

Community Health Boards Releases Survey Results

They say it takes a village to raise a child and the same is true of healthy people and communities. Fortunately, there are 37 Community Health Boards (CHBs) within Nova Scotia who are committed to health and well being of residents.

Within the Colchester East Hants Health Authority (CEHHA) there are five CHBs: Along the Shore (ATS) Community Health Board, East Hants (EH) Community Health Board, North Shore Area (NSA) Community Health Board, South Colchester (SC) Community Health Board and Truro & Area (TA) Community Health Board.

Community Health Boards serve an important role in the general well-being of their communities by supporting many community-based projects and forming partnerships with other community groups and organizations through Wellness Grant Funds. More importantly, the CHBs are responsible to identify gaps in health services in their local areas and submit a Community Health Plan to the Colchester East Hants Health Authority Board to assist with the business planning process. This plan is submitted every three years with annual updates. This year Colchester's five CHBs will submit a shared plan for the first time.

In the spring of 2012 the Community Health Boards within CEHHA distributed an informal survey to their communities to gain their input on the health needs in their communities. The survey was made available online using Nova Scotia Health's SurveySelect website, and paper versions which made available at more than 40 facilities and events within Colchester East Hants communities. More than 1012 individuals responded to the survey and the results provide a valuable snapshot of the CHB Communities and the opinions of their residents.

Individuals of all ages responded to the survey, with most responses coming from adults between the ages of 45 and 64. Those who completed the survey included individuals with and without jobs and with different education backgrounds. The majority of respondents reported excellent or good health.

The survey questions were broken down under five separate headings: Access to Health Services, Nutrition, Physical Activity, Chronic Disease, and Mental Health and Addictions. There was also space on the survey for respondents to add in their own comments with regard to "emerging issues" or concerns. Some of the findings are highlighted below.

Access to Health Services: Almost half (48%) reported that

they looked for health services in the last year; (48%) reported that they found what they needed; 33% have called 811; 23% said that accessing HealthLink 811 saved them a trip to the ER; Most said it was easy to get a doctor appointment, but (32%) said it was challenging and A large majority did not report having trouble getting to appointments because of a lack of transportation. However, a substantial number - nearly one in ten - did report trouble getting to services.

Nutrition: About half reported they "usually or always" buy locally and the majority gets their food at grocery stores. Farmer's markets were also a popular choice; Most reported they could afford enough healthy, nutritious food; A notable minority reported that they had enough food but not always healthy and About 6% reported that they "sometimes or often" did not have enough to eat.

Physical Activity: Consistently across the district, about a third (30%) reported that children and youth "sometimes" or "never" get enough moderate or vigorous physical activity and Fewer than half (38%) reported that they are doing "OK" with getting enough moderate to vigorous exercise.

Regarding Chronic Illness: More than half (61%) reported having a long term health condition.

Mental Health & Addictions: Six out of ten did not report problems quitting, yet quitting tobacco products was reported as a problem for nearly a quarter (23%); Few respondents reported that stress usually (7%) or always (4%) gets in the way of making healthy choices and 6% reported "always" seeking additional mental health supports in their areas.

Thanks for filling out our survey! Congratulations to all of the winners; each winner received a \$50 gift card to Sobeys, except Along the Shore which received a \$50 gift card to Masstown Market.

The five boards in Colchester are; Along the Shore: Kathy Barnhill, Debert; East Hants: Wilma MacPhee, Shubenacadie; North Shore Area: Samantha Keddy, Toney River; South Colchester: Gloria Parker, Hilden and Truro & Area: Vivian MacDonald, Truro.

Online Survey winner: #47 - Carla Conrod, East Hants. The full report of the results of all five Community Health Boards can be found on the CEHHA website: <http://www.cehha.nshealth.ca> under the heading: Healthy Living.

Lower Onslow Community Centre Notes

By Ann Fiddes

December, is it really December? Is December more than half gone? With all the twinkling lights on houses, Santa showing up at our Open Mic night, and carol singing on the radio, yes I think Christmas is just around the corner.

Card Parties have been cancelled for the month of December, but will resume on Monday, January 7 at 7 p.m.

Our Open Mic nights continue to be popular, we will take a break on December 27, but will be back on January 3rd. The Community Centre Board appreciates the dedication of Wayne Elliott who coordinates each evening, and all the musicians who faithfully show up to entertain. If you like good old country music, join us some Thursday night at 6:30, I don't think you will be disappointed.

I think special mention

should be made of one of our regular musicians. Geordie Linkletter from Five Islands and his wife Hazel will celebrate their 65th Wedding Anniversary on December 20th. Congratulations to a wonderful couple!

The Centre is decorated beautifully for the season thanks to two ambitious Board Members. The Pre School Christmas Concerts were held on Monday, December 10 and Tuesday December 18th. Even though he was very busy, Santa found time to pay a visit.

Yoga continues on Wednesday night and Friday noon hour. Yoga will be cancelled on December 21, 26 and 28, but resume again in the New Year.

Enjoy this most wonderful time of the year with family and friends, enjoy all those goodies and drive safely. See you in 2013!!

The
Shoreline
Journal

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is January 22
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PHOTO FEATURE

Parrsboro's Christmas Tree Lighting Well Attended

By Lawrence R. Nicoll

The 2012 Annual Christmas Tree lighting ceremony in Parrsboro was held on November 30th to the enthusiastic response of young and old alike. The event, sponsored by Parrsboro & District Board of Trade and The Town of Parrsboro, included trimming the tree, sing along music by the Parrsboro Citizen's Choir. The children were given ornaments to add to the tree. Parrsboro Lions Old Home Week Queen Audriana attended to kick-off Christmas shopping season in the historic town. Mayor Lois Smith opened the event and the hot chocolate and cookies were well appreciated by the large crowd who gathered for the event. (photos by Lawrence R. Nicoll)



Parrsboro Citizen's Choir added to the festivities with plenty of sing along music.



The weather was good and the crowd large at the magic moment when the tree lights were turned on in Parrsboro on November 30th.



Oh my, the Cookies and hot chocolate are good.



Members of the Lawrence Nicoll house outside lights ready for Santa.

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