

The Surveyor

March 12, 2009

Holland College, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

FREE



Paramedic students Alex Key, left, and Amanda Wheatley strap in Kris Mollon for their exam. Fleming photo

INSIDE



Dog-sitting more than
just walks
page 5



Harness racing book
to support youth,
Page 8



Cuba makes lasting
impression on visitors
Page 13

Students line up for Holland College grad rings

By PATRICIA URENA

A representative of Jewellery Plus, the official Holland College Grad rings provider, showed the rings at the cafeteria on Feb. 26.

Sheila Poirier said the price of the rings depend on the size, but mostly on the price of gold.

"Students can choose from sterling silver, 10k gold, 14k gold and 18k gold rings."

The rings are available in yellow and white gold and it takes three weeks after the orders are made to get the rings back, Poirier said.

"It depends on when they ordered because this is our busiest time of year as we are getting

closer to the graduation ceremony in May."

They also come in different sizes, she said.

"Small, a ring usually for women, medium, a bigger ring and large usually for men."

Jewellery Plus has a contract with the college and students can get their college graduation rings only from them, Poirier said.

She can go and display the rings to the different program's class rooms or students can contact her for orders, Poirier said.

"Students worked hard and deserve it. It's good to have something to remember your efforts."

The culinary students are their

"It's good to have something to remember your efforts."

- Sheila Poirier

biggest buyers, Poirier said.

"They are great; when I go there for displays we end up taking the most orders."

Students can also have their rings custom made, Poirier said.

"It costs \$200. Some draw their own design."

Students don't have to pay the

full price, they can make a down payment, Poirier said.

Lauren McNeil, a first-year Accounting student who graduated two years ago from Tourism and didn't get a ring, said she is happy she can afford one this year.

"I think it's worth it. I actually want to get a ring that has accounting and tourism printed on it."

It's a good reminder of your days in college, she said.

"I'm getting the simple sterling silver that cost \$119."

Bookstore Manager, Cheryl Lambert, said students should consider buying their grad rings because it is an important mile-

stone in their education. It's something they could take with them from Holland College in terms of their educational experience as a whole, she said.

"Another wonderful product students should consider is the diploma frames we have available in the bookstore so they can showcase their diploma."

They have various styles and different sizes and they can put the diplomas into the frames, Lambert said.

"It is a full service and we are set up during the graduation ceremony, but they are also available prior to the ceremony here at the bookstore."

Free fitness seminars offered to College students

By PATRICIA URENA

They're free and they'll make exercising fun, says a Sport and Leisure Management student who is organizing a Fitness Seminar Series.

The 12 fitness seminars began March 2 at the Holland College Charlottetown gym or fitness centre, said Ryan Cairns, a second-year student.

"We want to teach people how to work out without equipment for people who travel a lot or don't have a gym membership."

Some people just may not know how to work out and exercise is vital for everyone, Cairns said.

"We want to promote fitness and get students to be healthy, have strong muscles and a healthier mind."

It's important to start being healthy and the students are there to help anyone who struggles, to enjoy doing exercise, Cairns said.

"There are ways to make exercise fun, we want to get people from getting bored."

All seminars cover a different type of exercise. On March 9 there was the three essentials series, hips, bums and Abs only for ladies, Cairns said.

"The earlier you start being healthy the longer you will stick to it."

Ryan Payne, a first-year Sport and Leisure student, said they are



Ryan Cairns left, is promoting the seminars at the Holland College cafeteria which began March 2 and Ryan Payne signs up for the fitness series. Urena photo

required to attend six of the 12 fitness series for class marks.

"I want to become a gym teacher and teach kids how to exercise properly and be safe while doing it."

The average person doesn't know a lot of the techniques and workout wrong, Payne said.

"It helps them just by having general knowledge."

He played a lot of sports. He likes teaching and being healthy to him is a lot of fun, Cairns said.

"I like teaching, so I mean why not put fitness and teaching together, keep healthy have fun and it keeps me in shape too."

Insurance too high for young men, says young driver

By SAMANTHA MACKINNON

When Thomas Carmody moved out on his own he made the choice to buy a car.

What he didn't take into account was the price of insuring the car or the fact he would be paying much less if he was a young female.

For a long time now young men have paid more for car insurance because of their high-risk status as drivers.

Some young men, like Carmody, feel this is discrimination.

He is only one driver and thinks being categorized in a group isn't right, Carmody said.

"Maybe (young) men are more likely to get in car accidents, but that doesn't mean I am."

Sex shouldn't be a contender in how much you're paying for car insurance and neither should age, Carmody said.

"The fact that I'm paying more just because I'm a guy is crazy."

Young men are paying two and a half times more than young women as a new occasional driver, said an insurance agent

"The fact that I'm paying more just because I'm a guy is crazy."

- Thomas Carmody

from Charlottetown.

While young men complain about the high rates, young women are thrilled their rates are so low in comparison, said the agent, who asked not to be named.

"They expect the rate to be as high as the young men, so they're pretty happy to hear how low it is in comparison."

Although the issue seems to remain one not everyone can agree on, it doesn't seem like it will be changing either.

Dealing with the price is something he'll have to live with, said Carmody, who drives to work each day.

"Let's hope they find a different way to distinguish rates in the near future."

Anderson House brings hope to women

By JENNIFER MICHELS

There is a lot of domestic violence in Prince Edward Island, says a local transition house worker. Sherry Pag  e of Anderson House said the shelter was formed in June, 1982, by the Transition House Association when the need for a shelter for women was discovered.

Police records suggested one in 10 women was abused between 1980 and 1981, Pag  e said.

For the first six to seven years, Anderson House was filled with women and children, she said. The shelter has a limit of 21 women and children who can sleep there.

Anderson House is a secure building for women and children to feel safe, Pag  e said. There are security guards and alarms.

The address is not publicized for that reason, she said.

Some women choose not to leave their abusive situation because they don't want their children to have to leave school, Pag  e said. This makes Anderson House a lot busier in the summer compared to other times of the year.

Women can talk to someone on Anderson House's 24-hour crisis line and come to a support group once a week, Pag  e said. Anyone can come in to talk or they can call.

"Most people that are in a domestic violence never call anyone."

Counselling services are available for women and children who need it all across Canada.

Jen Sung is a victim services support worker at Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW).

The group does not offer safe housing for women and children, but it refers them to transition or safe houses available in their community, Sung said.

WAVAW has support groups and a victim service program with a crisis line. It provides emotional

"Most people that are in a domestic violence never call anyone."

- Sherry Pag  e

support, information on relevant federal and provincial legislation and programs pertaining to victims of crime, Sung said.

"My personal experience has been tremendously insightful in terms of understand sexualized violence feminist, anti-oppression framework."

Sung provides her clients access to case-specific information such as the status of the police investigation, charges, protective orders, sentencing, witness orientation and court procedures.

Women arriving at the hospital in need of support during their sexual assault service examination also receive help from WAVAW.

Sung is on call for hospital accompaniment for one week a month. It can be exhausting to be called in at 3 a.m., Sung said.

"I am committed to providing this support to women who are alone during their examination."

The experiences at WAVAW have been beneficial to the community, Sung said.

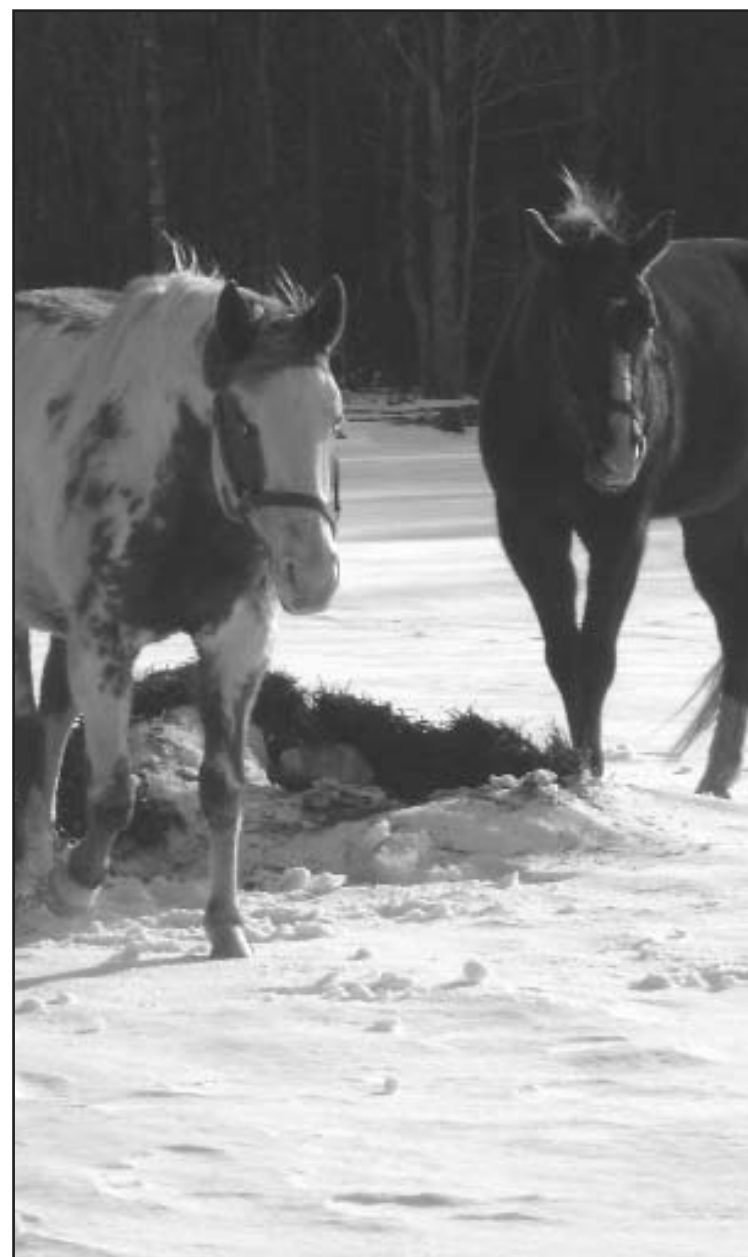
"We are all agents of social change."

Now people's thoughts have changed as well.

Society is changing, Pag  e said. It is not socially acceptable for a man to beat a woman.

The laws have changed, she said.

"A lot of people know now that it's not OK."



Enjoying the day

Horses Jazz, left, and Jesse enjoy a sunny winter day in Orwell Cove. McGeoghegan photo.



Nursing instructors Christie Lougheed Bambrick and Andrea Slysyz recommend Aveeno products for dry skin caused by winter weather. Hamilton photo

Skin suffers in winter: Bardati

BY JILLIANNE HAMILTON

There is a direct relationship between skin dryness and the use indoor heat in winter, says a professor of environmental studies at UPEI.

Darren Bardati said indoor relative humidity in winter tends to drop unless humidity is added by a humidifier or an air exchanger.

"This latter system relies on outside humidity, which may also be quite low in winter, but higher than indoors."

Dry skin isn't considered a seri-

ous medical condition, but for chronic sufferers of dry skin, winter weather will often times make the condition worse.

Holland College nursing instructors Christie Lougheed Bambrick and Andrea Slysyz said winter can be hard on the skin.

As in the summer, there are simple ways people can protect their skin in the winter.

"Put a scarf around your face," said Slysyz.

Lougheed Bambrick said skiers sometimes don't protect their face and end up with wind burn.

"Be mindful. Even in winter, your skin can be damaged."

Heather Robinson of Economy, N.S. is a diabetic and suffers from dry skin all year long.

"As a diabetic, my skin is drier than it used to be. Plus, my age plays a factor too."

She uses a gentle cleanser and moisturizer which contains an SPF of at least 15 every day, Robinson said.

"Any product containing urea is really good for dry skin and is recommended in many diabetic resources."



ENJOYING THE MOMENT - Grace Rooney spends some quality time with horses Ginger, left, and Ebony in Orwell cove. McGeoghegan photo

Professors debate the existence of God

By **CASSANDRA BERNARD**

Two UPEI professors went head-to-head Jan. 27 in a debate over the existence of God.

The event was hosted by UPEI's Student Union and the political studies program. An estimated 200 students gathered in the lecture theatre to watch the debate.

Joe Velaidum is a Christian Religious Studies professor and the founder of the Christianity and Culture Centre. He said God is a being outside space and time.

He answered the question to the debate 'Does God exist?' saying there is no way anybody could possibly prove it. Our science and language are not equipped to prove it, he said.

"God is not an object or a thing, he is not even visible"

But Malcolm Murray, an atheist and a philosophy professor at UPEI, said when you look at the arguments made about the existence of God, you can find fault in them.

"It is a common misconception. You can have belief in something if you have enough information to accept it."

Murray said he is not concerned about the right to believe.

"It compares to an invisible monster. There is a burden of proof. Someone claims something, but is there evidence? Courts of law work the same."

Atheists are problematic for rejecting God, whatever God, Murray said.

"We deny there is a supernatural agent that loves, cares and forgives all. This agency is non-natural."

Velaidum said atheists are mistaken and uninformed and have a personal agenda of their own.

"They try to put a number on the probability or the improbability of God"

Velaidum said he has faith and he has taken a leap of faith. He said he has faith in common with atheists.

"I believe love concurs fate, the slime will come out of the water because love is biological. It is a necessity."

Humans are frail creatures, Velaidum said.

"I believe that life is a miracle."

The rebuttals began and Velaidum said there is a tradition-

"It is a common misconception. You can have belief in something if you have enough information to accept it."

- Malcolm Murray,
UPEI philosophy professor

al argument about God being an old man with a grey beard or being invisible.

"This is not the concept of God found in christian tradition. The Bible says 'I will be what I will be.'"

God has agency, but to say God is love does not mean he loves. That is a rationality as a counterpoint to faith, Velaidum said.

"Atheists have just as much of an agenda, they use it to argue their points."

Murray said we cannot prove that God exists.

"All we have is perceptions. The reasons are limited because we can't see behind boundaries."

Christians are idol worshippers

and atheists reject the whole concept, Murray said.

"There are limitations of being mortal, there can be no supernatural."

Some pre-determined questions were asked by the faculty and staff of UPEI.

The first question was asked by a faculty member directed to Murray. The question revolved around examining nature, organisms and the design of evolution.

The eye and the human brain are questioned in the design of evolution.

"This compares to fossils. Ninety-nine per cent of fossils found are extinct. Things that don't fit, die off," he said.

Murray said some people bring up the point about a birds-wing. The wing has evolved, but how could it have evolved from anything smaller?

Velaidum agrees with Murray. The pre-determined question for Velaidum was with common understanding of God, the loving powerful God, why is there evil?

"I find it hard to explain the existence of evil. It is like the Fall of Eden, love is freedom. We have a freedom of choice, and being humans we tend to screw things up."

We don't live in perfect harmony with the creator, with each other or with nature, he said. We are self-centred, and we have abused nature.

"When in love, we are vulnerable and as we all know love can cause a great deal of pain. There are horrible things like hurricanes, floods and diseases that we could consider evil."

Murray said the Fall of Eden is a poor response.

"The problem of evil is only for those who think God will always help you. Who needs mortality if we are still suffering?"

800-1,000 Community college delegates from across Canada to meet in Charlottetown

By RYAN CONWAY

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges conference set to start May 31 a great way to showcase what is being done here at Holland College, says conference coordinator Joan Diamond.

The conference is an annual event held so colleges from across the country can exchange ideas and best practices.

This will be the first time Holland College has hosted the event since 1990.

It's a great opportunity to showcase some of the new innovations at Holland College, which the college is really proud of, said Diamond.

"We will also be exchanging some of the best practices we have, so it is an opportunity to showcase that."

It is also a great way to learn about what other colleges from across the country are doing, she said.

It is not only a great opportunity for Holland College, it is also a great opportunity for tourism in P.E.I., she said.

"With all of these people coming here to the Island, they could be taking an extended vacation

here with their families. They might take a few extra days before or after the conference."

Every year the convention has a theme which the conference is based around, she said.

Diamond said the students voted on this year's theme, *Charting the Course: Navigating the Seas of Change*.

"The theme is aimed at having college professionals coming together to look at how education has changed and how we can be best prepared to give students the best education possible.

"The key speakers and workshops will focus on the theme."

Key speakers will include David Foot, the author of *Boom Bust & Echo*. He will be talking about his book and how colleges can cater to different generations, since generations have different ways of learning.

Political columnist for the Toronto Star Chantal Hebert will talk about the change in political tides.

Mark Milliron, president and CEO of Catalyze Learning International, will talk about leadership in future trends.

And Sandy Shugart President of Valencia Community College,



ACCC conference coordinator Joan Diamond reading up on current events.

will focus on how colleges can be more learning centre focused.

"He is also a published poet and song writer, so he should be very entertaining as well," said Diamond.

The conference will also feature

a keynote panel. The members of this panel will be Joan McArthur-Blair, president of Nova Scotia Community College, Susan Witter, president of Douglas College, and Brian McMillan, president of Holland College.

McMillan said in a written statement his role is to support the planning committee and offer any assistance they will require making the conference a resounding success.

"The committee has been working very hard to make this conference the best annual conference in the history of ACCC."

Counting on us

He said he is also pleased to serve as moderator on the keynote panel: *Canada is Counting on Us*.

"I look forward to interesting discussion between trusted colleagues from Douglas College and Nova Scotia Community College."

Diamond said with the importance of showing Island hospitality, both the opening and final nights of the conference will have special events.

"There will be a reception on opening night at the Culinary Institute where the culinary students will feed the delegates with their culinary delights."

She said there will be a lobster supper with Islander entertainers performing on the final night of the conference.

Dog-sitting is much more than just walks



Dog-sitter Brooke Walker Cameron and Molly keep warm in Charlottetown Urena photo

By PATRICIA URENA

All he ever wanted to do is work with animals, said 46-year-old dog sitter in Charlottetown.

Brooke Walker Cameron recently started a dog-sitting job after a year of unemployment.

Cameron was walking in his neighbourhood when he met an eight-month-old Golden Puddle and her owner.

Cheryl Wagner, Molly's owner, said the two had a "mutual admiration society" immediately.

"Molly just loved him."

Wagner has had Molly since she was 10 weeks old and she is happy to have her play with another eight-month-old dog Cameron walks. It's a Golden Retriever, Hannah.

"It's a win-win situation, we all get exercise, I get a full salary and they get play time."

- Brooke Walker

Cameron brings her over for 'romps' on her back yard and both pups really love it, Wagner said.

"Warms the heart."

Wagner said when she is tied to her desk, Cameron will take Molly on a "much-needed walk."

"Preferably to the soccer field at the end of Olebar."

Cameron said it's great to work doing something he enjoys and a

way to financially help his wife who, for a year has been supporting the family.

He is paid \$10 an hour. He wrote on card stock his contact information and posted around town. He said he hopes to sit eight dogs.

"It's a win-win situation, we all get exercise, I get a full salary and they get play time."

Cameron was a dog owner for 17 years and said it is important for dogs to have a connection with someone who lets them play.

"I'm a very reliable and responsible dog owner."

Cameron said dog-sitting is a huge business elsewhere and it's time Islanders have the availability and service.

"I hope to get response, call 620-9230 for an interview."

The Surveyor

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Opinions expressed in *The Surveyor* do not necessarily reflect those of the college administration.

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Where do students find the money?

By **LESLIE KEEPING**

We've all heard it in news stories, heard the complaints from students and experienced it first hand, what it's like to be a so-called "starving student."

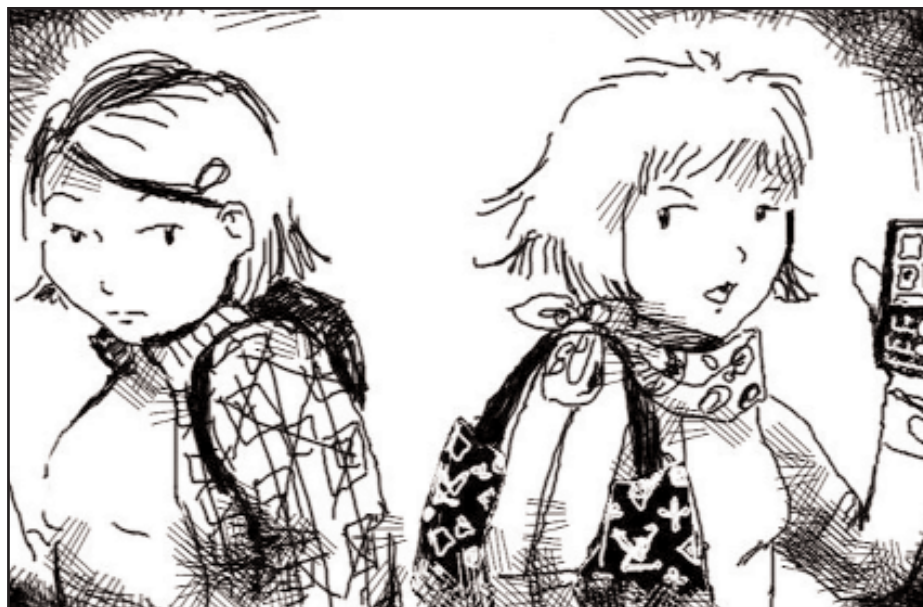
Living paycheque-to-paycheque, eating more than an unhealthy amount of pasta, and working the late-night shifts just to make ends meet.

Nowadays however, it's been occurring to me that the starving student is a dying breed.

Though tuition costs are higher than ever, there seems to be a suspicious amount of spending going on within the early 20s age group.

Personally, I have a ratty pair of sneakers I've had for three years from Walmart, I shop at Value Village, I sew my own clothes when I can, I usually get my meals in the form of a coffee cup, my paycheques barely cover rent and groceries for the month and I use student loans.

But I feel like I missed a



meeting at some point since the students around me don't seem to be doing too badly.

New clothes over the weekends, cellphones (I do not how how any one can afford cellphone bills) laptops, iPods and a different pair of boots to go with each new outfit.

For me, it begs the question: where do students find the money?

Statistics Canada found in a study back in 2001-

2002 that of post-secondary students enrolled in the more expensive programs (over \$5,000) 85 per cent funded their tuition with personal savings. Though the savings usually aren't enough to cover the entirety of the fees.

Surprisingly, only 26 per cent of all post-secondary students rely on student loans for their tuition and not-so-surprisingly 90 per cent of students rely on

several sources for their money. Scholarships, part-time jobs and family funding are just a few.

It still sounds to me that unless students have some sort of inheritance or are enrolled in very cheap programs, that it still should be a bit of a struggle to pay the bills each month.

I suspect high-paying entry-level work such as call centres may be the reason for this, but that

still doesn't explain it for those of us who can't make the commute to the industrial park.

I might be wrong about all this, perhaps the new clothes and boots are old ones dug out from the closet.

The iPods, cellphones and laptops could be gifts. But when people my age cringe at me when I say I shop at Value Village, or they do a double take when I say I don't have a cellphone, it makes me think otherwise.

I say let's stick to the cheap status-symbols like ripped jeans and dollar store headphones connected to the no-name mp3 players our mom got us thinking it was an iPod.

Choke down our pasta and drink coffee to suppress our appetites until we get our paycheques and can afford real food.

There used to be an honor to the humble life of a poor student, and I say we should re-capture it. Or at least, you well-off students should share your money secrets with the rest of us.

Locally grown food can make good business sense

By **PETER CORBETT**

The last few months I have been hearing a lot of talk on the Island about promoting our local food products.

A conference was recently held in Charlottetown connecting local farmers with chefs and business owners and last year the first P.E.I. chapter of Slow Food group was opened.

Networking between chefs and food producers is being talked about more and more on the Island. As a professional chef, I believe things are headed in the right direction.

I think the reason is pretty obvious. The closer your restaurant is to the farm that grows your food,

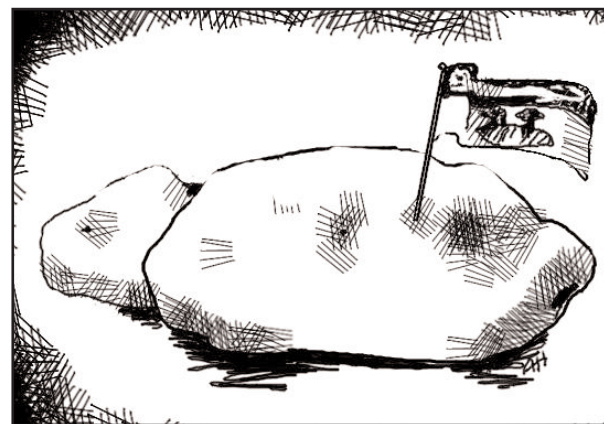
the fresher it is likely to be.

For example, produce to be shipped over a long distance is often picked before it has fully ripened in order to increase its shelf life.

A farm that is close to where the produce is sold can allow the fruit or vegetable to ripen naturally on the vine, tree or bush.

Anyone who has ever eaten a garden grown tomato will tell you those grocery store tomatoes from far away places usually don't compare.

I bet if you talked to someone about mangoes who came from a place where they grow naturally, he or she will tell you the often green and hard mangoes we have here just are



not as good as the ones they have had back home.

At an Island restaurant I worked at I witnessed a pair of travel veterans who have eaten all across North America amazed by some local beets.

They wanted to know what we did to them to make them so good. We

had just boiled them and added a little salt and pepper. They were just a better product than most people get to experience.

It isn't only great produce here on P.E.I.

We also have great seafood, meat, poultry and dairy. It's all here if you look for it.

And to those just starting culinary careers, my advice would be to pay attention to the trend of embracing locally grown food. I don't think it's going away any time soon.

Just listen to chef's on TV like Gordon Ramsey, or Jamie Oliver. Or read the food magazines and you will realize this is the direction the industry is headed.

By showcasing the right ingredients and combining them with some talent and hard work you could become as successful as those chefs.

And the right ingredients are here on P.E.I.

Energy drinks concern Alliance, board

By RYAN CONWAY

The Healthy Eating Alliance is quite concerned about the selling of energy drinks to children, says Charmaine Campbell, provincial school nutritional coordinator for the alliance.

The alliance is a multi-sectoral organization dedicated to working together with the community to encourage children and youth to have in healthier eating habits.

Campbell said energy drinks are displacing healthier drinks like 100 per cent fruit juice, water and milk.

"This is one of the reasons why we think energy drinks should be kept away from schools."

She said another reason is because of the high caffeine con-

tent.

"These energy drinks have up to 160 milligrams of caffeine.

Health Canada says the average recommended amount of caffeine for an adult is 400 milligrams a day, which is about three cups of coffee."

"The daily recommended amount of caffeine for kids and teens is less than 100 milligrams."

Campbell said these drinks also have negative side-effects that could be a risk to a child's health.

"Energy drinks can give children panic attacks, stomach pains, irregularity and an increased heart rate.

"Energy drinks can also cause children to have trouble sleeping.

"These problems tend to happen because students tend to abuse the

drinks and they do not know the dangers of doing so."

Campbell said the alliance has been talking to both teachers and principals throughout the province about their stance on energy drinks.

"Both the Eastern School District and the Western School Board have policies prohibiting energy drinks on school property."

No ban

Donna Dawkins, the manager of policy and planning for the Eastern School District, said there isn't actually a ban on energy drinks in the district, but rather a move to ask students not to bring the drinks onto school property.

"We are asking students for

their compliance and there will not be any penalty for bringing the drinks onto school property.

"This is more of an educational focus rather than a disciplinary one."

Dawkins said schools in the district will provide students with information about the dangerous effects these energy drinks can have when abused.

"These methods seem to have worked so far.

"The students have been compliant for the most part, with the schools saying they haven't had any problems."

She said the school district did receive a letter of support from the provincial health officer.

"In the letter he commended us for warning the students about the

dangers of these energy drinks."

The issue was brought to the district's attention when the principal of Souris High School voiced her concerns, said Dawkins.

"She had noticed strange behavior from the students who were consuming energy drinks. It was one school that brought it forward. All schools polled agreed that the energy drink problem should be issued."

On Oct. 13, a board meeting made the new policy regarding energy drinks on school property official.

The superintendent released his directive regarding the issue, saying all schools in the district will prohibit the consumption of energy drinks on school property.

Birth control methods available to high school students

By JENNIFER MICHELS

The level of pregnancy in high school is about the same as it has been over the past couple of years, says the nurse at Amherst Regional High School's Teen Health Centre in Amherst, N.S..

Michelle Richard said birth control pills as well as condoms and ECP, more commonly known as the morning after pill, are available to all students at their centre.

The centre also helps arrange pap tests, and tests for pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, Richard said.

"More and more STI and pap testing."

But Amherst Regional High School student Emily MacDonald is uncertain if having all forms of birth control methods available to students is a good thing or not.

"Tell an adult who you trust. An adult should be aware what you're taking."

- Michelle Richard

Parents should be able to know if their child is taking birth control. It shouldn't be done behind their backs, she said.

"I don't think it's right."

An adult, not necessarily a parent, should know if a teenager is taking birth control, MacDonald said.

"Tell an adult who you trust. An adult should be aware what you're taking."

Having birth control methods at school are a good thing for many people.

Without these methods ARHS could have more teenagers pregnant, she said.

In case there are health issues, a parent should be notified if the teen continues to take a form of birth control, MacDonald said.

Continuing to give pregnancy tests and supply condoms in high school is a good thing, MacDonald said. As long as teens know the risks and side-effects involved with what they're using.

Richard agrees.

She is available to students who feel more comfortable going to see her than they are going to a doctor.

The health centre tries to have a doctor's clinic twice a month, Richard said. Now the centre is open full time, making it easier for students to come in.

The supply of birth control methods has done a lot of good for ARHS, even though sometimes what she supplies is wasted, Richard said.

Sometimes condoms will be found around the school being wasted instead of being used for the right reason, Richard said. But this isn't always the case.

"Most go towards the right thing."



Nurse Michelle Richard writes down the time for her scheduled meeting in the Teen Health Centre at Amherst Regional High School in Amherst, N.S. Michels Photo

Teen health centre busy spot

By JENNIFER MICHELS

The Teen Health Centre at Amherst Regional High School in Amherst, N.S., is involved in birth control methods, the Run for the Cure, the gay and straight alliance, have a heart campaign, aerobics, counseling, and the newest one, supplying breakfast to the students.

Nurse Michelle Richard said during exams things are different. At breakfast there is more water and bananas because they're known as an important breakfast food. "Stimulating brain cells before exams."

But the main thing the centre is known for is supplying students with methods of birth control.

Harness racing book to support youth



Jana Hemphill-King hangs out with some young horses in Brookfield. Oakes photo

By NICHOLAS OAKES

Behind The Gate, a compilation of stories from Atlantic Canadian harness racing, was released recently offering those involved in the project a chance to give a little back.

The book was produced by writer Paul Murphy, publisher Larry Resnitzky, researcher and technical advisor Jerry McCabe, graphic designer Shannon Murray, and editor Nancy Resnitzky.

The book has received a great deal of interest from across the continent, especially Islanders, and those involved decided they wanted to give something back.

The group has announced that they will donate \$250 to two riding schools, for a total of \$500, to sponsor horseback riding lessons for deserving youngsters.

"We wanted to go with something related to horses that was active and vibrant," publisher Larry Resnitzky said.

The two schools benefiting are the Storybook Stables, in Brookfield, and the Hughes-Jones Centre for People and Animals, in Cornwall.

Jana Hemphill-King, owner of the Storybook Stables, has been

involved in the horse industry for nearly three decades.

She's excited to be involved in the sponsorship project.

"I've always had a passion for horses, horses are kind of an obsession.

"There's so many kids that love horses that might never have a chance to really experience even being around horses, let alone riding one.

"It's a shame if they couldn't have that opportunity."

Riding lessons at Storybook Stables are \$200 for an eight week program.

Hemphill-King says she will put in an extra \$150, to make the total \$400, in order to sponsor lessons for two individuals.

"We'll do our best to get someone who might not otherwise have that chance, and give them a chance to have a little bit of fun with horses."

Storybook Stables has 60 riding students, ranging from recreational to competitive riders.

Hemphill-King says she is just happy to share horses with the community.

"Anything we can do to bring someone into the world of horses would be exciting for us."

Ellen Jones, of the Hughes-Jones Centre for People and Animals, plans to use the money for an individual to participate in a week long summer camp.

She has been working with "Hype," which operates out of the John Howard Society in Charlottetown.

The program deals with at risk youth, and Jones has been giving some young people, from the program, horseback riding lessons.

"They've been bringing kids out to me to do various activities with the horses, and we work on leadership and self-esteem," Jones said.

She is going to ask the John Howard Society to help her to find a suitable candidate for the sponsorship.

"I'm going to approach them and ask them to keep an eye out for a young person that would enjoy a summer camp."

Along with the two riding schools, Resnitzky is just happy to share the books success with Prince Edward Island residents.

"We had a very good feeling about this book, and wanted to pass that feeling on to as many people as possible."

Facebook group fights to keep Parkdale School

Parents point out building includes \$1.3 million gymnasium, playground equipment and wheelchair accessibility

By SAMANTHA MACKINNON

"We are trying to have Parkdale removed from the infamous list."

- King-MacDonald Gillis

The Eastern School District is misleading the general public with some of its reasons why Parkdale Elementary School should close, says the creator of a Facebook group that's fighting the closure.

Brenda King-MacDonald Gillis is a school board member and a concerned parent who started the group Save Parkdale School from Closing to spread awareness of Parkdale's possible closure.

If good reasons and factual data are given to counter the board's claims as to why Parkdale should close, they stand a chance to keep the school, she said.

"We are trying to have Parkdale removed from the infamous list." The list holds the names of 11

small schools across P.E.I. that may be forced to close.

There are may reasons that Parkdale may not have to be one of these schools, said King-MacDonald Gillis.

Parkdale has a new \$1.3 million gym that was built in 2002, as well as a great gym program, Gillis said.

"It has won awards."

The \$70,000 worth of playground equipment at Parkdale is part of the Kaboom project from Home Depot.

The equipment is said to never rust, there are no visible screws, non-allergenic paint is used and the ground beneath the equipment is rubberized.

The school is completely wheelchair accessible. The French program at Parkdale is noted too, Gillis said.

"It goes beyond core French."

All of these facts are presented to the public through Gillis's Facebook group.

The almost 300 members include past and present students,

concerned parents, and members of the Eastern School District.

Chevon Sheppard, who graduated from Parkdale in 2001, is shocked they're thinking of closing, she said.

"It's a great school with great teachers, not to mention it's in a good location."

The school has a lot of meaning to a lot of people, she said.

"Not to mention the new gym, what a waste of money if they close."

Adriana Trainor, a graduate of 2005, said the new playground would also be money gone to waste if the school closed.

The school holds many students happy to see their teachers each day, she said.

"We were happy going to school there."

The school houses less than 200

students and is a close-knit community.

Laura Josey, another former student has met most of her close friends at Parkdale school.

"We were so close in the small-school setting, some of my best friends today are people I met in Grade 1 there and I'm 19."

Although many schools are fighting an impending closure, Parkdale is one that is putting up quite a fight to keep its beloved school.

At Colonel Gray high school on Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. Gillis and others presented reasons why they feel Parkdale should not close.

Beforehand, Gillis hoped many show up to support them at this presentation which is open to the public. "The more support we have the better chance we'll have to save Parkdale."

Charlottetown studio develops game for Nintendo DS

By RYAN CONWAY

Puffins Island Adventure, the first solo project of Charlottetown video game development studio Other Ocean, will be released for the Nintendo DS in April, says game producer Owen Watson.

The game will be published by American gaming company Majesco, the company behind the hit Cooking Mama series and the importer of the Japanese fighting franchise, Guilty Gear.

A team of 10 people is largely responsible for the game's development, said Watson.

"The team of 10 people did spend the most time on the game, but everyone in the studio had a part in developing the game over the year and half."

Watson said the game's concept revolves around a puffin created by the player. The puffin becomes involved in a series of mini-games, quests and over 100 levels of game play.

"The puffin must build a burrow home, fish, join a flock, gain the respect of the flock, finding a mate and raise a hatchling."

"The game will also feature extra content such as footage of real puffins in their natural habitat in Newfoundland, as well as music from Great Big Sea's Allan Doyle."

"It's a great opportunity and it shows how the gaming industry is growing in P.E.I."

- Owen Watson

The production and development of a video game is filled with different challenges, said Watson.

"There are always the challenges of the day-to-day fine tuning of the game as it is in development."

Watson said the game is great for the company. The content of the game really speaks to home with it taking place in the Maritimes and it is a big deal for the studio as a whole to develop the game for Nintendo.

"It's a great opportunity and it shows how the gaming industry is growing in P.E.I. It's really exciting to see some exposure in the gaming market on the east coast rather than the west coast."

Chris Sharpley, learning manager of the Video Game Arts and Design program at Holland College, said the development of a game begins when people with money have a few discussions on what to do with it.

"If it is the developer who is developing the game, they'll fix

the budget and develop it to a certain level, a demo or a prototype and they'll sell it to a publisher for some sort of price."

Sharpley said development cycles can last four to five months but the majority of cycles averages about 14 months. Some games can take several years.

The industry has been expanding drastically over the past couple of years and employment in it is continuing to grow as well, he said.

"Hardware is being marketed towards audiences it hasn't been before like the DS and the Wii are aimed at a wider age group and both sexes and the more games that are in production, the more jobs that are available."

Sharpley said he had his own experience working with Other Ocean. He was one of the artists for the I-Phone game Super Monkey Ball.

"The development of the game only lasted about four or five months. We didn't have to design the whole game since it was based on previous titles."

For more information regarding Puffins Island Adventure, go to www.puffinsislandadventure.com or you can check out the official Facebook page, which has additional gameplay photos as well as the game's official trailer.



Gameplay screen shots from Puffins Island Adventure. Used with permission from Other Ocean.

Parents protest closure of Grand Tracadie school

'I'm not an ignorant hillbilly,' says parent Samantha Watts of plan announced by school board

By LESLIE KEEPING

Saying students aren't getting a proper education in small schools is a direct insult to the community and it's teachers, says the president of the home and school association at Grand Tracadie Elementary School.

The comment was made Feb. 17 during a public consultation on the school closures held at the Charlottetown Rural focusing on the closure of Grand Tracadie Elementary School.

Samantha Watts, a concerned parent and resident of Grand Tracadie, made a presentation to the school board of trustees and the superintendent on the importance of keeping the school open.

This was in response to the report released Jan. 7 about the closure of 11 schools across the

province.

Public consultations are scheduled in every school district between Feb. 12 and April 21 to let the community know more information and give them an opportunity to speak to the school board trustees as well.

Superintendent Sandy Macdonald said 30 students attend Grand Tracadie elementary, with only seven students in the combined grades one and two. Across the province schools are losing students, which hurts student performance and programs, he said.

"About 20 of our elementary schools, we have 23 schools, 20 of the schools lost between 30 and 50 per cent of students in the past 10 years." One-third of all P.E.I. students, about 4,000, are struggling with some part of the curriculum, he said.

"It's our responsibility to make sure we do everything we can to decrease those numbers, to have as few students as possible who are struggling with the curriculum."

The best way to do that is to limit mixed-grade classes, which are common in small schools, and to focus on improving the teaching and learning process, he said.

Georgetown Mayor Peter Llewellyn said his biggest problem with the closures is there was no plan and no open communication with the community.

"A lot of the anger and a lot of the mistrust is happening because they imposed a gag order on the trustees, they imposed a gag order on teachers."

Although teachers are allowed to speak on the closures, they can be investigated and lose their jobs

for it, he said.

"They're scared to talk and they feel right now, a lot of them feel, that the school board and Sandy has said that they don't have the skills to teach," he said of Eastern School District superintendent Sandy MacDonald.

The school board insists the closure process is open and transparent but he doesn't feel that's the case, Llewellyn said.

"Why are you spending all that effort hiding and lying about reports, gagging people?"

Parent Kelly DeVries agreed the process needs to be more open.

"We are not adverse to change, but we want to make sure we make the best possible decision. Let's infuse this process with integrity, with due process, and with transparency."

The people in small communi-

ties have chosen a rural lifestyle and now feel that lifestyle is being threatened, she said.

Watts agreed. She said the rural lifestyle is just as important to preserve as any other.

"The quality of education comes from people, teachers, and a community."

Although Grand Tracadie has been accused of being behind the times, they've been ahead on some issues, Watts said.

"We have been junk-food free for almost a decade before the eastern school district."

Premier Robert Ghiz should know when the election rolls around rural communities will vote and make their votes count, she said.

Another public consultation was to take place at Colonel Gray High School on March 3.

City aims to create festival for families

By TAYLOR FLEMING

A more family-friendly Festival of Lights is the way to go, government officials said Feb. 25th of the new direction Charlottetown plans for the annual event.

The festival, held on the long Canada Day weekend, is known for a wild series of rock concerts - with even wilder fans roaming the downtown.

Recently, city council decided to try to make the festival more open to families by showcasing fewer rock bands, making the event alcohol-free and offering more events for the children.

Mayor Clifford Lee said there are several reasons why the Festival of Lights is going in a more family-friendly route.

"It's always been the desire of the council and the city to see it more family friendly, like the Jack Frost Festival, which is a great success."

Councilor Mitch Tweel said the residents of the city are trying to come to a compromise.

"The businesses and the residents of the downtown area have been polarized over past years. The businesses want the concerts for the money, but the residents don't want them because of things

like vandalism and destruction to their property."

Lee said the festival is now notorious for being a drunken, sometimes even violent, celebration.

"Charlottetown has gained an image for the Festival of Lights, which isn't exactly the image we want to project."

Tweel said the out-of-hand fans aren't the only reason a rock concert is a bad idea. He also blames the location.

"Confederation Landing was not built to hold rock concerts, it was built to be a national park."

Tweel said people want to go to see the band of their choice and not be squished in like sardines due to a poor location.

"We need a place like Halifax or Moncton where there can be 50,000 people who have mobility and can move around without bumping into people."

Lee said the main thing is the council doesn't want the reputation of Charlottetown's historic waterfront to be sullied by these wild parties.

"People have complained that fights in the streets are not what we want from the place where Confederation was formed."



Weather's no problem

A squirrel enjoys a cool snowy day outside of the Holland College lecture theatre. Conway photo

Tourism numbers fall in Cavendish in 2008

By SHELBY MCDONALD

Cavendish saw fewer tourists than usual in the summer of 2008 because of a variety of factors, but business owners hope for a better story this summer.

Matthew Jelley, president of the Cavendish Beach and the Dune Shore tourism association, said they have to stay positive.

"It's uncertain of what is to come, but it's very important to remain optimistic about tourism this summer," Jelley said.

He said he knows why last summer was quieter than most.

"Last year was challenging because of high fuel prices, the U.S. election and other factors such as that."

Weather also plays a part in people travelling.

"Good weather helps out a lot.

We had a very rainy August and September that kept people inside," Jelley said.

Even though other parts of Canada are struggling with the economy, Jelley said the East coast is staying strong. "The Maritime economy remains strong. Fuel prices are down and that is sometimes the deciding factor when it comes to people travelling."

As for summer jobs for students and adults in the Cavendish area, Jelley believes people will not have to worry about a job shortage.

"I wouldn't anticipate a decrease in the job market. The tourism industry has had a high demand for good quality employees, so we can provide the best customer service to all visitors."

Even with the dwindling econo-

my, there are no business owners shutting their doors for the 2009 season.

"No businesses are closing, but we are seeing a lot of new construction being done to improve their existing business.

"In the next couple of months news of new businesses opening in the Cavendish area will be available."

Big difference

Brittany Evans has been employed at How Bazaar in Cavendish for the past two summers.

She said she saw a big difference between both summers.

Evans works a schedule of 52 hours a week in the summer. She has spent a lot of her time observing the changes.

Each month was a different sto-

ry last summer. It was like riding a economic roller coaster.

"I started at the end of June when festival of lights was on and I thought to myself it's astounding the lack of tourists around the boardwalk," Evans said.

Evans compares July, 2007 to this past summer.

"Cavendish seemed busier compared to the end of June, but when I worked in the summer of 2007 it seemed like there were a lot more people around at that point in the season.

"I don't know if it was because there was a major concert on P.E.I. in the middle of July that contributed to it or not, but it felt different that there were not as many people around."

Evans believes the opposite to what Jelley said.

"August in 2008 picked up and

ended our summer season well.

There were less beach days because of the weather, so the boardwalk gave tourist something to do. The previous august saw more beach days and warm weather so that kept people on the beach rather than shopping at our stores."

Evans knows the main way how she can tell the seasons were different.

"We had a book of sales from 2007 that in 2008 were suppose to match the amount we made and we never succeeded. There might have been three days that just barely made it over."

Her outlook for the upcoming season is similar to Jelley's.

"I predict that tourism will be strong if gas prices decrease and the economy doesn't continue in a downfall," Evans said.

Microchips prove popular with pet owners: vet

By AMY MCGEOGHEGAN

Permanent identification is the big reason pet owners are fitting their pets with microchips, says district veterinarian Margaret McGeoghegan.

The microchip is installed in the pet and the owner's address and phone number are entered into the database for the PETtrac website where they register their pet.

McGeoghegan said for now it's mostly in purebred animals.

"We have a lot of people who travel with their pets and microchipping is a requirement for entry into most countries other than North America."

So microchipping is becoming increasingly popular.

"Most humane societies automatically microchip all cats and dogs that they adopt out," she said.

A microchipped pet that gets lost or stolen has a much better chance of being returned to its rightful owner.

When a pet is found and brought to a vet clinic or to a place where

there is the appropriate scanner, they scan the chip and read the identification number.

Then there is a contact number that allows them to access the owner's information and they are able to call the owner to pick up their pet.

Humane societies are not the only ones who microchip their animals.

Cat breeder Sylvia Luscombe gets her cats microchipped.

"It think it's good to microchip them," she said.

Luscombe said she heard about an animal that was being transported by plane when it got lost and sent to a different country.

"They actually got it back to the right country. It does work."

Veterinarian Tim McQuaid agrees.

"It's good to get done, especially in dogs. Collars are good, but they can get lost," he said.

McGeoghegan said people who export animals microchip their pets more.

"It's law to have a microchip to

be able to bring your animal into the European community."

Back on the Island, she said it's mostly domestic dogs that get microchipped.

"People seem to invest more in dogs."

The microchip is installed using a specialized syringe and needle. It is inserted at the back of the animal's neck under the skin and over the shoulder.

McQuaid said it's quick but it's not painless.

"It's better to do it when they're being spayed or neutered because they are anesthetized."

McGeoghegan said on occasion the chip will migrate and slide around under the skin.

"Most often the body forms a capsule around it and it doesn't move."

She said the chips are also tamper proof.

"Tattoos can be removed or hidden and fur can be dyed."

Microchipping usually costs between \$30-\$45, depending on the veterinary clinic.



Pets like Rusty, posing for a picture in a barn in Orwell cove, can be easily tracked and returned home with the help of a microchip. McGeoghegan photo.

Healthy foods can be expensive, but they don't have to be, dietitian says

By CASSANDRA BERNARD

Healthy food can be expensive, but it depends on the choices made, a dietitian with Lifewise Weight Management and Wellness says.

The Charlottetown small business offers a variety of services that include nutritional and exercise consultants. They also do hair mineral/toxin analysis. There is a detox program and full service weight loss programs.

Owner Alison Shields said people generally use the price of healthy foods as an excuse to buy junk.

"They don't want to give up their comfort foods, which is usually junk."

A lot of junk is addictive, including salt and sugar.

"They just think that healthy is more costly, they don't really know."

- Allison Shields

People can't break the bad habit of eating them, so expense is their first excuse, she said.

"Ignorance or lack of knowledge would be the second main reason."

Many are not educated as to what is healthy, she said.

"They just think that healthy is more costly, they don't really know."

One way for people to manage

their money in order to eat healthy is simple, Shields said.

"The money they save on not buying junk food, which is actually more expensive, will go on healthier foods"

More planning and cooking is required, so being organized is the key to eating healthy economically, she said.

Eating healthy does require more preparation in general,

Shields said. Healthy food is non-processed, not pre-packaged.

"Eating healthy involves buying raw foods and putting them together."

Frozen produce, frozen fish, frozen fruit, and bags of rice are not expensive. They do not spoil and are all healthy choices.

Eating healthy without it costing more simply requires planning and organization, she said.

During the current downturn in the economy, Shields said people will eat less in restaurants.

"But for those who don't know how to eat healthy, there will be no change other than that."

Sherwood MLA Robert Mitchell said if there is less money coming into a household, eating out at restaurants would be one of the first items to cut from a families

monthly budget.

"An experienced families eating habits are quite often dictated by their daily regime and lifestyle."

Mitchell knows some families where meat, potatoes and fresh vegetables are daily menu items.

And exercise doesn't need to be costly either, he said.

"Perhaps in times of less household income, folks may choose to look at doing things that cost nothing."

"A nice brisk walk around the neighborhood is free and a great way to promote a healthier lifestyle."

It is all about education, Shields said.

"People need to be taught how to eat properly and balanced. That is where I come in and others like me," she said.

It's about people, not location, wildlife: VP

By **LESLIE KEEPING**

It's a simple thing to teach someone how to grow food, but it can be very significant, said the vice-president of Farmers Helping Farmers on Feb. 27.

Winston Johnston, vice-president of FHF, has been part of the group since he was asked to go to Kenya to represent the Rotary Club.

The organization isn't an aid or charity group, but concentrates on food production and teaching agricultural practices in Kenya, he said.

"I've worked in agriculture all my life and I've never had to worry about where the next meal is coming from."

FHF member Teresa Mellish said she has been part of the

"I've worked in agriculture all my life, and I've never had to worry about where the next meal is coming from."

- Winston Johnston
Club.

group since the very beginning in 1979. The group is a much more direct connection to projects and has proved to be successful and sustainable, she said.

"For anybody who has any kind of an interest in international development, we would provide them with an opportunity for direct connection to projects in

Kenya."

Mellish's most memorable project was working with the Muckui women's group, dedicated to building a kitchen garden by their homes for the Kenyan women.

A kitchen garden is one you eat from every day, she said.

"Those women can now feed their families better."

The work is unending, but Mellish said she doesn't let that overwhelm her.

"If you let it overwhelm you, it can. But I just don't let it..... We help a few communities, we make a difference, and I'm comfortable with that."

For more information about Farmers Helping Farmers, contact Teresa Mellish at 902-838-4032 or visit www.farmershelpingfarmers.ca.



Kenyan children outside of one of the breakfast halls built by Farmers Helping Farmers. Photo submitted by FHF.

Memories of storm linger for many

By **LAURA YORKE**

Just a little over five years ago, a devastating blizzard struck the Maritimes, leaving many stranded and without power for weeks.

With the threat of more major winter storms hitting Prince Edward Island this year, many were looking back on White Juan and remembering where they were. Wanda MacInnis of St. Peter's was working in Montague. She wasn't even expecting the storm.

"I remember how quickly it came up and we were stranded at work."

Others, lucky enough to be safe at home, made the most of it. Joanne MacQuarrie lives in Crapaud. Her children were delighted to play in the snow banks the next day. "They actually had ladders down the holes and were passing buckets of snow down to each other."

But for some, White Juan simply meant work. Doug Cook is the equipment manager for WM&M, a snow removal company. He has worked for

the company for 30 years and remembers how tough it was to clean up after White Juan, even with the larger equipment.

"We have a bunch of truck plows, three-quarter tons, and it was hard on them. It was just too much snow."

The process takes twice as long as it would to clean up after a regular winter storm, he said.

"The more snow you get the longer it takes to get it done."

The trucks head out around 1 a.m. and try to have apartment complexes and other residential areas cleared by 7 or 8 a.m., he said. "Then we go back and do it all over again."

This year, however, the snow has been piling up due to a colder winter and fewer thawing days, he said.

"There seems to be more snow this year than there was last year."

But even with the threat of another major blizzard looming, Cook just shrugged it off.

"There's nothing you can do about it. Just do your best and hope people have patience."

Oceanic 'dead zones' major concern for fisheries

By **JILLIANNE HAMILTON**

Dead zones in the ocean will have a major impact on the fisheries industry, says an aquaculture student.

Trisha Lewis, 20, is a student at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro and the daughter of a Five Islands fisherman.

Oceanic dead zones are caused by human-made chemicals, like certain fertilizers, entering the water systems.

These particular ocean areas are low in oxygen and have become inhabitable by many species of fish.

All living species need oxygen to live, said Lewis.

"When there is a lack of oxygen, living species may no longer be supported.

"In areas where there is a decreased oxygen, many fish may be faced with hypoxia."

Hypoxia is a lack of oxygen in the fish's tissues.

This can be lethal if the species doesn't find a way to get the oxygen it needs, she said.

"Hypoxia can lead to death very quickly and it is very stressful for the fish, which means the immune system will also become weak

"If dead zones are created, many aquatic species will no longer be able to live in those areas."

- Trisha Lewis

and the fish will be more susceptible to disease."

The oceans are affected by a decrease in fish and also an increase in organic matter settling on the bottom of the areas with decreased oxygen.

"If dead zones are created, many aquatic species will no longer be able to live in those areas and be forced to go to other areas of the ocean which do have an adequate supply of oxygen," Lewis said.

These dead zones can have a huge impact on the fishing industry if something isn't done soon, she said.

"Since these dead zones are usually along coastal areas, fish will begin to move into deeper waters."

Many people fish for recreation along the coast and many fish for a living, she said.

"If the fish are forced to move, the fishermen may see a decrease in their catch, which directly affects their pocket book as well as the supply of fish for people to eat."

Central Northumberland Strait Fisherman's Association president Mike McGeoghegan is troubled by the issue.

"It is a concern," he said.

McGeoghegan, a commercial lobster and crab fisherman, said it doesn't take much to upset the environmental balance.

"The ecosystem is very fragile."

However, he's skeptical about these types of reports and the science community.

"Our voices are not heard very well," he said.

These dead zones – and other oceanic anomalies – could be better understood by the scientific community by working closer with people who are impacted by them most, he said.

"When you've been out on the water, you learn a few things"

Cuba makes an impression on its visitors

By **PATRICIA URENA**

Cuba got it right, says a group leader and organizer of a recent solidarity trip to Cuba.

It was just a worthwhile experience, Ruth Lacey said.

She got the idea of forming a group to visit the Caribbean island after talking with a friend, Daniel Rubio, about expanding Canadian World Youth to include more countries.

"I'm fascinated by Cuba."

People are made to do the right thing and the country does the right thing, Lacey said.

"Cuba got it right."

Cuba is a Third World country doing more than many developed countries, Lacey said.

"All citizens enjoy free education and no one suffers from malnutrition."

Money isn't the issue and she admires their creativity, Lacey said.

"They get the job done."

The group stayed in Las Tunas, near Holguin, in a government-organized facility called Casa de la Amistad, in November, 2008.

"They were great. People are



Tony Reddin performs in front of a crowd at an information session. Urena photo.

taught respect and are treated with respect," Lacey said.

The group visited many communities and said they are well

organized.

"We were impressed with all they do with so little."

Marion Copleston, who went on

the trip, said she taught paper mosaic to daycare teachers. A mosaic is a method of inlaying small coloured pieces in patterns.

"They loved it and gave it their own Cuban touch."

They made palomas, Cuba's national bird, a pigeon, and used the colours of their flag, Copleston said.

It's not what the group brought to Cubans, but it's about the group being there with their hearts open, Lacey said.

"It's about learning about their culture and what they have to offer."

Cubans are intelligent people, they use up every free space to grow food, she said.

"Urban agriculture is famous and they make all their compost and don't use chemicals."

Tony Reddin, one of the 10 participants, said Cubans performed to the rhythms of their typical music and talented musicians sang for them.

"Music and art is encouraged and it's high quality."

Artist are paid a salary, like every other professional in the country, Reddin said.

"It's under \$2,000 a year, that's

their average income."

Faye Boswall, a nurse who participated on the trip, said students from around the world go to Cuba to study medicine.

"Cuban's still use instruments we used in Canada in the 50s or 60s. But they are very advanced in some areas, they export so many medical professionals around the world."

Boswall visited many clinics and hospitals and said she found there is a very high ratio of staff to patients.

Cubans take advantage of the little they have. They are efficient and hard-working people, Lacey said.

"Horse and bicycle taxis are very common and horses and carts do the labour work."

Animals are practical and oxen are a very big resource for the community, Lacey said.

"Not many pets. After the support from Russia was removed, many people were trained to care for them. They are used to do the heavy work."

It's just such a vibrant, vibrant society, Lacey said.

"It was a wonderful, worthwhile experience."

People cutting back on oil: plumber

By **CASSANDRA BERNARD**

People still depend on heating oil in order to heat their homes, but some are turning to alternative options.

Chris Marryatt with Direct Energy, an electric and natural gas supplier based out of Halifax, said everybody he knows is trying to cut back on what they spend on oil.

"Cutting back and keeping the heat turned down when it's not so cold out is what most people seem to be doing these days."

A lot of people are discovering new ways to heat their homes, he said.

"I just installed a heating pump into my home and my heat bill is half of what it was last year."

Some other alternative heating services include pellet stoves, wood stoves, solar panels and geo-thermo.

P.E.I is a great place to use geo-thermo because the Island has so much water under the earth.

Geo-thermo works to heat your home in the winter and cools the home during the summer.

"Geo-thermo heats the water under your home to heat the home, in the summer geo-thermo cools the water so that your home stays cool."

Seniors struggling this year

Leo Doucette with Doucette Bros, a plumbing and heating company in Charlottetown, said this year he finds seniors seem to be struggling.

"They either have the choice between heat or food, which sounds awful, I know."

Pellet stoves are great, but pellets have not been available locally in quite some time, even though distributors say there are lots around, he said.

"People are starting to use other materials to burn, such as corn and other grains."

Arnold Macleod with Macleod Arnold Plumbing and Heating in

Charlottetown said it seems people are spending less this year on oil only because it is cheaper this year.

"Last year it was more expensive, so of course they were spending more."

Turning down the heat when you don't really need it turned up all the way is a good oil preserver, he said.

"But on cold nights it could take hours to get the hot water flowing through pipes and by then the pipes could be frozen and real damage can be done."

Space heaters prove popular

People are starting to use space heaters in their bedrooms and keeping the heat turned down in the rest of their home, which can result in a lot of damage, he said.

"Drafts can create a lot of damage if the heat in your home is not turned up."



RAISING MONEY - Jacinta MacDonald shows goods being sold at a fundraiser for the P.E.I. Military Family Services on March 6 in the Holland College cafeteria. Photo Corbett

Hilton beats out two finalists to win Holland College Idol

By CASSANDRA BERNARD

Gallant was awarded \$200. The students were judged by three judges, Larry Tweed, Mandy O'Connell and Wyatt Inman.

Judging was based on the students level of talent, performance quality, projection, dynamics, musicality and on their personality.

McKenna welcomed back Dana Harris from Graphic Design.

"How's everybody doing today?" he said to the crowd.

Harris said, besides school, in his spare time he likes to play music. Harris uses a synthesizer to mix his songs and this day he sang a song he mixed himself using his computer.

Harris explained he uses a talk box to make the weird noises.

"It's an amp with a tube that forces air into my mouth to manipulate sounds with my lips and throat."

Harris sang a remix to *Aerodynamics* by Draft Punk.

He received third place winnings of \$50. The third finalist to sing was Jenna Blanchard who played her guitar and sang *I'd Lie* by Taylor Swift.

Friends of Blanchard sat up front holding up a sign that said "Go Jenna!"

When Blanchard finished everyone clapped and cheered. Blanchard received \$100 for coming in second.



Nikki Gallant plays an original song at the Holland college idol Thursday on Feb. 12. Bernard photo.

Centre offers place for young people to go, be safe

By CASSANDRA BERNARD

"The fact that all young people are welcome, but it is a drug and alcohol-free centre and there is zero tolerance when we deal with this."

- Gordon Whitlock

lock.

"As well as the local business community."

Generation XX has always been consistent with the message it has sent out throughout the years, he said.

"The fact that all young people are welcome, but it is a drug and alcohol-free centre and there is zero tolerance when we deal with this."

Generation XX has received many awards over the years, including the Premier's Crime Prevention award and CTV Maritimer of the Month.

"We also received the Royal Commonwealth Award beating out hundreds of centres in different countries."

The award they are most proud of was when Melanie Hughs won the \$50,000 Canadia Trust scholarship and a job every summer, he said.

"This just demonstrated that hard work does pay."

Generation XX has no problem reaching its target market. That happens through word of mouth from the kids.

They also try to be in the paper as much as possible.

However, with just one employee, fund-raising comes first, Whitlock said.

The greatest thing about running Gen XX is when the first and second set of kids that used to come to the centre drop by see them, he said.

"You get to see the finished product. Well-rounded young people working and paying taxes, starting their own business, hiring people and contributing to the economy. That's what were all about."

Gen XX provides young people with an alternative to getting into trouble, Whitlock said.

"Sometimes, the biggest challenge is raising enough money to properly run the centre."

Clarkin said Gen XX is a place where he can go and skateboard without having to worry about getting kicked out.

The biggest challenge the gang had was finding a building large enough to facilitate what they wanted to accomplish. They also had some work to convince the public they were serious.

"Lastly, the business community supported it."

Today, there are numerous groups out raising money for great causes, Whitlock said.

"But there is not an endless stream of money for everything."

Whitlock said Gen XX is unique because of its structure.

"Youth have a direct say in how the centre operates and what programs we offer."

The place belongs to them, Whitlock said.

"I just manage it for them."

Gen XX is extremely busy these days. With more and more kids are using the centre.

The centre is organizing the 80th annual Dave Clark memorial skateboard competition.

Whitlock said he looks at things on a day-to-day basis and although he may not know the top three key success factors of the club, he knows every day the centre is open and providing a place for the young people, it is a suc-

cess.

The board of directors is working on a three-year plan for the centre.

"We want to be able to expand what we are doing and offer some on-going programs for the youth," Whitlock said.

Before they focus on expanding, they want to focus on groups with the young people and see what types of services they think are important.

Generation XX has a few goals for 2009. They are much the same as they were for 2008.

Clarkin said Gen XX holds a lot for the future.

"In the past few months a lot of new people started going there. More and more people every few months."

"To be a safe haven for young people and try to guide them in the right direction."

Another thing the club is working on this year is to become a registered charity.

"We feel this can open some additional doors of funding opportunities. Don't be scared to take chances because hard work normally pays off. Listen to young people because they know what they are talking about."

Clarkin said he hopes a new skatepark will be built on to Gen XX.

Children donate hair to Wigs for Kids

BY SAMANTHA MACKINNON

An eight-year-old Charlottetown girl is helping a child somewhere in the world everytime she cuts her hair.

Sydney Wheatley has been giving her hair to the Wigs For Kids organization in Ohio since she was four years old.

Wigs For Kids collects children's hair from around the world to make wigs for kids who are sick and have lost their hair.

Founded by Jeffrey Paul over 25 years ago, the organization specializes in wigs for children.

A 15-year-old girl came into Paul's salon crying one day. She had LLeukemia and was beginning to lose her hair. Paul promised the girl she would have the hair she wished for.

But wigs are usually hard to make because of the size and activity levels of children.

Paul designed a head piece that could withstand anything a child might do.

When another girl came into Paul's salon asking to cut her hair

to make a wig for her mother, he was skeptical; however, taking the challenge, he made the wig.

The organization has since blossomed in a big way.

There are a few guidelines for children who want to donate their hair, said executive director Liz Ferro.

"The ponytail has to be at least 12 inches long and not chemically treated in any way."

When the hair is cut it is put in an envelope and mailed to Ohio, she said.

"We have hundreds of ponytails donated per week and most of them are from children."

Wheatley doesn't mind cutting her hair because she knows it will always grow back, she said.

"We go to first-choice usually when I want to cut it."

Wheatley's older sister first gave hair to Wigs for Kids when she was only two years old, she said. "She was in the newspaper for doing it."

Giving hair to Wigs for Kids is something Wheatley will probably continue to do, she said.

"I like to do it."



RESULTS OF STORM - There's plenty of ice to be seen on the trees and bushes after last Tuesday's ice storm. MacAusland photo

Local fundraisers helping groups make a difference

By KATELYN FARRIS

All the money from fundraisers goes towards helping recruit big brothers and big sisters for children, says a director with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

Yvonne Cartner is the spokesperson for the Big Brothers Big sisters program in P.E.I.

The program has many fundraisers, and one of the most popular is the Bowl for Kids held March 7-8, Cartner said.

"The money from the Bowl for Kids is going towards helping the children, as well

as helping us to recruit Big Brothers and Big Sisters for the children."

Big Brothers Big Sisters has a goal for the Bowl for Kids fundraiser, Cartner said.

"Our goal is 380 teams. We have come close though it was 369 teams last year," she said before the event.

The local program has been creating friendships since 1975.

The program was started in New York City by a court clerk named Ernest Coulter who noticed more and more boys coming through his courtroom,

Coulter felt caring adults could keep the

kids out of trouble and he set out to find volunteers.

The program came to Canada in 1912 when the first Big Sister agency formed in Toronto. A year later the first Big Brother program began in Toronto.

Many children get matched through this program, Cartner said. "We get about 199 children matched and there are always more waiting for volunteers."

• Tom Scinto of the Canadian Red Cross Association of Canada said they also have many fundraisers.

"One is the Malaria Bites fundraiser. For

\$7 donated, a net is distributed to a family in Africa that is put over their bed and protects them from being bitten by malaria carrying mosquitoes."

Because of the economic crisis, fewer people are volunteering, Scinto said.

"The volunteers are usually retired people who can't afford to stay retired and have to go back to work."

So far the economic crisis isn't affecting the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, Cartner said.

"We're just going to think positive for now."

Tourism showcase at Tourism and Culinary Centre draws large crowd

BY PETER CORBETT

This year's tourism showcase went better than expected, says a representative from the Tourism Industry Association of P.E.I.

The showcase was held Feb. 19 in the Holland College Tourism and Culinary Centre's cafeteria.

This is the eighth year for the event, said Rod Clark from TIAPEI.

By the end of the day over 700 job-hunters were expected to come through the expo, said Clark.

"There are 20 employers under one roof that are all hiring. It's your one-stop shop."

Adam Hickey of Shining Water Family Fun Park said the park has hired people met at past showcases.

"We were very pleased to see the high schools come through."

Received an offer

Amelia Howards, a student looking for employment, said she has attended previous showcases. She said she received a job offer last year from a business she had

been wanting to contact.

"I went there with a purpose."

Howards said she was impressed with this year's showcase as well.

Some government organizations also had representatives at the showcase.

The showcase was a good opportunity to spread some information about federal government services, said Craig Abbott from Service Canada. "Students are often wondering how to get work with the federal government."

Pam Vienneau from Tourism P.E.I. said

her organization's goal was to spread the word about the tourism industry as a whole to people looking for work.

"There are many more jobs than they realize."

Vienneau said she was impressed with the turnout for the event. "It's been a very diverse group of backgrounds."

Other businesses should be aware of the money that can be saved by participating in events such as the showcase, said Clark.

"All of your hiring could be potentially done in one spot."

Late season storm covers Island in ice

Top left, Grace gets to know some horses in Orwell Cove.

McGeoghegan photo

Bottom left, Jenkins Road never looked so peaceful after an ice storm struck PEI. Macausland photo

Bottom right, a well-dressed snowman enjoys a clear winter day. Bernard photo

