Alfred Aucoin of St Joseph du Moine represented all Inverness County volunteers at the Provincial Awards ceremony held in Halifax April 7th. The award was presented by His Honour J.J. Grant, Lt. Governor of NS (left) and the Premier of Nova Scotia, Mr. Stephen McNeil.

In this issue:
Ancestors Unlimited
Salute to our Volunteers
Cribbage Winners
Engage Inverness County Park for Cheticamp
...and More
We have upgraded to a full-colour, glossy paper product and hope that this change will make for a more enjoyable reading experience for you. And, in the same way as the paper has changed, I hope that by the time you receive this issue our never-ending winter will have become but a distant memory and Spring will already be upon us.

Although the weather still seemed wintry at the time, an annual rite of Spring in Inverness County took place on April 15th when Municipal Councillors and staff gathered to salute county volunteers at a special awards dinner in Port Hood. Each April we have the honour of hosting this event to thank volunteers, who have been nominated by their organizations, for all that they do to make this county such a wonder-place to live. The volunteers of Inverness County give selflessly of their time and labor, expecting nothing in return. They are the “backbone” of our communities and worth their weight in gold!

In mainstream media news stories too often we see and hear about the negative, and at times inhumane, behaviour of people. Inside these pages, taking time to read the biographies of our volunteers will restore your faith in the innate goodness of the people who call Inverness County home. These are the biographies of volunteers of county organizations that nominated a representative as their 2015 Volunteer of the Year. The biographical texts begin on page 10. Photos of the volunteers who attended the awards dinner can be found on pages 9, 11, and 15. Jeannette Gallant of Judique, a professional photographer, took the photos of the volunteers that appear in this issue.

On the front page is a photo of Alfred Aucoin of Grand Étang. His name was drawn from the volunteer nominations that were submitted by February 13, to travel to Halifax to accept the provincial award on behalf of all Inverness County volunteers at the Provincial Volunteers Awards ceremony. Thank you Alfred for taking time out of your busy schedule to make the journey.

Another rite of Spring in Inverness County is the annual Cribbage Tournament Championship. Held this year on April 25th, the tournament is one of several annual events that I always look forward to covering as the competitors have such a good time socializing as they play. We congratulate the 2015 winners in both categories. The results with the Winners and Runners-Up Division photos are included on page 21.

Another enjoyable annual event is still on the horizon: The 2015 Seniors’ Games will be held this year on June 13th. These Games are a great way for those 50+ to spend the day socializing with one another and having fun. If you wish to participate in the competitive events be sure to contact your local seniors club as soon as possible. Although some of the events may already have a full roster there may be others with space still available. Contact information for the clubs can be found on page 6 along with more information on the event.

The Inverness Academy/Education Centre students who volunteer their time setting up the venue for the Senior Games and spend the day working at them are yet another shining example of the selflessness prevalent in all of our Inverness County volunteers. If you attend the Games be sure to thank them, as well as the adults who also volunteer to help them, when you see them on the 13th June.

Finally, county Artists and Artisans can get themselves listed on the Inverness County website under “Creative Artisans” on the Visitor Information page. Contact by phone at: 902-787-2274 or email: information@invernesscounty.ca. Access the webpage at http://www.inverness-ns.ca/celebrating-our-creative-artisans.html to check it out.

Happy Spring everyone!
I. Queries

a) Who has information about John “the Sailor” MacDonald who lived in Inverness County and moved to Prince Edward Island in the 1850s? To whom was he related? Why did he move across the Gulf of St. Lawrence?
b) Who has information about the ancestry of Michael Downey who is found in Port Hood on the 1818 Census but seems to have moved to Mount Young, then to Lake O’Law, Margaree, and on to Codroy Valley, Newfoundland, where he died? He was a native of Kilkenny, Ireland and married in Newfoundland to Anastasia O’Hearn (?), born in 1804.
c) Information is being sought concerning Duncan and Margaret McDonald who are found on the 1871 Census, River Inhabitants District. They appear to have been living in the area that came to be called Princeville and had children: John, born ca. 1836; Hugh, born ca. 1837; Isabel born ca. 1839 and Margaret, born ca. 1843 — all in Scotland, and also children born in Nova Scotia: Mary Ann, Sarah Bell, Ann and Donald, born between 1845 and 1852. Duncan was born about 1807. Margaret’s birthdate has not been ascertained with certainty. Both were born in Scotland according to the census.
d) Who knows the names of the parents of Abby Ann Gasper of Brook Village? She is found on the censuses as a Gasper and also as a MacLeod with no clear statement of parents. She married Alexander Mullen in 1907 in Boston. The marriage record says her parents are Francis and Elizabeth Gasper; her death record in 1916 gives the names of her parents as James Gasper and Jane Hanly (?) (perhaps Hawley). Was she illegitimate?

II. Responses to Queries

a) Two requests were received for the names of the family of the first station agent in Orangedale, James MacFarlane (who is mentioned by Jimmy Rankin in his song The Orangedale Whistle.)

James Edward MacFarlane was born in Mull River, 26 November 1855, and was the son of Hugh and Mary (MacDonald) MacFarlane. He first married, in 1876, Ellen MacKeen of Mabou the daughter of Thomas and Mary (Roach) MacKeen. Ellen was born in 1853 and died in 1877. His second marriage took place in 1877, this time to Margaret Ann Cameron of Mabou, daughter of J.D. and Margaret (Matheson) Cameron of River Denys and Mabou. The Camerons were early merchants and innkeepers of Mabou Village. James Edward MacFarlane died in Orangedale October 13, 1918. Children of James Edward and Margaret Ann (Cameron) MacFarlane were:

i) Hugh Cameron MacFarlane (1878-1953) born Mabou, married Margaret Forestall of Mulgrave, N.S.


iii) Catherine Mae MacFarlane (1883-1966) born Mabou, married John MacAulay of South Side River Denys Basin.


v) John Duncan MacFarlane (1888 -1902) born Orangedale.

vi) Margaret Eugene “Gene” (1890-1961) born Orangedale, married Kenneth MacRitchie.

vii) George K. MacFarlane (1898-1905) born Orangedale unmarried.


ix) Hilda MacFarlane (1903-1933) born Orangedale married Raymond Richardson.

x) Alexander E. MacFarlane (1904-1904) born Orangedale, unmarried.

b) The following was received by email from Allan J. Gillis of Ottawa in response to one of our queries:

In the February issue of The Participaper Vol 36, No 1, page 5, you mentioned Henry D. McIsaac (ca. 1870 - Nov 1900). I believe that he was a son of Donald McIsaac (ca. 1833 - ?) and Dorothy Murphy (Ca 1833 - ?) He had at least nine siblings, one of whom, Dorothy, was the second wife of Rory MacDougall, a prominent Port Hood merchant. She was also the mother of Rory’s children.

I hope this information might prove useful to those who may be researching this family tree.

[Editor: Many thanks to Allan for sharing this information, we appreciate his contribution.]

III. Material of assistance to Researchers

a) Some of the surviving “Census Rolls of Cape Breton Island for 1811” may be found on-line. The information is

Continued on page 4...
Continued from page 3...Ancestors

very useful to help “flesh out” the individuals and families listed. This is because respondents were requested to give the census taker information on people over fourteen years old as well as those under fourteen and over sixty. Also recorded were the number of men and women in the household who were unmarried plus, household servants were counted. In addition, occupations are listed as the number of cattle, sheep, horses and vessels owned by the family. In contrast to the 1818 census, widows are listed by their own first names, but not the name of their husbands. For example, recorded in the “unnumbered district” but noted as Gut of Canso and St. George’s Bay, the following three widows are listed: i) “Widow” Catherine McDonald, farmer, with no men in the household between fourteen and sixty; but with one female between fourteen and sixty and one person over sixty; no males or females under fourteen or servants. She had five cows and four sheep. ii) “Widow” Catherine McEachran, farmer, with one male between fourteen and sixty; two females in the same age group; three unmarried; no people over sixty; no male under fourteen; no servants; fourteen cattle and two sheep; no sailing vessel. iii) “Widow” Ann McInnis, farmer, with no males between fourteen and sixty; two females in that age group; one unmarried; no people over sixty; no servants; two males under fourteen and two females under fourteen; six cattle and no sheep or sailing vessel.

It would be interesting to know who these widows were and how they made out as farmers with some livestock.

b) The 1871 Census: this first “every name” listing of people in Canada, may be found on-line through the listing on the National Library of Canada. As well, it may be consulted on microfilm at the Beaton Institute and at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia in Halifax and at the Nova Scotia Highland Village.

In order to make full use of the census in “fleshing out the economic activity and land ownership of individuals and families,” it is important that one consult the other Schedules which follow Schedule One, the listing of households with the names of people in the household.

These other Schedules record the information given to the census taker concerning the productivity of farms in the year 1870. The researcher thus gains insight into the economic structure of the family and the productivity of the farm. For example, recorded for Whycocomagh District One - on page seventy-four, household number eight - a household of six unmarried Chisholms is listed.

Their farm seemed to have been very productive and well organized. Their listings show a farm which was very stable in the previous year and with a greater productivity than many others in the area. The farm was located in Kewstoke, near the base of the Dunakym-Glencoe Mountain Road.

Living in this household were: Norman, age 26, a widower; Donald, age 28; Hugh, age 20; Catherine, age 18; Effie, age 16; and a second Catherine, whose age is given as 22. All are unmarried.

Although not on the record, they were the children of Alexander and Christy (MacAskill) Chisholm, formerly of Nevada Valley and Cape North where Christy was born. Alexander is one of the six sons of Donald and Mary (MacDonald) Chisholm who came from the Isle of Skye in 1832.

According to the other schedules, this Kewstoke family owned three hundred acres of which eighty were under cultivation and thirty-six used as pasture.

There were two houses and one barn on the property. They had a carriage and a sleigh and two carts or wagons and one plough. Their livestock consisted of two horses and one colt, sixteen milk cows, fourteen young cattle; thirty-eight sheep and seven pigs. They sold seven cows and eight sheep and three pigs during the year.

Through their labour, the farm produced twenty bushels of barley, two hundred and fifty bushels of oats, fourteen bushels of buckwheat, and two hundred and forty-five bushels of potatoes.

They made a lot of hay – thirty tons. As well they harvested thirty pounds of flax and saved one half a bushel of flax seed for another year.

In addition, they made six hundred pounds of butter and seventy pounds of cheese; they wove sixty yards of homespun fabric; and thirty yards of linen cloth.

Unlike some of their neighbours, they produced no maple sugar, although the district listed its productivity at one thousand three hundred and sixty-two pounds – much of it produced by the people of the First Nations community.

Today, the productive Chisholm farm of the 1870s is vacant; the buildings are gone and only an apple tree or two marks the location.

Many descendants of the family live in the area and in Lynn, Massachusetts. But little memory survives of the hard work of this family and so many others in Inverness County in those days.

By using the Schedules of the 1871 census, the economic productivity of a family may be researched and recorded as the researcher works to describe the family and its activity. So genealogical research comes to be much more than “hatch, match and dispatch” dates.

V. Tidbits gained from newspapers

i) From the North Sydney Herald, June 1898 - “The people of Cheticamp may well feel proud of their new promising
physician, Robert Oswald Ross, B.A., M.A., M.D., of Margaree who two years ago won the season Anatomy Prize at McGill Medical College. Offered the position of House Surgeon at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Dr. Ross preferred to practice in Cheticamp.

ii) Same newspaper, same date; “All person having legal claims against the estate of John MacEachern, late of S.S. Whycocomagh, are requested to make same known to Alexander and J. G. MacEachern, Sole Executors, Sydney. [Editor’s note – MacEachern, a native of Judique, was a long-time teacher in Waycobah.]

iii) Same newspaper, same date - “for sale, two nice horses, Tom 7 and Bill 6. Apply at Post Master, Loch Leven. [Editor’s note – Loch Leven, former name for Inverness town]

iv) From Macella, 1896, the following obituaries:
   b. William MacKenzie, 110 years in July, died in May – Gairloch Mountain, came from Gairloch, Scotland
   c. Mrs Lauchlin MacKinnon, 74, sister of Reverend. Lauchlin MacDonald, died at Malagawatch on the 7th of June.
   d. James G. MacIntosh, age 31, son of Malcolm MacIntosh, Malagawatch died in Boston on the 30th of May.

v) From the Hawkesbury Bulletin, March 1896: “Fine day of horse racing at Hastings. H.A. Archibald’s Maggie, first. James MacIntosh’s Ben Butler, second. Hugh Cameron’s Gypsy Girl, third. Mr. MacPhee’s horse from West Bay, fourth. Just after the start in the first heat, Mr. MacPhee’s horse broke some of his harness and ran away. A new sleigh was procured but the animal would not trot to advantage in it.

Neither Lily Banshaw or any of the other trotters from Hawkesbury took part in the race. In the second class, Hugh MacMillan’s horse won first place after a hotly contested race. Mr. MacIssac’s horse came second.”

vi) From Macella 1897, September 10th: John Cameron, Broad Cove Banks, son of George Cameron, died in Minneapolis recently. He had both feet removed two years ago from an accident while working on the railway. He received $2000.00 from the railway.

Collections of some items from many newspapers may be found at archives – and the originals may be consulted at the Beaton Institute at Cape Breton University and at the Public Archives in Halifax.

Workplace Safety - Head’s Up!

In 2014, nineteen Nova Scotians died at work or as a result of a work-related illness. As of April 16 this year, seven have already died. This summer many students will be working for the first time. All workers should know their rights! Starting your first job or any new job you have the right to: Refuse unsafe work and/or ask about what could hurt you. It is ALWAYS a good idea to take control of your own safety and learn about what you can do to protect yourself in the workplace. Visit the Work Safe for Life website at: http://worksafeforlife.ca. Don’t be afraid to speak up. Know your rights. You CAN NOT be fired for reporting an unsafe working environment! The Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Act is designed to improve workplace health and safety in Nova Scotia. It provides for the promotion, coordination, administration and enforcement of occupational health and safety in the province.

Whether you have been working for decades or are just starting out, safety should always be foremost in your mind. There are a wide range of workplace injury prevention resources available through the Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB) and their partners in safety for workers and employers. Working together with many partners in workplace safety, the WCB provides tools and resources to help create safe workplaces. Visit http://worksafeforlife.ca/Home/Prevention-Tools to learn more. It is also important that employees take every reasonable precaution to ensure their health and safety and that of others in the workplace. This includes: Reporting hazards to their supervisor as soon as the hazard is noticed and wearing proper safety equipment and using safety procedures when doing a job.

To report an unsafe workplace contact the Office of Health and Safety Division of the Department of Labour and Advanced Education at 1-800-952-2687 or fill out their online Secure Enquiry Form.

HOMEOWNERS, did you know that YOU could be held financially liable - if not criminally responsible - if those working on your property are injured? Your Homeowner’s policy is unlikely to cover you unless you have taken measures to ensure that your contractor carries WCB coverage and that they work safely, or that you have explicitly delegated (as in a written contract) this responsibility to them. So, don’t be afraid to ask contractors if they have insurance coverage before they begin your job. This is the only way to protect yourself!

[Sources: Report on a Study of Workplace Safety in the Residential Construction and Renovation Sector 2008 Dalhousie University and NS Department of Labour and Advanced Education website.]
On Saturday, June 13th, Inverness County residents (50+) are invited to attend the 19th Annual Senior Games. Sponsored each year by the municipality’s Department of Recreation/Tourism, this fun event is held at the Inverness Education Centre/Academy, 59 Veteran's Memorial Court. Registration takes place 9:00AM to 9:45AM. A $5 registration fee includes a delicious luncheon buffet meal, entertainment and tickets for door prizes. The draws take place in the afternoon during the entertainment portion of the event. All competitive activities and workshops run between 10:00AM and noon.

The theme is "Be Active and Healthy Your Way...Every Day!" The event includes a bit of friendly competition; fun workshops; presentations; a little exercise; delicious food; lots of door prizes; entertainment and medal presentations - in other words, a little something for everyone. If you wish to participate in the competitive events please register with your local Seniors Club (see contact information below).

The competitive activities include:

- Cribbage
- 200's
- 45's
- Bocce Ball
- Corn Toss
- Darts
- Scrabble
- Washer Toss

1st, 2nd, and 3rd (gold, silver and bronze) place medals are awarded for each competitive activity. Clubs are reminded that they are limited to entering a maximum of two teams in each of the competitive events.

For those not involved in the competitive events, there will still be lots to see and do throughout the morning: Workshops and displays provide valuable subject material on local services available to Seniors such as Health & Nutrition; Fitness; Gardening; and much more. A delicious buffet lunch will be served at noon and this will be followed by some special musical entertainment with some old favourites that will get you up dancing if you feel like taking a spin around the floor. So, come on out and take advantage of this opportunity to spend time with friends and renew old acquaintances. You might even find yourself making new friends, over the years many people have made new friends at this event.

We are looking forward to a great day and hope to see another enthusiastic turnout from seniors’ clubs across the county. [Note: If you are 50+ and not a member of a local seniors’ club but wish to attend as a spectator or participant in this event, please contact your local club. Or, for more information, you may contact the Recreation/Tourism office at (902) 787-3508 or email annalee.maceachern@invernesscounty.ca]

Inverness County Seniors’ Clubs Contact Information:

**Cheticamp** - Le Club des Retraités des Cheticamp
Hector LeLievre, 902-224-2970

**East Margaree**
New Horizons East Margaree Seniors’ Club
Pauline Berry, 902-235-2596

**Inverness** - NaMara Seniors’ Club
Mona Smith, 902-258-2468

**Judique** - Kildonan Seniors’ Club
Pauline Campbell, 902-787-2434

**Mabou** - Mabou Seniors’ Club/Fifty Plus
Eddie McNeil, 902-945-2493

**Middle River** - Highland Seniors’ Club
Lonnie Dowe, 902-295-1114

**NE Margaree** - Northeast Margaree Seniors’ Club
Joanne Ross, 902-248-2927

**Port Hawkesbury** - Evergreen Club
Claire MacEachern, 902-625-2877

**SW Margaree** - SW Margaree Senior Citizens’ Club
Leo Henry LeBlanc, 902-235-2044

**St. Joseph du Moine** - Nouveaux Horizons
Leona Doucet, 902-224-3172

**Whycocomagh** - Bayville Seniors’ Club
Julia MacLean, 902-756-3255

Note: Anyone 50+ from Port Hood who wishes to participate in the Seniors’ Games may contact Doris Carver at 902-787-3068.
On Wednesday April 15th, the Municipality of Inverness County hosted their 30th Annual Volunteer Awards dinner. As they arrived at St Peter's Parish Hall in Port Hood, the volunteers and their invited guests were greeted by Councillors and municipal staff.

The Hall, which had been beautifully decorated with a spring theme for the event by the ladies of the CWL. The hall was filled to capacity as the event got underway with the Warden being introduced to the attendees by Donna MacDonald, Recreation/Tourism Director for the County.

In his opening remarks the Warden, Duart MacAulay, warmly welcomed the volunteers and thanked them for their dedication and service by saying, “This annual event allows us (Council and staff) the opportunity to show our appreciation for all that you do in your communities. The fact that your organization has chosen to nominate you to represent them at the awards ceremony speaks volumes to your commitment and dedication and is indicative of how much your organization values your contribution. We wish to thank all volunteers throughout the county. We are blessed to have so many people who willingly give freely of their time and effort for the betterment of our communities.”

Before passing the microphone to District One Councillor Alfred Arthur Poirier (who said Grace) the Warden officially introduced the Councillors and staff to the attendees. Then the ladies of the parish CWL served a delicious full course dinner that was much appreciated by all.

After dinner Donna MacDonald announced that a special guest had been invited to attend this year’s ceremony. With that, she introduced Helen Batherson of Port Hood, saying, “Thirty years ago, when the municipality first held the volunteer recognition awards ceremony, Helen was chosen to represent all county volunteers at the Provincial awards ceremony. We have invited her to join us tonight, with her husband Ian, to help us celebrate this anniversary and present her with a bouquet as a token of our appreciation.”

With the presentation to Helen complete, the Councillors took turns presenting the individual awards to the volunteers. As they rose to receive their awards, Donna MacDonald, Director of Recreation/Tourism for the county, read what each organization had written about their nominated volunteer. As she read them, gasps of admiration could be heard from those assembled. It is truly inspiring the extent to which some of the volunteers dedicate themselves, not only to the nominating organizations, but to their communities in general. (The texts submitted by the organizations start on page 10 and are well worth taking time to read.)

The final award presented was the Youth Volunteer Award. Ali Doucet, of Margaree Forks, a student at the Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy, was nominated by the school. After listening to the text that had been sent in with the submission nominating this lovely young lady, the crowd rose in an emotional and heartfelt standing ovation. This was the first time in the fifteen years that I have attended this event that I have seen this happen. (To learn more about Ali and read in her own words why volunteering is important to her, turn to page 17.)

Once things had calmed down a little, Donna introduced Alfred Aucoin of Grand Étang. Alfred had represented county volunteers at the Provincial Awards Ceremony earlier in the month in Halifax. He thanked the Municipality for the opportunity that he had been given to attend the provincial

We Salute Our Year 2015 Inverness County Volunteers

by Marie Aucoin

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections every four years, but when you volunteer, you vote every day on the kind of community you want to live in.” - Anonymous

Continued on page 8...Volunteers
ceremony and made a heartfelt speech about his experience. He explained how touched he felt upon hearing some of the amazing things that volunteers around Nova Scotia are doing. As he held the provincial award high for the other volunteers to see, he told them how impressed he was to hear of the work that they have been doing in the county and said that he was proud to have represented them. He returned to his seat to warm applause.

Donna MacDonald returned to the podium to say a last few words before the night ended. She thanked the staff of the Recreation/Tourism Department who had done such an excellent job of organizing the event; Jeanette Gallant, Judique, for taking the photos; and, St. Peter’s Parish CWL for the beautifully decorated hall and delicious meal.

She finished by saying, “As mentioned throughout this evening, we are celebrating our thirtieth anniversary of hosting our volunteer recognition celebrations. I know that some of you present here tonight have been volunteering in your communities all thirty of these years and some of you even longer. It really is hard to imagine what our communities would look like if we didn’t have volunteers – I for one don’t want to try imagine it. I know it wouldn’t be a pretty place nor would it contain the elements that we cherish having in our lives – fire departments; arenas; trails; cultural centres; community festivals and events; parish functions; home and school; recreation programs; and the list goes on. In my role as director for recreation and tourism it is very obvious how much we need and rely on volunteers because they – by that I mean YOU - are the lifeblood of the communities that we work with and partner with throughout the year.

I know many thank you’s and congratulations have been mentioned this evening – and I do hope you will take them to heart – you really deserve our thanks. The dinner and the certificate are but a mere token of our appreciation for all that you do in your community to help Inverness County be such a great place to live. I am humbled once again, and as always, I am totally amazed at the volunteer effort we have in Inverness County. Obviously not all of our volunteers are here tonight but you are ALL great representatives of ALL of the good people we have living and volunteering in Inverness County.”

Donna then shared the following quote from the Governor General of Canada - David Johnson, “We can all be drivers of change when we offer our time and talent to others. Every act of volunteerism creates a ripple effect, inspiring others to follow suit. Even the biggest wave starts out as a ripple. Let’s keep it up!”

Bringing the evening to a close she said, “If I could ask one more thing from you tonight, it is that you share your story with others. Encourage others to volunteer, especially our young people. Our communities will always need volunteers like you. We have had some fine examples of youthful volunteers honored tonight. If you have the opportunity to involve youth in your organization or event, please do so – sometimes they just need the details and a bit of encouragement and the answer is usually yes. We will all be better off for it! Hopefully, next year we will see many more young people being honoured with your help. Thank you for getting involved! Thank you for caring and committing your time….safe travels back home tonight!”

[Anyone interested in volunteering in Inverness County communities should contact their local organizations directly, or, contact the Municipal Recreation/Tourism Department to obtain contact information for the many organizations throughout the county that could use help. Don’t forget, volunteering is also a great way to meet new people and make friends. And, especially for young people, it’s an excellent way to get experience in the job market which can help you stand out from the competition when looking for a job.]
Meet Your 2015 Volunteers

Alfred Aucoin
Grand Etang

Coralie Cameron
Scotsville

Robert Clark Snr
Margaree Valley

Pat Danberger
Judique

Deborah Delaney
Belle Côte

Ali Doucet
Margaree Forks

Silvan Eggenberger
River Denys

Harold Ferguson
Inverness

Maureen Hart
Mabou

Leo & Lisa Heukshorst
Mabou Ridge

Leo LeBlanc
Margaree Harbour

Marguerite Leonard
West Bay

Continued on page 11

Volunteer Photos
Alfred Aucoin, Grand Étang – The Board of Directors of the Lemoine Development Association is pleased to nominate their president, Alfred Aucoin as their Volunteer of the Year. Alfred has worked very diligently in his appointment as president. The Lemoine Development Association has managed the Centre de la Mi-carême for the past number of years and without any funding, many volunteer hours had to be spent in order to keep it open. Alfred helps out the Centre by dressing up as mi-caremê for role playing. By undertaking a lot of the renovations himself, Alfred was successful in restoring the old St. Joseph du Moine school into the beautiful Lemoine Centre building that it is today. Because of his endless determination, others have come forward to volunteer their time. A very special thank you goes out to Alfred from the Lemoine Development Association for his commitment to the Association and to his community. We would also like to thank Alfred for graciously accepting to represent Inverness County at the recent Provincial Volunteer Ceremony in Halifax. Congratulations!

Coralie Cameron, Scotsville – The Lake Ainslie Development Association is pleased the nominate their chairperson, Coralie Cameron as their Volunteer of the Year. As part of the Lake Ainslie Development Association, Coralie has volunteered as secretary and has helped to create Winter Fest activities in the community. She is an active member of the Lake Ainslie Trail committee as well as serving as a member of the Municipal Food committee. The Lake Ainslie Development Association extends a big thank you to Coralie for all her endeavors. Congratulations!

Robert Clark Sr., Margaree Valley – The Inverness Search and Rescue is very proud to nominate Robert Clark Sr. as their Volunteer of the Year. Robert is always available to lend a helping hand to his community. He has inspired young and old to become searchers. He is an avid fundraiser and spends endless hours helping out at the annual fishing derby. Robert goes above and beyond in all his endeavors and his dedication and endless ambition for his Search and Rescue team has not gone unnoticed. The Inverness Search and Rescue thanks Robert for his volunteerism. Congratulations!

Pauline Campbell, Judique – The Judique Seniors Club is pleased to nominate Pauline Campbell as their Volunteer of the Year. As president of the seniors club, Pauline is always willing to volunteer at any given moment for the betterment of the club and the community of Judique. She works at every card game and organizes and serves the delicious lunch after funerals. You seldom attend a function in Judique where Pauline can’t be spotted busy in the kitchen or head first lending a helping hand. She is an avid volunteer in many organizations within her community and is an all around pleasant person to work with. The Judique Seniors Club is very fortunate to have her in their club. Congratulations!

Pat Danberger, Judique – The Judique Community Centre is very pleased to nominate Pat Danberger as their Volunteer of the year. Whether it is setting up chairs, ordering and cooking the food or taking care of the funds and banking for the Kintyre Farm concert, Pat is one of the people who makes it happen. She volunteers her time weeding at the TartanGardens in Judique as well as staining the Gazebo, works at bingo and community dinners. The Judique Community Centre wishes to thank Pat for all of the time that she dedicates to her community. Congratulations!

Deborah Delaney, Belle Côte – The Belle Côte Community Centre is very pleased to nominate Deborah Delaney as their Volunteer of the Year. As a board member for the Centre, Deborah gives of her time to help organize and work at the annual pot luck dinner. She is committed to volunteering at Belle Côte Days as well as cooking and baking for sales and luncheons. Deborah is a member of two local quilting guilds where she generously donates her time and expertise helping to make quilts for local fundraising groups as well as serving as treasurer for the Celtic Quilt Guild. The Belle Côte Community Centre is very fortunate to have Deborah on board. Congratulations.

Silvan Eggenberger, River Denys – The Valley Mills Volunteer Fire Department is pleased to nominate Silvan Eggenberger as their volunteer of the year. Since joining the department at sixteen years old, Silvan has contributed his time to various committees. He is an active medical first responder and was Lieutenant of self contained breathing apparatus for one year. Since he joined he has been very dedicated to working at the brunches and pub nights, as well as contributing countless hours with doing renovations throughout the building. He is always willing to lend a hand or take on a new project. The Valley Mills Fire Department would like you to know that they appreciate your pleasant nature and good sense of humor and we thank you Silvan. Congratulations!

Harold Ferguson, Inverness – The Knights of Columbus Council 2298 is happy to nominate Harold Ferguson as their Volunteer of the Year. Harold joined the KOC forty five years ago and has been an active member of its Council to the present day. He has also volunteered many years with the Kinsmen Club and the Boy Scouts. As a generous community minded person he continues to carry out many hidden acts of charity to residents in the Inverary Manor, Inverness hospital and anyone who is in need. Harold is also a valuable volunteer in his Church, serving as Eucharistic Minister and an altar server. The community of Inverness thanks you Harold for all that you do. Congratulations.

Continued on page 12...Volunteer Biographies
Continued from page 9... Volunteer Photos

Findlay Lock
West Bay

Bonny Jean MacDonald
Mabou

Hughie MacEachen
Port Hawkesbury

Becky MacInnis
West Bay Road

Virginia MacInnis
Judique

Margaret MacIntyre
Kingsville

Sheila MacKay
Whycocomagh

Ashley MacLeod
Port Hawkesbury

Stanley MacLeod
Judique

Lynne MacLennan
Port Hood

Jillian MacMillan
Port Hood

Alec MacNeil
Mabou

Continued on page 15... Volunteer Photos
Leo & Lisa Heukshorst, Mabou Ridge - The Mabou Playground Committee would like to nominate Lisa and Leo Heukshorst as their volunteers of the year. Lisa and Leo have added their expertise, time, talent and resources to the community’s much beloved and still newly developing playground ‘Kinship Place’. Providing the knowledge, plants/trees, soil mulch, equipment and so much of their time, they have created a truly beautiful, welcoming community space for people and families of all ages to enjoy. Always answering the call for help, but many times instinctively arriving without being asked, they are dedicated, hardworking examples of community minded volunteers. Their quality workmanship has developed an aesthetic appeal that has added much value to the community of Mabou and the Mabou Playground Committee want to let them know how much they are appreciated. Congratulations Leo and Lisa!

Leo LeBlanc, Margaree Harbour – The South West Seniors Club is happy to nominate Leo LeBlanc as their Volunteer of the Year. As President of the Club, Leo is quite a busy man. He can often be found with his horses giving sleigh or wagon rides for birthdays and weddings. He makes sure that the Club’s members and the community are able to attend functions by removing snow, opening and closing the hall, and other tasks throughout his area. Leo organizes card plays, dinner outings, and parties with other members and can be seen selling tickets for fundraisers. The South West Seniors Club wishes to thank you Leo for all your hard work. Congratulations!

Marguerite Leonard, West Bay Road – The Head of the Bay Seniors Club is proud to choose Marguerite Leonard as their Volunteer of the Year. Marguerite is a very busy lady in her community. Dedicated to both church and community, she freely gives of her time and energy. She regularly works at the weekly card games and is treasurer of the West Bay church. She shares her homemade goodies at community functions and is always available to lend a helping hand. The Head of the Bay Seniors Club thanks you Marguerite for your dedication and support to its Club and community. Congratulations!

Findlay Lock, West Bay - The West Bay Community Organization nominates Findlay Lock as their Volunteer of the Year. Findlay’s volunteer work greatly benefits the West Bay Hall as well as the well-being of everyone living in that community. He helps organize, set up and clean up for community events. Findlay mows the grass around the Hall, cemetery and the boat launch and maintains the plowing equipment. He actively supports dances, the annual winter activity day, fun runs, and has been instrumental in clearing and maintaining a community rink as well as volunteering his time clearing the trails. Findlay clearly is a community-minded person who, despite having school and work commitments, finds the time to give of himself for the benefit of others. The community greatly values his contributions. Congratulations Findlay!

Bonny Jean MacDonald, Mabou - The Mabou Gaelic and Historical Society is pleased to nominate Vice-President for History, Bonny Jean MacDonald, as their Volunteer of the Year. Bonny Jean has been involved with the society for many years. When called upon to assist in any way, she is always ready to lend a helping hand whether providing music, baking, serving tea, collecting at the door, lining up performers, or taking the lead in organizing events. Bonny Jean’s volunteerism reaches far into the community. She can always be depended upon to share her musical talent with the fiddle as part of the choir and at funeral services in St. Mary’s Parish, and to be present to perform at charity events, family celebrations, and ceilidhs. For anyone who has had the good fortune to meet Bonny Jean, you will know that everything she does is done with a generous heart and a big smile. Congratulations!

Hughie MacEachen, Port Hawkesbury – The Strait Area Evergreen Senior's Club would like to nominate Hughie MacEachen as their Volunteer...
Margie MacIntyre, Kingsville – The St. David’s United Church Women are very pleased to nominate Margie MacIntyre as their Volunteer of the Year. Margie is a very active member of her church and her community. She is an organist at several churches and the nursing home and a member of Session at St. David’s United Church. She is a member of Inverness/Guysborough Presbytery where she serves on the Ministry and personnel committee as well as other committees when needed. She is a well known

Bobby MacEachern, West Bay Road – The West Bay Road Volunteer Fire Department is proud to nominate Bobby MacEachern as their Volunteer of the Year. Bobby is one of the founding members of the Fire Department. He has held various positions within the Department including Fire Chief. He is currently secretary of the Strait Area Mutual Aid as well as the Inverness County Fire Fighters Association. The West Bay Road Volunteer Fire Department along with the community of West Bay Road has greatly benefitted from his dedication. Congratulations!

Mary Ann MacFadyen, River Denys – The North Mountain Cultural and Recreation Association is happy to nominate Mary Ann MacFadyen as their Volunteer of the Year. Mary Ann stepped forward a few years ago to head the activities committee and works tirelessly trying new activities. She can be seen working at events from start to finish to keep things moving smoothly. Often she was found hard at work in the summer heat to help build the new gazebo at the community hall. The North Mountain Cultural and Recreation Association wishes to thank Mary Ann for all her volunteerism. Congratulations!

Becky MacInnis, West Bay Road – The Glendale Area Community Co-operative Limited is pleased to nominate Becky MacInnis as their Volunteer of the Year. Becky is a dedicated member of the Co-operative. She is available at any moment to help the group with kitchen duties, making monthly meeting calls, giving sound advice and sharing her wisdom wherever she see fit. Becky can be spotted capturing photos and memories at functions and often takes part in radio interviews to promote events. She volunteers her time at the yearly outdoor concert, the kitchen ceilidh and the many Celtic Colours events. The Glendale Area Community Cooperative is very grateful to you Becky for all the volunteer work and hours you give. Congratulations!

Virginia MacInnis, Judique – The Parish Council of St. Andrew’s Parish in Judique are pleased to nominate Virginia MacInnis as their Volunteer of the Year. Virginia has single handedly counted, recorded, deposited and receipted the church’s collections for almost twenty years. She faithfully sets up and clears tables at the Christmas bazaar dinner as well as bakes goodies for the dinner and bake table. Virginia is secretary of the Parish Council and can be continually counted on to help out at any event. The Parish Council of St. Andrew’s Parish thanks you Virginia for all your time and efforts, especially those behind the scenes. Congratulations!

Sheila MacKay, Whycocomagh – The Session of Stewart United Church is pleased to nominate Sheila MacKay as their Volunteer of the Year. Sheila can usually be found in the kitchen of the Cameron Hall at any Church event. She filled her time by visiting the sick and shut-ins or whenever an organization needs a helping hand. Sheila is always ready to help out where there is a need and the Stewart United Church thanks her for her volunteerism. Congratulations!

Geoffrine MacIntyre, Port Hood – St. Peter’s Catholic Women’s League is pleased to nominate Geoffrine MacIntyre as their Volunteer of the Year. Geoffrine, with her cheerful disposition, is always willing to give of her time and talents to assist her community. She is co-organizer of meals served after funerals as well as the annual CWL auction. She teaches religious education and directs the parish Sunday School classes as well. The St. Peter’s Parish Hall kitchen is a happier workplace with Geoffrine’s cheerful laugh and chatter. St. Peter’s CWL thanks Geoffrine for her unselfish spirit of volunteerism to the parish community. Congratulations!

Margie MacIntyre, Kingsville – The St. David’s United Church Women are very pleased to nominate Margie MacIntyre as their Volunteer of the Year. Margie is a very active member of her church and her community. She is an organist at several churches and the nursing home and a member of Session at St. David’s United Church. She is a member of Inverness/Guysborough Presbytery where she serves on the Ministry and personnel committee as well as other committees when needed. She is a well known

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Dougall McLean, Whycocomagh – The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 123 Whycocomagh is pleased to nominate Dougall McLean as their Volunteer of the Year. Dougall is a veteran and a long serving member of the Legion. Since retiring, Dougall has quickly become involved with various organizations including his Church, Legion, Sircom Masonic Lodge and the U.N. Peacekeepers Association. Dougall became a member of the Legion Branch in 1959 and has held the office of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer for several terms. He served as membership chairman and has been a

Lynne MacLennan, Port Hood – The Bayview Education Centre is thrilled to nominate Lynn MacLennan as their Volunteer of the Year. Lynne has led the School Advisory Council as president for the past five years and has sat as team member for twelve. In this time, Lynne’s leadership and overall concern for the school’s student body has aided them in making informed decisions. She has supported the school by ensuring the agenda was followed, the schedule was respected and the discussion encouraged all members to have the opportunity to contribute their own perspectives, interests and concerns. Lynne also assists the principal in communicating to partner groups regarding the annual report. The staff at Bayview Education Centre consider themselves fortunate to have had Lynne as School Advisory Council chairperson and want to thank you for all your time and dedication. Congratulations!

Stanley MacLeod, Judique – The Judique and District Volunteer Fire Department is proud to nominate Stanley MacLeod as their Volunteer of the Year. Stan joined the Fire Department is January 2012 and has proven to be a tremendous asset. He attained his Level 1 Firefighter Training in 2014 and faithfully attends weekly training sessions, monthly meetings and emergency calls. Stan can always be counted upon to help with fundraising activities and work parties. The Judique and District Volunteer Fire Department wishes to thank Stanley for all his volunteerism. Congratulations!

Alec MacNeil, Mabou – The Mabou & District Community Development Association wishes to nominate Alec MacNeil as their Volunteer of the Year. Alec has served as a director of the Association for many years, most recently as a member of the executive. He has always been a dedicated and dependable community partner and volunteer. He approaches every task with a smile on his face and his enthusiasm can make even the most tedious task a lot of fun. Although he has recently resigned from his duties on Mabou Development’s board of directors, Alex continues to serve his community through his work on the Mabou River Trails subcommittee. Alec was a leader in forming this group which maintains a 20 kilometer section of the Celtic Shores Coastal Trail network. The Mabou & District Community Development Association is thankful to Alec for his work in advancing their initiatives as well as all he does to promote, preserve and maintain the community of Mabou. Congratulations!

Bruno MacNeil, Kingsville – The St. Mary of the Angels Men’s Club would like to nominate Bruno MacNeil as their Volunteer of the Year. Bruno is presently serving as secretary. Over the years Bruno has spent countless hours completing applications and obtaining estimates for the many repair projects to the hall. Bruno is always willing to lend a helping hand whenever it is needed. You a very valuable member of the Men’s Club and they appreciate everything that you do Bruno. Congratulations!

Jillian MacMillan, Port Hood – The Port Hood Volunteer Fire Department is honoured to nominate Jillian MacMillan as their Volunteer of the Year. Jillian is a compassionate, caring first responder with the Fire Department. She is one of the first fire persons to arrive at the Hall for an emergency and is always ready and willing to help out with fundraising and events that take place. On any given day it’s not uncommon to see Jillian offering a drive home to a resident of the community or delivering their groceries. The Port Hood Fire Department is very lucky to have a dedicated member such as Jillian. Congratulations!

Ashley MacLeod, Port Hawkesbury – The Port Hastings Volunteer Fire Department wishes to nominate Ashley MacLeod as their Volunteer of the Year. Ashley has spent thirty years as a member of our Fire Department and at the present time serves as the Safety Officer. He has served as Deputy Chief for almost twenty years and has been a past Training Officer. He is the Training Coordinator for the Mutual Aid Association and has been the ‘go-to’ person for the majority of training organized through them. Ashley also serves on various committees for St. David’s United Church in Port Hastings. The Port Hastings Volunteer Fire Department as well as their Mutual Aid Association thank you, Ashley, for all your hard work and dedication. Congratulations!

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central figure with the annual Remembrance Day services and dinner. He attends to the Canadian flag…lowering when necessary and placing miniature flags on the gravesites of veterans in the Whycocomagh area. The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 123 Whycocomagh is very proud to salute one of their own this evening. Congratulations!

**Kathi Morrison, Port Hood** – The St. Stephen’s United-Jubilee United Church Women are pleased to nominate Kathi Morrison as their Volunteer of the Year. Since joining the UCW several years ago, Kathi has taken on the role of head of the fundraising committee and has consequently brought to life several new and successful events including bi-weekly jam sessions, an Easter bake sale, and a Celtic Colours ‘Everything Apple’ sale. She has begun the Annual Jubilee church concert to raise funds for repair of the Jubilee Church on Port Hood
Dianne Quimby, Mabou – The Lake Ainslie Weavers and Craft Guild is pleased to nominate Dianne Quimby as their Volunteer of the Year. As a skilled weaver, spinner, dyer, knitter, and teacher of these skills, Dianne helps in so many ways to fulfill the Guild’s goal of preserving and promoting Cape Breton’s traditional fibre arts. Dianne is always on hand for Guild fundraisers, meetings, and other activities. She contributes her handcrafted items to stock the summer gift shop, and is on the Guild team in the international spinning and knitting race, the ‘Back-to Back Challenge’. Dianne is also the president of the South Haven Weavers Guild, is on the board of directors of Strathspey Place and is currently organizing a book club for Mabou. The Lake Ainslie Weavers and Craft Guild thanks you Dianne for all you do to help keep the Cape Breton culture flourishing. Congratulations!

Christian Roach, Grand Etang – The Lemoine Volunteer Fire Department is pleased to nominate Christian Roach as their Volunteer of the Year. Whether it is working with the radio/pager committee, power plant committee, organizing card games and the Christmas party Committee, Christian has proven that he is always ready and willing to donate his time. The Lemoine Volunteer Fire Department is very fortunate to have Christian as part of their team. Congratulations.

Tina Roach, Pleasant Bay – Le Conseil des arts de Cheticamp is very happy to nominate Tina Roach as their Volunteer of the Year. Tina is currently serving on the Board of Directors. She is one of the first people to volunteer to help with fundraising activities. She has played numerous roles in plays that the Conseil des arts has produced. If she is not doing her part on stage you might find her backstage taking care of the younger actors. Tina understands the importance of the Conseil des arts contribution to arts education and to our youth. Congratulations Tina!

Sharon Rose, West Bay Road – The West Bay Pastoral Charge is proud to nominate Sharon Rose as their Volunteer of the Year. Sharon has been a dedicated volunteer for many years and is presently serving in the positions of Chair as well as Secretary. She is a willing participant in all fundraisers and has prepared and provided church service on Sundays in the absence of a minister. Having individuals like Sharon is the reason for the organization’s success. The West Bay Pastoral Charge wishes to thank Sharon for her volunteerism. Congratulations!

Angele Ross, Margaree – The Margaree Kinette Club is very pleased to nominate Angele Ross as their Volunteer of the Year. Angele has been very involved in fundraising activities. She has taken on the role of secretary, director and Sergeant Of Arms for several terms. Angele is also a volunteer at religion classes. The Margaree Kinette Club would like to acknowledge Angele for her volunteerism. Congratulations!

John Shepherd, West Bay Road – The West Bay Road Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary is proud to nominate John Shepherd as their Volunteer of the Year. John is one of those people who fly under the radar. The many things he does in his community and the help he gives to friends and neighbours is done without ceremony, so people do not know of his kind deeds. He was active in scouting for many years and has helped start the Riverside Archery Club. John supports the West Bay Road Volunteer Fire Department and Ladies Auxiliary and is a very special guest at the Christmas tree lighting when all the children come to see Santa, ‘aka John’. He cares for two old cemeteries and watches over an old community church. His helping hand is given to those who need it in a quiet and humble way. Many thanks John and congratulations!

Donald Stewart, Whycocomagh – The Sircom Lodge #66 A.F. & A.M. is pleased to nominate Donald Stewart as their Volunteer of the Year. Worshipful Brother Donnie has been a member of the Sircom Lodge for thirty one years serving as Master in 1989 and 2011. He has held most lodge offices and is currently serving as Junior Steward. In the past, Brother Donnie has held district lodge offices and has served on many lodge committees. He is always willing to do what he can for the betterment of the lodge and its members. As a dedicated member and Elder of Stewart United Church and a member of the Causeway Shrine Club, Brother Donnie is kept busy. The officers and members of Sircom Lodge #66 congratulate you Donnie.

Sandra Taylor, Judique – The Chestico Museum and Historical Society wishes to nominate Sandra Taylor as their Volunteer of the Year. Sandra is a keen supporter of the Chestico Museum and Archives. She has worked on the annual Chestico Museum yard sale, participated in the Downton Abby tea, helped assemble the yearly parade float, baked for the weekly summer ceilidhs and on two occasions acquired funding for museum programs. She is a volunteer for the yearly museum
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The Port Hood Area Development Society would like to take this opportunity to thank you Judy for all your volunteerism. Congratulations! Judy is a member of both the St. Peter Parish choir and the Inverness County Singers. The Port Hood Area volunteering her time in preparing the snowflakes and wreaths used for decorating for the Society’s yearly Christmas-by-the-grounds at Central Park for spring and summer planting. She has been instrumental in organizing, and once again, has made the job of both the President and Vice President so much easier. She has also worked as a volunteer to prepare

Sandra has contributed her talents to Inverness County Cares by volunteering at the annual pizza sale and recycle program. The Chestico Museum and Historical Society is very fortunate to have Sandra as one of their volunteers. Congratulations!

The Volunteer Youth Award recognizes a youth aged 13-24 who has made a significant contribution as a volunteer. The Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy is thrilled to nominate Ali Doucet as their Youth Volunteer of the Year. Ali has been very involved in her school and community for many years giving freely of her time and talents. With a smile on her face, she is always the first person willing to lend a hand. Ali is a leader within her school community and an exceptional role model for the schools’ student body. She is involved in student council, yearbook committee, school sports teams, school musicals, students without borders and the Cape Breton West Challenge Movement. She is an inspiration to all and her eagerness to help and serve others is contagious. Ali has been recognized this year at the 41st annual Provincial Volunteer Awards Ceremony held in Halifax on April 7th. One of the questions she was required to complete began with “Before I volunteer my time and energy for projects, organizations or events within my community or school, I say to myself, ‘I am volunteering for this because...?’ And, this is what she wrote... ‘Volunteering my time and efforts has been something I have loved to do from a very young age. I learned the importance of dedicating myself to the service of others through my wonderful family members, who all use their unique talents to help others. When I volunteer, I tell myself that I am volunteering because I am making my entire family proud—especially my grandma. Her entire life, my grandmother put the needs of others before her own. She raised a family of 10 (two of whom were adopted), and always ensured that their needs were met and that a delicious dinner was on the table for them every night. She also used every opportunity to volunteer in the community. What really made my grandma an exceptional volunteer was her role as a foster parent. Her and my grandfather took in over 200 foster children over 35 years, and provided them with more safety and love than those children had ever received. As a loving, determined foster parent, my grandmother embodied every quality I strive to embody myself. She never stopped loving, never judged, and certainly never gave up on anyone. Unfortunately my grandma died of cancer in May 2014. My heart still breaks when I think of this woman, who helped everyone her entire life, lying helpless in a hospital bed. Though no longer with us, I know that she lives on through the lives that she touched, especially mine. I have a mission to continue her legacy, to display acts of love toward others in the ways that she taught me to. She may not have saved the world, but she changed the world for so many people who knew her. I volunteer in the hopes of changing lives just like my grandma did. [Editor’s Note: Ali’s grandfather is Bill Cameron and her late grandmother was Wilma Cameron.]

The Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy and the entire County are very proud of you Ali. Congratulations you deserve this award!

All photographs pages 7 through 17 by Jeannette Gallant Photography, Judique
What is “Engage Inverness County”?  

The stated mission of Engage Inverness County is to provide an inclusive, equitable and responsive engagement process in and across the county; a process that inspires, builds relationships, supports learning and the collaborative ability to help organize our communities to take advantage of opportunities and face the challenges of building a vibrant, healthy and prosperous region.

Engage (or engagement) can be seen as a “Buzz” word these days - used too often and not really practiced enough, unless of course you are getting married! To be “engaged” means that you have bought into something and are committed to participating fully: after all, that is what it takes to make a community or marriage work!

For the Municipal government, “Engage Inverness County” is about making a commitment to the people of the county. A commitment to provide opportunities to:
• Bring together citizens in a way that leads to shared vision and collaborative action
• Invite people who are not usually a part of the conversation to join in
• Provide opportunities for skill-building, learning and exchange
• Shift the conversation from what is wrong to what is possible, and from what others should do to what we can do ourselves
• Learn together how best to support what it takes to have all corners of our county engaged as enterprising and healthy communities in making things work.

“Engage Inverness County – All that Matters,” the Municipality’s first big gathering last year, took a look at many aspects of our county and what’s going on to support our health and prosperity. The second annual Engage Inverness County - Community Matters held April 18th, looked more at how we can strengthen our capacity to work together as a team - whether that is in our organizations, community’s, districts or sectors.

Who put this together? For each of the two Engage Inverness County events it was a group of community volunteers, county councillors and Municipal staff working closely together who helped organize and host the events. Each group brought a unique blend of interest and experience to the planning as they explored ways to try and be inclusive and meaningful for both presenters and participants.

But this is not just an annual event where we need to come together to connect. The Municipality of Inverness County is well positioned, in fact mandated, through the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) of March 2010, to provide an ongoing process of engagement with their citizens to help ensure all aspects of our social, cultural, economic and environmental values are included in our local planning and decision making process.

It is interesting to note that our Municipality committed to the idea of hosting the first countywide gathering even before the infamous Ivany Commission’s One NS Report came out last February. That report was a call to action for all Nova Scotians (not just Governments) and stated in part; “(The) critical first step is a shift in attitudes and a greater willingness and capacity on the part of business, key institutions and communities throughout Nova Scotia to join together in the pursuit of shared goals to benefit all….”

Historically, before there were Municipal, Provincial and Federal Governments, every small community in Inverness County was an example of “shared goals that benefited all.” From food, housing, roads, barns, schools, church’s, doctors, births, deaths and everything in between, people were engaged daily, working together...
to build, maintain and staff what mattered. An example, from long after governments were in place, was the Coady - Tompkins movement, where the church leadership played a role in engaging citizens to make things work through the co-op movement.

Rural people in the past were generalists – “jacks of all trades,” where everyone knew a little about a lot of things. Much was common one hundred years ago, such as: how to start a fire - especially if you wanted to heat your home; how to grow and store food for a whole year; how to help each other by raising barns, quilting bedcovers, haying, fulling, etc. They also instinctively knew that it was better not to walk behind the hind end of a horse unless you wanted to get kicked, and so on. Back then common sense was a way of knowing how to share and how to take care of each other. Upon looking back, life seemed somehow simpler then.

Today, “common sense” is no longer a practical phrase to use. On many levels in our day to day lives we have less and less in common with each other because we have become much more specialized. We now know a lot about a few things and we spend most of our time in our professional and volunteer communities relatively isolated from the complexity of all that is going on around us.

This is not a judgement on where we came from or where we are now, but rather a reflection on why it may be wise to work at coming together to help make better decisions. Our challenge is to find productive and meaningful ways to bring a “common sense” and shared purpose to a growing individualized world of specialized jobs, limited time and competing interests.

We can all attest that life is pretty complex and competitive these days on a personal and family level. When you look across Inverness County and add fourteen thousand citizens; one thousand businesses (including the fishery, farming, forestry and tourism sectors) two hundred not-for-profits involved in arts, culture, recreation and social services; two hospitals; six schools; fourteen hundred kilometers of roads; six sewer and water plants; sidewalks; streetlights; two regulated childcare centres; trails; housing; income assistance; aging demographics; Provincial government cutbacks ... etcetera, it can become a bit of a challenge to make decisions that are informed, collaborative, innovative, well thought out, prioritized, cost effective and timely.

But there are recent examples of some unravelling of this complexity through a well facilitated engagement process; where a diverse group of people and organizations set a course with a shared vision, partnerships formed, investments made and outcomes set. The Pan Cape Breton Food Hub is one of these. It was initiated three years ago by bringing together everyone and anyone interested in a local food economy. We now have five Cape Breton Municipalities and the Province
Chief Executive Officer Rod Googoo updated participants on recent activities of the community of We’koqma’q. Photo courtesy of Amey Beaton

supporting a co-ordinator position to link producers to consumers at all levels for increased production and profitability.

“Engage Inverness County” is the Municipality’s effort to signal that it is our time. Our time to re-engage and help sort through the complexity and find a unity of action that improves our collective health and prosperity in and across our county and Island. As someone said at the Engage Inverness County gathering this year, “Our rural communities often feel like we never have enough people, resources, or time, and yet, perhaps if we take the time to come together and get better at organizing ourselves we can increase our capacity with what we already have.”

And finally, individually improving the quality of engagement requires our municipal government’s leadership style to be more facilitative and inclusive of everyone’s voice and ideas. We can ALL practice this role by being more curious and open minded (not negative), offering gratitude, compassion and understanding (less judgmental) and take responsibility for how we feel (not blaming others) each and every day.

While we may not get married, we should definitely be engaged if we want to shape the future that all of our children deserve whilst still taking care of this place that we all love.

In January, the Lake Ainslie Development Association received $29,000 in Trans Canada Trail (TCT) project funding to complete a section of trail between Deepdale and Scotsville. They will continue to work on connecting their trail toward Whyocomagh. Lake Ainslie Development Association will be the lead applicant for TCT funding on two-thirds of the land-based route. The association and SANS are currently working on a concept plan for construction for the entire route to be completed in phases.

Lake Ainslie has cleared the right-of-way on their first phase along the Southwest Margaree River.

Response to the Bras d’Or Lake Water Route has been very positive in Cape Breton. Work continues to raise awareness of this water route project and the opportunity for communities located around the lake interested in developing a public access point for paddlers.

Presentations or information updates about the Bras d’Or Lake water route have been made to several communities around the Lake and to groups including the Unama’ki Tourism Association, Bras d’Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association, Pitu’paq and Bras d’Or Lake CEPI (Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative).

A number of communities in Cape Breton Island are in the process of developing TCT concept plan proposals to be submitted this spring. Meetings have been held with various stakeholders within the four First Nations communities located on the Bras d’Or Lake; Eskasoni, Potlotek, Waycobah and Wagmatcook. The response has been very positive with three of the communities currently developing concept plan proposals.

For more information contact Jessica Farrell, Cape Breton Trans Canada Trail Engagement Officer by email at: jessica@novascotiatrails.com
2015 Inverness County Cribbage Championship Tournament Results

Winners’ Division Teams
Betty & Mark MacKinnon / Scotsville
Anthony & Ethel Gallant / NE Margaree
Laurette & Eugene MacGillivray / Cheticamp
Pat MacDonald & Suzanne MacDonald / Mabou
Donald Angus MacMillan & Cyril MacDonald / Judique
Norbert & Rannie MacLellan / Creignish
John Howlett & Mike Delorey / Port Hastings
Charlie & Diane LeBlanc / Margaree
Lorraine Gwinn & Brenda Campbell / Inverness
Francis MacDonald & Angus MacDonald / Glendale
John & Phillip Prosper / Waycobah
Howard & Byron Timmons / Pleasant Bay
Mary Jane Tracy & Jenny Batherson / Port Hood
Donald & Anna MacInnis / Skye Glen
Blair MacKenzie & Florence Rideout / Port Hawkesbury

Runners-Up Division Teams
Anna Lee MacEachern, Inverness County Program Coordinator, presented the Runners-Up Division Champions Malcolm MacLean (l) and Raymond Ellis (r) of Skye Glen with their trophies.

Margaret Beaton, Inverness County staff member, presented the Winners Division Champions, mother and son team Mark and Betty MacKinnon of Scotsville, with their trophies.

Anna Lee MacEachern, Inverness County Program Coordinator, presented the Runners-Up Division Champions Malcolm MacLean (l) and Raymond Ellis (r) of Skye Glen with their trophies.

Right, the Editor of the Oran played AND covered the event this year. Hi Rankin!

Continued on page 22...
The Cribbage Tournament makes for a great time. What could be better than playing a game of crib for the honour of your community while enjoying great company? Just think, all of that plus an excellent meal with dessert. Who could resist? And, for the first time since the Cribbage Championship event began thirty-eight years ago, every community in Inverness County was represented. It was also nice to see such a variety of age ranges competing.

Congratulations to the 2015 champions and many thanks to the volunteers who worked at the event and made the delicious meal. Thanks also to the staff of the Inverness County Recreation/Tourism Department who worked so hard organizing it.

Continued from page 21...

On July 18, the 12th edition of the Across the Highlands Challenge (AHC) will be held in Mabou in beautiful Inverness County. The newly formed Na Beinn Trails Cycling Association club of Mabou is the organizer for this year's event.

This year's route will traverse many of the beautiful trails in the area and once again, both short (30-35km) and long (65-70km) routes will be offered. Both courses will explore trails on the south side of Mabou Harbour which will offer hilly terrain and great views. Some easy miles will come in the form of a section on the Ceilidh Coastal trail (part of the Trans-Canada trail) while still offering great views riding towards the heart of Mabou. Both courses will traverse the village and make their way to the north side of Mabou Harbour before heading uphill. This is where the long course will begin the challenging climb towards Cape Mabou, while the short course will take a scenic route before looping back towards the West Mabou Hall, headquarters for the Across the Highlands MTB.

The course will be signed and all riders must follow the marked course for their own safety. A number of patrollers will be on the course and also at strategic locations to direct the participants and to provide emergency assistance if required. Pit Stops at regular intervals along the road will provide food and refreshments.

Fees are as follows - before June 14, $70 and June 15 to July 12, $75. The deadline for registration is July 12th. The fee includes ride kit, food and refreshments and the post-ride banquet. Cancellation costs $0 before June 15 and $15 from June 15 to July 12. There will be no refund for cancellations made after July 12.

If you haven’t yet had the “AHC Experience” there’s never been a better time to give it a go. Riders below 16 years of age are welcome to participate but must ride accompanied by a parent/adult at all times. Registration is limited to the first one hundred who register. Register at http://www.velocapebreton.ca/node/714, or email Yann Gagnon ahc15@nabeinntrails.com or call Cheryl Chandler at 902-945-2902 or Yann Gagnon (evening): 902-623-1844.

Mabou is known for it’s scenery, beautiful trails, sandy beaches, celtic music and welcoming hospitality. In the heart of the village are many places to stay and the famous Red Shoe Pub. Fifteen minutes north, in Inverness, is the world class Cabot Links golf course. Ten minutes to the south is the town of Port Hood which offers pristine beaches and the warmest waters in Eastern Canada. The Mabou River and Mabou Harbour also offer excellent opportunities for water sports during your stay here.

AHC’15 also takes place the same weekend as the Mabou Ceilidh. This local festival offers a variety of activities for the entire family. Come to Mabou for the AHC’15 and see what this part of Cape Breton Island has to offer.
We welcome Elizabeth Whalley, the new manager of the Inverness County Centre for the Arts. Born in St Jerome, Quebec and raised in Morin Heights just north of Montreal, Elizabeth’s father, Peter Whalley, was one of Canada’s best known and beloved cartoonists. Her mother was also an artist and worked as a fashion illustrator.

As an adult, Elizabeth moved to New York to pursue her education and a career in art. She obtained her MFA there and established herself as a successful freelance artist. She is also an adjunct professor at Brooklyn College.

Given her background, it is likely that you are wondering how on earth she ended up here in Cape Breton as the Manager of the Arts Centre. Well, she was an "accidental" tourist. Years ago her daughter was invited to spend a summer in Margaree with family friends. New York residents, this family had been summering for several years in Cape Breton at that point. However, like most mothers of children just 10 years of age, Elizabeth felt uncomfortable with the idea of letting her daughter travel so far away for an entire summer without her. Not wishing to deny her the opportunity to make the trip, she decided that she would also tag along. Of course, as we all know, once you visit this place you are hooked! Naturally, she kept coming back and we are glad that she did because she is now in charge at the arts centre and already has a jam-packed event schedule planned for this, her first season at the helm.

With lots of great ideas and plans on how to raise the profile of the arts centre and that of the artists and artisans of Inverness County, with her many contacts in the North American art world there is no doubt that this will be an excellent opportunity for Inverness County creators: We hope that you will take advantage of Elizabeth’s presence, get out and support her AND the centre. After all, the Centre was built for ALL of Inverness County creators - young, old or in between.

To find out how you can become involved, during what will surely be an exciting next few years, contact Elizabeth or drop in for a visit. In the meantime, check out the exhibition and event schedule below and plan to attend one or all.

2015 Exhibitions

May 10 - May 31
Fresh Picked:
Student Artists of Inverness County

June 7 - June 28
Port Hoodlums II – New Work

July 5 - July 26
Hands Dancing: The Annual Roundup

August 2 – August 23
The Forest

August 30 – September 20
Interlacing Conversations:
Traditional and Contemporary Fibre Arts

September 27 - October 18
Main Gallery: Structures: Interpretations in Textiles
Studio Art Quilt Associates, Atlantic Canada
Outer Gallery: Penny Berens: Scratching the Surface

October 25 – November 8
November in Inverness County

2015 Exhibitions Other Events

Wednesday, May 13 Art For The Non-Artist with Jude Caborn
Ever wonder what it would be like to paint a picture? Well, here is your chance to do it risk free. Jude will supply all materials you will need. Bring your sense of adventure and be prepared to try something new. You will be walked through a painting, step-by-step. If you find you want to try this medium then Jude will advise you on where to get the materials at affordable prices. The workshop is for those who have not painted before or those wishing to try watercolor.

Saturday, May 30 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Royal Bank Volunteers Day: Spring Cleaning Charlotte’s Garden Everyone is welcome to join us for a joyous celebration of the arrival of spring in the garden of the art centre. Originally planted by Charlotte Blackman Doucet, we will gather in the garden to tidy, prune, prepare and plant. Refreshments will be served.

Thursday, June 25 7:00 pm $10 Belle Plaine - Concert and Storytelling with a fine band from rural Saskatchewan

July 8 - August 5 Wednesday evening Art Workshops with Virginia McCoy
Play and Love and Workshopping Art

July 9 - July 12
Theatre Workshop Intensive with JoAnne Akalaitis

PLUS, much more to come...stay tuned!
Possibility of Community Park for Cheticamp

Several years ago the Robin's store in downtown Cheticamp was closed and abandoned. The taxes went unpaid with ownership of the property ultimately reverting to the municipality.

The municipality put the building up for sale to cover the taxes of approximately $200K but had no luck selling it. Thus, in the interest of safety they made the decision to demolish the building.

With the empty lot standing vacant for a couple of years now, I sometimes found myself wondering what was to become of it. Thankfully, I need wonder no more: Le Conseil économique de Chéticamp (CEC) has come up with an imaginative plan to turn what could have easily become an eyesore, into something beautiful and functional. Something that the village has been missing all along. Their plan is to turn the vacant lot into a "Town Square" park, complete with parking behind and above that will have room to accommodate buses and RVs. The municipal government is willing to work with the CEC to help them accomplish this goal. By transferring the land to the CEC, they will ensure that the vacant lot is put to good use rather than languishing in limbo while it continues to deteriorate.

Before a transfer of public property such as this can take place, it was necessary for the municipality to conduct a public hearing. Therefore, on April 19th a hearing was held in Cheticamp to allow the residents (or anyone else) to voice their opinions or objections to the proposed transfer of the vacant property. Not surprisingly, there were no objections expressed. Everyone who attended the hearing was given the opportunity to look the plan over: It is impressive. And, once built, it will likely become quite an attraction for both tourists and residents. Behind the park, the addition of a public parking area large enough to accommodate buses and RVs is something that Cheticamp has needed for a long time. Even if the final phase is not completed (a lighthouse slide that can be accessed from the parking lot above to slide down into the park) with its central location and ample parking, the park in and of itself will still encourage tourists to stop to explore the village. Containing a play area for children, a small stage, picnic tables, benches and bike stands, not only will the park encourage tourists to stop it will likely become a gathering place for local residents as well.

A mural will be painted on the three walls around the perimeter of the park. This will be undertaken by students of Ecole NDA under the guidance le Conseil des Arts. Of necessity, the landscaping of the park will be low maintenance, as there is no budget for staff to maintain it. Nevertheless, if there are people who enjoy gardening who are willing to volunteer, there is a possibility that they could contribute their talents to this project. Once construction is complete, this little park is sure to attract lots of attention.

In view of the plans for the future of this one derelict lot, it really is not a mystery that there were no objections standing in the way of the transfer of the land from the municipality to the CEC at the hearing. In fact, quite the opposite. The response has been overwhelmingly positive. It is now a mere formality before the land is officially transferred.

With most of the funding in place, if all goes well the CEC hopes to put the project to tender in stages this summer with the hope that work will begin by the end of the summer.

As a resident of the community, I look forward to welcoming such a wonderful new addition to the downtown area.
The first annual Roots to Boots Festival will be held in Chéticamp and Louisbourg

The first annual Roots to Boots Festival will be held in the communities of Chéticamp and Louisbourg from June 11 to 14, 2015. Artists and musicians from Cape Breton and Newfoundland and Labrador come together to revive forgotten tales and old Acadian connections. A unique blend of entertainment to please cultural enthusiasts: storytelling, hiking, food, local-flavour, concerts, songwriters’ circle and late night square dances!

In 2014, community representatives accompanied Parks Canada to the “Trails Tales Tunes Festival” in Norris Point, Newfoundland and Labrador in order to explore the possibilities of organizing a similar festival here. The visit was successful and plans were soon underway to host the Roots to Boots Festival on Cape Breton Island.

Several musical artists have already been confirmed. Bernard and Robert Felix hail from the tiny community of l’Anse à Canards on the small Port-au-Prince peninsula of Newfoundland and Labrador. Deeply rooted in a French ancestry, Bernard and Robert are as proud of being Newfoundlanders as they are of their French heritage and their pride shines through in their music.

The brothers have been playing together since 2003 when the Felix (Bernard) Formanger (Norman) Duo disbanded after nine years of world travel and producing several recordings - “Jigs & Reels”, “A Little duo of Accordion Music,” “Between the Jigs & Reels” and “Carrying on the Tradition”. Bernard is also featured on other recordings including Scott Macmillan’s “Minnie Sessions Volume 3” and Pam Morgan’s “On a Wing and a Prayer”.

Daniel Payne is from the town of Cow Head on the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland and Labrador. For over a decade, he has worked as a professional musician, performing the traditional music of his province, as well as collecting songs and dance tunes from older traditional players.

Starting in his teens with guitar and voice, Daniel has gone on to become proficient in a wide variety of instruments, including fiddle, accordion, mandolin, flute, whistle and Bodhrán. His passion and virtuosity have taken him around the world, touring Australia, Japan, Ireland, Europe, Greenland, the UK and the US, as well as Canada.

Scott Macmillan has a passion for creating music in all its forms, composition, arrangement commission, collaboration, performance, musical directing live, in the studio, conducting, teaching, or as a clinician. Driven by his need to be creative, Macmillan seeks opportunities in all aspects of music making. That love has inspired exploration into genres from rock to blues, classical to choral, Celtic to jazz, as well as modern and avant-garde.

The program of activities will be held mainly in Louisbourg on the first two days, with the week-end activities held in Chéticamp. A full program of events is available on the website: www.rootstobootsfestival.ca

Historical ties between the west coast of Newfoundland and Cape Breton have given life to a collaborative approach to this year’s edition of the festival. An exciting list of musicians and artists will lend their talents in both Cape Breton and Newfoundland to revive forgotten tales and old Acadian connections.

It is interesting to note that the Newfoundland and Labrador annual festival, “Trails Tales Tunes”, to be held from May 15 - 24 this year, will include an Acadian Day: Cape Breton musicians, Nicole LeBlanc and Michelle Deveau of Cheticamp, will be performing at the event.
Nova Scotia is in the process of positioning itself to make the tourism industry its number one service export. The provincial government's stated objective is to double the present dollar value of this $2B industry within the next 10 years.

The Municipality of Inverness County understood many years ago that the tourism industry was a linchpin of our economy and has been working hard to boost the county's tourism sector. This year they are more committed than ever to the sector and will do all that they can to ensure that the county reaps the benefits of the province's push to attract more tourists to Nova Scotia. They want our tourism operators to be well positioned to take advantage of every opportunity that comes their way. With that in mind, on February 28th they hosted a highly informative and useful Festival & Events workshop at the Inverness County Centre for the Arts.

The Director of Recreation/Tourism for the County, Donna MacDonald, opened the day’s events by welcoming everyone. She spoke briefly about the county's new marketing strategy to attract more visitors here before introducing Amey Beaton, the Department's Tourism Assistant. Amey gave an enlightening and informative presentation on Social Media and how businesses, especially those in the tourism industry, can use social media to raise their profile and attract more customers.

After Amey's presentation, Ross Hunter and Kelsey Peters of Destination Cape Breton were introduced. They spoke about DCBA's Festival and Events Marketing Initiative for 2015, "15 of 15." They said that the top 15 events of 2015 will showcase Cape Breton Island's living culture, exceptional venues and unique lifestyle - from culture and music festivals to hiking the majestic Cabot Trail. (For a Continued on page 27...) Workshop
Continued from page 26...Workshop

DCBA website: http://dcba-info.com/. Kelsey and Ross also talked about how important it was for event planners and tourism operators to populate the CBIsland website with up-to-date information on what is happening in their communities. The explained that the internet is the way that the vast majority of people now plan their trips. These folks expect to find up-to-date information on websites to help them make their decisions on where they will ultimately visit and what they will do once there. One attendee questioned why there is no “hard copy” promotion of the CBIsland website address for people crossing the causeway onto the island. She also asked how DCBA ensures that festival and event promoters are aware of the website and how to have their information added to it. Ross responded that DCBA will take a look at that issue. He and Kelsey also suggested that a good strategy for promoting festival and events is to develop relationships with the employees of the various county Visitor Information Centres.

Next up was Brenda Dunphy. She is the organizer of the Whycocomagh Summer Festival, which relies heavily upon volunteers for its success. She spoke about how she has managed to attract so many young volunteers to help out at the event. The festival adopted a “Youth Ambassador” program. She visited the schools and spoke to the kids about what is expected of the ambassadors and about the benefits of volunteering. She said that she also tries to match the volunteer’s interests with the job as much as possible. Her suggestion for those who would like to recruit young volunteers was to contact the schools and have them run the pertinent information on the school PA system along with the school’s regular announcements. Something else that can work well is notices posted in the schools with information describing the volunteer position and the pertinent contact information.

Jessica Farrell followed Brenda. The Cape Breton Trans Canada Trail Engagement Officer gave an excellent presentation on how tourism operators can incorporate trails into what they already have on offer.

Next, Damian MacInnis of the Strait Area Chamber of Commerce shared his experience building a new event for Cape Breton Island. Celtic Oktoberfest was launched successfully last year right after the Celtic Colours event. He gave some excellent advice on how to get a new event up and running on Cape Breton Island.

Another speaker, Margie Beaton the Director of Marketing for the Gaelic College, also shared great advice with attendees when she spoke about Kitchen Fest - Féis a Chidsin! The festival debuted last year because the college wanted to do something to kick off the summer season a little earlier than usual plus host an event that encouraged pride of place.

Continued on page 28...Workshop
During the festival, musical events are held around the island over a period of four days with bilingual hosts (English and Gaelic) sharing a little history and local knowledge with the audiences as they introduce the music.

The festival will run again this year from 27th to 30th June and she told the attendees that they are looking to partner with others on hosting day events that they can package with the musical events. She said that this year they have also added a closing concert. It is a variety concert and will be an event for the entire family to enjoy together. In closing, she left the audience with an excellent piece of advice for planning their own events. She said, “Offer an authentic experience, remembering that our culture is not a product for sale but something that we like to share.”

Yvette MacPhee of Le Société St Pierre, Cheticamp told the participants about a new festival. The Roots to Boots Festival will take place in Louisbourg and Cheticamp, June 11-14th (see page 25 for more information on this.)

The final speaker was Dawn Beaton, Artistic Director for Celtic Colours. She spoke about how important volunteers are in running a successful festival or event. In the case of Celtic Colours, 1,904 volunteers ensure that all goes off without a hitch year after year. She explained that one of the reasons that they have enjoyed so much success in recruiting volunteers is that they make sure to show their appreciation and give them the tools that they need to do a good job. She said that the training that they provide to the volunteers creates assertive, valued trained people who apply these same skills at their own community events all year round.

Congratulations and thank you to the Department of Recreation/Tourism for offering this excellent and informative workshop. It was certainly an informative session and well worthwhile attending. [Editor’s note 1: With tourism operators maxed out during the high season, the Department of Recreation and Tourism scheduled the event for a time when they thought folks were most likely to be available. Given the winter that we have just had, if the weather had been bad that day it would not have been surprising to see few in attendance at this workshop. However, February 28th was one of those rare days when the roads were fine. Therefore, it is a pity that so few took advantage of the opportunity to learn more about marketing and/or hosting events or how to recruit and retain volunteers for events and festivals. Hopefully, if the county offers something as interesting as this session again, many more tourism operators and festival and event planners will take the time to attend.]

[Editor’s note 2: Here is the website where folks can access event information and/or submit event information to Destination Cape Breton’s CBIsland site: http://events.cbisland.com/index.php?cid=40&pid=493&s=1]

--Continued from page 27...

---Gold Medal Winner - Carpentry NS Skills Canada Competition 2015--

Congratulations to Silvan Eggenberger of River Denys – not only was he nominated this year for a volunteer award by the Valley Mills Volunteer Fire Department - he won the Gold medal for carpentry at this year’s Nova Scotia Skills Canada Competition. This is quite an achievement. He will now go on to represent Nova Scotia, as a member of Team Nova Scotia, at the national competition to be held May 27-30 in Saskatoon.

Skills Canada - Nova Scotia (SCNS) is affiliated nationally with Skills/Compténces Canada which was developed as a nationwide not-for-profit organization with the goal of being a recognized leader in promoting skilled trades and technologies to youth.

The first Nova Scotia Skills Competition took place in April 1998, hosted at NSCC campuses across the province. Gold Medalists in the different events go on to form Team Nova Scotia and compete in the Skills Canada National Competition.

We wish Silvan good luck in the national contest. He is sure to be an excellent ambassador for Nova Scotia.
The hunt is on to find forest-dwelling swifts  

By Allison Manthorne

In June 2010, I was doing a bird survey in northern New Brunswick in a patch of forest that had recently been harvested, leaving behind a few white pine snags. Suddenly, two dark shapes appeared in the sky above me, flickering through the air like blowing leaves. The next moment, the shapes plummeted from the sky into a tall pine snag and disappeared.

That was my first introduction to the Chimney Swift, a fascinating and rare bird native to eastern North America. Chimney Swifts are dark grey with pointed wings and short tails. Every spring, the Chimney Swift migrates northward from South America to breed. Along the way, large flocks roost overnight in chimneys, sheltered from the elements and potential predators. Chimney Swifts reach Nova Scotia in May, returning to the very same roost chimneys that their ancestors used (well-known roosts are found in Middleton, Wolfville and New Glasgow.) In June, swifts leave the roost in search of nest sites, usually chimneys but also barns, sheds and, as I witnessed during my bird survey, trees.

Centuries ago, Chimney Swifts roosted and nested in snags and cavity trees. Historical anecdotes describe massive tree roosts containing up to 9,000 Chimney Swifts at a time, overlapping like shingles inside the trunk. Today, Chimney Swifts are most often found using their namesake, chimneys. As European settlers spread across the continent, however, they changed the landscape drastically. Chimney Swifts took advantage of the warm, dark and readily available man-made habitat that replaced trees, and the birds became a familiar sight in towns and cities.

Unfortunately, this habitat is disappearing too, as buildings are modernized and chimneys are capped, steel-lined or torn down. Besides the loss of both natural and man-made habitat, severe weather events, declining populations of their insect prey, and other factors have contributed to a 95% decrease in the Canadian population of Chimney Swifts since 1968. Since 2010, the SwiftWatch program has worked to improve our understanding of Chimney Swifts and curb their steep decline. SwiftWatch volunteers visit roost and nest sites every year to count Chimney Swifts. The information they collect is shared with conservation partners and used to track population trends as well as encourage landowners to manage roost and nest sites for Chimney Swifts. For more on the program, visit www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/acswifts.

While this approach is quite successful, the effort has focused on so-called "human-occupied" sites like chimneys. We know Chimney Swifts still use trees, but we have little information about what tree species they favour, what age a tree must reach to host swifts, or how much natural habitat remains. This information is critical to the success of Chimney Swift conservation plans.

The last Nova Scotia record of tree-nesting Chimney Swifts came from renowned naturalist Bernard Forsythe of Wolfville, who found a nest in 1979 while paddling Black River Lake. Seeing swifts flying into a white pine snag in the lake, he peeked inside and found the nest. Bernard continued to observe swifts nesting there until the tree toppled over in the late 1990s. Given that the last tree-nesting Chimney Swift in Nova Scotia was reported over a decade ago, it’s obvious we still have much to learn about Chimney Swifts in forest habitat.

Now the hunt is on to find forest-dwelling swifts, and SwiftWatch is turning to woodlot owners for help. We are asking woodlot owners to be vigilant for swifts in the woods from May through September. Chimney Swifts are readily identified by sight and sound. Both males and females are dark, sooty grey all over, with paler grey under the chin. Sometimes found flying with other birds, swifts' rapid, bat-like flight and short, squared-off tail sets them apart from similar birds like swallows. Their constant, rapid high-pitched "chittering" call is unique (listen online at http://ow.ly/K76kH) and their short, stubby bodies have given the birds the nickname of "flying cigar."

Look for Chimney Swifts from May to September, when they fly south for winter. If you observe swifts circling or flying into/out of a snag or cavity tree, please record the date, tree species, diameter at breast height (DBH), location (latitude and longitude in 'decimal degree' format, dd.dddd) and any other relevant details and report your sighting to SwiftWatch (marswifts@birdscanada.org 1-506-364-5196) or toll-free on the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute species-at-risk-hotline at 1-866-727-3447. [Allison Manthorne is the Maritimes SwiftWatch Coordinator, Bird Studies Canada]

The Central Inverness Community Health Board invites residents to a health fair

Saturday, May 30th, 10 AM – 4 PM - We hope to see you there! At the Community Health Centre of the Inverness County Memorial Hospital

In addition to promoting healthy life styles our goal is to create an awareness of the rich variety of healthy pursuits available in Inverness County, from the local yoga classes to community gardens and our stellar Celtic Shores Coastal Trail system. Among our many presenters we will feature visits from EHS and the local fire department, cancer support groups, speakers on naturopathy and stress reduction and a chance to try a yoga class or tai chi.

Jay Hartman-Berrier, Board Chair

For board members Kelly Bernard, Darlene Ellis, Bob Hartman-Berrier, Karen Hirtle, Nadine Hunt, Erin MacKenzie, Shania MacMillan, Betty Ann MacQuarrie, Mary Morris, Ruby Pye, Rose Sylliboy, Kristen Sutherland, Stephanie Swinkels, Jean Walker, and ex officio, Angela MacArthur and Kate Watts

For further information you may contact us at (902)248-2240 or at CICHB@weaverjay.ca

The Participaper Vol 36 No 2
**Our mission is to stimulate a love of reading and a life-long interest in learning. To encourage self-reliance and the use of new technologies. To provide an up-to-date, forward-looking network of accessible and inviting facilities, information services and outreach programs. To be responsive to community needs and to contribute to the economic and social well-being of our communities.**

The Library now offers 3D printing services. Printing costs $1 per hour of printing time. Color choices vary. Visit either the Port Hawkesbury or Petit de Grat Libraries to arrange printing your design. Or email your design to: 3dprint@nsme.library.ns.ca. We will ship 3D projects to any ECRL location for pick-up.

Make a suggestion for a book that others might enjoy by posting to our ECRL Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/EasternCountiesRegionalLibrary. Or, suggest a book the Library should buy by using our ILL (Interlibrary Loan) Request Form. These are available from your local branch or on our website http://ecrl.library.ns.ca.

Lifelong Learners Live Longer!

Your local library has many resources available to you - Join today!
Inverness County Councillors and Staff thank ALL Inverness County volunteers for their selfless dedication through the years

Pictured above are some of the volunteers and their guests who were on hand for the annual Inverness County Volunteer Awards banquet.  

[Jeannette Gallant photo]