

The Pioneer is published by the River John Community Action Society. It is a not-for-profit community-owned paper.

**Pickleball: the River John experience. A community welcoming a new sport for all ages.**

**by Sherry Keen**

Pickleball is often described as a combination of tennis, ping-pong, and badminton. Pickleball Canada commissioned a survey in January, 2023. That survey indicated that more than 1.37 million individual Canadians now play pickleball at least once per month, with more than half playing four or more times per month. The draw to pickleball is that any age can play and within the first thirty minutes you realize you're having fun, and feeling like you can do this! For some, it's about socializing and meeting new people, and for others it's a game in which you can build your skills, be competitive and join in tournament play. It's a low-cost sport, easy to learn, with rewards of enhancing our mental, social, and physical well-being. So, welcome, everyone, to the next step in our journey to bring North America's fastest growing sport to River John and surrounding communities.

The River John Pickleball Club (RJPC) is a registered not-for-profit that was started by a small group of community volunteers in January, 2022. Our objective is not only to build the facility but to bring pickleball to the people of River John and surrounding areas. Introducing new players to the sport is a key part

of our strategy. People are getting excited - almost 250 people have joined the River John Pickleball Facebook group in the past 14 months, with our Club recognizing 60 members who have joined through Pickleball Canada.

Our journey is about building partnerships and contributing to the well-being of this community. It is vital that we celebrate and recognize the partnerships formed, as we look forward to continuing to be part of the evolving communities of the north shore. River John Pickleball Club realizes that success happens due to the building of strong partnerships with organizations within our communities.



Sean Fraser MP and Karla McFarlane MLA officially turning the sod

Since we came together as a club in early 2022, we have relied on partners in our community to help get us to where we are today - the building of our courts. Firstly, the partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 108 has been phenomenal over the past year. As Sean Fraser offered at our sod turning "They could have easily said no..." to our request to build courts on their land. The Legion, however quickly realized the value of this joint project for the community, and worked closely with us to apply for grants, meet with local politicians, and plan the construction of the courts. Going forward, this partnership



In front row, Warden Robert Parker, Sean Fraser, MP; Mike Topley, Legion President, Karla McFarlane, MLA and Wade Taylor, Pickleball Club President, surrounded by local pickleball enthusiasts.

promises to grow as we work together to plan enhancements, programming, and social events to realize the potential of this facility.

Other partners have also recently recognized this project with their financial support. Our sincere thanks to the Honourable Sean Fraser, MP for Central Nova, who presented to us the New Horizons Seniors Program Grant of \$25,000. This grant, along with the \$60,000 Recreation Facility Grant presented by Karla MacFarlane, MLA for Pictou West, and the \$20,000 contribution from the YMCA of Pictou County, are foundational for the project to proceed. We look forward as well to the YMCA providing programming support for the local youth of Pictou County.

In such a short time, the support from the com-

.....continued on page 7.....

**River John Community Food and Health Centre**

**by John McKim  
Secretary, CSSRJ**

The Community Support Society of River John (CSSRJ) was incorporated as a non-profit society in 2022, with the goal of constructing and operating a multi-use community resource building to provide services to people in West Pictou County. With financial support from the Province of Nova



Stocked shelves

Scotia and the Government of Canada (through the ACOA program), we were successful in purchasing property and completing construction of a 2,800 square foot building. With a final electrical inspection completed and an occupancy permit expected in the next few weeks, we'll hold an official opening ceremony and commence operations. The construction process was not without issues and multiple delays, given the difficulty in finding subcontractors and materials, following the impact of both COVID-19 and Hurricane Fiona. There were unexpected cost increases as well. Thankfully, we're almost there, and completion is expected soon. Stay tuned for the grand opening event announcement.

The building contains a food warehouse, with walk-in fridge and several freezers; community kitchen, with commercial dishwasher; health centre office and examination/treatment room; a community meeting room for use by local groups and individuals; 2 offices, and multiple washrooms. The

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Erecting the greenhouse

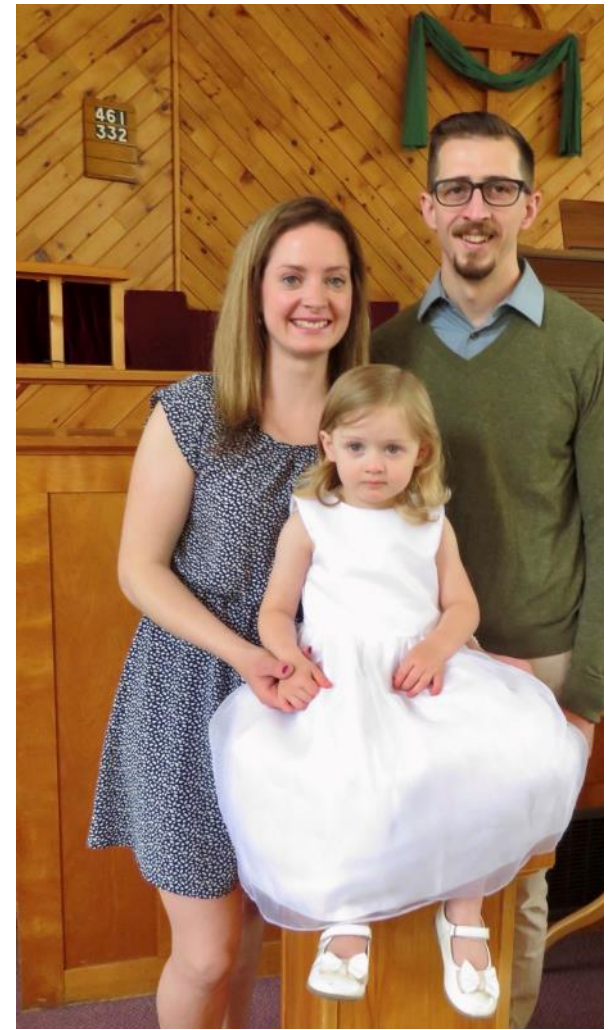


Baby: Maisie Olenka Claire Marriott  
Born: March 11, 2023  
Weight: 7lbs. 3oz.  
Parents: Justin and Chantal Marriott, Timberlea, NS  
Grandparents: Sandra Patriquin and Glen Foyce, Duane and Kim McSweeney  
Great grandparents: David and Beverly Marriott.



Baby: Reese Walker Mackenzie

Born: April 25, 2023  
Weight: 8lbs 4oz.  
Parents: Cera Langille & Jesse MacKenzie  
Grandparents: Cindy Langille and Stewart Joudrie of River John  
Linda O'Hara and Junior MacKenzie of Tatamagouche  
A brother for Quinn



Baptism of Charlotte Elizabeth Cripps

Baptized at St. George's Presbyterian Church, River John by Rev. Enjei Roni, Sunday, June 11, 2023



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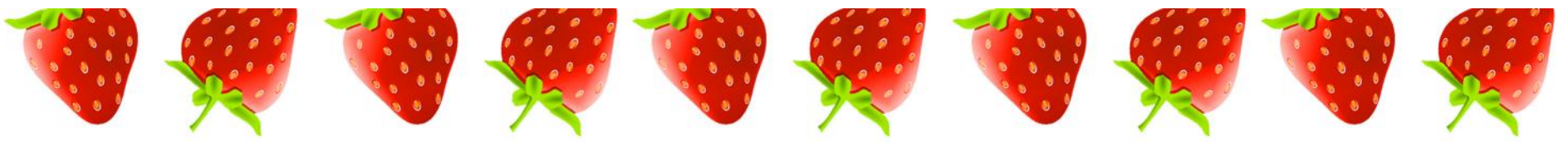
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*The Minneys*



### Strawberry Salad

by Christiane Gill

I have no idea why it's called that but the name "Strawberry Salad" has stuck now for well over half a century so I am not about to change it.

This is an easy recipe that just needs patience but believe me, your patience will be rewarded, especially on a hot summer's Sunday.

By the way, this recipe is very easily adaptable. You prefer graham cracker crust: go for it. You don't want to bake: sprinkle crushed party pretzels or your preferred cookies on top. You prefer individual servings? Layer to your heart's content.

But most of all: ENJOY

#### Ingredients

1.5 cups / 150 g	Party Pretzels, ground medium fine.
3/4 cup / 150 g	Butter, melted.
4.5 tbsp. / 65 g	Sugar
2 packets	Strawberry Jello
3 cups	Water
8 oz. / 250 g	Cream cheese
1 cup / 200 g	Sugar
12 oz. / 350 ml / 340 g	Whipping cream
1 pint / 500 g	Strawberries




- Pour the contents of the two Jello packets into a 4 cup or larger bowl (best one with a spout)
- bring 2 cups of water to a boil
- Pour the water over the jello powder and whisk the heck out of it until everything is dissolved
- Stir in 1 cup of cold water
- Put the vessel into the fridge or freezer to cool
- Keep a close eye on the Jello. Put it onto the counter top just before it sets (worst case: if it started to set put hot water into a larger pot and the put the jello container into that, gently stirring)
- Grind or smash party pretzels/sticks to a fine powder with a few chunkier bits (much like for graham cracker crust, which can be used alternatively: here follow your own recipe)
- Add melted butter and 4.5 tbsp sugar and mix well
- Pour mixture into baking pan and compress lightly
- Bake for about 10 minutes or until lightly golden brown
- Take out of the oven and set aside to cool
- Mix 1 cup of sugar with the cream cheese until soft and smooth
- Whip cream until firm and fold into cream cheese and sugar mixture



- When the crust is cool spread the cream evenly and put it into the fridge or freezer (faster)
- When the white layer and the Jello are cold enough gently pour half of the Jello with a spoon over the white layer and put it back into the fridge or freezer
- Now clean and slice or chop the strawberries
- Once the first layer of Jello is firm enough distribute the strawberries evenly and again gently pour the rest of the Jello with a spoon over everything
- Back into the fridge or freezer for at least an hour
- ⚠ do not cover with cream wrap or tin foil or you will lose the shiny surface

and ENJOY

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# Editorial — Summer 2023

by **Joan MacLeod**

I was away a lot in the winter and I forgot how devastated we have been by post-tropical storm Fiona. When I visited Mary Beth and David Sutherland's property, I was truly shocked; the river was plainly visible, where it had previously been hidden by trees. That is after a lot of damage has been cleaned up. I had no idea that they lived on a bend of the river. And when I drive past the Bigney Woods, I just want to cry. This wonderful wooded area had beautiful trails leading down to a beaver pond, where River John Recreation hosted busloads of children to play in the outdoor magical space filled with quirky wooden creations. And who can forget the fun in the Haunted Woods. A few years ago, I had relatives visiting from Australia, and they were delighted to be able to access the woodland and see a real beaver dam. It was a special place which we treasured in our community, due to the largesse of the Bigney family. Now it is just a tangled mess of fallen trees. I am wondering if there is any way we could help them restore it?

This is all to say that we are still recovering from a devastating loss. We have to mourn what is gone and accept a new reality, but that is not an easy task. Our forestry industry has been badly affected, our farming industry has as well, with the loss of so many old barns, and in some cases, livestock. And don't forget there are still people who are not back in their homes since the storm. The good news is that there is a lot of work for trades people to repair all the damage. The bad news is that this is a sign of climate change, caused by global warming. It is likely to get worse. We are so lucky that this particular area was not hit by the forest fires which destroyed so much woodland and property in other areas of Nova Scotia and Canada. We are thankful that our recent rainfall will now protect us, as will the greening up of the forest, which also helps cover up some of the damage.

Nonetheless, I feel that we are a resilient close-knit community, which tries to help each other out in times of difficulty. When we have problems, we look for solutions. Over forty people came out to a

Town Hall meeting with the police to discuss the rise in crime in the area. Another example is that we started a group meeting to co-ordinate the community groups, so that we do not have scheduling conflicts, and so that a variety of groups can share in some of the costs of sending out monthly bulletins. We bought a community printer to reduce printing costs. We honour and mark the graves of Mikmaq children. We strive to find solutions. And some of us stop by the road and save the lives of people who are in cardiac distress.

It is lovely to see new businesses in our village: a cafe, an ice cream stand and now a machine shop will all add character and services to our village. We have high level of community involvement with hosting two major festivals every year, Read by the Sea, a literary festival (July 6-8) and River John Festival Days (July 21-29). These all take a tremendous amount of work and dedication by a huge team of people. Our service groups, the IOOF, the Lions and the Legion also provide benefits to our whole community.

Also, we are proud of our public spaces, Bissell Park and Roger's Landing, again all organized and maintained by volunteers.

It is an exciting time for our community, 140 people signed up for pickleball in the fire hall this winter and three courts are being built in conjunction with the Legion; our new River John Community Food and Health Centre has been built and will open soon.

I could not be prouder to call this close-knit community of River John my home.

## Correction

The editor wishes to apologize for an error in the last issue of the Pioneer. On Page 3, the two women on either side of Warden Robert Parker were wrongly identified. Heather Allen-Johnson is on Warden Parker's right and Sueann Musick is on his left side.

### The Pioneer is published by the River John Community Action Society

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**The views expressed in this newspaper are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editorial board.**

The Pioneer is distributed throughout the B0K 1N0 postal area which is primarily River John and West Branch. We welcome any articles or pictures from any of our newspaper friends and areas. Contributions to the next issue should be sent to the editors. Please send text files and pictures as separate attachments. Text should have the bare minimum of formatting. Photos should be 500-1200 pixels wide, and be accompanied by a list of captions. We reserve the right to edit letters and articles for clarity and brevity. Profanity will not be tolerated and we have the right to refuse to print letters.

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## The Pioneer Needs Help

by **Joan MacLeod**

This Summer 2023 issue of the Pioneer represents the 10th one I have edited and I have learned a few things along the way. I was trained first as a social worker and then later as a massage therapist; learning to do this work has not been easy.

Firstly, people may not realize that it is not straightforward converting from an electronic format to a paper format. And I feel strongly that many older people are not on computers and a newspaper is more easily read by them and it stays around longer.

Although we have a wonderful, varied group who create the paper, there is still a position which needs filling. We would like someone to join our team who can assist with the technical aspect of putting the newspaper together. Good computer skills would be an asset, but so is a willingness to learn.

Perhaps we need someone quite young. We use Outlook as our Pioneer email account and when I realized that I also needed to have Outlook on my cell phone, guess who installed it on my phone? My 10-year-old grandson!

I am not suggesting that we find a 10-year-old. But maybe there is a young person out there who would be willing to help us format all our articles ready for editing; it could look good on a resume. Sadly, we do not have a team of reporters to interview people and write the articles. We rely instead on your contributions which come in varied formats.

I am justly proud of our team of volunteers. Although we work hard to put the paper together, we also have fun, because we celebrate every issue with a party!

Most importantly, this community newspaper is yours. It is something good which we do for you, our community. We especially want to thank our paid advertisers. It would not be possible without your revenue to pay the printing and mailing costs. Thanks to all you writers for your valuable contributions in making this little gem happen. And we would be nothing if we were not widely read, thank you too, all readers, near and far. Enjoy the read.

## Community Announcements

**Calling all  
local artists  
and artisans**

**River John Library is offering local artists and artisans an opportunity to showcase\* some of their work.**

**For the guidelines and an application form, or for more information call 902-351-2599 or email [riverjohn@parl.ns.ca](mailto:riverjohn@parl.ns.ca)**

\*Note there are limitations in what can be displayed due to the size of the display cabinet. Preference will be given to River John and area artisans & artists



### Card of Thanks Donny Redmond

Joan Redmond and family would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude for the outpouring of love, kindness and concern after our beloved Donny passed away. We are so blessed to have such wonderful friends and neighbours who offered support and compassion by ongoing visits, calls and an abundance of meals. Thank you to the Lions Club and the River John Fire Department for their heartfelt service prior to visitation. We are so thankful for all monetary donations made in Donny's honour. To the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital, we are forever grateful to the doctors, nurses and staff who showed such care and compassion to Donny. It is truly an honour to such a wonderful man to have such an outpouring of love from friends and family.



### An Evening with Nelly Bly

The lively one-woman play, "Two Hours in a Madhouse, An Evening with the Notorious Nellie Bly" will return to the stage this summer. Written by local novelist and playwright, Gary Blackwood, the biodrama is about pioneering female investigative reporter, Nellie Bly.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1864, Elizabeth Jane Cochrane was known by her pen name, Nellie Bly – an extraordinary woman who dedicated her life to improving conditions for the lower income and working-class people by exposing political corruption and other social issues such as baby trafficking and unfair employment agencies. But it was her daring undercover assignment as a patient in a mental institution on Blackwell's Island that made Nellie a household name and instigated significant social reform. In 1889, she went on to earn international recognition for being the first person to travel around the world in only 72 days.

Amanda Jefferson Gillis is reviving the role of Nellie, after having co-produced the play with Gary ten years ago. "It's such a terrific opportunity to not only share this amazing story again, but to recreate a more engaging and meaningful portrayal of this character. Since I'm older, I feel like I have more experience to draw on and use in bringing Nellie to life in a more realistic, authentic way," says Amanda. "She and I have a bit more confidence."

With a delightful blend of drama and humour, the play focuses mainly on Nellie's experience in the 'Madhouse' and on her 'Celebrated Journey' around the world. But

North Shore Players Presents

## TWO HOURS IN A MADHOUSE

### An Evening with the Notorious

*Nellie Bly*

Written By GARY L BLACKWOOD

Performed By AMANDA JEFFERSON GILLIS

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SUN, JULY 9 - 2PM  
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Gary also provides an intimate glimpse into Nellie's personal life and how she struggled to remain optimistic in the face of ill-health, betrayal, and bankruptcy. With a simple set - a large traveling trunk that contains a variety of props and costumes, Amanda will deliver the two-act performance, portraying not only the feisty Nellie Bly but also impersonating various 'invisible companions' with whom Nellie converses.

You have three opportunities to catch the show this summer at the Grace Arts Centre in Tatamagouche: two evening performances at 7 p.m. on July 6th and 8th, and a matinee at 2 p.m. on Sunday, July 9th.

Tickets are \$20 and are available online ([gracejollymore.com](http://gracejollymore.com)) or at the Grace's box office.

### Card of Thanks for Susan A. Robison

January 29, 1961-January 1, 2023

I would like to thank Susan's family and friends who attended her graveside committal. I also want to thank those who were kind to her during her lifetime (you know who you are). Also, I would like to personally thank the following people who helped me arrange the sad task of laying her to rest: Dr. Rob Bush who was always there not only with medical help but a sympathetic ear and advice; Rosemary Fitzgerald, Social Worker, who was able to open doors for me which would have otherwise been closed; Rev. Dr. Glen Matheson who proved that there are still true servants of God among us; Peter and Lynn of P & K Funeral Home, who handled a delicate situation with dignity; and last but not least, Bill Hatch's brother John, sister Bonnie and her husband Torstan, who were so supportive in all the decisions.

Margaret Langille

*Ed. note: This card of thanks was submitted for the winter issue of the Pioneer but somehow got lost. We apologize for the error.*

### Thank You Note Forward Family

Thank you for your outpouring of love, concern and encouragement after our beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend, Henry G. Forward, passed away. Your many acts of kindness and sympathy continue to be a great comfort in our time of sorrow.

A very special thank you to the River John Volunteer first responders, the EMHS attendants, Rev. Enjei, the choir, River John Fire Department for their honour guard and McLaren's funeral home for your professionalism and compassion at such a difficult time. We wish we could thank each one of you in person. Henry lived well, laughed often and loved much, leaving us with many memories to treasure and remember.

With much love and thanks,

Elaine, children Laurie, Beryl, Maureen, Tammy, Hank, Jason and Trina and families.

## Obituaries

### Chris Giles (1950-2023)

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Christopher Donald Giles. Chris passed away peacefully on the morning of May 21, 2023.

Chris's love of adventure took him down many exciting roads, and his friends and family often described him as a fun-loving and kind man who made friends wherever he went. Chris was a good friend, a loving husband, a wonderful dad, and an even better grandpa. Often a man of few words, he met any challenges in his life with grace and quiet courage.

He was born in Abadan, Iran, to parents Blanche and Donald Giles on May 31, 1950. After graduating from high school in Rome, Italy, he attended Syracuse University, New York, and then the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, completing a Bachelor's in Marine Biology. His love of the ocean and its creatures sifted down to his daughters, and then granddaughter, on visits to the beach over the years.

He met the love of his life, Terry, in a conversational French class in Halifax 45 years ago, and together they made all their dreams come true, the last being a small farm by the sea when they found their place in River John 12 years ago.

A dedicated teacher, Chris retired in 2010 from Northumberland Regional High School. He taught courses such as AP Biology and Math. He was known by some students as "The Cell Man" and kept his classroom full of wonders from the natural world.

He was an energetic man with many hobbies, and his passion was gardening. When Terry first met Chris in Halifax, his part of the parking lot for his flat had been tilled and made into a vegetable garden. Over the years, he grew many spectacular organic vegetable gardens. If he wasn't gardening, he was either singing and playing guitar with the local jam group, kayaking out on the bay, or speeding by on a Laser. He loved working on his old "Fergie" tractor around the farm. He could often be seen walking their two dogs, Jilly and Borrigo along one of the many beaches at Cape John.

Before he became ill, he wrote stories for the Pioneer newspaper centred around a young boy in 1880 River John. His research and imagination caught the feeling of that era through a boy's eyes.

He is missed so very much by his family and friends.



### Sharon Langille (1949-2023)

It is with broken hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Sharon Marie Langille on June 14, 2023, at the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital, surrounded by her family, after a short battle with cancer. She was born on April 19, 1949, to Arthur and Thelma (Zinck) Langille, River John. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend. Sharon lived a life full of love, warmth and unwavering dedication to her family. Her flower and vegetable gardens were a testament to her green thumb. Sharon spent over twenty-five years fishing lobster alongside her husband on the waters off Skinners Cove. Sharon had a heart full of kindness and generosity, evident by sharing her delicious baking with family and neighbours. Her warm smile and compassionate nature touched the lives of many, leaving a lasting impact on all who had the privilege of knowing her. Sharon's memory will forever live on in the hearts of her family, her husband of 51 years, E. Wayne; daughters, Tracy (Lauchie) MacKinnon, Valley, Tanya (Ian) Langille, Bayhead; grandchildren, Evan and Carson Langille and Ayla MacKinnon; sisters, Nancy (James) MacLeod, twin Sheila Langille; brothers, Brad (Wendy) Langille, Darren (Tammy) Langille; sisters-in-law, Donna, Betty, Greta, Linda; numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. Sharon was predeceased by her beloved son, Trevor; siblings, Ted, Geoff, Winnie; in-laws, Donnie, Everett, Ronnie, Robert, Elaine, Ian, and niece Shelley. A special thank you to Dr. Bush, Debbie, and all the staff at the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital for



their dedication and care. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Lillian Fraser Memorial Hospital Auxiliary or the River John Volunteer Fire Department, or a charity of your choice. Cremation has taken place. Visitation will be held Friday, June 16, from 5 to 8 p.m. and the funeral on Saturday, June 17, at 2 p.m., both at the Salem United Church in River John. Burial at Hamilton Cemetery with a reception following at the River John Fire Hall.

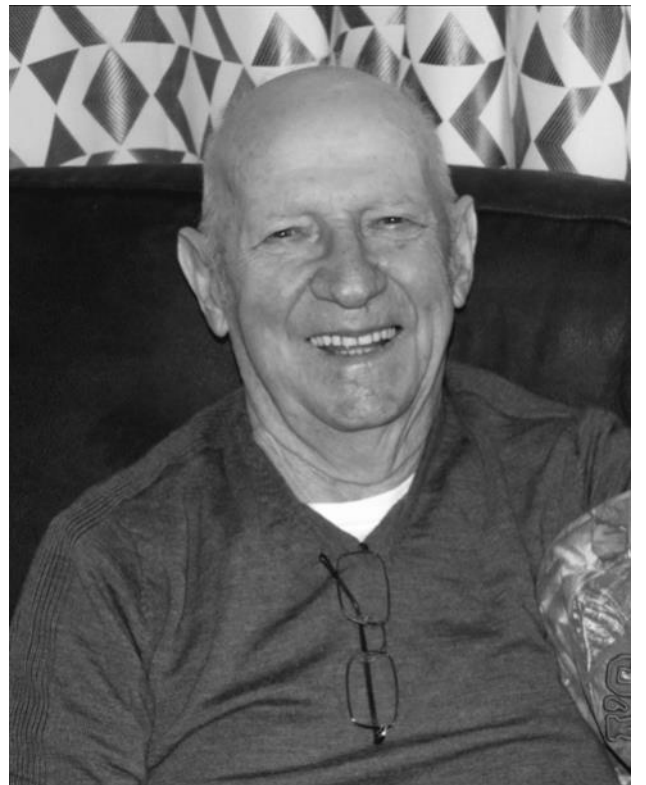
### Forward, Henry Gotwood

It is with profound sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Henry Forward of River John at home on June 6th, 2023. A proud Cape Bretoner, Henry was born on April 1, 1939, in Glace Bay, to parents Christena (MacNeil) and Henry Forward.

Henry was a former coal miner at No.12 New Waterford mine, and a long-haul trucker with Maritime Packers. He then moved to Ontario for six years, where he worked at Goodyear. He later moved his family to River John, which he quickly embraced and proudly called home. He worked as a delivery driver for Scotia Oxygen and later Air Liquide in New Glasgow until his retirement. Along his truck routes, he made many friends.

Henry was an avid reader of Louis L'Amour novels and loved a good game of crib and euchre. He was well-known for playing the guitar and singing in church, at variety concerts, and most recently at Willow Lodge Nursing Home in Tatamagouche. Henry was a passionate hunter and outdoorsman. Anyone who entered his home was proudly shown his 21-point buck mount from 1984. He delighted in sharing his love of hunting with his sons, daughter Laurie, and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A natural, expressive storyteller, Henry loved sharing stories, jokes, and pulling pranks. His wit and humor stayed with him, leaving everyone smiling and laughing. Henry had a special way of making you feel welcome and loved.

Henry was active in his community, serving as a former member of the River John Volunteer Fire Department, where he earned his 25-year pin. He was also a former member of the Independent Order of Oddfellows Branch 34. Henry was a member of St. George's Presbyterian Church, where he served as an elder for 50 years. He was also in-



involved in the Pictou West Cat and Raccoon Club, supporting and organizing the Annual Fishing Derby, and the IWK Hunts.

Henry and Elaine enjoyed many hours supporting first their children, then their grandchildren and great-grandchildren in all their endeavours. There was a lot of love in their home. In his retirement, Henry, affectionately called Poppy by his grandchildren, was often a chauffeur to many sporting events and tryouts as well as appointments.

A devoted family man, he is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Elaine Forward, and his treasured children: Laurie Forward (Mark) of Dartmouth, Beryl (Rickey) Reid of New Glasgow, Maureen (John) van Veld of Green Hill, Tammy

..... Continued on page 2 .....



*Pickleball.....continued from page 1.....*

munity has been demonstrated in many ways. From the local service clubs endorsing the projects and supporting our grants as well as making donations, to many individual donations that have also been received - we thank you all. One such outstanding supporter is the River John Fire Department, which opened their doors to the Pickleball Club last fall and offered their Firehall for indoor play. This step was instrumental in bringing pickleball to the community of River John. Since last fall, 100 different individuals have come through the doors of the fire-hall - many encountering pickleball for the very first time. Recently, a new member was heard to say, "This is so much fun - I could play all day every day. I love it."

This project aims to get and keep older adults involved in the community promoting volunteerism, supporting healthy ageing, helping combat social isolation issues often associated with rural communities, while building a stronger sense of community and partnership with the younger population. The pickleball courts will bring residents, tourists and pickleball enthusiasts to the area. Once here they will also discover the rich culture, varied recreational opportunities and local businesses.

We were very pleased with the community turnout at our sod turning and cheque presentation May 19, 2023. While we have secured substantial funds to begin court construction, we must fund-raise to secure all the required dollars to finish the project. We look forward to learning the results of other fund-raising requests in the weeks and months to come. We are reaching out to the public, both corporations and individuals alike. To donate to our cause, please contact club treasurer, John Carruthers at [jcarruthers@outlook.com](mailto:jcarruthers@outlook.com) or (902) 222-0645. Donations of \$100 or more are eligible for a tax receipt.

Our club is proud to be a member of this community. Thank you all for your support in so many ways.

*.....Henry Forward..... from previous page .....*

(Darren) Langille of River John, Hank Forward of River John, Jason (Sarah) Forward of West Branch, Trina (James) Spaulding of Stellarton, and son-in-law Fred Falconer of Melville. He is also survived by 17 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren (with 2 more arriving this month), sisters-in-law Beryl (Bill) Swallow of River John, Maurita (Bill) MacLeod of New Glasgow, Arlene Lane of Riverglade, and Joan Redmond of River John, as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Besides his parents, Henry was predeceased by his beloved daughter, Mattie Elaine Falconer, and great-grandson Hank Reid, sisters Annie MacPherson, Fannie Howell, Liz Budge, brother John MacNeil, parents-in-law Lloyd and Mattie Redmond, and brother-in-law Donnie Redmond. Henry was the last surviving member of his immediate family.

A funeral service was held on Saturday, June 10, at 2 p.m. at St. George's Presbyterian Church, with Rev. Enjei Achah officiating. Cremation has taken place. Interment immediately followed the service at Hamilton Cemetery, River John. Donations can be made to the River John Action Society or a charity of your choice.

*"The finest gift in life is family."*

## Stranded in the Foodland Parking Lot

**by Allan and Sharon Marble**

Thank goodness there are generous people in our midst. On Friday June 16th, Sharon and I went to Foodland in Tatamagouche to pick up a few groceries. Upon returning to our car, we discovered that the gear shift could not be shifted from park to drive. The gear shift was locked in park; nothing I tried allowed me to move the gear shift out of park.

When I contacted Toyota Roadside Assistance I was told they would send a truck from Truro which would carry our car to a Toyota Service Centre and that Toyota would provide us with a courtesy car so that we could drive back to our cottage at Cape John. After waiting for two hours, we were told that they could not find a truck or a courtesy car and we would have to leave our car at Foodland overnight. They would try to send a truck the next morning to pick up our car and that we would have to find our own way back to our cottage at the Cape.

We did not have the cell phone number of our next-door neighbour. In fact we did not have cell phone numbers for anyone on Cape John. We decided to call Winmill Electric to ask if they had cell phone numbers for our neighbour. The lady who answered could not find the cell number but, after she heard our story, volunteered to come to our rescue when she finished work at 4 p.m. She arrived at about 4:20 and, when I told her about the gear shift being locked in park, she exclaimed that she had had that problem on one occasion. When I followed her directions, I was able to move the gear shift out of park and was able to drive back to the Cape.

Sharon and I are indebted to Susan Ricco, our rescuer, for her generosity and good advice, and wanted the residents of River John and Cape John to know that people like her live nearby and come to the rescue of stranded individuals such as us.

## Neighbours helping neighbours

**by Valrie Suidgeest**

Hurricane Fiona tore through Pictou County! River John was the victim of her wrath, creating a path of destruction, throughout the village and surrounding areas. Trees were felled and power lines were down, roofs and cottages and trailers were ripped apart. Residents spent days and weeks cleaning the debris from their properties. Our property and our neighbour's were no exception - trees ripped and uprooted and poles snapped off for a kilometre or more. My husband's week of vacation became a clean-up vacation. Our neighbour and his brother arrived to assess and clean up his property. The next day, we were outside working and expecting them to be cleaning up, as well. We kept waiting for them to come outside - they didn't. By mid-afternoon, I called and texted them and did not get a response. My husband went to check on them, never thinking there was anything wrong. Adrenaline took over when he discovered our friends, unresponsive. We pulled them out of the cottage and called 911. The River John Volunteer Fire Department was extremely quick, responding to our call with oxygen and monitors to check for carbon monoxide. Fortunately, EHS arrived quickly, as well. The Life Flight landed on the road in front of our house, which was possible due to the poles and power lines down and traffic being rerouted. It was a terrifying experience for everyone involved. My husband and I have been frequently asked about their condition and we are relieved to report that after a week in the hospital and time to recover, they are doing well.

Carbon monoxide is extremely dangerous. Everyone is urged to use caution when using alternate heat and light sources in enclosed areas, during a power outage.

Neighbours helping neighbours create long-lasting friendships and also a safety net, when needed!

## The Threads Story

**by Griselda Manning and Enid Schaller**

Toward the end of the summer in 2021, we, (Griselda and Enid,) were discussing our love of fabric, our overflowing sewing rooms and our "need" for more fabric! We agreed that it would be perfect if we had a shop for fabric and yarn but with a few stipulations: the items had to be affordable, we couldn't be tied down to a 9-5 shop, and people who shopped with us had to feel that they were treasure hunting. Our solution was to convert a horse trailer into our travelling shop and to run entirely on donations from overflowing sewing rooms (including our own!) We spent our first season travelling a few times a month to different communities on the North Shore and word started to get about. Soon we had many lovely donations diverted from the landfill to our little trailer and we were able to make our prices low enough to ensure that everyone who came to shop found something for themselves. We decided at the very beginning that no matter whether the fabric was cotton, rayon, silk, etc., it would all be priced at \$2 per metre. That pricing ticked a lot of boxes for us: People would come away feeling like they got a real treasure, it was affordable to undertake a project, and they wouldn't have to drive to a large centre to buy their supplies. We didn't just have fabric though; we had acrylic, wool, and silk yarn, rug hooking and needlepoint supplies, and patterns

and notions. We had a wonderful spring and summer and were only rained out twice.

After Hurricane Fiona, we parked the trailer and began our respective cleanups. We emerged from that and began discussing what Threads would look like this year. We wanted a permanent location to set up our Threads studio and knew that it had to be here, in River John, at the old school. It is the heart of River John, close to home for both of us and it came with the lovely Shelley and Leonard Bigney, owners and saviours of the Old River John School. We struck a deal with Shelley in early spring and next thing we knew, she turned her creativity to an empty classroom and transformed it into a wonderful space for us. We moved everything into our shop, and we truly have something for everyone. Our customers are all ages and all interests, and all so interesting. We love seeing what people pick out, what they make, and even learning tips and tricks that we didn't know, and we are profoundly grateful for every donation we receive.

Now, on any given Friday, we can be found bustling away in our little studio, sorting materials, sewing, or enjoying a chat with friends who have popped in to find a little something for their next project. We feel very lucky to have a spot at the old school in River John, in the heart of the community, and especially lucky to be able to get inspiring secondhand textile related supplies into the hands of our creative community members.

# River John Motor Company

## A Mechanic Shop to Open in River John

by Gillian Joudrie

Great news for the residents of River John! A new mechanic shop called River John Motor Company is set to open soon and it promises to be a one-stop shop for all your repair needs. Co-owner, Cody Joudrie, is a resident of River John and has always wanted to give back to his community by opening a business that would benefit locals.

Over the course of eight challenging months, River John Motor Co. underwent renovations and encountered numerous obstacles. However, with the dedicated support of community members and volunteers, the team was able to overcome these obstacles and bring their vision to life. They would like to express their sincere gratitude to all those who helped make their dream a reality.

River John Motor Co. will be offering repair services for a wide range of equipment, including compact diesel tractor maintenance, small engines, lawnmowers, snowmobiles, marine, trailers and many other recreational needs.

There will be a retail front where customers can

purchase batteries and other mechanical-related gear or parts. Eventually, their goal is to establish a rental service for marine, trailers, and other equipment due to the high demand in the area.

Cody's passion for mechanics and his love for his hometown has driven him to start this venture. He is excited to provide quality service to his customers and bring his skills to the community.

The grand opening of River John Motor Co. is something to look forward to. It is sure to be an event that the whole village will enjoy. Cody and his team are working hard to make sure that everything is perfect for the big day.

So, if you're in need of any repairs, keep an eye out for the grand opening. You can trust that Cody and his team will take care of your equipment like it's their own. Congratulations to Cody and the entire River John Motor Co. team on embarking on a new journey!

(Editor's note. This new company will be housed in the store which used to be Simpsons and prior to that was the Co-op.)

# Sunrise Trail Community TV

by Stuart Cresswell

Sunrise Trail Community TV is looking for community correspondents, volunteers and content creators

As Pictou County looks forward to a new community-owned fibre optic network, bringing affordable, reliable high-speed internet to homes and businesses in the region, a new venture is hoping to use it to build a vibrant online community for this region of Nova Scotia.

Sunrise TV is a new online community TV channel that will be accepting content from the autumn of this year, with a view to establishing a schedule of programming that reflects our communities and the world around us. Operating in a similar way to traditional community TV channels, Sunrise TV has one major difference - it will be available on the internet. It will not only provide an outlet for content creators, or an opportunity to inform and report on local events, but Sunrise TV can help businesses reach existing local markets or new markets anywhere in the world. It's inevitable that the channel could become a useful tool to promote tourism, real-estate sales and all aspects of the north-shore lifestyle.

The aim is to build capacity quickly, such that around 50 hours of unique programming per week is the early target. Sunrise TV is looking for community correspondents in Pugwash, Tatamagouche, River John, Pictou, New Glasgow and Antigonish, who will report on events and act as liaison with residents and businesses in the area who want to create content. Training will be provided to help people, groups or businesses create their own content. Alternatively, a growing network of production teams could help to bring events, promotions or other content to the screen.

In the initial stages the project is being supported by a team of business and media professionals, and design on the broadcast website and infrastructure is underway. For now, a holding page - [www.sunrise-tv.ca](http://www.sunrise-tv.ca) - is online and you can get more information, express interest and suggest content by emailing: [info@sunrise-tv.ca](mailto:info@sunrise-tv.ca)

Sunrise Trail Community TV is your channel, and a chance to show the world what the Sunrise Trail is about.

## Child Care, We Care

by Grace Dares

Have you heard of this joke: "The best parenting hack is to live close to your own parents!"

Unfortunately, it is not applicable to everyone, and I am one of those people. Even if you live near your parents, who are the loveliest people, you might still want your children to be around other kids to develop their social skills. Or maybe your parents are still working.

In rural areas, this is a double challenge. Even if we are willing to drive for 30 minutes or more to work, we don't have adequate childcare to pursue our current careers. There were some spaces opening in Pictou and Tatamagouche, but they filled up so quickly that there are still many mothers who are prevented from working, at home, feeling frustrated and stressed.

Not to mention that it is such a loss for society to lose so many competent workers because of this child care crisis.

According to [childcarenovascotia.ca](http://childcarenovascotia.ca), starting December 31, 2022, families received an additional 25% reduction in child care fees (on average). Families are now paying an average of 50% less for child care than they were in 2021. By 2026, fees will move to an average of \$10 per day.

The government has also announced that the province is creating 1,500 new licensed child care spaces across Nova Scotia by December 2023, through renovations to existing sites and new constructions. The new spaces may include infant, toddler, and preschool spaces.

What can we do now? Should we give up our careers until our precious kids attend school? What about after-school care?

Maybe you've considered starting a new career as a family home child care provider. Did you not major in early childhood education? No problem!

Do you not know how to start or run a child care business? No problem at all!

There are two Family Home Child Care (FHCC) agencies available in our area - one in Stellarton and the other in Truro. What do they do?

They will help you to open and maintain your home as an FHCC by providing resources such as toys, books, and art supplies, as well as offering training and promoting your FHCC at no cost.

What will happen if you decide to do it? Your home will be inspected and approved by licensed agency staff. They provide regular training, such as first-aid and child development workshops, and a subsidy is available to the families who send their children to your home.

Are you interested in opening one, or would you like to chat with them? There are two agencies in our area who offer help:

1. Family Home Child Care Society  
Location: 281 S Foord St, Stellarton, NS B0K 1S0  
Contact: 902-928-2211

2. Jane Norman College Family Home Child Care Agency  
Location: 60 Lorne St #1, Truro, NS B2N 3K3  
Contact: 902-897-5111



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# Mabel Murple's Book Shoppe and Dreamery

by Sheree Fitch and Gilles Plante

Gilles and I want to take this opportunity to thank all in our village for being such good neighbours. Our friends at the pharmacy, post office, liquor store and Meh's have been so kind and helpful as we navigate our way through the disease of Alzheimer's.

We have decided to keep Mabel Murple's Book Shoppe closed for another season but welcome all who might want to stroll the property around the book shop, wave to donkeys, peek in Mabel's house, picnic under the trees, walk the labyrinth and take a stroll in the pasture where there is an apple orchard. And maybe fairies.

We are repairing the barn and ask everyone to take caution around that area. (We assume no liability.) We hope you will respect the grounds, take care of each other, and enjoy the property.

We will not be around to greet people, but now and then, we heard Gilles and Great Granny Gertie Green, Mabel Murple's old friend, might be around to say hello.

We ask anyone visiting over the summer to make donations to the River John Fire Department or the River John Community Action Society. This was the best way we could think of saying thank you to the village we love so much.

During the past few years our volunteer Fire Department has come to our aid more than once, and following the hurricane we cannot say enough about the kindness of everyone. Terry Heighton and all, great job!

We knew in 2001 we had found our forever home and it has been a wonderful place to settle these past 12 years. We have made many friends.

If anyone wants to book the property for an afternoon for a private family outing or birthday venue or wedding - we actually had one here! - let us know and we can arrange that. Call: 902 495 7295. There will be a fee for this.

Please note: On Labour Day weekend there will be a celebration for Gilles' new barn (even if not quite done) and a blow-out 50 % book sale. And who knows, maybe music and cupcakes and wandering picture book characters. And others! There will be more about that on our website.

Some Sheree Fitch books will be available at Lismore Sheep Farm and From Away in Tatamagouche.



Sheree & Gilles

We have plans for the future we are excited about, but things will evolve. Right now, we want to enjoy our summer making memories filled with family and friends.

Oh, yes! Anyone with perennials is invited to donate. Gardens for the future. Or nice rocks... we like rocks! We still think this place is kind of old-fashioned and magical and want to share. We missed seeing people enjoying our space even more than selling books. Who knew?

This truly is the little book shoppe and dreamery our community helped us create. We did it because we love it here and so many supported us. So, please feel welcome.

Tell your friends and relatives and say hello if you see us. We have the donkeys still and the bunny and a big black puppy who only seems to answer to the name Good-dog!

Tell us who you are. We will leave a guest book on Mabel's doorstep. We like to know, even if we forget.

Have a great summer!

*"As long as we have stories, we will never be alone"*

Sheree Fitch

# Pioneer Profile

by Joan MacLeod

We are very proud of one of our writers, Beulah Jane Wright, and we wish to highlight her in this issue. Beulah has a passion for writing and for history. She has been with the Pioneer since its inception and in fact it was she who found out that there had been an earlier newspaper in River John with the same name. Beulah has been with the Pioneer since the beginning but her writing career goes back to the 60s. She has been writing for seventy years! Over this time, she has written hundreds of stories. She wrote and published a history of the Hedgeville School. One of her goals is to combine her stories into a small book.

Beulah is not just passionate about history but particularly passionate about River John history. River John has been her home since her family moved here from Elmsdale, Hants County in 1950. She is from a farming family and the eldest of seven children.



Beulah's Photo by Rev Connie McNamara

Beulah's career was working in the fisheries. She started in the office of National Sea in Caribou. She became an accountant-bookkeeper and eventually rose to be an educator, teaching fishers how to do accounting so that they could run their own businesses. She worked all across Nova Scotia and beyond, including stints in Bermuda and the (then) North West Territories, doing this skillful work.

Beulah, the family matriarch, lives in her family home in Hedgeville with occasional help from her brother and her nieces and nephews. Her "happy place" is the River John Historical Society Museum, (phone number 902-351-3002), where, every summer, she so happily helps visitors find their family trees and answers their many questions. You may have seen her going by on her scooter.

Beulah possesses an amazing reservoir of knowledge. Who but Beulah could have written that great story in the winter issue of the Pioneer about life in rural Nova Scotia in the 50s. She knew that winter was the time for farmers to socialize after all the hard work of harvesting and preserving crops was done. We are blessed to have such a great writer and historical researcher on our team. Thank you, Beulah.

## INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS



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2022-2023 Noble Grand, Brian Emoff

# A Tribute to Olivia Pretty

by Jay Reid

As temperatures rise and most students begin to welcome the summer reprieve from all things school, we at the Pioneer think this would be an opportune time to acknowledge the scholastic achievements of a local academic legend. Very recently, a member of the community graduated from St. F.X. University with significant distinction. She was awarded the gold medal in the Education Program for maintaining the highest grade-point average at the school, in her field. Prior to this, during her undergraduate degree at Dalhousie University, she received a plethora of awards and accolades, including but not limited to:

**The Norbert Wolter Memorial Scholarship:** The scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate student enrolled in Chemistry within the Faculty of Science at Dalhousie University and is awarded to a Canadian citizen with first preference given to someone from Nova Scotia. The recipient must have achieved and maintain a GPA of 3.90.

In this case, the student in question held a cumulative GPA of 4.17. A tremendous academic achievement. In baseball terms, it's like hitting above a .350 average. In hockey, it's like scoring 60+ goals. I'm not saying she's the Wayne Gretzky of chemistry, but in order to modernize the metaphor, she's quite possibly the Connor McDavid of chemistry. Additionally:

**The Hugh Graeme Fraser Memorial Prize:** This award was founded by members of the arts and science class of 1931, upon their graduation, both as their graduation gift to the university and in order to perpetuate the memory of their classmate, Hugh Graeme Fraser, of Truro, N.S., who lost his life as a result of a tragic accident in the organic chemistry laboratory, while engaged in research work in February, 1931, three months before completing his Honours degree.

The student in question is River John's own



Olivia Pretty, Graduate

Olivia Pretty received a Bachelor of Science Degree (Distinction) with a Major in Chemistry from Dalhousie University in 2021.

Most recently, Olivia received a Bachelor of Education Degree from St. Francis Xavier University, along with a gold medal for the highest average in 2023.

Proud parents are David and Lesley Pretty of Cape John, NS.

Olivia Pretty. Dave Pretty's favourite daughter. Melissa Pretty's favourite sister. The famous teacher Linda Reid's favourite student and my third-favourite babysitter. Olivia was born and raised in River John and was a member of one of the last graduating classes from River John Consolidated School. She was an excellent student, obviously, but also excelled in track and field, where she competed competitively in Junior High and High School. She could probably still beat you in a 50-yard dash, and then finish far ahead of you on Jeopardy. She's that good. It's well known that she won every colouring contest River John Consolidated ever held, except for one in grade 4 where friend Patrick Heighton managed to wrest the title from her with a pastel version of Squidward from the SpongeBob cartoon. She maintains he cheated - his dad coloured it - but that's a story for another day.

To list every academic and athletic achievement Olivia Pretty has won over the years would take much more space than an ordinary paper allows, but her dedication to her scholastic pursuits does deserve serious praise and all of our respect. Olivia's scholastic focus and well-rounded demeanour shine even brighter in today's academic environment. As students are routinely inundated with distractions via social media, pandemics, and our deteriorating political landscape, their marks and their educational pursuits tend to bear the negative brunt of this cultural malaise. Not Olivia. Her hyper focus and impressive intelligence allowed her to graduate with all the honours any parent would ever want their child to graduate with. As far as role models go, you could definitely do worse than Olivia Pretty. She might even raise the bar a little too high. I tell my kids, "Just try to be half as smart as Olivia and you'll really go places."

Recently she was able to parlay her degree into a position as a teacher with Tatamagouche Regional Academy. Anyone who knows her would agree that TRA really lucked out in landing someone with so much promise, poise and ability. River John is proud to know you, Olivia, and the kids at your new job are lucky to have you in their corner. Congratulations on your academic achievements, and good luck going forward. You're going to need it. They're not all like you!



River John  
& District  
Lions Club

Proudly serving  
the River John  
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since 1970

The River John Lions Club meets the second and fourth Thursday of every month at the Lion's Den in River John at 7:00 pm.

2724 River John Station Rd, P.O. Box 67  
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riverjohnlions@outlook.com

# Jeff Baillie, Paramedic

by Sherry Keen

Jeff Baillie took a circuitous route to becoming a paramedic, but he's glad he did.

Baillie was a chef and graduate from the Culinary School at Holland College before he decided that paramedicine was the right avenue for him. Nineteen years later, the Halifax-area paramedic is still serving Nova Scotians in need, including his own colleagues and peers.

Nearly six years into his career, he applied to join EHS Operations PEER & Family Support Services team.

"I decided to join the team to be there for my peers and co-workers in a time of need, to be someone people can safely and confidently talk to," he said.



The PEER team has more than two dozen volunteers offering a wide range of referral services available 24/7, including proactive calls to all employees following a stressful situation or call.

Having experienced many stressful life situations personally, Baillie said he is proud to play a role in helping his colleagues feel heard, understood and supported as a volunteer with this program.

"Mental health impacts everyone, and you just never know what people are going through. It's never easy talking about mental health, but I always encourage this as much as possible," he said. "I'm proud to offer my support to my colleagues through this program, and to give the idea that hope is possible."

It works both ways, as his time on the PEER team has also helped him personally and professionally.

"The experience with the PEER team has led me to be a better person and a better father and husband," he said.

Jeff is the son of Norma and Ronnie Baillie of River John

# Read by the Sea summer literary festival: visit [www.readbythesea.ca](http://www.readbythesea.ca)

by Jackie MacKean

Relax and Read ... By the Sea

River John – Grab a lawn chair and sunscreen and head to River John this July to hear – and meet – some of Canada’s finest authors.

Read By the Sea Summer Literary Festival 2023 kicks off Thursday, July 6, with WordPlay, for children of all ages. Taking place at the River John Legion Gardens, this afternoon of magical storytelling will be championed by authors Lana Button and Olga Manzoni.

Button, author of “The Cow Said Boo!” and “My Teacher’s Not Here,” also “Tough Like Mum,” among many others, fell in love with the magic of picture books while she was studying early childhood education. Her work, translated into other languages, helps children find their own voices, she says.

Manzoni will read from her first book, “Mondays with Nonna,” which she calls “a children’s book for adults first.” Her work shows children the positive potential in each day, and teaches them that they have choices.

Following WordPlay in the schedule, OnWords aims to delight mid-graders and teens with the works of authors Andre Fenton and Lynette Richards. They will present their latest books and talk about how they write, what inspires them and offer tips for young writers.

Based in Halifax, Fenton is an award-winning African-Nova Scotian author, spoken-word artist, screenwriter and arts educator, recipient of the Emerging Artist Recognition Award at the 2022 Creative NS Awards, and the author of three award-winning young adult novels.

Richards’ book, “Call Me Bill,” is her first illustrated historical graphic novel, whose main character defies gender expectations by leaving home in search of adventure. Richards lives in Terence Bay, NS, and is a stained-glass artist and Craft Nova Scotia Master Artisan. “Call Me Bill” is her first graphic novel.

Wordstock, affectionately known as “The time before and between WordPlay and Main Stage, offers WriteWords, a writing workshop with children’s author Michelle Robinson, the Tatamagouche author of such titles as “Isabelle and the Crooks,” and “The Pumpkin Who Was Afraid of the Dark.”

Also part of Wordstock are a Thursday evening Family Storytelling Campfire at Caldera Distillery, Open Mic, hosted Friday afternoon by the Pictou County Writers Group at the Anglican Hall and a Saturday morning Heritage Story Walk beginning at the village museum. On Saturday morning at the Legion Hall, audiences are welcome to watch emerging authors trying to persuade publishers to accept their manuscripts – with just three minutes each.

Main Stage closes out the annual literary event on Saturday, July 8, and features four of the country’s finest authors.

Novelist Bruce Bishop, born and raised in Yarmouth, presents his novels Unconventional Daughters, Undeniable Relations, and Uncommon Sons, largely set in his hometown.

New Glasgow poet Angela Bowden is a mother, TEDx speaker, writer, activist, community volunteer and graduate student from St. Mary’s University, whose work is informed by her experiences of struggle and joy as a Black woman. Her published

book of poetry, “UnSpoken Truth: Unmuted and Unfiltered,” and other work, highlights, documents and challenges systemic and overt racism entrenched in Nova Scotia. A new work by Bowden titled, “Black Girl, Black Girl,” being released this month, is her first children’s story.

Whit Fraser, a former CBC broadcaster, Canadian Arctic author and storyteller, currently living in Ottawa, who started his career at the former CKEC radio station in New Glasgow. He left the RCAF in 1967 for a job with CBC in Iqaluit, and spent the next 50-plus years telling the important stories of Canada’s North. The spouse of Mary Simon, Canada’s first Indigenous governor general, Fraser wrote the award-winning national best seller, “True North Rising,” documenting his witness to the events and people who helped change the North – and Canada. He followed with his 2021 historical novel, “Cold Edge of Heaven,” set in the Far North in the 1920s.

Nancy Regan, former co-host of CTV’s popular Live at Five, interviewer, author, professional speaker and actor, presents her first book, “From Showing Off to Showing Up.” Intended to create authentic conversation, it was released in Canada in 2022 and became a national best-seller in just two weeks.

The Read By The Sea audience is reminded that picnics are welcome at the three-day event. There will be on-site food concessions in addition to local restaurants. Admission is free to all events, although donations are welcome. The authors’ books, raffle tickets and festival swag are available, on a cash-only basis, to help support the festival.

For a full schedule of events visit [www.readbythesea.ca](http://www.readbythesea.ca).

## This Year We Celebrate Ship Hector 250!

by Mary Beth Sutherland

A notable date in Pictou County’s history is September 15, 1773. This year is the 250th Anniversary of the arrival in Pictou Harbour of the Ship Hector from Loch Broom, Scotland.

The Dutch-built sailing ship Hector departed Scotland in early July 1773, carrying 189 emigrants bound for Nova Scotia. They were looking to a new future for themselves and their families, along with the promise of land they could own. The journey would take weeks longer than planned, due to the weather and a storm off Newfoundland. Water and food became scarce, and sickness on the ship caused the deaths of eighteen passengers, mostly among the children.

The settlers arrived in Pictou Harbour on September 15, 1773, too late in the year to prepare for the winter. Much of the land had not been cleared, as they had been told it would be, and they were dismayed to see dense forest at the water’s edge. The Scots needed to learn how to clear the land of trees so cabins could be built. Fortunately, the local Mi’kmaq and the earlier settlers from the ship Betsy assisted with their survival during this first winter. Not all of the Hector settlers stayed in the area: many of them left before winter arrived, finding shelter in settled parts of the province.

The Hector’s arrival was the start of significant Scottish immigration to Nova Scotia and to our country. These Scots brought with them their culture, language, dance, music, religion and the value of education. The influence of the descendants of these early men, women and children lasts to this day. Local authors, Brenda Hutchinson and John

Ashton, are publishing a booklet on some of the more notable descendants, which will be on sale this summer.

River John and its surrounding areas have numerous people who can link their lineage to the Hector passengers. River John’s shipbuilder James Kitchin Jr. (1839-1916) can be traced back to the Hector passengers – through his mother’s line – to George MacConnell.

There are numerous events planned for Pictou County this summer to celebrate the anniversary of the Ship Hector’s arrival, which you may be interested in attending. While these celebrations have already started, the main focus of activity will be in September.

A “Ship Hector Passengers Descendant” group has been formed, which is planning a “Ships to Shore” genealogy and local history conference to be held September 9-10. They have also planned cemetery tours, book readings, a banquet and other events. Why not check out the Facebook page, “Ship Hector Passenger Descendants,” which is a great resource for planned events. In addition, the website [www.shiphctordescendants.com](http://www.shiphctordescendants.com) has a wealth of good information. You don’t need to be a descendant to participate – just have an interest in history.

Plans are in place for celebrations in the town of Pictou from September 14-17. While the Bluenose II is in port, there will be a Gaelic day and performances of the locally-produced play, “The Voyage.” There will also be a re-dedication of the Hector Settler monument and a Hector Tattoo. For up-to-date information, see [www.pictou2023.com](http://www.pictou2023.com) or

search [Pictou2023/ShipHector250](http://Pictou2023/ShipHector250). This site has a calendar which lists more cultural activities, festivals and concerts. By late June, the Caladh Marquee on the waterfront will be the scene of great summer entertainment.

So come join the festivities and celebrate the Ship Hector settlers who had far-reaching effects on our province, country and continent!

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# North American Indigenous Games 2023

by Paul Martin

In the Mikmaq language kwe' (gway) means greetings. Katjipokoek (Gad gee bogo eg) means a lonely river flows through it, and is the place more commonly known today as River John... so kwe' Katjipokoek and thank you for taking time to read my latest article. I want to take this opportunity to promote an indigenous-based event that happens every four years at different locations across North America. The North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) are coming to Mikmaki, (meeg magee; land of the Mikmaq,) or Nova Scotia, and the main venues will be in Kjipuktuk, (jee boog toog,) Halifax, and We'gopegigt, (way go be geegd,) Truro.

The North American Indigenous Games will be held from July 15-23, 2023, and will offer competitions in 16 different sports within 21 venues and showcase several traditional events such as lacrosse, canoeing and 3-D archery. NAIG 2023 will bring together more than 5,000 athletes, coaches and team staff from over 756 Indigenous Nations from all across Turtle Island, (an indigenous name for North and Central America). The aim of NAIG is to celebrate, share and reconnect through sport and culture with the help of 3,000 volunteers and, like a pau wau, (powwow,) everyone is welcome to attend.

The opening ceremony, a ticketed event, is bound to be a colourful and culturally interesting

event that will take place at the Scotiabank Centre on Sunday, July 16 at 7:30 p.m. The closing ceremonies are free and, again, open to all, and will happen at the Halifax Commons on Friday, July 21 at 8:30 p.m. In the days between ceremonies, each sporting event will incorporate Mi'kmaq values, customs and traditions so they will undoubtedly have great educational value.

I would like to share a small amount of information about two of the culturally significant events that will be showcased at the 2023 games.

The game of lacrosse did not originate from European colonizers, rather Indigenous people invented the game and have played it for thousands of years, dating back to the 12th century. The game is considered a gift from the Creator and is thought to be his favourite game. In 1860, lacrosse officially became Canada's national sport and became Canada's national summer sport in 1994. Lacrosse was played by many different Indigenous communities who had their own versions of the game and with various names, but each saw the sport as "the medicine game," as lacrosse symbolizes a spiritual ritual to honour, heal, and celebrate individuals and communities. Many of the rules of modern lacrosse were invented later on by European settlers after they adopted lacrosse from Indigenous peoples. Today many Indigenous nations across North America are currently playing lacrosse.

Like lacrosse, canoeing is another showcase event. The canoe did not originate in North America; however, the idea was adopted by Indigenous people and was perfected for traversing the many rivers, lakes and maritime oceans for transportation of people, furs for the fur trade, and hunting for birds, whales and seals. Among several canoe types found across Turtle Island, the Mi'kmaq designed, developed and relied heavily upon the oceangoing canoe made of birch bark. This canoe was lightweight, built with several sheets of bark, sewed together with spruce tree roots, and had spruce gum to fill or patch seams, all on a softwood frame. Sea canoes were up to 28 feet in length, whereas the typical freshwater canoe was up to 16 feet in length. The Mi'kmaq seagoing canoe had high sides and rounded ends necessary to handle high winds and waves. Interestingly, it was commonplace for the Mi'kmaq people to travel the 97 km by canoe across the Cabot Strait from the southern coast of Newfoundland to northern Nova Scotia up until approximately 1921.

For more detailed information on how the canoe will be showcased, and when lacrosse games take place, as well as the entire weekly schedule of events for the North American Indigenous Games, you can visit NAIG2023.COM. I hope you find the time to experience this summer's culturally rich and colourful spectacle.

Wela'lin (we laa lin) (Thank you).

## Book Review

by Joan MacLeod

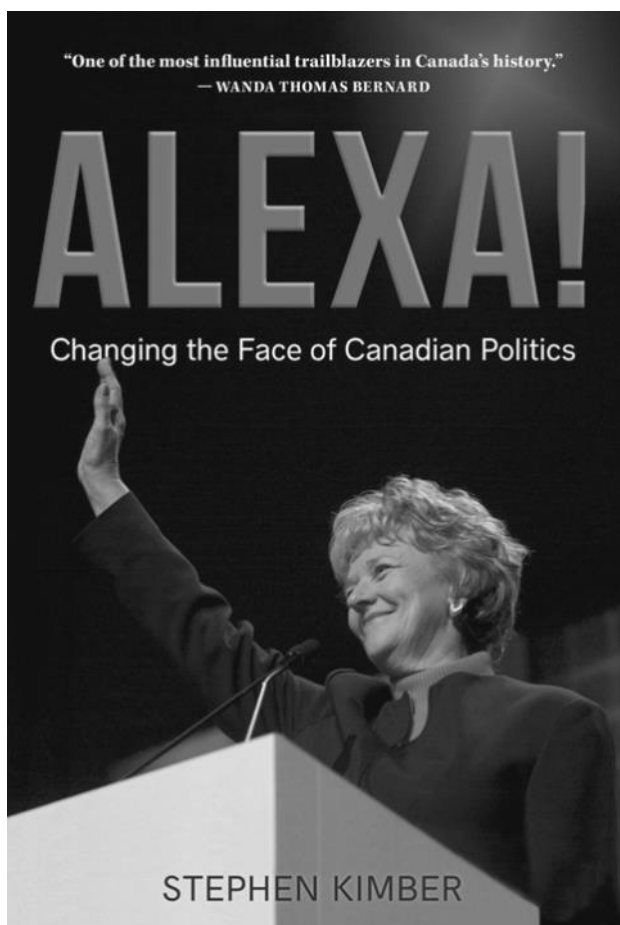
### Alexa ! Changing the Face of Canadian Politics by Stephen Kimber

Alexa McDonough (1946-2022) was an unusual person, a politician who kept her word and could be trusted. Alexa started her political awareness at her Baptist Church. When the issue of apartheid in South Africa was raised, she realized that there was equally apartheid in Halifax. The black Africville children were separated from their white peers, with inferior housing and inferior educational opportunities. So as a 16-year-old, she and a group of friends spearheaded a summer camp program based at the church. In doing this she had not only to organize programming, but also meals and transportation. The program was wildly popular and ran for years. This was when her mother first realized

Alexa's leadership potential. She went on to become a social worker, graduating from the Maritime School of Social Work. This led her into politics and working to reform the social welfare system.

Alexa was often criticized for being raised with a silver spoon in her mouth, as her father was a millionaire who owned Shaw Bricks, but he was also a socialist who encouraged and helped Alexa along the way in her career.

When Alexa was first elected as an MLA, one of the first three women ever elected, jeers and sexist comments were commonplace. There was not even a women's washroom! She pointed out that provincial politics had always been an old boys' club, with favours and contracts dispensed for political patronage, along with the rum. This was done by both mainstream parties and rule bending was rampant. She was disliked because



she was "a thorn in the old boys' sides." Despite this, she rose to become the provincial leader and later an MP and then leader of the national NDP party.

Alexa achieved what she did in politics despite being a woman, because she cared and was passionate about her work, especially for those who were voiceless.

One of Alexa's main gifts was her ability to connect with a variety of people on a personal level. From knocking on doors in her constituency to taking on unpopular but important causes. She pushed for a public enquiry into the wrongful conviction of Donald Marshall Jr. She was there for the families of the Westray victims. In fact, she

remembered the words of one of the widows who said to her, "Promise me that this will never happen again." It took over ten years, but finally, in 2003, parliament passed the Westray Bill which makes owners legally responsible for the safety of their workers, and failing to do so would incur criminal charges.

Another unpopular case she took on was the case of Maher Arar, a Canadian software engineer who was arrested in New York on his way back to Canada from Tunisia and wrongly accused of having ties to al Qaeda. He was deported to Syria, where he faced torture, with the complicity of Canadian officials. It was a year before he was released and, in the meantime, Alexa worked tirelessly not just for his release but for a public enquiry into the role Canadian officials played in his imprisonment. Then she went a step further and recruited his wife, Mazigh, to run for the NDP. Alexa was not only defending the rights of Maher Arar, she was defending her vision of Canada.

Alexa did all this while raising two boys. She was a feminist who paved the way for other women to follow in her footsteps. She rose above the misogyny of her fellow MPs, one of whom who had the temerity to tell her, a veteran politician, to "stick to her knitting!"

As a Nova Scotian, I feel proud of her accomplishments. She was a feminist, a social worker, a mother and a politician who was a passionate advocate for justice. She helped nudge the mainstream parties a little more to the left. We will not see her ilk again.

*(Editor's note: I bought this book directly from Stephen Kimber at a writing workshop he led at "Read by the Sea" in 2021. I can loan it to anyone who is interested in reading it.)*

## Sunrise Trail 4-H 2023

**by Bonnie Allan**  
**General Leader**

The Sunrise Trail 4-H Club is made up of Cloverbuds & Members from Tatamagouche to Lisimore and communities all along the Sunrise Trail.

There are 4 Cloverbuds, that is, 7- and 8-year-olds. They are spending the year learning about the projects available to them in 4-H, also how to judge and give reasons, as well as how to do a speech or demonstration. On July 25th at our Achievement Day, they will have boxes displaying all their work from throughout the year.

The club is made up of nineteen families and twenty-three members from 9-21 years old. Their projects include: Alpaca, Beef, Cake Decorating, Dairy, Dog Obedience, Fisheries, Foods, Goat, Great Outdoors, Heritage, Horse, Photography, Rabbit, Scrapbooking, Sheep, Small engines, Welding & Woodworking.



The club had fun at their Hallowe'en Party, enjoyed a Holiday Social with their Special Friends, "adopted" a family at Christmas – went shopping for the family of four, wrapped gifts for them and provided them with a Christmas dinner; completed their communication work with speeches and demonstrations. In May they sold tickets on 10 dozen lobsters which were very generously donated by local fishermen. The money from the ticket sales will assist seven members to attend Camp Rankin in Cape Breton.

Upcoming events for the club are a Banquet on June 25th with their Special Friends, the Breakfast on the Verandah on Monday, July 24th as part of River John Festival Days, and their Achievement Day on July 25th. Their work will be on display at the Pictou Exhibition September 6th-10th. September 29th-October 1st is also 4-H Provincial Show weekend in Windsor. Our members are looking forward to qualifying to go.

Registration for the new year will take place on Monday, October 9th at the Toney River Community Hall. November is 4-H Month and we look forward to joining St. David's for their Special Service. We want to thank the community for their support throughout the year.

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## West Branch and Area Community Association

**by Reg Crewe**  
**Director/Treasurer**

The West Branch Hall was built in 1933. The hall is a registered "Comfort Centre" and has been holding events, meals, and social-info gatherings for the community. The association and hall are run by an elected board of seven volunteer community members.

The board has been successful in applying for several grants to enable the continued maintenance and use of the hall. We received a New Horizons for Seniors Program grant of \$24,216, and have made many improvements to the hall, including two commercial fridges, 60 Banquet Chairs, many kitchen utensils, range hoods, kitchen carts and outside picnic tables. This should enable hall events to take place with better equipment to ensure everything needed is at hand.

We also received funding and have upgraded our washrooms to be fully accessible with new toilets, sinks and handrail-grab bars.

We are in the process of a Net Zero Solar Power and Efficiency Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Program to upgrade the hall and install solar panels to become a solar powered facility.

The board was also successful getting a partial grant to purchase a replacement AED for the hall. The Municipality of Pictou County provided half the funding needed to purchase this much-needed medical life-saving equipment and we are actively seeking funding for the remaining portion.

Our thanks to the granting organizations for providing the necessary funding to allow us to keep our hall in great operating condition.

The hall hosted West Branch Wednesdays on three dates in February and March to address "Mental Health: Taking Care of Ourselves and Others." We welcomed community members to the hall for a meal and information sessions. This was a pilot project for the county to assess the need for more regular get-togethers for community members on an ongoing basis, depending on attendance and need. Attendance was great and participation was fantastic and we plan to continue these in the fall.

We held our annual Maple Syrup Festival on April 29th. It was a huge success and we served 325 meals.

The weekly music jams started June 7th and are continuing bi-weekly.

The hall is accessible and available to any interested community member or group for private events, anniversaries, birthdays, celebrations or meetings. We seat 60 people and have a fully equipped kitchen. Please call for details, 902-351-2260.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all newcomers to the area and encourage anyone who would like to participate or contribute to the West Branch and Area Community Association to contact one of the board members. We appreciate any help anyone has for the betterment of our community.

Below is the report from the President, Jim White, at our Annual General Meeting.

### **Annual General Meeting May 8, 2023**

The Board met ten times in 2022, the music jams were operated twelve times until discontinued due to COVID infections.

The hall sponsored three dinners and the hall was rented out eight times. An AED training session was convened with a good turnout of participants.

The Annual General Meeting was held on May 9th; members Denise White and Patsy Chapman resigned and Reg Crewe took on the treasurer position. Charles Kennedy came on to the board; the remaining members, are Gary Johnson, David Luxton, Elizabeth Bezanson and Catherine Dalgleish.

In September, after Hurricane Fiona, the hall operated for fourteen days as a comfort station. Community meals were sponsored by Sean Baillie and Ben Otter and friend. Water and food deliveries were supplied by the EMO and the public. A grant was received from the United Way to cover food and fuel costs incurred by the hall.

Three additional grants were received, with thanks to Reg Crewe for organizing them.

A bulk recycling of hazardous waste was carried out in October and a tree fall cleanup was also held by board members. Patsy Chapman held a craft fair and food drive in December.

Jim White, President.

## Greetings from your Councillor

**by Mary Elliott**

Hello to everyone in District 4 and surrounding communities. A warm welcome back to all our seasonal residents. This year has certainly tested our "Nova Scotia Strong" strength.

Our volunteers and first responders deserve enormous gratitude as they are the backbone of our community. The members who tirelessly give of themselves to improve and make things better for others are the individuals who make a difference.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the community clean-up, your efforts and commitment do not go unnoticed.

This summer will be very busy with events: River John Festival Days are July 21st-29th; community suppers and barbecues are just around the corner, so make sure to stop by and enjoy the many local businesses. Supporting local can really make a difference.

As another school year is coming to an end, I would like to extend my congratulations to all those who completed another year. A special shout out to all of those graduating and starting a new journey. As you close one chapter and start a new one may you be blessed with wonderful opportunities and good health. All the best to the class of 2023.

It is my pleasure to serve as your Councillor for District 4. The work can be very demanding at times and the gratification of helping is very rewarding. Please check out all the updates and information on the Municipality's website [www.munpict.ca](http://www.munpict.ca) or on Facebook. Meetings, events, and news are shown there for your viewing.

Take time to enjoy all the little things that really make life wonderful, enjoy your summer, stay safe and smile often.



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## Surprising diversity at Lismore Sheep Farm

**by Christiane Gill**

It is Sunday mid-afternoon, family affairs all taken care of and the sun just came out. Now what to do with the rest of the day? Get a head start on the week's chores? Heck no! Go for a walk? Hmm? I got it. Why don't I go up to Lismore Sheep Farm and see where that takes me?

Off I go with my cameras and I end up in a wonderful conversation with Gillian Crawford. She takes me to the edge of a field with the most breath-taking view over the adjacent expansive fields speckled with sheep and lambs, lined with our River John and its bank on the other side, crowned by the deep blue sky that is speckled with fluffy, white clouds mirroring the lush, green fields before us with the sheep. Lismore - Gaelic for Big Garden - how very fitting, how truly romantic! Gillian reveals that that is the exact spot where a former summer employee had envisioned her wedding to take place even before she knew whom she would marry. It turns out that the lucky young lady not only got to marry her Prince Charming, but she got



That breathtaking view.

to marry him right in that most charming spot. Can the start into a new phase of life be any more romantic?

I am wondering, does one ever tire of 24/7 romantic? The Crawford family definitely does not. After Gillian and John started over two decades ago with a flock of five hundred sheep, (I just learned that you only count ewes), now both adult children are also a core part of Lismore Farm. Over time, the flock was reduced to two hundred sheep, and their son, Rory, has joined his parents and helped to diversify with six hundred acres of soy, oats and barley. Lismore Farm is also now testing an 8-acre field of hemp, to be sold to a company called "Fibresource," which is setting up a processing facility in West River. Yes, hemp. No, not THAT kind of hemp but the kind that can be spun into cloth just like they did 50,000 years ago. Yes! 50,000 years ago. Today it can be used for paper, rope, biodegradable materials, paint, biofuel, food,

animal feed, textiles and clothing. Yes, I can see your eyes rolling, but hear me out. Besides hemp cloth sporting the same positive characteristics as flax linen does, it is eight times stronger. Yes, it does wrinkle and it does need a bit of TLC but it is not only the epitome of today's fashionable, natural look, it is also the best way forward into an ecologically sounder and healthier future. So, don't walk past hemp (or flax) clothes - go get yourself an iron, if you don't already own one.

The future holds so much in store for us. Who knows, maybe one day we will see balls of hemp thread along with the wool for which they are so famous, and find ourselves sitting on the porch of the Lismore Sheep Farm store with other East Coast Canadians. For example, the lady from Newfoundland, (far right), who just happened to stop by on Knit in Public Day on June 10th. She got her knitting from her car and joined our much-appreciated River John Square Knitters: (L-R) Marie Langille, Netta Heukshorst and Catherine Miller. I know I am sure to join them next year - and maybe I will then finally finish my winter tuque that I started two years ago.



John and Gillian on their verandah.



**Hon. Karla MacFarlane**  
 MLA, Pictou West

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- Kids Help Phone...800-668-6868
- Addictions Services...800-922-1122

## Anchor Park and More

**by Chuck and Lynn Cox**

We are Chuck and Lynn Cox - proud entrepreneurs and business owners of Anchor Park and more! You will find us if you head down Highway 6, between River John and Tatamagouche; we are situated just 10-12 minutes between the two villages, in our own little piece of heaven, Marshville.

We aren't new to the area; 14 years ago, we purchased a small treed lot on Joudrey Road, in Marshville. We cut out some trees and were happy to put our RV in the centre of our newly purchased land. We set to work making it our summer home. Our family has made great memories here and spent countless hours at the beach and touring around both River John and Tatamagouche.

Chuck's family has had a cottage in Brule since the 50s and both his parents are buried in Lockerby cemetery. As a young child, I camped at Nelson Park with my family and spent a good part of my teenage years basking in the sun at Rushton's Beach. We both have fond memories of this area.

Seven years ago, the land around our "happiest place on earth" was listed for sale. We both felt compelled to bring tourism and people to Marsh-



Mini Golf

ville. We decided on a seasonal RV campground and thus, set the ball in motion. We began the process of building the RV park, starting with 25 seasonal sites. Build it and they will come. That was our motto, our mantra. Out in the middle of nowhere, yet ideally located between two small touristy villages. It was perfect. We added, and then expanded, the coin-operated laundromat. The cottagers, locals and campers were happy with the expansion, and we very quickly had regular clients at our laundromat.

We added ten more RV lots and they filled up before we had finished construction. We are very proud of Anchor Park and how our campers have become one big family. Last winter we added a much-needed rec hall - Anchor Hall - which gives our campers a place to be together, out of the sun or rain. It is a gathering place, a meet and greet, and the home to many upcoming social events.

Always thinking of new ideas to diversify, and the difficulty to find mulch and gravel for our own landscaping needs, we decided to add another small business to Anchor Park. Mud, Mulch and More began. We sell bulk gravel, topsoil, mulch and more.

After the expansion, we sold our family home in Upper Brookside and moved to Joudrey Road permanently. This is our second year here, full-time, and we couldn't be happier to call Marshville home.

In addition, my own bookkeeping business has been relocated to the area, and I enjoy helping small business owners thrive.

We began to focus on Marshville and what we felt it needed. A place to go for an afternoon of fun along with a general store. This spring, we opened a mini golf, which is open to all. We have several more projects in the works, including our general store, which has an impressive hardware section and many items from local businesses.

We enjoy our time here, especially when we are able to spend some time with our family. We have 4 grown children and 6 grandchildren, who all reside in the Truro area.

Come visit Marshville's newest addition, the General Store and Mini Golf. We can't wait to show you around!

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**River John and surrounding area have much to be proud of. I have seen first hand the important work that community volunteers and advocates continue to do to make our community a great place to live and visit.**

**Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable summer!**

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# River John Festival Days

**JULY 21<sup>ST</sup>-29<sup>TH</sup>**



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TO BE**  
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River John Festival Days' history dates back to 1985 when River John celebrated its 200th Birthday with a week-long festival. The event was so successful that it was decided to hold a week-long celebration every year!

Join us for Festival Days and take part in our many events and activities for all ages. Become a part of the celebration of our beautiful community!

The River John Festival Days Committee wish to extend their appreciation to the residents of River John and area, as well as to all visitors from near and far, who have supported the festivities for over 35 years!

The committee would also like to acknowledge and thank all of the hard working individuals, who have organized these events and volunteered during the Festival Days.

# Schedule

Visit our new website for  
more information:  
[www.rjfestivaldays.ca](http://www.rjfestivaldays.ca)

## FRIDAY JULY 21

**6pm** Baseball Tournament begins at the ball field. Contact Jay Reid 902-351-3396 to register.

## SATURDAY JULY 22

**9am** Baseball Tournament continued

**12pm until sold out** Lobster Dinner at the Fire Hall. Price TBD.

**10am-4pm** Atlantic Military Historical Association WWI/WWII Display at St. Georges Presbyterian Church

**2pm** Cardboard Boat Races at Bissell Park dock. Build your own cardboard boat and compete to cross the river!

## SUNDAY JULY 23

**9am** Baseball Tournament continued

**10am-3pm** Sheep Shearing Day at Lismore Sheep Farm. Meet some lambs, make a wool craft and visit our wool shop.

**10am-4pm** Atlantic Canadian Military History Association WWI/WWII Display at St. Georges Presbyterian Church

**11am** Ecumenical church service at Salem United Church

**1-3pm** River John Fire Department Open House

**2pm** 4-H Tug-of-War Competition at the ball field. Come watch and cheer on the teams!

**TBD** Bridge to Bridge Fun Paddle. Bring your own kayak, canoe, etc. Weather permitting. Meet at Bissell Park. More parking behind Fire Hall.

**6pm** Children's Parade and Family BBQ at the Lions Club Playground. Participants meet at St. Georges Presbyterian Church. Categories include best fictional character, best original, best on wheels, best group, best festival theme.

**7pm** Gospel Sing at St. George's Church Hall with the "West Branch Singers"

## MONDAY JULY 24

**6:45-10am** Breakfast on the Veranda by Sunrise Trail 4-H Club. French Toast and Sausage, (\$10 adults/\$8 children).

**9am-12pm** Church Open House hosted by Heritage Nova Scotia. Drop into St. John the Baptist Anglican Church, St. Georges Presbyterian Church, Salem United Church and the River John Historical Museum.

**1pm** Strawberry Tea at the River John Legion (\$7 adults/\$4 children)

**6pm** Scrabble Walk. Register at Bissell Park for \$2. Cash prizes.

**7pm** Firefighter Competition/Demo on the Old School grounds

**7pm** Cribbage Night at the Legion. Ages 19+, \$10/ player, teams of two, winner takes half. Prize for biggest regular hand, prize for biggest crib hand. Cash bar.

**7pm** Entertainment on the Veranda with "The Strange Valentines"

## TUESDAY JULY 25

**6:45-10am** Breakfast on the Veranda by River John 4-H Club. Bacon, Eggs & Beans, (\$10/\$8).

**1-4:30pm** Sunrise Trail 4-H Achievement Day at Melville-Seafoam Community Hall

**1-3pm** River John Pickle Ball Club Open House at the Firehall

**1:30pm** Kite Flying at Caldera Distilling Inc (65 River John Road), treats provided

**6:30pm** Striped Bass Fishing Tournament Registration at Bissell Park, \$5

**7pm** Trivia Night at the Firehall. \$20, teams of four, winners takes all. Ages 19+, cash bar.

**7pm** Entertainment on the Veranda, Open Mic

## WEDNESDAY JULY 26

**6:45-10am** Breakfast on the Veranda by Pictou County 4-H, proceeds to Legacy Barn. Eggs, Bacon and Hash-browns, (\$10/\$8).

**12pm** Washer Toss registration at the Legion. Games to immediately follow registration. 30 teams max.

**1-4pm** Community Picnic at Skinners Cove (East)

**6:30pm** Family Chocolate Bar Bingo at the Fire Hall. Bring a chocolate bar to "buy" a bingo card (1 chocolate bar = 1 bingo card). Open to all children with parent/guardians.

**6-9pm** Night Market at the Old School

**7pm** Euchre at the Legion, \$6/person, 19+

**7pm** Entertainment on the Veranda with "Geezer"

## THURSDAY JULY 27

**6:45-10am** Breakfast on the Veranda by the Oddfellows & Rebekahs. Ham & Eggs, (\$10/\$8)

**2-4pm** Wardens Tea at the Fire Hall

**6pm** Children's Scavenger Hunt. Register at Bissell Park, free.

**6pm** Meat Darts at the Firehall. Ages 19+, cash bar

**6-9pm** Night Market at the Old School

**7pm** Bingo at the Legion

**7pm** Entertainment on the Veranda with "Route Six"

## FRIDAY JULY 28

**6:45-10am** Breakfast on the Veranda by the Melville/Seafoam Group. Pancakes, Sausages & Beans (\$10/\$8).

**1pm** Pie Sale at the Firehall by the River John Festival Day Committee

**1:30pm** Tie Dye in the Lions Club Park, sponsored by the River John Lions Club. Ages 12 and under. Dress in old clothes it could get messy. Supplies provided. Register by July 23rd, call 902-351-2898, please leave a message.

**7pm** Striped Bass Fishing Tournament Weigh-In at Bissell Park, prizes awarded at 7:30pm

**7pm** Entertainment on the Veranda with "River Run"

**8pm** Caldera Distilling Inc. bonfire, music and cocktails at 65 River John Road. Bring your own instrument and join in! Ages 19+.

## SATURDAY JULY 29

**6:45-10am** Breakfast on the Veranda by The Lions Club. Pancakes and Sausages, (\$10/\$8)

**10-11am** Antique Car Show Registration

**11am-2pm** Antique Car Show open to public at the Old School parking lot

**2pm** Antique Car Show trophies & prizes

**TBD** River John Volunteer Fire Department Lucky Duck Race on the River

**2pm** Lobster Crate Run on the River. Register at 1:30, Bissell Park dock, \$5.

**6:30pm** Street Parade. Awards following the parade at St. Georges Presbyterian Church.

**9:45pm/Sunset** Fireworks over the river

**10:15pm-2am** Festival Dance (DJ) at the Fire Hall, \$10. Ages 19+

The schedule is subject to change.  
Please watch our Facebook page  
to keep up to date!



[www.facebook.com/  
riverjohn.festival.days](http://www.facebook.com/riverjohn.festival.days)

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Check out our Facebook page for updates!



## Pretty in Pink

(Just a Bit of Humorous Whimsey...)

by John Crichton  
July 28, 2021

She was young, she was new,  
Would look directly at you  
With a smile that was hard to interpret,  
And barefoot, no hose  
With a cute button nose  
dark eyes  
slightly  
convergent.



What attracted him to her  
He wasn't quite sure,  
And when asked he couldn't say.  
He knew he'd been teased  
But still was intrigued  
By her  
porcelain  
kind  
of way.

But really ...

She was brittle, she was old,  
She was empty, she was cold.  
And that smile was merely painted on.  
Distant and snide  
And hollow inside,  
If she ever  
had a heart  
it was gone.

Because she hadn't any,  
She wanted all his money.  
She thought that would make her feel fulfilled.  
A tragic situation  
And certainly not funny,  
'Coz ...  
when she was filled ...  
she was killed.



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# Pride Week

by Joan MacLeod

This feature of the Pioneer during June which is Pride Month is designed to recognize that we at the Pioneer welcome and celebrate diversity of expressions of our sexuality among consenting adults.

Sadly, there are negative forces who would disagree. They even disagree with our right to freedom of speech and freedom to read. This group called "Action4Canada", think that our public institutions such as libraries and schools should not have a variety of books and educational materials which offer choice and alternatives in lesbian or gay lifestyles. This group tried to stage a protest at our local school but the students would not engage with them. They met a similar fate at the New Glasgow Public Library where a group called "Taking a peaceful stand for love and Acceptance" staged a counter demonstration of over 100 people. The atmosphere is this group by all accounts was very positive and there was a diverse group of representatives with people born from the 40's to the 00's. When the small group of right-wing protesters saw the large turn out at the library, they refused to engage and walked away.

A part of me thinks that we do need to engage with these people to learn from where their infor-

mation and extreme views are coming and try to change their minds. But another school of thought is to deny them attention and they will disappear.

Their literature refers to people like me as "the enemy" which I strongly object to. Is there any interest in having a gay/straight alliance in River John? What would happen if the group "Action4Canada" decided to descend on the River John Library? I really hope that there would be an outpouring of support as happened at the New Glasgow Library.



The Pride flag at Salem United Church

## Gender Talk

Gender identity: how a person feels about themselves in terms of gender

Cisgender: a person who identifies with the gender assigned at birth

Transgender: a person who identifies with a gender different from the one assigned at birth

Gender fluid: a person whose gender identity changes over time

Gender expression: the way a person acts and presents themselves in terms of gender

## Open letter to the Pioneer

by Bernadette MacDonald

I, like many of you, are observing a period of social dialogue where we are told to believe that the gender a person identifies as, is more important than the sex they are, and that we are to accommodate this self-identification. So, when a man says he feels like a woman, we are told we need to believe he is a woman.

Wow, that is a big ask!

This new belief, which I and many other people call, gender-identity ideology, maintains that our biological sex (which is based on science, objective thinking, biology, evolution, fact) doesn't matter, and it's your innate inner gender (feeling, subjective thinking, belief) that is important, and we must all believe it and not challenge it.

A person's belief is their own business, but it doesn't mean everyone else needs to believe it. Many people believe in a god and many people don't. We don't make a big deal about it. So why is not believing a man can be a woman any different?

For myself, I will never believe a man can be a woman or a woman can be a man. I know, no matter the belief a person has about their inner gender, and the amount of cross sex hormones a person takes, how they dress and present themselves, how many surgeries, and how much they wish to be the opposite sex, nothing can change their sex.

But why can't I, and many others, just go along with this imposed belief "that a man can be a woman and vice versa"? There are many reasons, but my top two are, 1) it is causing harm to women and children, and 2) it isn't true.

It is no secret that young and adolescent children are coping with a recent phenomenon called Gender Dysphoria. It is also well known that the distress this is causing is in large part driven by their online community, social media, and gender ideology. The current clinical practice is to provide "gender-affirming care" and put children on a cocktail of hormones called puberty blockers. What is shocking about the use of these hormones on children is they were never developed or researched for this purpose. Because of this they are called "off-label" drugs. These drugs cause sterility, bone loss, and many other health concerns. Recently many of these youth gender services have been under intense review, in particular in Finland, Sweden, UK, and currently Australia, where some services have been shut down (Tavistock, UK 2022) due to the harm to children. Moving forward gender services for children in these countries, and many more will be following, will be taking a mental health, not a gender-affirming care approach to services, and puberty blockers are virtually banned or very restricted.

The use of puberty blockers needs a serious re-

*Continued on next page .....*

## Open letter to River John allies of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community

by Kiva-Marie Belt

As a queer person living in Seafoam, I am asking for your help. This Pride season, 2SLGBTQIA+ people need their allies more than ever. State-sponsored hatred of queer people has been ramping up globally, from Uganda to the United States. And lest you think Canada immune, the People's Party of Canada platform would repeal the federal ban on conversion therapy and legally bar trans women from using the women's washroom or participating in women's sports. It would outlaw gender-affirming care for minors and criminalise doctors who provide it, because they claim that 'most boys and girls suffering from gender dysphoria simply grow out of it.' (This blatantly contradicts all major medical organisations, who unequivocally identify that transgender children are real and in need of gender-affirming care. That such care is necessary and saves lives is not disputed by any respectable doctor.)

Close to home, this year, there have been protests of transgender children using bathrooms of their gender at our local schools. Across the province, pride flags have been burned and slashed. Anti-queer groups are protesting Nova Scotian drag events. Right now, such incidents may be small, but the rhetoric against the queer community is heated. We may very well lose the progress we've made as a province toward equality. Our communities are vulnerable to fracturing by hate. But we are not powerless against these forces.

River Johners are strong and have so much to offer. We queer people who are living here could really use your help. We need our community to support us actively. You may think you're accepting or tolerant, but acceptance in the privacy of your own thoughts is not enough.

We need you to tell your friends, family, neighbours, and anyone who will listen that you support our community and our right to live without fear. Hound government officials to listen to our voices and expand access to gender-affirming care and more inclusive healthcare at large.

We need you to support queer-owned and operated businesses. Give mutual aid during tough times. Attend Pride events to show your support. Amplify 2SLGBTQIA+ voices. Stop talking about us - and talk with us.

We need you to buttress the progress that has already been made, and demand that school officials continue to fully include queer kids in school as their true gender. Tell them that you believe age-appropriate education about 2SLGBTQIA+ identities should always be part of the curriculum. Teach your own children not to bully others for being gay or trans.

We need you to have the humility to look in the mirror and interrogate your complicity in a culture that still uses people's differences as a punchline - or a punching bag.

2SLGBTQIA+ people are not your enemy or even outsiders. We are not here to change you or to take anything from you. We are here because we ARE you. We are your children, your neighbours, and your colleagues. We love you. We need you to tell the whole world that you love us back.



# My thoughts on last night's RCMP River John Town Hall

by Chris Gill

*Life is not TV, even "reality TV" isn't real!  
Life is messy, very messy.*

The Town Hall meeting of June 13, 2023, at the River John Legion was quite triggering for me insofar as it brought back many memories that all comprise my appreciation of these dedicated servants of the people.

For one, because we don't see the officers often doesn't mean they are not there. Quite the contrary. Most crimes happen covertly. So here is the conundrum they are in: either be out there and be seen, which does not stop crime but only drives it even deeper into the dark, or they move about mostly unseen which is much more effective but puts the officers at risk of being accused of not doing their job.

Speaking of said accusation: on one hand the public demands, rightly so, that the police officers do their job and do so to the best of their ability (which, sadly, often doesn't seem enough for some, especially those who conveniently forget that not everything can or should be made public for so many reasons), and, on the other hand, some demand loudly that the police give a play-by-play by the minute, lay out everything including possi-



Natasha Farrell, Community Liaison Officer, Warden  
Robert Parker, Glen Fraser

ble evidence before the public and wait for the "public verdict." Our RCMP are not reporters! And we are not watching a crime show where we get to judge every minutely-scripted step of the way from the comfort of our cozy sofa.

Last night a question was posed, "What is more important: life or property? Should the Officers respond to a property theft or a motor vehicle accident?" I was very saddened to notice that there wasn't that immediate and resounding "Life" response that I thought was a given.

When one of the officers brought up sex traf-

ficking some were shocked, "Surely not here?"

This triggered a very visceral memory of a barbecue I once attended with a police officer and his family there on his day off. At some point he found himself in the middle of a basic Q&A. I was standing a little off with his wife. After a few minutes I looked at her and asked, "So, is that really what it's like?" She looked me straight in the eye and said, "No! We have a closed off bathroom right in the garage where Peter\* goes straight to when he comes home from a messy situation to clean up." She elaborated, "Serious car accidents, for example, often trigger vomiting of the injured. Guess who is in the way of that, doing his best to rescue that person? Cuts and broken bones that cut through tissue not only happen to the extremities but often enough to the torso. Just think of what bodily stuff can come from there. Use your imagination. Guess who is right in there trying to determine if that person is still alive? Spousal abuse often times doesn't stop at shouting and yelling. That, too, can get very messy.

All of that and so, so much more unimaginable horror doesn't happen with music tastefully and discreetly drowning out any of the gruesomeness. This doesn't happen on a daily basis, but it happens often enough. When Peter comes home and goes straight to the kids, hugging them or me, or quietly sits beside their bed, I know that he just came home from a traumatic situation. To this day I have no idea how he manages to get through all that but he does and tackles each new day with the same dedication no matter if he is on or off duty, as you can see here for yourself. As much as I fear for his well-being, I do all I can to support him and feel safer because of him."

How does one support when you feel vulnerable because your property, your safe space, has been violated? For some this is as bad as physical rape and it is hard to regain trust in anything or anyone. You don't even need to have had anything happen to you or your property to feel vulnerable. You have two choices: either give up and become bitter and perpetually afraid or be pro-active and (slowly) regain control of your life and everything in it. Surprisingly enough, it can be simple things like installing motion-sensor lights and/or cameras, putting 911 on speed dial or learn a self-defence technique. If you have a case pending investigation, ask every now and then how things are. Talk to people, the RCMP have trained specialists. Take positive action. Ask what you and your social circle can do and then go and do it.

Another point that I was glad to hear is that our law enforcement is very aware of the legal boundaries they observe and make sure not to cross - at times maybe even to some peoples' dismay - but in the long run it is to everyone's benefit.

Also to everyone's benefit, I am sure, is that some of our RCMP are part of a trial group testing body cameras. Mind you, this is not for public judgmental consumption but for everyone's safety and peace of mind.

Bottom line, this Town Hall drove home that life is messy, very messy, and complicated, and that there are no easy fixes for "complicated," but working together towards improvement is a big step in the right direction.

Thank you, Natasha Farrell, Robert Parker and Glen Fraser, for taking the time and patience for this very informative, at times eye-opening event and I wish you and all your colleagues well.

.....**Letters**.....continued from previous page

view in this province & country. Children cannot consent to something that is so life changing and permanent, when we know 80-90% of children grow out of their gender distress, if these harmful practices are not used.

Children, who went through gender affirming care, a regime of hormones and for some invasive surgeries, and who are now young adults, are the strongest voices to challenging the medicalization of other children. These children, are expressing their mental health concerns and internalized homophobia through gender distress, and are caught up in what is now recognized as a "social contagion". Children can make informed decisions about their bodies once they reach maturity.

Due to this false belief, (a man can be a woman because he says he is), men are getting access to our (women and girls) change rooms, bathrooms, services specifically for women, women's prisons, and women's sports to name just some of the obvious intrusions, where violations by men are happening. Our sex based rights to safety, security, dignity, privacy, services and programs based on our sex (not gender) are in jeopardy. There have been many incidents across Canada, and around the world, where male sexual predators have violated women and children because they have gotten access to our private spaces under gender-identity ideology.

Once boys and girls go through puberty physical changes to both sexes are obvious. All a man needs to say is he is a woman, and is allowed to compete against women. This is ruining sports for women and girls. Some sport governing associations are finally coming out with a policy, "fairness and safety for women & girls, over inclusion."

If people, who want to present themselves in genders that don't match their sexed bodies, fill your boots. This does not change your sex.

It is time for governments at all levels to make the safety and security of women and children a priority, and face the reality that Sex Matters.

## Update on New Wireless Service by Municipality

by Adam MacInnis  
**Communications Officer**  
**Municipality of Pictou County**  
**902-485-2240**

Progress is being made to bring reliable high-speed internet to River John despite a few hurdles that had to be overcome along the way.

In April, the MOPC's wireless tower in River John was victim to a theft.

The thief(s) took some copper leads from the tower to the power pole, as well as ground wire to the tower itself. This theft temporarily delayed hooking up power to the tower.

Repairs were quickly made, however, and power has now been connected. In May crews finalized final-stage commissioning.

"There will be a break-in test period of a few weeks, then if all is well, it should be ready for installs to start in the summer." said Scott Hewey, MOPC Broadband Systems Manager.

Residents can sign up to be contacted as soon as wireless is available for them by registering at [https://mopc.uisp.com/crm/\\_plugins/ucrm-client-signup/public.php](https://mopc.uisp.com/crm/_plugins/ucrm-client-signup/public.php)

MOPC FirstHome Wireless Service is \$49.99 plus monthly HST, no contract, and no data cap. Employees will test your signal strength as part of the installation process. You must be able to receive 25 Mbps download and 5 Mbps upload speeds to be eligible for the service.

If all goes according to plan, people in parts of the River John area should also be able to start accessing fibre internet by the end of 2023. You can stay up-to-date on those plans by following MOPC First Home on Facebook.

# River John Volunteer Fire Department

by Krysta Maclellan

River John Fire Department would like to say Congratulations to Robert "Robbie" Heighton Sr. on receiving his 50 years of Service in the department. He has many years of knowledge and has trained many members. Without the older members, we wouldn't have the younger members with the skills to tackle some tough situations. For that, we say Thank you and Congratulations on 50 years with River John Fire.

We would also like to say a huge Thank you for your continued support through the Nova Scotia Firefighters 50/50 Draw. Money we have received through this endeavour has recently allowed us to purchase eight new water backpacks which we use to help put out grass fires and such.



As many know, the province is dealing with forest fires. Please be mindful of fires and make sure you check before you burn! All information is updated at 2 p.m. every day at <https://novascotia.ca/alerts/fire-bans/>. In the event of a local forest fire, Regional Emergency Management Organization (R.E.M.O) has put out a suggestion list of items to pack in the event of an evacuation. Our thoughts are with those who have been affected by the fires and with those fighting the fires. Stay safe!

With warmer weather come swimming, boating, camping and the risks of heat stroke. Just some quick reminders for the summer to wear your sunscreen and also your PFDs when applicable. Check the burn ban before you have a campfire or bonfire and stay hydrated.

Upcoming events for the Fire Department this summer will include such things as:

- 4-wheeler Draw
- Lobster Dinner
- Lucky Duck Race
- Firefighter Competition
- Chicken BBQ

Please keep a lookout for when things get posted. We will also be hosting an Open House July 23rd from 1 p.m.-3 p.m. We look forward to seeing you there.

We would also like to give a quick shout out to the River John Pickleball Group. They have made use of our hall over the past few months, and we would like to congratulate them on breaking ground on their future location at the River John Legion.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION – ITEMS TO GATHER			
No. of vehicles _____	Drivers _____	Trailers _____	Motorcycles _____
<b>15-minute warning:</b>		<b>1-hour warning:</b>	
1. Wallet, purse, keys, glasses	2. Cell phone(s), charger(s)	3. Emergency cash, credit card	4. Pets, carriers, leashes, meds
5. Clothes, shoes, hats for season	6. Hearing aids, medications	7. Flashlights, extra batteries	8. Safety deposit box key(s)
9. Checkbooks, bills to pay	10. _____	11. _____	
<b>30-minute warning:</b>		<b>2-hour+ warning:</b>	
(The above, plus):			
1. Pillows, sleeping bags, blankets	2. Address book, phone list	3. Jewelry & most-valuable personal possessions	4. Personal hygiene items
5. Other meds, supplements	6. First aid kit, medical items	7. Pet food, dishes, bedding, litter	8. Children's items, toys, books
9. Battery radio, extra batteries	10. Toilet paper, hand wipes, soap	11. Clothing for 3 days, shoes	12. Computer, monitor, laptop
13. Gal. jugs of drinking water	14. _____	15. _____	
		1. Albums, photos, home videos	2. Albums, photos, home videos
		3. Family photos on display	4. Military decorations, records, mementoes, plaques
		5. Luggage (packed)	6. Valuable items, cameras
		7. Heirlooms, art, collections	8. Primary cosmetics
		9. Secondary vehicles, RV	10. Camping equipment, tent
		11. Journals, diaries, letters	12. _____

## News from River John Legion

by Mike Topley, President

We are proud of the newest addition to the Legion's property. This is the (under construction) 3-court pickleball facility which will be located adjacent to our side parking area entrance off Roger Road. Plans and fund-raising have been ongoing for close to two years and the River John Pickleball Club signed a Partnership Agreement with the Legion in March of this year. A contract has recently been awarded to Maritime Tennis Court Builders, and work has begun, with the aim of a soft opening by August. Grand opening details to follow. When completed, the pickleball facility will be open to the community, based on either an annual membership or limited day-play usage.

Our Legion was fortunate enough to be on the receiving end of one of the IOOF Oddfellows Helping Hand Lodge's 145th year celebration projects. The re-building of our front entrance planters was one of several community projects the Oddfellows undertook as part of their celebration. The heavy timber planters were in an advanced state of deterioration, so the Oddfellows removed the rotting timbers and replaced them with new timbers just in time for spring planting. Many thanks from Legion veterans and members.

In keeping with our efforts to maintain our Remembrance Gardens in tip-top shape, a major work bee was organized for the last Saturday in May. Some 12 to 15 Legion members, along with several executive members of the River John Pickleball Club descended on the grounds with rakes, shovels and wheelbarrows for a post-Fiona spring cleanup. Tree damage was extensive and several stumps were removed, courtesy of excavator work by Gary Johnson and backhoe/trailer work by Willis Langille. Harley White's truck/trailer and Melanie Cote's all-purpose field vehicle made dozens of trips carrying broken tree limbs to a (future) burn pile. A nice lunchtime burger BBQ was enjoyed by the hungry workers.

This brings us to looking forward to summer activities including karaoke every Saturday evening, regular cribbage and washer toss days, (date/times will be announced,) Read by the Sea, and Festival Days activities. Hope to see everyone out.

# River John and Area Historical Society

by Beulah Wright

Thank goodness for spring! Time to open the Heritage Museum, dust off the artifacts, hang a few things back up, find spaces to add the artifacts donated this winter and welcome visitors from near and far to view our holdings, look up family history and hear some stories of our past. The recent years, dealing with COVID, have been a little trying, but we managed to stay open every year, although with reduced hours and always following guidelines for health and safety. The support of our local people kept us going and we received many more donations of artifacts. Last summer, things were relaxing a bit and visitor attendance was up, and we are hoping for a nearly-back-to-normal experience in 2023. We are pondering on some projects and offerings, maybe a used book sale and a return of "Let's Talk - about River John."

But we are faced with a problem.

We are desperate for new members for the Historical Society. We are all volunteers, we are all getting older (!) We hold regular meetings, usually at the Museum, and are willing to adjust times and dates to fit most schedules. The meetings are fun and interesting, and with all the new residents in River John, surely there are some people who would like to join us, learn some of our local history and become a part of our great community. New people bring new ideas!

With the guidance and assistance of the Pictou and Antigonish Regional Library, we are embarking on an exciting new project – digitization of museum holdings. At the museum there are hundreds

of files that no one gets to see, unless there is a specific request. Some of these documents are too fragile and tattered to be handled. We have many binders full of printed material. We also have lots of material that is one-copy only, with no way of replacing, if a loss occurred. If these are digitized and put online, hopefully the public will be aware of their existence and then able to ask to view the originals if they are interested. This is a new concept for us and there are many details to be worked out, but I think it is a worthwhile project, and as we learn more, we will let you know.

We are very proud of our museum. We have made many improvements - with our foundation repairs, new heat pump - to allow us to keep our artifacts at a consistent temperature, and have replaced most of the windows - three more to go, and a ramp and stairs to be replaced in the near future. We have great local support and so many people have entrusted their artifacts to our care, which we appreciate.

Yay! River John!

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# IOOF and Rebekah News

by Jacob Leegwater

Hello to our Pioneer readers. Since our last report from Helping Hand Lodge #34 IOOF and Frazee Rebekah Lodge #33, we initiated three new members and accepted three members as associates to Helping Hand. Brother Willis Langille has been very busy getting photos of past Noble Grands to be put up in the downstairs hall. When they are all there, there should be at least 40. All the interior work on the hall is complete except for a good cleaning and painting.

This year we are celebrating our 145th Anniversary. We have a banner on the front of the hall, which looks really good. As part of our celebrations, Brothers Willis Langille, Steven Craib and Jacob Leegwater planted a flowering crab tree next to our bench which had been our gift to the Bissell Park for our 140th Anniversary.

On March 30, District #17 meeting was held at Eastern Star Lodge #1 in Pictou, with District Deputy Grand Master Brother Michel MacKenzie presiding. As this was our spring meeting, nominations for District Deputy Grand Master were called for. Since the three lodges in our district take turns, Brother Robert Dwyer will be assuming this position for the next year.

On May 12 and 13, Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly Sessions were held at the "Inn on Prince" in Truro. One of the highlights was that Brother Dan Ferguson was elevated to the position of Deputy Grand Master, just one step away from Grand Master. At the Rebekah Assembly, Sister Joanne Ferguson was installed as District Deputy President for Districts 9 and 10. Brother Jacob Leegwater was appointed as Grand Chaplain, for the eighth time.

Both the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs provided funds for graduation exercises at Tatamagouche Regional Academy and Northumberland Regional High School, for students in the River John Area.

We sold tickets on three draws for 10 pounds of market lobsters to be drawn on June 17, just in time for Father's Day. During the months of January and February we were selling tickets on a selection of gift cards valued at \$600. Winner of this prize was Gwen Langille of Pictou. Thanks to all who supported us in this endeavour.

During the weekend of June 1-4, some of our members will be travelling to Ottawa to participate in laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on behalf of the Jurisdiction of the Atlantic Provinces of the IOOF. The Odd Fellows are the only fraternal group to be represented besides the military. From our two lodges will be Brothers Willis Langille, Dan Ferguson, Peter Richardson, Brian Emoff, and Rod Hayman, and Sisters Greta Langille and Margaret Langille as well as Brother Terry Hubey of Liberty Lodge #120, Tatamagouche.

We hope to see a large turnout for Festival Days breakfast on Thursday July 27 for ham, fried eggs and toast.

Also of note, the Maritime Odd Fellows Home in Pictou is celebrating its 100th birthday on July 5, from 1-3 p.m., with the Kilted Chef in attendance at the bar-b-que. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Hope you all have a pleasant and relaxing summer.

Odd Fellows meet every Monday at 7:30 p.m., except July and August.

Rebekahs meet 2nd and 4th Friday of the month at 2 p.m. except July and August. New members are always welcomed.



Brothers Willis Langille and Steven Craib, having planted a flowering crab tree to commemorate the 145th Anniversary of IOOF.

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## North Shore to "Test Drive" RuralCarpool Website

by Michael Jensen

The joys of North Shore living are many, but the occasional long car trips to Truro, New Glasgow, or Halifax are not among those joys. Such round trips might cost \$20 to \$80, just in gas alone, not to mention the carbon dioxide emissions. In regions like ours, travel pretty much requires driving yourself, since there are so few taxis, buses or trains between towns. The business models of Uber or Lyft don't work with low population densities and long distances; it's just too costly to make economic sense.

The problem of rural transit has frustrated Michael Jensen, former sustainable farmer and Internet innovator, since he and his wife Susan moved to West Branch, in 2007. Living several kilometers down a gravel road, 30 minutes from the nearest grocery store, Michael and Susan had to face those transit costs, both in money and in CO2 pollution. Now living outside Tatamagouche and officially "retired," (he says with air quotes), Jensen has been able to focus his attention on the problem of rural transit, including its carbon emissions. RuralCarpool.com is his part of a solution.

"We here on the North Shore tend to plan our longer trips. A medical appointment or a Costco run, or just to make a major grocery trip to a superstore: these trips are both expensive and time-consuming, so people plan ahead." Jensen sees that as an opportunity for coordination. "RuralCarpool provides an online space for rural folks to self-organize shared travel," he explains. "It's carpooling, for the wider community. As a driver, you can post an upcoming trip for someone else to join, or join someone else's trip to, say, Halifax. Each trip has its own Trip Chat space, so you can plan with other travelers where and when you're going, and how to make the trip work. When the trip happens, two travelers split the cost in half. If there's a third traveler, the travel cost is divided into thirds.

Jensen and his team have produced a full-featured demonstration site which allows anyone to take on a trial identity to view upcoming trips, see possible available trips, and experiment with the trip chats and working statistics. To check out the demo, go to [RuralCarpool.com](http://RuralCarpool.com). After trying it out, Jensen hopes you'll sign up for the launch of the real RuralCarpool site in late June.



#### The Rural Transit Problem:

- ☹ Long Distances
- ☹ Low Population Density
- ☹ Only Occasional Trips
- ☹ No Taxis, Buses, Trains
- ☹ High Fuel Prices....

#### A Rural Transit Solution:

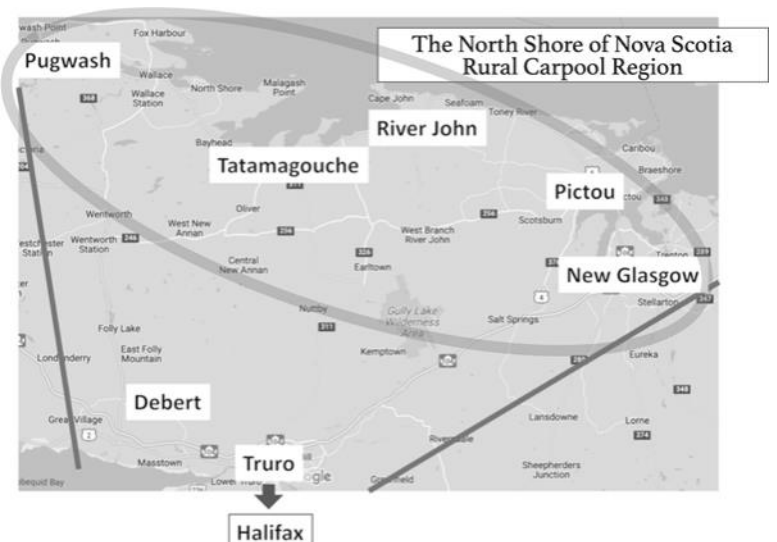
- ☺ Local Self-Organizing
- ☺ Trip Sharing and Cost Sharing
- ☺ Easy Planning
- ☺ Free Membership
- ☺ Save \$\$\$ and CO2!

Jensen feels the North Shore is the perfect size and distance to discover if the system works as well in real life as it does in the demo.

"We are serious about that 'self-organizing' part, and provide easy tools to build the best trip possible. For example, if a driver wants her trip to be a women-only trip, or a classical-music-only trip, or a French-only trip, that's up to the members themselves. Rural Carpool helps organize a good carpool experience with your friends and nearby neighbours."

Members do not pay anything to RuralCarpool. Jensen emphasizes that RuralCarpool is not a taxi service, not for emergencies, and cannot be anyone's part-time job. "It's just people sharing the trip and its costs. The driver pays his/her share too."

What does the future hold for RuralCarpool? "We hope people on the North Shore sign up, start sharing rides, and start saving money and CO2. I want to know how to make this project work for the North Shore. We plan to add carpooling tools for special events, and for commuters, after we have the outreach tools solidly in place. Of course, we want to expand to other communities. If people used it all over the province, then we could be saving serious money and CO2, and strengthening our communities while we're at it."



## River John Recreation and Development Association

**by Ashley Langille  
Community Coordinator & RJR Volunteer**

River John and Area Recreation and Development Association (RJR) envisions a physically active and healthy community.

Our mission statement reads: Facilitating and supporting community initiatives focusing on physical activity and well-being. On that same note, our organizational values include physical activity, networking, community development, and volunteerism. Our funding is obtained through small grants, fundraising efforts, and donations. The members of River John Rec are all volunteers and are community-based. The group has a treasurer, secretary, director, and many volunteers committed to seeing the community thrive.

Since its inception, River John Rec, as community members know it, has been run as a not-for-profit organization. All incoming funds contribute to our operating budget, which employs a local individual as our Community Coordinator. Additionally, our budget funds the community ball field maintenance, landscaping equipment, electricity, and office overhead. The budget also funds community events such as picnics, beach days, holiday events for children, outdoor festivals and carnivals, ball tournaments, summer day camps, and the Meals On Wheels program for local seniors.

The River John and Area Recreation and Development Association began in 1977. Its founding members sought an organized approach to community development, focusing on projects to increase physical activity, organized sports and general health through socialization, exercise, and healthy living initiatives. An essential asset in the community is our recreational ball field. In 1979, Colonel Daniel Sutherland, a local veteran and community member, donated the land where the community ball field sits today. As such, the field is named in

his memory. The ball field allows locals to enjoy ball tournaments in spring and summer. It is also for many community events which are held there. RJR works hard to make the space accessible to all community members and groups, including during River John Festival Days. Additionally, you will often find the local 4-H clubs holding tug-o-war competitions. It is also used to hold strong man competitions, and on the weekends, you often see groups of kids playing in the grassy areas; it fills our hearts to see children having the opportunity to play safely outdoors at their local parks. We also hold the lease to Bissell Park, located in the heart of our village. It is good to see our community working together to make the park a special place for families to gather. We work alongside the River John Community Action Society and tireless community members to continue the park's upkeep, including power and landscaping. In closing, thank you to Joanne Wilkins for your dedicated contributions to RJR over the last two decades. Her dedication has built RJR into the successful association it is today. Despite some challenges, Joanne has always fostered a safe and fun learning space for our kids and always went above and beyond for our community. Joanne has touched the lives of many in her role; this year's summer students continue to speak fondly of her. We congratulate her on her retirement from Community Coordinator & RJR Board and we look forward to seeing her around in the village. Lastly, River John Recreation is always looking for volunteers, and we have spots available on the Executive Board if anyone is up to having fun with us! Contact me to see how your skills can benefit RJR.

*Editor's note: if you notice how well our village public spaces such as Bissell Park, the ball field, Legion Memorial Gardens, etc. are maintained, you can thank the summer students co-ordinated by RJR*

## Join the River John Community Action Society and make a difference

**by Gillian Joudrie, Secretary**

The River John Community Action Society (RJCAS) is a group of volunteers who help to make big things happen in our small community.

This group helps to look after Bissell Park, including grounds, washroom, benches, deck and dock. Roger's Landing also falls under the hat of RJCAS, including securing funding for the creation and upkeep.

The group makes financial donations to other community groups, including the River John Festival Days Committee, to help with their week-long event, and the Lions Club Christmas Dinner; also, it employs a Recreation Committee summer student to help with park maintenance and day camp.

Here are just a few things that RJCAS has done or will be doing this year:

- Launched the Facilities Spreadsheet / Community Bulletin in partnership with River John Recreation.
- Put in place the docks at Bissell Park and Roger's Landing for another season.
- Cleaned up Bissell Park after the long, wet winter months.
- Working on creating new River John Welcome signs and park signage.

- Hiring a cleaner to clean the washroom in Bissell Park and keep the park and Roger's Landing tidy.
- In partnership with River John Recreation, sharing responsibility for upkeep and maintenance of the park.

RJCAS meets at the Lions Den on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. (except July & August). All village and area residents are welcome to attend, and new members are encouraged to join. Your input and participation would be greatly appreciated!

RJCAS would like to give a huge thank you to Chuck Cox of "Mud, Mulch and More" for his donation of sand, compost and soil to beautify the rock garden and raised bed at Bissell Park. Also, thank you to Helen George, Julie Windebank and Eric Olgivie for replacing the rocks in the rock garden, weeding and tidying it up. Also, thanks to the River John Garden Club for replanting the raised bed beneath the River John sign.

Furthermore, come on out to the River John Festival Days Lobster Crate Run on July 29th. We'll be hosting a BBQ at Bissell Park in partnership with the Lions Club and River John Recreation. All profits will go towards supporting our community. See you there!

## River John & District Lions Club

**by Anne Patriquin, President**

We have been busy with helping individuals where needed. We are also busy cleaning up around our building and the Lions Childrens Park. We are hoping to get the fence fixed at the park, as well as adding a swing for handicapped children before the fall.

Our Annual Chicken BBQ will take place on Sunday, July 2nd, starting at 11 a.m. until sold out. The price is the same as last year, \$15.00 large and \$10.00 small.

We made a donation to Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides in Memory of Lion Allister MacKenzie. We also made a donation to St. Georges Presbyterian Church in memory of Lion Don Redmond. Both these Lions were Charter members and with the club for over 50 years. Rest in Peace boys till we meet again.

We would like to thank everyone for your continued support and dropping off your bottles and cans at our club. Also thank you for supporting our Radio Bingo.

Our purpose is  
"We Serve."

## River John Square Knitters

**by Netta Heukshorst**

Since our article in last fall's edition of the Pioneer, where it was mentioned that the cost of shipping a bundle of 60 knitted squares was about \$47, imagine our surprise and shock when more bundles were ready to mail out and the cost was now over \$100 a bundle! This was due to no more shipping by surface mail, only airmail now to South Africa. Needless to say, nothing was mailed out at that time. Other avenues were explored such as Fed Ex, UPS, Purolator, but it is all airmail and very expensive. Other countries are experiencing the same problem.

So, did we stop knitting? Of course not. We just kept sewing the squares into blankets, big and small, to share locally. Last fall, several were given to palliative care consult nurse, Martha Ferguson, for palliative care patients. On April 26th, nine beautiful blankets were delivered to Third Place Transition House in Truro where they were gratefully received. On May 22nd, seven were delivered to Maplewood Manor in Tatamagouche for the residents there.

As you can see, we happily keep stitching away and give locally with love.

We keep in touch with Canada Post, hoping that surface mail will once again be an option.

Donations of yarn and needles are always gratefully accepted and may be left with Wilma at the River John library. The knitters meet there each Friday morning from 10-12. All knitters and crocheters are welcome to join, it is free. Yarn and needles can be provided.

Knit, smile and be kind always.

# Happenings at the River John Library

**by Wilma van der Veen**  
**Managing Branch Assistant**

## Ongoing programming

*Arts & Crafts workshop series*  
*1st Saturday of the month*

Since the last edition of the Pioneer, we have had the following workshops: Upcycling household items (March 4th), Felting with Gillian Crawford of Lismore Sheep Farm (April 1st), Pebble Art with Diane Spurvey (May 6th), and Leatherworks with Eric Fisher, (June 3rd). On June 24th we will have Marg Jones demonstrating circular knitting machines. There will be no regular monthly workshops in July, August or September. Let us know what arts & crafts you are interested in learning and we will try to find someone to teach it.

*Gardening workshop series*  
*2nd Saturday of the month*

Gardening is now in full swing. Following the seed ordering session in February, we had our 2nd annual seed swap in March, with a second swap in April. Next was the 2nd annual seedling exchange in May. In June, a workshop was to mark Pollinator week. June 19-25, a global event to raise awareness of the dire situation facing our pollinators upon which we depend. The Garden Club is meeting again and if there is any aspect of gardening that you would like to learn about let us know and we will try to organize a workshop on the topic.

*Fix-It Café series of workshops*  
*3rd Saturday of the month*

There has been lots of interest in our fix-it café series. A presentation on Backup Power systems with Colin Barr, a representative of Clean NS, was held in February. In March, we had two volunteer fixers helping patrons do basic fixes to their lamps; thank you to Bob MacKenzie & Paul Baron. In April, Darrell MacNeill of Papa Ds auto repair shop in Scotsburn, facilitated a basic auto maintenance workshop which was very much appreciated by all. In May, Andrew Morrow of Earltown Edge ran a workshop on basic knife and garden tool sharpening, also very popular. Future events will cover safe use of power tools, tool kits for the home, and more auto maintenance. We are always looking for fixers; if you know some trades persons who might volunteer some time to help others, please have them get in touch. We are always looking for ideas for what needs fixing. Note: Fix-It Café is on hiatus for July & August.

*Sewing Club*  
*2nd Wednesday of each month*

Bring along your sewing; Alice Smart, seamstress extraordinaire, will be able to guide you through the next steps in your project. Bring your own machine or use the one available for use in the library. 10 a.m.–12 p.m., until end of August

*Monthly Book Clubs*

1) The River John Library Book Club meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month, 4 p.m.

2) The River John Library Banned Books Book Club meet the 1st Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m. Suitable for young people and adults.

For teens who enjoy reading, we are preparing to organize a teen book club. Expressions of interest are welcome.

*Language conversation clubs*

Spanish meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month. French meets the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month

Not for beginners; some ability to converse in the language is required. Part knowledge, part self-confidence, we provide a comfortable place to learn, make mistakes and share some laughs. For a refresher: practice using a free online language course, e.g. Duo Lingo), start watching Spanish or French tv shows and movies and use subtitles to help you learn the language, or take out some children's books.

*"Did you know" Facebook posts*

For social media users, each Wednesday we post a weekly "Did you Know," identifying one of the many services our library provides. Don't forget to check these out and see what the library has to offer.

## Special programs

Newcomer Meet & Greet: A second RJ Newcomer Meet & Greet, organized by the RJ Welcome Committee and RJ Library, is scheduled for June 20. Representatives from various community organizations are on hand to inform new residents of various clubs and activities in which they may wish to participate.

## Upcoming programs

Calling RJ artists and artisans: The Library is seeking local artwork from River John and surrounding areas for display in our glass cabinet in the library. There is limited space. Call for more information, 902-351-2599, or to pick up an application package.

Lego at the Library: Friday afternoons, 2-5pm. Suitable for all ages, young and old. Let's see how creative we can be! Anyone into a bit of friendly design competition?

Board games are now available for loan at the library with your library card. They must be returned to our branch.

## Children's programs

This summer we will be hosting several children's author readings.

Scheduled so far: Carolyn J Morris, author of "Lucy's Lamb" & "Into Town", June 28, 10-11 a.m.

Megan Coffin, author of The Adventures of Sneaky Snake, July 26, 10-11 a.m.

August: Dawn Peters, author of Ozzy The Incredible Wonder Cat (date still to be determined).

The library is looking for ideas for children's programs, beginning in the fall. (Guardians must be present).

## Note:

Some programming takes a break during the summer months.

Astronomy and Afternoon tea/coffee time are on hiatus until mid- October. Be sure to check parl.ns.ca or riverjohn.com websites for event notices. Unless noted as 'drop in,' it is always best to register for a program since space is limited.

Remember all programs are free; all you need is a library card. You can register online for a card at parl.ns.ca, or drop in the library. There is something for everyone; reach out and tell us what you might be looking for; we are always looking for suggestions for workshops and activities, book or DVD purchases. A world of exploration, ideas and learning awaits.



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"Helping You Join Your Hands and Hearts"

## Are You a Friend of the River John Library?

**by Linda Little**

Well, good, because the library needs more Friends. The Friends of the River John Library look after the building and grounds and supply wish-list extras like new shelving units. Originally, the group held the mortgage which allowed construction of the new building to go ahead back in 2001 but that mortgage was paid off several years ago. This leaves routine maintenance management duties and no fundraising worries for the board. If you can spare a few hours a year to sit on this board you can expect 5-7 meetings a year. These meetings are about an hour long and always include at least two good laughs, often more. This is your chance to make an important contribution to the beautiful, vibrant heart of the village that is the River John Library. If you can help, please leave your contact information at the library or email [gunnrbaker@gmail.com](mailto:gunnrbaker@gmail.com).

## Save Our Old Forests (SOOF) Campaign

**by Bernadette MacDonald**

The North Shore Chapter of the Council of Canadians (COC) is joining forces with other concerned citizens across Nova Scotia to help protect the remaining old forests on crown land across the province.

The North Shore COC Members and Friends will be circulating a petition over the summer that reads:

*WHEREAS our Government has committed in law to protecting 20% of Nova Scotia's lands and waters by 2030 but is continuing to permit logging of old forests of high conservation value on Crown land,*

*THEREFORE we, the undersigned residents of Nova Scotia, call upon the Premier to pause all harvesting and road building activities in forests over 80 years old on Crown land in Cumberland, Colchester, and Pictou Counties until such time as 20% of Nova Scotia's lands have been permanently protected.*

The campaign is also encouraging individuals, not-for-profits, and businesses to add their names and logos to the SOOF website as a supporter. Website is SOOF supporter. There are currently over 40 logos, and we would love to add your North Shore logo to the SOOF website! There is power in numbers and every show of support counts. Please send the logo in .jpg or .png formats to [soof@arlingtonforestprotection.ca](mailto:soof@arlingtonforestprotection.ca)

Locally you can contact the North Shore Council of Canadians at 402-480-2794 or [susanestephen@icloud.com](mailto:susanestephen@icloud.com)

# The Acorn Doesn't Fall Far From the Tree

by Maggie Howatt

I guess I became interested in growing oaks after I read *Restoring the Acadian Forest* (2008) by Jamie Simpson, and realized our wood lot had just one red oak on it and a young one at that, only about 6 feet tall.

My youngest sister was growing trees in Ontario for various conservation areas and she got me started.

So off I went one fall day hunting for acorns. With her guidance I knew enough not to choose anything with a hole, cracked or a tight cap. I probably gathered a few hundred, took them home and proofed them in a bucket of water; it's a general rule that if they float, they likely are rotten, have a worm or a crack. A close examination can usually eliminate any bad ones. I closed them up in a plastic bag with damp shavings and stuck them in the fridge for the winter, a process called stratification. That was the start.

Around March I started checking them for signs of growth. A little tendril will start poking its way out of the pointy end, the beginning of a root. This tells me I can stick them in soil and get them started on their long journey to maturity. I had the opportunity to grow these tiny seedlings in a greenhouse in newspaper pots and was astonished at how many thrived. Suddenly I had a couple of hundred oaks to plant. Before I sent them out into the cruel world of wind and sun, they needed to be hardened off. So, I set them under a shelter of fir boughs and gradually exposed them to the great outdoors. After a week or so of removing sections of greenery, I started planting them - and planting them and planting them.

I finally had to create a small plantation in a section of field, and the rest I heeled in the garden for another time, maybe to finish planting in the fall, as summer was well underway.

That experiment was so successful that I have been gathering acorns ever since but I only start a few and the rest I plunk directly in the ground. Any opening in the canopy or rotten stump is as good a place as any. I wait a year or two and see what pops up. It's a wonderful surprise to walk along and suddenly a bit of red catches my eye as I stumble upon another little oak pushing its way up. I am abashed to admit I sometimes forget where I've pushed an acorn in and suddenly, I have two or three growing mere inches away from each other.

The damage from Hurricane Fiona has provided many openings in the canopy, so I started 50 or more oaks this past spring and am almost finished getting them into the ground. I grew this bunch in milk cartons, tall enough and easy to cut open for planting. We have our own little greenhouse now so by May, I was able to start planting.

The mighty oak tree is a key species, in that entire ecosystems depend on it for habitat survival.

One source states that oak acorns provide food for more than 100 vertebrate species of wildlife and the tree itself provides shelter for many birds, insects and mammals, from birds to bears. Over 500 species of caterpillars are supported by oaks, which

contribute to the diet of birds and animals. Most years, years of huge acorn production, guarantee food for squirrels, mice, birds, deer, bear and other foragers of the forest. This also ensures enough seed for future oak trees. Like many species, oaks are struggling and threatened by population growth, climate change and invasive species.

The vast majority of acorns that fall (millions) over the lifetime of the tree either die or get eaten. The tree typically starts to produce acorns at around 20 years old, but 50 years old is not unusual for the first crop. The average 100-year-old tree will provide over 2,000 to 10,000 acorns per year with the mast production occurring every 4 to 10 years, depending on conditions. The reason for this remains a bit of a mystery, with theories related to climate change, amount of rainfall, harsh summers or availability of pollinating winds. There are many species of oak and they have been around for millions of years. A 56-million-year-old fossil was



Oak Seedlings grown in milk cartons

discovered in what is now Austria. Given an opportunity, oaks are a long-lived tree, reaching the great age of 400 years. It will grow a foot a year, and the canopy captures and slows rainfall which helps prevent soil erosion. Because it is deep rooted, it is less likely to blow over, unlike the mature maples, yellow birch, iron wood and beech that are lying flat in our woods.

One of the key ingredients to a successful planting is to have hole deep enough to allow that tap root to reach down.

Indigenous people everywhere also used acorns as a food source, grinding it into soup, mush and flour. Evidence found in archeological sites shows acorns were used as food for over 9,000 years.

The acorn emerges green and by the second year they turn brown and drop to the ground in the fall. The red and white oak is the most common in Nova Scotia, with over 500 known species in the world.

It was also used in shipbuilding, furniture, flooring, and in barrels for aging and storing wine and whiskey.

So next time you are raising a glass, think of that mighty oak and all it provides.

# Fiona and Our Cemeteries

by Mary Beth Sutherland & Julie Windebank with thanks to Minnie Cormier

I will admit; I didn't think of our local cemeteries after Hurricane Fiona last September, but I am glad others had it on their radar once they had their own properties cleaned up.

Walking through the Bellevue Cemetery, you would see the old trees standing tranquil and graceful guard over the final resting place of citizens of our village.

The cemetery was established in 1878 and records of the cemetery date back to 1882. Many of our ancestors, who originally built the community we now call home, are in their final resting place there. So much history: some born in far-off countries who came to live and died here, some who moved away and came back, so many children who died before the development of antibiotics and vaccines, family names no longer heard here, names of families still very much active here, the names of survivors and those who did not return from two World Wars. One marker bears the name of Fred Crawley; it is believed he was the first black resident of the village. Mr Crawley jumped ship and swam ashore, and hid on the Mountain Rd until he was declared lost: a "run-away slave". He stayed, and was given a parcel of land where he had a home. He played and made fiddles, and was well-liked in the community.

The trees have been there a very long time. But after September 23rd, as in the rest of our region, there's a lot of destruction in Bellevue Cemetery. Great trees fell around old grave sites, and along the roadway that loops around allowing access to the many burial spots, there was chaos. Amazingly there was minimal damage to the gravestones and somehow, many trees are still standing. Great volunteers, Charles Haliburton and Earl Johnson, spent many hours cutting trees and gathering up brush, restoring order. But there was also a need to bring in paid workers and their equipment to deal with the destruction.

Associations managing cemeteries sell burial plots and perpetual care, investing the money for future care of land and burial sites. For the Bellevue Cemetery Association, this might bring in \$1000-1500 annually. The cost of plots and care has not changed much in the past twenty years, while the price for gas and machinery has definitely gone up, as we all know.

Damage from Post-Tropical Storm Fiona, which has been described as the strongest storm to ever hit Canada, and the most costly weather event to hit Atlantic Canada, is beyond the regular annual maintenance funds of a small village volunteer group. The cost for Fiona clean-up already exceeds \$4000.

Restoration work in Bellevue Cemetery was last conducted in 1986. Work including drainage im-

..... Continued on page 26.....

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*Cemeteries.....continued from previous page .....*

provement, stone repairs and other work was completed with the help of donations from people in the village and across Canada. It's time again to ask for help.

This spring, the River John Garden Club has worked to clean up and install plants around the stone name sign at the entrance. Volunteers will be tidying up around plots and memorial stones. Shrubs need trimming to keep from obscuring names and dates, and some small "volunteer" trees which are encroaching need to be cut to prevent damage. Some stones need raising, repair, leveling and cleaning.

While we are so grateful for the hard work of volunteers, there is a much greater need this year for funds to cover the repair work following Fiona. If you have family laid to rest in the cemetery, please consider contributing financially. If you know of family members living away who may wish to contribute to this work, please pass along our request. We are looking after this beautiful and historic cemetery for our families, for those who are no longer living, and for those family members who have moved away. At this time, we need your help.

How to Donate:

Bellevue and Extension Cemetery Association  
c/o Robin Campbell,  
PO Box 83, River John NS B0K1N0  
bellevuehamilton@gmail.com



## St John's Anglican Church News

**by Rev. John Morrell**

Two events last month brought the community together for desserts and song. On May 20th, Jocelyn Heighton and her many helpers organized a Dessert Cafe and plant sale, as well as baking and book tables. Also, a raffle for a quilt, two wooden Adirondack chairs or a braided wool rug began and the winners will be announced at the Village Open Churches on Monday, July 24th. Raffle tickets are available from Dana Jefferson (902-351-3224).

On Sunday May 28th, a successful Gospel Concert was held in the church with many local singers and players. Proceeds are being collected for urgent roof repairs caused by Hurricane Fiona.

The Festival Ecumenical Service on Sunday July 23rd at Salem United is being organized by St John's Anglican Church. Guest speaker will be the Reverend Jeanne Hunter of Fox Harbour. Reverend Jeanne is originally from Calgary and recently moved to Nova Scotia. She is currently Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of St. George's, New Glasgow, as well as Worship Leader at the recent Synod of the Anglican Diocese of NSPEI.

At the beginning of River John Festival Week, on Monday July 24th, the three churches in River John and the River John Museum will have Open Houses. This is part of an Open Churches initiative of Heritage Nova Scotia.

## Salem United Church News

**by Rev Connie McNamara**

I love summer, so this is my favourite time of year as the days get warmer and longer, and of course, a few weeks of impending vacation is an added bonus! The warmth and the length of days also reminds me of the 'spark' of the Spirit that we celebrated on Pentecost Sunday, May 28th. Our worship that day was filled with joy in who we are as a church in this community, and encouragement for all who attended to let that spark lead us to be more, and to do more in ways of compassion and care. For the spark of the Spirit is not only as a visual connection to our faith, it is also an impetus for movement and activity, helping and caring, enabling and sharing.

Indeed, the spark of the Spirit is much needed in our church these days as attendance is low and financial support is lagging after COVID. In the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona, our building is in need of extensive repairs to the basement, the steeple, the windows, and the exterior. The costs are high for these major undertakings. Serious consideration must be given to the usefulness of such a huge building being home to only twenty people gathered in worship for an hour on Sunday mornings. Being good stewards of our limited resources is an important part of ministry, and the time has come to ask the hard questions and then strive to discern the best way forward.

If you have not ever been inside our building, or if it has been a little while since your last visit, we invite you to drop in as we participate in "Doors Open for Churches" through the Nova Scotia Heritage Trust, during River John Festival Days. Salem UC, along with St. George's PC and St. John the Baptist AC, will all have their doors open on Monday, July 24th, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Please stop in to all three churches - see the historical artifacts, find a moment of peace in the sanctuary, and engage with one of our member hosts.



Ruth Baillie, Janice Jollymore, Jean Holt. In back, Beulah Wright, Ian MacLean

It is certainly my hope that the spark of the Spirit may reside within our church, our community, and each of us as individuals, throughout the summer and beyond, enabling us to take on the challenges, celebrate the joys, support one another in the sorrows, and give thanks always for the blessings that come our way.



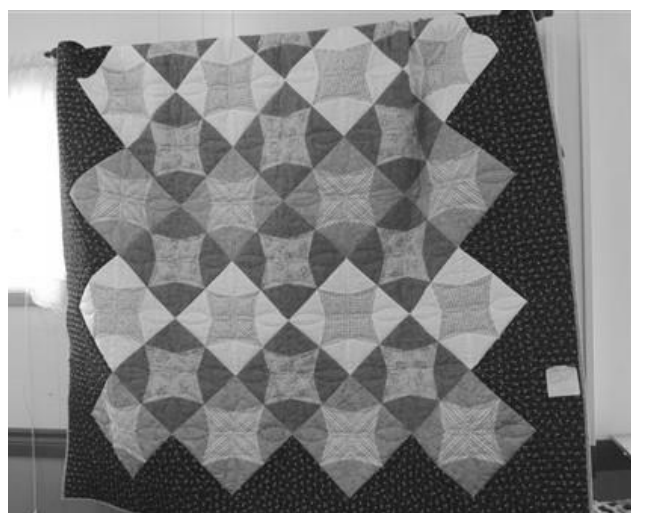
Linda Thompson-Reid, Joan MacLeod, Janice Thompson & Minnie Cormier, all dressed in red for Pentecost



Enjoying desserts at the Dessert Cafe



Baked goods



Raffle quilt

# Presbyterian Church News

by Rev Enjei Roni

Our churches have a few activities that are coming up as follows:

Church Services:

St. David's Presbyterian Church, Toney River:  
Every Sunday at 9.30 a.m.

St. George's Presbyterian Church, River John:  
Every Sunday at 11 a.m.

Vacation Bible School:

July 3-7 St. George's, River John

July 17 St. David's, Toney River

St. David's, Toney River: July 16th at 6.30 p.m.

Beach Service at Toney River Beach.

St. George's Atlantic Mission Society, RJ. Service of Praise: September 24 at 7 p.m.

Join us at St. George's Presbyterian Church on Sunday, September 24, at 7 p.m. for a Service of Praise. Special musical guests will be the choir from Little Harbour Presbyterian Church, under the direction of Margaret Weir. Freewill offerings will be gratefully accepted to support Mission Projects of the Atlantic Mission Society, sent from the St. George's Atlantic Mission Society Auxiliary. Light refreshments to follow afterwards in the church hall. Everyone Welcome.



Elder Lola Swantee (centre) accepting her certificate from Rev. Enjei Achah (left) and Elder Cindy Langille (right) on May 11, 2023.

by Cindy Langille

St. George's Presbyterian Church would like to extend warm congratulations to our local graduates Chase Tattrie, Victoria Langille, Mikayla Redmond, Shaila Stewart, Spencer White and Levi MacKinnon. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours! Sincere apologies to anyone we may have missed.

I would like to congratulate my aunt, Iola Swantee, on receiving the recognition of Elder Emeritus, for extraordinary and faithful devotion to the leadership and pastoral care and oversight of the St. George's Presbyterian congregation. She certainly deserves it for all of her service over the years.

On April 30, 2023, the St. George's Presbyterian Church Family had the privilege of recognizing Elders Earl Johnson and Henry Forward for their 50 years of faithful service glorifying our Saviour Jesus Christ. They were both ordained on Henry's birthday, April 1, 1973. Congratulations to you both!

River John Vacation Bible School will be held at St. George's Presbyterian Church July 3-7, 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. All children are welcome to attend. Children three years and under will have to bring their adult, please. Pre-registration is not necessary but I am happy to take your child(ren)'s name and age on Messenger or by text or phone, (902) 899-5302. A more detailed registration will take place on-site between 8:30 and 9 a.m. each morning for newcomers.



Rev. Enjei Achah, Elder Henry Forward, Elder Earl Johnson

# World Day of Prayer 2023

by Marjorie Fraser

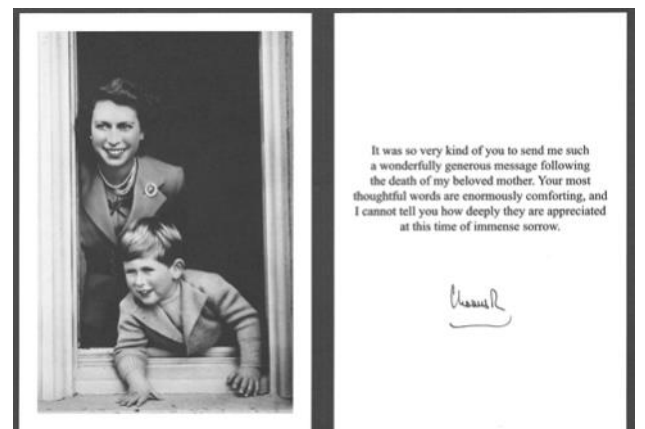
Thanks to all the churches - Salem United, St. George's, St. John's in River John, St. Michael's in Brule and St. David's in Toney River, who were involved in the World Day of Prayer, which was scheduled to be held at St. David's on February 3, 2023. Due to the snow storm, the service was cancelled. Information was sent to the Women's Inner Church Council of Canada, in Toronto. Donations totalling \$165 were sent, also the name of the contact person for the following year.

The World Day of Prayer planned for March 3, 2024, will be held at Salem United, River John. Contact person is Cathe MacLean. The country is Palestine. Thank you!

# The Queen's Passing

by Rev. John Morrell

On Sunday, September 25th, the Reverend John Morrell organized a Community Memorial Service for Queen Elizabeth II. Hurricane Fiona resulted in the service being cancelled, however Rev. John had circulated large sympathy cards through the churches, library and drug store. These were sent off to Buckingham Palace in mid-October and this Thank You card was received by him on June 9th.



# Times Have Changed

by Mary Beth Sutherland

While Joan Sutherland was watching the coronation of King Charles III on May 6th, 2023, she was thinking back to his late mother's coronation in 1953. The two events were 70 years apart with similarities and yet differences.

Back in June 1953, Joan was a nursing student doing her rotation at the Kentville Sanatorium, a hospital which treated TB patients. Patients were not allowed to have radios with them in the hospital, it was believed rest was the best treatment. But on the day of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, the hospital arranged to have the London program broadcast in from a radio station on the hospital's internal sound system. The patients were given headphones to listen in on the historic event. She remembered during morning care the patients might share an ear piece with their nurse, so she could listen to the proceedings with them. Later that afternoon, while the patients were having their rest period, the nurses themselves were given headphones and went to a room so they, too, could listen. Joan said the sound on the headphones gave the sensation of being there in person. It was new technology.

Then that evening the Greenwood Royal Canadian Air Force Base hosted a formal dance and they sent a bus to pick up the nurses wanting to attend the dance. It certainly was a full bus. Everyone was in their best attire (evening gowns and military uniforms).

A few hours after the coronation people in Canada were able to watch it at the movie theatre. The coronation was recorded on movie reels and the film was developed en route on the airplane. The film was flown in especially across the Atlantic because the technology was not there to transmit it, and few homes had televisions.

Now, jump ahead 70 years, and folks were now able to watch these proceedings via satellite, live on televisions in their homes or even on their phones in a car, (of course, not while driving themselves), on their way to get their double-double from Timmies. Technology definitely has advanced so much since then!

People in 1953 mainly watched for the importance of the event. But let's be honest, in 2023 we also people-watched and definitely got our money's worth. Weren't there beautiful outfits, gowns and

hats, worn by dignitaries and guests from all over the world? And weren't our Canadian representatives attired to match the occasion!

Well, no matter how each and everyone feels about the change of Head of State, we are sure to get newly designed bills and stamps to look forward to. No one can fault us for boring currency.

Three cheers for our new king - King Charles III!



Joan Sutherland with some of her royal mementos

# The MacLennan Shipyard of River John

by Beulah Wright

The River John, emptying out from the Northumberland Strait, was deep and wide and fairly sheltered. The surrounding lands were covered with forest, providing a seemingly endless supply of quality lumber. Able men and boys were eager for employment, for creating a career for themselves, on or near the ocean they loved and respected, and that would give them fame, adventure and travel. There were shipyards all the way along the northern shore but River John would become famous for its shipbuilding and commanding, rivaled only by New Glasgow. In the beginning, there were ships built, loaded with coal or lumber and sailed across the Atlantic and sold there. Gradually though, the vessels became of a better quality, no longer built for sale, but captained and manned by local men, and shipyards were established to create larger, faster and ever more handsome sailing vessels which travelled the world.

Robert MacKay, a local merchant, built the first ship in River John in 1835 and Charles H. MacLennan launched the last one in 1920.

Alexander MacLennan, of Scotland, married Nancy Mackenzie, and they emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1808, settling in Rogers Hill, Pictou County, where they lived and died. They probably had more children, but the only one of whom there is a record, was Charles MacLennan, born in 1820 in Rogers Hill. Nancy had a brother, Alexander MacKenzie, who must have come with them from Scotland, and who married Elizabeth MacDonald of River John.

Alexander MacKenzie purchased a store and shipyard in River John, from Robert MacKay, and began business there with his nephew, Charles MacLennan, as an employee. Charles soon became his son-in-law, as Charles MacLennan married Amelia MacKenzie, daughter of Alexander.

Charles began as a clerk in the store, and as the shipyard grew, he became involved with the shipbuilding as well, until he established his own yard in 1837. His yard was on the west side of the river across from where the post office is now, and where their base office was located. The bows of the ships being built would extend over the highway. At low tide it is still possible to see some remains of the old timber slips. During that time, he built a fine home up on the hill beside the MacKenzie home, the two houses much similar. He eventually owned a large acreage of land from the middle of the village westward, some of which had been the grant of John Patriquin. The MacKenzie home was in the land which now is a wooded park connected to the Old School property, now owned by the Bigneys, and the MacLennan home was on the site where Charles Haliburton, his grandson, now lives.

From his shipyard were launched at least one or two vessels per year. Many of these were schooners that were bought by a firm in Newfoundland. Two of the larger square-riggers recorded were the "Panama," 735 tons measured built in 1852, and the "Iona," 648 tons launched in 1872. In 1875, Charles retired from shipbuilding. He was always a prominent part of River John and was involved in county politics. Archie MacKenzie constructed some vessels from the yard for a few years.

Charles had children, but most of them died young and only Charles Henry MacLennan, born in 1860, survived. He was educated in River John and in Pictou Academy, and then went to sea for a time. When he returned, he began employment, still a teenager, in Archie MacKenzie's general store, and eventually bought it for himself and ran it until 1912. He was engaged in the shipbuilding

as well, and eventually took over the shipyard that had been his Father's. Some notable vessels were launched by him, mostly schooners like the "Sirdar" of 500 tons and the "Maritana" of 450 tons, both built in 1899. In 1891, however, was launched the last square-rigged vessel in River John, the "Gazelle" a barque of over 1000 tons, which was bought by Daniel Sutherland of Pictou.

Things were changing. Steel vessels were replacing the wooden vessels. Steam was replacing wind. The lumber supply was being depleted, necessitating huge spars being imported by rail from British Columbia. The cost of insurance was prohibitive. The yards were suddenly idle, until the first World War broke out and any kind of vessel was needed. Charles Henry MacLennan felt that he wanted to contribute to the war effort, so he began building the schooner, the "Mary F. Anderson" in 1918, but money was scarce, so with materials that were available, he built the "Cyril T" and sold it to finance the completion of the "Mary F. Anderson." It was completed too late for launching in 1919, so it was launched in the spring of 1920, the very last of the handsome, sturdy, world-travelling, wooden sailing ships, from River John.

The records of these vessels are not as accurate as we would like, and there are conflicting accounts as to tonnage and dates. Several good books have been written about the period, and various newspaper accounts, but they don't always agree. There is available a list of River John vessels, which was compiled from two accounts, but there may have been ones that were missed. We do have a nice collection of photos in the Museum.

Charles Henry MacLennan, like his father before him, was a community-minded individual, who involved himself in village affairs. He donated land for various purposes and was instrumental in having the railway built closer to the village than what was originally proposed. He was born in 1860, married Florence Chisholm in 1891, had seven children, and died in 1931. He and his wife now rest in the Bellevue cemetery.



Charles MacLennan III, standing in front of his original family home in June 1968



The MacLennan Family:

Standing in back: L. Amelia (Millie) R. Florence

Sitting: Ester, Charles III, Charles MacLennan, II, his wife, Florence (Chisholm), on her lap Dorothy (Minnie and Charles's mother), Minnie, Christine.

# The River John Co-Op

by Beulah Wright

Co-operatives, of every possible kind, have been around for many years. In Pictou County, the first co-op began with the coal miners in Stellarton, followed by fisheries and agriculture. Co-ops begin and flourish in times of economic and financial hardship, and so it was in River John. Shipbuilding, which was such a source of employment in the 1800s, was no longer there. Many men turned to lobster fishing but prices were low, and while the canneries provided employment, they were seasonal. Most fishermen were also farmers, and there were many large successful farms in the area, but the prices for their livestock were still very low. The Stock Market crash in the 1920s, and the Great Depression of the 1930s created hardship for all, especially the farmers who had very little market for their beef, pork, sheep etc.

In 1933, the farmers got together looking for a solution and formed the River John Farmers Association, the beginning of the co-operative movement. The list of the founding members will be familiar to long-time residents of River John. William Baillie, Amos Tattrie, George M. Tattrie, J. Gordon MacDonald, Clifford D. Langille, William A. Gunn, Harold R. MacKenzie, Amos Allan, James Gollan, John D. Gollan, George Gollan, A.D. MacDonald, George MacDonald, William J. MacLean, George D. MacGregor, George MacLean, Seldon Langille, Ralph T. Langille and Alex Mackenzie.

In the beginning it was mainly the shipping of their hogs by train to market, which quickly included calves and sheep, and there would be a shipping day every two weeks. Amos Tattrie was in charge of the shipping and in early morning would travel by horse and wagon to the railway siding where the animals would be stamped, loaded on the rail car and shipped to the slaughterhouses. Finally, they were getting fair prices.

Two priests from St. Xavier University, Antigonish, Coady and Tompkins, were instrumental in establishing co-operatives in North Eastern Nova Scotia, and Lloyd Matheson of the Coady Institute assisted the River John group with advice, and in the 40s, a feed shop was built by the members, and a feed mill, as well. That resulted in large orders of feed, seeds and fertilizer, which could be delivered and stored at a lower cost. In 1945, it officially became the River John Co-op. And two years later, a hardware store was built all in the same area. The business was growing and doing very well, and the members decided to buy George Carruthers' grocery store, in what was known as the MacKenzie building, (a building made of stone near where our present-day library stands). They paid \$8000 for the building and \$12,000 for the stock, and Carruthers became the first grocery manager. Berwin MacLeod, a longtime member, drove around the countryside, urging residents to buy shares for \$5 a share. Following the usual terms of a co-operative, each shareholder had one vote and the membership and the profits steadily increased.

There were nine directors who operated the Co-Op. Harry Redmond served on the board for 30 years. The feed store and hardware closed in the 1970s. The original store closed and a new building was built where the old original school had been, which later became Simpsons. In 1993, the Co-Op celebrated 60 years with the hope that the good days could be rejuvenated, but things, again, were changing. The bank closed, and since everyone now had to travel to the bigger towns, they tended to pick up their groceries at the same time. In 1999, the sad decision was made to close the Co-op.

It had served the community well!

# Climate Change and Disaster Preparedness

**by Wilma Van der Veen**  
**Managing Branch Assistant**

The River John Library organized a two-part discussion series on Disaster Preparedness in light of Hurricane Fiona and other disasters of the past and coming future. The second part, May 23rd focused on communities, with a panel including:

- Jane Morigan, co-author of “Disaster Resilience Plan for West Branch 2012”
- Jim White, West Branch Community Hall
- John Davison, Regional Emergency Management Organization
- Cristy Ann Langille, Community Support Society of RJ/RJ Food Centre

The presentation began with Jane Morigan providing a synopsis of the research project, Disaster Resilience Plan for West Branch 2012, which took place in 2011-12. Despite the findings being twelve years old, much of the information was still pertinent. For example, various disasters identified by the interviewees would still be of concern today: severe weather events; insect infestation, human and animal diseases; chemical contamination (pesticides), pipeline explosion, fires and clearcutting, power grid failure.

Jim White shared experiences of West Branch in light of the improvements sought by West Branch Community members, e.g., setting up the West Branch as a comfort centre and lobbying to have very bad roads paved as they were unsafe. Both campaigns being successful, demonstrating that if people come together change can be realized.

John Davison explained that his office is responsible for liaising with various authorities (fire halls, Red Cross, provincial and regional government entities such as health authorities and departments of natural resources and the environment), being a vital communication link with those experiencing disaster and those providing assistance in a disaster. Several entities in the community have emergency communication capabilities, e.g., River John fire hall. Besides standard radio, amateur radio and walkie talkies can be useful. It was noted that landlines are no longer a guaranteed communication, but neither are cellular services. You can visit the REMO (Regional Emergency Management Organization) website, <https://www.remopictoucounty.ca/>, to download the list of items one should have on hand for the first 72 hours, noting that in light of the severity of storms, a week’s worth of supplies would be a better recommendation.

Cristy Ann Langille contributed information on food security and associated gardens of the RJ Food Centre, organized by the Community Support Society of River John (CSSRJ). If last year – the first year the community gardens operated - is any indication, much food has been and will continue to be produced by this initiative. A greenhouse is currently being installed. She said that if there were to be a disaster now, there would be insufficient food. They are currently relying on donations from the community, and will in the future be connected with Feed Nova Scotia. There was a suggestion that the centre purchase an industrial food dehydrator to ensure that food is available during the months when outdoor gardening is not possible. As with any community initiative, volunteers are always being sought.

Several places in the community have generators. The River John Library will be acquiring a generator so that the equipment which provides Wi-Fi will still be available barring that the fibre-optic cables are operational. There was an interest in

having a workshop on how to safely use generators. Stay tuned as the library will organize this in the near future.

Another suggested area of training is that pertaining to DARTNS: Disaster Animal Response Team of Nova Scotia, <https://www.dartns.org/>. No longer are only humans on people’s minds during a disaster, but also the family pets, livestock and wildlife.

There was one question pertaining to access to medications and thus the River John pharmacy. The Tatamagouche pharmacy has a large capacity generator, with a smaller one in River John. Beyond individuals taking responsibility for ensuring they have sufficient medication, the pharmacies are operating during any emergency.

The people of a community were cited as the most important factor when it comes to disasters. Many folks go above and beyond to assist others. It was common to see members of the community show up to someone’s house without having asked for help. But not everyone may have a connection in the community, so it was highlighted that we must ensure the elderly, those with physical or other limitations, newcomers, and similar are attended to, never assuming everyone is getting a check-in. Do the neighbourly thing and check up on others.

From the West Branch research project, emergency agencies provided the following suggestions:

- Be “fire smart” with your property
- Call Before You Dig near a pipeline
- Volunteer with Red Cross, Fire departments and DARTNS
- Put together 72-hour emergency kits
- Learn about LifeSaver technology, eg. AED
- Take First Aid courses
- Learn safe generator operation

There was discussion about the various warming centres that can be found in River John and surrounding areas. These include: The RJ Legion, the RJ Firehall, the new RJ Food Centre. The following are emergency contact numbers that you should have at the ready:

- Regional Emergency Management Organization (REMO): John Davison (902) 759-1797, [coordinator@remopc.ca](mailto:coordinator@remopc.ca)
- Red Cross: Jennifer Gunn, 902-331-1119, [jennifer.gunn@redcross.ca](mailto:jennifer.gunn@redcross.ca)
- Pharmacy: Main contact (Tatamagouche) 902-657-2545
- RJ Firehall: Chief Terry Heighton, 911
- Pictou County Health authority: 211
- NS Power: 1-877-428-6004, <https://www.nspower.ca/outages>
- Bell Aliant – landline provider and cell phone provider contact information 1-888-214-7896
- NS Department of Natural Resources: 902-922-4020, 1-800-565-2224
- Maritime Northeast Pipelines: 1-888-444-6677 for emergency and call before you dig.
- DARTNS: Red Cross provides care for animals with REMO coordinating this.

Within days of this presentation, the province was hit with raging wild fires in several locations, with most people not prepared. Are you prepared?

It was suggested that at least annually, and on an as-needed basis, representatives from the various community comfort centres and other safety entities, e.g., RCMP, would come together to touch base, share information about capacities or the lack thereof. An excellent discussion was had. Thank you again to all the attendees, panel presenters and concerned community members.

## Flood Mapping in River John

**by Abigail Bonnington**

Dalhousie Engineering students Abigail Bonnington, Binta Goodridge, and Thomas Tzagarakis recently completed their Capstone project on flood mapping and mitigation measures in the River John primary watershed. Capstone projects, completed by engineering students across Canada, represent the culmination of the 4+ years of study in a Bachelor of Engineering program. They count for two credits over the final two semesters and are typically developed in partnership with industry clients to give students real-world experience in consulting engineering.

Bonnington developed this Capstone project in collaboration with Bryan Orendorff and Suzanna Lewis from WSP Canada, two of her advisors during her second co-op placement. In 2019, WSP was engaged by the Nova Scotia Municipal Department of Affairs and Housing to create flood maps for River John as a test case for their new Municipal Flood Line Mapping program. The overall goal of the program was to provide rural communities with flood forecasting information they can use to make land use decisions and advise their residents as to the flood risks associated with different locations. Since then, the program’s guidelines have been updated, and new flood mapping projects in different municipalities around the province have been launched. The aim of the Capstone project in River



(Left to right) Goodridge, Bonnington, and Tzagarakis receiving their certificate for first place presentation at the Capstone conference.

John was to redo the 2019 flood mapping exercise using updated data and guidelines and to take the task a step further by assessing flood mitigation mechanisms that could be used to protect residents and infrastructure at risk. The scope was limited to river line flooding on, due to the lack of available

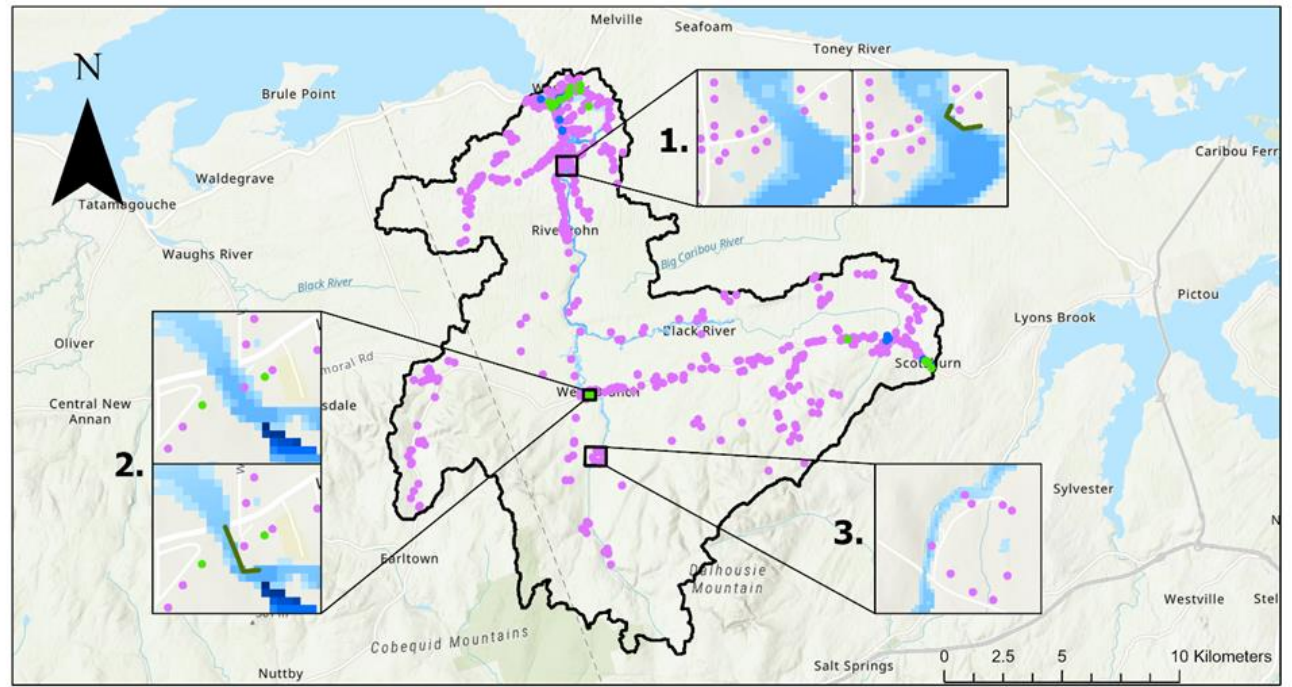
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**Flood mapping** (continued from page 29)

data and student knowledge in 3D coastal modelling.

From September 2022 to April 2023, Bonnington, Goodridge, and Tzagarakis collected information from online databases, conducted fieldwork, and gathered photographs and other evidence of past floods from members of the community. They simulated storms, created and calibrated hydrologic models and hydraulic models, and created flood maps. Three areas along the river were identified as having structures at risk: around the Welsford Bridge, along Scotsburn Road at the West Branch crossing, and along Loganville Drive. In each location, floods with a 1% annual exceedance probability in 2100 resulted in the complete inundation of private residences. The group assessed mitigation measures and concluded that installing two short dykes, along with widening the Scotsburn Road bridge, would be sufficient to prevent flooding in the former two locations. Relocation was suggested for the third.

Bonnington, Goodridge, and Tzagarakis presented their work at the 2023 Dalhousie Capstone Conference, where they received 1st place among all Environmental Engineering projects. They would like to express their gratitude to the River



Map of River John watershed with water levels during a 1:100-year future flood before and after the implementation of suggested mitigation measures. Also shown are houses (purple), private businesses (green), and public infrastructure (blue).

John community for sharing stories, photographs, and knowledge of the local area. Mary Beth Sutherland was a particularly invaluable resource to the team. If you have any questions, or would like to see the final report, poster, or flood maps, please email Abigail Bonnington at a.bonnington@dal.ca.



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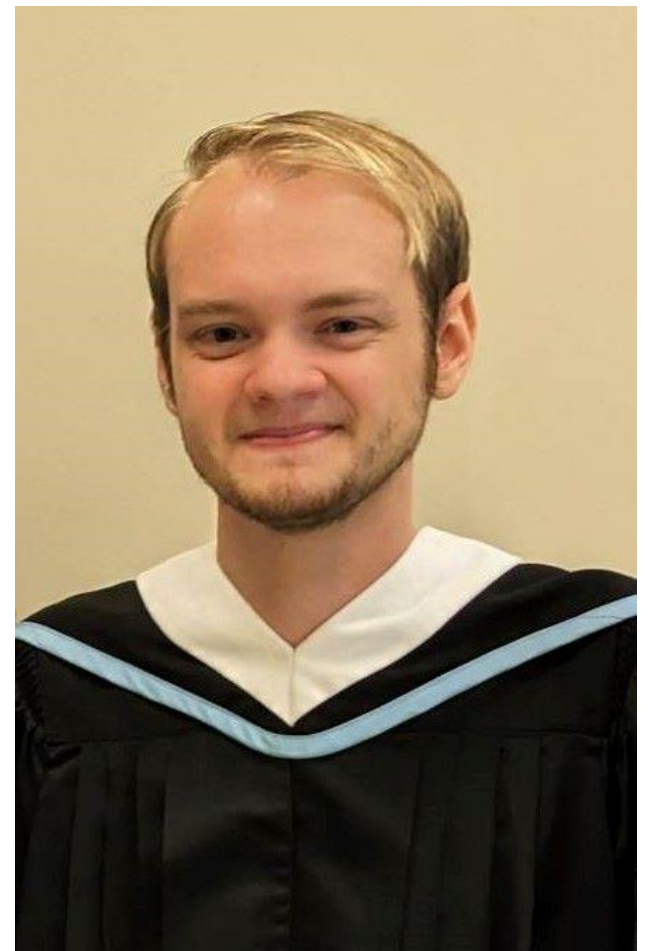
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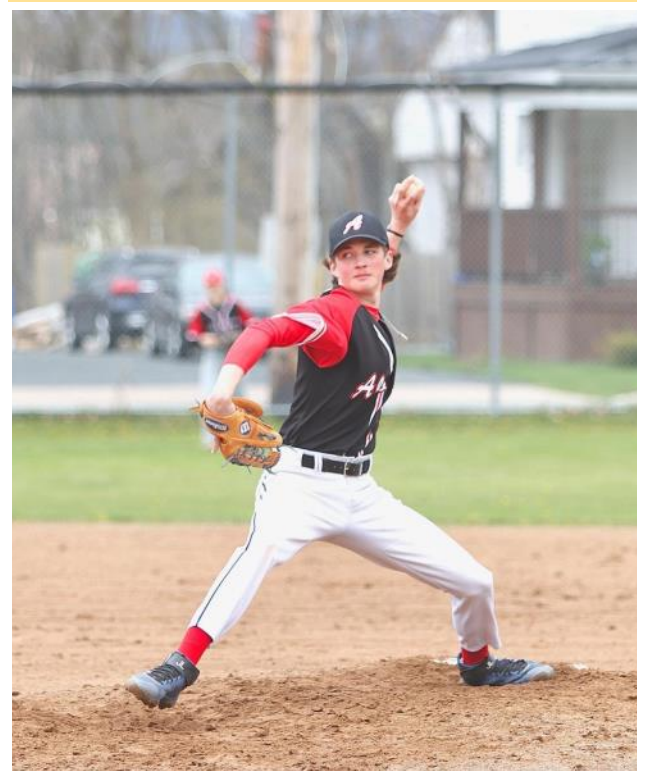
**Michael Gillis**



Proud parents, Leo and Amanda Gillis, and Grandmother, Della Jefferson, are thrilled to share congratulatory news of their son, Michael, who recently graduated from Mount Saint Vincent University, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree with a combined major in English and Political Studies and a minor in Writing. "Michael has worked tremendously hard these past four years and it certainly has paid off," says Amanda. "Not only was he chosen to be valedictorian for his graduating class but he was also awarded the President's Prize for his outstanding academic accomplishments, which came as a complete but wonderful surprise to him during the ceremony."

Michael will return to the Mount this fall to work towards an honours certificate, and will likely continue with graduate studies in English. "Even as a young boy he loved to write stories. It's so amazing to see him pursue his passion and do so well with it. We're so happy for him."

**Jared Langille**



Here is one of our summer grant students, Jared Langille, in action for the U22 AAA Albions baseball team.

Jared previously played for the Pictou County Highlanders U18 AAA and they were back-to-back Provincial Champions, winning in 2021 and 2022.

Jared is the youngest son of Tammy and Darren Langille and grandson of the late Henry Forward and Elaine (Redmond) Forward.



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.....*Food and Health Centre, from page 1*

building is equipped with 52 solar panels to provide all power needed for the building, and the Municipality has exempted the building from municipal property taxes, thus significantly reducing operating costs. Major ongoing costs include property and liability insurance, internet and telephone services, and purchase of any required food over and above donations. There will also be a propane-powered generator to operate the centre as a comfort/warming centre during emergencies and disasters. We are in the process of erecting a greenhouse structure for use in conjunction with the large community garden on the property.

Our vision includes a Community Food Centre, to address food insecurity issues for residents in West Pictou and North-East Colchester. A recent study (see proof.utoronto.ca article based on the Stats Canada 2021 Canadian Income Survey) found that 22% of households in Nova Scotia were food-insecure, either to a severe, moderate, or marginal degree. The impact of inflation and rising food costs on many people is well-known.

The Community Food Centre concept/vision includes having a weekly community food market, planned for Friday afternoons between 1-4 p.m. The market will have basic necessities, including fresh vegetables, we hope, from the community garden/greenhouse. Anyone is welcome to use this service on a free or donation basis. The CSSRJ continues to offer delivery service for anyone in need who cannot attend on market day – call 902-324-8897 for an appointment or delivery. Operation of the community food market will rely on donations (food and money) from the public. We are pursuing membership with Feed NS, but, for the moment, they have a moratorium on any new



Food preparation area

memberships. Anyone wishing to donate can drop off food goods on Friday afternoons (1-4 p.m.) or call 902-324-8897 to arrange pickup.

The concept of a community food centre encompasses much more than a food bank. The goal is to address food insecurity issues not only by providing emergency supplies of food, but also education and guidance in growing, preparation, and preservation of food, including meal preparation. This can involve freezing or canning fresh produce, and specific food preparation programs with the support of nutritionists and food experts. We hope to fully equip and operate a community kitchen to meet these goals. The community garden and greenhouse will be an integral part of this. We plan to have multiple Meals on Wheels programs operating out of the centre, and possibly a Community Luncheon program on Fridays.

The concept of a community health centre run by a non-profit organization offers a range of multi-disciplinary health care providers and related services to the community. Currently, River John has no direct health care services other than a local



The River John Community Food and Health Centre and the Hon. Sean Fraser MP kicked off the gardening season on May 19, 2023, with this huge greenhouse grow tent.

pharmacy. The health centre plan is designed to improve access to health care services, including physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, dietitians, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, social workers, psychologists, health promoters, etc. Our vision is to provide both primary care services, as well as health promotion and education programs. The CSSRJ is collaborating with the Pictou County Community Health Centre Society to achieve this vision, as a satellite location for that group's operations. We hope to have a resident family doctor or nurse practitioner on a part-time basis, and perhaps even a walk-in clinic. These goals will likely take years to accomplish but this a valuable start.

Volunteers are needed to assist in many of the activities and programs, so please consider offering your skills and time. Please email me, speak to a board member, or drop in on Friday afternoons once we are open. The CSSRJ thanks all community members who have supported this vision of a multi-purpose facility for the benefit of all.

**Read by the Sea**  
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**THURSDAY, July 6th**

1pm ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION GARDENS (RAIN VENUE: INSIDE THE LEGION)  
**WordPlay**  
Lana Button, Olga Manzoni

2:15pm ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION GARDENS (RAIN VENUE: INSIDE THE LEGION)  
**OnWords**  
Lynette Richards, Andre Fenton

6:30pm CALDERA DISTILLERY PATIO  
**Family Story-telling Campfire**

**FRIDAY, July 7th**

10am RIVER JOHN HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM  
**Heritage Story Walk**

10am - 12pm ANGLICAN CHURCH HALL  
**WriteWords**

1pm ANGLICAN CHURCH HALL  
**Open Mic**

**SATURDAY, July 8th**

9am ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION (INSIDE)  
**Pitch the Publisher**

11am - 3pm ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION GARDENS (RAIN VENUE: RIVER JOHN FIRE HALL)  
**Main Stage: The Grand Finale!**  
Bruce Bishop, Angela Bowden, Whit Fraser, Nancy Regan

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