

Issue 74 December 2020 / January 2021 sjcommunitynewspaper@gmail.com
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Have you heard of 211?



By ATB with information from United Way and Government of New Brunswick releases

As Canada navigates the second wave of COVID-19, people are still seeking support and unsure where to turn.

Whether it's help accessing food, mental health supports, or other non-emergency programs and services in your community, simply dial 2-1-1 or visit 211.ca. 211 is a free helpline and the phones are answered 24/7 in 150+ languages. Community Navigators will talk to you about your situation and help you find the right solutions. Whether you're a senior feeling isolated or anxious about getting your basic necessities, or an individual uncertain about whether there are assistance programs for which you are eligible, or a parent worried about your child's mental health, *Help starts with 211*.

"211 NB is a much-needed service and will help fill the gap of navigating social and community services and resources across New Brunswick – from basic needs like housing and food access to support for youth, seniors, mental health and more," said Debbie McInnis, CEO of United Way Greater Moncton and Southeastern New Brunswick. "As a new, provincial service 211 NB will be able to reach all of our communities and give them the support they need. We are thrilled to be a partner and are proud to champion this vital service."

The service is now fully active, providing information and referral services 24 hours a day, every day.

For more information on 211 and how it can help you, please see the interview with Randy Hatfield of the Human Development Council on page 14.

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THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Reduce your waste this holiday!



By the HUB Green Team

At the Social Enterprise Hub, we encourage sustainable gifting which can include homemade gifts, thrifted items, and local products. Supporting Saint John businesses is a gift to our community!

Plastic waste is a global issue, and we know that it isn't necessarily we as individuals that are responsible for that, but we can exercise our power as consumers by choosing products with less wasteful packaging and opt to support sustainable brands. And what's more relaxing, economical, and environmentally friendly than crafting? It can be fun to get creative and make homemade gifts for loved ones or try making wrapping paper and gift tags from recycled materials!

The Social Enterprise HUB's Green Team challenges you to reduce your waste this holiday in whatever way you can! Tell us about your creative ideas and how you're Reducing, Reusing and Recycling this season! Send us your photos or stories on Facebook at "The Social Enterprise Hub."

From the Editor's desk: 211 - a gift to us all at the holidays! Lorna Brown

647-4850, sjcommunitynewspaper@gmail.com

When I look back at how we spent the holiday season last year, the 2020 holidays seem to be happening in an alternate reality in comparison. We continue to fight the good fight against COVID-19. Around us many of our neighbours suffer the same struggles as before, except that there are more of them. Just look at the rising numbers of Saint Johners who depend on Romero House for a daily meal (p. 11) - already 8000 more meals than last year.

And yet - the vaccine is on the horizon, allowing us to dare to hope that the holidays next year can and will look different. What gift can we all give now to our December 2021 selves and our community, to lift us up in a year's time?

We cannot do better than 211. Whatever the challenges our community members face, they will be improved by the ability to pick up the phone, talk to another human being, and find the help they need. The *ATB* interview outlines how New Brunswick has this award-winning information service until March 2021, and Randy Hatfield indicates that if we use it when we need information now, others may be able to use it later - because our calls will make the case for keeping 211 in New Brunswick from April onward. See the article above left and the interview with Randy on p. 14.

As ever: peace and joy! You can get them both by giving them. :)

Remembering Chuck Gorjidazeh



Remembering Chuck (Photo: Jonathan Driscoll)

By Jonathan Driscoll

Recently we lost an amazing leader in our community. Chuck, who owned Smart Choice Variety, died suddenly. Most partners and community members could count on him to help with groceries or events in the North End. His love of community showed every day.

How much Chuck was loved was evident by the response of our community, which came together to celebrate Chuck's life. Within a couple of days our community organized a balloon release in his honour. It was heartwarming to see how appreciative and supportive our community is. Clearly the community's greatest strength is coming together in difficult times.

After school at ONE Change



(Photo: Latoya Grant)

By Chealsea Brown

Our after school program is coming to end for the year and the last ten weeks have been so much fun. We have a great group of kids and we had done so many activities like painting pumpkins for Halloween to making poppies for Remembrance Day and now with winter coming the kids are learning all about snow and other winter activities. They are also learning to play a Pokémon card game which they are loving. Because of such a high interest in Pokémon we will be starting a Pokémon club in the new year, and we are looking forward to seeing some new faces.

The Honourable Trevor Holder MLA Portland - Simonds Constituency Office: 229 Churchill Blvd. Suite 11 Tel: (506) 657-2335 Email: trevor.holder@gnb.ca Office Hours: Monday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Friday: Closed

Art Entrepreneurship



Malaki, Seth and Evan (Photo: Saint John Community Loan Fund)

By ONE Change

Exposure to the arts is vital in the lives of youth, not only for personal development but also for mental health. Meanwhile, school budgets face cuts to art programs year after year, sometimes leaving youth who thrive off practicing creativity without an outlet.

At ONE Change, we are happy to provide a new art program that supports teenage artists of all skill levels. In collaboration with the Co-operative Enterprise Council of New Brunswick's (CECNB) youth partnership Initiative, our young people have had the opportunity to participate in an Art Entrepreneurship program led by international artist Fabiola Martinez.

The art program is designed to engage youth in learning new art forms and develop their creative skills. The youth lead with their own ideas and explore different mediums together. The program also encourages youth to connect to their community and to have an entrepreneurial mindset. By the end of the course, they'll have gained experience, grown their portfolios, and learned how to earn income from their own creations. Contact abigail@loanfund.ca to learn more about the program.

Community lunch

By Christa Petts

We have been doing a grab-andgo lunch every Wednesday. In the past, we would have had a dinner in our multi-purpose room. Because of COVID-19 our staff have been keeping dinner going each week. A huge "thank you" to

Childs Catering. They have partnered

You're Awes me

(Photo: Jonathan Driscoll)

with us since March to provide a weekly dinner. Our community members looked forward to it each week and it was always a surprise what meal we would get.

The staff of Childs every now and then would add uplifting messages for our community such as "keep smiling." Thank you, Childs Catering for all your support!

North
Neighbourhood Contact

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christa.onec@gmail
Nick Nicolle Community Centre
85 Durham Street
658-2980





Comings and goings: People United in the Lower South End (PULSE)

By Mary LeSage, PULSE

- ·Don't forget the Heating Rebate Forms will be available the first week of January. This is a one-time payment of \$100 to help families cope with high energy costs. We will have the application forms at our office. They should also be available at: www.snb.ca
- Please remember our monthly Food Purchase Club money is due December 16th and January 15th. The orders arrive on the Friday after the money is due. We have \$15 and \$25 orders available! We have a Pay it Forward option where you can provide a single person, a couple or a family with fresh fruits and vegetables! E-mail or call us for more information. It's a great deal for fresh fruit and vegetables.
- ·We are always looking for volunteers; come in and talk to me and see what you can do to help out your neighbourhood. Cst Duane Squires can be reached at 977-1733 or duane.squires@saintjohn.ca. Mary LeSage can be reached at 632-6807 or operationsmanager.pulse@gmail.com
- ·If you need help from us, please call ahead for an appointment to lessen your wait time in the building at 251 Wentworth Street. Our general hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday: 9 a.m. 2 p.m. The building is closed Wednesdays.
- ·As always our nurse is available upon request!
- ·For regular updates on PULSE and community-related activities, please like, follow and visit our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pulsesj



Youth Unbound

By Paula Medford, Director, Youth Unbound

An initiative of Partners for Youth Inc., Youth Unbound is a transitional housing program for youth ages 16-19 located in the South End of Saint John. We provide a supportive housing environment while helping youth achieve their goals as they work towards living independently.

In addition to our transitional housing program, we also offer support and outreach services to youth ages 16-24 years living within the community. Our Outreach Coordinator Bailey can assist youth with food security, accessing community and government services, finding housing and attaining employment or preparing to enter the workforce.

If you would like to self-refer or refer someone you know to our Transitional housing program you can visit our Partners for Youth Inc. website (click the program tab for Youth Unbound) and download our referral form. Once we receive it we will contact you and guide you through the next steps of our referral process. If you are a youth who would like to access our Outreach Support services or have any questions about our services and how we can help, please call us at 642-6647.



Thanks, Vineyard Church, for hosting Halloween



The entrance to Saint John Vineyard Church, Halloween night (Photo: PULSE)

By Mark Leger

During the pandemic, Vineyard Church has helped us host social activities where we needed more space to respect physical distancing rules. We handed out treats to kids on Halloween there. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the #TimeOutCafe planned for December 16th at the Vineyward Church has been cancelled.

Your neighbourhood food pantry

By Mark Legel

Food security in the neighbourhood is a high priority. That's why PULSE is big supporter of the Food Purchase Club and Rainbow Park community garden. The PULSE Pantry Mission is a friendly non-judgmental environment where residents in need can receive fresh, frozen and dry food items to help them make healthy meals and connect with programs and services in the community and our building. We have a freezer and a fridge now so there is fresh and frozen food now, along with dry goods! The upcoming hours for the pantry are December 11th and 18th from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at 251 Wentworth Street. If possible, please call ahead: 632-6807.



(Photo: PULSE)

South Neighbourhood Contact

Mary LeSage pulseinc@bellaliant.com 251 Wentworth Street 632-6807



The Growing Place Garden Cleanup



A Grade 3 class visiting the garden (Photo: Hazen White-St Francis school)

By Olivia Clancy, Food Security Coordinator, Crescent Valley Resource Centre (CVRC)

October was the end of the garden season for The Growing Place, and the end of the year means there is a lot of cleanup to prepare for winter. Luckily, we had the help of some hard-working students from Hazen White-St. Francis School! The students spent time learning about the garden, clearing out garden plots, and playing some lawn games in the green space.

Here is what some of the students had to say about their visit to the garden:

- •"I like the games. I like the nice people. I love planting. I had fun."
- •"What I liked about the field trip: games, garden, the walk."
- "We help with the garden and we play nice games. The boss of the garden, she is a nice girl. Thank you for the nice time."
- •"What I liked about the field trip: that we are a family, games, I brought back beans, I got to see a baby carrot."

Thank you to all our wonderful helpers. We can't wait to see everyone back in the garden when spring comes!

Wishing everyone in our community a safe Christmas that is merry and bright!



We're proud to provide our community with lighting to make Saint John sparkle and shine bright during the festive season



The Growing Place



By RoseEva Butler, gardener

I've had wonderful success and enjoyed my gardening experience this past year at Crescent Valley. What impressed me was the length of the sunshine it offered for successful planting, plus how everything was available for my use: hand tools, water, garden carts, even seeds. I believe The Growing Place is the perfect place for beginning gardeners who can take advantage of advice from experienced gardeners.

I was very impressed with the mushroom compost soil mix provided and I added old cow manure, seaweed, wood ashes, and organic fertilizers, in keeping with the organic gardening philosophy of The Growing Place. I started planting in early April till the end of May and continued with successive plantings with lettuce, chards, peas, string beans, etc., and ate salads and veggies daily through the summer.

In the fall I was able to harvest a number of crops which completely filled my small freezer for the winter. I was pleased to make use of a raised bed in the greenhouse to experiment with transplanted late crop tomato and cucumber plants, and was pleasantly surprised with an abundance of new blooms because of the warmth of the greenhouse. (*Photo: RoseEva Butler*)

The Growing Place is the perfect place for beginning gardeners

Crescent Valley Neighbourhood Contact

Anne Driscoll
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130 MacLaren Blvd.
693-8513





Standing Tall at the Carleton



By Kate Worden, Carleton Community Centre (CCC)

Our 'Standing Tall' program kicked off November with tons of excitement! Carleton Community Centre has partnered with East Coast Boxing & Performance to offer two intro classes: a co-ed teen class (ages 12-17 years) and a Women's Only class (ages 16+ years).

This free six-week training program offers community members an opportunity to learn basic boxing skills with Coach Bryanne, every Monday and Wednesday through the end of December. Classes are designed to work on movement and agility, build cardio, and learn self-defence techniques through mitt work, foot work, the punch system, and even a bit of kickboxing.

We are beyond excited that our Women's Only class is full! We have limited spots available in our teen class, wait list for Women's Only. Contact us today to register (506) 658-2920!

"I want to learn how to protect myself, and become more physically and socially active" – participant, Women's Only



Bryanne Haines and Chris Peters (Photo: Dustin Leclerc)



The Honourable Dorothy Shephard MLA Saint John Lancaster

640 Manawagonish Road Saint John, NB E2M 3W5 Constituency Office is located at side of building facing Church

Tel: (506) 643-2900 Fax: (506) 643-2999 Dorothy.Shephard@gnb.ca www.gnb.ca

West Side Walkway

By Krista Turnbull, Community Schools Coordinator, Seaside Park Elementary School

Seaside Park Elementary School partnered with the Carleton Community Centre, Harbour View High School, YMCA of Greater Saint John, City of Saint John, and other community partners creating a safe and interactive walk to school for students in the community.

The West Side Walkway runs from the Community Centre, up Charlotte Street to Fundy Drive, along by Beaconsfield Middle School, to Young Street and Havelock Street to Seaside Park Elementary School. Along the way, decals mark the route in addition to several interactive sections of creative artwork.

With many students walking to school, the desire was to create a safer, recognized route where a bit of fun could be had on the long uphill walk to school. Special thanks to Matt at Kent, Westside for the donation of paint for our project. You can join a friend for a fun walk along the West Side Walkway.



(Photo: submitted by Krista Turnbull)





Dustin Leclerc director@carletoncommunitycentre.ca 120 Market Place, Saint John NB E2M 0E1 506 658-2920

West Neighbourhood Contacts

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University of New Brunswick nursing students in food security project

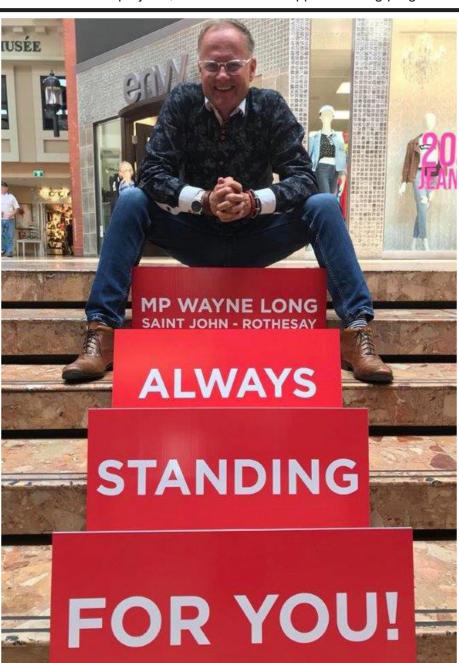


Emma Collins (left) and Alicia Killam (right) (Photo: Kaya Sleep)

By Kaya Sleep, WVA

Starting on October 28th the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association (WVA) began a social determinants of health project with two University of New Brunswick (UNB) nursing students. The project, working in tandem with ONE Change at the Nick Nicolle Centre, will have a focus on food security concerns, and how those affect health outcomes for residents in both Waterloo Village and in the North End. The two students, Emma Collins and Alicia Killam, have been developing a survey built out of researched and peer reviewed dissertations that will help both WVA and ONE Change gain a clearer understanding of the different challenges residents face when it comes to having enough to eat.

The end goal of Emma and Alicia's six-week project is to make an infographic poster of the results, which will be used as a tool for current and future projects, such as WVA's Supper in a Bag program.



The Stone Church laundry service



(Photo: The Stone Church)

By Rev. Jasmine Chandra

When Stone Church was being renovated five years ago, there was one thing everyone agreed needed to be included - the laundry. For over 10 years Stone Church has been offering free laundry services to the Waterloo Village community.

I asked Carl who has been a long-time user of the laundry what it means to him. "I love it," he said. "It means a lot less stress for me." Like many people on assistance, once Carl has paid his rent, he has very little left over to live on. Carl went on to explain that when the laundry was closed during the COVID lockdown he ended up throwing clothes out since his place is small and he has no way of getting them clean.

Carl also appreciates the volunteers who help out. "It's been great to have volunteers to chat to." Each day the laundry is open there are two volunteers who are there to help. The laundry has become an important part of their lives as well. Debbie who volunteers on Thursdays said that it gives her insight into what day-to-day life is like for people who are struggling. She said that it has made her more aware of the challenges people face such as safe and affordable housing.

The Stone Church laundry is free of cost. It is open Tuesdays to Fridays from 9-11:30 a.m. Detergent and dryer sheets are provided. Call 634-1474 to book your appointment. The Stone Church is located at 87 Carleton Street.

"I love it ...
It means a lot less stress for me."

The Stone Church laundry is free of cost. It is open Tuesdays to Fridays from 9-11:30 a.m.

Waterloo-Village Neighbourhood Contact

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Youth in our Communities • Youth in our Communities • Youth in our Communities • Youth in our Communities

Halloween at Princess Elizabeth School:



A few Princess Elizabeth School "Student of the Month" recipients (Photos: Jennifer Carhart)

By Jennifer Carhart, Principal, Princess Elizabeth School (PES)

While there are many new challenges and restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been so many wonderful positives that have happened as a result. During the week leading up to Halloween our staff organized a school-wide "School Spirit Week" full of fun costumes, crazy hair and topping it off with an absolutely epic pumpkin carving contest. The smiles and enthusiasm this brought to our hallways and classrooms daily were a much-needed insertion of energy and positivity. It takes a community to raise children and there is no question that our school community stepped up in a big way to make that week one to remember with lots of laughter along the way. Wrapped up in the same week was the opportunity to celebrate our students of the month for all their accomplishments - a wonderful way to end the week focused on the positives about the gift we have as educators of helping to raise children and educate them along the way.



Left: Justice
Bedford working
hard on carving
the pumpkin for
his class; right:
PES staff,
Halloween
School Spirit
Week



Partnering from Kindergarten to Grade 12 and Beyond



- Partnerships
- Volunteering
- Mentoring
- Role Models
- Coaching
- Focus on Literacy
- Having FunTutoring
- Breakfast/Lunch Programs
- New Opportunities
- After School Programs
- Career Exploration
- Making a Difference

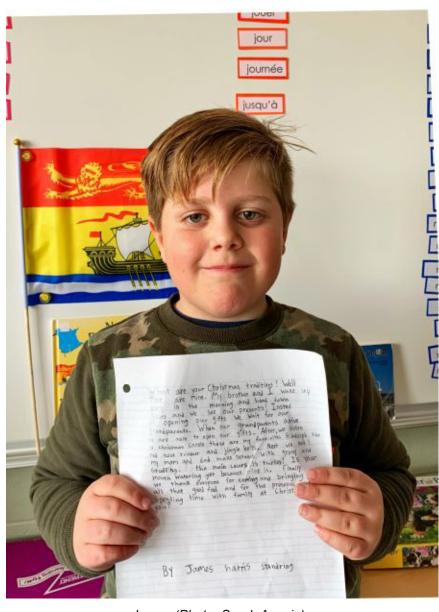


Deborah Fisher fisher.deborah@jdirving.com

Susan Tipper tipper.susan@jdirving.com

We ALL have something to offer!

Christmas Traditions



James (Photo: Sarah Aucoin)

By James Harris Standring, 3FI Seaside Park Elementary School

What are your Christmas traditions? Well these are mine. My brother and I wake up early in the morning and head downstairs and we see our presents! Instead of opening our gifts we wait for our grandparents. When our grandparents arrive we are able to open our gifts. After, we listen to Christmas carols. These are my favourites: Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer and Jingle Bells.

Next we eat! My mom and dad make potatoes with gravy and stuffing. The main course is turkey! Is your mouth watering yet because mine is. Finally we thank everyone for coming and bringing all that good food and for the presents. I love spending time with family at Christmas. Do you?





Your money matters: Make a budget and check it twice



(Photo: Saint John Community Loan Fund)

By Darlene Jones, Money Matters Coordinator, Saint John Community Loan Fund

It's the most wonderful time of the year! This year more than ever people are looking forward to the holiday season. However, it is best to rein in your budget before your budget leaves you quarantined for 2021. Here are two tips to stay on top financially.

1. Set a budget and stick to it!

Review your expenses and your income to calculate how much you can spend on holiday shopping. If you stick to your budget, you can avoid paying high interest on credit cards or taking out a loan. Aside from gifts, there are other expenses to consider during the holiday season - extra food, transportation, clothing, and decorations. Be realistic when planning for each of these expenses.

2. Make a "Santa Claus" list

Make a list of people to whom you will be giving gifts and decide on one maximum amount. Make sure that the total amount fits with your Christmas budget. Look at alternative gift ideas such as homemade food/craft items or coupons for chores such as babysitting or cleaning. Also remember, taking time to visit or sending a card is still meaningful and appreciated.

Christmas is the #1 spending season of the year. Make a budget for your needs and then check it twice against your wants list. Let's ring in 2021 with memories of the yule instead of stress and anxiety about how to pay for it.

If you need help with your budget or any other financial matters, please reach out to me. Remember no matter how much or how little your income is, how you spend your money matters.

(506) 652-5626 Extension 4 darlene@loanfund.ca

Elsewhere at the HUB...There is lots of talk about the new 211 service that is available until March - and maybe beyond?

Check it out in the *ATB* interview with Randy Hatfield of the Human Development Council on p. 14



Looking ahead to spring!



(Photo: Danielle Jordan)

By Atlantic Coastal Action Program (ACAP)

Ruby throated hummingbirds are one of Canada's smallest bird species, weighing only 3.1 g! Not only can they hover in place, but they are known to beat their wings about 53 times a second.

You can often see this tiny little creature buzzing around looking for nectar in the summer months, but have you ever wondered where they go in the winter? Most ruby throats fly nonstop 800 km or more across the water or over land following the coastline to Mexico and other Central American countries to reach their wintering grounds. That is a long way to go for some warmer weather!

Make sure you keep an eye out for them when they return in the first week of May; they'll be hungry from their long journey home.

They are known to beat their wings about 53 times a second!





Community Partners • Community Partners • Community Partners • Community Partners • Community Partners

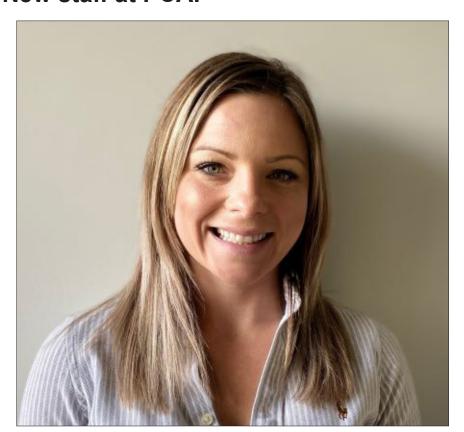
Meeting milestones in housing and homelessness

By Cathy Boyce, Affordable Housing Specialist, Human **Development Council**

Saint John has reduced chronic homelessness by 10%! In November, Saint John was recognized by Built for Zero, an organization leading a national change effort to end chronic and veteran homelessness. for being the sixth city in Canada to reach this milestone. For the past year, Saint John has been using a By-Names List (BNL), a list of all individuals experiencing homelessness in the city, to house and support people who need it most. In December 2019, Saint John established a baseline of 74 people experiencing homelessness; since then service providers have worked together to gradually reduce chronic homelessness. In October, 14 people moved into permanent housing; of those, 11 were chronically homeless. It is not enough to know how many people are homeless, we must know their names and understand their needs to provide a real home - the BNL helps us do that. By working together and using data to make decisions, we now know that there is a small group of our community members who require additional supports and services to see success in housing. While there is much more work to do to resolve homelessness in Saint John, we continue to make steady progress!

For more information on the BNL, check out the Coordinated Access section on the HDC's website: www.sjhdc.ca

New staff at PCAP



Hallie Merry (Photo: PCAP)

By Sam Flewelling, Clinical Supervisor, with Hallie Merry

The Parent Child Assistance Program (PCAP) would like to welcome our new advocate, Hallie Merry to the team.

Hallie joined us early September. Originally from Quispamsis, Hallie brings to PCAP oodles of experience working with programming at the YMCA of Northern Alberta, supervising the day-to-day operations of childcare centers, completing intake screens with pre-natal and post-natal Moms and shadowing home visits with YMCA staff.

Hallie, her husband Jeff and sweet baby Mya are excited to be back in New Brunswick and closer to their families. PCAP is excited to enjoy Hallie's expertise with the Moms and families we work with.

PCAP is responsible for providing direct outreach, home visitation, case management and advocacy to high-risk women who have experienced alcohol and substance use during pregnancy. Please drop down to PCAP on the first floor and introduce and welcome Hallie to the vibrant teams at the Social Enterprise HUB.

Meet Alex!



Alex (Photo: Saint John Learning Exchange)

By Cheyanne Fulton and Susmitha Gopi, Creative Squirrel Marketing & Design

Alex is the new Administrator for our Social Enterprises. While new to the role of Administrator, this isn't his first time at the Saint John Learning Exchange! Alex started his journey with us in 2016 as a participant of our Work Essentials Skills Program (WES). After completing WES, he enrolled in post-secondary education and graduated from the Administrative Professional program at NBCC in 2019. Alex joined our amazing Social Enterprise team this past September, and we are thrilled to have him. Talk about full circle!

Alex loves taking on any new project. He enjoys working with his teammates, collaborating, and problem-solving.

His motto is: "Anyone can be successful just by putting their minds to it; those who learn and put their foot forward are the ones who see the success in themselves."

Anyone can be successful just by putting their minds to it









<u>Energy</u>

Kettle Campaign



Left to right: Majors Lynn and Dave Grice (Photo: used with permission from The Salvation Army)

By Major Tracy Goyak, Church & Community Pastor, The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is looking for volunteers to participate in our Kettle Campaign which runs Monday through Saturday until December 24th. If you are interested in donating a couple of hours of your time, please contact Leif Power at 654-2493. We have various locations and times available.

All funds received stay in the community and go directly to those in need this Christmas. Thank you for helping us in "Giving Hope Today."



Giving Hope Today

RiverCross Church would like to wish the people living in Saint John's priority neighbourhoods God's joy and blessing during this Christmas season. We are proud to call each one of you our neighbour and our friend!

Services for young mothers

first Steps

By Sharon Van Dine, MBA, Director of Development, First Steps Housing Project Inc

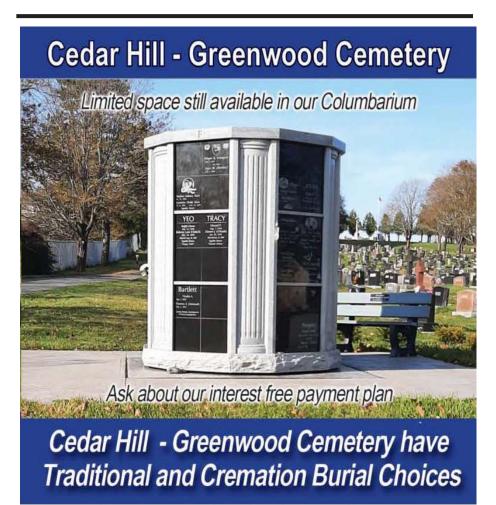
First Steps offers a safe place to live for young mothers and is the only organization of its kind in Canada.

Serving all Atlantic provinces, we accept parenting and pregnant mothers between the ages of 16 and 29. We provide parenting programs and also offer mothers the opportunity to complete their high school diploma in-house at the Dr Christine Davies Education Centre. While they are completing their education, we also offer full-time child care at our in-house daycare.

If you or someone you know is a parenting or pregnant young mother who is experiencing homelessness or has no safe place to live, please contact us at 506 693 2229.

You can also complete our online referral form at www.firststepsnb. com/referral.

First Steps offers a safe place to live for young mothers and is the only organization of its kind in Canada



Library services by mail



(Image: Saint John Free Public Library)

By Marianne LeBlanc, Manager, Saint John Free Public Library

Unable to visit a library and love to read? Borrow books, magazines, audiobooks, music, and movies by mail for free!

How it works: Library Services by Mail sends library materials via Canada Post to people who are unable to visit a library and offers thousands of alternate format books to people who have difficulty reading print due to a visual, physical or learning disability. Patrons can either choose their own titles online or staff can select materials for them based on their reading preferences.

Staff can also assist patrons in choosing books and materials in DAISY, audio, braille, eBook, e-braille and other accessible formats. There's something for every age and interest!

For more information, or to sign up, call 1-888-759-3535 or email LSBM-SBPP@gnb.ca.

Borrow books, magazines, audiobooks, music, and movies by mail for free! There's something for every age and interest!



Older adults: learn to use technology at the Y!



Lorraine Elizabeth (left) and Gina Chiarella (right) (Photo: Jordan Maddie)

By Kristen Wheaton Clayton, Chief Development Officer, YMCA of Greater Saint John

The digital literacy program is here to help older adults access and use technology. Volunteers will do one-on-one sessions with you on what you want to learn when it comes to technology. This program is open to all older adult members of the community to participate for free. If you're interested in the program or want more information please contact Sam Howe | s.howe@saintjohny.ca

Romero House by the numbers

By Romero House

We have been serving meals "out the window" since March 17th, 2020.

In 2019 we served a total of 82,402 meals.

At November 16th 2020, we had served 75,877 meals "out the window" and 90,953 in total so far this year.

<i>Month</i> April	Total meals served 8333	Daily average 277
May	8169	263
June	8581	286
July	9456	305
August	9814	316
September	10,625	354
October	10,666	344
November 1st-16th	5776	361



Giving newcomers the resources they need to succeed!



Left to right: Doaa Higazy, Lina Gharbiya, Emily MacMackin (Photo: Saint John Newcomers Centre)

By Emily MacMackin, Communications Specialist

When newcomers arrive in Canada they may face many barriers and stresses that can impact mental health and general well-being. The Saint John Newcomers Centre is always here to give newcomers the support they need during their settlement journey, an increased time of change and adaptation.

Making an appointment with one of our settlement advisors can help newcomers identify where their stress is coming from and can give them the resources they need to overcome them. As a newcomer, you may experience the following types of stress.

1. Culture Shock caused by living in a new and unknown culture A normal part of adjusting to new foods, language, customs, people and activities. You may feel excited at the beginning, but then feel frustrated, sad, angry or like an outsider in your new home.

2. No network or relationships

When you move to a new place you have to rebuild your personal community. Sometimes this is not easy as Canadian customs, norms, and environments can appear difficult to adjust to.

3. Language Barriers

Your English or French language level affects the jobs you qualify for and your ability to continue your education.

The Saint John Newcomers Centre is always here



Donner aux nouveaux arrivants les ressources dont ils ont besoin pour réussir!

Par Emily MacMackin, Spécialiste des communications

Lorsque les nouveaux arrivants arrivent au Canada, ils peuvent faire face à de nombreux obstacles et stress qui peuvent avoir une incidence sur la santé mentale et le bien-être général. Le Centre des nouveaux arrivants de Saint-Jean est toujours là pour offrir aux nouveaux arrivants le soutien dont ils ont besoin pendant leur parcours d'établissement, une période plus longue de changement et d'adaptation.

Prendre rendez-vous avec l'un de nos conseillers en établissement peut aider les nouveaux arrivants à identifier d'où vient leur stress et leur donner les ressources dont ils ont besoin pour les surmonter. En tant que nouvel arrivant, vous pouvez ressentir les types de stress suivants.

1. Choc culturel causé par le fait de vivre dans une culture nouvelle et inconnue

Une partie normale de l'adaptation aux nouveaux aliments, à la langue, aux coutumes, aux personnes et aux activités. Vous pouvez vous sentir excité au début, puis vous sentir frustré, triste, en colère ou comme un étranger dans votre nouvelle maison.

2. Pas de réseau ni de relations

Lorsque vous déménagez dans un nouvel endroit, vous devez reconstruire votre communauté personnelle. Parfois, ce n'est pas facile car les coutumes, les normes et les environnements canadiens peuvent sembler difficiles à s'adapter.

3. Barrières linguistiques

Votre niveau d'anglais ou de français affecte les emplois auxquels vous êtes admissible et votre capacité à poursuivre vos études.

Le Centre des nouveaux arrivants de Saint-Jean est toujours là



Le Centre de nouveaux arrivants de Saint-Jean



The Gift of time changes lives!



(Image: BBBS)

By Rhoda Welshman, Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS)

In these unusual times, now more than ever, children are looking at us to lead the way. To help guide and support their little minds and trying hearts while learning to understand the world around them.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saint John is in need of Volunteer Mentors to be matched with children virtually or in-person within various communities and schools in and around the Greater Saint John area.

All you need to do is commit to one hour a week and you can be the spark to make a difference in a child's life. Simply by making the effort, you are giving them the time and attention to be heard and seen. This helps to build their resiliency and ability to reach their full potential.

With several one-to-one and group mentoring programs to choose from there's truly something for everyone. Our programs include: Big G 55+, In-School Mentoring, Go Girls!, Game On!, Mentor Links, Big Sisters and Big Brothers.

Won't you consider giving the gift of time this holiday season? Start your new year off with making a difference in the world today. Small act. Big impact. Call 635-1145 or visit www.BigBrothersBigSisters.ca/SaintJohn for more information.

All you need to do is commit to one hour a week and you can be the spark to make a difference in a child's life.

Small act. Big impact.

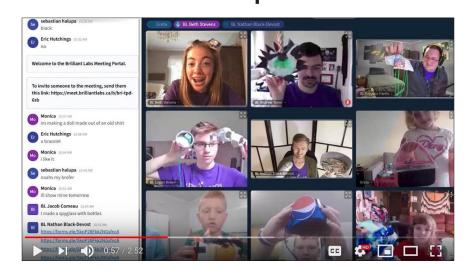
On behalf of Msgr. Henneberry, staff and parishioners of Holy Redeemer Parish (St. Pius X Church) we wish you the joys of the Christmas Season, a time when we celebrate the "reason for the season"

Christ among us





Video: "Digital Hope Through Virtual Summer STEAM Camps"



(Photo: Brilliant Labs)

By Brilliant Labs

Watch the new video about Brilliant Labs' summer STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) Camps on YouTube! See how the online camps engaged children aged seven and up every weekday for seven weeks in Saint John and across New Brunswick, and throughout Atlantic Canada.

To watch the video, go to YouTube and enter Digital Hope Through Virtual Summer STEAM Camps in the search box.

The STEAM camps were made possible in Saint John and the surrounding area thanks to community partners, the Human Development Council, and the generous support of the Government of Canada through the Emergency Community Support Fund (ECSF) and the United Way of Saint John, Kings & Charlotte Counties, Canada Summer Jobs, Canaport LNG, and the Ted Rogers Foundation. Through their support, children learned how to create and innovate online, with their peers!





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Around the Block interview

Randy Hatfield: What is 211?



(Photo: Laura Foote)

Randy Hatfield is the Executive Director of the Human Development Council (HDC), Saint John's social planning council. The HDC identifies and addresses social issues in Greater Saint John through research, information, coordination, and networking. ATB spoke with Randy about 211, now available in New Brunswick.

Please tell our readers: what is 211 and what's in it for them?

When you don't know where to turn, help starts at 211. It is a free and confidential information service that connects people quickly to critical government, community, social and non-clinical health support. The CRTC has set aside those three numbers for information referral – 911 is emergency; 811 is health; 411 is directory information; 311 is municipal services; but 211 will connect you to information referral specialists, community navigators, who have access to a database of community and government services throughout the province. Rather than just providing basic information to a caller, they are trained to work with you to identify the issue, to look at resources that are available nearby, and to follow up with you to make sure that you received information that is appropriate and accurate. It really is the front door to help.

So, if I'm hearing you correctly, 911 is if you have an emergency and you need a service, and 211 is if it's not an emergency but you need someone to help you understand where you could find help.

That is correct. It's not uncommon to have a lot of calls related to where you can get food, for example. The community navigator who answers the phone doesn't just give you an address for a food bank and hang up; they ask questions to understand the full picture. The caller may need shelter and financial assistance as well, and not just food, for instance. In this way, they can match the callers' needs to available resources, referring them directly to an agency or an organization that can help.

The beauty of 211 is that New Brunswickers can speak with a real person. This eliminates the stress of trying to wade through the changing information people are processing each day. It's available 24/7, with access to over 150 languages, and, to-date, calls are answered in less than 30 seconds.

How long has New Brunswick had 211?

New Brunswick has never had 211 before October 2020. The HDC used to produce a Community Services Directory - a print directory of government and non-profit agencies and services - that people could read and use as a resource. In 2003, we created an electronic database of all our print directories and put it online, so an individual could go in and do a search for services in their community. But 211 is more than that; it is province-wide and has a telephone piece to it. We've always lacked the telephone piece in New Brunswick - the person who could listen to you, ask you questions, and help you find what you need.

So, what is happening now that's different?

This is a COVID-related response to the need to connect people to services. On October 15th, it was launched thanks to funding from the federal government, in partnership with the United Ways of New Brunswick and the provincial government. This has two parts. First, it has provided resources for us to hire two specialists to put services that are comprehensive, province-wide and bilingual into a database. A 211 database includes websites, programs, locations, services, hours of operation, accessibility, accommodations - everything you could want to know about any program or service that is available to you. The database is the foundation. The second part is the telephone piece, which we've never been able to enjoy in New Brunswick. The phone is more accessible to many people who might need services. Not everybody can go online, not everyone knows how to navigate a database, but most of us can call 211 and be connected to a live person on the other end.

So, it sounds like the people who most need the information about the services haven't been able to get it easily, and now they will! Do we have 211 forever now?

We are optimistic that 211 will continue. A strong case can be made that there is value to the Province, to New Brunswick's community non-profit organizations, and to citizens who need help knowing what services are available, where they are, and how they can access them.

How can the reader help 211 make that case?

Use the service and talk about it. Spread the word. In the first four weeks, there have been hundreds of calls! The needs included emergency food access, questions about unemployment insurance, mental health, substance use disorder services, health care, basic needs, consumer services, environment, public health and safety... this award-winning service has proven its value in any province that has rolled it out. And COVID has taught us that people, particularly if self-isolating or observing public health requirements, still need information. Through 211, they can get it quickly and accurately.

So, if I am hearing you correctly, you would encourage readers to use the service because the more they use it, the more likely they are to get to keep it?

That's exactly right. When a caller dials those three numbers and gets the assistance that they need, they're making the case for continuing the service and allowing New Brunswick to join the 211 family. It's free, it's confidential, and it's a 24/7 operation!

So, if NB has 211, no one needs to be left without help if they can get to a phone?

No one needs to be left behind.

211 is the front door to help.

Use the service and talk about it. When a caller dials those three numbers and gets the assistance that they need, they're making the case for continuing the service and allowing New Brunswick to join the 211 family.

No one needs to be left behind.

We are here. You are not alone.



Sophia Recovery Centre has launched a new online discussion space for women in recovery (Photo: supplied)

By Julie Atkinson, Executive Director, Sophia Recovery Centre

"I need help." Such incredibly important words, but sometimes they can be so hard to say!

At Sophia Recovery Centre, we want to make it as easy as possible for women to reach out for help with their recovery from substance use. Those who struggle with an addiction sometimes experience fear and other emotions that can be debilitating. For some, just coming to the door and ringing the bell at the house on Hazen Street is very difficult.

For this reason, we are thrilled that with support from the United Way, we have been able to launch a refreshed website with a new virtual discussion space.

The online forum allows women to reach out for help without leaving their homes. When women contact us online, they discover that we are kind, compassionate and empathetic.

Because we are women in recovery ourselves, we know that there is courage underneath all of the other emotions they are experiencing. As women of Sophia, we help each other conquer fear and find the bravery needed to engage in the recovery journey.

When women contact us online, they discover that we are kind, compassionate and empathetic.

As women of Sophia, we help each other conquer fear and find the bravery needed to engage in the recovery journey.



Around The Block Team (Issue 74)

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Food purchase contest



(Photo: PULSE)

By PULSE and ATB

For issue 74 our Food Purchase contest will again be expanded. We will continue to partner with Saint John Energy to offer two \$15.00 and two \$25.00 food purchase orders of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Throughout *Around the Block* there are five Saint John Energy logos, including these three: one in this article, one in the ad on page 4, and one in the sponsor section of page 1. **You need to locate the other two!** Send your answer to sjcommunitynewspaper@gmail.com or call 647-4850 and **leave a message.** You need to:

- identify the pages and locations of the two hidden logos (**NOT those** on pages 1, 4, or 15);
- tell us your name, address, and phone number.

Only one entry per household. Your name will go into a draw for one of the four orders. The contest will end December 17th at noon and you will be called if you are a winner. We will also list the winners on the Human Development Council Facebook page.



Paper based General Educational Development (GED) testing now!

By Maureen Creamer, Test Administrator

Saint John Kings GED Testing Centre is now offering paper-based tests as well as computer-based ones. The paper-based tests are scheduled two days per month and take place at the testing centre located in Place 400, at 400 Main Street in Saint John. Applications, found on the Government of New Brunswick web site (google GED New Brunswick), can be sent by regular mail or scanned and e-mailed to gedtestingsj@gmail.com . You must also register on the web site: GED.com, where your results will be posted. To help you prepare for the tests, this web site also has two versions of practice tests for each subject. Once you have logged on to GED.com, click on the "Start Studying" tab and the next page will show links to the tests and answer keys. For information on both computer-based and paper-based tests, please check out our Facebook page: Saint John Kings Adult Learning Inc.



Special occasions!

Thanksgiving at 33 Smythe Street

By Mary Anne LeBlanc, Secretary, 33 Smythe Street Tenants Association

Members of the 33 Smythe Street Tenants Association Executive "bubble" - Barb Hovey (President), Doreen Brewer (Vice-President) and I - spent the morning of October 9th preparing for a full Thanksgiving supper, complete with cranberries and pumpkin pie for all 86 residents of 33 Smythe Street. These were delivered door-to-door (strictly following the Provincial guidelines). It also gave everyone a chance to see a friendly face and have a little chat, as many of our seniors are not able to be out and about much because of the pandemic.

The next project for tenants was a Hallowe'en treat bag, delivered as well. A "thank you" to Debbie McLeod for the labels.

(Photos: Mary Anne LeBlanc)



Barb (left) and Doreen (right) preparing for delivery of Thanksgiving dinners



Halloween recycling at the HUB! (Photo: The Social Enterprise HUB)

Halloween at the HUB



The Hub's Halloween costume contest, judged by Lily McNulty and won by the big baby! Left to right: Heather Atcheson, Randy Hatfield, Callie Mackenzie, Ian Keller, winner Laura Foote, and Cathy Boyce (Photo: Evelyn McNulty)

Une activité extérieure d'Halloween pour les familles



Les enfants ont pu se costumer et recevoir un sac de cadeau durant l'activité (Photo : Cathy Wojtala)

Par Cathy Wojtala, Animatrice en santé communautaire et mieux-être, ARCf (Association Régionale de la Communauté francophone) de Saint-Jean

Le samedi 31 octobre dernier, les services santé mieux-être et petite enfance de l'ARCf Saint-Jean en collaboration avec l'agente de développement de la régie de santé Horizon avaient convié les familles francophones à une activité en famille autour du lac Lily à Rockwood Park.

Les enfants, aidés de leurs parents, ont pu y découvrir la recette de la soupe de la sorcière grâce à des indices cachés tout au long de leur promenade autour du lac. Un grand soleil était au rendez-vous et les quelques 25 personnes présentes ont pu apprécier l'activité tout en gardant une distance sécuritaire des autres participants.

Les enfants quant à eux ont été heureux de pouvoir profiter de leur fête d'Halloween et de recevoir les bonbons scellés dans des sacs tant mérités!