



A Message from the Seniors Take Action Coalition

Each New Year brings a chance for new beginnings...to try and learn to cook Italian cuisine, sew an apron, skip rope every day...

It is also a time of reflection, to mull over the past year, to imagine what could have been different, triumphs and mistakes made. It is a time to remember and be thankful, even for the losses and hardships we faced...through them, we have learned.

We face a challenging world, armed by living in a beautiful corner of Nova Scotia, of Canada. We have each other, our greatest resource and source of resilience. As we think of our life in 2025, we can decide to shake off inertia and figure out how better to share our skills, time, knowledge, interests and talents...we all have them...for as a community, we are stronger and work towards the well-being of all in Richmond County (and beyond).

Dorothy Barnard, Coalition Chair

Chaque nouvelle année est l'occasion de prendre un nouveau départ... d'essayer d'apprendre la cuisine italienne, de coudre un tablier, de faire de la corde à sauter tous les jours...

C'est aussi un moment de réflexion, où l'on repense à l'année écoulée, où l'on imagine ce qui aurait pu être différent, les erreurs commises et les triomphes. C'est le moment de se souvenir et d'être reconnaissant, même pour les pertes et les difficultés que nous avons rencontrées... grâce à elles, nous avons appris.

Nous sommes confrontés à un monde plein de défis, armés par le fait que nous vivons dans un coin magnifique de la Nouvelle-Écosse, au Canada. Nous avons les uns les autres, notre plus grande ressource et source de résilience. En pensant à notre vie en 2025, nous pouvons décider de secouer l'inertie et de trouver comment mieux partager nos compétences, notre temps, nos connaissances, nos intérêts et nos talents... nous en avons tous... car en tant que communauté, nous sommes plus forts et nous travaillons au bien-être de tous dans le comté de Richmond (et au-delà).

Dorothy Barnard, Président de la coalition

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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

This issue of Better with Age is dedicated to Claire Doyle, who died on September 24, 2024.

Claire was an active member of the Seniors Action Coalition for many years and was on the first Board of Directors. We remember Claire not just for her extraordinary deeds but for her extraordinary heart. Her legacy of compassion, generosity, and unwavering dedication to others will continue to inspire all of us to live with more kindness, more empathy, and a deeper commitment to making the world a better place.

Ce numéro de Better with Age est dédié à Claire Doyle, décédée le 24 septembre 2024.

Claire a été un membre actif de la Seniors Action Coalition pendant de nombreuses années et a fait partie du premier conseil d'administration. Nous nous souvenons de Claire non seulement pour ses actes extraordinaires, mais aussi pour son cœur extraordinaire. Son héritage de compassion, de générosité et de dévouement inébranlable aux autres continuera à nous inspirer tous à vivre avec plus de gentillesse, plus d'empathie et un engagement plus profond à rendre le monde meilleur.





Are you interested in the health and well being of older adults and promoting an age-friendly community?

Join our Team and Make a Difference Today in the Lives of Older Adults in Richmond County

We are looking for dedicated volunteers to join our Board of Directors

What we do:

- Meet monthly to share information and provide education
- Engage with seniors clubs and organizations
- Explore funding opportunities and program ideas
- Advocate for issues that impact seniors
- Celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of older adults
- Produce a monthly calendar and quarterly newsletter
- Share information on our Face Book Page with 780 members

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT CELESTE AT
SENIORSTAKEACTION.INFO@GMAIL.COM**

<https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/age-well>

McMaster

OPTIMAL AGING PORTAL






2024 YEAR AT A GLANCE

STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIPS WITH CLUBS

Seniors Take Action Coalition partnered with several clubs by rotating our monthly meetings and featuring presentations on a wide range of topics including housing, provincial grants for older adults, programs through Service Canada, and partnering opportunities with CB University.

AGE-FRIENDLY GRANT PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA LAUNCHED SENIORS CENTRE WITHOUT WALLS

Launched a Seniors Centre Without Walls, arranging presentations in local communities, virtual program and learning opportunities, and Virtual Coffee Clubs on Friday mornings. Still exploring other opportunities to host Virtual Watch Parties and planning a health and wellness fair.

MONTHLY CALENDAR EXPANSION

Produced monthly calendars highlighting Club activities and other areas of interest for older adults to participate in Richmond County. Calendars are available via social media and in locations throughout Richmond County. Now available on Tellie as a weekly program: What's Happening.

HOSTED IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES - CHAPTER TWO

May 2024, hosted Imagine and Possibilities - Chapter Two -125 participants gathered in Louisdale, learned more about the Happy Communities Project and attended a community showcase of service providers.

BETTER WITH AGE NEWSLETTER

Celebrated four years of producing our quarterly newsletter to promote an age-friendly community, share information and celebrate older adults in Richmond County. Featured health care providers in the community.

ABLE Village (<https://www.ableplatform.ca>) is a virtual platform that allows older people to connect, play games, make art, and engage in movement activities with others, including family members in different locations, through computer video at the same time (or "live"). The platform was co-designed between older members of the community, computer scientists, and researchers in media arts and gerontology.



AGE-FRIENDLY communities

Seniors Centre Without Walls

by: Celeste Gotell



A PROJECT HOSTED BY



Lots of exciting opportunities are being explored as part of the Seniors Centre Without Walls. We have already arranged for several community presentations on various topics both in-person and virtually and are planning several others for the months ahead. We have launched our Friday morning Virtual Coffee Club, and a new program called *What's Happening*, which is aired daily at 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Telile Community Television, featuring our monthly calendar and the many events and activities available for older adults to participate in.

We are beginning to plan a Health and Wellness Fair to showcase the many services available in our communities. We are also exploring opportunities to offer programs focused on grief, loss, bereavement and mental health resiliency for older adults in our communities.

De nombreuses opportunités passionnantes sont à l'étude dans le cadre du Centre des aînés sans murs. Nous avons déjà organisé plusieurs présentations communautaires sur divers sujets, à la fois en personne et virtuellement, et nous en prévoyons plusieurs autres pour les mois à venir. Nous avons lancé notre café virtuel du vendredi matin et une nouvelle émission intitulée *What's Happening*, diffusée tous les jours à 9 heures et à 17 heures sur la télévision communautaire Telile, qui présente notre calendrier mensuel et les nombreux événements et activités auxquels les personnes âgées peuvent participer.

Nous commençons à planifier une foire de la santé et du bien-être pour présenter les nombreux services disponibles dans nos communautés. Nous étudions également les possibilités d'offrir des programmes axés sur le chagrin, la perte, le deuil et la résilience en matière de santé mentale pour les personnes âgées de nos communautés.



Our Centre is being funded by the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care Age Friendly Communities Grant

Watch for more updates in the Seniors Take Action Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1161257753926917/> or feel free to contact Celeste Gotell if you have any questions at seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com or call 902-471-0317

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE

VIRTUAL COFFEE CLUB

Join us for a virtual cup of coffee or tea.

Every second Friday
January 24th, February 7th, 21st
March 7th and 21st
9-10:30am on Zoom, Email
seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com
for the link or go to our FB page.

Seniors Centre Without Walls is possible due to the financial support of the Province of Nova Scotia's Age-Friendly Community Grant

To access our monthly calendar, Better with Age Newsletter and other information of interest to seniors, visit:
<https://www.richmondcounty.ca/seniors-resources-and-support>

AGE-FRIENDLY communities



Isle Madame New Horizons Club Launches Lunch and Learn Series

Members from the New Horizons Club have something new to look forward to at their regular monthly meeting thanks to funding provided by the Strait Richmond Community Health Board Wellness Fund Program. At each regular club meeting on the first Sunday of the month, a presentation is arranged based on feedback from the members.

The new program kicked off in November and eight sessions will be offered in total. This creates an opportunity for participants to learn about a topic of interest to older adults and then enjoy a lovely lunch and some social time before their monthly meeting.

So far, they have had a session on Frauds and Scams, Continuing Care, Digital Literacy. Upcoming sessions include Brain Health and Dementia, Estate Planning, and Grief, Loss and Bereavement.



Le club Isle Madame New Horizons lance une série de déjeuners-conférences

Les membres du club New Horizons ont quelque chose de nouveau à attendre avec impatience lors de leur réunion mensuelle régulière grâce au financement fourni par le Strait Richmond Community Health Board Wellness Fund Program (programme de fonds de bien-être du conseil communautaire de Strait Richmond). Lors de chaque réunion régulière du club, le premier dimanche du mois, une présentation est organisée en fonction des commentaires des membres.

Le nouveau programme a démarré en novembre et huit sessions seront proposées au total. Les participants ont ainsi l'occasion de s'informer sur un sujet intéressant les personnes âgées, puis de profiter d'un délicieux déjeuner et d'un moment de convivialité avant leur réunion mensuelle.

Jusqu'à présent, une session a été organisée sur les fraudes et les escroqueries, les soins continus et la littératie numérique. Les prochaines sessions porteront sur la santé cérébrale et la démence, la planification successorale et le chagrin, la perte et le deuil.

What's In a Name?

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Since 1992, Community Links has worked to support the community-based senior serving (CBSS) sector - those organizations, big and small, that support seniors to live engaged and meaningful lives in their communities. In 2023, hundreds of senior-serving groups and organizations from across the province contributed to our Community Connections research, sharing valuable insight into the CBSS sector's strengths, needs, and opportunities. Guided by your input, we have been working to develop new ways to better support the sector.

What was Community Links is now Aging Well Nova Scotia. What has changed is more than our name, but certainly that change was a timely step in the right direction.

We invite you to save the date for our upcoming virtual gathering on **January 29, 2025 - 10am to 11:30am!** During this event, we will launch Aging Well Nova Scotia, share updates on organizational changes, and discuss how we are enhancing our engagement and support for the CBSS sector. We'll also share key information about upcoming in-person and virtual gatherings and events planned for 2025.

We look forward to connecting with you and continuing to strengthen the CBSS sector together!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/>

Click the link to register.



Tech Smart Seniors offers you courses with step-by-step, easy to follow instructions on how to do what you want to do online - easily, and right now.

<https://techsmartsenior.stemcamp.ca/>



The Community Health Teams in partnership with the IWK offer **FREE online wellness sessions** delivered over Zoom for Healthcare.

<https://cht.cdha.nshealth.ca/selectCourse.aspx?unitId=HealthyNS>



Comfort Tea...Come For Tea !

by: Stephen Anthony - Vice Chair
Strait Richmond Palliative Care Society

The Strait Richmond Palliative Care Society looks forward to hosting more Comfort Teas in 2025. The first Comfort Tea was held in September 2023 to participate in the Good Grief, Nova Scotia festival. The festival's goal was to increase knowledge about grief and the loneliness associated with it and was organized by a team headed by Dr. Mary Ellen MacDonald at Dalhousie University. Our first tea was held in St. Peters and others were held in Louisdale, Arichat, and Port Hawkesbury in 2024.

Comfort Teas are meant to be a welcoming setting for anyone experiencing any type of loss and to spend time with others who are willing to listen. Each tea has had 20-25 participants. People are free to share their experiences or just listen to others. We do introductions with some discussion in the full group, share delicious home-baked treats, talk in smaller groups, and then return to the larger group before closing. The teas are about two hours long and some folks have attended more than one.

Many attendees discuss the death of someone close to them. We have also talked about grief associated with a changing work world, retirement, and immigrants losing contact with family and culture. We have received positive feedback about people feeling comfortable sharing and discussing topics they may not talk about enough. Our Society believes that sharing feelings about grief helps with healing and living healthier lives.

Our current goal is to host four teas in 2025 – two in the spring and two in the fall. Details will be posted on the Strait Richmond Palliative Care Society Facebook page, 1015 The Hawk, Telile, The Reporter, church bulletins, STAC Coalition, and posters.

We look forward to welcoming more people this year.

www.srpalliativecaresociety.com



Death Cafe: A Space to Talk About Life and Death

by: Celeste Gotell

Inspired by Bernard Crettaz's "Café Mortel" in Switzerland, a Death Cafe provides a safe space to discuss one of life's most significant moments. A Death Cafe is a discussion group, but, it is not a grief or support group. At a Death Cafe, people gather to discuss death in a relaxed setting while enjoying food and drinks. It is open to everyone and designed to engage and encourage people to openly discuss death with the goal to remove the stigma attached to conversations about death.

The format is simple, participants talk about all things related to the death experience, sometimes with other people whom they've never met before. It has been found that at times it can be easier to talk about death with strangers. Death Cafes are non-religious and provide an alternative to traditional ways of understanding death. They aim to raise awareness and help people make the most of their lives. There are Death Cafes operating in close to 100 countries and in Canada there are 1693 Death Cafe locations. In this area, two have been held as part of the CORAH programming at the NS Community College in Port Hawkesbury.

Learn more: <https://deathcafe.com/c/Canada/>

Café de la mort: Un espace pour parler de la vie et de la mort

by: Celeste Gotell

Inspiré du « Café Mortel » de Bernard Crettaz en Suisse, le Café de la mort offre un espace sûr pour discuter de l'un des moments les plus importants de la vie. Un Café de la mort est un groupe de discussion, mais il ne s'agit pas d'un groupe de deuil ou de soutien. Lors d'un café de la mort, les gens se réunissent pour discuter de la mort dans un cadre détendu, tout en dégustant des plats et des boissons. Il est ouvert à tous et conçu pour encourager les gens à discuter ouvertement de la mort, dans le but d'éliminer la stigmatisation liée aux conversations sur la mort.

Le format est simple : les participants parlent de tout ce qui a trait à l'expérience de la mort, parfois avec d'autres personnes qu'ils n'ont jamais rencontrées auparavant. Il a été constaté qu'il est parfois plus facile de parler de la mort avec des inconnus. Les cafés de la mort ne sont pas religieux et offrent une alternative aux méthodes traditionnelles de compréhension de la mort. Ils visent à sensibiliser les gens et à les aider à tirer le meilleur parti de leur vie. Il existe des cafés de la mort dans près de 100 pays et au Canada, il y en a 1693. Dans cette région, deux ont été organisés dans le cadre du programme CORAH au NS Community College de Port Hawkesbury.

Pour en savoir plus : <https://deathcafe.com/c/Canada/>





WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?

Happy 100th Birthday Marjorie MacKenzie-MacKay: An Incredible Milestone

by: Celeste Gotell

Centenarians, people who are 100 or more years old, are among the fastest growing segment of Canada's population. In 2022, Statistics Canada data showed the country is home to 13,500 centenarians, a 43 per cent increase over 2018. Over the next 25 years, StatsCan predicts our population aged 85 and older could triple to almost 2.5 million people. There are now more than half a million people living around the world who are aged 100 or older. Thanks to improvements in living conditions, nutrition, research in health and higher quality health care from primary care providers and specialists, the number of centenarians has risen sharply in the last couple of decades.

What is the secret to living a longer and happier life? What's the secret to being in that lucky group who see a second century? Many scientists are trying to figure that out, but nobody is entirely sure. While genetics plays a huge role in our longevity, there are many who also agree that factors like managing stress, eating right, being physically active, not smoking and, little or no alcohol have all contributed to their longer lives.

There are many famous people who have reached that significant life milestone, famous people and celebrities like George Burns, Glynis Johns, Bob Hope, Jimmy Carter, Gloria Stuart, Kirk Douglas, and the Queen Mother. We also have a centenarian right here in Richmond County who just celebrated her 100th birthday surrounded by family and friends.

On a beautiful sunny day in January, just days after Marjorie's 100th birthday, I had the absolute pleasure of spending time with her and her daughter Dianne in their home in Sampsonville. Meet Marjorie (MacDonald), MacKenzie - McKay born on January 6, 1925, to John and Elsie MacDonald from Soldiers Cove.

Marjorie's father John was a veteran of the Canadian Forces who served in both WWI, WWII. While he was overseas, during the first world war, he met Elsie Lily nee Fogwill, who was from Paignton, a seaside town on the coast of Devonshire, England. While in England, he married Elsie and when the war ended and our military members returned home, like many other war-brides, she arrived in Quebec and travelled by train to Cape Breton to begin in her new life. Arriving in St. Peter's she travelled by horse and carriage to her new home Soldiers Cove. Coming from an urban area, Elsie found it challenging to adjust to a very rural lifestyle.

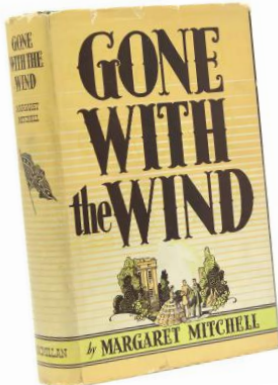
They moved into the family homestead with John's parents. John and Rebecca MacDonald and began their lives raising their family. Marjorie was one of seven children born to John and Elsie, two of her siblings unfortunately died in early childhood.

Marjorie and her family lived through the Great Depression, but when I asked her about it, she shared that as a family they really did not experience what others did. In fact, she shared that she really wasn't even aware, as they lived on a vibrant farm, with two horses, chickens and other animals with access to food from the crops they harvested.

As a young teen, Marjorie found her first love, following a visit to her home when a neighbour left a book called "Gone With The Wind". First published in 1936 and set in Georgia, during the American Civil War, the story depicts the struggles of young Scarlett O'Hara. Marjorie quickly grabbed the book and hid it under her mattress so nobody else could steal it from her. Some 1000 pages later she was hooked.



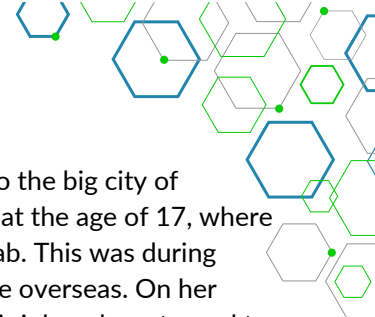
Marjorie taken on January 11th while visiting her in Sampsonville.



Marjorie discovered her love of books with this classic.



Happy 100th Birthday Marjorie MacKenzie-McKay An Incredible Milestone



To advance her schooling and attend grade nine she had to leave her home in Soldiers Cove and head to the big city of Halifax, where she attended St. Pat's High School for one year. Not long after, Marjorie left for Ontario at the age of 17, where she lived with her Auntie in Kingston. While living in Kingston, her job was testing metal at a chemical lab. This was during the war time years, and many of these jobs were being filled by women left at home while the men were overseas. On her Auntie's encouragement, knowing when the war was over the men were returning home to resume their jobs., she returned to Nova Scotia and attended Provincial Normal College in 1944, for one year. At that time, you could attend teachers' college without completing your high school education.

Marjorie's first teaching job was in Barra Head School, Richmond County, in a one room schoolhouse. In those days it was necessary to attend summer school in Halifax, as condition of upgrading to maintain your teaching license. While there, she was reminded how much she enjoyed the city life. One of her classmates from Bridgewater encouraged her to apply for a teaching position that was available. So, at the end of summer school, she packed her suitcase and headed for Bridgewater where she taught grade five and boarded with friend's family. The following year she landed a position in Larry's River.

While growing up, Marjorie knew of Justin Mackenzie, a lad from the local community. Justin had joined the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve and served in WWII. following the war he settled in Ontario. Years later though, when they had both grown up, and Justin was returning home on holidays from Ontario, she caught his eye, and he began courting the young Marjorie.

Following a proposal and an engagement ring that arrived in the mail, Marjorie left her home on the train after Christmas in 1948 and headed for Brantford, Ontario, where she married and settled in her new life. In an unusual twist, Justin was the wedding planner and had everything organized for when she arrived.

During those early days in the last 1940's and the 1950's while living in Brantford, they began their family and had four children, Dianne, Marjorie (Mimi), Ian and Rosemary. She also did some substitute teaching. In 1956, while home in Cape Breton on summer vacation, her husband Justin was offered a job driving the Coca-Cola truck in and they never went back. He and his brother-in-law drove back to Ontario to collect their belongings.

They moved into the family homestead and began their new life in Soldiers Cove. They welcomed three more children, Joan, Ken, and Allan. In 1957, the family moved to St. Peter's. Marjorie did some substitute teaching and eventually in 1961, when some of the kids were older, she accepted a full-time position at St. Peter's High where she taught grades 7-8-9 until she retired in 1982.



Marjorie and Justin on their wedding day in 1948.



Photo circa 1975. Back Row From L-R-Dianne, Rosemary, Allan, Ian, Kenny, Joan and Mimi. Front Marjorie and Justin.



Marjorie's photo is bottom row, far left.



Happy 100th Birthday Marjorie MacKenzie-McKay An Incredible Milestone

In 1981, Marjorie's husband Justin died. But she was given a second chance at love and in 1983, she married Donald McKay.

Marjorie and Justin first became friends with Donald and his late wife in Ontario. They would often come to Cape Breton on holidays, and they spent time together as couples. While Donald knew her children, it did take him a bit of adjustment to his newfound family. He and his late wife never had children and all sudden he inherited a huge family of seven children, and their children. There were times when things were chaotic, but Donald very quickly adjusted to the many new adventures this large family would introduce to him.

Their shared interest in travel found them on a cross-country bus tour across the United States, several trips to parts of Canada, a trip to England, Scotland, Germany, and Bermuda. On a trip to England, Marjorie was able to learn more about her mother's family and meet some of her kinship.



Marjorie and Donald on a trip to Ireland

She celebrated her 25th Wedding Anniversary with Donald, and he died a year later at the age of ninety-seven. Marjorie remained in her own home in St Peter's until 2020, Just prior to Covid, she moved to Richmond Villa for a brief period and then in 2021 moved in with Dianne and Conrad and has been there since.

Marjorie was always an avid reader, from the time she picked up *Gone with the Wind*, she always enjoyed a good book. With a particular interest in history and biographies, it was not uncommon to find three books on the go at one time... one in the living room, one in the kitchen and one on her bedside table. She was involved with the local Home and School Association, the Ladies Auxiliary for the Legion, and the local PC Party Ladies Association. She also shared a passion for Scottish Culture with both her husbands, Justin, and Donald.

The music of Scotland is dear to her. She is proud of her family of bagpipers, first her father, and now her three sons and four grandsons.

Marjorie enjoys visits and phone calls from her children and grandchildren and always looks forward to her daily power nap in the afternoon. She also enjoys watching YouTube videos of Scottish music, dance videos and concerts.

When I asked Marjorie her secret for living to be 100, this is what she had to say. ***"Eat a good diet, no excesses and keep your mind and body active. I was blessed with good health, and I was always an avid reader and a lifelong learner."***

As I was driving away after my time with Marjorie, I was filled with gratitude. What an opportunity to spend an afternoon with such lovely woman who has the respect and admiration of all of Richmond County!



Birthday Party on Dec 28th Photo includes, children and spouses, grandchildren with spouses or significant other and great grandchildren.

There are seven children, 11 grandchildren and five (awaiting the sixth) great grandchildren. Six were unable to attend.



Birthday Wishes from King Charles and Pope Francis



Happy 100th Birthday Miss Marjorie!



Spotlight on:



YOUR DIGITAL LITERACY GUIDE

by: Ann Marie Powers- Adult Education Instructor



Digital literacy is crucial for all age groups, but it holds particular significance for seniors. As technology becomes increasingly integral to our lives, seniors who lack digital skills risk being left behind in both social and practical domains. From staying connected with family and friends to accessing essential services, managing finances, and engaging in lifelong learning, digital skills open doors to independence and enhanced quality of life.

Furthermore, technology can combat isolation—a challenge many seniors face—by enabling virtual connections and access to online communities. Learning digital skills not only enhances seniors' ability to participate in today's digital world but also provides a sense of accomplishment and empowerment, proving it's never too late to learn something new.

The *Basic Digital Literacy Skills* course is part of E3 Foundations, designed to provide learners with the confidence and abilities they need to navigate the digital world effectively. In today's fast-evolving technological landscape, possessing digital skills is no longer optional but a necessity—whether for employment, further education, or personal pursuits. This course introduces learners to decoding basic digital information and purposefully using digital tools and programs relevant to everyday life.

Our partnership with Northstar Digital Literacy Assessment allows learners to have access to an online digital skill platform that they can access at their own pace and time. Through hands-on exploration of digital devices and real-world software applications, learners begin to understand how to use these tools with confidence. This course caters to adult learners who have limited experience with digital technology, equipping them with foundational skills to achieve their goals. By focusing on the practical application of digital tools, the course enables learners to identify and develop skills applicable to both their personal and professional lives.

Whether creating a resume, setting up an email account, or learning how to navigate the internet safely, the curriculum is designed to empower learners to use digital technology effectively and confidently. The structured learning and assessment tasks within the course are framed as opportunities to demonstrate individual progress and success. By the end of the program, learners not only gain an introductory understanding of digital tools but also develop the confidence to continue exploring the digital world independently.

I'm thrilled to be part of the Richmond County Literacy Network (RCLN) team as an Adult Education Instructor instructing two vital courses: CAEC Prep (Canadian Adult Education Credential Preparation) and Basic Digital Literacy Skills. I'm passionate about supporting adult learners on their journey to mastering digital tools and skills, and I'm excited to continue making a positive impact at RCLN. Whether you're looking to enhance your digital skills for work, education, or personal growth, I'm here to guide and support you every step of the way. Together, we can unlock the potential of technology to enrich lives and open new opportunities.

Do you have a new laptop, tablet, iPad or cellphone?

Do you need help navigating your digital device or using some of its apps?



Digital Literacy Sessions - Where can you find us?

Wednesdays, 1:00 - 3:15 p.m.

L'Ardoise Seniors Jolly Club, 206 Chapel Cove Rd, L'Ardoise

Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Richmond County Council Chambers, 2357 Hwy 206, Arichat

You can drop in to these sessions on a first come-first serve basis, but it is suggest you call theoffice first to discuss what help you're looking for and what you will need to take with you for your visit.

**Call Arlene Boudreau, Digital Wellness Coordinator
902-535-3304 or 902-227-8704**





Spotlight on:

VON Richmond - Providers of Home Support to Richmond County's Vulnerable Populations

by: Glenda Kipp, Manager of Home and Community Care

VON was established in 1897 to ensure that care was available, affordable and accessible to everyone in Canada – no matter where they live. It's work that we've continued for over a century. We were among the first in Canada to offer prenatal education, well-baby clinics, school health services, visiting nurses and coordinated home care programs.

VON has helped communities across Canada during some of the most devastating periods in our country's history – World War I, the horrific explosion of a munitions ship in the Halifax harbour in 1917, the deadly influenza epidemic of 1918, the Great Depression, World War II and the COVID-19 pandemic. We are proud of our legacy, and of the fact that, well into our second century, our priority remains to provide care and support to Canadians in their own homes and communities, where they want to be.

VON Richmond provides care across Richmond County from one county line to the other, and in every rural space of this beautiful southern piece of Cape Breton.

Home Support is for clients who need additional support to live at home independently. We support frail elderly seniors, people recovering from surgery or injury, people with cognitive impairment, terminally ill clients and children and adults with special needs.

We use a personal support care plan that reflects individual needs, whether this is personal or hygienic care such as bathing and grooming, homemaking tasks such as cooking, laundry or light housekeeping, assistance with getting in and out of bed or walking, help with eating or exercise, medication supervision or catheter and colostomy care. We also perform environmental risk assessments to make sure clients' homes are as safe as possible.

At the same time, we also provide companionship and conversation and report on any changing needs so these can be included in the care plan. Our Home Support services provide respite for caregivers, allowing them to tend to other responsibilities outside the home and preventing caregiver burnout.

Our Meals on Wheels (Frozen) is a healthy option that provides complete, frozen, home-style meals to clients, without them having to leave their homes. This program makes nutrition easier for members of the community. We deliver frozen meals to seniors, people with disabilities or those who aren't able to do their own grocery shopping and/or cook for themselves. Clients are given several frozen meal options to choose from and special dietary items are also available.

Note: VON Richmond does not provide Nursing Services; these services are provided by Nova Scotia Health.



Kelsey Landry (Service Delivery Supervisor) on route to see a client. VON Richmond received a one time donation of \$5000 for a Hygiene Pantry. These items are for vulnerable clients who are sometimes now choosing between Hygiene and Nutrition. This grass roots action has grown across the VON sites in Nova Scotia, where Palliative Pantries have been established.

**Glenda Richards,
Program Coordinator
Meals on Wheels**



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



Mealtime just got more nutritious, balanced and convenient.





COMMUNITY CORNER update



Richmond County Seniors' Safety & Social Inclusion Coordinator
Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre
Phone: (902) 587-2800 ext: 3
seniorsafetycoordinator.dkmchc@gmail.com

Dr. Kingston
MEMORIAL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

ADULT DROP-IN
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE WARM DRINKS AND SNACKS GROUP ACTIVITIES

Thursdays 1pm-4pm
September through June
St. Peter's Lions Hall,
39 Lions Ave, St. Peter's, NS B0E 3B0

SOCIAL INCLUSION MENTAL WELLNESS

For more info, contact us!
902-587-2800 Ex 3
drkingstonmemorialclinic@gmail.com

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 2025 SESSION DATES:
February 11, March 11, April 15th
2:00 to 3:30 pm

Locations vary in Richmond County, call us for more info.

Call to register
902-587-2800 Ext 3

Emergency Management

Coming Soon!
To enhance communication capabilities for emergencies and operational changes

VOYENT ALERT!
Stay Alert, Stay Connected

RICHMOND
THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF / LA MUNICIPALITE DU COMTE DE

For more information on these and other initiatives, please visit:
<https://www.richmondcounty.ca>

Voluntary Vulnerable Persons Registry

Who is eligible to register?
Those persons with:

- Mobility impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Vision impairment
- Developmental Disability Impairment
- Cognitive Impairment
- Mental Health Conditions

VPR
Vulnerable Persons Registry



Want to learn more about Memory Cafés?
Visit: <https://memorycafens.ca/>



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/mvca/)
- <https://www.nshealth.ca/frailty>

New additions

- <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>



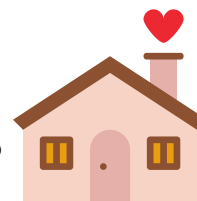
Healing Pathways Community Fund for Grief, Loss, and Emotional Wellness

This funding is available for community-level projects or initiatives focusing on supporting those that are experiencing grief, loss, and bereavement, and which aims to restore them to emotional health well-being.

Applications must be received no later than February 14, 2025.

<https://healingpathways.nshpca.ca/>

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.



NEW POLICY

LOW INCOME TAX EXEMPTION PROGRAM POLICY

The application deadline has been extended to February 28, 2025.

www.richmondcounty.ca

Low Income Tax Exemption Program Policy application deadline extended to February 28, 2025

Submit completed forms along with accompanying documentation to the tax office by e-mail, mail or in person.

Email: taxoffice@richmondcounty.ca

Mail: Municipality of the County of Richmond, 2357 Hwy 206, P.O. Box 331, Arichat, NS B0E 1A0

To view and download the policy or application form, visit: <https://www.richmondcounty.ca/low-income-tax-exemption-program.html>

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 2025.

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-help-household-healthcare-and-home-heating-costs-seniors-care-grant>

Nova Scotia Heating Assistance Rebate Program is now open.

You can receive \$600 if you qualify for the Heating Assistance Rebate Program.

Applications for the provincial program are now open. You can apply until March 31, 2025.

You can find out if you qualify and apply here:

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-heating-assistance-rebate-heating-assistance-rebate-program>



LAST WORDS

Celebrating and thanking the many local businesses and organizations in our communities operated by older adults

"We never work a day in our lives if we love what we do!"

Sherry MacLeod first started selling real estate in the 90s. After a couple of years, she purchased Cape Breton Realty and a few years later, acquired the Prudential office in Port Hawkesbury, followed by the Canso Realty office. Over the past 30 years, the company has grown significantly, selling properties to locals, but also to Americans and Europeans. Sherry's daughter Beth Groom is her succession plan. This past year she became the broker of record, and Sherry is the managing broker. Sherry loves having her in the business—*"she brings great energy and intelligence-she always says, "surround yourself with smart people."* 😊

Sherry says the best part of this business is helping to grow communities. Over the years, rural communities have seen schools and post offices close, as well as banks and other businesses. Many rural communities have experienced population decline, with young people moving away for work. Farms are growing over, and houses falling into disrepair. Sherry finds this heartbreaking. *"With age comes wisdom. Now, we are making serious efforts not just to keep our rural communities strong but to help them thrive. Rural Nova Scotia needs advocates and this belief is reflected in our Mission Statement."*

Our mission is to create economically and socially strong communities in Cape Breton Island and Northeast Nova Scotia while providing quality service to buyers and sellers. We are deeply invested in the well-being of this region and its residents.

Sherry became involved with the Rural Community Foundation (RCFNS) to try to make a difference. They lobbied the Nova Scotia Real Estate Association to donate to RCFNS, and started a fund for free stores in schools.

Sherry acknowledges that one notable aspect of this business is observing how people live—those who have and those who don't. *"It's a fulfilling feeling to assist those in need, whether it's helping someone buy their first home or preparing them for their final home. It's heartwarming to see young families secure their first home, and help seniors transition to places like the Villa or other senior living options."*

As realtors, people like Sherry support others through various stages of their lives, and on a larger scale, encourage businesses to invest in our communities.

For Sherry this job is very social, and she often says *"We never work a day in our lives if we love what we do!. As a young person in business, you focus on learning. Then it shifts to earning, and as you grow older, it becomes about giving back. At a certain age, your perspective changes."*

Sherry now enjoys mentoring new agents, engaging with communities, and guiding people through the process of buying and investing in homes. She is excited to see the next generation getting involved in real estate now.

Sherry was born and raised in Cape Breton, one of the lucky ones that didn't have to go west for work. She is a long time resident of the area and lives in St. Peter's.



Photo: Sherry with her daughter Beth.



Money Path Atlantic is an educational initiative launched in 2022 that works with organizations across Nova Scotia who are interested in expanding their in-house programming to include financial literacy.

Financial Literacy

Facilitator Training

Training. Resources. Connections.

About the Training

Our **free** Financial Literacy for Facilitators Training is offered as a five part, weekly online program that covers ten modules of financial literacy basics.

- Money Priorities
- Taxes and Benefits
- Budgeting
- Banking and Financial Services
- Savings
- Credit Basics
- Credit Scores
- Debt
- Frauds and Scams
- Shopping Smart

Course certificates and membership in the Money Path Trail Guide network are provided upon course completion.

The Money Path team is also available to support Trail Guides to customize money workshops that build the confidence, knowledge and skills of the community members you serve.

What you will Gain

- Financial Literacy lesson plans
- Financial Literacy slide decks
- Financial Literacy Facilitator kit box
- Online calculators, video links and tools
- NEW financial literacy resource updates
- Connections to our NS Trail Guide Network
- Access to NEW training opportunities

2024- 25 Course Dates

OCTOBER 2024 - Online
Wednesday October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
from 9am - Noon

NOVEMBER 2024 - Online
Wednesday November 13, 20, 27 and
December 4, 11 from 9am - Noon

MAY 2025 - Online
Wednesday May 7, 14, 21, 28
and June 4th from 9am - Noon

Ask about our options to provide 2 day onsite sessions for your team.

For more information and to register
info@moneypath.ca

our Partners

MetroWorks
www.metroworks.ca

Mill Road Social Enterprises
entrepreneurship - independence

UCLA

Funded by
Employment and Social Development Canada

Employment and Social Development Canada

www.moneypath.ca





Seniors Clubs and Organizations in Richmond County



Arichat

Donald Goyetche
Isle Madame New Horizons Seniors Club
dGitchie@hotmail.com
902-227-7059

Grand River

Joanne McCormack
Grand River Seniors Club
bilmac1111@yahoo.com
902-587-2143

L'Ardoise

Derek Hughes
L'Ardoise Jolly Seniors Club
dehughes09@gmail.com
613-863-0298

Louisdale

Robert Goyetche
Fleur de Lis Seniors Club
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
902-345-0495

Lower River

Peggy MacNeil
Riverdale's Seniors Club 55
pegmacneil@eastlink.ca
902-625-0166

Port Hawkesbury

Francis Lamey
Strait Area Evergreen Senior Citizens' Club
fmlamey@hotmail.com
902-625-3962

Red Islands

Howard MacIntyre
Bras D'Or Lakers Seniors Club
howarddmacintyre@gmail.com
902-631-5643

River Bourgeois

John Digout
River Bourgeois 50+ Seniors
Johndigout@icloud.com

Rocky Bay

Cynthia Blackmore
Rocky Bay Irish Club
cynthiawalterblackmore@gmail.com
902-302-3922

St. Peter's

Pat Leachman
Bonnie Brae Senior Citizens Club
palkal@icloud.com
902-535-2835

Others Seniors Groups

Richmond County Branch of Retired Teachers
Donna Machin
richrtopres@gmail.com

Le Regroupement de Aines et Aines de la Nouvelle-Ecosse

Janine Lacroix
janine.capricorne@gmail.com
902-226-0077

THANK YOU!

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THANK YOU! MERCI!

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Centre Culturel La Picasse

Café Conversation Café

Apprendre le français de base!
Learn basic French

Tous les mercredi
Every Wednesday 9h30 à 10h30

Pour plus d'informations, appelez La Picasse : 902-226-0149

STAYING CONNECTED



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seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com

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