

News from Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library

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

It's official, we're now open! The Murray Family Public Library in the deCoste Culture Hub!

November 1, 2024 marked another auspicious milestone for the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library. The Regional Library officially opened the new **Murray Family Public Library** at the deCoste Culture Hub, on the waterfront in downtown Pictou. It was a grand day, celebrated with many well wishes and great friends who dropped by to share their time with us – on our special day!

The Pictou Public Library has been renamed the Murray Family Public Library, in recognition of the Murray Family Foundation, who graciously supported the Culture Hub project and the construction of the new library within the deCoste Culture Hub. The deCoste Culture Hub brings together the deCoste Performing Arts Theatre, the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library and Creative Pictou County! Since the deCoste Culture Hub opened its doors on 16 September, and until the November 1st Grand Opening, we've welcomed over 10,000 visitors in just 7 weeks.

The new space offers a refurbished theatre, with new seating, and expanded backstage area for storage – and enhanced accessibility, as well as a fully equipped catering kitchen, designed by The Kilted Chef and crew. In addition, a Community Art Studio space was created, to professional artist specifications that is a shared space managed by Creative Pictou County, a local arts society. The library has a Children's Rainbow Room, a MakerSpace and Technology area, and several small community meeting rooms, and a larger Community Room with a kitchen area. The shared spaces within the building include an Art Gallery, along the hallway between the library and theatre.

In addition, over a dozen commissioned pieces of public art were created for the deCoste Culture Hub, from a sculpture by **Dawn McNutt**, "The Muse" found on our front entrance at 99 Water Street, to a Celtic-inspired ceramic fireplace (with a mantel piece of wood from the Ship Hector) by **Denise Martin Lynch** and **Fenn Martin**, to a Literary Pollinator Garden by **Kiva-Marie Belt** (Seafoam Lavender) and **Johanna Skibsrud** (Scotiabank Giller Prize winner), and a stunning sculpture, "Wolverine and Little Thunder, Eel Fishing" by Mi'kmaw artist, **Alan Syliboy** and metal sculpturer, **Darren Martin** – on the new harbor front boardwalk with a set of sea stairs, that connects to the TransCanada Trail Head and the Jitney Trail. In the children's area we have an inspiring whimsical painted mural by children's illustrative artist, **Doretta Groendyck**, of children soaring over the harbor on the backs of large birds, as they prepare to go to bed with sleepy time stories. The front desk area is a shared space with the library circulation on the left, and the theatre's Box Office on the right, and over the desk is a 60-foot illuminated silk painted banner by **Holly Carr**, featuring the worlds of wildlife from the sea to the forest. In the Adult Fiction stacks, there are 3 end panels of woven tapestries in the Primary Colors by fibre artist, **Karen LeBlanc**.

In the Technology area, you will see a very large touch screen monitor on the wall, displaying a 3D rendering of a Merigomish Goose Boat (that can also be 3Dprinted), with a QR code that leads to a website of historical resources about the Goose Boat (or Sneak Boat). Next to the public computers is

the cozy fireplace, with our cultural and historical collections, featuring the stories by and about the local First Nations and Settler communities (Gaelic, French, and African Nova Scotians), and local historical reference documents.

Stepping into the Sunrise Reading Atrium, looking skyward, and dangling from the rafters are a series of Art Deco banners from painting of several iconic locations from around Pictou County, by painter **Benoit Paradis** from the Caribou Lighthouse, Green Hill Look off to the Pictou Causeway. Looking towards the wall above the entrances to the two Community Meeting Rooms/Offices is an 8-foot mural of the buildings of Water Street and Front Street in downtown Pictou – through time (seamlessly blending the old and new!), by historical illustrator **Theresa MacKenzie**. Peeking into the larger Community Meeting Room, there is an oil painting by artist, **Carolyn Bedford** of a writer seeking inspiration. Heading outside, at the harbor side entrance, and along the waterfront next to the sculpture, on the boardwalk is a poem about celebrating this special place, by writer **Thekla Altmann** (who also happens to be our Managing Branch Assistant at the Trenton Library). All of these inspiring pieces of public art were made possible through generous financial support from The Sobeys Foundation.

And the icing on the cake - the new library is now open Mondays through to Saturdays! All are welcome to drop on by, we'd love to meet you!

For more information, visit our [website](#).

Welcome to our shared Circulation and Box Office Desk! Above the desk, you can see some of the beautiful, illuminated silk banner created by artist, **Holly Carr**.





Heading past the Circulation Desk, into the MakerSpace and Technology area, and the side entrance to the theatre and Art Gallery and towards the harbor front Sunset Reading Atrium.

A purple-licious Storytime with **Sheree Fitch**! Sheree is one the newest members of the Order of Canada.





An art illustration workshop about the mural she painted for the Rainbow Room/Children’s Area, with artist **Doretta Groendyck**, with the Grade 2 class from Scotsburn Elementary School.

A thank you, to The Sobey's Foundation for their very generous support of the Arts, in the Culture Hub. Pictured here, in front of the fireplace, created by ceramic artists **Denise Martin** and **Fenn Martin** (left to right), **Troy Greencorn**, Executive Director of the deCoste Centre for the Performing Arts, **Crystal Murray**, Chair of the deCoste Centre Board, **Frank** and **Debi Sobey**, **Denise Martin Lynch**, artist and **Fenn Martin**, artist, and **Eric Stackhouse**, Chief Librarian, Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library.



A huge thank you to the Murray Family Foundation, for their continued support of literacy, public libraries, and communities! Pictured here in the entrance to the Rainbow Room, are **Jill Murray, Mrs. Shirley Murray, Eric Stackhouse** (Chief Librarian, Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library), and **Sean and Crystal Murray**. We are currently holding a naming contest for the elephant sculpture, created by a local woodcarver.



The Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library was so very honored to receive the 2024 Community Partners Award, from the Pictou County Chamber of Commerce at the 2024 Business Achievement Awards held on November 21, 2024 at the deCoste Centre for the Performing Arts, in Pictou, NS. It was an exciting evening, and sincere congratulations to all award recipients, nominees and the Chamber.

The Community Partners Award is sponsored by Sobeys, and is presented to an organization or business that demonstrates the creation of strategic partnerships to make Pictou County a better place to live and work. It celebrates the belief that we can prosper if we can encourage a culture of collaboration within our communities.

(left to right) **Trecia Schell**, Community Services Librarian, **Mansi Nishit-Trivedi**, Technical Services Librarian, **Maren Fassnacht**, Managing Branch Assistant - Pictou Library, and **Eric Stackhouse**, Chief Librarian.



Pictou County Community Health Centre (PCCHC) Collaboration

On December 9th, the Pictou County Community Health Centre (PCCHC) will open its doors at 25B Front Street in downtown Pictou. Situated near the food bank and pharmacy in an accessible building, the Centre reflects what can be achieved when a community comes together with a shared vision for better health.

The CHC will be open to the public three days a week, including evening hours, with a full-time community health worker and a program developer on staff, as well as support from the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library's (PARL) virtual care technician one day a week, ensuring flexible and accessible services.

Supported by the Aberdeen Health Foundation and the Department of Health and Wellness, this initiative is the result of years of collaboration, research, and a commitment to addressing gaps in local health care.



Susan MacConnell (left), Executive Director and Anne Simmonds (right), Chair of the Board of Directors of the new Pictou County Community Health Centre (PCCHC) in downtown Pictou. The CHC, set to open in December, will provide flexible and accessible health care services tailored to the needs of the community, beginning with a partnership with the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library's Virtual Care @ Your Library program.