



Better with Age Mieux avec l'âge

Winter 2023 - Volume 12



Seniors Take Action Coalition
... promoting age friendly communities

A Message from the Seniors Take Action Coalition

May you Find Peace

We seem to be more accepting of our 'new normal'... starting to understand that we live in uncertain times and more than ever, we need each other. The holiday season is traditionally a time of sharing and celebration, of memories and regrets, of caring and understanding of the challenges faced by many living in our area. Yet, no matter our circumstances, how dire things may seem, we all have something of value to share... and this is definitely the season to share! We are surrounded by an abundance of older adults throughout Richmond County who generously give the gift of their time, knowledge and skills by volunteering to make our communities a better place!

May you find peace in this hectic of seasons!

Take care, Dorothy R Barnard, Coalition Chair

Nous semblons mieux accepter notre "nouvelle normalité"... nous commençons à comprendre que nous vivons des temps incertains et que, plus que jamais, nous avons besoin les uns des autres. Les fêtes de fin d'année sont traditionnellement un moment de partage et de célébration, de souvenirs et de regrets, d'attention et de compréhension des défis auxquels sont confrontés de nombreux habitants de notre région. Pourtant, quelles que soient nos circonstances et la gravité de la situation, nous avons tous quelque chose de précieux à partager... et c'est vraiment la saison pour le faire ! Nous sommes entourés d'une abondance de personnes âgées dans tout le comté de Richmond qui donnent généreusement de leur temps, de leurs connaissances et de leurs compétences en faisant du bénévolat pour faire de nos communautés un meilleur endroit !

Puissiez-vous trouver la paix en cette saison mouvementée !

Dorothy R Barnard, Coalition Chair

What's in This Issue:

Page 1:

Update from the Seniors Take Action Coalition

Page 2:

Managing Stress During the Holiday Season
Important Phone Numbers and Websites

Page 3:

Greetings from MLA Trevor Boudreau

Page 4:

Holiday Greetings from Richmond County

Page 5/6:

Who are the people in your Neighbourhood?
Kitchen King - Louie Boudreau

Page 7: Eva's Festival of Trees

Page 8: It's That Time a Year Again

Page 9:

Grandma, Tell me about your Christmases

Page 10: ACTing Collectively Update

Page 11:

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Page 12: Featured Holiday Traditions & Recipes

Page 13: Grants available

Page 14:

Last Words - *Celebrating and thanking the many local businesses and organizations in our communities.*

Welcome to our 12th issue of **Better with Age**. This newsletter was developed 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.

Nous sommes fiers de vous présenter notre 12th édition de Mieux avec l'âge. Ce bulletin a été développé par Seniors Take Action Coalition pour en savoir plus sur les aînés et leurs préoccupations en fournissant diverses informations propices. Nous voulons également offrir des occasions aux aînés pour contribuer à ce bulletin. 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

Managing Holiday Stress

By: Celeste Gotell

Welcome to the holiday season. For many, it is a time of joy, festivities, feelings of love and good cheer! A time surrounded by great food, laughter, friends and family. But, for others, it can also be a time of financial worry, feeling you have to be on top of your game, a time when you are dreading the holidays because of a recent loss, a time of loneliness and anxiety.

Even people that look forward to the hustle and bustle can experience stress leading up to and during the season. Stress is a part of life and can negatively affect your life. But there are some steps we can take to reduce and manage that stress and help us experience a more relaxed holiday.



Important Phone Numbers and Websites

211 Nova Scotia

A free, confidential helpline and website that connects you to community and social services in Nova Scotia, in over 140 languages.

811

Concerned about your health? Wondering if you can care for yourself at home, or need to see a doctor? Call 8-1-1 to talk to a registered nurse around the clock, seven days a week.

911

This number is for police, fire, or medical emergencies when immediate action is required: someone's health, safety or property is in jeopardy or a crime is in progress.

988

Suicide Crisis Helpline, a national three-digit number for suicide prevention and emotional distress support will launch.

1-888-429-8167 - Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Line provides crisis intervention for children, youth and adults experiencing a mental health crisis or mental distress. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The crisis line also supports families, friends, community agencies and others to manage mental health crisis through education, outreach and consultation.

1-888-347-8888 - Gambling Support Network
Not sure how to talk about gambling? Talk to us.

Nova Scotia Health Mental Health and Addictions
www.MHAhelpNS.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association of NS
<https://novascotia.cmha.ca/>

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
<https://www.camh.ca/>

Mental Health Commission of Canada
<https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/>

Canadian Coalition for Seniors Mental Health
<https://ccsmh.ca/>

Holiday CHECK LIST

1. Get lots of rest and sleep
2. Get some fresh air and sunshine
3. Don't overindulge in food and drinks
4. Stick to a budget; don't go into debt
5. Avoid people that stress you out
6. Reach out to family and friends if you need to talk
7. Make time for yourself
8. Use technology to stay connected, Facetime, Zoom, Video Messenger
9. Learn to say no
10. Volunteer or donate to a cause that is important to you

And Give the Gift of Time

The greatest gift you can give someone is your time. Because when you give your time, you are giving a portion of your life that you will never get back.



NEW RESOURCE

Anxiety in Older Adults with CCSMH

Our new resource covers:

- How to identify excessive anxiety
- Why it is important to pay attention to anxiety in older adults
- How anxiety manifests in older adults and the unique challenges they face



<https://www.anxietycanada.com/older-adults/>

spotlight on:



Greetings from MLA Trevor Boudreau

I want to take this opportunity to not only bring greetings to all of you but to extend my sincere thank you to the many volunteers that really do make our County thrive. Rural communities like ours often do not have many of the resources at our fingertips as others in more urban areas do, but we are blessed with neighbours who are always looking out for each other and their well-being.

Community festivals and events, fundraisers, and social gatherings allow us to connect with each other to support our emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Often seniors and elders in our communities are leading these initiatives as they have been for many years. Thank you so much for all that you do. As we move ahead with plans for next year, I look forward to seeing many of you out in the community.

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.

As highlighted later in this newsletter, the Property Tax Rebate Program is available for seniors with a deadline of December 31st, 2023. The Heating Assistance Rebate and The Seniors Care Grant are provincial programs that are also available. The deadline for those two is March 31st, 2024.

Our office can be reached by phone at (902) 535-2297 or by e-mail at info@trevorboudreau.ca.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2024!

Trevor



Salutations du MAL Trevor Boudreau

Je tiens à profiter de cette occasion non seulement pour vous saluer tous, mais aussi pour remercier sincèrement les nombreux bénévoles qui contribuent réellement à la prospérité de notre comté. Les communautés rurales comme la nôtre ne disposent souvent pas des mêmes ressources que les communautés urbaines, mais nous avons la chance d'avoir des voisins qui veillent toujours sur les autres et sur leur bien-être.

Les festivals et événements communautaires, les collectes de fonds et les rencontres sociales nous permettent de nous rapprocher les uns des autres pour favoriser notre bien-être émotionnel, mental et physique. Souvent, les personnes âgées et les aînés de nos communautés sont à la tête de ces initiatives, comme ils l'ont été pendant de nombreuses années. Merci beaucoup pour tout ce que vous faites ! Alors que nous avançons dans nos projets pour l'année prochaine, je me réjouis de vous voir nombreux au sein de la communauté.

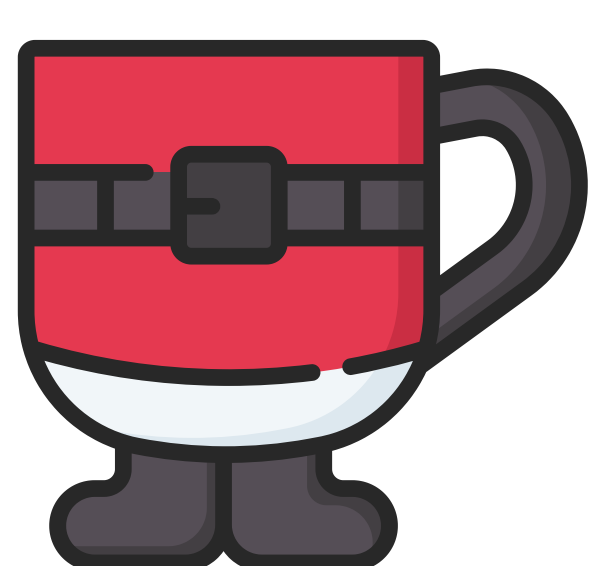
Je voulais également profiter de cette occasion pour vous faire savoir que notre bureau est là pour vous aider à répondre aux questions que vous pourriez avoir sur les aides ou les subventions qui pourraient vous être accordées. Nous voulons nous assurer que tout le monde bénéficie des avantages qui peuvent être mis à sa disposition.

Comme indiqué plus loin dans ce bulletin, le programme de remboursement de l'impôt foncier est disponible pour les personnes âgées et la date limite est fixée au 31 décembre 2023. Le remboursement de l'aide au chauffage et la subvention pour les soins aux personnes âgées sont des programmes provinciaux également disponibles. La date limite pour ces deux programmes est le 31 mars 2024.

Vous pouvez joindre notre bureau par téléphone au (902) 535-2297 ou par courriel à info@trevorboudreau.ca.

Nous vous souhaitons un joyeux Noël et une bonne et heureuse année.

Trevor



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

spotlight on:



Holiday Greetings from Richmond County



The fall and early winter have been filled with many wonderful community activities, so at the very top of my message I have to do a shout-out to all of the volunteers who are working away to make sure that as many people in our County feel social connection and belonging. It's no secret – the majority of our volunteers are older adults and NONE of this work would happen without you, so **THANK YOU** for your contributions!

An integral part of our social fabric here in Richmond County is our Seniors Safety and Social Inclusion program. On behalf of Richmond County Council I would like to extend a warm welcome to Rachael Leblanc who assumed the Coordinator role in November. If you're a senior in our County and you need help accessing programs and services, feel free to reach out to Rachael at the Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre.

Another important resource in our community is, of course, the Seniors Take Action Coalition, and the important role they play in promoting an age-friendly community. By providing information to and connecting seniors through their active FB group of over 670 members, their monthly calendar and wonderful quarterly newsletter, *Better with Age*, they are reaching hundreds of residents.

Finally, many of you have heard about the Acting Collectively Project that has been underway for the past year. There is still time to participate. Reach out to Jennifer Tanner at the Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre to register (902-587-2800).

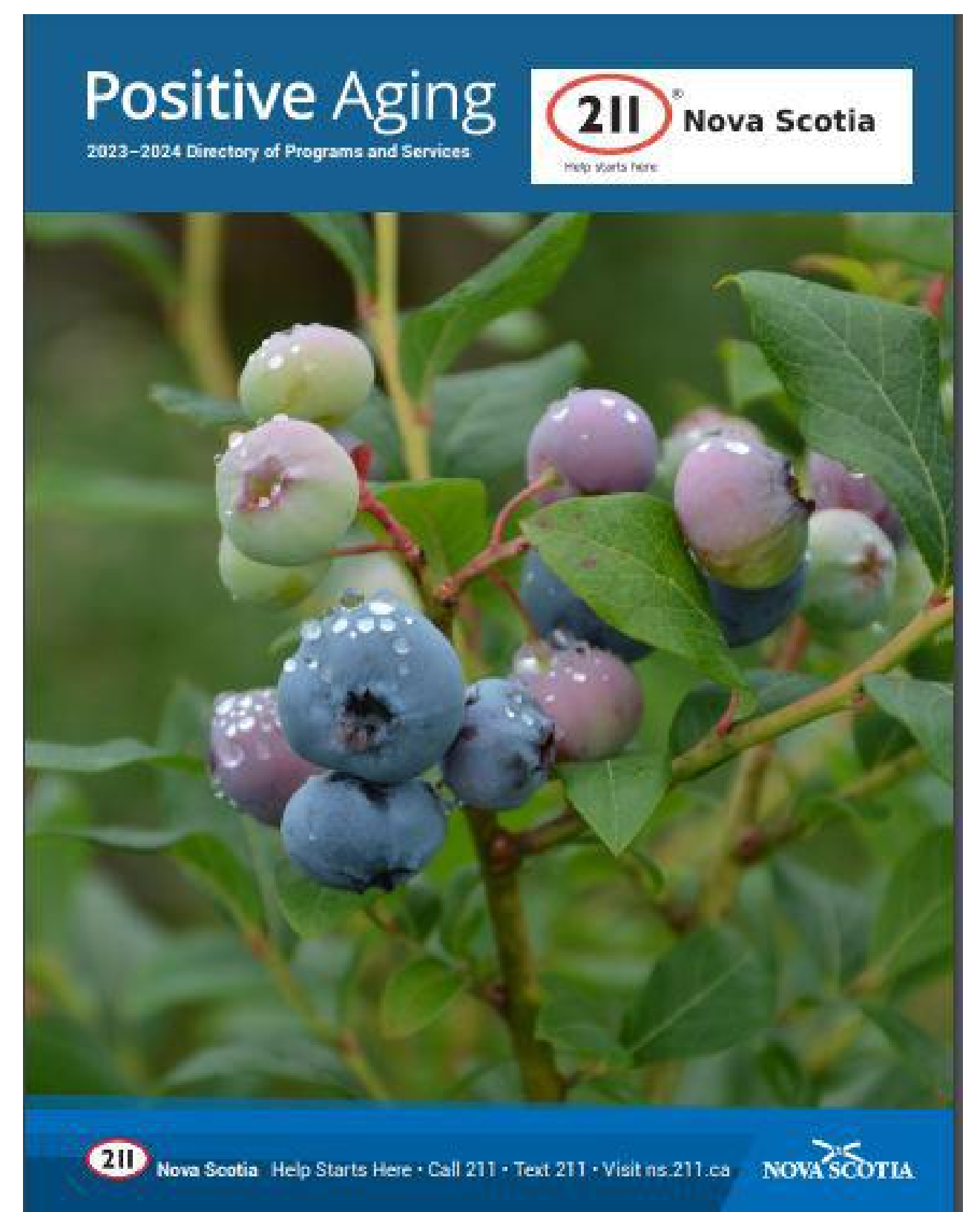
Although I know the future is bright in Richmond County with new clean energy industries on the horizon, we also know that many of our older residents are struggling to make ends meet. There are several programs that can help such as the Oil to Heat Pump Affordability Grant, the Heating Assistance Rebate Program, the Seniors Care Grant, local food banks and service clubs. In this season of giving, please reach out if you need help and check on each other.

On behalf of Richmond County Council, I hope you have a blessed holiday filled with family, friends and tranquility. Merry Christmas!

Amanda Mombourquette
Warden, Richmond County



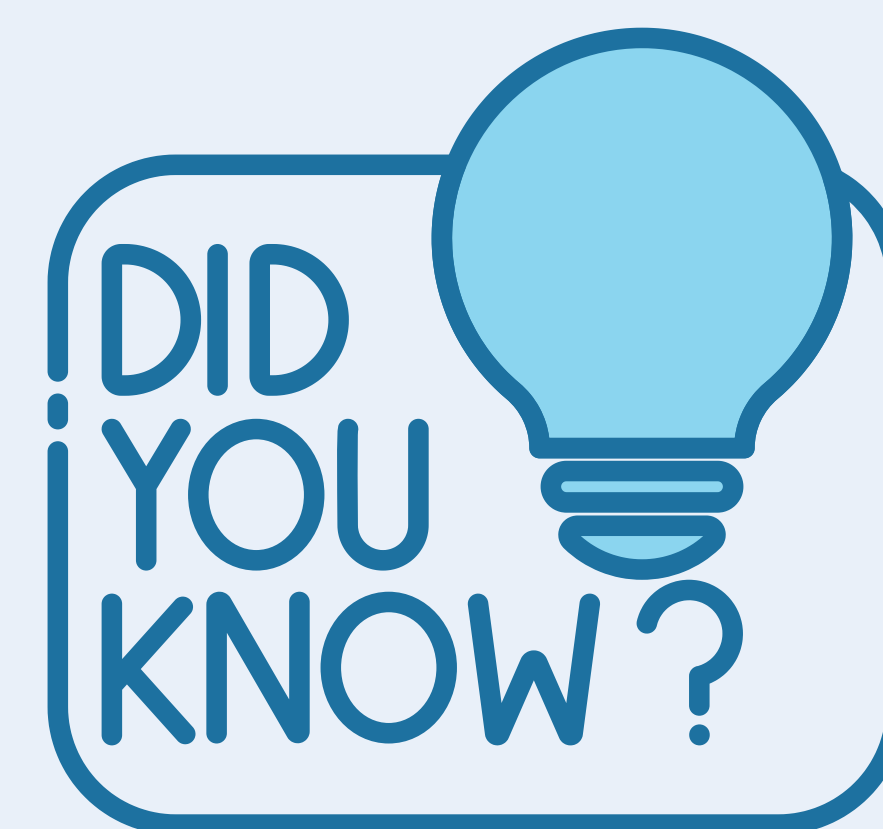
Watch for information on Imagine the Possibilities Chapter Two on our Facebook page in the new year. We will be choosing a new date for the spring and shortening the day in response to the feedback we received.



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

Seniors Take Action Coalition							acting collectively	
DECEMBER 2023								
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
Want to stay informed? Join our FaceBook Group and sign up to receive our Better with Age newsletter								
					1 Informal Knitting/Crocheting group in the PDG Library at 2pm. Come when you can' kind of group.	2 Social Action Weekend LeBlanc Community Centre Breakfast 7-10AM		
					Annual Tree Lighting St Peter's Community and Cultural Greenspace 6pm	Christmas Market St. Peter's Lions Hall 10:00am - 2:00pm		
3 Legion Branch 150 Archie - 9 to 11am Community Breakfast	4 Dr. Escousse Hall Mias at 9:30am	5 Richmond Education Centre & Academy Christmas Craft Fair 6:00 - 8:00pm	6 Jolly Club Sewing Group 9am in LeBlanc	7 Coffee and Conversation 10am to Noon West Bay Community Centre	8 Informal Knitting/Crocheting group in the PDG Library at 2pm. Come when you can' kind of group.	3rd Annual Tree Lighting at 6:45PM, Followed by Music at 7PM Rocky Bay Hall		
LeBlanc Community Centre Bake Sale 11-1pm	Meals with Friends River Roots 1130 to 130PM	45's card game St. George's Channel Hall 7:30pm	Riverdale Seniors Club Get Together Lower River - 12 noon	Card Play 7:30 pm Dr. Escousse Civic Improvement Hall		Christmas Parade and Children's Party LeBlanc Community Centre Parade at 5:30PM		
Sweets Sounds of the Season St. John's Centre for the Arts at 2 pm in Archie . Bake Sale is 10 to 1PM.	MEALS WITH FRIENDS LeBlanc Community Centre		New Horizons Club 45 Card Play 2pm Archie .		Concert Evangelique de Noel at 6:45PM Centre LeBlanc . Petit de Grat .			

Check out our monthly calendar on our Facebook page and regular updates on things to do.



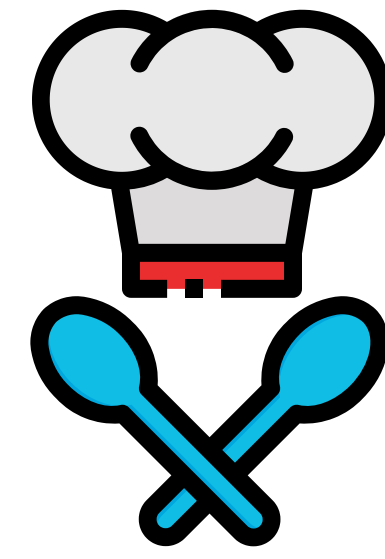
There is a Seniors Resource section on the Richmond County Website .

<https://www.richmondcounty.ca/seniors-resources-and-support.html>

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Kitchen King - Louie Boudreau

By: Cynthia Curtis



For almost sixty years, Louie Boudreau has been in the restaurant business. Fourteen kitchens, hundreds of staff, thousands of customers, and approaching a quarter million hours on the job. That's a lot. A lot of a lot of things. And though it seems everyone around knows the popular, "generous-to-a-fault" restaurateur, there are some facts about his life that may surprise many.

When Louie was seven, his family moved from Louisdale to Sydney. His father worked for Municipal Ready Mix and unloaded filthy coal cars, for extra income, in his off hours. Louie's mother also contributed to the family coffers, feeding and boarding as many as 18 working men at a time. Needless to say, the rooms of their modest rental home were always full.

The family returned to Louisdale about seven years later to the house his father built. Louie left high school at sixteen and enrolled at NSIT in Halifax, a trade school that offered precision sheet metal training. Upon graduation, he worked for EMI Cossor, a company that employed various technologies to improve communication systems and gather sensitive security information. Louie was involved in their use of sonar buoys to detect submarines and other submersibles.

It was during his stint in Halifax that Louie met and married Loretta Sampson, his beloved wife of 57 years.



Louie and Loretta, Photo taken in late 1980's

When he was laid off by EMI Cossor in the mid 60's, the newlyweds headed to L'Ardoise. There they built a house where they have lived since the day of its completion in 1966. Their daughter, Lisa, was born in early July 1967 and had the special honour of being the first Centennial baby in Cape Breton. Six years later their son, Kevin, joined the Boudreaus and they became a family of four.

Through all this, Louie had a hand in many different jobs. He drove a salt truck for a winter, assisted in the building of what is now the Maritime Inn, helped pipe fitters in the construction of the heavy water plant, and served as a carpenter's assistant and labour foreman in the build of PMII in Port Hawkesbury.

And all that by the time he was 20.

It was his mother, however, that was the catalyst in redirecting Louie's career. She was working at The French Village restaurant in Louisdale when she asked her son that most fateful question: "Louie, do you think you might be interested in learning to cook?" It was at that moment when the restaurant industry in Richmond and Inverness Counties changed forever.

Louie cooked for a year at The French Village and realized the restaurant business was his passion. In 1972, when he learned the Louisdale restaurant was to be sold, he decided it was time for him to move forward and open his own establishment. Formerly owned by Joe Mancini, the current owner, George Urquhart, had put the corner business in St. Peter's up for sale. The asking price was \$60,000--certainly not the kind of money readily available to the young entrepreneur. For a second time in so many years, Mrs. Boudreau Sr. stepped in. Together with his sister, Shirley, and her husband Willy, she agreed to loan the three of them \$10,000 as a down payment. Louie's Cosy Corner opened on Mother's Day of that year and by the end of August—in just under four months—the restaurant was successful enough to repay their mother in full.



Cosy Corner - Early Days

Over the years, the upper main building and the outbuilding saw some interesting changes. Above the restaurant were six rooms that were rented to older men. Almost like a small seniors' home, each tenant had his own private room. When Louie first bought the place, the satellite building was a barber shop. It was soon vacated and Louie opened a sports store in the building. That venture, with a partner from Sydney, did not last long and the restaurateur decided buy a Ready Chef chicken franchise, not unlike a KFC. That venture, along with the bakery his mother and Kay Boudreau ran in the same building, lasted a few years. Eventually those two enterprises closed and Louie sold all the chicken processing and frying equipment to the now proprietor of Lick-A-Chick in Little Bras d'Or. With one last attempt at retail there, Louie then opened a Pop Shoppe depot that proved too slow to sustain itself. Finally in the mid-eighties, he embarked on his last effort with the outbuilding. A radical change in its purpose, Louie converted the building to a rental. Again, designed for six, each locally-working man had his own room and a common area with showers, washroom, and laundry. Though this venture provided profitable and successful, this smaller building was demolished by the next proprietor some years later.

In 1985, the restaurant struggled a little and Louis decided to move to Port Hawkesbury, leaving his sister and brother-in-law to run the St. Peter's restaurant. He, Loretta, and Kevin worked Louie's Family Restaurant Two (now The Carriage House) for eight years. Early into that stint, he and his relatives sold the Grenville restaurant to Parker Stone, current owner of the St. Peter's Home Hardware.

Kitchen King - Louie Boudreau



While running Louie's Two, he also rented and ran the kitchen at the MacPuffin in Port Hastings, Perk Up (formerly Tim Horton's, currently BaRyKin) in the OSL mall, and the Canteen at the Civic Centre. Around the same time, Louie contracted with the Mill's cafeteria to feed its 500 employees daily. When his time at Louie's Two was up, the restaurateur moved to the Skye Motel in Port Hastings, where he ran a very successful kitchen and dining room for several more years. Giving up the MacPuffin, he then set up shop at the Shieling Motel, and later, Shindigs in town. At one point, the cook from L'Ardoise was running six busy establishments in the Hawkesbury/Canso area, serving hundreds of patrons daily.

In 2009, Louie changed course again and left Port Hawkesbury entirely. He returned to St. Peter's and opened a relatively small restaurant at the MacDonald Hotel (now Pepperell Place Inn). He was there only a year when the opportunity arose for him to "move home", to his original location, some 27 years later. Malcolm MacDonald, who had bought the building from Parker Stone, accommodated the re-establishment of Louie's Cosy Corner, offering Mr. Boudreau significant control over the new space. "It was my rules. My place. The way I wanted it." The anticipation of January 1, 2010 was electric!

But Louie's efforts have not only been in business. Over the years he has been very involved with community groups such as the Lions' Club and the Knights of Columbus. His contributions to the community and local philanthropic events are more than generous, including participation in the L'Ardoise Festival and Men's Club, Harbour Wars, charitable bingos, as well as countless silent auctions and sponsorships.

Despite the significant impact Louie had on the restaurant industry in Port Hastings and Port Hawkesbury, he maintains that "[his] greatest achievement is now, here, in St. Peter's." Reflective and smiling, Louie is confident in the choices he has made: ***"That first of January 2010, was the best day of my life. ... We came home, back to our roots. ... I've loved every f*&%ing minute of it. And still do."***



Photo of Louie's Cosy Corner Today
9985 Grenville St, St. Peter's

At the same location, close to 15 years later, the 78-year-old still demonstrates a work ethic to admire. Virtually every day of every month, Louie works his 100-seat sit-down restaurant, along with the favourite seasonal takeout, Jiggs. Often more demanding than both, is his catering business that has served, in one sitting, as many as 1200 people. Despite his remarkable achievements and awards, his most notable being both the Nova Scotia's Restaurateur of the Year Award in 1995 and the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce Excellence in Business Award in 1998, Louie is both humble and insightful about his success.

"You are only as good as the people behind you. ... [You must have] a good staff, people you really get along with, people you treat as you'd want to be treated. That's always been my motto. ... If you wanna come and work for me, at that point you join the family; if you don't want that, this is no place for you."



Louie posing for the camera in December 2023



Cosy Corner - 1949

Eva's "Festival of Trees"

By: Colin MacDougall, St. Peter's

In the fall of 1995, I received a call from Eva Landry: "Colin, what do you think about putting together a "Festival of Trees" to celebrate Christmas in the community?"

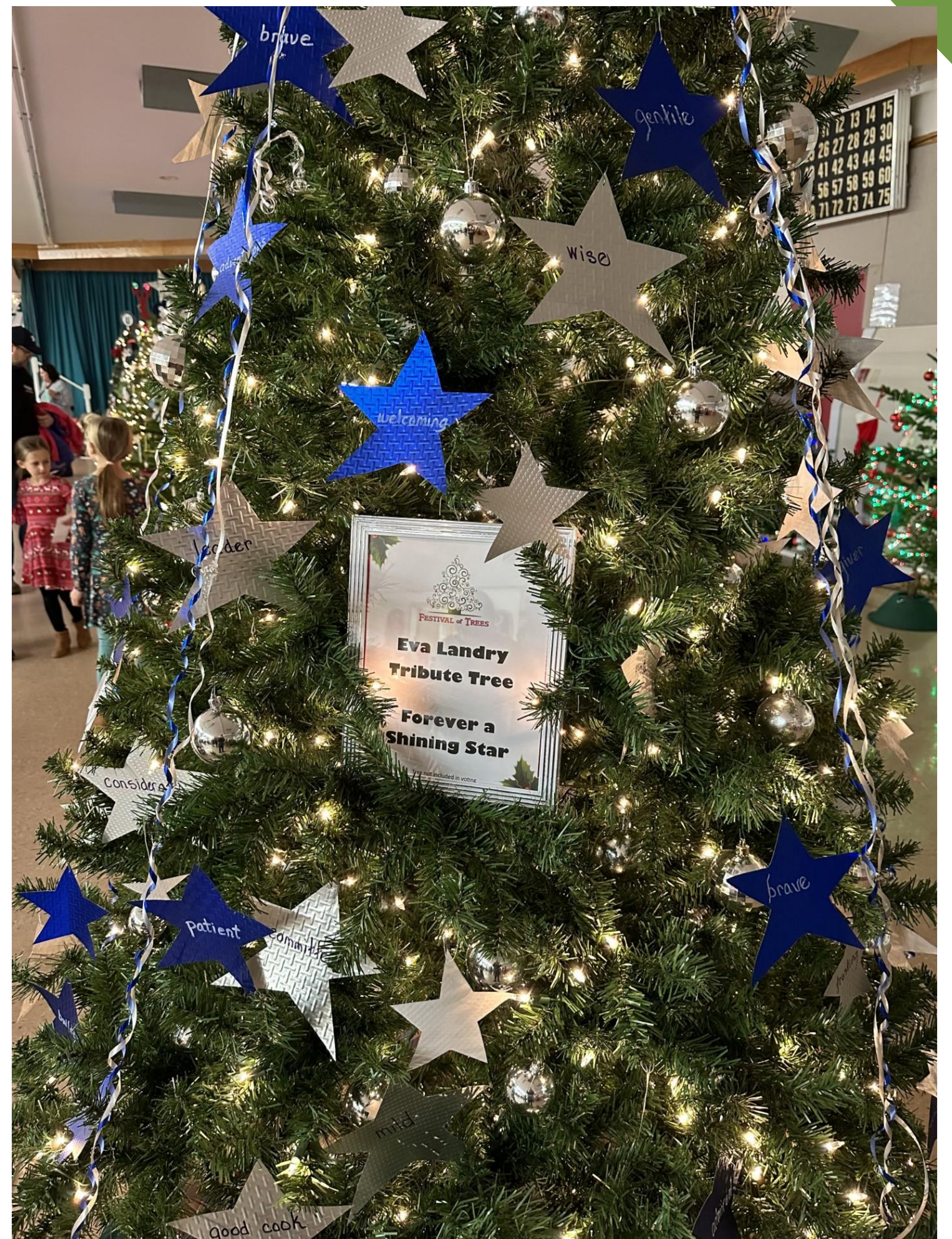
I thought it was a wonderful idea, but had a slight issue—my wife was about to give birth and my store, Joe Pops, was full-swing busy. Timing might be an issue. Eva visited the store and took a keen interest in the Coca Cola display. This inspired ideas on how the Festival might be approached. Sowing her magic as she did, Eva went from business to business promoting her idea. It was not long before she had the whole community on board.

Mid-November that year was a magical time—with the birth my daughter, Madison Piper, and the inaugural celebration of the "Festival of Trees". Exciting as the planning of the event was, the logistics of how to light so many trees all at once posed some challenges. Eva's husband and right-hand man, Doug Landry, was instrumental in solving that issue, managing to safely configure a very impressive web of electrical outlets. And, the decorating of the trees was most creative. I took a Coke cooler and Coke decorations from my store and made a tree! We even commissioned Santa to come. Each child had a photo taken with Saint Nick and enjoyed a bottle of Coke. It certainly was a wicked kick off to the Christmas season!

Year after year, the Festival grew and improved. With Eva leading the way, the celebration just got better. The choir and cookie-making were added along with the oh-so important Food Drive Tree. Eva brought together our communities in such harmony that you'd have to be a bear in hibernation to not feel the Christmas Spirit!

What Eva started here in St. Peter's set an example for other communities. Her great success with the Festival inspired other towns and villages around the island to follow Eva's lead.

A while back, I designed the logo for the annual event, but in 2023 we decided on new signage. This being the first year without Eva, we brought her along in the new design. Her name is now where it should be--encircled at the centre of the new logo for the "Festival of Trees".



Follow the arrow



FESTIVAL of TREES
NOVEMBER 18-19, 2023

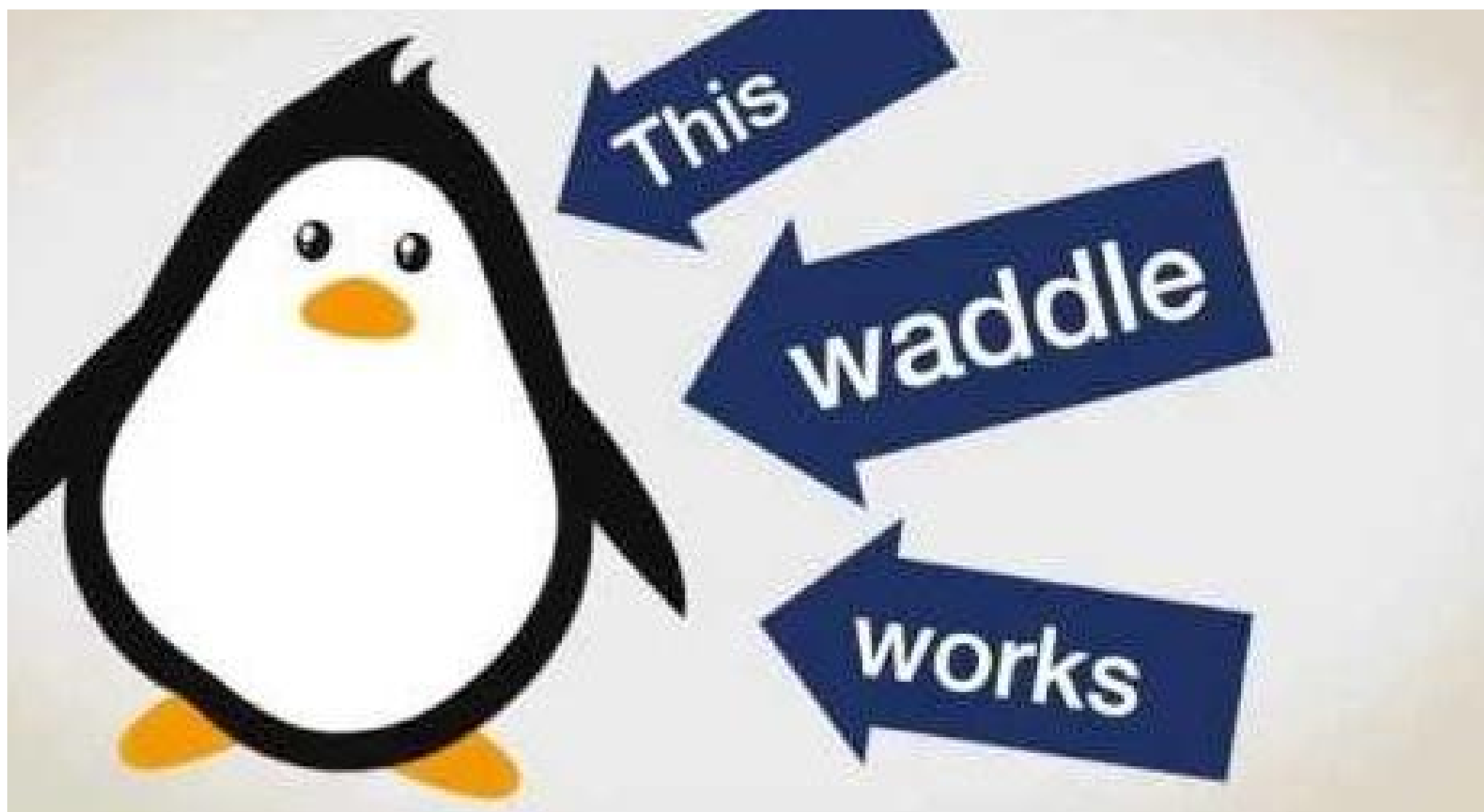
ST. PETER'S LIONS HALL

It's That Time of the Year Again

Do the Penguin Walk

Ice on the ground?

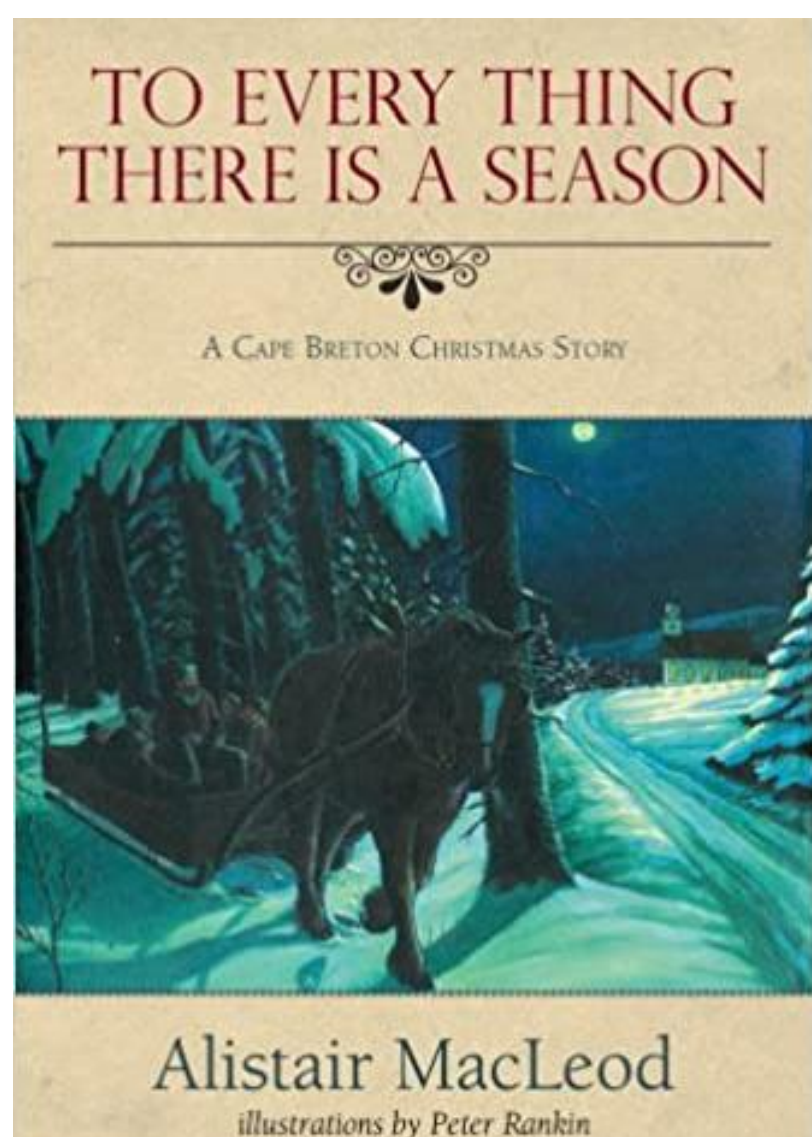
Do the PENGUIN WALK to prevent falls and possible injury:



- Bend slightly and walk flat-footed
- Point your feet out slightly like a penguin
- Keep your center of gravity over your feet as much as possible
- Watch where you are stepping
- Take shorter, shuffle-like steps
- Keep your arms by your sides, not in your pockets
- Concentrate on keeping your balance
- Go S-L-O-W-L-Y!

Stay safe this winter!

[Click here to watch](#) this short (1:37 min) Penguin Walk video by Alberta Health Services.



A Walk Down Memory Lane

Written in 1977, but set at Christmas time in Cape Breton in the late 40's, this lovely short story is about the excitement upon the return of an eldest son, the loss of innocence, and a father's struggle with health and his own mortality. It is a simple but poignant glimpse, like so much of MacLeod's award-winning work.

"To Everything There Is a Season"

a Short Story Alistair MacLeod

[Click here to listen](#) on CBC Radio.



Aloysius Boudreau from Arichat, passed away in 2018, but his voice will be remembered by many for years to come. Aloysius served the parish of Notre Dame de l'Assomption in Arichat, as Choir Director. His music ministry spanned decades. His hymns and songs in both official languages are etched on the minds of those who had the pleasure of hearing him sing. [Click here to watch](#) his performance in 2015.

Telile Community Television - Christmas programming

Check out their extensive library of recordings over the years. Treasures and precious memories from the past. Like the one with Aloysius, the Festival of Choirs from [2006](#) and [2007](#) and the [St John Center for the Arts Christmas Concert](#) from 2018.

Faces smiling while lifting their voices singing traditional carols.

While some of these beautiful souls are no longer with us, they remain in our hearts and minds.

The late **Stuart McLean**, best selling author, award-winning journalist and humorist, and host of CBC Radio program, *The Vinyl Cafe* also has provided us with many moments of joy listening to his stories about Christmas.

Check out the links below:

"Christmas at Tommy's" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIHRbMOegwI>

"Dave Cooks the Turkey" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VmMUM0HW6E>

Stuart McLean "Christmas Present" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2VGg4h6x3c>



Christmas isn't a season. It's a feeling.

"Grandma, tell me about your Christmases"?

She sat nestled in grandma's comfy lap as they both rocked to and fro, little eyes gazing up to her wrinkled face that shone by the firesides glow.

"Did you have Christmas, she asked her, when you were small like me, did you help your mama decorate, the house and the Christmas Tree"?

"Were gifts wrapped as you were sleeping, and what did dear old santa bring, did you always get what you asked for, or did you not get anything"?

Grandma's thoughts went back to childhood from questions this dear child asked, of skipping ropes and coloring books that were gifts from her Christmases past.

Warm woolen socks and bright mittens knitted by her grandma from left over yarn, it was always so cozy to wear them even with holes that had been darned.

Paper dolls with lots of pretty dresses metal slinkies that boinged end over end, table hockey game just for my brothers played for hours with a very special friend.

Wooden toboggans, fast running "coasters" woolen snowsuits we wore in the cold, were gifts that some of us treasured although weighed down with clumps of snow.

Darling child, as she snuggled her closer this is what Christmas was like for me, we didn't hear much about Santa but there were always gifts under the tree.

Stockings hung on bright shiny door knobs or on the posts of an old creaky bed, our prayers were whispered so reverently as we humbly bowed our little head.

Gentle Jesus so meek and so mild were the prayers we said at night, please look upon this little child kneeling by the glow of a dim lamp light.

Christmas morning was always exciting as we emptied our stockings with glee, there were grapes, oranges and candy and an apple as big as can be.

We didn't always have turkey for dinner but lots of food on the table galore, a warm welcome was always given to anyone, who came to our door.

Our friends came over to admire gifts that were tucked neatly under our tree, each child had their very own special place where we showed them off with glee.

We celebrated "Twelve Days of Christmas" like we always did this time of year, to me it's still the happiest of seasons hearing children's laughter fill the air.

I remember some nights so vividly when "Jannies" would knock on our door, and papa would open it and chuckle "Come in, cause you've been here before"

We would take our time to guess them as they hid under big coats with fur, or under sheets that totally cover them used to disguise who they really were.

The fun was in the changing voices as they spoke to hide their true selves, some gave a big "HO,HO" like Santa some were dressed up as little elves.

"So, little child, it wasn't much different then what we celebrate here today, as long as we hold on to traditions Grandmas Christmases will never go away".



By: Judy J. Langdon - Oct. 22, 2021 - Reprinted with permission

Judy was born in Newfoundland and lived there until she moved to L'Ardoise eleven years ago. She loves living in Cape Breton. "It's beautiful surrounding has given me inspiration to continue my writing!!

Want to know about Jannies? Check out:
<https://canadiangeographic.ca/articles/the-evolving-identity-of-newfoundlands-outport-jannies>

WELCOME RACHAEL LEBLANC

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome Rachael to her new role as the Richmond County Seniors Safety and Social Inclusion Coordinator. Rachael graduated from the Social Services Program at NSCC in 2006 and has worked in that field for the past 14 years. Rachael has a strong work ethic and is committed to the rights, dignity and inclusion for all. She views seniors' care today as a reflection of past, present and future and looks forward to building connections with older adults in our communities.

Rachael enjoys local history, nature and animals. She has an appreciation and passion for music and food, both cooking and tasting!

On behalf of Seniors Take Action Coalition, we extend a warm welcome to Rachael and look forward to working with her in the future.

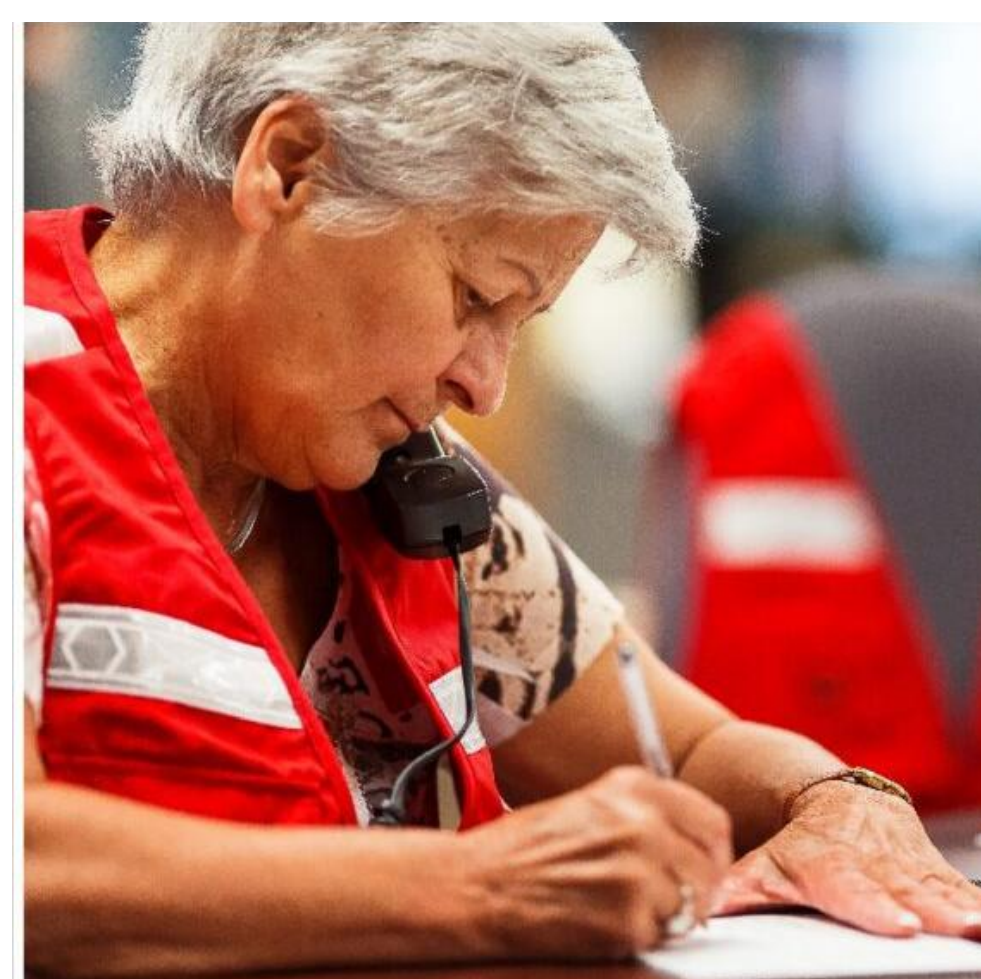
Richmond County Seniors' Safety & Social Inclusion Coordinator

Phone: (902) 587-2800 ext: 2

SeniorSafetyCoordinator.DKMCHC@gmail.com



Check our Facebook page to learn more about programming Rachael will be offering in the new year.



FRIENDLY CALLS

Feeling isolated or lonely due to COVID-19?

CONTACT US

at

1-833-729-0144

Monday to Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. AST
to register

Social isolation can have a major impact on seniors' lives. Loneliness and depression can worsen during the holiday season. Promoting an age-friendly community involves doing our part to both communicate services available, opportunities to get involved, and watching over and reaching out to the seniors on our communities.

Spotlight:

ACTing Collectively Recruitment Soon Wrapping Up

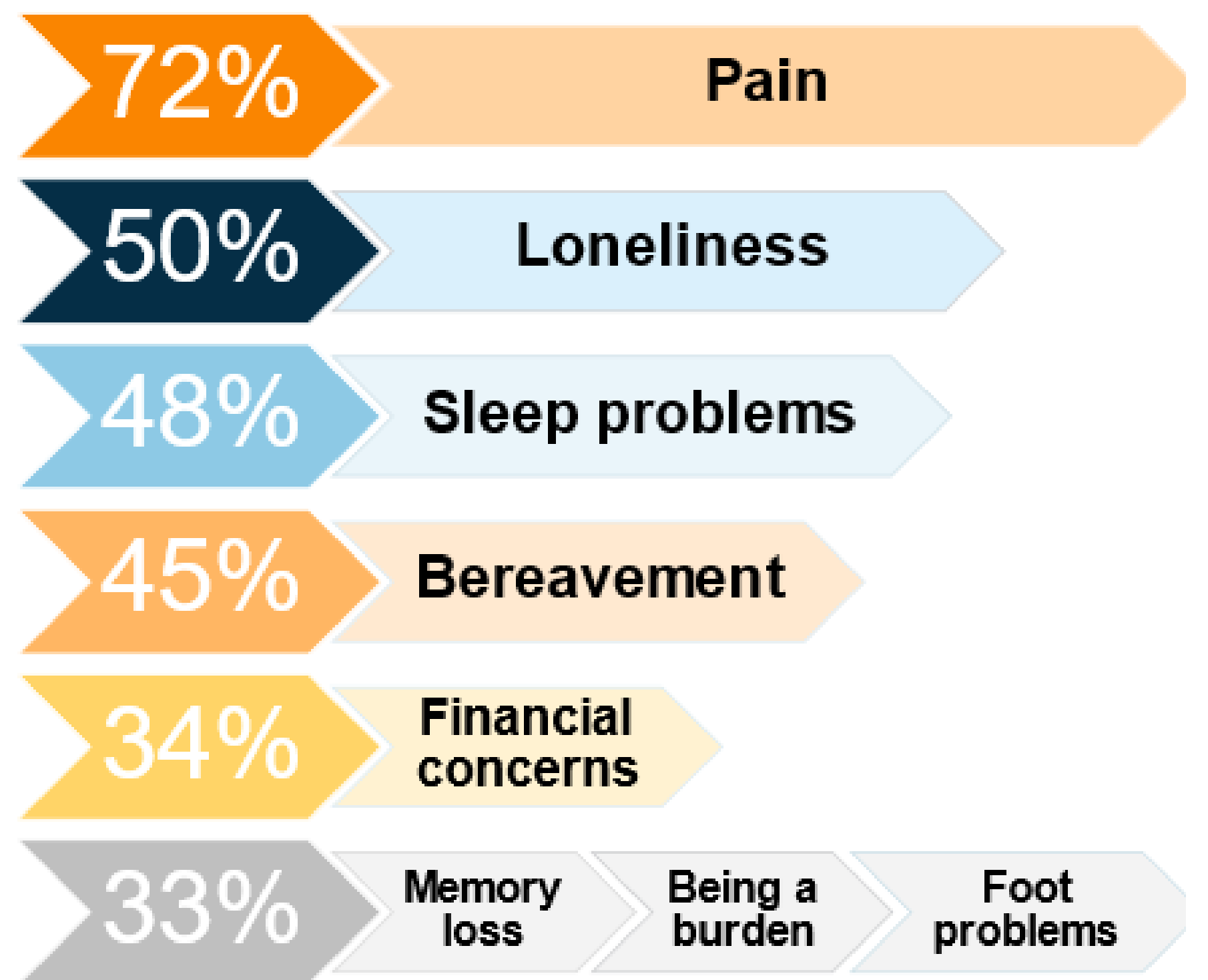
By: Dalhousie Research Team

"The *ACTing Collectively* project is dedicated to identifying the needs of older adults and the resources available to help them live at home in their communities. In the past year, over 200 assessments with older adults from Richmond County, Victoria County, and the Cape Breton Regional Municipality have been completed. Thanks to the ongoing support of local community members, as of December 7th, 207 assessments have been done in total, 89 completed in Richmond County. As shown in the graphic below, these assessments have provided valuable insights into the top concerns and issues that older adults face. For example, 72% of older adult participants interviewed identified concerns with pain (sample size = 190).

With community recruitment for the project wrapping up soon, the research team at Dalhousie University will pursue additional data collection opportunities in the new year, including interviews with participants and project partners and through work with community organizations. Together, these initiatives will help inform the development of reports for municipal and provincial partners, which will be available publicly in the future.

The Dalhousie research team wishes to thank everyone who participated, and helped to spread the word. Special thanks to the Local Community Team supported by the Dr. Kingston Community Health Centre and the local assessors! To stay up to date with *ACTing Collectively's* progress, check out the project website and Facebook page at the links below.

Website: <https://www.actingcollectively.ca>



Older adults in Richmond County, we want to hear from you!



Our research team and community partners want to learn what services help older adults (65+) live healthier and more independently at home.

What will you do?

Have a one-hour conversation with a trained interviewer (in-person or over the phone) about your life as an older adult in Richmond County.

What is the benefit?

- You will receive a personalized list of services.
- You will be entered into a draw for a \$200 Visa gift-card.
- Your community will learn what older adults need to live well at home.

Interested and want more information?

Please contact Jennifer at 902-587-2800 (ext. 4) or email jennifertanner.dkmchc@gmail.com



Debbie Samson is one of Richmond County's local assessors for the project.



It has been a privilege for me to be involved in the Acting Collectively project from the onset. Originally getting involved to help our county recognize the resources we have and find our shortfalls, but getting to speak to and discuss their lives with seniors throughout the county has made me see what a diverse and resilient group of people we have living here.

Follow us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089844428089>



Sharing Holiday Traditions

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

By: Celeste Gotell

Andy Williams may have recorded the song, *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year* in 1963, but sixty years later in 2023, if you walk through the doors of Kenneth David's house, from Alderney Point in Isle Madame, you would soon realize for him Christmas is the most favourite time of the year! I had the pleasure of chatting with Kenneth about his love for Christmas and his annual tradition of decorating his house and wanted to share this heartfelt story. Every single piece of this beautiful story comes with memories of family and friends.

When I asked Kenneth what inspired him to do this, he said it is all about family. Kenneth lives in the original family homestead, now renovated. His parents, Amadee and Blandine, loved Christmas. The house is filled with wonderful memories of family members, with his nieces and nephews coming to visit, and enjoying the holiday traditions. Now, years later, these same memories are being passed on to the next generation as his brother's kids now have their own children.

The expression "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree" is often used to describe how children tend to inherit the characteristics of their parents. I learned from Kenneth that his love for Christmas was passed down from his parents. Back in the 1980's he realized he also had the inherited trait that would develop into both hobby collections, a passion for decorating and all things Christmas.

Kenneth's Dad passed away on 1999 and the following year, in his memory, he decorated a Nautical Tree, adorned with his Dad's fishing memorabilia, fishing hooks, boats, and things collected on the shore. Kenneth also shared that his Mom was a collector; her hobby was dolls, and while his Mom passed away in 2012, a few favourite dolls can be found under the old-fashioned tree that for over 20 years now has a special place in his home. The tree is decorated with all of his parents' ornaments from the past, along with one very special ornament: a paper mitten, kept by his parents, that his older sister made in grade one.



Nautical Inspired Tree in memory of Kenneth's Father



Old Fashioned Tree

You can find many trees decorated through the house, with different themes and wonderful memories attached to teach. You will find a winter scene tree in blues, a white tree with black ornaments, and a tree decorated in red, his Mom's favourite colour.

In the hallway you will find a special wizard-inspired tree, which began because of his nieces' love of Harry Potter.

His Dickens Village display takes about three weeks to prepare. As one of his three collections, the village has over 70 houses, trees of all sizes and various other accessories.



Harry Potter Wizard Inspired Tree



Dickens Village

In the early days, Kenneth's love for blown glass ornaments led to him picking them up on his travels. His friends who were in the retail business would attend shows in Toronto and always surprise him with a couple of unique pieces to add to his collection. You will find these beautiful ornaments on trees throughout the house.

Kenneth recalls his first Snow Baby; Jack Frost was a gift from his parents. This collection now is over 100 pieces, many given to him over the years as gifts.

As you can imagine, all these collections not only take many hours to both put up and then take down, but they also need to be stored somewhere the rest of the year. I couldn't help but laugh with Kenneth when he shared that he had to add an extension to the house for his holiday storage!



Snow Babies Collection Display

My conversation with Kenneth brightened my day and made me smile. When I think about the love that goes into Kenneth's passion for the holidays I am touched. Now, I can't wait to go visit him over the holidays.

Featured Holiday Traditions and Recipes



TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH BLACK BUN RECIPE

Christmas celebrations were banned by the Scottish Presbyterian Church for 400 years – it was not until the 1950's that Christmas Day could be celebrated, and by then most of the old traditions had been laid aside, if not forgotten. I have few recollections of childhood Christmas, but my parents (admittedly northern English) always celebrated Hogmanay – the arrival of the New Year.

To this day, I still have a First Footing in the house – someone (traditionally a dark-haired man) comes in the front door after the last stroke of midnight, and brings with him whisky, coal/peat/wood, and a loaf of bread..symbolizing a warm, happy and well-fed year ahead.

I've never heard of Black Bun before, but this recipe looks like just the thing to try this year.

Happy New Year – Bliadhna mhath ur (bleea-nah va oor)

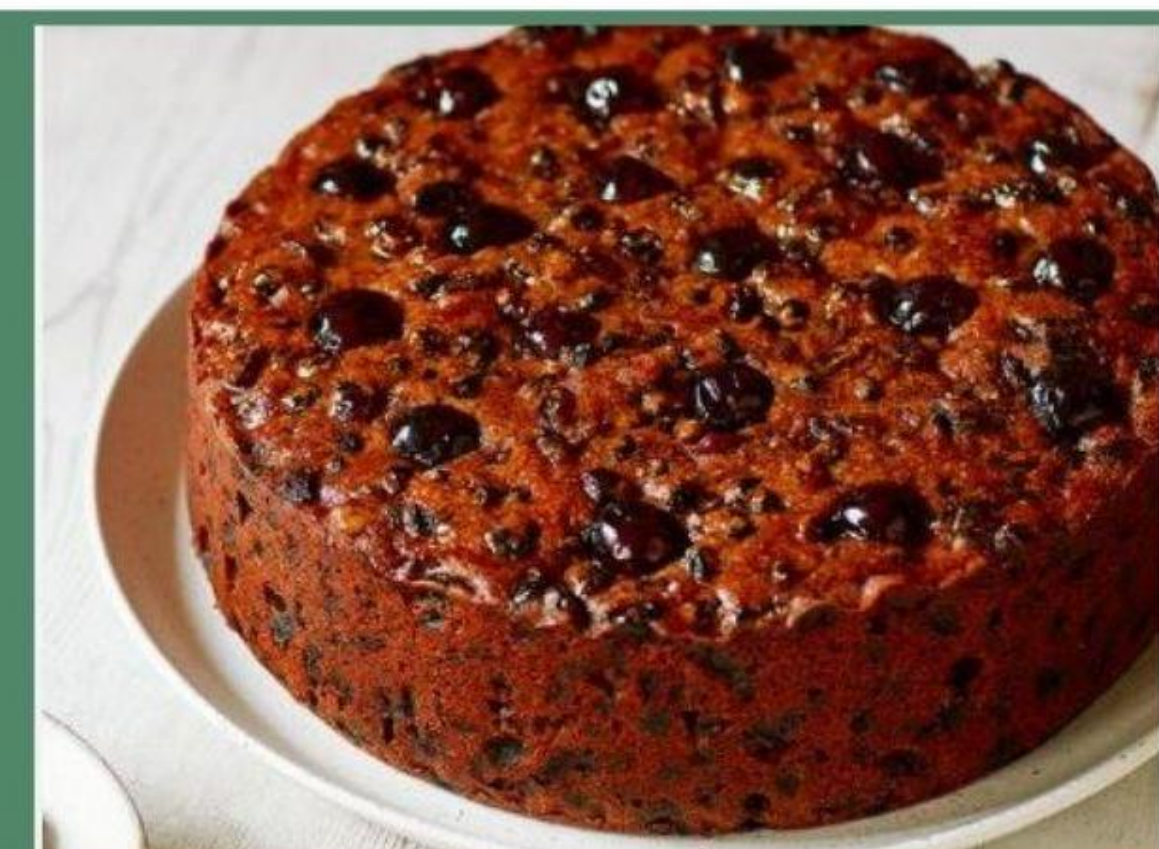
Scottish Scran

Check out their website for the recipes and more details

<https://scottishscran.com/black-bun>

Contributed by Julie Freeman, L'Ardoise

Wartime Christmas Fruitcake



Ingredients

1 cup of each raisins or currants; dates and prunes
1 cup dry fruit (peels)
1 cup of red & 1 cup green cherries- Cut in half
1 cup chopped walnuts
2 cups brown sugar
1 teaspoon of each salt; cinnamon; nutmeg;
allspice and ground cloves
2 cups of boiling water

Method

Bring all this to a boiling point and then let simmer for 10 minutes, then cool to lukewarm.

Add 3 3/4 Cups Flour with 2 teaspoons baking soda
Add flavour of your choice 1 to 2 teaspoons:
vanilla, lemon or rum extract.

Bake at 300 degree for two hours or until done.

Kenneth David's Great Aunt Minnie à Charlie gave this recipe to his mother. She made it every Christmas when he was growing up and now he carries on the tradition..

Mi'kmaq Cuisine

Introducing Shaun Zwarun, Executive Chef for the last ten years at Kiju's Restaurant in Membertou, Cape Breton.

Born in Glace Bay, Shaun's Ukrainian and Italian heritages bring a global flavour to his recipes, but his influences today frequently reflect our First Nation communities, and local growers.

"Kiju's is located in Membertou First Nation community, so a lot of the recipes are Mi'kmaq-inspired," said Zwarun.

"We have a three-course Mi'kmaq-inspired menu. Four-cent bread and we serve it in a little cast-iron frying pan. We do cedar-planked salmon and the traditional blueberry cake."

Shaun published his first book in 2022 – Fresh, Local and Delicious: Dishes from Mi'kma'ki and around the World from Kiju's Restaurant in Membertou. It's available on Amazon through this link!

Recipes can also be found on Kiju's website, including this traditional Mi'kmaq quick bread, Luskinikn

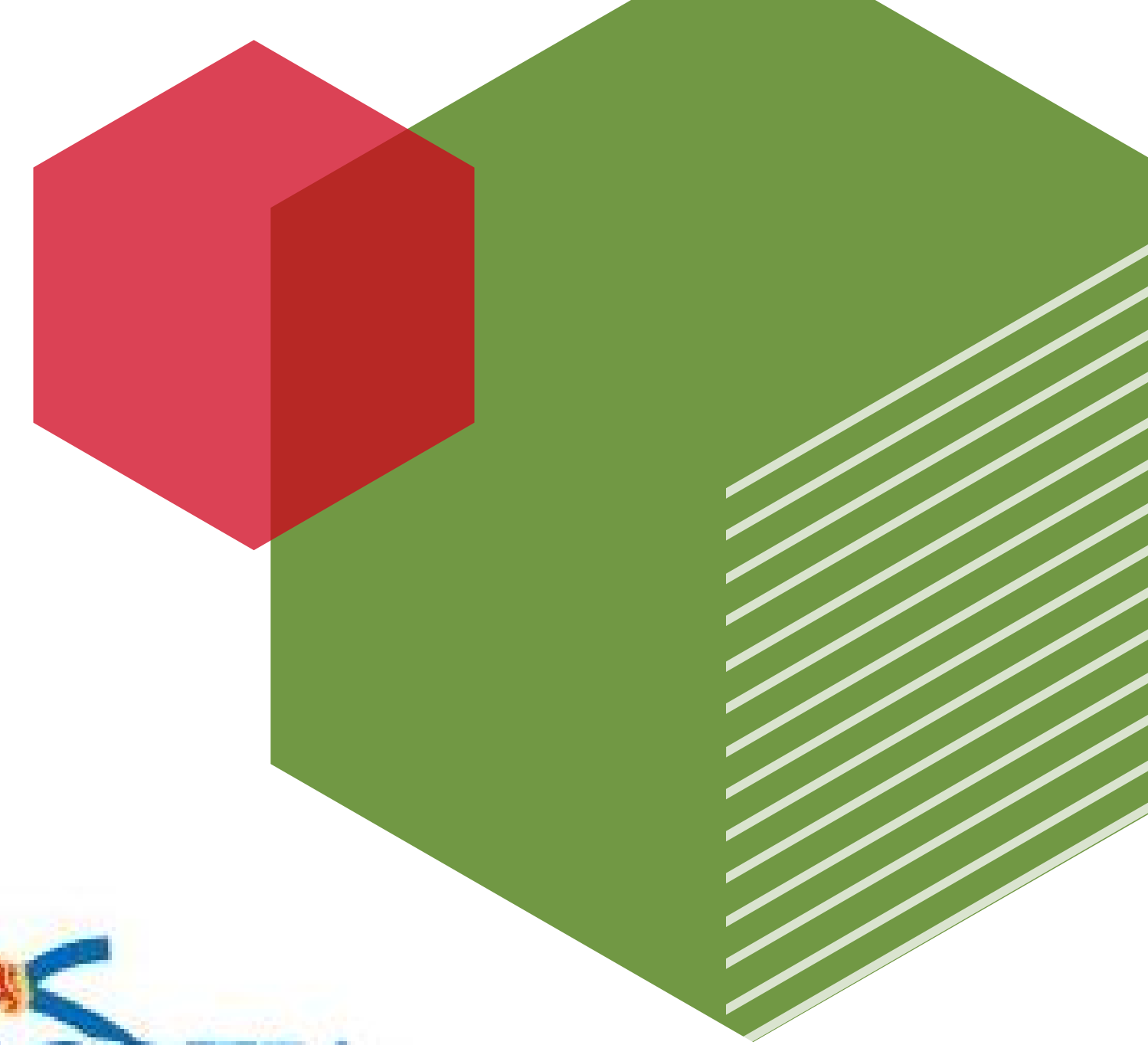
Fresh, Local and Delicious

Recipes for Indigenous Inspired Fine Dining from Membertou's Kiju's Restaurant



Shaun Zwarun

GRANTS AVAILABLE for organizations and individuals



Property Tax Rebate for Seniors Program

This program provides a 50% rebate of residential municipal property taxes paid for 2022, up to \$800. To be eligible for the Property Tax Rebate for Seniors you must be at least 65 and receive, or be eligible to receive, the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) or be between 60-64 and receive, or be eligible to receive, the Allowance in 2023. The Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and the Allowance are monthly federal supplements available to low-income Old Age Security pensioners.

To Apply:

- Your 2022 municipal residential property taxes must be paid in full. The taxes must be in your name or include your name.
- Complete the application in full. An incomplete application may delay your rebate. All applications must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2023.
- 2022 municipal property tax bill and receipts which show taxes paid in full will be sent to the province by your municipality once the province receives your application.
- Mail to: Property Tax Rebate for Seniors, Box 283, CRO, Halifax, NS, B3J 2N7
- Fax to: 902-428-2164 (Please make sure to send both sides of the application.)

The Property Tax Rebate for Seniors forms have been mailed out on June 30th by the province. This year we will be providing the copy of bill and receipts to the province electronically. **Seniors will be required to complete their application form and mail it to the province but will no longer require the Municipal Tax Sheet they used to request from the municipality. We encourage seniors if they have any questions to phone the office at 902-226-2400.



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. <https://housing.novascotia.ca/programs/using-programs-seniors/home-adaptations-seniors-independence>

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.

<https://housing.novascotia.ca/programs/housing-programs-seniors/senior-citizens-assistance-program>

Call one of our caseworkers today at 1-844-424-5110.



Oil to Heat Pump Affordability Program

The Oil to Heat Pump Affordability (OHPA) Program Provides up to \$10,000 to help eligible homeowners make this switch and may be combined with funding from existing federal and provincial programs including the Canada Greener Homes Grant (CGHG) and programs offered by Efficiency Nova Scotia.

<https://www.energyns.ca/residential/services-rebates/oil-to-heat-pump/>



Seniors Care Grant

The Seniors Care Grant helps low-income seniors with the cost of household services (like lawn care, snow removal, grocery delivery, transportation, small home repairs and phone service), healthcare services (like physiotherapy and mental health support) and home heating. Grants are \$750 for each household.

You can apply until 31 March 2024.

To qualify for the grant, you need to be 65 or older by 31 March 2024 and meet all of the following criteria:

- Have a household net income of \$37,500 or less
- live in your own home or apartment
- Have your name on the property title, Land Titles Initiative Certificate of Claim or residential lease agreement or a Band administrative letter issued by a First Nation community (reserve)
- Have paid (or that you will pay) for household and healthcare services and home heating between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024

For more information go to <https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-help-household-costs-seniors-care-grant> or call 902-424-5200 or toll free 1-800-670-4357 with any questions.

HomeWarming offers home energy assessments and upgrades for income-qualified homeowners, at no cost for people living on lower incomes. For qualifying homeowners, if determined that upgrades like draft-proofing and insulation will help reduce your heating and power bills, upgrades can be installed at absolutely no cost to you. [Apply Here.](#)



LAST WORDS

Celebrating and thanking the many local businesses and organizations in our communities

Joanne's Own Journey to Wellness Through Her Business

By: Celeste Gotell

Joanne Samson-Decoste lives in Louisdale with her husband, Frank, of 29 years. Her three children, Devin, Logan and Madison are all grown and now living on their own. Formerly from Samson's Cove, Isle Madame, she is the daughter of Leah and Willard Samson.



From a very young age, Joanne always knew she wanted a career where she could help people. In 1988, she began her professional career as a nurse after graduating from Dalhousie University with a Bachelor of Nursing. Her nursing career included work at the NS Rehab Centre, continuing care, palliative care, youth and school health, public health and long-term care. Joanne retired from NS Health in 2019 and has never looked back. She continues to work on a casual basis in long-term care and appreciates the time flexibility she now has in her life and personal business. This has allowed her to follow her passion of empowering and supporting people to improve health and wellness.

When the opportunity came up to become involved in a part-time business to promote health and wellness, while still working in a full-time position as a nurse with NS Health, Joanne was intrigued. In 2009, she became a health and wellness consultant with Arbonne, a company that has always been focused on health and wellness for over 40 years. Since her retirement in 2019 Joanne has devoted considerably more time to growing her business, sharing her knowledge and supporting folks on their personal wellness journey. At the same time she has been transforming her own health, spending more time with family; friends and volunteering to give back.

Always willing to share her own journey with others, Joanne does not shy away from speaking with honesty about the challenges many of us have to overcome to enjoy a positive sense of self and overall well-being.

Her greatest blessings are her faith, family, children and having her daughter Madison as a business partner enjoying her own personal health transformation.

"I so love making a difference in people's lives, leaving them better than when I first met them."

You can reach Joanne at 902-631-3905 or e-mail: joannedecoste@hotmail.com



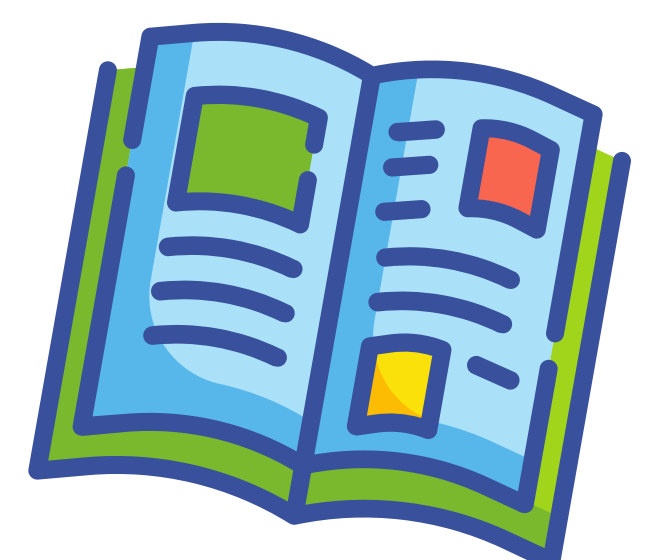
Joanne and her daughter Madison

Seniors Take Action Coalition would like to express its sincere thanks to the local businesses and organizations who have generously offered to have printed copies available of our newsletter since we launched Better with Age back in Spring 2021.

Special thanks for our many newsletter contributors in this issue, Colin MacDougall, Judy Langdon, the Dalhousie ACTing Collectively Team, MLA Trevor Boudreau, Warden Amanda Mombourquette, and Kenneth David.



We are grateful for the support of Dept of Seniors and Long-Term Care for the Age-Friendly Community Grant that makes this newsletter possible.



If you have comments, feedback and ideas for future issues let us know at seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com

Si vous avez des commentaires, des réactions et des suggestions pour nos prochaines publications, faites-le nous savoir à seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com

Newsletter Committee

Celeste Gotell
Cynthia Curtis
Julie Freeman

Newsletter Design

Celeste Gotell
with the support of Janelle AuCoin
Mental Health and Addictions
Nova Scotia Health