

## News from Pictou County

Trecia Schell, Community Services Librarian, Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library

### Artists and Artisans Announced for deCoste Culture Hub

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(Pictou County) Sixteen artists and artisans have been selected to create thirteen public art pieces located in and around the new deCoste Culture Hub, currently under construction in Pictou, Nova Scotia, and set to open in September 2024.

The deCoste Culture Hub is a partnership of the Town of Pictou, the Municipality of the County of Pictou, the deCoste Performing Arts Centre, and the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library. Selection of the artists and the artwork was completed by a committee of volunteers interested in arts and culture and representatives of the four partners. "It was not easy selecting the final artists." says Eric Stackhouse, Chief Librarian of the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library. "There is incredible talent and creativity in the community and across the region." Pieces include not only traditional media, but metal, fabric, and digital artwork as well.

Public art is an important part of the project and intended to enrich the experience of those visiting the culture hub, both residents and visitors. The inclusion of public art also offers a sample of the amazing talent in the area and provides significant investment in the creative economy. Most importantly, it offers the opportunity to inspire, create discussion, and paint a picture of our diverse community.

The project team is seeking donors/sponsors for selected art pieces. Should anyone be interested in learning more, please call 902-755-6031 or email [culturehubpc@parl.ns.ca](mailto:culturehubpc@parl.ns.ca).

The artists and artisans.

- Thekla Altmann – Exterior project - patio.
- Carolyn Bedford – Acrylic painting.
- Kiva-Marie Belt – Exterior project - garden.
- Holly Carr – Silk mural.
- Doretta Groenendyk – Acrylic mural.
- Linda Johns – Poetry and painted shelving end panels.
- Katherine Knight and Nick Rocha – Interactive digital exhibit.
- Karen LeBlanc – Fibre art – shelving end panels.
- Fenn Martin and Denise Lynch – Ceramic artwork.
- Dawn MacNutt – Exterior project – sculpture.
- Theresa MacKenzie – Watercolour mural.
- Benoit Paradis – Banners.
- Alan Syliboy and Darren Martin – Exterior sculpture.

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## **News from Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library**

It's been a whirlwind, since the NSLA conference in the fall! In December we held 3 fundraisers for the library, our annual Gift-a-Book campaign and to that we added this year a Staff Cookbook (with a seasonal 3D printed cookie cutter), and Book Bundles of gift-wrapped with a bag of specialty Coffee beans (from the Coffee Bean Coffee Shop), and chocolates. All 3 fundraisers were well received.

Plans for the new library building in Pictou are really taking shape! Drone videos of the work in progress are available to view on the project website. We are all looking forward to the next exciting stage of the project will be to move into our new home for the [Pictou Library](#) over the summer months, with a grand opening planned for the early Fall. All are welcome to drop by an visit us, along the Pictou Waterfront! The new library location is also situated on the TransCanada Trail, and Blue Route (so more ways you can drop by!)

Renovations at the [New Glasgow Library and PARL Headquarters](#) are due to begin this summer too! We'll be moving into a temporary location in the downtown core of New Glasgow, near the present location of the library. The Architectural plans are found on the project webpage, and calls for construction tenders by the Town of New Glasgow will begin soon.



In January 2024, Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program received a \$5,000 USD grant from the Million Dollar Roundtable Foundation, to support the community literacy's programs and initiatives with PARL. Brooklyn Linthorne is pictured seated in a very cosy chair in the Children's Area at the Westville library, enjoying her new picture book from AAL.

Programming for all ages is well on the go! PARL offers over 120 library programs, per month – all free of charge! Full details may be found in our PARLevents calendar online, at [www.parl.ns.ca](http://www.parl.ns.ca).

The Family Literacy Day Challenge was well met, and very much enjoyed by all who participated – with many thanks to Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program for sponsoring the purchase of special prize gifts, and many beautiful new children's books to give away too. Jade Dares, at the River John Library (pictured on the right), is thrilled with her lovely new book bag (filled with goodies!) for being the lucky winner of the FLD prize draw.



And we've been enjoying many workshops this winter and spring led by local experts in the community, from making Holiday wreaths and swags, learning how to tie fancy bows and make Fidget Quilts



(Pictured on the left, crafted with love, as displayed by two of the very happy participants at the Pictou Library), Healthier lifestyle choices for better nutrition (and sleep!), and less stress, Heart Healthy activities to green thumb gardening tips, earth friendly homemade cleaners and upcycling tricks to give old items a second life, Yoga for Bigs & Littles, and Music with Heather - all thanks to Community Wellness Grants received from our local Community Health Boards in Pictou County.

Daily Scavenger Hunts are a super hit year-round, with changing monthly (and special weekly themes too!), such as the family favorite– Paper Bag Princess Day and Pete the Cat! Pictured here, Isabel Cripps is working on her Scavenger Hunt list at the River John Library.

LEGOS for all ages continues to grow (literally). The Antigonish Library's Adult LEGO Builders Association completed construction of a giant Lighthouse, and just this month the New Glasgow Library's Adult LEGO Builders just finished building the Great Wall. We're not sure what next landmark architectural wonder they'll create!



The Writers Group that meets weekly at the Trenton library has become a stable fixture, and their monthly workshops are a fan favorite – featuring mentoring with local authors such as **TP Wood, Emma Kventa, Jennifer Hatt, Thekla Altmann, Michelle Robinson, Monica Graham**, and special guest for April 2024 will be **Mal Kishii**, leading a workshop on “Found Poetry”. And the Writers’ Group at the Antigonish Library has resumed weekly meetings too!

PARL branches have been very busy for March Break with a variety of programs for children and families including movies, crafts, puppet shows, and more. Families at the Antigonish Library enjoyed a visit from



A&D Reptiles and Friends. Pictured is Caesar, a green iguana, with Daniella.

Crafting fun for the whole family was enjoyed by all, at the Stellarton library as we made bookish Hedgehogs (pictured on the right). From Making Slime to watching movies, crafts and Picture BINGOS, painting flower pots, making bird feeders and learning all about our fine feathered friends to MakerSpace exploring with Silhouetting & 3DPrinting. It was another very, very busy March Break.



In late February and early March 2024, we also opened two more Community Pantries in partnership with our local municipalities, at our libraries in Trenton and Westville (in partnership with local volunteers with the Humble Harvest). Pictured below (left to right), is **Alanna Grover**, CAO Town of Trenton, with **Nicole LeBlanc**, Town Councillor and PARL Library Board Member, then **Rhonda Rafuse** with the Humble Harvest, and **Thekla Altmann**, Managing Branch Assistant with Trenton Library. In the second photo, at the Westville Library we have **Lennie White**, Mayor of the Town of Westville, **Sheila Newell-Fagan**, Branch Assistant, **Gina Snell**, Managing Branch Assistant, **Scot Weeres**, CAO with the Town of Westville, and **Danielle Fraser** with the Humble Harvest. In addition to the Community Pantry found at the Antigonish Town & County Library that was opened in April 2023.



We’re also pleased to launch this spring - the CNIB Play collection, coming to our libraries in Pictou and New Glasgow! The collection of accessible games was funded through a Community Wellness Grant from the Pictou West Community Health Board for a project partnership with CNIB Maritimes and Visually Impaired Pictou County. The project was spearheaded by **Julie Martin**, Chair of the PARL Accessibility Committee, and former Chair of VIPC, with the assistance of **Jeff deVillers** with CNIB Maritimes.

And new staffing news! In the fall, we welcomed **Kaitlyn Denny**, and **Marcus Silveiras** as a Branch Assistants with the New Glasgow Library. **Elizabeth Glinz**, Community Outreach Assistant with the Antigonish Library returned from Maternity Leave in October, and **Kim MacDonald** joined us as a Branch Assistant with the Antigonish Library. In January, we welcomed Councillor **Sarah MacKinnon**, with the Town of Westville to the PARL Board. In February we welcomed **Esther Pereira** as our new IT Technician at PARL HQs, and **Anne Brunelle** and **Kerri Pye** as two new Branch Assistants – Antigonish County Backups. And in March, **Helen Chudley** joins us in the permanent position as the new Managing Branch Assistant for the River John Library.