A Message from the Seniors Take Action Coalition

Here's hoping for summer weather of clear skies, rain at night, warm ... but not too warm temperatures and no mosquitoes!

It has been a disconcerting late winter/spring, but summer is in sight. Let us rejoice in the natural beauty of our area. We live in a place where we can share with others so that we all can achieve some enjoyment; where we can remember all the ways we are fortunate to live in Richmond County; where, together, we can make Richmond County all it can be and a great place for all of us to live!

We were very pleased to showcase one of the many ways we are fortunate here in Richmond County at our recent health and wellness event held on May 28. Over 35 local service providers joined us for the day to meet with older adults, and share information about what their organization does to support our community and help people to age well.

Dorothy Barnard, Coalition Chair

Nous espérons que l'été sera marqué par un ciel dégagé, de la pluie la nuit, des températures chaudes, mais pas trop chaudes, et pas de moustiques!

La fin de l'hiver et le printemps ont été déconcertants, mais l'été est en vue. Réjouissons-nous de la beauté naturelle de notre région. Nous vivons dans un endroit où nous pouvons partager avec d'autres afin que nous puissions tous en profiter ; où nous pouvons nous rappeler toutes les façons dont nous avons la chance de vivre dans le comté de Richmond ; où, ensemble, nous pouvons faire du comté de Richmond l'endroit où il fait bon vivre pour nous tous, comme il peut l'être!

Nous avons eu le plaisir de présenter l'une des nombreuses façons dont nous avons de la chance ici, dans le comté de Richmond, lors de notre récent événement sur la santé et le bien-être, qui s'est tenu le 28 mai. Plus de 35 prestataires de services locaux se sont joints à nous pour la journée afin de rencontrer des personnes âgées et de partager des informations sur ce que fait leur organisation pour soutenir notre communauté et aider les gens à bien vieillir.

Dorothy Barnard,
Président de la coalition

Seniors Take Action Coalition
... promoting age friendly communities

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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

Seniors Centre Without Walls
FOR RICHMOND COUNTY

A PROJECT HOSTED BY
Seniors Take Action Coalition
... promoting age friendly communities

What's The Buzz

By: Celeste Gotell

The parking lot at the Louisdale Parish Hall was full on May 28, when over 35 community service providers who offer programs and services in Richmond County gathered for the Second Annual Community Health and Wellness Showcase/Expo.

Building on a mini-one hour version of this at the May conference hosted last year, this expanded version provided the close to 100 attendees an opportunity to spend more time talking to many different people, and also socialize with friends at the café that was available throughout the day.

Photo Credits - Warwick Yang

Thanks to the wonderful Louisdale volunteers, we were provided with yummy refreshments and a light lunch for both the showcase participants and attendees. Many of the showcase participants also had the opportunity to connect with each other during the day.

Thanks to Warwick Yang, ImpactStation, who volunteered his professional services as a photographer for the event.

This event was one of the many activities that has been provided to older adults in Richmond County through the Seniors Centre Without Walls project.

One of the most important features of this project's success depends on the strong partnerships with local seniors' clubs like the Louisdale Fleur-de-Lis Club, who we were so pleased to partner with to host this event.

The recent research project, ACTing Collectively, undertaken in three Cape Counties including Victoria, CBRM and Richmond County, focused on connecting people. Those who participated in the study were connected to resources in their community to address their specific needs. One of the findings was that older adults preferred being able to access local resources. This was a big reason why we wanted to offer this expanded showcase to let people know about the many resources and services that are available in Richmond County to support them as they age.

We are so grateful to the many service providers in health, community and local non-profit volunteer organizations that chose to spend the day with us and share important information. If you want to access the resources, click on the link. https://online.pubhtml5.com/qkgt/geng/

Seniors Take Action Coalition is committed to promoting an age-friendly community, and one of the many ways it does that is to ensure that older adults have access to the information they need to access services and age well in place.

MLA Trevor Boudreau dropped by

Thank you

East Coast CREDIT UNION

To East Coast Credit Union for sponsoring this event

NOVA SCOTIA

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

AGE-FRIENDLY communities

A Message from the Warden

As Warden for the Municipality of Richmond County, it is my pleasure to share a few words with you in this edition of Better With Age. I want to thank the Seniors Take Action Coalition for its longstanding commitment to the well-being, dignity, and inclusion of older adults in our region.

Our communities are stronger because of the experience, wisdom, and generosity that older residents bring to the table every day. Whether through volunteer work, mentorship, or quiet acts of kindness, seniors play a vital role in shaping the social fabric of Richmond County. It is essential that we continue to build a municipality where seniors feel safe, valued, and supported—at home and in public life.

June 15 was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and I encourage everyone to take a moment to reflect on what each of us can do to help prevent and address elder abuse in all its forms. Abuse can be physical, emotional, financial, or even neglect—and it often happens behind closed doors. The more we raise awareness, the more we empower individuals and communities to recognize the signs and take action.

At the municipal level, we are committed to supporting policies and partnerships that prioritize aging in place, adequate housing, access to care, and a safe environment for all residents. I look forward to continuing this work in collaboration with the Seniors Take Action Coalition, community organizations, health providers, and residents themselves.

Please know that your voice matters. Whether through public forums, council meetings, or direct outreach, I welcome your ideas and concerns. Together, we can continue to make Richmond County a place where seniors thrive.

Thank you for all that you do. I wish you a safe, healthy, and engaging summer season.

Sincerely,
Lois Landry, Warden

Un message du Préfet municipal

En tant que préfet de la municipalité du comté de Richmond, j'ai le plaisir de partager quelques mots avec vous dans cette édition de Better With Age. Je tiens à remercier la Seniors Take Action Coalition pour son engagement de longue date en faveur du bien-être, de la dignité et de l'inclusion des personnes âgées dans notre région.

Nos communautés sont plus fortes grâce à l'expérience, à la sagesse et à la générosité que les résidents âgés apportent chaque jour. Que ce soit par le biais du bénévolat, du mentorat ou d'actes de gentillesse discrets, les personnes âgées jouent un rôle essentiel dans le façonnement du tissu social du comté de Richmond. Il est essentiel que nous continuions à construire une municipalité où les personnes âgées se sentent en sécurité, valorisées et soutenues - chez elles et dans la vie publique.

Le 15 juin était la Journée mondiale de sensibilisation à la maltraitance des personnes âgées, et j'encourage tout le monde à prendre un moment pour réfléchir à ce que chacun d'entre nous peut faire pour aider à prévenir et à traiter la maltraitance des personnes âgées sous toutes ses formes. La maltraitance peut être physique, émotionnelle, financière, ou même une négligence, et elle se produit souvent derrière des portes closes. Plus nous sensibilisons les gens, plus nous donnons aux individus et aux communautés les moyens de reconnaître les signes et d'agir.

Au niveau municipal, nous nous sommes engagés à soutenir les politiques et les partenariats qui donnent la priorité au vieillissement sur place, à un logement adéquat, à l'accès aux soins et à un environnement sûr pour tous les résidents. Je me réjouis de poursuivre ce travail en collaboration avec la Seniors Take Action Coalition, les organisations communautaires, les prestataires de soins de santé et les résidents eux-mêmes.

Sachez que votre voix compte. Que ce soit par le biais de forums publics, de réunions du conseil ou de contacts directs, vos idées et vos préoccupations sont les bienvenues. Ensemble, nous pouvons continuer à faire du comté de Richmond un endroit où les personnes âgées s'épanouissent.

Je vous remercie pour tout ce que vous faites. Je vous souhaite un été sûr, sain et engageant.

Sincèrement,
Lois Landry, Warden

AGE-FRIENDLY communities

by: Caregivers Nova Scotia

Would you like to see a caregiver support group come to Richmond County?

Peer Support Groups

At caregiver our support groups the focus is on you, the caregiver. Sessions are facilitated by our coordinators and create a confidential and non-judgmental space where you can share your experience, ask for advice or support. Whether you feel like talking or you're more comfortable just listening, you are always welcome to meet other caregivers with similar experiences. Facilitated sessions are free and open to all caregivers, regardless of age or the health condition of your care recipient.

Here is what caregivers say about our peer support groups:

"We come together as strangers but leave as family."

"I really feel these groups are very important to the community. They are a vital service that should be supported."

"These groups are...there to help you through difficult times. You realize you are not alone, and that gives you confidence that you are doing your best."

With support groups throughout Nova Scotia, there's no need to ever feel alone. If you are unsure of locations and need help with directions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our facilitators are staff members who are or have been caregivers like you.

Support

A validating group experience rooted in the belief that everyone has the wisdom to determine the best route for themselves to recovery. It is a place of mutual respect, open communication, and safety.

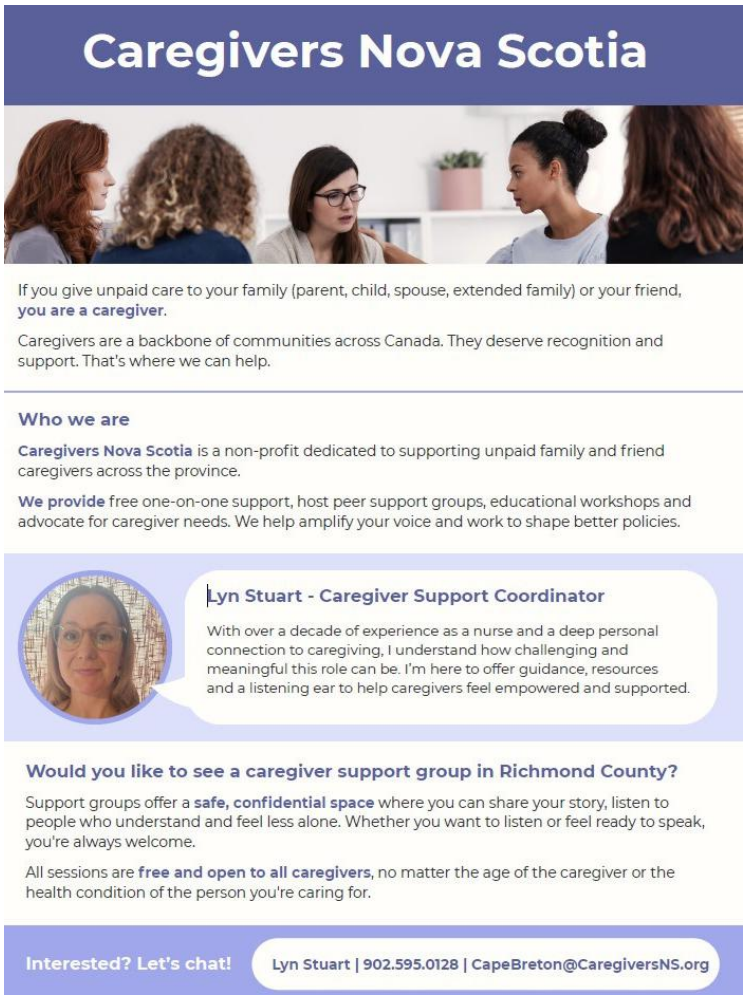
It is a place where judgment is suspended and people are free to ask questions, vent frustrations or fears, explore answers for themselves and solace.

It is a place where the participant is surrounded by people who 'get it' and the facilitator plays an important role but is not the only teacher in the room.

All participants agree to abide by the rules of the group including confidentiality.

Caregivers Nova Scotia

COMING SOON!



CHECK THIS OUT

STEM camp

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/

DID YOU KNOW?

nova scotia health

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

https://library.nshealth.ca/HealthyLiving/RegisterForPrograms

AGE-FRIENDLY communities

Seniors Centre Without Walls
FOR RICHMOND COUNTY
A PROJECT HOSTED BY
Seniors Take Action Coalition

NEW LAUNCH

Check out our new program called Age-Friendly Community Conversations on Telile Community Television

TV

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

Invitation to join us on the Board of Directors for Seniors Take Action Coalition

Seniors Take Action Coalition
... promoting age friendly communities

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

Join our Team, and make a difference!

We share information on our FB group, monthly calendar, Better with Age Newsletter. We engage with seniors clubs to offer programs. We advocate for important issues. We celebrate the contributions of older adults and much more....

Please contact us seniorstakeaction.info@gmail.com or 902-471-0317

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

After years of collaboration, learning and community engagement, the ACTing Collectively project has officially come to a close.

We want to sincerely thank the three communities for their invaluable contributions — including the older adults who participated, the assessors who conducted the assessments, the local Community Coordinators who served as our "boots on the ground," and the municipalities and community groups/organizations who helped facilitate these vital connections. Your voices and experiences shaped this project and made it truly impactful.

We are excited to share the final findings and insights through the Public Infographic located on our website, www.actingcollectively.ca/findings

Please feel free to share it with anyone who may find the information valuable. Thank you!

Sincerely,
The ACTing Collectively Core Team

EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS

A World of Webinars at Your Fingertips

Did you know that CARP has a range of videos on topics such as frauds and scams, moving, cancer care and fall prevention? Check out our collection of educational webinars with a wide range of experts, on a wide range of topics, including our latest, *The Path to Longevity: A Holistic Approach to Well-Being.*

EXPLORE WEBINARS

Click photo above

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?

"Sixty is the New Forty" Staying Young and Healthy

by: Celeste Gotell

Lt Commander Tyrone David (retired) 2019

Life expectancy in 1970 was approximately to age 71. Today, average life expectancy is to age 79 or 80. Our "senior years" keep getting pushed further and further back. "60 is the new 40" means there is plenty of productive life ahead.

Research has shown that ageism has serious implications for the health of older people, associating it with poorer physical and mental health, and a reduced quality of life.

Because ageism is everywhere, we need to do whatever we can to change harmful stereotypes about older adults. In the last issue of Better with Age, we celebrated the life of Marjorie (MacDonald), MacKenzie-McKay from Sampsonville, who had just turned 100 years old.

Richmond County has an aging population, with 46% of all residents 55 years old and older. It also has a growing older population, as many people who "Come from Away "choose Richmond County as their new home, while others who grew up here have opted to return home to retire and enjoy the next chapter of their lives.

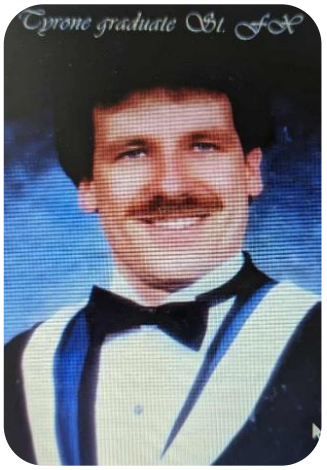
June is Men's Health Month, and, in this issue, we have featured several articles along that theme. I had the privilege to chat with Tyrone David, who is one of those people that returned to Richmond County to retire following a career that took him throughout the world. Tyrone also generously shared his own personal journey with mental health. That journey, although now part of him, does not define him.

Left to right: Tyrone's Dad, Mom, Brother, and sister and himself

Tyrone grew up in Alderney Point on Isle Madame with his brother Troy and sister, Nicole, his parents were the late Marilyn David and Donald David. As a young child he participated in all sports , including soccer, hockey, baseball, tennis and basketball. As a young teenager, he would attend kitchen parties at his neighbours. It was during this time he discovered his love for music and was fortunate to get guitar lessons from Michel Boudreau.

Tyrone graduated from Isle Madame District High in 1983 and headed to STFX, where he studied French and Psychology. He graduated in 1986 and joined the Canadian Military as a Naval MARS Officer. A MARS Officer, short for Maritime Surface and Sub-surface Officer, is a Naval Warfare Officer responsible for the command, control, and coordination of maritime operations. They manage and direct tactics, and procedures for operating ships.

Tyrone's third birthday with his siblings



Graduation from STFX in 1986

"Sixty is the New Forty" Staying Young and Healthy ... continued

After about five years, he changed his career path and in 1991 became a clearance diver. Clearance divers are highly trained specialists in underwater operations and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD). They are responsible for a wide range of tasks, including mine countermeasures, underwater repairs, and disposal of various explosives in both maritime and land environments.

Tyrone had a number of postings during his career, including Esquimalt in Victoria, BC, the Naval School in Quebec City, CFB Halifax, and Fleet School in Shearwater. He also served with the Belgian Navy, and spent time in the US, Portsmouth in the United Kingdom, Bahrain, and was deployed in Afghanistan.

Tyrone travelled extensively throughout his 34-year military career. In fact, he shared that "*he has forgotten more about his travels, more than he remembers".* Fortunately, his many work trips, which included 10 years with NATO as the Canadian Rep. for Mine Warfare, also allowed time for him to both work and play. He found time to explore many places throughout the world. This included the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand, Oslo, Paris, Germany, South Korea, throughout the US, South Korea, and Slovenia, to name a few.

Tyrone in Istanbul

Tyrone is an extrovert who enjoys chatting with people and socializing, but underneath that gregarious personality, Tyrone is also is dealing with his own trauma. Not all wounds can be seen.

In chatting with Tyrone, he shared that he lived with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), because of his time in Afghanistan. ***"Once you witness the things I did, you cannot go back".***

Monument in Kandahar Afghanistan

PO2 Craig Blake, one of Tyrone's closest friends was killed while they were both serving in Afghanistan. Tyrone was in Kabul and it was not safe for him to travel from Kabul to Kandahar to attend the Ramp Ceremony. In this ceremony, a fallen soldier is honoured overseas in preparation for his/her return home. Typically, as the service member is loaded into the plane, there are hundreds and sometimes thousands of members present lining the ramp, saluting. It is one of the most memorable and difficult parts of deployment, and Tyrone lives with the guilt of not being able to give his friend the final salute.

"Sixty is the New Forty" Staying Young and Healthy ... continued

Tyrone and his partner Donna

Prior to retiring, Tyrone had bought his parents house, thinking he would eventually retire there, but fate had other plans for him. He later realized that he would not likely return there and sold the house in 2018, just prior to Donna, coming into his life, and his retirement. He has been living in Louisdale since 2020.

When I asked him how someone from Alderney Point ended up in Louisdale, without hesitation, he said, Donna. In 2018, he met Donna, his new love, thanks to a post on a friend's Facebook and the rest is history.

His new life includes travel, glamping in their motor home and cruising with their three-wheel motor bike, two new hobbies and passions he now shares with Donna. They also enjoy spending time with their children, his grandson and their Frenchton dog, Denver.

Denver - she's a Frenchton, Boston Terrier/French Bull Dog cross

Tyrone with his grandson

Tyrone works hard to keep his mind and body healthy, in addition to seeing a psychologist regularly, Tyrone says music and giving back to the community is a big part of his own healing journey to main positive mental health.

Tyrone says giving back to the community is **good for the soul,** and openly talks about mental health to help reduce the stigma.

Music has become both hobby and passion, and he has combined the two to give back to the community. He plays all kinds including, old country, rock, Irish, folk and French.

Tyrone can be found most weekends playing his guitar and singing for local gigs at the Groundswell, Bras D'or Inn, Seal Cove Restaurant, Farmer's Pantry, the Legion, jam sessions, or volunteering his time to support local causes. He often plays for donations and tips to raise money to help seniors with oil costs; he supports Leeside Society, by organizing an all-female singer line-up; and the Louisdale Food Bank, where he volunteers his time and organizes fund raisers to support the cause.

Other times you may find him playing at the St. Anne Centre, Richmond Villa, Port Hawkesbury nursing home, the Drop-In Adult Program in St. Peter's, and the ROC Centre to name a few.

Tyrone, like so many others who have served this country, now carry the burden of bearing witness to atrocities of war. Tyrone finds peace and joy in service to others and through his music. Tyrone understands firsthand the positive impact that both provide him for his mental and emotional well-being, as he says, "good for the soul".

Spotlight on:

Improving Health Care for Local Residents

by: Gina MacDonald

I'm Gina, originally from River Bourgeois, and now working as Program Director for Cape Breton South Recruiting for Health (CBSRH). We are a non-profit organization that aims to improve healthcare outcomes in the areas of Richmond County and the Town of Port Hawkesbury, through recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals, as well as relevant community programming.

After working in administrative positions in our healthcare facilities for many years, I moved into this role, where I can use my knowledge and experience to make a real difference in the way our region engages with new and existing healthcare professionals. The healthcare landscape is ever-changing, and so must our approach as rural communities to ensure we maintain adequate health services. Local residents are very fortunate to have the support of our Municipal and Town partners, who recognize the importance of prioritizing this work.
I am most often found organizing site visits for potential new hires, assisting incoming workers with things like housing and spousal employment, and hosting recognition events to celebrate healthcare professionals' contributions. These initiatives aim to foster a welcoming environment, ensuring that healthcare workers feel valued and integrated into the community.

One focus area for 2025 and beyond is student recruitment. It is a well-researched fact that the people most likely to work in a rural healthcare setting long-term, are people from or with strong ties to the area. Recognizing the importance of cultivating local talent, and with funding from the Government of Nova Scotia's Community Fund, we have begun work on a recruitment campaign to encourage local students to pursue careers in healthcare. This is a big picture initiative, in terms of seeing results, but by engaging students early we aim to inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals to consider building their careers within their own communities.

Additionally, CBSRH has developed an information-sharing campaign meant to educate the public about the healthcare and related services available in the region. Over the next few months we will be rolling out a series of rack cards which will be available from local practitioners, pharmacies, and other organizations, with details about resources in our region, like food banks and mental health resources, that will inform and empower individuals to access what they need to maintain good health and well-being.

Healthcare recruitment and retention is a challenge all over the country, but we have a distinct advantage, one that is pointed out to me nearly every time I represent this area at an event: people have a special connection to Cape Breton and the people who live here. No other place in the country has our ocean views, our special brand of hospitality, and our people. It is up to us to continuing sharing our warmth and welcoming nature with everyone around us, to lay the groundwork for a robust and resilient healthcare system in Cape Breton South.

Cape Breton South
RECRUITING FOR HEALTH

Gina MacDonald, Program Director
gmacdonald@capebretonrecruiting.com
902-631-6480
https://capebretonrecruiting.com
www.facebook.com/CBSouth4Health

Meals on Wheels

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.

Spotlight on:

LEESIDE SOCIETY
A Safe Place to Be

Strength in Vulnerability: Breaking the Stigma Around Men's Care

By: Kyle Day, Leeside Men's Support Worker

For far too long, the idea that men must be tough, independent, and unaffected by hardship has shaped societal expectations. Many men—regardless of age—have internalized this myth, avoided support and struggled in silence. The reality, however, is alarming: men in Canada are three times more likely to die by suicide, and many experience serious health and social challenges without adequate resources to help them navigate these issues.

In Nova Scotia, this problem is magnified by a severe lack of dedicated services for men's well-being, leaving many without the structured support they need. While programs exist for general mental health care, they often fail to address the unique pressures men face, such as societal expectations, emotional suppression, and economic challenges. As a result, men experiencing mental health struggles, addiction, food insecurity, and social isolation often have nowhere to turn or face long waits for limited programs.

One of the most overlooked groups affected by this lack of services is older men, particularly those who find themselves isolated after the loss of a spouse. Many suddenly face challenges they never had to navigate before—learning how to cook nutritious meals, managing household tasks, or handling financial responsibilities their partner once took care of. Something as simple as online banking—a skill their wives mastered—can leave them struggling and unsure where to turn for guidance. Without support, these men often experience declining physical health, worsening diets, and deepening loneliness.

Kyle Day,
Leeside Men's Support Worker

For more information or to access support:
902-623-0659
menssupport@leesidesociety.ca
609 Church Street, Suite 104

Leeside Society Men's Support aims to bridge this gap by providing accessible, men-focused services that address these challenges head-on. We offer mental health and addiction support, helping men cope with emotional distress and substance use issues through structured guidance and advocacy. Support counselling ensures that men have a safe space to discuss their struggles without judgment, while case management and action planning provide practical solutions tailored to everyone's situation.

Beyond personal struggles, many men in Nova Scotia face food insecurity, uncertain employment, and a lack of strong community ties. Our outreach programs foster public awareness and education, ensuring that men feel seen, heard, and supported in their journeys toward stability. By strengthening community relations, we work toward a more compassionate approach to men's health—one that doesn't rely on the outdated expectation that men must weather every storm alone.

The lack of services for men is a pressing issue, and change is long overdue. Strength should not be defined by silent suffering but by the willingness to seek support when needed. At Leeside Society Men's Support, we are committed to ensuring that men—of all ages—have access to the resources and guidance necessary to improve their health, well-being, and overall quality of life.

To learn more and stay connected, visit the Leeside Society Men's Support Worker Facebook page: www.facebook.com/p/Leeside-Society-Mens-Support-Worker-61561043556312/

Spotlight on: L'Ardoise MEN'S CLUB Est. 1975

"If it wasn't for the Men's Club, I'd probably need therapy"

By: Julie Freeman

In pursuit of exploring how many of the men in the L'Ardoise area meet their (recognised and unrecognised) mental health demands, it turns out that this unique organization, the L'Ardoise Men's Club, fills the bill quite sufficiently. And at the same time serves the community in a major way.

For 50 years, this volunteer organization has been the purview of the male gender, appointed initially by the Parish to manage the community center's events and fundraising efforts. Don't get me wrong, the women in the community are deeply involved in the execution of such events, tirelessly putting in the time and work required to support the cause, but the Board of Directors and the membership of the club itself is comprised of a male-only constituency.

So, I decided to look into how, and why, and who. I spoke with members who have been active for decades, and those who are 'from away', recently new residents and members. In so doing, I found a common thread of motivation, and a singularly strong and healthy spirit of connection.

These dialogues also spoke to the stresses and challenges of managing events that hosted between 200 to 400 participants each year: the logistics of time, equipment, food-handling, and enough volunteers to carry it all to success. Clearly, the teaming and co-ordination, the experience and talents, all demonstrate this is a well-oiled machine. But make no mistake, the level of commitment of every working member is a personal one.

It seems to be a generally accepted idea that men don't seek emotional connections as easily as their counterparts. Women often intuitively connect and nurture, it's thought. But I heard those same sentiments from various members too: 'I could see he was frustrated and down over things out of his control, so I took a day with him to walk in the woods and just enjoy time away from reality for a while' said one guy. 'He has PTSD and finds the time working with us and engaging with the community to be healing,' said another. I paraphrase, but the connections between the members of this group are strong.

Long-standing members spoke of growing up here in very large families, both within the home and the community as a whole. They are of a generation who grew up depending on each other to get by, thrive. It's a deep acceptance of the history and culture of the region that shapes one's soul. Volunteerism is a connection that is as vital and natural as breathing. Not for all, but certainly for these guys. The familiar banter and camaraderie, their place in the community's well-being is 'better than therapy' I was told.

'Come from away' tends to be a different story, based on my conversations. Outside of a sports locker room, an entirely male domain is less common. And there is no parallel to be drawn between those two otherwise. Large families and close-knit communities don't play a large part in the same way. But it struck me that these men are drawn to the club for the same mentally rewarding aspects – community well-being and connectedness, a social group of like-minded peers who welcome them into the group. It's also a great source of local information, which is priceless when one moves into a new area.

Commitment to such a group of volunteers is mentally and emotionally rewarding, in a way that's more significant than simply turning out to partake in the event itself. I heard a real concern about the lack of new volunteers, and the future of events and programs that will simply fall away. Not just because of the aging factor, but also because younger generations aren't seeing the critical role that these volunteers play in creating and supporting the very ideals that make this community such a great place to be, to raise a family – and to continue the platform of a caring community that values connections.

One clear message I heard over and over is that no matter how much time and effort goes into an event run by the Men's Club, when the last dish is washed and put away, the last table and chairs stacked, the feeling of accomplishment is magnified many times by the community's appreciation of it all. That reward, that boost, that feeling that comes from being part of a job well done...it's way better than therapy, for sure.

Spotlight on:

Could Men's Sheds Be a Solution?

By: Lisa Johnston

Note: Lisa was a Second Year Social Services student from NSCC who spent five weeks working with us on her placement. We really appreciate everything she did while with us, including this article.

June is men's health month; it is a time to raise awareness about the physical and mental health challenges aging men face with life's transitions. For example, many men feel isolated after retirement, losing not only their job, but their social interaction and sense of purpose. Are you looking for friendship, purpose, and a place to share your skills? Let me introduce you to the "men's shed movement."

"Every man feels valued and engaged in his community, experiencing purpose, belonging, and well-being in his aging journey"

According to the National Institute of Aging (NIA) Canadians over 50 are 43% at risk of social isolation and 59% will experience some degree of loneliness. As we recognize Men's Health Month this June, let's bring awareness to the challenges aging men face, such as, loss of a spouse or partner, diagnosis of an illness, or even retirement. NIA reports over half of older men, specifically those who live alone, report having weak social networks and feel isolated. Communities need to find ways to promote social connection and well-being, could Men's Sheds be a solution?

Originating in Australia, with over 2500 sheds around the world, Men's Sheds Canada (MSC) was launched in 2022 to help address men's mental health and social isolation. It is a grassroot solution that empowers men to build projects, share their skills, and enjoy each other's company. Whether woodworking, metalworking or repairs their focus is on connection, camaraderie, and community. This is a great way to stay active, learn new skills, and work *"shoulder to shoulder."*

For men participating in Men's Sheds, studies have shown improvements in mental health, self-esteem, and community engagement. Men's Sheds help improve mental health, boost self-esteem, and build stronger communities. Men benefit from having fun, making friends, sharing knowledge, and getting involved in their community. The community benefits from the projects through beautification like fixing benches, making crafts where proceeds can go to local organizations, teaching their skills through intergenerational projects, or just helping out other members of their community.

Could this be an opportunity in our community? Men's Shed Canada values collaboration at all levels and is willing to partner with community organizations.

Anyone interested in learning more about Men's Shed Canada, visit https://mensshedscanada.ca/. Here you will find information on funding, 7-steps to start up, and access to their toolkit.

Sources: Mens Shed Canada: https://mensshedscanada.ca/
McMasters Optimal Aging: www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/blog/detail/blog/2018/07/03/the-men-s-sheds-a-safe-and-inclusive-space-for-older-men

To view or download the 2025-2026 Positive Aging Directory, visit: https://novascotia.ca/seniors/directory/positive-aging-directory.pdf

Photo taken from Men's Shed Canada website.

COMMUNITY CORNER update

UPCOMING EVENTS

This project is supported by an Age-Friendly Communities Program Grant through the Nova Scotia Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care

What to Expect

Dementia Live® is a transformative experience designed to deepen empathy and understanding of dementia. Participants gather in small groups, don specialized sensory gear, and engage in tasks within a controlled environment. This immersive encounter sheds light on the challenges faced by those with dementia, fostering empathy and equipping participants with practical skills. Through shared reflections and discussions, individuals gain a profound insight into dementia, enhancing their ability to provide compassionate care and support.

YOU'RE INVITED!

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Reserve your 45 min spot!

September 22, 2025
St. Louis Church
156 Grandique Ferry Road,
Louisdale, NS
Call Debbie Samson
902 - 345-2998

September 23, 2025
Isle Madame New Horizons Senior Citizens Club
2373 HWY-206, Arichat, NS
Call Gloria Samson
902-212-3102

Questions?? Please call:
Sheila Schuehlein, Dementia Live Coach at 902-322-6210

HOTSPOT LENDING PROGRAM

eastern counties REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Hotspot Lending Program allows library users to borrow a mobile wireless hotspot for three weeks to access Eastlink's extended coverage area (see map for details)

Hotspots have returned to ECRL! Learn more about this exciting initiative and place a hold for yours today!
https://ecrl.ca/news/hotspot-lending-program/

Eastlink extended coverage map:
https://www.eastlink.ca/mobile/mobile-network

CAFE REMINSCE

Café Memory NS

June 19
July 7
Aug 5
September 9

1 - 2:30 PM

A friendly and supportive space for people with memory challenges and their caregivers.

Gentle activities and crafts, music, conversation, warm drinks and light snacks.

Everyone is welcome and it's FREE

Locations may vary

For more information or to register:
Rachael LeBlanc,
(902) 587-2800 Extn. 3

RICHMOND RIVER ROOTS Market Garden Society

Dr. Kingston Memorial Community Health Centre

Upcoming Programming:

BEREAVED FAMILIES
Helping people move through grief since 1990

Living with Grief
This is a 6-week program designed to bring people together who have suffered the loss of a loved one.

General Grief Program
Any adult experiencing the loss of a loved one (for example, individuals suffering the loss of a relative, a friend) can attend this program. Each week, a grief-related topic is covered to help participants move through the grief process in a systematic way and registration is required.

Learn more: https://bfocb.ca/

That Richmond County has an entire section on their website dedicated to seniors resources. You will find our monthly calendar, our newsletter there. Click the link below to visit the webpage:

Seniors Resources and Support - Richmond County, Nova Scotia

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.nshealth.ca/frailty
- https://www.nscc.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
- NEW
- https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/age-well
- https://www.ableplatform.ca/

Starting June 20, Scratch Eats will be a pickup location for the Pan Cape Breton Food Hub Co-op!
https://capebreton.localfoodmarketplace.com/Products

Start-up Grants – Men's Sheds Canada
Up to $1,000 is available for Men's Sheds
Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Municipal Grants and Programs - Richmond County

The Community Grants - Tier 1 funding can be used to support smaller projects up to $1,000.

The Community Grants - Tier 2 funding can be used to support larger projects up to $7,500.00.

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.

Property Tax Rebate for Seniors - Helps low-income seniors with the cost of municipal residential property taxes. Rebates are 50% of what you paid on last year's property taxes, up to a maximum of $800. You can apply until 31 December 2025.
Click here to learn more.

NOVA SCOTIA

One Saturday a month from 11AM to 1PM at the D'Escousse Civic Improvement Centre
Check out their FB for dates

SQUARE ROOTS

Square Roots was launched by Enactus Saint Mary's and is currently active in 14 communities across Nova Scotia.

What do we do?

- We partner with local farmers to bring fresh, affordable produce to our community. Our mission is to reduce food waste and help close the gap of food insecurity.
- We purchase 'seconds'—produce that might otherwise be discarded due to minor imperfections, even though it's perfectly healthy and delicious.

How does it work?

- Produce will be available for sale by the pound or in 10lb variety bundles.
- Selection may vary depending on availability.
- This program is open to everyone.

Whether you're facing food insecurity or just want to support local farmers, Square Roots is here for you.

LAST WORDS

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

Thanks to Monica for providing the information for this article.

In this edition, we are delighted to recognize the inspiring contributions of Monica McCarthy, owner of Moniculi Wellness and Healing. Monica exemplifies the vitality, wisdom, and entrepreneurial spirit of older adults in our communities, enhancing lives through her holistic wellness practice.

Monica was born and raised in a loving family of fifteen children, ten sisters and four brothers and has lived in Cape Breton her entire life, except for a brief ten month stint in Halifax. She currently resides in her home community of Lower River Inhabitants, N.S.

Family remains the heart of Monica's life. She is a proud step-mother, grandmother to four, and great-grandmother, affectionately known as "GG" to three little ones. With a large extended family of nieces, nephews, great-nieces and nephews, and dear friends, Monica's life is filled with joy, connection, and gratitude. She shares her home with three siblings, and one very spoiled fur baby, Myles McDaniel McCarthy, a spirited three-year-old cat who definitely rules the household.

Monica is an avid traveler. She recently returned from a seven-week spiritual and personal journey through five breathtaking countries: Bali (Indonesia), Ireland, Spain, the Azores (Portugal), and Italy. Each year brings a new adventure, with Costa Rica in August this year and past trips include Scotland, Hawaii, Jamaica, Mexico, Ireland, and Cuba.

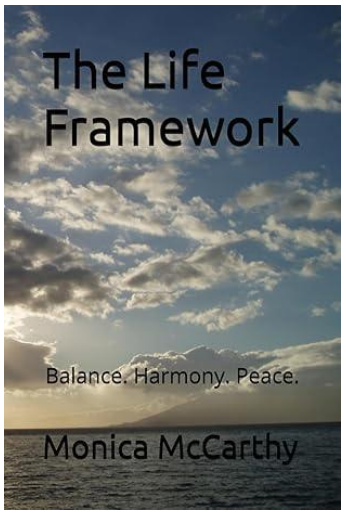
A lifelong volunteer and community builder, Monica has served on the boards of several local non-profit organizations. Most recently, she lent her time and talents to L'Arche Cape Breton and the Strait Area Community Curling Club, continuing her legacy of service and leadership in Cape Breton.

Located in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia, Moniculi Wellness and Healing is dedicated to fostering balance, harmony, and peace through Reiki energy healing, embodiment coaching, meditation, mindfulness practices, and wellness workshops. Monica combines her extensive professional background, after retiring from a 42-year career in the Credit Union System in Nova Scotia, with her passion for holistic healing, guiding individuals to achieve greater emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being.

Monica is also the proud author of the insightful book *The Life Framework: Balance. Harmony. Peace.*, published in December 2024. Her book serves as a practical and inspiring guide for those seeking a meaningful, balanced, and harmonious life.

To learn more, visit Monica's website:
www.moniculiwellnessandhealing.com

Monica McCarthy
803 Church Street, Port Hawkesbury
902-623-2686
moniculiwellnessand healing@gmail.com



The Municipality of the County of Richmond is proud to support the launch of the **Voluntary Vulnerable Persons Registry (VVPR).** The VVPR is a voluntary, self-referral list of individuals who may require support during emergency situations. It provides important information to Emergency Management staff, volunteers, and first responders to help appropriately respond to resident needs in situations such as sustained power outages, severe storms, and more.

Who should consider registering?
Individuals who reside in Richmond County who experience severe difficulty with any of the following: mobility, vision loss, hearing loss, developmental disabilities, cognitive impairment, mental health conditions, persons who require electricity for life-saving equipment such as oxygen and dialysis.

Registration is now open! To register or learn more about the program, please visit:
https://www.richmondcounty.ca/voluntary-vulnerable-person-registry.html

Seniors Clubs and Organizations in Richmond County

Arichat
Gloria Samson
Isle Madame New Horizons Seniors Club
gemsamson27@gmail.com
902-219-3102

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

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to the Department of Seniors and Long-Term Care, Age-Friendly Communities Grant for the funding to produce our newsletter.

National Indigenous Peoples Day

#NIPD2025

Mois national de l'histoire autochtone

#MNHA2025

THANK YOU! MERCI!

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

Or search "Seniors Take Action Coalition"