



From left, Amherst Mayor Rob Small; Housing Minister John White; Alana Hirtle, Member of Parliament for Cumberland-Colchester; and Deborah Page, Vice-President Marketing, Communications and Public Policy, United Way Maritimes stand outside one of the new units at The Groves at Hillsdale. (Province of Nova Scotia)

47 Affordable Units for Cumberland

Continued from page 1
month, depending on the unit size; The Groves at Hillsdale units belong to a bare land condominium corporation, and a monthly fee of \$120 will cover site maintenance, such as the parking lot and lighting, as well as landscaping; utilities are the responsibility of the homeowner, but with a small footprint and energy efficient appliances, these costs are expected to be reasonable; the

deed transfer tax and legal fees related to the sale will apply and pets are allowed at The Groves at Hillsdale. The Province has also provided \$402,500 in financing through the Community Housing Acquisition Program to the Cumberland County Transition House Association, known as Autumn House, to purchase a five-unit building and to maintain these affordable apartments in Amherst.

Volunteer Recognition Deadline Feb 27

The Municipality of Cumberland is inviting nominations for volunteers who go above and beyond. All nominees will be celebrated at a special event this April, where the municipality will honour their contributions. Some nominees may also be considered for Provincial Volunteer Awards, including one exceptional volunteer who will represent Cumberland as the municipality's Provincial Volunteer of the Year. Nominations may be submitted in person at the Dr. Carson

& Marion Murray Community Centre in Springhill, the Upper Nappan and Parrsboro Service Centres and the Pugwash Library, by email at mprendergast@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca or by completing the electronic nomination form. The nomination form can be downloaded from the municipal website under the recreation drop-down menu to Volunteer Recognition tab. Deadline for nominations is Feb. 27. For more information, call 902-763-3000.

Springhill's GOVRC receives Community Support and Service Award

By Darrell Cole

For more than 50 years the Golden Opportunities Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, or GOVRC as it's more popularly known, has been making a difference in the lives of its clients.

That commitment was recognized on Thursday, Oct. 23, when it was presented with the Municipality of Cumberland's Community Support and Service Award during the Cumberland County Chamber of Commerce's annual awards ceremony that coincided with Small Business Week.

"It's a tremendous honour and the clients are very proud to be the recipient of this award as it recognizes what they do every day here at GOVRC and in the community," manager Paul Williams said. "To me it's a thankful reward for my board trusting me in revising and changing the program to allow our clients to be more inclusive in the community and more active in the community."

"We've expanded into a food program and a rec and leisure program and every week we're working to get out into the community to do something different for everyone to be part of the community."

GOVRC opened as an activity centre in 1972. The program had seven clients and included social and recreational activities such as making small crafts, knitting, colouring, bowling, dances and other events.

It was funded via grants and received free rent from the ROAB Lodge and continued to be operated by volunteers until the late 1970s when the provincial Community Services Department began providing an annual grant that enabled the centre to hire a full-time coordinator and saw a change in the focus to teaching vocational skills that produced quality con-



Cumberland Mayor Rod Gilroy (left) presents the Community Support and Service Award to Paul Williams of GOVRC.

trolled products that were sold to raise money and provide life skills programs.

The workshop opened in Springhill's industrial park in 1980 and in 1988 an expansion was completed and a greenhouse constructed.

GOVRC is partially funded by the province of Nova Scotia, and operates social enterprises including a greenhouse, an on-line auction, laundry services and a woodworking shop that assembles pallets, survey stakes and kindling. These social enterprises provide valuable employment and life skills to our participants.

It primarily provides pallets to Cumberland County manufacturers such as Compass Minerals, Granby Furnaces, Mauser (Ropak) Packaging, Benjamin's and Waldale Manufacturing.

It also repairs pallets for Oxford Frozen Foods each year to divert materials destined for the municipal landfill.

Another accomplishment is its new Community Employment program, recreation and leisure program and a cooking program enabling clients to participate more fully in the community more than ever before.

Getting out into the community more is something both the

Bridge Adult Service Centre in Amherst and Sunset Industries in Pugwash have been doing more of. With more new clients at GOVRC, Williams said, it provided an excellent opportunity for them to do the same.

Williams said the future includes expanding its new programs to enhance inclusiveness and the board completing a

physical expansion to the facility in Springhill that will include some automation of the pallet-making operation to give those working in the woodshop more opportunity to be involved in the community.

A fundraising campaign will be launched soon with hopes to see construction in late 2026, but more likely in spring 2027.

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