second included Greg Davies, curator of the Cape Breton University Art Gallery, who has been a strong advocate for artists at all stages. In both cases, discussion could easily have gone on much longer.

**Three Richmond Artists Alliance board members: Breann Calder-Pottie, Elaine Mandrona, and Colleen Dewolfe at the Meet the Artists Night at the Alliance Gallery in the D'Escousse Civic Improvement Society Hall.**





# Spotlight on:



## The Richmond County Artist Alliance- A Community Waiting to Happen (continued)

### The Gallery

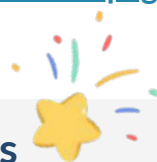
One of the major developments of our first year was being offered gallery space at the D'Escousse Civic Improvement Society Hall. We received strong support from the organization, especially manager Ronnie Leblanc and volunteer Daphne Pottie-Campbell. Visitors consistently told us how much they appreciated having local art visible in the community, and it helped us connect with artists we hadn't yet reached.

Encouraged by the response, we plan to reopen the gallery on Mother's Day and are exploring a second gallery space in St. Peter's.

Looking ahead, one project of particular interest to seniors is the Richmond County History and Art Project. Seniors are the holders of local stories. Working with member artists, those stories will be turned into visual art and installed in public places around the county. Public art stays present. People engage with it simply by passing by.

### Need further information?

E-mail us [info@richmondartistsalliance.ca](mailto:info@richmondartistsalliance.ca) and check out our [Facebook page, Richmond Artist Alliance](#). Plus, we're only charging \$5 for the first year membership.



## December Volunteer of the Month: Sonia Morris

Beyond promoting active living, Sonia is deeply committed to serving her community through volunteerism and leadership. She generously gives her time as a board member of the Seniors Take Action Coalition, where she advocates for and supports initiatives that enhance the quality of life for older adults. In addition, Sonia plays an active role in fundraising and supporting vital local organizations, including the Hearts of Isle Madame, the local daycare, and area food banks, helping to ensure that essential programs and services remain accessible to those who need them most.

This past holiday season, Sonia's compassion and generosity were evident when she hosted a free English-style Christmas dinner for more than thirty community members. Her efforts provided not only a warm meal but also a sense of belonging, connection, and holiday spirit for those in attendance.

Please join us in recognizing Sonia for her hard work, dedication, and commitment to her community. We thank you for all you do for Richmond County!

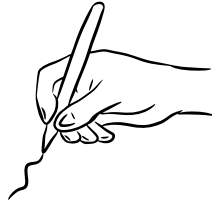


# From the desk of:

## It's Never Too Late

By: *Sonia Morris, Board member and owner of SonicSon's Fitness*

You can start living a more active and healthy life no matter your age.



First, figure out why you want to make this change. What's motivating you? Once you know your reason, come up with three concrete ways to improve your health. Break each approach into simple, doable steps and sort them by how quickly you can begin.

Use these steps to create a SMART goal: one that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Instead of a vague aim like "I want to exercise more," try something like "I'll walk for 30 minutes every day for the next two weeks."

Walking offers numerous benefits, including improved cardiovascular health, enhanced mood, support for weight management, and increased energy levels. Incorporating resistance training twice per week further benefits muscle strength, bone density, cognitive function, metabolic health, heart health, and mobility. Engaging a personal trainer or participating in group classes can provide valuable support throughout this process.

For individuals managing complex medical conditions or injuries, consulting a physiotherapist for a tailored rehabilitation program is advisable; self-referral is often possible without a physician's letter. Prior to beginning any new exercise regimen, it is essential to complete a PAR-Q form and obtain clearance from a healthcare professional pending your answers to your PAR-Q questions.

Checkout the latest ParticipACTION report: [2025 Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults](#)



## Il n'est jamais trop tard

Vous pouvez commencer à mener une vie plus active et plus saine, peu importe votre âge.

Commencez par déterminer pourquoi vous voulez effectuer ce changement. Qu'est-ce qui vous motive ? Une fois que vous connaissez votre raison, trouvez trois façons concrètes d'améliorer votre santé. Décomposez chaque approche en étapes simples et réalisables, et classez-les selon la rapidité avec laquelle vous pouvez commencer.

Utilisez ces étapes pour créer un objectif SMART : spécifique, mesurable, atteignable, pertinent et limité dans le temps. Au lieu d'un objectif vague comme "Je veux faire plus d'exercice", essayez quelque chose comme "Je marcherai 30 minutes chaque jour pendant les deux prochaines semaines".

Marcher nous offre de nombreux avantages, y compris l'amélioration de la santé cardiovasculaire, le renforcement de la santé mentale, le soutien à la gestion du poids et l'augmentation des niveaux d'énergie. Intégrer un entraînement en résistance deux fois par semaine profite en outre à la force musculaire, à la densité osseuse, aux fonctions cognitives, à la santé métabolique, à la santé cardiaque et à la mobilité. Faire appel à un entraîneur personnel ou participer à des cours en groupe peut fournir un soutien précieux tout au long de ce processus.

Pour les personnes gérant des conditions médicales complexes ou des blessures, il est recommandé de consulter un physiothérapeute pour un programme de réadaptation personnalisé ; l'auto-référence est souvent possible sans lettre d'un médecin. Avant de commencer tout nouveau programme d'exercices, il est essentiel de remplir un formulaire PAR-Q et d'obtenir l'autorisation d'un professionnel de la santé en fonction de vos réponses aux questions du PAR-Q.

Découvrez le bilan récent [ParticipAction: L'édition 2025 du Bulletin de l'activité physique chez les adultes](#)





# Spotlight on:

## My Journey with Grief

By: Celeste Gotell

*"Death ends a life, not a relationship." – Mitch Albom*

Grief is never an easy topic to discuss, and many people avoid it like the plague. My journey with grief began very early as a teenager when my grandfather died. I didn't know him well as we lived away most of my childhood, but I had fond memories of visits to my grandparents in the summer. A few years later my uncle died. These two deaths were sad, but I don't recall my feelings of grief.

My first real experience and memory with grief that was gut wrenching and profound - the death of my mother when I was 21 years old, and she was only 49. This loss was unimaginable and not something I thought I would have to face so young. Thankfully, my father, my siblings, several good friends and a large extended family wrapped their arms around me and helped me navigate the new normal. Twelve years later, my father died when I was 33 years of age. Once more, I was consumed with gut wrenching and profound grief. I never imagined living most of my adult life without my parents, surrounded by the love and comfort of family and friends, I survived and once again and somehow found a way to adjust to my new norm.

Over the next couple of decades, I experienced even more loss - my grandmother, two of my dearest friends, several aunts, uncles, more close friends and pets. With each death, I learned new coping skills and learned to walk with my grief.

In 2024, I experienced two great losses several weeks apart, my Aunt Claire, who was like a mother and big sister, as well as my brother, Blair. These recent experiences were quite different.

In the months leading up to both their deaths, I was given the gift of knowing their time was limited. I therefore became very intentional about what I needed and what they needed. Recently retired from full-time employment, I had the flexibility to spend as much time as possible with both my aunt and brother, offering support and learning from them.

Claire and Blair showed courage, grace and insight as they lived with cancer and later came to accept their death.

In their own special way, they each gave me an invaluable gift, one that I will carry with me until my time comes - live each day fully. Be present. Embrace moments with gratitude. Pursue passions. View each day as a fresh start to find meaning and joy in the now.

Each person and pet I grieved for taught me something and brought joy, laughter and love into my life. Over the years, I have learned to walk with my grief. The grief I feel is real, I still miss those I have loved so much, and there are days when I feel cheated and overwhelmed with sadness. Other days, I feel lighter and feel the joy for having been blessed to have them in my life. All these feelings are okay, I am okay. This is the journey.

My experience with both Claire and Blair's deaths influenced my decision to participate in the six week "Living with Grief Program". Shortly thereafter, I felt called to enroll in the training to become a peer grief support facilitator to support others in their grief journey.

Peer support groups for grief offer safe, spaces in communities where people can share experiences with loss, reducing isolation and providing coping strategies through shared stories and mutual support.

In addition to sharing my experience to help others, I have been reading about grief to better understand its impact.

The following are thoughtful insights shared by grief expert, David Kessler:

*None of us choose grief.  
We don't want our loved one's life to end.  
We don't want the pain, the longing, the emptiness  
that follows.  
But grief isn't the enemy –  
it's the cost of having loved deeply.*





# Spotlight on:

## My Journey with Grief (continued)

In 2025, Seniors Take Action Coalition (STAC) partnered with Bereaved Families Nova Scotia to bring grief programs to Richmond County. In the fall of 2025, I co-facilitated with Sonia Morris the first Living with Grief Program held in Louisdale. I was humbled to have ten participants trust us to support them in their grief journey.

To learn more about upcoming Living with Grief sessions in Richmond County, visit the Bereaved Families NS Calendar and follow us on Facebook.

Learn more about Bereaved Families of NS: <https://bfocb.ca/>



6-week Living With Grief Program  
ARICHAT



Are you dealing with a loss of a loved one?

We invite you to join our 6-week support program

March 18<sup>th</sup> to April 22<sup>nd</sup>

Tuesday/Wednesday afternoons 1:30 PM-3:30 PM

(Sessions held on March 18<sup>th</sup> & April 22<sup>nd</sup> will be held on Wednesdays)

Council Chamber Municipality Office, 357 HWY 206 Arichat

Contact us:

Phone: 902-564-6795 or Email: [info@bereavedfamiliesns.ca](mailto:info@bereavedfamiliesns.ca)



BEREAVED FAMILIES OF NOVA SCOTIA

Register Now



Seniors Take Action Coalition

Coalition des aînés en action



A FREE GRIEF SUPPORT PROGRAM TO HELP THOSE WHO ARE COPING WITH THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE. WE CAN HELP!

*"Getting the opportunity to talk about your loss & grief among people who know how it feels, in a safe, respectful place truly helped in the healing process, I highly recommend it."*

*Joyce Forgeron, Living with Grief Program participant*



Support 'N' Share Sessions  
LOUISDALE



Are you dealing with a loss of a loved one?

We invite you to join our monthly Support Sessions

January 28<sup>th</sup>, February 25<sup>th</sup>, March 25<sup>th</sup>, April 29<sup>th</sup>  
Wednesday afternoons from 2:00 PM- 3:30 PM

Glen Sampson Room, St Louis Parish, 156 Grandique Ferry Rd., Louisdale

Contact us:

Phone: 902-564-6795 or Email: [info@bereavedfamiliesns.ca](mailto:info@bereavedfamiliesns.ca)



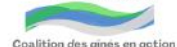
BEREAVED FAMILIES OF NOVA SCOTIA

Register Now



Seniors Take Action Coalition

Coalition des aînés en action



*"I received one on one bereavement counselling for the period of one year following the death of my husband. Two years later, I was still not in a good place and had the opportunity to attend this six-week group bereavement session with other people who had lost their loved ones. I found the group session much more beneficial because the participants felt the same as I did. They were kind, compassionate and caring to each other. It was the first time I felt that I was not alone."*

*Aileen Shannon*

*Living with Grief Program participant*

A FREE GRIEF SUPPORT PROGRAM TO HELP THOSE WHO ARE DEALING WITH THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE. WE CAN HELP!



# Spotlight on:

Every person deserves a voice; every voice deserves to be heard.

By: Rob Murphy, Audiologist, Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia (HSNS)

Hearing is important to your overall health. Staying socially active helps us stay healthy, especially as we age. Even small hearing changes can affect the quality of our social interactions or how often we connect with others, which may contribute to feelings of isolation.

Research has shown that better hearing can support better brain health as we age.


Many people do not realize they have hearing loss. For this reason, regular hearing checks are recommended for adults over the age of 65.

A hearing test includes several simple tests. Some are automatic, and others require your participation. For example, you may sit in a quiet booth and press a button when you hear beeping sounds. You may also be asked to repeat words presented at different volumes.



HEARING  
& SPEECH  
NOVA SCOTIA

## Did you know?

 Hearing loss affects 1 in 4 Canadians.

Hearing loss becomes more common as we age.

Hearing loss can be caused by noise, infections, aging, or genetics.

Tinnitus (ringing in the ears) is often linked to hearing loss.

Untreated hearing loss is linked to isolation, falls, depression, and memory decline.

Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia (HSNS) is a not-for-profit organization providing free hearing services to all Nova Scotians with a valid health card. You can refer yourself at any time by contacting one of the more than 30 HSNS offices available throughout the province.

HSNS provides a safe and welcoming space to support your hearing health. HSNS provides hearing tests, balance support, tinnitus care (ringing in the ears), and testing for hearing and brain function.

Contact HSNS via the following available options:

<https://www.hearingandspeech.ca/find-location/hsns-antigonish>

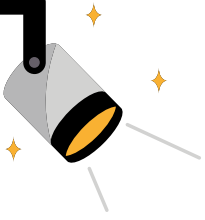
<https://hearingandspeech.ca/referrals-self-refer>

<https://hearingandspeech.ca>



Or call us, toll free:  
1-888-780-3330





# Spotlight on:

## Media Literacy - Find the Facts

By: Josie Robinson, Community Engagement and Public Relations Manager  
Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre



In the fall of 2025, the Dr Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre offered the media literacy program, "CTR+F Find the Facts".

The aim of the two-session program is to help adults develop skills to:

- spot misinformation
- trace the spread of claims online; and
- build digital resilience



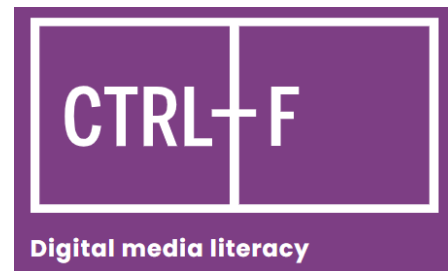
Usage of the Internet is increasingly inseparable from our day to day lives. To perform even the most routine tasks, we typically use the Internet. The pandemic certainly accelerated this, and got many people online who weren't before, including older adults. In 2023, Statistics Canada reported that 82% of seniors now regularly use the Internet.

### What's next?

Information spreads quickly, in a different and more complex way than when we relied on traditional print and broadcast media.



Today, we are challenged with the dominance of content algorithms. An algorithm is a constantly evolving mathematical equation that sorts and ranks content. Algorithms use information gathered about YOU to decide what might get your attention, and what will keep you coming back to a specific site.



### Find the Facts:

Learn to tell what's real and what's fake on the internet

## Here are some tips that may help you to safely and effectively interact online:

**Diversify your intake of internet content:** If you tend to stick to one site, try taking small steps to branch out and look at other sites for information. Simply accessing an additional news site per month may help increase your ability to think independently and lessen the control algorithms have over you.

**Slow down before you react:** Your attention is real currency in the social media age. If someone is trying to get a strong emotion out of you, that is often deliberate. The more time you spend watching angering videos, or arguing with strangers in comment sections, your algorithms will show you more of the same stuff. It can become a vicious, cycle.





# Spotlight on:

## Media Literacy - Find the Facts (continued)

**Question the intent of content:** Is the intent of the content to inform or to influence? Content made to inform may be news coverage, or simply raw information. However, content intended to influence usually has an end goal in mind. Perhaps the content creator wants you to buy something or vote a certain way. Social media blurs these distinctions a lot more than traditional media (TV and radio). Rather than becoming a passive consumer, it's in our best interest to practice critical thinking.

**Look for additional coverage:** Has someone you know on Facebook said that a common food is dangerous? Maybe a podcaster you follow on YouTube is saying that a crisis is happening in a city far away? Don't keep scrolling! Fact-check this information by getting off the site you're on and looking at different sites to validate the information. Has any other credible source shared this information? Look up key words in search engines, such as Google, or look at crowd sourced sites such as Wikipedia. AI chatbot tools (Chat GPT or Gemini) can also be helpful, but only when used ethically. Check the links in the reference notes rather than relying on summarized text alone.

**Investigate claims of expertise:** Anyone can amass a large following online in a short timeframe. But real-life expertise happens over time. It's important to determine whether this person has "domain knowledge." Has the person obtained any degrees or credentials in the field they're speaking on? What is the person's experience? Has the person published findings on the subject? By asking ourselves these questions, we also acknowledge that a person can be an expert in one area and not in another area.

**Practice click restraint:** Generative AI is making it easy to create convincing graphics. For example, a friend may send you a link on Facebook Messenger which appears to be a CBC news link. The image may look identical to an actual CBC graphic; however, if you hover over the image rather than click to open the site, and the URL preview says anything other than an actual CBC site, that's your warning sign that it's a phishing scam.

★ **Bonus tip for a brighter world:** If you find yourself angered or fooled by something you read online, consider shifting your energy into something worthy of your time, such as leaving a positive online review for a local business or listening to music created by one of your favorite artists.

***If you're interested in receiving hands-on help with media literacy, the Dr Kingston Health Centre will be offering the CTRL+F: Find the Facts Media Literacy workshop to residents of Richmond County.***

***We will collaborate with local seniors' clubs and other organizations in the spring to host these important media literacy sessions.***

***To express your interest in participating in this free offering, e-mail: [cepr.dkmchc@gmail.com](mailto:cepr.dkmchc@gmail.com)***





# COMMUNITY CORNER

## update



**Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre**

### MEMORY CAFES

A social environment for people living with dementia or other memory loss and their families. **These events are free to attend**



**What is a memory cafe?**

- Creative activities
- Entertainment
- Snacks and beverages
- Low stimulation, non-memory based conversation



**WINTER 2026 SESSION DATES:**  
January 13th, February 10th, March 17th, April 14th  
1:00 - 2:30 pm

40 School Road, L'Ardoise Nova Scotia, B0M 1S0

Call to register  
902-587-2800 Ext 3

**Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre** **ILNS**

### Disability Tax Credit:

What it is and how you can get **free help** to apply.



**February 26th, 2:00 to 3:00 pm**  
Dr Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre.  
40 School Rd, L'Ardoise, NS B0E 1S0

**Contact Josie to register**

 [cepr.dkmchc@gmail.com](mailto:cepr.dkmchc@gmail.com)

 902-587-2800 ext 4

**Seniors Centre Without Walls FOR RICHMOND COUNTY**

**Seniors Take Action Coalition**  
Coalition des aînés en action

### Join us for We Care Day a partnership with the Seniors Take Action Coalition and the Louisdale Seniors Fleur-de-Lis Club

**Fall Prevention**  
Involves a combination of making your home safer, staying physically active, and managing your health.

Rachael LeBlanc- Richmond County-Seniors' Safety & Social Inclusion Coordinator  
Courtney MacKinnon, Community Occupational Therapist- NS Health

**Wednesday, January 28, 2025 at 10am**  
Followed by a light lunch and the monthly meeting for the Louisdale Fleur-de-lis Club at 1pm  
Louisdale Parish Hall, 156 Grandique Ferry Road  
**Note: Should there be bad weather, it will be cancelled.**

**Seniors Centre Without Walls FOR RICHMOND COUNTY**

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### Join us for We Care Day a partnership with the Seniors Take Action Coalition and the Louisdale Seniors Fleur-de-Lis Club

**Your Safety is a Priority**  
Join Steve to learn more about Preparing for an Emergency, Climate Safety, the Voluntary Vulnerable Person's Registry, Richmond County's Voyent Alert System, comfort centres and more...

Steve Marcellus, Emergency Services Coordinator  
Municipality of the County of Richmond

**Wednesday, February 25, 2025 at 10am**  
Followed by a light lunch and the monthly meeting for the Louisdale Fleur-de-lis Club at 1pm  
Louisdale Parish Hall, 148 Grandique Ferry Road  
**Note: Should there be bad weather, it will be cancelled.**





# COMMUNITY CORNER update

Needing a little help these days?

### St. Peter's & Area Food Bank

Serves St. Peter's and surrounding communities

9785 Grenville Street, St. Peter's (basement)

Open every second Thursday from 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

For general inquiries, call 902-631-8830.

### Louisdale Food Bank

Basement of the Lions Den

Open two Tuesdays a month (noted on voicemail),  
from 8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

For general inquiries, call 902-345-2910

If you need perishable items,  
call on the Sunday before.

### Isle Madame Food Bank

1460 Hwy 206, West Arichat

Open every second Thursday  
from 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.

Call 902-631-2818

### L'Ardoise Food Bank

Lower level of the community center,  
206 Chapel Cove Road

Open second Wednesday starting Jan. 21.  
Sally Anne Mombourquette, 902-587-2171

### Potlotek Foodbank

7 Old Band Office Road

Open every second Friday  
from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

E-mail [Potlotekfood@gmail.com](mailto:Potlotekfood@gmail.com)

Call Cynthia (Cindy) Francis at 902-623-0606

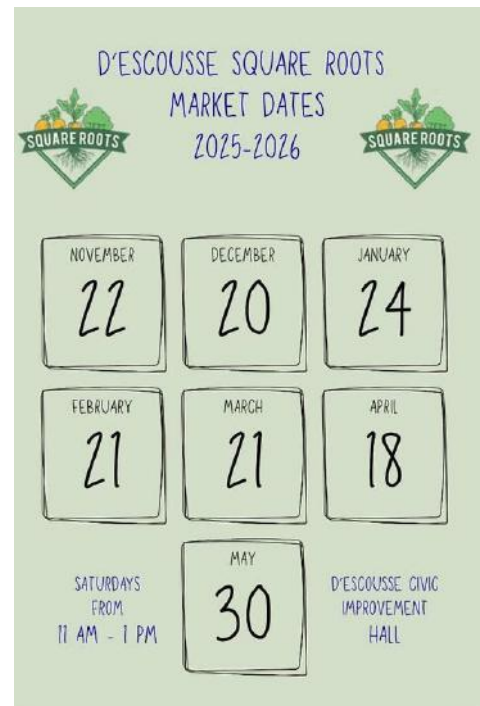


### Age-Friendly Community Conversations

View past episodes on the Telile YouTube Channel

Click below to see themes and videos.

<https://online.pubhtml5.com/qkgt/kxsa/>



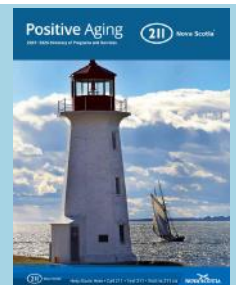
The Municipality of Richmond County has an entire section on their website dedicated to seniors resources. where you will find our monthly calendar and newsletter. Click the link below to visit the webpage:



[Seniors Resources and Support](#)

To view or download the 2025-2026 Positive Aging Directory, visit:

<https://novascotia.ca/seniors/directory/positive-aging-directory.pdf>





# GRANTS AVAILABLE

for organizations and individuals



## Useful links

- <https://caregiversns.org/>
- <https://alzheimer.ca/ns>
- <https://ns.211.ca/>
- <https://nscommunitylinks.ca/>
- <https://novascotia.ca/seniors/>
- <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/ccs/> (Continuing Care)
- <https://housing.novascotia.ca/programs/housing-programs-seniors>
- <https://mha.nshealth.ca/en>
- <https://fountainofhealth.ca/>
- <https://www.legalinfo.org>
- [Nova Scotia Centre on Aging \(msvu.ca\)](https://www.novascotia.ca/aging/mstvu.ca)
- <https://www.nshealth.ca/frailty>
- <https://www.nsc.ca/landing/corah/> (Centre of Rural Aging and Health [CORAH])
- <https://griefmatters.ca/>
- <https://www.mygrief.ca/>
- <https://www.chpca.ca/>
- <https://www.virtualhospice.ca/>
- <https://von.ca/en/locations/richmond-county/>
- <https://bfocb.ca/> (Bereaved Families of NS)
- <https://rcln.ca/> (Richmond County Literacy Network)
- <https://drkingstoncommunityhealthcenter.com/>
- <https://www.moneypath.ca/>
- <https://benefitswayfinder.org/starting-points/retirement/nova-scotia>
- <https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/age-well>
- <https://www.ableplatform.ca/>
- <https://www.homewardboundns.ca>

## 2026 Wellness Funds

### COMING SOON!

Application Website Opens  
February 16, 2026

Application Deadline  
April 15, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.



### Need more information?

Visit: <https://www.communityhealthboards.ns.ca/wellness-funds>  
or contact your local CHB coordinator.



**Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence** - Helps homeowners pay for home adaptations so seniors with low incomes can stay in their homes independently for longer periods of time. A one-time forgivable grant of up to \$3,500 is available. [Click here to learn more.](#)

**Senior Citizens Assistance Program** - Provides assistance to senior homeowners (age 65+) who would like to remain in their own homes, but cannot afford necessary repairs. [Click here to learn more.](#) Call one of our caseworkers today at 1-844-424-5110.

**Seniors Care Grant - Government of Nova Scotia:** [Click here to learn more.](#)

Apply for help with household, healthcare and home heating costs. Call, toll-free: 1-800-670-4357.

**Low Income Property Tax Exemption Program - Richmond County:** [Click here to learn more.](#)

Call 902-226-2400 or toll-free, 1-800-567-2600.

**Heating Assistance Rebate Program - Government of Nova Scotia:** [Click here to learn more.](#)

Apply for a heating assistance rebate. Call, toll-free: 1-800-670-4357.

**Salvation Army- The Home Energy Assistance Top-up (HEAT) Fund:** [Click here to learn more.](#)

or call 902-422-3435





# Seniors Clubs and Organizations in Richmond County

## Arichat

Gloria Samson  
Isle Madame New Horizons Seniors Club  
[gemsamson27@gmail.com](mailto:gemsamson27@gmail.com)  
902-219-3102

## Grand River

Joanne McCormack  
Grand River Seniors Club  
[bilmac1111@yahoo.com](mailto:bilmac1111@yahoo.com)  
902-587-2143

## L'Ardoise

Derek Hughes  
L'Ardoise Jolly Seniors Club  
[dehughes09@gmail.com](mailto:dehughes09@gmail.com)  
613-863-0298

## Louisdale

Robert Goyetche  
Fleur de Lis Seniors Club  
[rgoyetche1951@outlook.com](mailto:rgoyetche1951@outlook.com)  
902-345-2232 or Cell 902-227-7079

## Dundee/St. George's Channel

Doris Matthews  
South Mountain Arm of Gold Association  
[dorismatthews123@gmail.com](mailto:dorismatthews123@gmail.com)  
902-345-0495

## Lower River

Peggy MacNeil  
Riverdale's Seniors Club 55  
[pegmacneil@eastlink.ca](mailto:pegmacneil@eastlink.ca)  
902-625-0166

## Port Hawkesbury

Francis Lamey  
Strait Area Evergreen Senior Citizens' Club  
[fmllamey@hotmail.com](mailto:fmllamey@hotmail.com)  
902-625-3962

## Red Islands

Howard MacIntyre  
Bras D'Or Lakers Seniors Club  
[howarddmacintyre@gmail.com](mailto:howarddmacintyre@gmail.com)  
902-631-5643

## River Bourgeois

John Digout  
River Bourgeois 50+ Seniors  
[Johndigout@icloud.com](mailto:Johndigout@icloud.com)

## Rocky Bay

Cynthia Blackmore  
Rocky Bay Irish Club  
[cynthiawalterblackmore@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiawalterblackmore@gmail.com)  
902-302-3922

## St. Peter's

Pat Leachman  
Bonnie Brae Senior Citizens Club  
[palkal@icloud.com](mailto:palkal@icloud.com)  
902-535-2835

## Others Seniors Groups

Richmond County Branch of Retired Teachers  
Donna Machin  
[richrtopres@gmail.com](mailto:richrtopres@gmail.com)

## Le Regroupement de Aines et Aînées de la Nouvelle-Ecosse

Janine Lacroix  
[janine.capricorne@gmail.com](mailto:janine.capricorne@gmail.com)  
902-226-0077



*Heartfelt thanks to the Municipality of the County of Richmond for their financial support, which allows us to continue with our Seniors Centre Without Walls, produce this newsletter, calendar and organize other activities.*

## Meals on Wheels



Mealtime just got more nutritious, balanced and convenient.



**Christi Sampson**  
Program Coordinator

*If you or someone you know may benefit from Home Support services or the Meals on Wheels program, 902-345-2900 or contact Continuing Care at the toll-free number, 1-800-225-7225.*

## THANK YOU! MERCI!

### Newsletter Committee and Contributors

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[seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com](mailto:seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com)

Follow us on Facebook!



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1161257753926917>

Or search "Seniors Take Action Coalition"

