



DECEMBER 2020

NAVIGATOR NEWS

Monthly Newsletter of the PEI Community Navigators,
an initiative of CBDC West Prince Ventures

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Individuals and families who choose to settle in rural PEI offer **incredible value to the communities that they settle**. In each of our numerous communities dotting the coastline or the inland rolling hills of our Island, you'll find a diverse group of community members who settled in PEI or were born as Islanders, **coming together to help each other and create a prosperous and fulfilling life in Rural PEI**.



**Message from Maxine Rennie
Executive Director
CBDC West Prince Ventures**

December is filled with opportunities to celebrate the cultural holiday traditions of both new and longtime Islanders. This month's newsletter shares information related to festive activities happening in communities, as well as suggestions to introduce you to new holiday customs.

As we approach the end of 2020, we want to take a moment to thank our many wonderful community partners and volunteers who have helped our Community Navigator project achieve success this year. We look forward to continued collaboration in 2021. Holiday blessings to all.

~Maxine Rennie

Meet Judy MacIsaac,

Western PEI Community Navigator Steering Committee Member
and O'Leary Town Councilor!



Welcome to O'Leary!which is a phrase that Judy REALLY gives meaning to when she uses it!

Judy was born in Saint John, New Brunswick, and attended both high school and university (St. Thomas) in the province. Judy graduated university in 1979 and spent the first year of her career working as a local kindergarten teacher. In 1981, a job opportunity came up on PEI in her field of social work, so she applied and the rest is history. What began as a 2-year contract somehow became a 36-year career worked in both Child & Family Services, and later in Homecare. During this time, Judy met her husband Chris and they have three children (Michael, Jeffery, & Jill), who they are proud to have raised in the Town of O'Leary.

What some might call retirement started for Judy a couple of years ago, but the reality is that with a heart as big as hers and the volunteer spirit to go with it, she finds herself deeply involved in her community and loving every minute of it! In 2018 Judy was elected as a local municipal councilor, which is a role that sees her responsible for welcoming newcomers to the community, as an ex-officio with the Community Seniors Housing Cooperative project, and the local EMO coordinator. Judy also actively volunteers her time with the St. Anthony's Church, as an active member of her parish.

Judy: Why is it important for O'Leary to welcome newcomers?

"The town prides itself in being welcoming to newcomers and the diversity of it is what makes it as special as is it. We have an aging population, and so both local and newcomer families help give the town a rebirth, and a future to look forward to as the population grows."

In closing, O'Leary is open for business and is always willing to help welcome and support new residents and new business to the area. If you are new to O'Leary and have a new idea, please reach out. Contact CAO, Bev Shaw @ olearyadm@eastlink.ca or call (902) 859-1964 (Be sure to mention Judy!). Special thanks to Judy for all she does for others and her community!



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Facebook Group - search for:
Western PEI Community Navigator

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We recently asked Crystal
of Minh-Wang Family
Restaurant in Bloomfield,
PEI what is their number
one food dish? Come to
find out, it's a tie!



General Tao Chicken



Singapore Noodles



Meet Crystal & Alson, Minh-Wang Family Restaurant,

Bloomfield Mall, 2238 O'Halloran Road, Bloomfield, PEI
Phone: (902) 859-2111 or (902) 859-3344



Hi! Lay ho ma! Which means Hi! How are you? in Cantonese. If you live in or have visited Western PEI, chances are that you have been through the doors of this local Chinese food restaurant. Recently, we got the chance to sit down with Crystal and have her share more about her and her husband Alson's journey to Canada, which began when they immigrated from Hong Kong in 1985.

They first arrived to Toronto, Ontario, working different jobs and studied English there. Their first language is Cantonese, although they speak some Mandarin as well. Eventually, they took a vacation to PEI; a place that they fell in love with on arrival and so in 2006 they made the move to Charlottetown, PEI, where Alson worked at a Chinese food restaurant. It did not take long before people started to recognize his delicious food dishes!

Crystal, what attracted you to PEI?

"The people are really nice here. It is quiet. Ontario was quite busy, but here it is calm and peaceful. There are not as many worries here and you can live comfortably."

In 2014, they learned about a business opportunity in Bloomfield where then current owners decided to sell their Chinese food restaurant to new owners, and this was an opportunity that Crystal immediately jumped at! They now happily own and operate Minh-Wang family Restaurant and are here to stay!

For the last seven years, they have been calling O'Leary home and operate their year-round restaurant in Bloomfield, PEI. They have an extensive Chinese Food menu and offer Canadian food options too. We asked what their number one dish is and it seems that there is a tie between the General Tao Chicken and the Singapore Noodles. People return from the other side of the Island to find this special taste!

Crystal, what would you want people to know about you and your restaurant?

"I've worked hard to bring this space to life and beautify it. We've added cultural décor, freshened the walls with new colours, new pictures and do our best to create an ambiance our customers enjoy." "We work hard to serve our customers... Our success comes from our customers and so we also want to thank everyone for their dedicated support."





Central PEI Community Navigator:

We've partnered with some great community organizations to bring you a number of fun activities in December!

For updates & registration links, join the Central PEI Community Navigator Facebook Group at:
www.facebook.com/groups/CentralPEICommunityNavigator



Friday, December 4 at 10 am **FRESH AIR FRIDAY WALK** **on the North Shore**

Presented by the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada, the Rural Municipality of North Shore, Central Region Sport & Recreation Council and the Central PEI Community Navigator.



Sunday, December 6 from 5-6 pm **Town of Kensington** **REVERSE CHRISTMAS PARADE**

Gerald McCarville Drive, Kensington
Check out the float from our Community Navigators!



Sunday, December 13 at 4:45 pm **Afternoon Skate for New Residents** **Kensington Credit Union Centre**

If you're new, this skate's for you! If you've never worn skates before, don't worry - we will be there to offer support! Need to borrow skates & a helmet? We can help with that too. A joint initiative from the Central PEI Community Navigator, Town of Kensington, and the Central Region Sport and Recreation Council.



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Facebook Group - search for:
Central PEI Community Navigator

Office: Kensington Town Hall
(upstairs)
55 Victoria Street East

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES **in Central PEI**



For more information, visit each community's Facebook page.
Please note, COVID event precautions apply.

Fri, Dec. 4 at 6:30

Town of North Rustico
CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

Sunday, Dec. 6 at 7 pm

CRAPAUD TREE LIGHTING
CEREMONY

Crapaud Hall

Christmas music & hot chocolate

Saturday, Dec. 12 at 6 pm

The Rural Municipality of
North Shore presents:
A CHRISTMAS MOVIE PARTY
North Shore
Community Centre



Introducing Diane Thibeault -

HR Manager at Atlantic Beef Products Inc. & Member of the Central PEI Community Navigator Steering Committee

What is your place of origin? What brought you to PEI? I have spent most of my adult life in Calgary, Alberta and met my husband there. He is from New Brunswick; we made the move to Moncton in 2009. I was offered a job here in 2014 and the timing was right, so I was thrilled to come to the Island.

What is your role with ABP? How does it involve working with new Islanders? I am the Human Resources Manager at Atlantic Beef Products Inc. My role involves everything from recruitment to payroll. Like most companies here on PEI, we have a shortage of local applicants. Therefore, to maintain & grow the company, we hire skilled meat cutters from outside the country and those who have been living in Canada, but new to PEI.

We arrange flights for employees from out of country and pick them up from the airport. Renting apartments and furnishing them, organizing transportation to and from work and the grocery store. And have even given driving lessons. We have hosted the Office of Immigration and the Newcomers Association to come and present to our staff members and have provided English language lessons. Our orientation program has evolved to include: PEI Health Card applications, lists of services available here on the Island and winter driving tips.

What is the most rewarding thing about your role at ABP? I would say that one of the most rewarding experiences that I have had is picking someone up from the airport and seeing them witness Canada for the first time. Especially in the winter if they have never seen snow. *I always find it rewarding when families are re-united, and they begin to get traction here in Canada.*

What are some of the challenges in your role at ABP? Staffing and ensuring that everyone is maintaining status is a challenge. Finding housing for those that are coming from off island poses a big challenge. *Being in a rural community means no public transit.*

Why did you choose to get involved in the Central PEI Community Navigator Project? Being part of a team that works together to build resources in the communities that we live benefits everyone. I am proud to be involved in this project and look forward to building a framework of resources and providing seeing current and new community members come together.

Is there anything else you want to share? I look forward to learning and sharing perspectives with the Steering Committee in the effort of creating a sense of belonging for every community member.



Do you have any advice for community members on how they can help to welcome ABP's newcomer employees within the community?

"I would say, keep being the kind and generous people that you are."

~Diane Thibeault



Meet the Swift Family

Leslie Swift and her parents, Tim and Sharon, are living the dream in rural PEI.

Camping was a part of the Swift family lifestyle, so Tim casually picked up a copy of a real estate magazine during one of their camping trips to PEI. When they arrived at home in Ontario, he tossed it to Leslie, who was working to save up for a down payment for her own home. **She looked at it, and inside she found the listing for the property that they now call home.** She pointed it out to mom and dad, who casually joked about turning it into their dream business and moving the whole family to PEI.

Shortly after, they found themselves sitting around the kitchen table, staring hard at each other and asking "could we really do it?". One by one, the Swift family gave their answers until the call was made. They were, at the very least, making a trip to PEI to see the property. **Within days, they were on PEI soil.** The day of the viewing, Leslie worked until 2am, drove until 6am, boarded the plane before 7am, and was on red soil before noon. They knew that they didn't want a seasonal cottage business, so they looked at the property and made a to do list that was a few pages long, then they went back to Ontario and assessed their options.

Within a time frame that most people take to pack up their Holiday decorations after Christmas, the Swift family sold their home, packed up their belongings, and landed on PEI soil once again. They immediately took to the tasks that would help them open the business: winterizing the cottages, extensive renovations to the lodge to turn it into "The Deck" restaurant, and getting the pool heater up and running. They worked tirelessly, and eventually their little piece of paradise began to look like the image they had dreamt up in their minds.

Ocean Acres is comprised of 5 cottages, a restaurant with fantastic coconut cream pie, roomy campsites, an outdoor pool, and a beautiful waterway for kayaking in warmer months. Throughout the seasons you'll find the site busy with activity, locals gather at the Deck for breakfast, and campers coming and going. **In winter, the waterway is turned into a massive rink, which is operated on a pay by donation basis. The Deck becomes a snowmobilers oasis, and serves up warm food and drinks to individuals who have travelled from near and far by sled.** Next time you're in Southern Kings, stop by Ocean Acres and say "Hello!" to the Swifts!



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Facebook Group - search for:

Eastern PEI Community Navigator

Office: 544 Main Street, Montague

15 Green Street, Souris

(one day per week)

**Souris Reverse
Christmas Parade**
December 5th, 2:00pm
Line up begins at
12:30pm



Meet your new shop owners, Gary Wong and Jess Leung of UNEED PEI Gifts!



Located at 5236 AA MacDonald Highway, next to Aspect Eureka Metal Products, you'll find a neat and tidy shop stocked with natural soaps and accessories. **Shop owners Gary and Jess moved to Canada from Hong Kong just days before the world hit pause due to the global pandemic**, and they are very grateful to be safe in PEI. Their journey to becoming PEI residents started years ago, but when they found out that the Canadian border was closing earlier than they were meant to move across the world, they quickly said their goodbyes to families and friends, and bought last minute tickets.

"Was it stressful to fly across the world on such short notice with your young family?" Lindee asked.

"We felt very safe, everyone was wearing masks." Jess answers. However, because they bought their tickets on such short notice, they couldn't get seats together.

"He was sitting a few rows back, and I was in the seat with the two children, trying to keep them happy, for the whole flight." Anyone who has travelled with small children knows that this is no easy feat.

When they arrived, they had to settle into a home without any furniture, so they made do for two weeks until they were able to go out and buy what they needed. **"The community took care of us."** Gary mentions. "PEI is a great place to live and raise kids," chimes in Melanie, who moved from Ontario to PEI and works as the shop attendant at UNEED PEI Gifts.

Inside the shop, you'll find thoughtfully crafted soaps with natural ingredients. **"I started making them for him, for psoriasis and sensitive skin."** Jess says. "They're all made with nice ingredients: oils, honey, soothing things. **We use local honey, and other local ingredients like lavender."**

In addition to being a natural product, Jess and Gary are also interested in the preservation of the product, explaining how soap bags make bar soap last much longer by hanging to dry inside the shower.

Next time you're in Montague, take a stop in to the shop and say hi to Gary, Jess, or Melanie. While you're there, pick up some natural soaps!



Santa in the Drive Thru

Eastern PEI
Community Navigator &
Eastern PEI
Chamber of Commerce

December 16th
4:30-6:00pm
MacDonald's Bakery
Drive Thru in Montague

Free cookies and hot
chocolate from Santa





Are you ready to get cooking??

The PEI Community Navigators are planning a
COOKING WITH CULTURE online series
to run this winter season.

The Navigators will introduce you to
cultural foods belonging to the Island's newest residents, as
well as traditional foods of our various PEI communities.

Watch the Facebook Page for details:
PEI Community Navigators

Is there someone in your life who speaks a different language than you?

Whether it's a co-worker, neighbour or the
owner of a business that you frequent,
how about writing them a holiday card or
practicing one of the phrases below the
next time you see them?

Share your global holiday spirit by saying
'**Happy Holidays**' in any of the following
languages:

Mi'kmaq: Ulnuelewi
Filipino: Maligayang Pasko
Indian: Śubh krisamas'
French: Joyeuses Fêtes
Spanish: Felices Fiestas
Swedish: Trevlig Helg
Portuguese: Boas Festas
Turkish: Mutlu Bayramlar
Romanian: Sarbatori Fericite
Mandarin: Jie Ri Yu Kuai
Japanese: Tanoshii kurisumasu wo
Italian: Buone Feste
South African (Xhose): Li holide eximnandi
German: Forhe Feiertage
Dutch: Prettige feestdagen
Gaelic: Beannachtaí na Féile
Slovenian: Vesele Praznike
Indonesian: Selamat Hari Raya
Croatian: Sretni praznici!

Here in Canada, Jolly Old Saint Nicholas is known as
Santa Claus. But around the world, Kriss Kringle may have
a different name...

Brazil – Papai Noel

Chile – Viejo Pascuero (translated as Old Man Christmas)

China – Dun Che Lao Ren (or, Christmas Old Man)

Denmark – Julemanden

Finland – Joulupukki

France – Père Noël

Germany – Weihnachtsmann (Christmas Man)

Hungary – Mikulas (St. Nicholas)

Italy – Babbo Natale

Norway – Julenissen (a Christmas gnome)

Portugal – Pai Natal



In **Japan**, a Buddhist monk named Hoteiosho visits families
on New Year's Eve to deliver gifts. He allegedly has eyes in
the back of his head, and is also depicted as rotund and
jolly as Santa Claus.

In **Sweden** there's a gnome who travels with the aid of
goats to deliver presents. He is small, old, bearded, and
wears a red cap, much like Santa Claus.

Russia also has a legend of Grandfather Frost, who
travels with his daughter, Snow Girl. They plan New Year's
Eve parties for children where they hand out presents.

As we celebrate the holidays, be sure to comply with provincial
COVID-19 guidelines for community and home gatherings.
<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/covid19>

DECEMBER CALENDAR



December 10 - 18 | Hanukkah

Hanukkah (also Chanukah) is the Jewish Festival of Lights and an eight-day holiday. Every year, the celebration honors the hard-fought victory of those trying to keep their faith despite a powerful enemy.

Friday, December 18 | International Migrants Day

Recognized by the United Nations, a celebration of the 272 million migrants living new lives and building new communities in every corner of the globe. #WeTogether.

Monday, December 21 | Winter Solstice

Fire and light are traditional symbols of celebrations held on the darkest day of the year. The winter solstice is the day of the year with the fewest hours of daylight, and it marks the start of astronomical winter. After the winter solstice, days start becoming longer and nights shorter as spring approaches.

Thursday, December 24 | Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is the evening or entire day before Christmas Day, the festival commemorating the birth of Jesus. Activities sometime include the gathering of family and friends, singing Christmas carols, enjoyment of Christmas lights, going to church, wrapping, exchange and opening of gifts, and general preparation for Christmas Day. Santa Claus brings gifts to the homes of well-behaved children on the night of Christmas Eve.

Friday, December 25 | Christmas Day

Many Christians in Canada mark the birth of Jesus Christ on this day. Many Canadians have a day off work on December 25 and many spend the day with close relatives or friends. It is customary to exchange gifts, enjoy a special festive meal and, perhaps, attend a special church service. Christmas Day is a public holiday. It is a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses are closed.

Saturday, December 26 | Boxing Day

For some people, Boxing Day is a time to spend with family or friends, particularly those not seen on Christmas Day. Many people will gather for meals, spend time outside, or relax at home and enjoy the day off. Boxing Day has recently become synonymous with watching sports. Many businesses are closed on this day.

December 26 - January 1 | Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is an annual celebration of African-American culture which is held from December 26 to January 1, culminating in gift-giving and a feast of faith, called Karamu Ya Imani. Kwanzaa is a Swahili word that means "first" and signifies the first fruits of the harvest.

Thursday, December 31 | New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is a day of reflection of the past year's events and a time to prepare for the New Year. It is also the last day of the Canadian tax year. Many people attend special parties or other events to mark the end of one year and the start of the next one, and some communities hold family celebrations. Please check provincial COVID protocols to see what is permitted this year.

Friday, January 1 | New Year's Day

New Year's Day is a national holiday celebrated on January 1st, the first day of the New Year. This New Year's holiday is often marked by making 'New Year's Resolutions' and looking ahead to the future's possibilities.



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