

# THE PARTICIPAPER

*An Inverness County Periodical*

Fall 2023

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## A letter from the editor

**DAVE MACNEIL**

[participaper@invernesscounty.ca](mailto:participaper@invernesscounty.ca)

It's true that perseverance can pay off in the long run.

But what a long run it has been for the Seawall Trail Society. They took up the mantle from the North Cape Breton Development Society, which two decades ago brought forth a proposal for a multi-day hiking trail between Red River and Meat Cove.

Society chair Ray Fraser, and the many volunteers who worked on the project these past 20 years, are to be commended. Not only for their patience and perseverance, but for doing it the right way from the very beginning and ensuring a strong partnership with Mi'kmaq communities at every step.

Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network's (NSITEN) role in the project is not just about protecting lands which the Mi'kmaq have held sacred since time immemorial, although that is important in itself. But the partnership with NSITEN also brings the promise of deeper understanding to complement the recreational and economic benefits. Hikers – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – will have the opportunity to discover more about Indigenous culture and ways of knowing.

The announcement on June 29 of \$6.4 million in funding for the hiking trail, which will be the first of its kind on the eastern seaboard of North America, may just be the spark that ignites economic renewal north of the Cabot Trail.

Multi-day hiking experiences like the Seawall Trail have been an economic boon in other regions of the world. So, it will be very interesting to see what additional economic opportunities may follow the trail's planned completion in three years' time.

We hope you enjoy our coverage of the Seawall Trail announcement, as well as the many other stories we have compiled in this edition of *The Participaper*.



**Cover Photo:** A group of bird watchers at Johnny Ban's Ponds, West Mabou.

**3 HIKING TRAIL GETS GREEN LIGHT**

**5 EMPLOYEE PROFILE**

**6 TURNING TRASH INTO A TREASURE**

**8 ACTOR MAKING NAME IN STAGE, FILM**

**12 PLOVER LOVERS REASON FOR HOPE**

**14 CAROLINE CAMERON ON GARDENING**

**16 AGE WELL SESSIONS GROW IN POPULARITY**

**18 'DREAM JOB' BRINGS BOYD BACK HOME**

**20 GLENCOE MARKS ANNIVERSARY**

**26 DR. GLENNA CALDER ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

**30 THE LAST WORD**



## Chief Administrative Officer's message

**KEITH MACDONALD**  
**INVERNESS COUNTY CAO**

### The future – youth retention

Over a 40-year period from 1981 to 2021 the overall population of Inverness County has declined by approximately 5,000 residents. The decrease of 5,000 people living in a populous metropolitan area would have limited impact on a municipal government's revenue and ability to deliver services. It is quite another story for a geographically large rural municipality. A population outflow of over 22% is a daunting task to overcome and certainly a trend that is incredibly difficult to halt, let alone try to reverse. Less population equates to a diminishing tax base which usually results in shrinking budgets and service cuts.

The good news is that the census period from 2016 to 2021 witnessed a halt in overall net population decline. There was actually a 0.6% increase in full-time residents over this time period. A one-time increase over 40 years does not indicate a trend, but it certainly indicates that times are changing, and more people have moved to the county we call home.

The story of Lauren Boyd in this issue is one example of many that underlies this recent population stabilization. More and more young professionals are either returning to their roots after furthering their education or moving here from various parts of the globe to build their career. The important themes that connect Lauren to Inverness County are similar to many of her demographic: close knit communities, making a positive impact, safety, feeling appreciated and being active in a rural landscape make a very compelling sales pitch to a generation that is now entering into the labour market.

Youth retention is one of the numerous strategic pillars of a population growth plan. One could argue that it is the key pillar in any population growth endeavour. With a focus on building on the aspects that help keep more Laurens in Inverness County, our collective future will see further population increases in upcoming census periods – a trend that will bode well for the future.

#### *The Participaper*

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# Patience pays off with announcement of trail project

BY DAVE MACNEIL



Elder Ernest Johnson speaking at the Meat Cove Welcome Centre.

Design work is already underway, after the Nova Scotia government announced \$6.4 million for the long-awaited Seawall Trail at an announcement in Meat Cove in late June.

The multi-day hut-to-hut hiking trail, which is expected to be ready for visitors in three years, was originally proposed by the Northern Cape Breton Development Society 20 years ago. Fifteen years ago, that body was replaced by the Seawall Trail Society, and that group's chair says he's "ecstatic" with the recent announcement.

"I'm looking forward to getting started and building on the community's vision," says Ray Fraser, adding

that time and patience were the key to getting the project over the finish line.

"All the credit goes to the community," Fraser adds. "It's the community that didn't stop. We just kept pushing forward."

"The counties – both Inverness and Victoria – have supported us from day one. They're part of that community."

The provincial funding will go towards design and marking of the trail and construction of the huts which will accommodate hikers as they make their way along the nearly 50-kilometre trail from Red River to Meat Cove. It will also be used to establish parking areas and a shuttle service between the two communities.

Fraser says the involvement of the local Indigenous community was critical at every step along the way.

“There are 10 years’ worth of community engagement gone into that trail plan,” he says, noting that a steering committee will now guide the project. That committee includes representation from the two counties, the province, the Seawall Trail Society, and the Nova Scotia Indigenous Tourism Enterprise Network (NSITEN). It will be co-chaired by the Seawall Trail Society and the Municipality of Inverness County.

The Seawall Trail will also have a new name – Jajiktek – which means “a difficult path or trail along the water.”

Mi’kmaw elder Ernest Johnson, who participated in the announcement, noted that trails in the area have long been used by the Mi’kmaq and by the animals of the forest, and that the new name also reflects the ones that were there before us.

Tenting will not be allowed along the new trail, as hikers will instead be housed in the huts, which will reduce impact on local plants and animals.

“The Seawall Trail has the potential to become one of North America’s iconic wilderness attractions for world travellers,” said Inverness MLA and Deputy Premier of Nova Scotia Allan MacMaster, on behalf of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage

Minister Pat Dunn. “This is an investment that will allow visitors to experience coastal scenic beauty now and generations to forever.”

Inverness County has established itself as a world-class destination for those who love our exceptional landscapes and access to pristine wilderness,” said Warden Bonny MacIsaac, council leader of the Municipality of Inverness County. “Today’s announcement will bring joy to the local communities that have actively worked to promote this project for many years.”

“It will also bring employment opportunities to this part of the county over the coming years and provide a significant pull for our thriving tourism industry for generations to come,” she added.

The municipality will work with Build Nova Scotia and the Seawall Trail Society to support community engagement and ongoing project communications. The provincial body will also provide project management and administrative services to the municipality for design and construction of the trail.

Once it’s completed, Jajiktek | the Seawall Trail will be the only multi-day hike of its kind along the eastern seaboard of North America. It will be located primarily in the Pollett’s Cove-Aspy Fault Wilderness Area, which boasts unique and impressive attributes for outdoor recreation.



A large crowd of residents, politicians and development officials turned out for the June announcement that the Seawall Trail would be going ahead.

## Getting to know...

### Bert Campbell

*In this recurring series, we ask a municipal employee a series of questions to get to know them better.*

#### Where are you from?

I was born and raised in Inverness.

#### Where do you live?

I still live in Inverness.

#### What's your role with the Municipality?

I'm a heavy equipment operator and a truck driver.

#### What's your service time?

I've worked on and off with the county over the last 40 years. I

spent 22 years at the Inverary Manor in maintenance. When I retired from there, I rejoined the county full time and I received my 10-year pin last year.

#### What's your favourite thing about Inverness County?

The people. Everyone is so friendly and you can always find somebody to give you a hand with whatever you're doing.

#### What's your favourite shop/store/service in Inverness County?

My favourite shop would be Ashfield Auto, which is in Ashfield, close to Orangedale. Eric Poirier is the owner and he's so intelligent around vehicles. I've taken rigs there that no one could



Bert Campbell

fix anywhere else, and Eric has been able to figure out the problem.

#### Finally, coffee or tea?

Tea. I grew up drinking it with my parents. I don't even remember ever having coffee in the house!

## MICRO-LOAN PROGRAM

Empowering Female Entrepreneurs



Under the Micro-Loan Program, female entrepreneurs from across Unama'ki - Cape Breton will be eligible to apply for a loan of up to \$10,000, offered at a low-interest rate, with zero percent interest for the first six months.

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East Coast

CENTRE FOR  
WOMEN IN  
BUSINESS

Centre for

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CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

Chamber of Commerce

STREAM AREA

# L'Arche gives reclaimed wood a beautiful new lease on life

BY JOE CAREW

Nestled at the foot of the mountains by the waters of the Bras d'Or lakes, L'Arche Cape Breton is part of an international federation of people with and without intellectual disabilities living together to celebrate the unique value of every person.

It's a vibrant community which ensures that its members are valued for their individual gifts, often expressed through artisanship and creativity. Along with a very active weaving program, members take part in baking, gardening, or staffing local favourites such as the Hope Chest and the Ark Store. These are just some of the activities that allow their skills and interests to grow and shine through.

And in this, its 40th anniversary year, L'Arche Cape Breton has partnered with the Municipality of Inverness County to kick-start a brand-new program: working with reclaimed wood that was destined for landfill to create beautiful, practical items that give the wood a second life.

## Turning trash into a table that's a treasure

Shannon MacLean had recently joined the municipal team as Re-Use & Waste Diversion



Lead when she identified a rich seam to mine: reusable materials that were heading to landfill.

The Waste Services team reached out to The Angels' Loft, an artisans' workshop run by L'Arche in Orangedale. They invited members, including Silas Donham, to visit the waste management facility in Kenloch and think about the potential for re-use.

While researching possible products to make, Shannon and Silas both independently came upon the same Australian artisan on YouTube. (Shout out to the Dainer Made: making cool stuff out of recycled timber! youtube.com/@dainermade)

It seemed like the stars were aligned, and L'Arche members got underway learning the skills to transform dozens of reclaimed pallets into a beautifully crafted boardroom table.

## It's a "great feeling"

Evan Ranson – one of the team that worked on the table – talks enthusiastically about this first experience of working with reclaimed pallets.

"This is wood that people didn't respect anymore," Evan says. "It was on its way to landfill, but we



saved it. We created something beautiful and useful, but also, we did it out of something that no one thought had any value anymore. That's a great feeling."

The pride that this project has produced is palpable when talking to L'Arche members. This was a professional assignment, and the team really wanted to get it right. There were challenges along the way, but perseverance paid off.

"I really put everything into this project," Evan adds. "All of my emotions went into this. I eat, sleep, and breathe it. If I didn't do this, I don't know what I'd be doing."

#### **Learning together generates passion and value**

"This project has been an immense learning curve for us – and such a rewarding experience for the whole team," Silas notes. "Working with reclaimed wood to produce beautiful, functional pieces like this table helps us reimagine what might be possible for our members. Such a range of different skills are needed so it allows us to come together to co-create."

At L'Arche, when evaluating the quality of programs, what's important is how much core members' gifts are revealed. The aim is for people to blossom and grow as artisans and as valued members of the wider community. Being valued is something we all cherish, and the skills we master contribute an important part of our identity.

"It's like Evan was saying – meaningful work really stirs people's passion," Silas says. "We aren't interested in 'busywork' for our members – just doing something for the sake of filling the time. Our programs give people the chance to discover and develop new skills, collaborate towards shared goals as a team. And in this case, also be leaders in combating the environmental crisis."

Shannon says this project has given her a renewed sense of the value of her role. "There's no limit to what a team can do if they're inspired!" she adds. "This project has showed that people can exceed the expectations that society might have of them – both for what we can do as individuals, and what we as a society can do for the environment. It's so inspiring."

Like Evan says, "Nobody wanted this old wood – well they will now!"

# Stage, film actor putting county on the map

BY DAVE MACNEIL

Allister MacDonald doesn't remember when he became a performer.

"My sister reminded me yesterday that I used to run around my house with a pillowcase around my head pretending I was someone named Sarah," he recalls. "I must have been like two."

The early start has certainly served him well, as the 32-year-old actor has captured a pair of ACTRA Awards since 2020. Add to that a 2022 Merritt Award, presented by Theatre Nova Scotia, for his role as the Mad Hatter in Neptune Theatre's *Alice in Pantoland*, and it's clear MacDonald is quickly becoming one of Canada's up-and-coming artists.

"Growing up in Creignish, I was very lucky to have my two older sisters," he recalls. "There was not a lot to do, so we had to kind of rely on our imagination, and in a world without cell phones, we really just found ways to make our own fun."

Growing up queer, he says was also very lucky to have the support of a loving family.

"I very much feel like a boy, and I very much feel a big mix of many different things... I've always felt this since I can remember," he explains. "It was not always rainbows and sunshine, but I'm definitely confident and happy that I was surrounded by a lot of love my whole life, because I know a lot of people didn't get that. But I am lucky that I did."

"I was drawn to playing with dolls, because I wanted to create stories and I wanted to become characters." MacDonald recalls. He also discovered a talent for singing, which has helped propel his career, both on stage and in front of the camera.

"I haven't had any formal training as a singer, or musically," he says. "So I just grew up very aware of the Rankin Family, going to the square dances with my grandmother (Joan MacFarlane of Glenville). I really think that there's something so musical about Inverness County that just kind of latched on to me."

"It's a huge part of the culture, at least in my family, just sitting around and singing. So I think that's where I fell into the ability that I have. It kind of just came out of nowhere."

MacDonald says that growing up he spent a lot of time in Glenville "because I found my grandma's house a very safe place."

"She would always chord songs and we would just sing, me and my Nana and my cousin, Nicole," he recalls. "I wasn't that into sports yet, not until high school. Spending time with my Nana had a huge influence on me musically."

Allister MacDonald with two of his alter egos from the Neptune stage: Frank N Furter from *Rocky Horror Picture Show*; and the Mad Hatter from *Alice in Pantoland*.

*Photo courtesy Allister MacDonald*





Allister MacDonald (foreground) in a scene from *Monica's News*, a movie which wrapped filming in July in the Annapolis Valley.  
Photo courtesy Allister MacDonald

He also learned to make his own opportunities, writing a song when he was 11 and attending Tamarac Education Centre in Port Hawkesbury.

“I took it to the music teacher, and we picked some people to play on it and we performed it in front of the whole school,” MacDonald remembers.

His sport of choice, volleyball, prompted a move to Antigonish, where he attended high school at Dr. John Hugh Gillis.

“I ended up playing for the provincial team for Nova Scotia, and on the Canada Games training team. I took it pretty seriously for a lot of years.”

But there was still the ever-present desire to perform on something other than a volleyball court, and 2018 proved to be a watershed year in that respect, as he nabbed a role in *Stage Mother*, a movie directed by critically-acclaimed Halifax-based filmmaker Thom Fitzgerald. That same year, he made his Neptune Theatre debut, playing William Shakespeare in *Shakespeare in Love*.

He says *Stage Mother*, in which he played a drag queen named Joan of Arkansas, was a “turning point, in that it opened up a door for people to take me a bit more seriously.”

“I was going to set every day to play a drag queen on a movie, and then I was shuttled to the theatre to play Shakespeare on the Neptune stage,” MacDonald says. “They are two very, very different roles. It really stretched me pretty thin as an artist. It took a lot of focus and a lot of energy.”

“I had sometimes 15 and 16-hour days. In terms of what I can do as an artist, I feel like it really showed me that I don’t have very many limits – at least in my imagination I don’t.”

His performance in the movie earned him his first ACTRA as best lead actor in 2020, but it also gave him the opportunity to work with some big-name actors, including two-time Academy Award nominee Jacki Weaver, who garnered those nominations for her work in *Animal Kingdom* (2010) and *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012).

“The movie really took on a life of its own in the queer communities around the country and throughout North America – even in London,” he says. “I still have people messaging about how much they loved that movie.”

His second ACTRA award came in 2021, again for best lead actor, when he teamed up with fellow actor Wayne Burns, a native of Truro living in Toronto, to create *Liar*, a CBC-funded 20-minute film.



Allister MacDonald did his own makeup to play Frank N Furter in Neptune Theatre's *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, in photo at left. He starred alongside Faly Mevamanana in Neptune's *In Lieu of Flowers*, in photo at right. Photos courtesy of Allister MacDonald and Stoo Metz Photography

MacDonald says his Merritt Award-winning performance as the Hatter paved the way for playing Frank N Furter in Neptune's presentation of the cult classic *Rocky Horror Picture Show* in 2022, for which he received a second Merritt nomination earlier this year. He says that role, more than any he's done, made the most of his talents.

"Mad Hatter is a close second," he adds. "I feel like I could take the reins in my own work. I decided to dye my own hair, came up with my own look, and makeup and really collaborated with the design and costume team to create who he was. I came up with the voice and the accent."

"I feel like he was step one toward being Frank N Furter. I showed that I had the tools to lift Frank N Furter to another stratosphere with my weird little side abilities to do makeup."

MacDonald's most recent project, a movie shot in the Annapolis Valley that was scheduled to wrap in late July, again has him in a central role, but playing a character that's very new to him. Set in Cape Breton, *Monica's News* "is about a little girl who witnesses the world around her changing in the 70s, women becoming more prominent figures, and taking more control of their lives," he explains. "It's also about how the men in the town deal with that one way or another, but at heart it's about this little girl."

"I've not played a character like this before," he says. "I'm playing an oil-rig worker who's unemployed, and this straight player who gets into some trouble."

"When I was auditioning, I thought, 'there's no way in hell I'm going to get this.'"

MacDonald was to return to the stage this fall in Toronto, as the new That Theatre Company gets set to present the critically-acclaimed *Angels in America*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Tony Kushner, which was also an HBO mini-series starring Al Pacino and Meryl Streep.

As his acting career reaches new heights, he's mindful of the little kid from Creignish who staged concerts on his grandma's deck. And he has advice for any young people who may be struggling with gender norms.

"I would say there's always someone around who probably feels like you, more people than you might know," he says. "So seek out community. And, if not, there's more than likely some allies around. Stick to the people you know will have your back, whether that's a teacher or a friend."

"Especially if you're in high school in a small town, try to find the people who make you happy and know that there's a world out there where there are a lot of people like you, and there are spaces waiting for you to walk into them when you're ready."



## Hope remains for an endangered species in West Mabou

Not much bigger than a sparrow, there's a yellow legged master of disguise whose natural habitat includes the fine sand and pebbles that line the dunes of certain Inverness County beaches. While their numbers remain critically low, there are now around 60 breeding pairs of piping plovers in Nova Scotia, which is an increase from about 30 pairs in recent years.

Nature enthusiasts were treated to a diversity of wildlife thanks to the range of habitats at West Mabou Beach Provincial Park.

Birds Canada, in collaboration with the municipality's Recreation and Community Wellness Department, organized a walk-and-talk event to learn more about the piping plover, and the other inhabitants of the rich and diverse ecosystem of West Mabou Beach Provincial Park.

## Biodiversity

Sue Abbott of Birds Canada led the walk and came equipped with a powerful scope, bird identification field guides and a lot of knowledge about the denizens of the park. With woodland and ponds as well as grasslands and shore, the range of habitats means that there's plenty to see and hear. Wood ducks, blue jays, yellowthroats and cedar waxwings were all observed within minutes of taking the woodland path to Johnny Ban's Ponds.

The presence of a pair of merlins – a small falcon – is one likely reason that this year, no piping plovers have chosen to nest in the park. The adult merlin was spotted on the dead trunk of a tree by one sharp-eyed bird enthusiast, who played a recording of the bird's call on their phone for the group. On hearing the recording, the merlin called back, to the delight of the group. Seeing an adult and a juvenile together is a good sign that a pair have successfully raised their young this year in West Mabou. Good news for the merlins, but the species they prey on, including small shore birds, had better keep a low profile!

## Getting active and supporting healthy ecosystems

Krista MacInnis of the Recreation department was thrilled to see that the walk was so popular. People came from all over Cape Breton Island and even further afield (shout out to Antigonish County birders!)

"This is the number one activity that I wanted to organize this summer. It's such a great addition to our programming designed to help Inverness County residents get active. There's a wide range of ages here and people are out in the fresh air getting a decent walk, while also discovering the richness of this ecosystem, and ways to help it stay healthy," said Krista.

There was also a range of birding and wildlife knowledge on the walk, from total novice (like the

writer of this article : ) to really expert, so it was a good forum to share and learn. Many identification tips were discussed, based on a bird's plumage, call and habitat. And some very convincing imitations of frog calls were demonstrated by one of the participants, highlighting the difference between the green frog (*lithobates clamitans*) which is common in Cape Breton, and its cousin the bullfrog (*lithobates catesbeianus*) which is not found on the island.

## Wildlife rehabilitation

Amongst those who joined the walk was Jessica Royer of Hope for Wildlife, a Nova Scotia non-profit working on wildlife rehabilitation. Jessica shared the fantastic news that Hope for Wildlife is currently in the process of expanding its activities into Inverness County, opening a new rehabilitation centre in Port Hastings. The nearest centre until now has been in Guysborough County, so this will have a significant impact in improving the chances of wild animals in need of care. Sadly, Jessica said that they are seeing more shore birds, like the piping plover, in need of rehabilitation now than ever before. This is because of a range of factors, including the increase of extreme weather events, as excessively high tides and more frequent severe storms are a major challenge to ground-nesting shore birds.

Strolling down the beach with the opportunity to observe such a rich diversity of bird species – bonaparte's gulls, nelson's sparrows, black bellied plovers, savannah sparrows – it was a timely reminder of the fragility of this exceptional ecosystem, and of the responsibility we all share to nurture its health.

The Recreation department hopes to organize more wildlife and ecosystem walks throughout the county. Let us know where a good location would be near to you!

[birdscanada.org](http://birdscanada.org)

[hopeforwildlife.net](http://hopeforwildlife.net)

You can download a free bird identification app, which lets you record a bird's call and can help identify it, like an avian Shazam!

Go to: [merlin.allaboutbirds.org](http://merlin.allaboutbirds.org) (named after the small migratory falcon written about in this article!)

# Fall reckoning - the opportunities offered by a full bounty

Weather and luck play such a large part in how well the farmers have done this year, and, if we have our own little gardens, how well they have faired. We may have ended up with a modest harvest, or indeed too many tomatoes, beans, or zucchini. We can share the bounty around, and with the frenzy of summer passed by, we may even consider preserving a bit.

It might seem like finding time to take on preserving would be a challenge, but with a bit of practice, it does become easy to slip into a day. In cash-poor times, our ancestors' wealth was in the garden, and time was made for the cash-in. But, of course, when this work was done in earlier generations, people were looking to store a winter's worth of vegetables, so it was always a large quantity grown, and a large quantity needing processing. And now, we also have freezers that give more, and quicker storage options.

If you have tomatoes piling up, it is so easy to bag them and toss them in the freezer whole. To save freezer space, they can be chopped or pureed, but I often puree and boil them up in batches as they accumulate, then seal them in hot sterile jars for tomato sauce. One can flavour them, but it is said that too much alteration may interfere with the natural acidity that helps them keep. I also make a point of adding my boiling-hot preserves to sterile jars immediately after they have been taken out of their boiling water. If preserved tomato is discoloured or gassy, it is important to take a wide berth.

Herbs are so easy to grow, and are such a pleasure to add to meals, that they are worth the small effort. Thyme, oregano, mint, chives, and sage are all perennial plants that will come back every year. Harvesting before they flower is recommended, and

you only need to cut handfuls of the sprigs, hang them to dry for about a week (until dried to the point of crumbling when handled), and store the leaves, or whole sprigs in bags or mason jars. Many gardeners also freeze herbs into ice cube trays, then move to bags for freezer storage.

A traditional summer Acadian practice is to prepare flavoured salt for winter cooking. Chives are chopped and placed in a jar, and covered with a layer of salt, and alternating layers are added through the season, as the chives regrow.

If you haven't remembered to plant your bean seeds in small batches, you'll likely get too many at once. It just takes about a half-hour to blanch them and get them into the freezer. Blanching is simply parboiling, and it prevents certain produce from discolouring when frozen, by breaking down enzymes that cause the darkening. To do this, I bring a large pot of water to boil, I ready some cold water chilled with ice, and trim up or cut the string beans. In small batches, I boil the beans for 3 minutes, then scoop out and cool them quickly in the water, drain and freeze. These typically turn out very well.

Zucchinis need no preparation for freezing, other than cutting them into a size useful for what you'll use them for: cubing for spaghetti sauce, shredding for loaf, slicing for lasagna. I also slice zucchini in disks and dry them, and have experimented with thin slicing and toasting with a bit of oil and salt for snacking chips.

Freezing is convenient, but the possibility of extended power outages makes bottling a great option for care-free storage. Please bear in mind that if produce is thawed, it can still be preserved when power is restored, rather than disposing.

Canning vegetables such as carrots, beans, or of course, pickling beets is a bit more time consuming, but it is so rewarding as the vegetables are enjoyed through the winter. Pickled beets are an old favourite, and making your own dill pickles is a fun and easy project.

I have a great appreciation of sound old practices, so it pleased me to learn that the fermentation that takes place during pickling provides real health benefits to digestion and blood sugar. There are so many traditional recipes to choose from, and the



processes are fail-safe. You can find a few friends to make different kinds and split them all up among you.

Few things measure up to homemade jellies and jams. Crab apple jelly is one of my favourite big batch enterprises, since it makes such a perfect little heart-felt gift for any occasion. But the possibilities for jams and jellies are endless.

Too many fruits of any kind can also be canned in a sweet syrup. I often do up some whole crab apples for garnishes, but pears and peaches preserve well in syrup.

One can also make easy and affordable juices by adding berries (blueberries, raspberries, or grapes) up to a quarter of the volume of a hot sterile mason jar, and then filling with a boiling water and sugar syrup, sealing, and setting aside for a few weeks.

There's lots of information on the internet about food prep, but I tend toward the older recipes and books for more tried-and-true practices. As well, workshops for food processing are becoming more common. I attended such as a workshop on fermentation and making sauerkraut offered in South West Margaree last year, where I came home with a fresh bottle of sauerkraut, and a fresh appreciation of the wonders our gardens and kitchen offer us.

*Happy Gardening!*



Photo at left: Zucchinis grow quickly! Pick vegetables as soon as they can be harvested and preserve while still fresh. Photos above: Fruit can be frozen and then made into jellies or jams after the busy season.

Photos: Caroline Cameron

Caroline Cameron lives in Strathlorne, and offers gardening and guiding services around Cape Breton Island. Please submit any gardening tips, questions, and news to [strathlorne@gmail.com](mailto:strathlorne@gmail.com) and visit Facebook at *Nature/Nurture Gardening & Hiking*.

# Age Well Academy sessions in full swing in Inverness County

BY BRANDON MACNEIL

Over the past few months, the municipality has been holding a host of information sessions in various community settings around Inverness County. With our county's seniors being the target audience, the Age Well Academy aims to improve the wellbeing of the 30% of our population that is over age 65.

The focus of Age Well Academy is to empower older adults on a diverse range of topics that are of interest to them in a relaxed social setting close to home. At least two sessions are planned for each electoral district in the county.

Both the CBC and The Inverness Oran recently provided coverage on the community sessions, which has further piqued the interest of prospective attendees.

In a recent session at St. Michael's Parish Hall in East Margaree in late July, those in attendance were treated to four presentations. Topics included avoiding fraud, improving brain health, accessing continuing care, and sorting household waste.



Cpl. Phil Richard of the Chéticamp detachment of the RCMP presented on how to avoid fraud. He outlined some common scams encountered by seniors and provided a number of strategies that seniors can employ to keep their money safe.

Beth Bennett, the regional coordinator for the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, presented on brain health. She covered some warning signs to look for that mark cognitive decline and a list of twelve actions for a healthier brain at any age.

Brenda Burton, Care Coordinator with Nova Scotia Health, spoke on the programs and services associated with continuing care, and Nicole Latimer, Solid Waste Educator with the municipality, helped attendees with some tips on sorting household waste.

Between the second and third sessions, a delicious lunch was provided for all in attendance. This also gave participants an opportunity to socialize over a hot cup of tea and some sweets for dessert.

There were also numerous table displays for attendees to peruse between sessions and during the lunch break. This included a table that showcased some of the newest sensory items that



are now available to county residents, including fidget blankets, wooden fidgets, puzzles, wooden and gel mazes, aqua art, and memory cards. All are available at no rental cost to seniors, and the fidget blankets are for each person to keep.

Ashli Campbell, the Accessibility and Senior Safety Coordinator for the municipality, organizes the Age Well Academy sessions and books the guest presenters. She says her favourite aspect of the sessions is the change she sees in attendees following the event.

Campbell says, "Most people don't really know what to expect when they come to an Age Well, but when they leave, they almost always ask us when we will be coming back again. I love seeing the participants interacting with the presenters, enjoying a meal, and having some social time with neighbours and friends. I also love getting calls telling us how much they enjoyed the session and how they look forward to seeing us in their community again!"

Campbell states that an important aspect of the sessions is scheduling presenters who speak on pertinent, everyday topics affecting the lives of seniors.

"A survey was conducted, asking seniors what topics would be of interest to them," she explains. "Based on those results, we started to make connections with different organizations who we felt had services and supports that could benefit many residents of our county. We want people to know what is available to them in terms of services, supports, and programs and how to access them.

"The presenters have so much to offer, and depending on what questions are asked, (sessions) can go in a variety of different directions, so we are also always learning new things."

According to Campbell, there are seven sessions remaining (at press time) before the series wraps up in November. Upcoming presenters will depend on availability and the specific needs and interests of the various communities.

Find out when the next session is in a community near you: [invernesscounty.ca/aging-well](http://invernesscounty.ca/aging-well), or call Ashli Campbell at 902-258-7960.

# Dream job brings healthcare professional back home

BY JOSEFA CAMERON

Lauren Boyd has always been an active person and is always looking for ways to give back.

After attending Dalhousie University for four years, the 23-year-old landed her dream job as a radiological technologist at the Inverness Consolidated Memorial Hospital.

She's been at the job for over a year, working in diagnostic imaging, doing x-rays, CAT scans and EKGs.

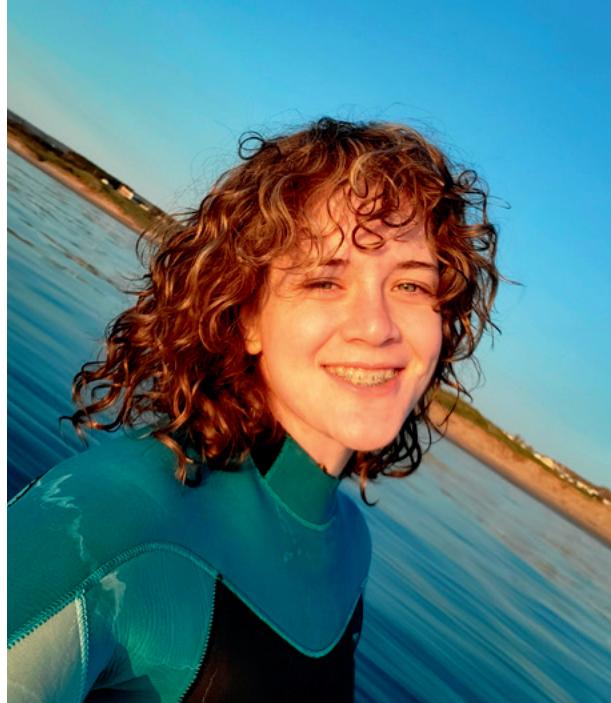
Since she was young, she was interested in healthcare and working with people. She said the impact her job has on people is rewarding.

"I like mostly knowing that you can make a difference in somebody's day," Boyd told *The Participaper* in an interview.

"Even if it's only a short 15-minute scan. You can tell when you brighten somebody's day a little bit."

And working near her hometown of Glendale is an added perk.

"It's definitely the kind of pace that I like, like being back home with all my family and friends and being in the woods and having the beach five minutes down the road," she said. "It's nice to have that break from the city after four long years."



It can be challenging to work with people on some of the most difficult days of their lives, she said, especially because she is closely connected to the community and feels pain alongside her patients.

"But it's just one of those things. You kinda have to be able to separate yourself from it," she said.

She said she navigates the ups and downs of the job by maintaining a mindset that focuses on doing good for people in hard times.

The team at the hospital in Inverness, she said, has been welcoming and admirable examples in the profession.

"It's rural but also busy enough, so every day is different, and you see so much," she explained. "But it's still small enough that you know who you're working with, and you know your patients pretty well and there's such a stronger sense of community than you get at a larger hospital."

After spending summers throughout high school and university working as a lifeguard in Inverness County, the area drew her back. The village of Inverness is a home away from home for her.

"I knew that there was a good crew that worked here, and it was just an enticing small little hospital, a good place to get all my bearings and start working and find my independence in the job that I have," she said.

The community has also been welcoming, she added, although it was a struggle to find housing. She plans to soon move from Glendale to Inverness.

“Everybody's always on my side. When I was looking for a place, it seemed like everybody in Inverness was trying to find me places to live, even patients were coming in and saying ‘Oh, you need a spot? I heard this person knows this person who knows this place.’”

Still in her early twenties, she said she has a lot of time to make moves in her career.

“But currently, I'm just focused on being more involved in the community,” she said.

Creating opportunities around recreational sports for people is a passion of hers and it's one way she plans to involve herself in the community more.

Currently she's working with a program called Girls on Boards, a nonprofit organization that empowers girls to love their bodies, trust themselves and get involved in water sports.

The program is important to Boyd because girls don't typically get the same exposure to sports as boys, she said.

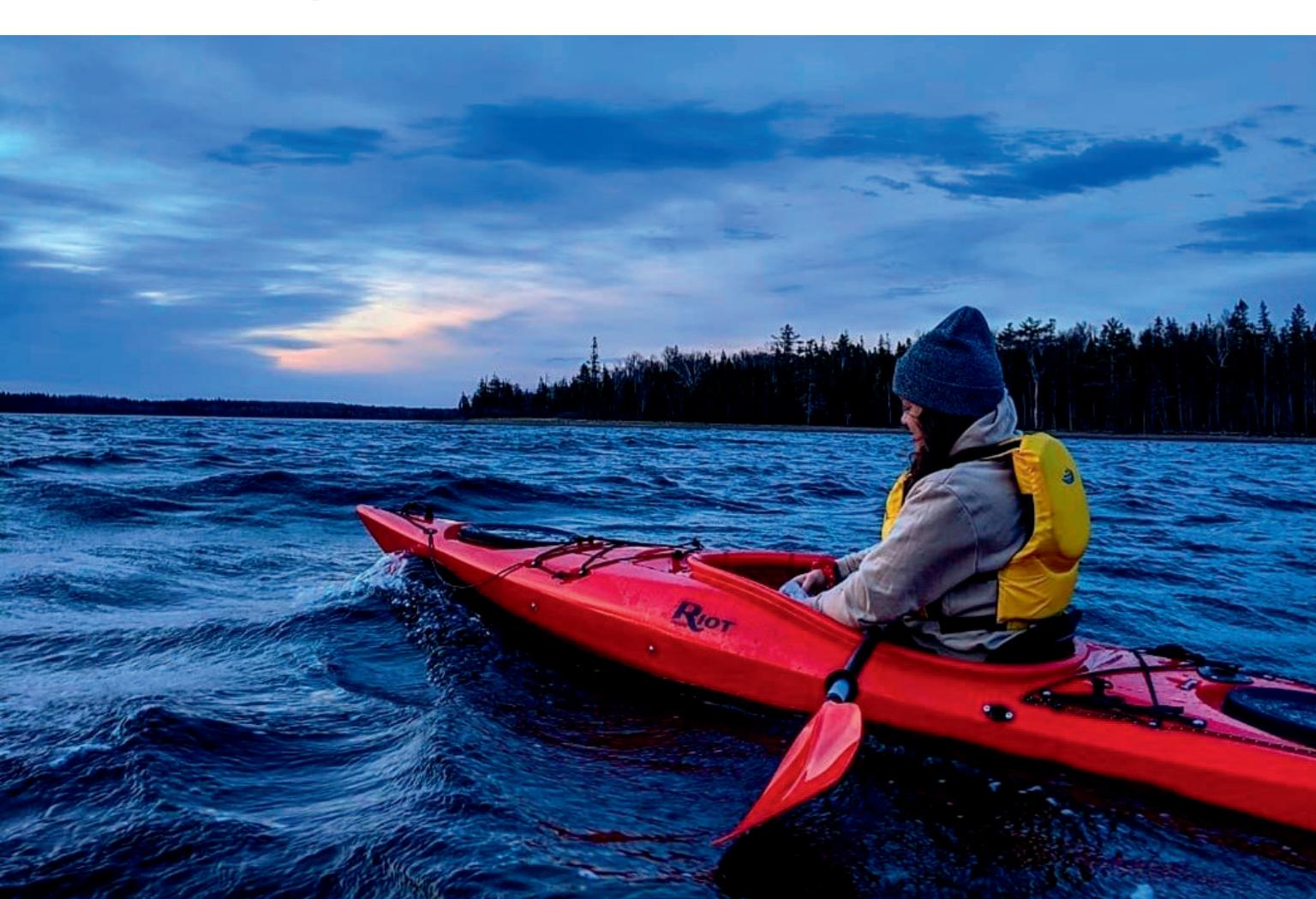
“I want to encourage girls to get out and find confidence in themselves with new sports that they never experienced before,” she said.

“We're just going to try to bring board sports to the rural areas and have girls introduced into different sports that they wouldn't have normally had the exposure to.”

The program works with girls ages eight to 18 with additional sessions for women.

“We're hoping to do some skateboarding and surfing and throw other board sports amongst paddleboarding,” she said.

Boyd's plans include learning more about her work, getting to know the community further and continuing to provide care for her patients with a smile in hopes she can help brighten their days.



# Glencoe marks 150th anniversary of St. Joseph's parish



All roads led to Glencoe July 29, as one of Inverness County's oldest communities celebrated the 150th anniversary of St. Joseph's Parish.

Most Rev. Wayne Kirkpatrick, Bishop of the Diocese of Antigonish, was on hand to officiate a celebratory mass, along with parish priest Fr. Bernie MacDonald. Festivities kicked off at 2 pm with games, a barbecue, horseshoe tournament, music and story-telling.

Mass was said with music in both Gaelic and English from the MacNeil Family. Father Bernie recalled that he has known four generations of MacNeils in the parish and congratulated the members of the youngest generation on their accomplished singing and playing.

A good scoff was served to the huge crowd, which swelled to fill a large marquee outside the hall. Glencoe receptions are famous for the quality and quantity of the provisions, and no-one went away hungry!

Festivities wrapped up that evening in true Glencoe style with a square dance in the hall featuring the talents of Shelly Campbell, Troy MacGillivray and Betty Beaton.

One of the highlights of the event, and what could be its most lasting legacy, was the release of a new publication called *Up In Glencoe – Aite Cruinneachaich* ('A Gathering Place'). The glossy 110-page book was a hot item at the celebration. Coordinator Bernadette Campbell says a committee of volunteers started work on the book in April, expanding on a similar 23-page publication that had been produced 50 years ago for the 100th anniversary of the parish.

"Our plan was for it to be maybe 40 pages," Bernadette recalls. "But we quickly discovered that if there were pictures to go with the content, then it would be nice to showcase that. And then beautiful pieces started arriving in our lap."

She says the committee placed an ad on social media and in the local weekly newspaper, requesting submissions of photos and material that would help trace the history of the community and the parish. They also received support from the Municipality of Inverness County and the Nova Scotia Office of Gaelic Affairs.

The result is a publication that includes contributions from more than 50 contributors, including Harvey Beaton, Joe MacMaster, Francene Gillis, Cathy Gillies, Joan Currie, and Frances MacEachen. Bernadette says Francene did a write-up on the history of the parish church, while Joe, a young fiddler who is currently studying to be a priest, contributed a piece from his own personal experience about the role of music in his life, from the perspective of someone who is also a seminarian.

There are also numerous family sketches, genealogical information and photos and material depicting the history of the community.

"We tried to have it really be very inclusive of, and representative of, the voice of the Glencoes," Bernadette explains. "There are a lot of beautiful pictures that depict life in Glencoe in its heyday. Glencoe at one time had several mills, a credit union, a post office, the hall, a school, the church."

She says it was also a very central location for people from other local communities to access various services.

"Glencoe is 12 miles from Mabou, 12 miles from Port Hood and 12 miles from Whycocomagh, so it was and is a central destination," she notes. "So when people would bring their wool to get carded, oats to be ground, or their wood to be cut, or shingles to be produced, it was within means and it was another community to go to get those services."

Copies of the book, which sells for \$30 including taxes, can be ordered by emailing: [glencoebook2023@gmail.com](mailto:glencoebook2023@gmail.com)

**Left:** If there was ever any doubt, this aerial image, taken during the anniversary celebrations, would certainly indicate that all roads lead to Glencoe. Photo by Steve Rankin Photography



Clockwise from top, left: Kaye Brady and Theresa MacDonell enjoyed the anniversary celebrations in Glencoe; dozens of historical photos were compiled for the event, including one showing, from left, Mamie (MacIsaac) Gillis and her sister Tena (MacIsaac) MacMillan and Josephine MacIsaac (sister-in-law); Emily Rankin and her daughter, Kira, looked at the many of the photos; Allie Cechetto worked the Plinko game, which was popular with the kids; and Roddie Graham of Judique tried his luck at bingo. Photos: Steve Rankin Photography

# Steer towards sustainability!

Folks from Clean Foundation brought electric vehicle test drives to Inverness County during August to show residents that plugging in to a cleaner, greener future is becoming more accessible.

Nova Scotians are eligible to receive a significant rebate through the Electrify program. For example, you can get \$500 back when purchasing an e-bike for \$1,200 or more if certain criteria are met. Rebates of up to \$3000 are available when purchasing certain electric cars.

Rebates are on a first come, first served basis until the program budget is exhausted.

Go to [evassist.ca/rebates](http://evassist.ca/rebates) to find out more.

Earlier this year, in partnership with Clean, the municipality installed a total of 10 electric vehicle charging stations in Grand-Étang, Inverness, Mabou, Judique and Whycocomagh. The stations are now supporting electric vehicles on Inverness County roads and contributing to environmental sustainability.

The charging stations were partially funded through Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)'s Zero-Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP).

"Inverness County is plugging in to a cleaner, greener and more prosperous future. This has been a team effort and the municipality is grateful to Clean Foundation and the Government of Canada for their contribution to making this exciting new infrastructure happen," said council leader Warden Bonny MacIsaac.

[cleanfoundation.ca](http://cleanfoundation.ca)

Brandon, Elliot and Faye from Clean Foundation engaged with Inverness County residents at the Celtic Music Centre during Judique on the Floor Days.



# A shed to the rescue

BY OISIN CURRAN

The Chéticamp Fire Department doesn't just serve the community it's named after, but rather a region that stretches all the way from French Mountain to MacKenzie Mountain. In other words, these volunteers have, for many years now, included the Cape Breton Highlands National Park in their territory.

Parks Canada has highly trained and well-equipped teams of rescue specialists that can bring in helicopters for truly hazardous and hard-to-reach incidents, but those teams are maintained off-site and are rarely called to the Highlands. Instead, the Park has an agreement with the Chéticamp Fire Department. Five to 10 times a year the local volunteer force is called to the park to handle injuries on the trails or to put out car fires, building fires and small forest fires.

Recently, members of the Chéticamp Fire Department volunteered their time and collective skills to construct a new building that now houses their rescue truck. Wayne Chiasson, the fire chief, modestly refers to this building as a "shed," although at 30 by 40 feet, it's more like a very substantial garage.





Pierre LeBlanc (shown at right) donated most of the funds for the fire department's new rescue sled. Here he receives thanks from department captain Shawn LeBlanc. Photo courtesy Chéticamp Volunteer Fire Department

In the past, the department squeezed its three-quarter-ton rescue truck into the main hall along with the massive fire engines. This meant there was barely enough room to walk around the vehicles, never mind service and maintain them. The shed gives the department some breathing room.

In addition to the rescue truck, there's even room for a seven-foot by twelve-foot trailer, designed to carry the department's rescue sled. This sled, purchased for \$10,000 in 2021 with funds donated by local benefactor, Pierre Leblanc, is like a mini ambulance. Five feet by eight feet long, it's essentially an enclosed pod that can fit both a patient and a paramedic.

Firefighters can outfit the sled with interchangeable skis or wheels, making it a versatile all-season piece of rescue equipment. This allows firefighters to tow it to and from remote areas with snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and bring people to safety no matter what time of year it is. Since acquiring the sled, the fire department has deployed it twice, once on the Skyline Trail and once on a backwoods road. Both times the sled was equipped with its ATV wheels.

Asked if he's concerned about the increase in wildfires across the country, including mainland Nova Scotia, Chiasson notes that the local forests seem resistant to burning.

"There was a small forest fire on Chéticamp Island about 15 years ago and we were very worried," he recalls. "We thought the whole island might burn. But by the time we got there, it had put itself out after burning about 30 square feet of forest."

"I don't know if it's the humidity here or the type of trees, but they don't light up for some reason," Chiasson adds. "Also, people around here are very prudent, and we don't have many grass fires."

He says he's more concerned about potential injuries at the Gypsum Mine, a popular local swimming spot.

"People take risks," he says, "and there are more and more people swimming there, so we think it's just a matter of time before somebody gets hurt. We train there regularly so we can be ready if that happens."

Luckily, the all-volunteer force includes four paramedics with P3 certification, the highest level of medical first responder training. The rest of the team is composed of carpenters, mechanics, and fishers. As for the chief, when he's not responding to emergencies, he's responsible for maintenance at the Chéticamp Hospital.

Lately, emergency calls have been few and far between.

"It's been a little boring," Chiasson says, "but that's a good thing."



## What to eat before exercise to optimize your workout at any age

BY GLENNNA CALDER, ND

With the school year back and kids gearing up for winter sports I wanted to talk about fueling up to feel and perform their best.

Our body needs vitamin and mineral stores which it gets from healthy food to prevent disease, maintain energy and function properly. On top of that, to feel our best, we need to eat well to prevent energy dips, fatigue, headache, mood swings, menstrual issues and other symptoms that will slow us down or will keep us from doing the things we love.

First, let's talk about children up to 18 years old who are active (which hopefully includes all our children here in Inverness County).

Having a meal two hours before with protein, carbs and fat will sustain them throughout their activity. The exception to this is kids who are very active (exercising more than seven hours per week) and going through growth spurts. If children are exercising more than 1.5 hours, they may need to have a snack towards the end of the hour or within 30 minutes before the onset of their activity to keep their energy levels up. If they do, it should be easily digested foods such as fruit, balanced granola bars or crackers.

**Here are some ideas for healthy snacks to feed kids (within an hour of activity or during activity):**

- Oatmeal with berries
- Balanced energy bar
- Banana, an apple or other fresh fruit
- Yogurt
- Fruit smoothie
- Whole-grain bagel or crackers
- Granola Bar
- Peanut butter and apple sandwich

Two hours before and/or two hours after activity, a healthy meal of protein, carbs and fat is ideal, and will ensure an optimal recovery and prevention of fatigue and illness from lack of fuel and nutrients.

Let's switch gears and talk about adults now. You may be a walker, runner or someone who enjoys yoga or weights. Adults often don't need to eat as frequently as children because our caloric needs are less, our stomachs hold more, we aren't as active, and we aren't growing. But we do need consistent protein, fat, and carbs in our diet. We don't need to eat before exercise if we exercise first thing in the morning, but it is a good idea to eat an hour post exercise to prevent muscle wasting. Eating a snack or light meal with carb and protein if it is mealtime will also help to build muscle after your workout.

**Here are some ideas.**

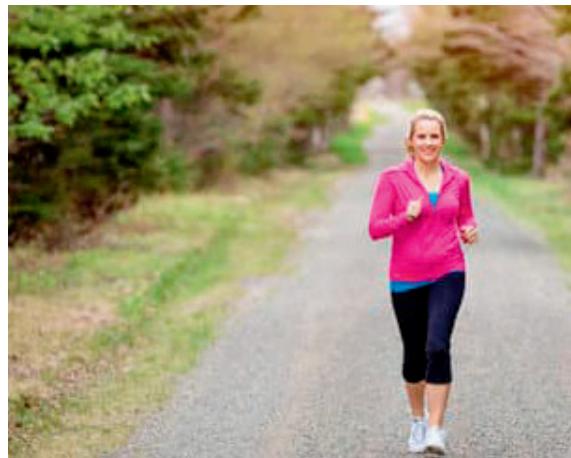
- Protein/fruit smoothie
- Salad with protein
- Trail mix
- Eggs
- Greek yogurt
- Apple or banana with peanut butter
- Homemade protein muffins or cookies or pancakes
- Protein bars
- Veggies with hummus
- Corn chips with avocado with a couple of nuts for protein

The fall is the absolute best time to exercise. The temperature is optimal for exercise so don't miss out on getting out for walks, runs, biking or hitting your gym or workout space in your house during this time. The benefits for your mental health are worth it! If you are having a hard time with motivation, sign up for a class, get a workout buddy so you can be supportive for each other and remember: motivation appears **after** we start the activity not before. To get motivation we must start. If you are waiting for motivation to come first, you will never get started.

Enjoy your healthy snacks, your workouts, and your post workout time!

*In health,*

Glenna Calder, Naturopathic Doctor  
[www.drglennacalder.com](http://www.drglennacalder.com)



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# Writers Festival celebrates 15 storied years

On the weekend of September 22-24, lovers of music, stories, and words will gather at an extra festive Cabot Trail Writers Festival, celebrating this highlight cultural event's 15th anniversary and the more than 150 artists that have visited the festival stage since it launched in 2009.

“We made it through two pandemic years and a hurricane year!” artistic director Rebecca Silver Slayter says of the festival, which was hosted mostly online (with some radio and outdoor programming) in 2020, limited to half-capacity by public-health restrictions in 2021, and cancelled last minute due to the arrival of Hurricane Fiona on the scheduled weekend in 2022 (though the organizers were able to quickly put together a new series of late-fall literary events after the storm).

“Since 2020, we’ve constantly sought out new ways to come together and connect, whatever the challenges,” Slayter adds. “But this year is going to be a really special one, as we finally gather again at full capacity, just in time to celebrate our first decade and a half.”

The festival’s lineup includes both new, emerging writers to be discovered and familiar, favourite authors to be savoured:



**Kate Beaton** | Cape Breton author of the 2023 Canada Reads-winning graphic memoir *Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands*

**Shelagh Rogers** | Recently retired host of CBC’s revered literary program *The Next Chapter*

**Omar El Akkad** | Author of *American War* and 2021 Giller Prize winner *What Strange Paradise*

**Amanda Peters** | 2021 Indigenous Voices Award winner, 2021 Writers’ Trust Rising Star, 2023 Publishers Weekly’s Writer to Watch and Nova Scotian author of new and acclaimed debut novel, *The Berry Pickers*

**Darren Calabrese** | Halifax-based award-winning photojournalist and author of *Leaving Good Things Behind: Photographs of Atlantic Canada*

**Nicholas Herring** | PEI author who won the 2022 Atwood Gibson Writers’ Trust Fiction Prize for his debut novel, *Some Hellish*

**shalan joudry** | Mi’kmaw mother, poet, playwright, oral storyteller and ecologist, whose most recent book is the poetry collection *Waking Ground*

**William Ping** | Newfoundland author whose first novel, *Hollow Bamboo*, has been shortlisted for the 2023 Amazon First Novel Award

**Habiba Cooper Diallo** | Halifax author of the powerful debut *#BlackInSchool*

The festival will also host a rich and diverse lineup of musical artists, as a toe-tapping accompaniment to an engaging literary program.

“Our festival has always been, by design, a lively, welcoming, and unpretentious celebration of all the ways that story and words enter and change our lives,” Slayter says. “We want to bring words off the page and into a conversation that everyone can be part of, finding inspiration, laughter, and joy in this vivid shared experience.”

The festival weekend will include a full and exciting program of events (several of which are offered for free): from writing workshops and in-depth conversations with renowned authors (like interviews with Omar El Akkad and Kate Beaton) to a meal with Shelagh Rogers, as she shares her unique perspective on literature in this country from 15 years of talking to writers and readers on *The Next Chapter*.

Stroll through the autumn forest, enjoying readings and music at outdoor event Heard in the Highlands; take in a presentation of Darren Calabrese’s breathtaking photographs; or listen in as four Atlantic writers discuss the unique hold this part of the world has on the imagination of all who live, love, or leave here, at a panel called The Myth of the Maritimes.

The majority of the programming will take place at the Gaelic College in St. Ann’s, with the final events (like Medicine Stories: Indigenous Women Writers Share Writings, Teachings, Dreams and Shelagh Rogers’s interview with Kate Beaton) taking a detour off the Cabot Trail to the Wagmatcook Culture & Heritage Centre and the Inverness County Centre for the Arts.

“I’ve always said that what, to me, is so special about this festival is the way every year we create what feels like a community out of readers, writers, locals, visitors, and everyone who finds themselves in the room... all listening with open hearts and ears, all sharing whatever story they have to tell,” Slayter notes. “These last few years have been challenging and sometimes isolating, and so coming together to gather again like this feels more powerful and more precious than ever. I for one can’t wait.”



Kate Beaton (top photo) is one of the featured authors at this year’s festival; Joshua Mensch (bottom photo) is shown reading at the festival in 2019.

Photos courtesy Morgan Murray and Cabot Trail Writers Festival.

**View the festival schedule or order tickets:**

[cabottrailwritersfestival.com](http://cabottrailwritersfestival.com)

[info@cabottrailwritersfestival.com](mailto:info@cabottrailwritersfestival.com)

902-224-5231

# This year for sure...right?

## The last word

BY DAVE MACNEIL

“What’s going on with the game?” my wife asked.

“The Leafs are up 3-1 late in the second.”

“Really? It sounded like you were being murdered down there!”

“Well, thanks a lot for checking!”

Granted, the sounds emanating from our basement may have led anyone unfamiliar with the struggles of a long-suffering fan of the Toronto Maple Leafs to conclude that some poor soul was meeting a rather slow, painful end. But she knows better.

She took up with this wreck in 1988, when it had been a mere 21 years since the Leafs last raised the Stanley Cup. Fast forward 35 years, and we’re now marking 56 years without a championship or, more accurately, 56 years without even coming close.

But it’s September, and as training camps open for the new season that is just weeks away, hope springs eternal. A Stanley Cup parade down Yonge Street is a mere nine months away, as the off-season trades and signings must surely have resulted in the best version of this once storied team.

A devotion to the Leafs is not something entered into lightly. In fact, I suspect a lot of Leaf fans are like me. It’s not always a choice, and more often an accident of birth.

My mother was a devout fan, growing up at a time when there were just six teams, but for her it was much more than a matter of cheering on your team.

She fervently believed that the Montreal Canadiens were put on this earth for a single reason - to inflict harm on Leaf players. As much as I grew to hate the Habs during their four consecutive championships in the late 70s, even I had to admire their talent.

I started watching hockey in 1974, when the Philadelphia Flyers were winning their first of back-to-back cups. Over the years, there were moments:

Lanny MacDonald scores in overtime against Chico Resch of the New York Islanders to send the Leafs to a semi-final meeting with Montreal in 1978, a series they lost in four straight games.

Toronto wins consecutive seven-game series against Detroit and St. Louis in 1993, to once again advance to the semi-finals against Wayne Gretzky and the Los Angeles Kings, only to be denied their first trip to the finals since last winning the cup in 1967 by a game-seven performance which Gretzky still calls the best single game of his career.

These are our Stanley Cups – mere moments in time amidst a 55-year run of futility.

It’s not just us fans who are forced to celebrate what so many fans of other sports teams would consider failures. The team itself, after that third-round exit in 1993 against Gretzky and Kings, released *The Passion Returns*, a 60-minute recap of the Leafs historic drive to....well, winning exactly half the number of series required to win the cup.

How sad is that? Sports teams win championships all the time, and don’t release a movie. The Leafs

thought one might be necessary just because they reached the third round. Admittedly, I watched the hell out of that VHS tape which now gathers dust in my basement. So, I guess I've answered my own question.

There have also been unforgettable low points along the way as well, like losing a first round seven-game series to Montreal in 2021 after being up three games to one. But the one that stung the most came in 2013, when the Leafs lost an opening round series to Boston, despite being up three goals with about 10 minutes remaining in the deciding game.

Much has been written about that game in the years since, but what has not been revealed till now is that it was my wife who was to blame. That's right. She alone angered the hockey gods and brought about this epic collapse.

I do credit her for paying enough attention to know that on that particular night, the Leafs had the chance to wrap up the series. But with the Leafs up 4-1 midway through the third period, she appeared in the basement as I did my best to maintain a defeatist aura.

Perhaps I should explain that last part before I continue this story. You see, a Leaf fan understands that no lead is safe, and a true fan knows not to celebrate anything until the game is over. As a result, every game, whether it's regular season or playoffs, is a gut-churning marathon of defeatism. Which helps to explain the noises that I mentioned earlier.

Anyway, as I kept my focus on the TV, she asked, "What's the score?"

Without looking up, I muttered under my breath, "4-1 Leafs, 10 minutes left."

"Wow," she said. "Who do they play next?"

I'm not really sure what happened next, but I swear the temperature in the room dropped 20 degrees as what appeared to be a storm cloud began forming over the TV. I struggled to find the words. At this point, I didn't really need words, as I'm sure the look on my face said it all. "What have you done?!"

No sooner had she uttered that fateful question when the Bruins' Nathan Horton scored to bring Boston to within two goals.

We sat in silence for what seemed like an eternity, the realization slowly dawning on my wife that she had unwittingly opened some portal to hell.

With goalie Tuukka Rask on the bench for an extra attacker, Milan Lucic scored to pull Boston to within one. With my head now firmly planted in my hands, and my defeatist aura now off the charts, my wife quietly started up the stairs. But before she even reached the top step, Patrice Bergeron had tied the score with 51 seconds left in regulation.

The rest is history. Bergeron scored the game winner six minutes into overtime, and yet another chapter had been written in the sad story that is the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Maybe this year will be different....

# Participaper Listings

The Municipality of the County of Inverness

## Main Switchboard

902.787.2274

## Main Fax

902.787.3110

## Executive Office

### Chief Administrative Officer

902.787.3501

## Finance, Water and Tax Dept.

### Tax Collections

902.787.3510

## Water Utility

902.787.3505

## Tourism and Recreation

### Director of Tourism

902.787.3507

## Director of Recreation

902.787.3508

## Adult Education / Literacy

902.258.3110

1.877.258.5550 (toll free)

## Public Works

### Dept. of Public Works

902.787.3503

## Water / Wastewater

### Operations

902.787.3503

## After Hours Emergency Number

902.258.5048

## Toll Free Number for Missed Solid Waste Pickup

GFL Missed Garbage Collection

1.888.863.1744

## Other Municipal Waste Management Questions

1.866.258.0223

## Other Listings

### Eastern District Planning Commission

General Inquiries

902.625.5361

## E-911 Civic Addressing

902.625.5366

## Building Inspector

902.625.5361

### Secondary Number

902.295.2900

1.888.625.5361 (toll free)

## Assistant Building

### Inspector / Fire Inspector

902.787.2900

### Secondary Number

902.631.2900

## Other Services

## Community Services

902.787.4000

1.800.252.2275 (toll free)

## Inverness County

### Home Care

902.787.3449

## Cheticamp Home Care

902.224.1872

## Municipal Homes

### Foyer Pere Fiset

902.224.2087

## Inverary Manor

902.258.2842

## Coady Tompkins Library

902.248.2821

## Emergency Measures Contact

902.787.3500

## REGULAR COUNCIL MEETINGS

take place on the first Thursday of each month and start at 3:00 p.m. These meetings are open to the public.

The municipality's Facebook page also carries up-to-date information on Inverness County events and other items of interest to our residents.

## @InvernessCounty

Stay up-to-date with what is happening in the county.

## CORRECTIONS:

The last issue of *The Participaper* carried a story which said that Buddy MacMaster was Joe MacMaster's grandfather – in fact Buddy was Joe's grand uncle. Thanks to Tina MacMaster for pointing out the error.

It was also stated that Bayview was the 'only school participating (in the Lilith Fair event) that's not a high school.' In fact Whycocomagh Education Centre, whose students also made a great contribution to the event, is a primary to eight school. Thank you to Connie Jordan for pointing out the oversight.

*We apologize for these errors.*

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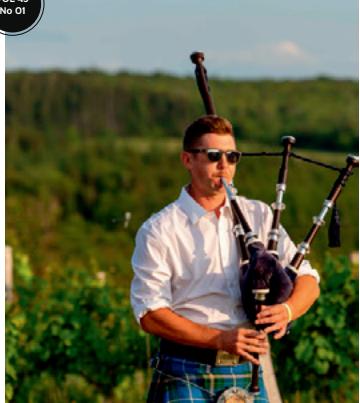
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August/September 2022

## THE PARTICIPAPER

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No 01

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