Welcome

“Some of the best memories are made in flip flops.”

- KELLY ELMORE

Welcome to our spring/summer edition of the Horizons newsletter. We write this newsletter for many reasons: to connect everyone on the Horizons team; to share information that we think will interest and inspire; to update our friends about what has been happening at Horizons; and to commit to paper the wonderful memories and work that we are privileged to be a part of that is happening in the Atlantic region. We invite you to share in the memories made since winter, as we look forward to creating more as summer approaches.

We hope you enjoy!

Spring into Action Challenge 2016 Great Success

Our Spring into Action Challenge 2016 had a terrific turnout with 62 teams and almost 500 people taking part. Most of our participants this year were from the Atlantic region, with a few hardy souls from Saskatoon who we love to hear from every year.

Over the six week challenge, our participants collectively clocked over one million minutes of physical activity! A big congratulations goes out to everyone who took part in the challenge and made the commitment to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives. We hope by doing this challenge every year, that it motivates people to make that change to their day, and to sustain it once the challenge is over.

“We are all enjoying this challenge and feeling good about our input of activities. We are planning to keep active all summer and into the fall. Thanks for the boost.”

– Tracy of Team Happy Feet

Both our grand prizes of the challenge ($100 for the individual winner towards something related to physical activity, and a $150 donation to a kids’ recreation fund/initiative in the winning team’s name) went to participants in NL this year. Our congratulations go to Dorothy of the Metis Movers and Shakers for being our individual prize winner, and to the team members of the Dust Runners #2 from Port Hope Simpson. Well done!
The Horizons Team

Executive Team
- Cari Patterson
- Jean Robinson-Dexter
- Vicki Crowell

Circle of Associates
- Angela Day
- Barbara Kaiser
- Bob Kanygin
- Clare LeBlanc Northcott
- Joanne Hussey
- Joanne Linzey
- John Colton
- Nicole Priddle
- Rolene Pryor

Research Assistants
- Berta Klooster
- Marie-Claire MacPhee
- Michelle Wolf
- Penni Burrell
- Sandra Bornemann
- Shauna Glidden
- Susanna Steinitz
- Trudy Watts

Administrative Assistants
- Cynthia Keizer
- Erin Wolfe

Support
- Greg Tutty, Graphic Design
- Jeff VanderWal, Information Technology

Reflection

At Horizons we work very hard. We care very much about the work we are doing and the communities with whom we work. We pay careful attention to the quality of our work, and to the way we work with communities and the members of the Horizons team. We dedicate the time needed to do our work with care and integrity. We reflect together and we do our best to learn from our experiences and grow stronger.

And as a consulting business, we are always looking for future work. We have consciously chosen to believe in abundance; we accept contracts as they come, and work especially hard in the winter, the busy time in the consulting world. We trust.

We intentionally contribute to our communities. We are actively engaged through volunteer work, through social justice efforts, and through our families. We have wonderful families and growing children (and young adults!), and we are meaningfully involved in each other’s lives. And we have fun. We love all of these things. And we cultivate a spirit of gratitude for our many blessings.

And in this world of information overload, and texts and emails and messages and mobiles, we are continually pulled in multiple directions at once. Sometimes I am amazed at the incredible range of skills we are required to draw on to get through the tasks in a regular day.

And it’s nearly July – time for vacation, for rejuvenation, for long warm summer days and starry nights, for restoration by the things that feed us: traveling, being with family, gardening, music festivals, painting, cooking, swimming, playing, campfires, sleeping in, walking on the beach… Ah, summertime.

Wishing you an abundance of whatever feeds you this summer. May we all be restored and refreshed and relaxed. Be safe, be well, be happy.

Have a great summer!!
As we shared in our last newsletter, we’ve been working with the CMHA NS to manage SEAK, a three-phased mental health promotion project funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada’s Innovative Strategy Division. The SEAK Project is working to develop and expand social and emotional learning in Atlantic Canada’s schools and to give children the opportunity to develop their social and emotional skills in healthy communities. We’re responsible for overall planning and management of the project, and facilitating leadership support for achieving the SEAK Phase III project deliverables. The project has just received word of continued funding for years two and three of the work.

Through the Atlantic First Nations Health Partnership (a partnership between Atlantic First Nations and Health Canada’s First Nations & Inuit Health Branch, or FNHB) and its committees, First Nations influence and shape the priority areas of focus for FNHB Atlantic staff, as well as the allocation of regional FNHB resources. Approximately every three to five years, the Health Partnership recommends a set of health priorities to be approved by way of an Atlantic Chiefs’ resolution. With the advice of its committees, and informed by the Chiefs, multi-year strategic action plans are approved, and committees are structured, by the Health Partnership to address the Atlantic Chiefs’ health priorities.

APC contracted us to assist with this process. We have gathered, reviewed, synthesized, and analyzed relevant data and evidence; gathered input about priorities from Atlantic First Nation Health Directors; and identified gaps in knowledge. In July we will be meeting with the Health Directors in Moncton to share and discuss our findings about potential priority areas. We will incorporate their input and advice into a process we will be facilitating with the Health Partnership, where we they will identify the priorities they will recommend to the Chiefs.

Grand View Manor (GVM) is a not-for-profit long-term care facility in Berwick, Nova Scotia. It provides 142 beds and 30 assisted living units, as well as services to 40 enriched housing units. Horizons has been contracted to conduct an organizational assessment of GVM. We have conducted a survey with staff, and are in the process of facilitating focus groups with staff in every Department. The assessment includes looking at the organization’s leadership, the organizational culture, and the change process. We are working with an excellent Advisory Committee with staff from across GVM. Over the summer we will complete the report and identify strategic directions for moving forward that support the vision and mission of the organization.

In January 2016, we began working with a provincial project team to evaluate the second phase of this project, Change the Odds, to reduce youth gambling harms in Nova Scotia. Our tasks include working with the provincial team to update the project’s objectives, logic model, and evaluation framework; as well as developing and implementing evaluation tools over the course of the project. We have already developed an action planning tool for the project’s working groups, and a monthly reporting template for the project coordinator to use with the funder (Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness).
We’ve continued our work with the Fountain of Health Initiative (FoH), coordinating its New Horizons funded Peer Leadership Project, where seniors facilitate a six-week series of educational sessions with other seniors to help maintain/improve healthy aging, wellbeing and resilience. So far, peer leaders have facilitated four series of sessions. We are supporting the volunteer facilitators and evaluating the project. We are hoping to run two more series before the work is completed.

In March, Cari and Jean spent a day in Eskasoni with Health Centre and Mental Health staff to review the policies and procedures, and gather their input and suggested revisions. We’ve completed a further update and adapted the human resource policies, and we are planning for a return to the community to finalize the work.

Eskasoni Community Health Centre contracted us to review and update its policies/procedures and job descriptions to ensure that they align with the current Community Health Plan. We started by reviewing the existing policies and job descriptions, and recommending revisions and updates.

The Summer Day
By Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean – the one who has flung herself out of the grass, the one who is eating sugar out of my hand, who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down – who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don’t know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass, how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields, which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn’t everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?
Recently Completed Contracts

- **Development of a Phase Two Evaluation Framework** • East Preston Empowerment Academy • (Cari)
  
  The East Preston Empowerment Academy (see Community Profile on page 7) is a very exciting, grassroots, community-driven initiative of the East Preston United Baptist Church. It focuses on faith and community-based adult learning in light of the systematic racism and discrimination that African Nova Scotians face in the education system in Nova Scotia. There are several components within the Academy, including learning foundations, employability pathways, leadership, and well-being. The initiative has just completed its first year of operation, and we helped frame an evaluation plan for the next phase, for which the community is currently seeking funding.

  It was a truly humbling experience to work with this group, and to feel the spirit of love among the people there. This work really is empowerment in action, and we are so grateful for the opportunity to learn with the EPEA.

- **Portfolio Express Tool Evaluation** • YMCA Employment Centre • (Cari)
  
  We worked with the Greater Halifax YMCA Employment Centre to evaluate the effectiveness of the Portfolio Express tool they developed and piloted with participants at the East Preston Empowerment Academy. Portfolio Express helps people identify their knowledge, skills, and competencies; draws heavily on storytelling as a method for participants to uncover their prior learning; and helps people identify additional competencies they need to build in order to meet their goals. The goals could be for personal learning, for furthering education, and/or for obtaining red seal certification for trades many have been working in for years.

  It was wonderful to witness the empowerment people experienced through the process of developing and sharing their portfolios, and to see the love and support they offered each other on their journeys.

- **First Nations Comprehensive Community Planning** • Mi’kmaq Confederacy of PEI (MCPEI) • (Cari, Jean)
  
  MCPEI contracted us to help build capacity among Comprehensive Community Planning Coordinators (CCP Coordinators) hired in Abegweit, Lennox Island, and Glooscap First Nations. The CCP Coordinators are piloting a community-driven planning process currently being very effectively implemented in BC. Along with Chiefs, Band Administrators, and the CCP Coordinators, we participated in a three-day workshop in Moncton to learn about the comprehensive community planning process, and to hear about the experiences of some of the BC First Nations. As a follow-up, we facilitated a two-day workshop in Glooscap First Nation, where we focused on building the CCP Coordinators’ capacity and knowledge about planning processes and community engagement, identifying the relevant contextual factors in their communities, and developing their work plans. As part of the workshop, we helped communities identify the supports they need to move forward in developing their comprehensive community plans. We are very excited about this initiative, which is being pilot tested for use across Atlantic Canada First Nations.

- **Celebration of Multiculturalism and Inclusion** • Municipality of the County of Kings • (Cari, Jean)
  
  We worked with the Municipality of the County of Kings to organize the 7th annual Celebration of Multiculturalism and Inclusion, which took place at NSCC in Kentville on International Human Rights Day (December 10th). The event reflected the day’s theme: freedom from fear, freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom from want.

  (Cont’d.)
Recently Completed Contracts (Cont’d.)

**Celebration of Multiculturalism and Inclusion (Cont’d.)**

At the reception, community members enjoyed displays presented by community organizations, had their pictures taken to be part of a human rights photo mural, and shared on graffiti boards how they can address and renew their commitments to addressing racism and discrimination. The reception also featured the Johanne McInnis Jazz Celtic Trio and internationally-flavoured food, prepared by the College’s culinary arts students.

The main celebration opened with representatives of Glooscap First Nation providing a welcome, and featured a number of artists, singers, and speakers, including Kevin Davison, Hughie Mcdonell, Tatiana Clarke, and a return visit from educator and African Djembe’ drummer, Dr. Henry Bishop. Featured speakers also included Order of Nova Scotia recipient, Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard, disability advocate Will Brewer, and representatives from the local Refugee Welcoming Committee.

Check out local media coverage [here](#).

**Team Building Facilitation for the Provincial Health Promotion Youth Gambling Prevention Project Team**

- Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA)  
  (Cari, Jean)

As part of their preparation for the second phase of their work, we designed and facilitated a teambuilding session with the provincial health promotion youth gambling prevention project team in late October. We helped team members articulate their skills and passions for the work, identify their values in light of NSHA values, identify their collaboration capacities and areas for growth in collaboration, and assess their current and target health promotion competencies. Finally we helped the team begin to articulate its brand/image. At a follow-up meeting in December, we helped the team members begin their evaluation planning for the second phase of the work.

**Give Us Wings Evaluation**

- Wagmatcook First Nation (on behalf of Nova Scotia's 13 First Nations)  
  (Cari, Jean, Susanna)

In March, we completed our work to evaluate Give Us Wings. This project was a three-year partnership among the 13 Nova Scotia First Nations, the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness, and the Nova Scotia Health Authority, and was funded by Health Canada’s First Nations and Inuit Health Branch’s Health Integration Services Fund.

*Give Us Wings* focused on integrating provincial mental health and addiction services into First Nations’ community-based services. The evaluation methods included a pre- and post-assessment of collaboration factors of community working groups; focus groups with the cultural safety component stakeholders, the Executive Committee, the Steering Committee, and the community working groups; a web survey with project partners; and a day-long reflection session/celebration with project stakeholders.

The evaluation findings showed many ways that the project achieved or made significant progress toward achieving its short-term objectives. One of the most notable success factors that emerged was relationship-building. There are many barriers to collaboration between First Nations and non-First Nations collaboration; taking the time to get to know each other, learn about each other’s roles and responsibilities, learn about each other’s systems and organizational cultures, identify and commit to working toward shared objectives, and develop personal/professional/institutional relationships can contribute significantly to reducing the barriers and increasing commitment to long term collaboration.

(Cont’d.)
**Recently Completed Contracts (Cont’d.)**

**Becoming an Inclusive Community – Orientation Session**
- Windsor Elms Village (WEV)
  - (Cari, Jean, Joanne Hussey)

We recently completed our contract with the fantastic folks at the Windsor Elms Village.

For the past year and a half, we have been working with a leadership group there to support the WEV in its journey toward embracing inclusion and celebrating diversity. Their warmth, openness to learning, and genuine desire to become more welcoming to all people is humbling and inspiring. Through a series of workshops and meetings, they mapped their diversity journey to date, examined their own privilege and experiences of discrimination, looked at strategies for addressing racism and discrimination, and explored strategies for building inclusive and welcoming environments. They then integrated principles of inclusion and diversity into their strategic work plans, and identified activities, timelines, and indicators for implementing and monitoring the strategies. They are focusing initially on inclusive communication, education and awareness, universal design of the social environment, and policy development.

We created a toolkit for a diversity resource team to champion this work, and conducted an orientation session with them to help them get started. Early in the new year, we met to reflect on our shared process, and to talk about how we can best support other groups who would like to take on this kind of journey. While our contract is finished, we are keeping in touch with the folks at WEV, and look forward to hearing about and learning from – and celebrating – their work!

**COMMUNITY PROFILE:**

**The East Preston Empowerment Academy**

We are delighted to profile the East Preston Empowerment Academy as a fantastic example of a true grassroots, community-driven, community development initiative. Please note that this content was initially developed for Literacy Nova Scotia’s monthly e-newsletter, by Wanda Thomas Bernard with Benjamin Mogli-MacLean, Alexander Slade, and Nirupa Varatharasan.

Since the summer of 2014, the East Preston United Baptist Church (EPUBC) has enjoyed great success in the East Preston community, through the creation of a unique, safe, learning environment for adult learners. Church leaders developed this Adult Learning Program (ALP) in response to an identified need in the community. The ALP is funded by the Black Educators Association through the Department of Labour and Advanced Education, and is supported by the East Preston Ratepayers and Community Development Association.

Participants, staff and board members of EPEA

It is well documented that African Nova Scotians have faced systemic racism and discrimination within the education system in Nova Scotia, resulting in fewer African Nova Scotians finishing high school or accessing higher education. Creating learning opportunities in the EPUBC is coming full circle, since similar initiatives were a part of the early history of the church. From the success of the ALP, the church launched the East Preston Empowerment Academy (EPEA) as an umbrella organization for both adult and youth education programming.

The EPEA offers adult community members the opportunity to learn in a safe and stigma-free environment under strong and supportive mentorship. This program has brought together members of all education levels and ages in the community, and has created a space that is about more than just learning. Participants have expressed that self-improvement and the notion of giving back have been significant motivating factors for participating in the EPEA. The EPEA is a space for the community to meet and support each other in their shared struggles.

Intergenerational learning has become an important aspect of the program, with grandparents and grandchildren learning together. The program is currently running two evenings per week and works with more than 30 members. A recent evaluation of the ALP identified three pillars of success: a safe learning environment; strong and engaged leadership; and teaching as mentoring and ministry. The EPEA continues to build on the success of these pillars and now offers a range of education programs, including preparation for Red Seal Certification for experienced African Nova Scotian trades people from East Preston and the surrounding communities.

“The East Preston Empowerment Academy offers adult education in a faith-based, community-driven, African-centred context. In this program the collective experience of exclusion and marginalization has been transformed into a collective experience of engagement and empowerment.”

Literacy and education is a human right. Greater support for this type of adult learning can work towards removing educational and employment barriers for African Nova Scotians.

More information about the EPEA is available [here](http://www.epea.ca) or on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/EastPrestonEmpowermentAcademy/).
Vigil for LGBTQ+ Folks Who Died at Pulse Nightclub

Cari wrote this reflection after the June 15th vigil in Wolfville.

There is power in coming together; and last night, as a community, come together we did. About 250 people gathered in remembrance of those who died at Pulse nightclub in Orlando. We were many genders, orientations, ages, ethnicities, religions, and abilities. Together we expressed sorrow, loss, resiliency, anger, hope, solidarity, and above all, love. We named the people who died in this horrible hate crime. We honoured other LGBTQ* folks who have died because of homophobia, transphobia, biphobia. We pledged not to be bystanders when we witness this hate and fear. We spoke of courage, of channeling outrage into working for change, of standing together, of being allies. We expressed these things through reflection, through poetry, through song, through silence. We offered appreciation and support for the Valley Youth Project, whose work supports youth on their journeys to becoming themselves, and whose work with LGBTQ* adults and allies builds communities where that is possible. We are not alone. Love is Love.

Milestone Achieved

Cari’s daughter Tammy graduated from NSCC June 14th with her diploma in Business Administration (Accounting). She’ll complete her business degree at Mount St. Vincent University beginning in September.

Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) Annual Conference: Evaluation on the Edge

In early June, Cari attended the Canadian Evaluation Society's annual conference in St. John’s, NL, Evaluation on the Edge. It was an excellent opportunity to network with evaluation colleagues from across the country, and to learn about current innovations in evaluation. Cari participated in an excellent pre-conference workshop on developmental evaluation with Michael Quinn Patton and Kate McKegg. Developmental evaluation is particularly relevant to our work because it is messy: part community development, part innovation, part program development, always evolving and changing, and complex.

Reciprocal Consulting from BC facilitated several conference sessions on evaluation work with indigenous communities, which were also highly relevant to our work; one particularly challenging and engaging session focused on integrating a reconciliation approach in our evaluation work.

We acknowledge and appreciate support from the CES NS Chapter toward Cari’s participation in the conference.

International Women’s Day Celebration

In March, Cari participated in an International Women’s Day panel at CFB Greenwood. She was invited to speak as owner of a successful business on the theme of Women Moving Forward. She spoke about the factors that have helped and hindered her on her personal journey. Other panelists were Marg Reid (Executive Director of the Greenwood Military Family Resource Centre), Colleen Hodder (NS Director for the Public Service Alliance of Canada), Betty Kalt (Women’s Outreach Worker at Chrysalis House Association), Diana Brothers (Warden for the Municipality of the County of Kings), Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard (Special Advisor on Diversity and Inclusiveness at Dalhousie University), and Major Andrea Keeping (CFB Greenwood). See the coverage in the March 21st Aurora Newspaper.
Approximately 50 people explored ways to create changes, including an exploration of the tools and knowledge necessary for communities to adopt and fashion their own version of a complete community. Small group discussion focused on Hantsport, a community whose Council voted to stop being an incorporated town, similarly to many small communities in rural Nova Scotia.

Feedback from the small groups offering ideas of how to move forward are being assembled for next steps: participants will be asked to engage others to help implement some of the recommendations. Actionable items that citizens can take to continue reducing barriers for all will be followed through. Please consider becoming involved in making the necessary changes by including yourself from the beginning in building communities that are truly for all of us.

This was an exchange between a panelist and an audience member after a discussion about how to create complete communities early in the workshop. It set the tone for important dialogue, exchanging of ideas amongst experts and community members. Dr. Robert Strang, the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Nova Scotia set the framework by saying ‘it’s all about creating accessible communities. Finding solutions is complex, but essential’. Inclusivity is a goal that is often stated in community development.

If you build it, they will come.

If you build it the same way you always have, the same people will come. You need to include others from the start to create an inclusive community.

Our economy and culture in Nova Scotia is being called to change, through events such as the loss of rural population, and hosting of Syrian refugees in rural communities. Participating in such events can enable citizens to take the lead in how this change will happen.

Jean & Kate at the Awards Brunch

Jean had her LITF Chairperson hat on at this year’s Saltscapes Expo. She also met up with an old university friend… now an infamous pirate.

WomenActive Nova Scotia Trendsetters Awards

Jean and her daughter, Kate, attended the first WomenActive NS Trendsetters Awards brunch, held in April in Halifax. Women Active NS intends to advocate, educate, collaborate, and promote meaningful active living experiences and leadership opportunities to enrich the lives of all women and girls in Nova Scotia. Jean was involved provincially in gender equity work in sport, recreation and physical activity, while a recreation director and later as Executive Director of the Recreation Association of Nova Scotia, beginning almost thirty years ago. This has been a long time coming! Later in April, Kate received the Exemplary Participation Award, for Liverpool Regional High School, from the NS School Athletic Federation.

Bluenose Marathon

After a two-year running hiatus, Cari completed the 100 Mile Running Challenge with her friends Susan Markham Starr and Janet Mooney. Beginning January 1st, she ran a mile or more a day for 100 days in a row. She ran on cold days, sunny days, stormy days, in the morning, in the afternoon, in the daylight, with a head lamp... She ran on the road, at the gym, on business trips, and on vacation. She and Janet and Susan texted each other to provide encouragement for each other, and to celebrate small accomplishments (sometimes running in a snow storm when she was tired on a large work day did not feel like a small accomplishment!) They rocked the Bluenose 5K in the 28° heat on the May long weekend. Here they are pictured below, feeling grateful, happy, and proud.
In February, Jean completed her volunteer work with the Winds of Change Society (Liverpool’s amateur theatre community organization) by presenting the organization’s new strategic and operational plan at its AGM. Jean had worked with the Board and a number of members in late 2015 to revisit the organization’s mission and goals, and to create a vision, values, mission, and goals, objectives, strategies and actions.

Once again, Liverpool opened its doors from May 18th to the 22nd and welcomed visitors from all over the world for the 13th Biennial Liverpool International Theatre Festival. Started in 1992, this event is an amateur theatre competition hosted at the historic Astor Theatre that brings the world to this small Nova Scotia community.

A key component of the festival is the engagement of the community’s young people. This festival, Dr. Richard Finch, from Durban South Africa, returned to Liverpool, and with Jim Petrie, delivered three full-day workshops, Brush Up Your Shakespeare, in area schools. Young people also painted dozens of wooden Jester Fish (the festival’s mascot designed by our own Greg Tutty) for troupe members to take home, and many volunteered as part of the technical crew.

Bernadette Jordan, MP for South Shore-St. Margaret’s recently recognized the festival, considered one of the top amateur theatre festivals in the world, in Parliament.

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