

Issue 76 April / May 2021 sjcommunitynewspaper@gmail.com Published six times a year by the Human Development Council

### Watch the Mayoral Candidates' Forum online!



#### By Human Development Council (HDC) and Civic Tech Saint John

The Mayoral Candidates' Forum on April 26th at noon is sold out for in-person attendance - **but you can still participate virtually.** At noon on the 26th go to the HDC's Facebook page (@SaintJohnHDC) and you will find a link to the live stream of the event.

There are also three group viewings of the event at: Carleton Community Centre; The Nick Nicolle Community Centre; and the Vineyard Church. Register in advance (see poster above for details). Light refreshments courtesy of HDC.

#### Proud Sponsors of Around The Block







THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



### Saint John Energy sponsors *Around the Block* in 2021



Left to right: Chloe Murphy, Communications Specialist, Saint John Energy; Mary LeSage, Advertising Sales, Around The Block; Juanita Black, HDC; and John MacKenzie, Councillor Ward 2 and Board Member, Saint John Energy. (Photo: Patrick MacFarlane)

#### By Juanita Black, Human Development Council (HDC)

Saint John Energy (SJE) is a proud corporate sponsor of \$1000 for *Around the Block* in 2021. For the seventh year in a row, SJE will also sponsor the Food Purchase Contest, which you will find on page 15.

Many thanks to SJE for their continued support of our neighbourhoods through their sponsorship of *Around the Block!* 

#### From the Editor's desk: Your chance to have a say - vote!

#### Lorna Brown 647- 4850, sjcommunitynewspaper@gmail.com

The Neighbourhood Action Group is awesome.

The five organizations - Carleton Community Centre, Crescent Valley Resource Centre, The Nick Nicolle Community Centre, People United in the Lower South End, and the Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association - responded positively and without hesitation to a request from the editor to provide questions from their neighbourhoods for the April 26th Mayoral Candidates' Forum. (See above left for how to watch on Facebook live.) They are helping to promote the event. Those who have the space also agreed to host viewing groups for the livestream on Facebook. A shout-out to Andrew Glidden and the Vineyard Church for offering space to PULSE for the South End viewing group.

These organizations and the great people who work at them do so much that it would be easy to take them for granted. *Around the Block* takes this opportunity to salute them as the wonderful colleagues and neighbourhood supports that they are.

This newpaper is the NAG's collective voice - and voice is another thing we should never take for granted. On Monday May 10th we all have a chance to have our voice heard when we vote to choose the next Mayor and Councillors for Saint John. This is a precious opportunity to influence our community's future. It is democracy in action. Please, be a superhero for democracy. Get out and vote!

Peace and joy to all. Remember - you get them by giving them.



#### **ONE Story Project**



(Image: Jonathan Driscoll)

#### By Christa Petts, ONE Change

COVID-19 has been hard on everyone. At ONE Change we have been working and trying to be innovative with different ways we can keep connected to our North End families. We've created programs such as ONE pot wonder, online activities, and senior care packages for our seniors. We also have ONE Stories where we have a staff read a story and we upload it so our kids can listen. It is an opportunity for toddlers and parents to engage and be able to enjoy a story as a family. Check them out on our Facebook page. We look forward to seeing pictures of any of our online activities. Please feel free to tell us your favourite book. Maybe we can have it read for you.

#### **Staff Appreciation**



A card from the March break kids (Photo: Latoya Grant)

#### By Christa Petts, ONE Change

Our staff go above and beyond for our programs and projects they are working on. I wanted to take an opportunity to thank some of our staff who have been working hard to make our programs and events great. Chealsea Brown has been working on a Pokémon program for our kids. She really came up with a great program for our teens and tweens. Latoya is working on videos online with John Driscoll and coming up with some great STEM projects. Mike is working in the evening making sure our bookings and rental guests are feeling at home in our centre. Finally, welcome Courtney Hunter back to the team! A huge thank you to you all.

# 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

#### **After-school Program**

#### By Latoya Grant, ONE Change

The after-school program has started back up again and we are excited to welcome the children back. At the Nick Nicolle Centre we have an after-school program where children from kindergarten to grade five come and learn new things, make crafts, play games, and have a snack.

Our after-school kids have been busy making different art projects from Saint Patrick's Day creations, to creating their own superheroes and learning STEM projects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), such as how to make a popsicle stick catapult. They also enjoy their time in the gym doing challenges and playing sports. We love having the children back at the centre.



Superheroes! (Photo: Latoya Grant)

#### **ONE Change March Break Camp**



Art from a camp participant (Photo: Latoya Grant)

#### By Christa Petts, ONE Change

We had an amazing March Break Camp. We are so excited to see our kids back! We had so many activities planned from fun science experiments to superhero day. A huge thank you to Brilliants Labs for providing fun and interactive online activities for our children. We were excited to have Hannah Gibson come and volunteer. She was employed with us through our SEED program last summer. She has been keeping in touch and is excited to come back.

We hope to do more work with Brilliant Labs. Please keep an eye out for our summer programs coming up.

### North Neighbourhood Contact

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Nick Nicolle Community Centre
85 Durham Street
658-2980



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

By Mary LeSage, PULSE

PULSE is now open five days a week 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. You will be greeted by Mary or one of the many volunteers to help you out.

Please wear a mask and follow COVID-19 protocols.

Don't forget the Heating Rebate Forms will be available. Deadline to apply: June 30th, 2021.

As always, we ask you to call ahead for an appointment to lessen your wait time in the building.

Tax season is here! Drop off your taxes and pick up the following week!

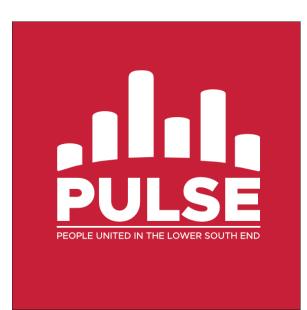
Please remember our monthly Food Purchase Club money is due May 14th and June 11th and comes back to you the following Friday. We have \$15 and \$25 orders available! We even have a Pay it Forward option where you can provide a single person, a couple or a family with fresh fruits and vegetables! How awesome is that!

As always our nurse is available upon request!

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





#### **Emergency Food Pantry Donation!**



(Photo: PULSE)

#### By PULSE

A great big thanks from PULSE Inc. and Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association to Patricia Cripps and her helper from the Home Depot for delivering excess food from Costco Saint John!

In the donation we had more than 105 pounds of ground pork and lots of ready-made Costco-sized meals that will go to feed residents of the South End and Waterloo Village!

Thank you for thinking of us - and what a great connection we made!

#### Happy Birthday with a twist!

By Mary LeSage, PULSE

On March 29th, I received a phone call from a father in the South End. His son Lyncoln just turned nine and decided to collect food for our Emergency Food Pantry!

What a fantastic idea! He wanted to help kids in his neighbourhood and more importantly, kids whom he goes to school with who don't always have enough to eat.

What a thoughtful idea! Thank you to his parents for raising a beautiful young boy.

He wanted to help kids in his neighbourhood who don't always have enough to eat.



(Photo: PULSE)

### South Neighbourhood Contact

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



#### The Growing Place Update



The greenhouse (Photo: Olivia Clancy)

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

We are excited to announce that our long-awaited greenhouse is now open! Beginning in the last week of March, the first gardeners have begun planting. Although there is still lots of spring cleanup to do, soon we will see the first signs of greenery. It won't be long before the outdoor plots are being used as well! We will also be hosting a series of garden workshops beginning in May. Keep your eyes on our Facebook page for the schedule! Some topics include high density gardening, companion gardening, and container gardening. A schedule and sign-up information will be posted soon.

Although most of our plots are full, we have a few accessible and greenhouse plots available. If you are interested in applying visit https://crescentvalleyresourcecentre.ca/the-growing-place.

### Saint John Bike Share Program: "Everyone needs a bike"

By Anne Driscoll, Executive Director, CVRC

Now in its seventh year, the Saint John Bike Share Program has donated more than 750 bikes to children, adults, and families from all over the Greater Saint John area. The focus of the program is healthy living and active transportation.

Donations of used bikes that are in good condition are needed. There is currently a waiting list for individuals to receive bikes; all sizes of bikes are accepted - but 20" and 24" are needed most. The donated bikes are refurbished, if required - tuned up and given to individuals and families - at no cost, along with a new helmet. For contact information to receive or donate a bike, please see below.

#### HAVE AN EXTRA BIKE HANGING AROUND? WE NEED IT!

Donate your gently used or unwanted bike and we will tune it up and give it to an adult or child in need of a bike. Contact the Saint John Bike Share Program at Crescent Valley Resource Centre, 130 MacLaren Blvd., Saint John, 693-8513, @cvrcsj or our satellite location at the Carleton Community Centre, Market Place, West, 658-2920.



Saint John Bike Share Program

### Cooking Program at Hazen White-St. Francis (HWSF)

By Kate MacDonald

HWSF has had wonderful support from the Youth Enhancement Program (YEP) who have conducted a cooking program with our senior students to learn about and prepare nutritious meals that taste great based on Canada's new Food Guide.



Senior Huskies participating in the cooking club (Photo: Ann Barrett, YEP)

#### **Emera donates iPads to HWSF**



Students show off reading and math activities available on the iPads (Photo: Kate MacDonald)

#### By Kate MacDonald

We thank Emera for their generous donation of iPads that has significantly supported students learning new skills with technology. Students say: "Learning Teams and video conferencing on the iPads has been exciting." "The iPads help us learn to speak English and practice our reading." Thank you, Emera, for your continued support.

### **Crescent Valley Neighbourhood Contact**

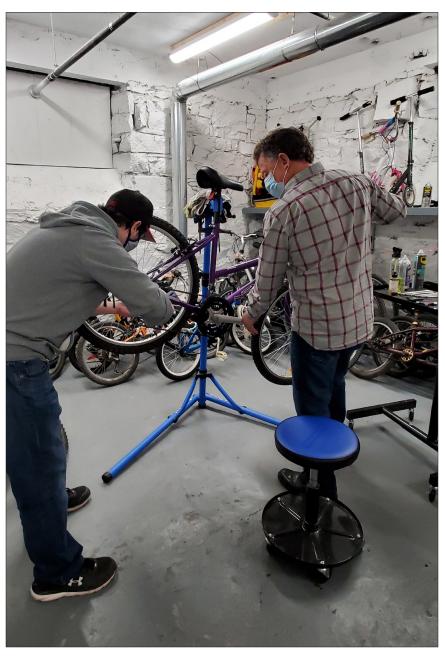
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<u>Energy</u>

# Lower West • Lower West

#### Bike share - and free repair!



Volunteers at the Saint John Bike Share Program, West (Photo: Kate Worden)

### By Kate Worden, Marketing and Program Coordinator, Carleton Community Centre (CCC)

Nicer weather is on its way – Saint John Bike Share's satellite location is open for westside residents, and applications are rolling in! Within just a few weeks, neighbourhood families can receive bicycles for this spring and summer season.

Already have a bike? In need of repair? Our volunteers are offering free tune-ups and light repairs.

To donate a bike or to get more information, call (506) 658-2920.





#### The Honourable Dorothy Shephard MLA Saint John Lancaster

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### Thank you to JDI PALS and the community!



Students from Mrs. Perry's kindergarten class (Photo: Krista Turnbull)

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

We are sending out a huge thank you to some of our amazing PALS at J.D. Irving, Limited. Iris, David, Alyssa, Isaac, and Michael came together to plan and lead an incredible project to support our PALS/ Community schools. With the support of the community dropping off donations of healthy cereal and snack food, these folks (along with some four-legged friends) collected 2,132 pounds of food!

This was no small undertaking on their part. With the group coming together from various divisions of JDI, they braved nasty Maritime winter weather to welcome our giving Saint John and surrounding area donors with a smile. Thanks to Paul for his tremendous help with our beloved Kids on the Go bus at the collection sites. We are so thankful to all involved in the success of this program, to support our students.

You are #OtterlyAwesomePALS!





#### West Side Neighbourhood Contact

Dustin Leclerc director@carletoncommunitycentre.ca 120 Market Place, Saint John NB E2M0E1 506 658-2920



#### By Chanelle Morgan, Coverdale

This bottle drive has been organized by long-time Coverdale supporter Helen Currie. Funds raised from the bottle drive will be used for special events for women accessing Coverdale services in 2021. Thanks for your support!

Are you interested in participating in an honorarium based pilot project on health outcomes related to food security, transportation, housing, employment and other?

We would like to assist you in making connections and follow up at 3, 6 and 12 months. Our role is to be supportive and helpful throughout your time participating in the program.

For more information please contact Penni: <a href="mailto:commorg.penni@gmail.com">commorg.penni@gmail.com</a> 506-647-8047 and Mary: <a href="mailto:operationsmanager.pulse@gmail.com">operationsmanager.pulse@gmail.com</a> 632-6807







This project is supported by Waterloo Village Neighbourhood Association, PULSE INC and Horizon Health

### Friendship, care, dedication: 30 years together in the Waterloo Village



Left to right: Carol Mason, Jackie Belyea, Carole Calnan, Rita Brown, and Michele Perkins-Stephen (Photo: Gabrielle Smith)

#### By Sara Gourley, Horizon Health Network

In the field of nursing it's common for Registered Nurses (RNs) to work in several different settings throughout their careers.

So, it is very special and rare to have five RNs who have been nursing together at one facility, in one department, for over 30 years!

Carol Mason, Jackie Belyea, Carole Calnan, Rita Brown, and Michele Perkins-Stephen have been RNs at Horizon's St. Joseph's Hospital (St. Joe's) Urgent Care Centre (formerly an Emergency Department) since the 1980s.

When this team of frontline heroes first began nursing at St. Joe's, medical emergencies would arrive by ambulance to their Emergency Department.

Patients from the Waterloo Village, and across the Saint John region, would come 24 hours a day to get the emergency care they needed and could be admitted to other units within the hospital. That changed in the early 2000s when it transitioned to an Urgent Care Centre to avoid duplication of services with the newly built Saint John Regional Hospital.

"It was a big adjustment for the team," Michele said, "but we adapted! Although our role changed, our commitment to our patients over the past 30+ years, and our desire to make a difference, has remained the same."

"We have shared good times and bad, busy days and quiet days," said Jackie. "My co-workers always have my back and coming to work is like coming to my second home. St. Joe's is the best!"

#### Waterloo-Village Neighbourhood Contact

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## Youth in our Communities . I fouth in our Communities. Youth in our Communities of Youth in our Communities

#### A heart full of love









Clockwise from top left: Steve Robar dressing up at Christmas; Meghan Coughlan and the Hannah twins "twinning" their masks in Grade 2; "Beach Day" - Suzan Cathcart, Lindsay Thompson; "Beach Day" - Leslie Davenport-Brown, Annie McLaughlin, Courtnay Lanigan (Photos: Jennifer Carhart)

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

What a ride this past year has been! In spite of the hardship, the heartache, the challenges and at times frustrations, the staff of my school has continued to go above and beyond with a smile on their face and a heart full of love. They've demonstrated a true love of their jobs and passion for education.

Throughout the pandemic the staff has remained focused on relationships and communication. While our families haven't been able to be "inside" the building like normal, our staff has stopped at nothing to make sure that our families have the best "view" possible. Saying I'm proud of the connection and relationships our staff has created is an understatement. Our staff continues to go above and beyond to make sure that every family has timely response, has a "view" into their classrooms, has opportunities to pop in virtually and above all our staff has made sure that our families know we love their children and that together we are a community of learners as a family, together, supporting each other. This has been noticed in so many of the staff dressing up, acting out, dancing, and playing like never before - all in the name of family.



#### **Partnering from** Kindergarten to Grade 12 and Beyond



- Partnerships
- Volunteering
- Mentoring
- Role Models
- Coaching
- Focus on Literacy
- Having Fun Tutoring
- Breakfast/Lunch Programs
- New Opportunities
- Career Exploration
- After School Programs

 Making a Difference tipper.susan@jdirving.com

Susan Tipper

Deborah Fisher

fisher.deborah@jdirving.com

We ALL have something to offer!

#### **Sewing at Hazen-White St Francis**



A student learning the valuable life-skill of sewing (Photo: Kate MacDonald)

#### By Kate MacDonald

Thank you to Brilliant Labs for your support in helping our students learn the essential life-skill of sewing. We are currently learning to sew our masks. Our students have this to say about learning to sew: "Using the pedal was my favourite because it was like driving." "Sewing was my favourite because I get to make something I am proud of!"

#### Thankful for good friends

By Ben Gillcrist, Community Schools Coordinator, St. John the Baptist/King Edward School (SJBKE)

As we roll into our first full year of pandemic life, so many things have changed in our "day to day," not least in terms of school programming, and especially large scale (often long-standing) events, which have had to be curtailed and often cancelled.

Adjusting to this reality, we have been so fortunate to find resiliency in our community partners and their adaptability to these unique moments. Never has the expression "lemonade from lemons" had more purchase, or been more applicable, than today.

I've written about specifics in other articles this year, but this time let's acknowledge the universal good in our wonderful community, who have all found different ways to step up and help us, be it standing in where we could not, finding new ways to assist when the "old way" became outdated. Not least of all, we've found new friends the past many months who've informed and uplifted efforts on behalf of our children.

COVID-19 has exacted a huge toll on society, but we meet that deficit with renewed vigour to make a happy world regardless. The sun shines today, and a brighter tomorrow lies ahead - thank you, friends!

### Your money matters: April showers bring May flowers



(Photo: Saint John Community Loan Fund)

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

Spring is in the air! Now that winter is officially over perhaps you have pulled out your spring cleaning list. One question....did you include your finances on your chore list?

A little spit and polish, some elbow grease can wash away the heaviness of winter. Of course making a concentrated effort to clean and organize makes the house look great for a short time. The same is true with finances.

Here are a few Financial Spring Cleaning items I would challenge you to look at:

- 1) Bank Fees how much are you paying for your monthly account. Is that fee going up? I received notification that my monthly fee will increase by \$1.00/month starting May 1st. There are options, a no fee account or to use fewer transactions per month to reduce your fee structure.
- 2) Taxes are they up to date? Make sure you are getting all the government benefits owed to you.
- 3) Debt do you have a strategy to get rid of your debt? Do you know the end date of any loans that you have? Having a date in mind gives you a target to strive towards.

As we know cleaning once doesn't mean it will stay clean. Chores need to be completed daily to maintain a clean house. Same as our finances. It is important to take time every month to review your bank account and payments. Make sure they are right. Look ahead to the month coming up. Do you have a special occasion, an event that will require extra money?

We have to look after our finances forever. Why not challenge yourself to put some spit and polish on your budget? You will be surprised at how shiny your bank account can get. If you need help with your budget, please reach out to me, darlene@loanfund.ca. 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



### Sarah's story: housing as the first step in a journey towards healing

By Cathy Boyce, Affordable Housing Specialist, Human Development Council

"Hello?" a gentle voice answered the phone. Sarah's sensitive demeanour and grace were immediately present at the other end of the line.

"I'll never forget where I came from." When Sarah received a housing placement through Fresh Start/YWCA's Justice Program in 2019, it gave her a place to relax and call her own. Childhood experiences of trauma and housing precarity were just two challenges in Sarah's life. Things became a bit easier when Gordon Ferris, a local landlord with a heart for helping people, offered one of his available units to be subsidized through the YWCA Justice Program.

When Lovey and Nancy, outreach support workers from the YWCA, viewed the apartment with Sarah, they agreed that it was a perfect fit. Sarah remembers them saying, "This is SO you!" She describes her awe of the newly renovated space that she now had to call her own. "This was a new start. Things moved pretty fast," says Sarah, "I didn't have anything because I was living in a bedroom before that." Her excitement continued when Fresh Start and Sophia Recovery Centre partnered to set her up with an apartment's worth of furniture. "Fresh Start gave me a love seat; I had never had a love seat before." Sarah now had a home of her own and wraparound support from the community. Like a warm hug, Lovey, Nancy, Mel, and Kristen from Fresh Start encircled Sarah, helping her to acknowledge her inner strength and allowing her to take small steps forward. "I'm grateful for Fresh Start; I recommend it to everyone."

Now housed, Sarah could focus on healing and managing her mental health. Sarah was over-medicated due to the lack of appropriate services to meet her mental health needs. At first, she found it challenging to manage life living independently, but she still worked a volunteer position at a local pizza shop. Over time Sarah developed a cleaning routine and learned how to take care of her apartment. Eventually, the volunteer position at the pizzeria turned into paid work.

Three months after moving into her apartment, Sarah began struggling with her mental health more than ever. She tried to quit her medication, which resulted in a hospital stay. Knowing she needed help, she reached out to a family member in the healthcare field who advocated for her. Sarah's psychiatrist invited her into his private practice instead of admitting her to the hospital. With the right medication and ongoing support from her community connections, Sarah's health began to improve. She stayed connected with her clinician from Mental Health and continued to work with her psychiatrist.

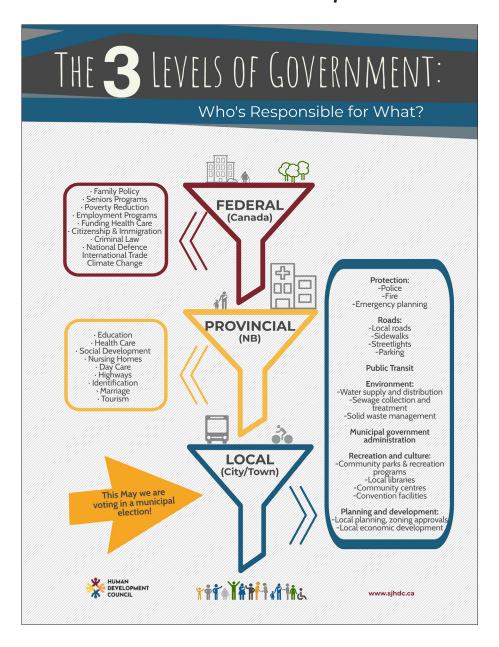
With newfound strength, Sarah started to expand her social network. "I made new sober friends; that was nice." On top of being offered full-time hours at work, she was thrilled to share the news with Lovey and Nancy that she and her long-term boyfriend were engaged. In the reality of the pandemic Sarah was determined to stick to the goals she had set. When the opportunity for a new unsubsidized apartment arose, Sarah spoke to her boyfriend about the possibility of living together. She reported to her case manager that she would now be living with her partner, so (due to provincial policy) her health coverage was cut off. Sarah could not be without medical coverage, so, resilient as ever, she took a job before Christmas at a local call centre that offers health benefits. She now maintains both her roles, and lives in her new apartment with her fiancé and their four cats.

When reflecting on the last few years, Sarah shares, "The system has not always worked in my favour; to have it work was great. I don't know what I would have done without Fresh Start or NB Housing." Sophia Recovery Centre has also been a stronghold for Sarah. Giving back to the community, pre-pandemic, Sarah led meditation sessions for the women at the centre. Meeting other women and sharing inspiration with them is one of Sarah's favourite parts of her role. "It's been a blessing to work with everyone."



Election Insert Editor: Randy Hatfield, Executive Director, HDC

Municipal election content prepared by HDC staff



#### Why you should vote

Voter turnout is often used as a measure of "civic engagement." The higher the turnout, so the theory goes, the higher the level of participation in the life of a community. If this is something we value, then the voters in Saint John need to pull up their socks and more of them need to head to the polling stations on May 10th. During the last round of municipal elections, only 38.1% of eligible voters in Saint John bothered to vote (down from 45.6% in 2012). Voters in Ward 1 had the highest turnout rate (47.3%) while Ward 3 voters had the lowest (30.4%).

Why are turnout rates so low? Some argue that most citizens are relatively satisfied with their council. Others suggest that people do not see themselves as having enough at stake to vote. Planning and zoning designations, traffic densities and program budgeting are seen to be too complex and irrelevant for ordinary citizens. Finally, it has been argued that it relates to the feeling by voters that their participation will not in any way influence the course of events. This is often summed up in the saying "You can't fight City Hall."

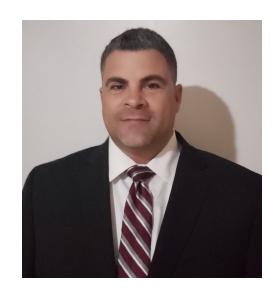
So does it matter how many vote? Maybe it doesn't. But it does matter who votes. Do equal numbers of men and women, all income and occupational groups, newcomers and old-timers, and groups defined by race, religion, or sexual orientation turn out in roughly equal measure?

If those who stay home are concentrated in certain groups, then, over the long term, their interests are likely to be ignored.

The more that voters in the priority neighbourhoods show up and cast a ballot, the greater the chance your interests and concerns will be on the public agenda.

Be sure to vote!

### **Candidates for Mayor**



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All candidate information is provided as supplied or available at time of going to press



#### **Candidates for Councillor at Large (8)**

All candidate information is provided as supplied or available at time of going to press











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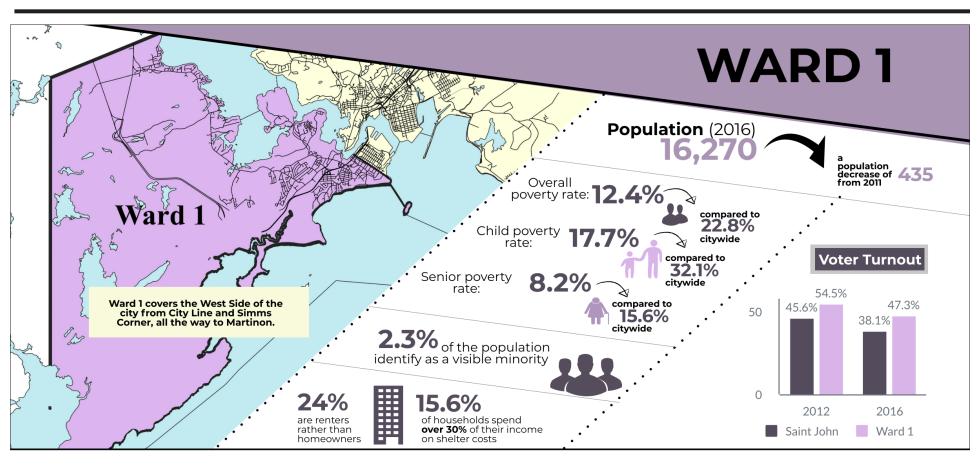
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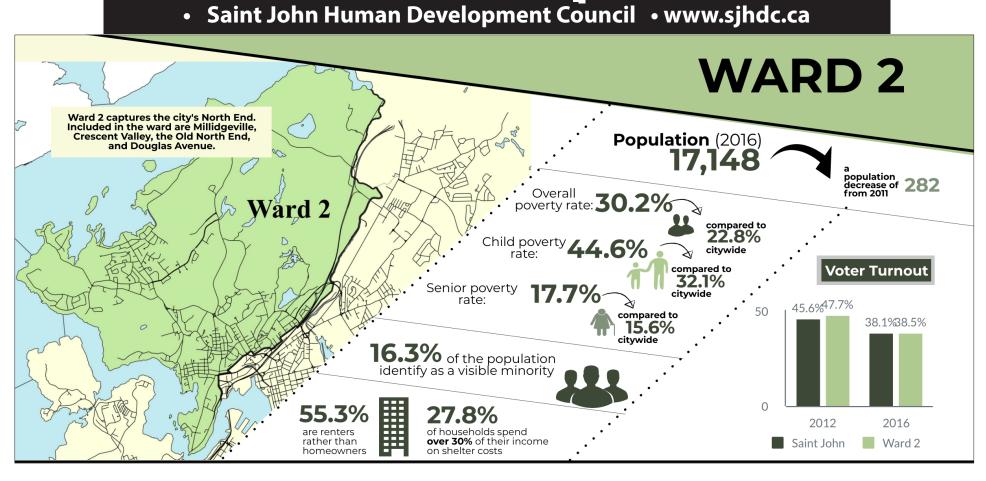
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All candidate information is provided as supplied or available at time of going to press



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#### Jacob W. **Stackhouse**

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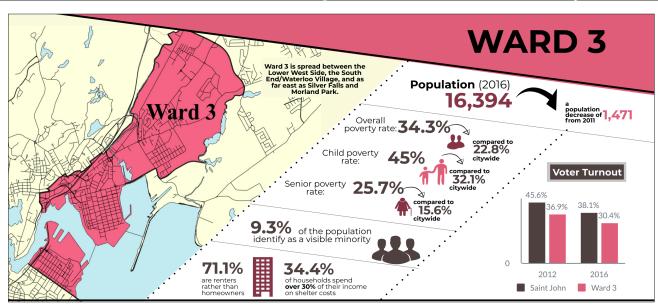
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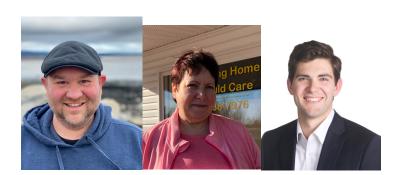


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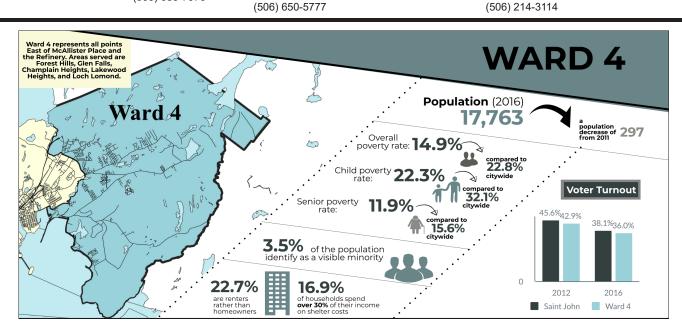
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Community Partners • Community Partners • Community Partners • Community Partners • Community Partners

### Social finance: Why it matters to our community

**From the editor:** The following is an edited version of the electroniconly Issue 75 educational article, printed to reach a wider audience. For the full article go to pages 10-11 at:

https://sjhdc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ATB-final-issue-75.pdf

#### By Seth Asimakos, General Manager, Saint John Community Loan Fund

Social finance is the practice of making investments to create positive social or environmental impact, in addition to financial returns.

In simple speak this means financing for social good, not just for profit. In the case of the Saint John Community Loan Fund, this has meant taking investments from individuals, organizations, and some of our municipalities, pooling the money, and from that, lending it to individuals and organizations to create income, build assets and become more self-reliant. The key is that the Fund is built on loans to us,



(Photo: Loan Fund)

from diverse sources, and we are obliged to return that money based on certain terms. Fortunately for us, our investors have rolled over their investments, maintaining our pool over time.

Over 20 years we have diversified. Originally we focused on the individual micro loan (on average \$3,500), helping a person become self-employed or employed. It helped our first borrower Marco ship logs he had retrieved from the bottom of the Saint John River to Michigan to be processed. Since then we have seen the opportunity to have greater impact by financing social enterprise, and social purpose real estate, and specifically affordable housing, to answer the need of 4500+ New Brunswickers who sit on a waiting list.

Besides increasing the diversity of who and what we finance, we have also diversified how the financing is structured. Here are some examples of the diversity of social finance. In the last two years we have provided bridge loans, an equity stake, and an agreement to purchase future revenue. At the very end of last year, we loaned \$150,000, our largest loan to date, to a non-profit developer to acquire a 12-unit building to maintain as affordable housing in a market that is becoming increasingly unaffordable for many.

These examples are social finance in action. But we need more, here and across the country. Our objective is to scale our Fund to meet the needs in our province. Our first objective is to double in size each of the next five years, reaching \$10 million, which will ensure the Fund is sustainable and will continue to create impact over time. To enable this vision, we have partners who have committed resources for a three-year runway for us to build the Fund. These include Living SJ, McConnell Foundation, Sisters of Charity, and other angel donors.

With a big goal we need to attract bigger investments from investors. Up until last year our biggest investment was \$50,000. But last year we received an investment of \$300,000 from a foundation in Toronto. They are investing a portion of their endowment, receiving a return to continue to earn interest to enable their granting function. In the past, foundations have invested in the market, with strong index funds and bonds. Some foundations have now realized they can have double impact by both investing in social finance funds for impact while also making their grants to charities. It's really a win-win.

Through our journey we have been fortunate to be involved in building a national ecosystem, first with the creation of the Canadian Community Investment Network and most recently with the The objective is to bring those managing impact investments around the table to share practice, advocate for policy, and build capital. And it is no accident that partly as a result of the collective work of the fund managers around this table over the last decade, the Government unveiled a commitment in their 2018 Economic Statement to make available up to \$755 million over the next 10 years to establish a Social Finance Fund. This Fund will invest in intermediaries, local funds, to build the ecosystem. In fact, the Saint John Community Loan Fund was named in the Economic Statement, which we intend to keep top of mind when the Fund starts rolling out!

It is expected that a Social Finance Fund could generate up to \$2 billion in economic activity and help create and maintain as many as 100,000 jobs over the next decade.

Other important ecosystem players in the province include the Pond Deshpande Centre's B4C accelerator in Fredericton, from which many of our Launch Social investees have graduated, and our partner, the Cooperative Enterprise Council of NB in Moncton, which has been promoting and educating individuals and organizations on co-ops, community investment funds, and social enterprise development for a decade. With these partners and others around the province, we hope to build capacity for social enterprise and to finance social impact opportunities for increased and sustainable outcomes.

So the pump is primed for social finance scaling in our province. We look forward to building a best-in-class Fund for social impact investors, and for working with risk takers and dreamers who want to build stuff that creates change!

#### Youth leader: Omar Morad

#### By Saint John Community Loan Fund

Omar has been making a positive change in the community (and beyond) since 2019, when he started an organization dedicated to

helping refugee and newcomer youth from different backgrounds adjust to Canadian culture. Impactful programs and events that support, empower and unite youth are at the heart of his organization; Union of Youth Newcomers.

Omar has found great value in the many partnerships he has established like with the Youth Partnership Initiative, Equitas, PRUDE, and more. He credits a lot of his success to his amazing team, a passionate group of youth volunteers who share his vision of building a safe space and community of support for immigrants and all youth.



Omar Morad (Photo: Abigail Reinhart, Loan Fund)

### Attention all teachers, educators, and nature enthusiasts!

By Shauna Sands, Conservation Coordinator, Atlantic Coastal Action Program (ACAP) Saint John

Spring has arrived and it's time to get things cleared up before summer hits. Are you interested in organizing a group cleanup but don't know where to start?

ACAP Saint John can provide you and your team with all the essential items needed to help run a successful cleanup in your neighbourhood. We will provide you with garbage bags, gloves and a garbage pick up (courtesy of our wonderful partners at the City of Saint John). Send us an email at office@acapsj.org to get started!



### Une trentaine d'aînés francophones connectés!



(Photo: Cathy Wojtala)

Par Cathy Wojtala, Animatrice en santé communautaire, mieux-être et de la maison des jeunes de l'ARCf de Saint-Jean

Les derniers mois que nous venons de vivre ont été bien compliqués pour tout le monde! Que dire de nos aînés qui se sont retrouvés souvent coupés de leurs familles et de leurs amis. C'est pour cette raison et avec l'aide du programme «Nouveaux horizons» que l'ARCf de Saint-Jean a décidé d'équiper les aînés francophones de tablettes numériques. Un livret accompagné d'une formation a pu être dispensé par Samuel Holmes, un jeune de notre communauté. Un programme d'exercices physiques a également été conçu et mis en ligne à leur intention. De quoi, nous l'espérons, permettra à tous de rester connecté à la communauté.

#### **Creative Nights with Chroma**



Izzy Francolini (Photo: the artist)

#### By Tanya James, Project Coordinator, Chroma

Chroma is a new organization in the Saint John area advocating for and making connections in the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual Plus (2SLGBTQIA+) community. One of our first projects is Creative Nights, a monthly arts event held exclusively for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals. These aim to foster a safe space where participants can make friends, learn a new skill, and creatively nurture their sense of self. We held our first event in March, a virtual sticker-making workshop with artist Izzy Francolini. One participant, Kelly, had this to say after the event: "I loved it and felt connected to my community. I met new lovely people and learnt a new creative outlet. I felt at ease and had fun!" We are still looking for 2SLGBTQIA+ artists and makers to host creative workshops. These are paid opportunities, and you do not need to be a professional artist to get involved. To learn more about Chroma and our upcoming events visit chromanb.ca

### "Dip your toes" with a Welcome to Recovery session at Sophia

By Julie Atkinson, Executive Director, Sophia Recovery Centre

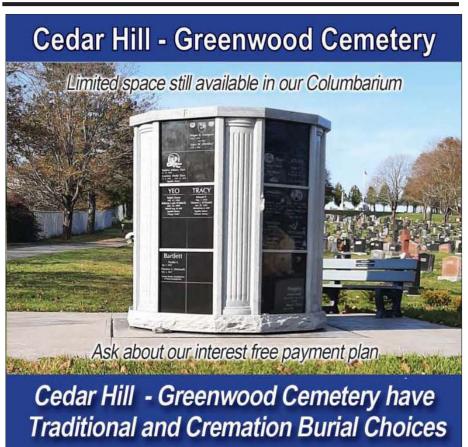
When women call or visit Sophia for the first time, they are invited to join a new program called Welcome to Recovery to "dip their toes" into our programs. Different people think that recovery from addiction means different things. This program brings those issues out into the open and allows each woman to consider the programs and services that are available at Sophia and elsewhere in the community.

Delivered in a small group format or sometimes one on one with our Outreach Coordinator Nicole as the facilitator, the program provides a general, discussion-based introduction to living in recovery. In the session, women have the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas and to identify immediate actions, resources and solutions to challenges that will help them stay strong through the early days, weeks and months of their recovery.

Women need to take ownership of their journey to a better life, and we know that the programs and the community of women at Sophia can and will help them with that commitment. The Welcome to Recovery program truly reflects what Sophia is all about: women helping women.

Welcome to Recovery takes place at Sophia every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. Women are welcome to sign up for the session at any time. Call 633-8783.





#### **Amazing volunteer Mentors**

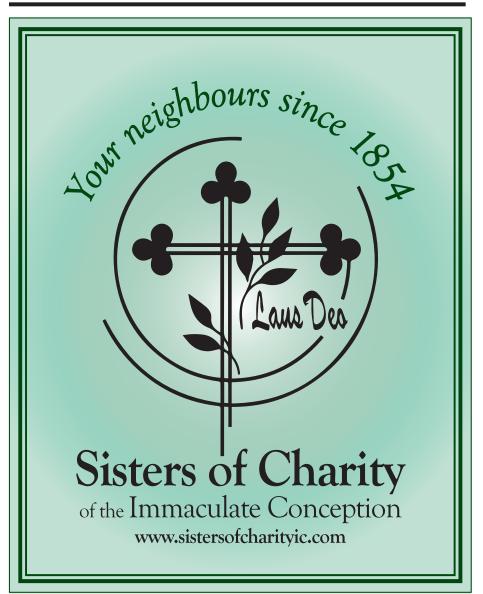


#### By Rhoda Welshman, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saint John

This past year has been difficult for everyone! Every person, every family, every business and organization has gone through so many challenges and changes. We have endured levels of stress, anxiety, fear and uncertainty like we have never experienced. We had to quickly adapt to a changing world and doing so we discovered how important the little things were, like having a good stock of toilet paper and the value of time spent with friends and family. Our children and youth have looked to us for guidance, support and hope in times when we ourselves may have been struggling with all of the above!

One thing we know for sure is we are incredibly blessed to have the amazing volunteer Mentors that we do. Our volunteers have stayed so engaged and committed, making every effort possible to stay connected and to support their Littles and Mentees. From handwritten letters, video calls and texting, to dropping off craft and art supplies; they went to every length.

The impact you have made will last a lifetime. As years go on and stories are being told of "how we survived the COVID-19 pandemic," our youth will acknowledge the people who were there for them, expressing care and providing support. From the bottom or our hearts and at the core of our mission, your friends and Mentoring Coordinators at Big Brothers Big Sisters thank you!



#### The importance of play



Local family enjoying some time together (Photo: Kate Selig)

#### By Kate Selig, Food Security Program Assistant, Saint John Inner City Youth Ministry

There are so many benefits to laughing together, to spending a few minutes checking in with each other, to trying something new together. So, here are a few ideas you can adapt to suit your family.

- Ask your friends if you can borrow/swap board games for a week.
- Ask one of your children to write down three questions you can all talk about over supper. Ex: What was the scariest thing you did today? What is the funniest joke you know?
- If board games don't sound like a good fit, try digging out some sidewalk chalk or going on a scavenger hunt together.
- If you are already gathering to watch a movie together, you could try watching (and participating in!) a kids' yoga video instead.
- If you've ever tried reading aloud to your children and given up because "No one is listening!", try passing out paper and asking them to draw what they are listening to.

Above all, simplicity is key. Keep it easy, let everyone help, and make sure it appeals to you as an adult, too. Family Connection is a joint program of Pennies and Sparrows and Inner City Youth Ministry, which provides the materials and inspiration for a monthly night of family fun.

### PRUDE Inc. services help employers and newcomers



#### By PRUDE

PRUDE Inc. provides various services that help locals and employers learn about the newcomers and how to be more inclusive. Our purpose is empowering Saint John with inclusiveness and diversity.

- School Presentations/Workshops
- Interactive activities allow teachers and students to examine stereotypes, challenge their assumptions, and identify their behaviour choices
- Bridging Cultural Diversity Training
   Workshop for employers to educate on cultural diversity in the workplace, and how to create an inclusive working environment.
- The Workplace Bias Recognition It heightens participants' awareness of workplace bias by highlighting the different types of bias and offering real-world solutions to help correct the issue.
- Community Presentations

It includes Assumptions & Examining Stereotypes, Cultural Diversity in the Workplace, Black History presentations, as well as community panel discussions.

### Faites la connaissance de notre équipe de soutien à l'emploi!



#### Par Le Centre de nouveaux arrivants de Saint-Jean (CNASJ)

L'équipe de soutien à l'emploi du CNASJ est disponible pour aider les nouveaux arrivants à naviguer dans le counselling d'emploi, la rédaction de curriculum vitae et les compétences en milieu de travail au Canada. Parmi les nombreux programmes que nous offrons, citons la plateforme de jumelage ALiGN, les compétences pour le milieu de travail canadien et la formation sur les compétences culturelles.

Samah El Maghlawy: Consultante en affaires, Samah est une experte en marketing et communication. Elle aide les immigrants à acquérir des compétences essentielles et à se préparer à une intégration réussie dans le marché canadien des affaires. Elle s'est donné pour mission de traduire son expérience et ses compétences pour aider les nouveaux Canadiens à acquérir les compétences nécessaires pour réussir leur carrière et leur avenir.

Yue Han (Tavia): Conseillère pré-emploi, détient un MBA de l'Université du Nouveau-Brunswick. Elle croit que redonner crée de la joie. En tant que nouvelle arrivante au Canada, elle comprend les défis liés à l'emploi auxquels les nouveaux arrivants pourraient être confrontés. Elle espère utiliser son expérience et ses connaissances pour fournir des suggestions aux nouveaux arrivants pour s'intégrer dans l'environnement de travail canadien.

William Tarr: La personne de référence pour le projet pilote d'immigration de l'Atlantique au CNASJ. Il fournit un soutien aux employeurs désignés, les aidant à installer leur personnel qualifié étranger nouvellement embauché et à élaborer des plans d'établissement pour les employés. Lui-même un nouvel arrivant, William apporte à notre équipe une riche expérience non seulement de son établissement réussi à Saint John, mais aussi de son travail dans le secteur de l'établissement au cours des trois dernières années.



#### Meet our Employment Supports team!

By The Saint John Newcomers Centre (SJNC)

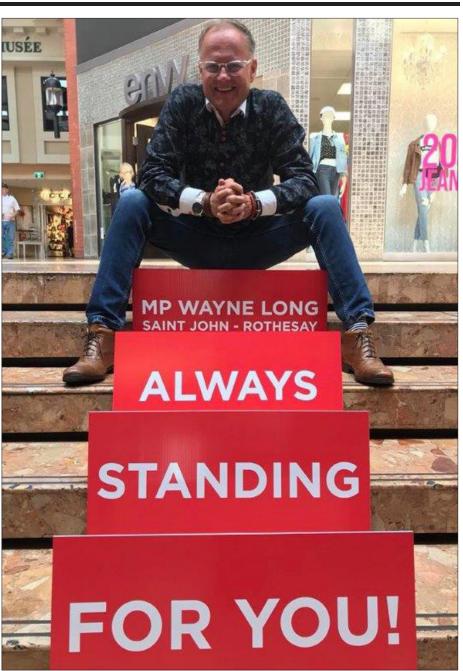
The SJNC employment support team is available to help newcomers navigate their way through employment counselling, resume writing and Canadian workplace skills. Among the many programs we offer are ALiGN Matching Platform, Skills for the Canadian Workplace, and Cultural Competency Training.

**Samah El Maghlawy:** Business Consultant, is a marketing and communications expert. She is helping immigrants develop essential skills and prepare for successful integration into the Canadian business market. She has made it her mission to translate her experience and skills to support new Canadians as they acquire the skills to help their successful careers and future.

**Yue Han (Tavia):** Pre-Employment Advisor, has an MBA degree from the University of New Brunswick. She believes that giving back creates joy. As a newcomer to Canada, she understands the challenges related to employment that newcomers might face. She hopes to use her experience and knowledge to provide suggestions to newcomers to smoothly integrate into the Canadian work environment.

**William Tarr:** The go-to person for the Atlantic Immigration Pilot project at the SJNC. Himself a newcomer, William brings to our team a wealth of experience not only from his successful settlement in Saint John, but also from working within the settlement sector for the past three years. He is able to provide support to designated employers, helping them settle their newly hired foreign skilled staff and to develop settlement plans for employees.





/Energy

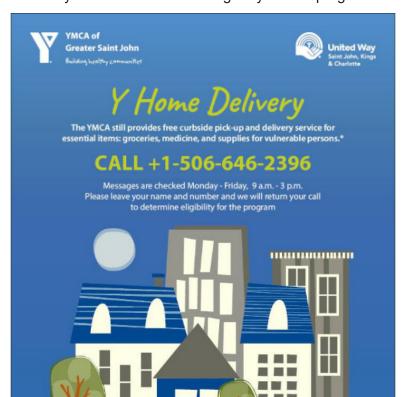
#### **Y Home Delivery**

By Saint John Y

In order to continue providing positive impacts to our community during COVID-19, the YMCA of Greater Saint John launched several new programs in 2020 including Y Home Delivery, a free curbside pickup and delivery of essential items for vulnerable persons in the community. This was made possible through our amazing volunteers and staff.

There are many individuals and families in our community who don't have the means or ability to leave their homes to pick up essential items like food, medication and other necessary supplies. With support of the United Way's Atlantic Compassion Fund, the Y provides this service to the community. The program launched in April of 2020 and 256 Y home deliveries were made last year!

Y Home Delivery is still being offered and those in need are asked to call (506) 646-2396 and leave a message with your name and number. We will return your call to determine eligibility for this program.





#### An anniversary to note



(Photo: Romero House)

#### By Romero House

On March 17th we celebrated the completion of one year of service "out the window" with a great meal and gift bags for everyone who came to the window. We are proud of our resilience and the accomplishment and feel that we have made those who have served before us, these past 39 years at Romero House, proud.

It has been a year filled with hard work, exhaustion, laughter and tears. Thank you, everyone, for all the physical and moral support you have given us over this past year. Words could never properly express our gratitude or the positive impact your help has been to some of the most vulnerable in our community. The unwavering support has bolstered our spirits and our pantry has never gone bare!

This has been a year of persistence and fortitude cemented by generosity and miracles. It is one we will never forget!

### One year "out the window" = 117,384 meals served

### **Brunswick Drive Community Room** makeover



The community room at 656 Brunswick Drive (Photo: Richard Northorp)

#### By Richard Northorp, Vice-President, Brunswick Drive Tenants Association (BDTA)

Many, many thanks to Social Development and NB Housing for all the support and work that was done to make our Community Room a much brighter and pleasant place to hold our activities and meetings. The ceilings were repaired, the room was painted and the floors were stripped and waxed. New blinds were hung as well. All done just in time to re-open the community room now that we are in yellow. After a long hard year with the pandemic, it is so nice to open a fresh new room for the tenants to enjoy their activities and programs, and using the new exercise equipment and enjoying the books in the library.

#### Around the Block interview: Kit Hickey, Executive Director Housing Alternatives Inc.

Housing Alternatives Inc.is a private, non-profit organization that provides Development and Management Services to both Housing Co-operatives and Non Profit Housing Organizations in South Western New Brunswick. Around the Block recently met with Kit Hickey to find out what's up in housing, a hot topic for our readers. Kit worked for the City of Saint John for two years then came to Housing Alternatives, where she has been ever since.

What is one thing about Housing Alternatives that you would like our readership in the priority neighbourhoods to know? Our ability to connect with other partner organisations. In addition to the provision of adequate and affordable housing we ensure that whatever support services are necessary are in place. We have been working in partnership with Second Stage Housing, First Steps Housing, Coverdale Centre, Outflow, Elizabeth Fry Society, the Teen Resource Centre. So we're the housing experts and the partner organisations provide whatever wraparound services are needed.

Why is there so little affordable decent housing in Saint John? One of the reasons that we saw the housing stock start to decay was when the owners started moving out of these priority neighbourhoods; there was never the same investment in the properties as when there was that sense of home ownership, the pride in community. We have a very low vacancy rate. Unless new units are added to the stock it's not going to get any better.

#### So what do you think the most important issue is in housing right now?

People are typically putting up with substandard housing and paying more than what is affordable - which is 30% of gross monthly income. Once you start paying more than that, then many necessities in life are forgotten.

#### Such as food. What changes do you think we need at each level of government right now to make this situation better?

We need all levels of government working together to ensure that an adequate supply of affordable housing is available. Housing is one of our most basic needs and without that, there are so many other needs that just cannot be met. With the housing first philosophy, it's housing first; everything else comes after that. And there's no judgment, there's no requirement placed on housing first clientele. You don't have to be clean; you don't have to be sober; you don't have to accept the services. But the reality is unless some of those services are in place you're not going to be able to succeed in the living arrangement. And who are we to judge? Which comes first, the drug addiction or the mental health issue?

#### What is happening to effect the needed changes?

The City of Saint John is working on an affordable housing strategy which is very encouraging, because this is the first time; it's not a municipal responsibility, it's provincial and federal. The programs that are in place are good. Do we need more money? Absolutely. And do we need the ability to stack programs to be able to access two levels of government? Yes. The Canada Housing Benefit is going to be extremely useful for for the modest income family. It's up to the Province to change the planning act but then it would be up to the City once that was done to expect inclusionary zoning; with new housing development, for profit or non-profit, the developer would be required to include a number of affordable rental units.

#### What practical things can readers do to help?

We always recommend that they ensure that they're registered with NB Housing because we draw from that waiting list. If I called the regional office and said how many people do you have on your waiting list, they may say 200. In fact we know the need is far greater than that, when you look at the number of income assistance recipients - about 6000 - and you look at the number of affordable housing units for that income - around 2700. And that doesn't take into consideration people on EI, senior citizens... so the need is far greater than what the waiting list is. You can register by calling 1 833 733 7835 - it's for all benefits but say you want to register for housing.

#### **About Elizabeth Fry New Brunswick**

By Courtney Pyrke

We would like to take this opportunity to educate candidates (and our community) about Elizabeth Fry New Brunswick (EFryNB). EFryNB is one of the 24 local EFry societies under the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS). The 24 locals are their own self-governing entity, with their own board of directors, executive director, and staff. We come together as a network to share resources and knowledge, build partnerships, and convene on key issues – all in service of offering the best support possibly to criminalized women and gender-diverse (WGD) people.

Saint John has the highest rates of single parent families living in poverty with a female head of the household in Canada. More than 70% of federally sentenced women offenders are mothers. Generally, women commit minor offences but suffer more stigmatization and poverty than men who commit more serious offences. Crimes committed by women tend to be crimes of poverty, often to fill the necessity to provide for themselves and their children.

When WGD people are released from prison, they will have a minimum criminal record of five years for a summary offense and ten years for an indictable offence. It costs \$657.77CAD to apply for a criminal record suspension. This fee does not include the costs associated with completing other documentation. In total, an application can cost up to \$800 CAD or more.

At EFryNB, WGD people who may be criminalized engage in education, advocacy, and direct services that provide hope and confidence to move forward from a position of strength. This year, EFryNB has ten active projects under the umbrellas of: education and advocacy; health and wellness; and individual services. These projects include our volunteer court liaison project, mother-child read aloud, My Place (community-based interim supportive housing), and the Free to Work project. These services help to empower WGD people who live equitably and with dignity.

For more information on EFryNB, you can follow us at www.facebook. com/efrynb/, check out our website (https://efrynb.ca/) or contact us directly by email (efry@nb.aibn.com) or phone: (506) 635-8851.





### The Salvation Army Now Operating a Mobile Service Unit in Saint John



Left to right: Mary Doiron, Community & Family Services Worker; Major Tracy Goyak and Major Orest Goyak, Leaders of The Salvation Army; Elizabeth England, Children's Outreach Worker; and Robert England, Community & Family Services Coordinator (Photo: The Salvation Army)

#### By The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army has officially begun operating a mobile service unit in Saint John, New Brunswick. The vehicle will provide transportation for clients, meal delivery services, and bring life-changing programs directly to people in need.

"The mobile unit opens up so many opportunities for us to help the community," says Major Tracy, co-leader of The Salvation Army in Saint John. "We can go to low-income areas to hand out fresh produce and packaged meals. We can transport children to summer camp and seniors to day programs."

Since the pandemic began, The Salvation Army in Saint John has been dedicated to supporting those in need through feeding programs, community meals, and clothing support. This new vehicle will allow the team to expand their services and increase partnerships with local agencies.

"The vehicle will also allow us to work with local agencies in the city," Major Orest explains. "We can go directly to people in need to provide services together. For people living on the streets in our city, this will be life-changing and make it easier to help them get back on their feet."

Funding for the mobile unit was provided by the Rogers Foundation, who in June of 2020 made a generous donation to help The Salvation Army continue providing much-needed programs and services on the frontlines of the pandemic.

"This vehicle will make an incredible difference in the Saint John community," say the Goyaks.



#### **Around The Block Team (Issue 76)**

**Publisher: Human Development Council** 

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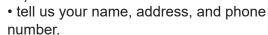
Layout and design: Lorna Brown and Juanita Black

#### **Food Purchase Contest**

By Juanita Black, HDC and Mary LeSage, PULSE

For Issue 76 our Food Purchase
Contest in partnership with Saint
John Energy will offer two \$15 fresh
fruit and vegetables packs, one each
to two winners. Throughout *Around*the Block there are five Saint John
Energy logos, including these three:
one in this article, one in the ad
on page 5 and one in the sponsor
section of page 1. You need to
locate the other two! Send your
answer to juanita@sjhdc.ca or call
651-3044 to speak to Juanita Black or
leave a message. You need to:

• identify the pages and locations of the two hidden logos (NOT those on pages 1, 5, or



Only one entry per household. Your name will go into a draw for one of the two orders. The contest will end Thursday, May 20th, 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. The Issue 74 winners were Rebekah Pearce and Vickie Legacy. The contest was not held in Issue 75.







### ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL URGENT CARE CENTRE

When you can't wait for an appointment but don't quite need an Emergency Department.

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