

Quality of Island Life Co-operative

January 2009

NEWSLETTER

Executive for 2008-09

President - Morley Pinsent
Vice-President - Peter Rukavina
Treasurer - Ann Sherman
Secretary - Kathy Stuart
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Whither the Quality of Life Co-op? *You are Invited*

The Quality of Life Co-op has come a long way since our start up in 2003. The Tyne Valley Quality of Life Study and bringing Community Accounts to Prince Edward Island are perhaps the most noteworthy achievements. It is time to take stock and chart a path for the future. What should we be doing next in order to fulfil our mission of telling it like it is and making decisions based on good data and what is important to Islanders?

So come and tell us what you think at a **STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION** to be held on **Saturday February 21, 2009 at UPEI, from 2-6** followed by a social hour and pot-luck. More details regarding the location and agenda will be sent out by e-mail. Storm date - February 28, 2009.

Check Us Out on the Web!

www.qoil.ca

We now have a web site! Thanks to Peter Rukavina for pulling it together.

Things you can find at www.qoil.ca include

- ▶ Information about the creation of QoIL
- ▶ Information about Community Accounts
- ▶ An event calendar
- ▶ Minutes and agendas
- ▶ Newsletters
- ▶ Reports and Presentations
- ▶ Links
- ▶ Contact information

By-law Amendment Passes at Annual General Meeting (May 2008)

The report presented by Morley Pinsent on behalf of an ad hoc Committee of the Board recommended that QoIL

- ▶ a) retain the quorum at 30% +1 of the membership, and
- ▶ b) delete By-Law 6A and replace it with: "The management of the association shall be vested in a Board of Directors which shall consist of a minimum of six members with the option of expansion to a maximum of nine members as needs dictate. Immediately following the annual general meeting of the cooperative, the newly elected board shall convene a meeting and elect the executive (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer) from amongst its members. The Board shall meet quarterly and a majority shall form a quorum."

These recommendations were adopted by the membership.

Quality of Life Co-Op - Objective

- *To develop indicators through a process of community participation and formal research, with the aim of enhancing and monitoring the quality of Island life.*

Money Makes the World Go Round ~ *It Also Pays the Bank Fees!*

At the Annual Meeting, the membership also discussed the issue of membership fees arising from the Treasurer's recommendation that an annual stipend of at least \$20 be paid by members to cover administrative charges to pay the annual return to the Province. A by-law change could be introduced to the next AGM that would allow an annual contribution by active members for the purpose of covering charges related to coop status and bank charges. It was agreed by consensus that the amount of the contribution would not be specified, but some contribution of any amount would be required from active members; and that it could be brought in on a volunteer basis in the current year.

There is not an avenue for corporate membership at present. There is an opportunity for sponsorship - such as newsletters, bank fees, annual meetings, advertising on the website. Passing the hat at functions is another option.

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTS - PEI UPDATE

- Christine MacKinnon
Corporate Planning Co-ordinator, Executive Council

The target for Community Accounts in PEI is a prototype version by April 2009. I've been working with Alton and his team to do the behind the scenes work. The intention is to allow the PEI Community Accounts the same functionality as the NL version. However, the limitation in our case is having the PEI data to create the accounts. To start with, the PEI prototype will use readily available Stats Can census data, on the census subdivisions. Basically, we'll present existing information in the Community Accounts frame. Going forward, we intend to purchase Stats Can data together with the other Atlantic provinces to negotiate a better price. I am also looking for other funding sources. For example, there is infrastructure funding available for "community capacity building". I think the work necessary to convert the census subdivisions into other community groupings or postal codes or watersheds, would be treated as a discreet project eligible for this funding. I am currently working through internal processes to confirm approval. Progress is slow but sure.

Best regards! Christine

Check out Newfoundland and Labrador's
Community Accounts at
www.communityaccounts.ca

The potential role of Community Accounts in community-based research, projects and programmes

~ Irene Novaczek, *Institute of Island Studies*

Now that the province of PEI has embarked on the development of a Community Accounts for our island, we can turn our minds to potential uses for such a resource. Community Accounts will initially provide quick and easy access to various types of data collected by Statistics Canada. For example, a municipal council could go to the website to get demographic information about their community, to help plan for infrastructure development or social services. Similarly, community organisations wanting to develop a project to, for example, provide programmes for seniors or youth, could use the data in Community Accounts to justify their project proposal when seeking funding. As long as the data is of a type collected by the federal government, and the community is recognized as a unit for the purpose of reporting, all will be well.

However, in some cases there may be particular needs that cannot be met using Stats Canada data, and that is where we can anticipate having "market demands" on Community Accounts to provide particular types of data, or data divided by particular geographic limits that might be outside of what Stats Canada would normally provide.

At the Institute of Island Studies we coordinate the Social Economy and Sustainability Research Network, which brings together academic researchers, students and community organisations to perform research that is important to communities (these may be geographically defined communities, or "communities of interest"). For example, there is one project that involves UPEI researchers working with the Hillsborough Helping Hands Youth Group. This team hopes to be involved in a major, Atlantic wide project over the next few years, exploring the relationship between youth engagement in their community and youth mental health. Having access to information about the study site, Hillsborough

Park, will be important for this project. However, because Hillsborough Park has amalgamated with Charlottetown, it will take a special effort to pull out data that is specific to that community and separate from the data available on the greater Charlottetown urban area. We expect there will also be challenges in finding certain types of information about youth mental health. Some data will be in provincial databases rather than with Statistics Canada and so gaining access to the information and making it available through Community Accounts will require a significant collaborative effort between the local community, the city, the province and federal agencies. We expect that the process of gaining access to information of this kind will in effect be a pilot project showing how Community Accounts can be developed to be of optimal use in supporting such community based projects and programmes on PEI.

Another Social Economy Research Network project that will pose an interesting challenge to Community Accounts is the one led by the Trout River Environment Committee, supported by the Institute of Island Studies. This project is exploring what islanders in the Stanley-Hope watershed mean by “quality of life”. The research will identify things that should be measured and monitored over time so that we can tell whether these factors that contribute to our quality of life are in danger of being eroded or lost. Often, quality of life is dependent on rather intangible aspects of personal, family and community well-being that may not be reflected in data collected by Statistics Canada. Also, where data does exist, it is not available for an entire watershed as a unit. Once again, in working through the information needs of this research project we will be able to point out to the government how our Island Community Accounts should be structured to meet actual on-the-ground needs of organisations that are working to maintain and enhance the Island’s culture, society and environment.

Community Safety and Well-Being

Taking Stock: Communities and Governments Working Together for Community Safety and Well-being Initiative (2006-2007) was a project funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre, Public Safety Canada with support from the PEI Office of Attorney General. The focus was to conduct research and build strong partnerships, creating a foundation for a planned approach to work together for

community safety and well-being by addressing the root causes of crime issues that create an environment for crime.

A lot has been written on how to prevent crime through social change and the links between factors for health and safety. Some social concerns are:

- People who are not part of the main stream of society
- People who are victims many times
- Lack of regard or respect for other people
- Fear of being the victim of crime

Social change activities to reduce risk factors come from the community, police, governments or working together. Many people have been trying to figure out ideas to measure how crime is reduced by improved well-being of people through social change activities. With good information, we could track changes in the number and type of criminal acts, the number and type of victims, and peoples’ feelings about crime and safety.

The main problem with tracking changes due to social improvement is that there are many changes and they are not simple. The *Community Accounts* project in Newfoundland and Labrador tracks a large number of indicators on many kinds of social factors related to community safety. Another approach is to measure the results of the governments’ and communities’ actions to improve community safety.

One goal in community safety is to improve reporting to people on the state of crime, and another is to measure how well each action and program works at the community level to reduce crime.

For more information contact the Justice Resource Service Tel: 368-4583 jlighwood@gov.pe.ca

Source - Adapted from the *Taking Stock* research report *What Key Indicators Should be Tracked and How will Data be Managed?* (2007) written by John Palmer in association with Katherine Clough and Diane Griffin.

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The only questions worth asking today are whether humans are going to have any emotions tomorrow, and what the quality of life will be if the answer is no.
~ Lester Bangs

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTS

Comprehensive frameworks such as Quality of Life Frameworks are designed to expand like accordions and reveal the sub frameworks or policy areas within. Comprehensive frameworks enable each sub framework or policy area e.g. community safety, to be managed both independently and in unison with other sub frameworks as community accounts (CAs). These CAs are much more than data fields. They are key result areas that serve to define the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability and whose condition ultimately determines our quality of life. CAs gather data for a purpose – to enable communities to define success measure progress and evaluate their outcomes. When expanded to show CAs (e.g. community safety, water quality, employment etc.), the Quality of Life framework can be expressed in a less linear fashion e.g., in the form of a medicine wheel or a health wheel. This serves to facilitate multiple account analysis and assist in identifying policy areas in need of harmonization. When addressing complex issues, it is often difficult to generate improvements in one policy area without generating simultaneous improvements in multiple policy areas. There are three sequential result platforms contained within all CAs. The management of CAs often requires the harmonization of result areas within accounts as well as the harmonization of efforts to achieve results across accounts.

Response Level Results: (Becoming knowledgeable, able and connected) Improvements in the ability to respond to stressors in a timely and effective manner. Indicators of success at this level include increases in knowledge and capacity, as well as expanded partnerships. These outcomes are the building blocks of all higher level results.

Stressor Level Results: (Decreasing liabilities) Decreases in the presence and/or impacts of factors which stress social, economic and /or environmental conditions. Indicators of success at this level include decreases in such negative factors such as crime, sickness, unemployment, pollution, illiteracy, poverty, social exclusion etc.

Condition Level Results: (Increasing assets) Improvements in social, economic and/or environmental conditions. Condition level indicators constitute a quality of life score card. These success indicators are termed quality of life indicators, protective factors, sustainability indicators and/or genuine progress indicators.

written by Jim Ellsworth, Atlantic Regional Manager, National Crime Prevention Centre.

Quality questions create a quality life. Successful people ask better questions, and as a result, they get better answers.

~ Anthony Robbins

Coming Events:

"Impact Assessment and Human Well-being Conference" **Accra, Ghana, May 16-22, 2009**

Theme - *How do you promote human well-being and protection of ecosystems when evaluating proposed development Policies, Plans, Programs, and Projects (PPPPs)?*

Human well-being depends on ecosystem services, and a healthy environment is essential for improving development and human well-being. Impact assessment aims at ensuring a healthy environment, ultimately leading to improved human well-being. This conference will assess the relevance of human well-being in impact assessments. IAIA09 will involve you in discussions with experts from around the globe focussing on how impact assessment assures: Healthy environment, Human well-being, Sustainable development, Protected ecosystems, and Quality of life.

Topics - IAIA09 participants are encouraged to highlight how the various instruments of impact assessment can assist developers, industry, decision-makers, development cooperation providers and the public with ensuring and promoting human well-being by integrating environmental, social, economic, and other concerns in the fields of: Climate change and human well-being ~ Environment and human well-being ~ Globalization and human well-being ~ Environmental assessment administration in Africa ~ Extractive industry ~ Tourism ~ Land use planning ~ Coastal zone management ~ Environmental governance in Africa ~ Sustainable production and consumption ~ Environmental compliance and enforcement ~ Environmental liability and funding

Program - In addition to conference session, workshops, and training courses, you will also be able to choose technical visits and sightseeing tours, including Lake Volta/Akosombo Dam, deepwater Tema Port, a cocoa processing factory, gold mines, national parks, and more. Deadline for Proposals for theme forums, sessions, and special meetings 15 January 2009: Paper and poster abstract submissions 28 February 2009: Registration deadline for organizers and presenters. Click the IAIA09 Accra, Ghana link at www.iaia.org

Prince Edward Island Social Forums

The Institute for Bioregional Studies Ltd. (IBS), invites you to join our **Social Forums**. Each event begins at **7:00 p.m.** with a potluck dinner, presentation and informal discussion. The intent is to share ideas and inform each other about social issues affecting our future.

Each forum is held at **114 Upper Prince Street**, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

For more information call 902-367-0390; Email: ibs_pei@yahoo.com; Internet: www.ibspei.ca

Be the Change, January 13 (Tuesday)

You know Gandhi's famous quote, "Be the Change You Wish to See in the World." You've heard Margaret Meade's declaration that you should never doubt that a small group of people can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has.

If you could change the world, your community, yourself what would you change?

Tonight we will share our insights for global, regional and personal change and perhaps create an implementation plan to follow though on our collective visions.

Inaugurating Change, January 21 (Wednesday)

We invite American Ex-pats and Progressive Canadians to convene and assess Obama's Inaugural Address. Is the promise of 'Change' materializing? What are the global implications of the proposed changes? Will America become more protectionist? Will America end its imperialist policies and advance social justice? Will America work to collaborate rather than dominate other countries? Is America ready to accept its responsibilities in reversing human impacts of climate change?

Community Renewal, February 10 (Tuesday)

The bioregional approach to community enhancement places very high value on activities that unite individuals to create of a sense of place that is safe, healthy, and productive while also retaining continuity of the region's natural and cultural history.

The community becomes, an extension of one's very selfhood. It implies a sensitivity and respect to the uniqueness of our neighbourhood and how it can be expressed in the infrastructure, symbols, images, art, rituals and other cultural expressions of the community.

The neighbours of Upper Prince Street will present

an oral history of our community, then open discussion to uncover strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats impacting our municipality and actions we can implement to enhance our neighbourhood.

Can We Save the Planet and Rescue the Economy at the Same Time?, February 17 (Tuesday)

Shake off your complacency, throw aside old habits, and rise, clear-eyed and alert, to the necessity of big changes. Tonight we will discuss the community economic development actions, impacts and necessary steps to create a social economy that promotes peace, environmental sustainability and social justice. From Shock Doctrine to the 11th Hour.

We will develop a picture of the causes and potential green solutions for restoring prosperity.

Community Enterprise, March 12 (Thursday)

Bioregionalism attempts to promote environmentally sound business development that has community-wide benefits. We will examine several project management methodologies that stimulate and sustain business development and discuss how to advance from ideas to implementation of new and/or expanded businesses.

Econundrums, Earth Day - Sunday April 22

While world leaders debate how best to respond to climate change, loss of biodiversity, population explosions, impending epidemics, etc., the rest of us wrestle with our own environmental quandaries. Is it better to use paper or plastic? Is a full dishwasher really more efficient than washing dishes in the sink? If we must travel, is it better to drive or fly? Tonight we'll take the Mother Jones EcoQuiz and discuss what personal actions are best for the planet. Some of the findings might surprise you.

Call 367-0390 to confirm dates and participation.

For a list of all the ways technology has failed to improve the quality of life, please press three. ~ Alice Kahn



Regular QoIL Board meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of every second month at 4:00 p.m. - however, the next QoIL Board Meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 4th at 4:00 p.m. in the Boardroom, 84 Fitzroy St.

A Search for a Measure of the Quality of Life on Prince Edward Island

An Inter-Provincial 'Cost of Living' Inquiry
by Godfrey Baldacchino & Matt Funk
Island Studies Program, UPEI 31 July 2008
from pages 14-17

..... And what does the term 'Quality of Life' mean? A recent 2007 study of residents in Tyne Valley, PEI, found that 20-39-year olds assign top priority to "friends and family" (26.6%) followed by "community" (17.0%) and "safety" (11.7%); whereas those aged 60 years and over in the same locality placed "community" first (28.8%); followed by "friends and family" (16.6%) and then "access to services" (12.1%) (Quality of Island Life Coop, 2007). These are nevertheless some of the key indicators of what 'quality of life' may mean to different age cohorts of Islanders.

Context analysis is one technique that can be used to sift through large amounts of textual data, and systematically identify key properties such as the frequency of keywords most used. One such exercise deployed in relation to the 2006 study of 320 recent immigrants to PEI (Baldacchino, 2007, p. 7), reveals that the most commonly used words by recent immigrants in describing the positive 'selling points', or pull factors, to PEI tend to gravitate around family, children, people and community; with some appreciation for the affordability of housing and property. In this respect, and comparing these results with those from the Tyne Valley indicative study, the suggestion is that the immigrants' broad interpretation of 'quality of life' tends to somewhat match that held by Islanders. Finally, would it be prudent or even plausible to attempt to evaluate "happiness"?

Happiness is generally considered an ultimate goal of life. The United States Declaration of Independence of 1776 takes it as a self-evident truth that the "pursuit of happiness" is an "unalienable right", comparable to life and liberty. It follows that economics is - or should be - about individual happiness; in particular, how economic growth, unemployment and inflation, and institutional factors such as governance affect individual well-being. The complex and elusive properties of happiness and independence remain inherently difficult to quantify (Frey & Stutzer, 2000).

V. QUALITY OF LIFE IN CHARLOTTETOWN?
We were not expected, nor were we planning, to

carry out any investigation into the 'quality of life' in/of the provincial capital of Charlottetown per se. However, this Census Agglomeration, with its 58,625 residents (Statistics Canada, 2006), has some distinct characteristics that may be worth identifying in this study. The place of residence of some 43% of the island province's population, the greater Charlottetown area has the largest proportionate concentration of residents by province. While the provincial population is essentially stable (zero growth), that of Charlottetown is growing at 6.5%. It has attracted 53% of immigrants that settled in the province (2001 Census data). While the registered unemployment rate in 2005 was 10.9% in Prince Edward Island, it was 7.8% in Charlottetown.

The town has been described as a unique settlement: It is a combination of downtown chic baroque residences, a university town (the University of Prince Edward Island, the Island's only University, has its campus here), a provincial capital (federal and provincial departments; Lieutenant-Governor's office, apart from a city with a municipal council); and the site of the bulk of the administrative and civic infrastructure befitting a provincial jurisdiction (including an airport, cruise ship passenger terminal, arts centre, hospital, churches, court house, movie theatres, shopping malls, gyms, swimming pools, farmers' market, technical college and ... a public transit system) – all within an atmosphere that is distinctly rural, intimate and laid back. No other city in Canada comes close. (Baldacchino, 2006b, p. 108).

What we do not have in Charlottetown are any significant banking institutions. This may turn out to be a blessing: had there been a significant finance industry on PEI, its bankers and financiers would otherwise compete for limited real estate, especially in Charlottetown. This would push up the price of residential real-estate, which, as has been noted in this and other reports, is a household's most typical significant investment. In the absence of the financial class, upper-middle class wage earners - doctors, lawyers, teachers, professors, federal and provincial government employees ... may find living in Charlottetown attractive and affordable. The price of residential property remains a significant draw for actual and potential residents of the province, and especially of its capital.

Some very interesting insights about the city can be additionally gleaned from a 2006 study that sought

to explore the relationship between the ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002) and economic development in Atlantic Canada. The study (Barrieau & Savoie, 2006) looked closely at Charlottetown, and made some spectacular observations. These include: Charlottetown has relatively high proportions of both university-educated individuals and professional artists. “Charlottetown, along with Guelph, posted somewhat surprising results by outperforming several large urban centres in both categories”. This data is a valuable indicator for both the talent and bohemian indices.

Using a combination of Florida’s creative occupations list and Statistic Canada’s knowledge economy occupations category, one can take stock of Atlantic Canada’s creative class and determine its weight relative to the overall labour force. Nationally, 24.3% of the labour force was employed in a creative class occupation. “Within Atlantic Canada, Charlottetown [with St. John’s and Halifax] surpassed the Canadian average”. Halifax had a high percentage of university graduates in Canada, ranking 5th overall at 22.6%. Charlottetown [along with St. John’s] also ranked above the national average, with 18.1% of the respective ‘20 years and over’ age group having at least a bachelor’s degree. And, especially: Almost 7 Canadians per 1,000 declared being an artistic professional in 2001. Interestingly, it also shows that three out of the four Atlantic urban centres figure prominently at the top of the bohemian index ranking. Halifax led the Atlantic region with 7.6 artists per 1,000 residents. “Charlottetown, despite being the least populated urban centre in our sampling [ranked 45th in the country] was not far behind at 6.9. The Island capital is the only small city to appear near the top of the ranking”. ... In real terms, the number of artistic professionals can be broken down as follows: 1,180 in St. John’s, 405 in Charlottetown, 2,735 in Halifax, and 540 in Moncton.

In sharp contrast to the rest of Canada, municipalities in Atlantic Canada dedicate very little of their total expenditures to culture. This result may be partly explained by the lower rate of urbanization in the region, as well as the small size and limited financial capacity of municipalities. Despite these limitations, Atlantic Canada’s major urban centres (Halifax, Charlottetown and St. John’s in particular) rank favourably in terms of creative capacity. The summative conclusion of these indicators –

indicative though they may be - is that, while Charlottetown is not a multicultural city (with very few foreign-born residents) and has no significant technology intensive employment, it nevertheless has some very powerful attractions to well educated, middle class residents: affordable housing, a concentration of diverse graduate residents, and a concentration of diverse artists (with some overlap between the latter two categories). Should these be aspects of the ‘quality of life’ that such individuals or households are looking for, then Charlottetown may fit their bill... even though it might mean that their money travels less than in other parts of the country.

The quality, not the longevity, of one's life is what is important.

~Martin Luther King, Jr.

About the Quality of Island Life Co-operative

The Quality of Island Life (QoIL) Co-operative has been set up to develop and promote Quality of Life (QoIL) Indicators that will provide a more complete and accurate picture of the state of Prince Edward Island: its people, plants, and animals and the land itself. Prince Edward Island QoIL indicators will be non-partisan, statistically valid, regularly reported, and based on the values held by Islanders. The project aims to promote broad public engagement and critical discussion on how best to measure the well-being of Islanders. The Co-operative is dedicated to ensuring that these measures of progress get the same policy attention that leaders, economists, experts, and journalists currently devote to tracking whether our economy is booming or shrinking.

The founding members of the co-operative represent a broad slate of Islanders from business, the public sector, academia, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations. Setting aside their professional and public personae, the members have in common a deep appreciation for Prince Edward Island and a commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of life it affords. We believe that by sharing this commitment we will attract many others to participate and begin a transformation in the way we see ourselves and measure our progress.

