

Volunteering offers valuable experience

by Heidi Riley

At the **Community Connector Volunteer Fair** held at UPEI, organizations that depend on the work of volunteers talked about the many ways volunteers can make a difference in our community.

Beach Grove Home, Prince Edward Home, and Sherwood Home are long-term care facilities which are home to about 265 residents. “Our volunteers make a very significant difference in the residents’ quality of life,” says **Jeff Cook**.

A variety of volunteer opportunities

“Opportunities are almost limitless,” says Jeff. “Volunteers read to residents, help with exercise and shopping, or simply socialize or go outside for a walk. Other helpful supports include assisting with eating and grooming, helping navigate the Internet, or teaching new skills.

“While there are various specific roles available to volunteers, we are very flexible and can develop new programs or activities based on volunteers’ interests and residents’ desires.”

The value of volunteering

“One-on-one interactions are so important,” says **Donna Sheehan**. “Many residents don’t have family close by and don’t get a lot of visits. It is nice for them to have someone there for support and friendship.

“People who start as volunteers gain valuable skills and experience, which can help them gain a future career in the healthcare system,” says Donna. “For some curriculums such as RCW and LPN training, the hours spent volunteering can be used to help meet program requirements.

“Long-term care is a great volunteer option,” says Jeff. “Not only can you experience and get an inside look at professions such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, nursing, social work, recreation therapy, geriatric medicine and dietetics, among many others, you get to connect with residents, learn, and make a difference.”

For more information on volunteering at these three facilities, contact **Jeff Cook** at jpcook@ihis.org or drop in to pick up a volunteer package.

For the full interview, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **Volunteer**.



More organizations looking for volunteers

Big Brothers Big Sisters - www.bbbspei.ca

Boys & Girls Club of Charlottetown - www.charlottetownbg.com

Chances Family Health Centre - www.chancesfamily.ca

Cystic Fibrosis Canada-PEI Chapter - Search **Cystic Fibrosis Canada-PEI** on **facebook**

Easy PEI - www.easypei.ca

Family Service PEI - www.fspei.ca

Heart & Stroke Foundation - www.heartandstroke.pe.ca

Junior Achievement - www.japei.org

PEI Family Violence Prevention Services - www.fvps.ca

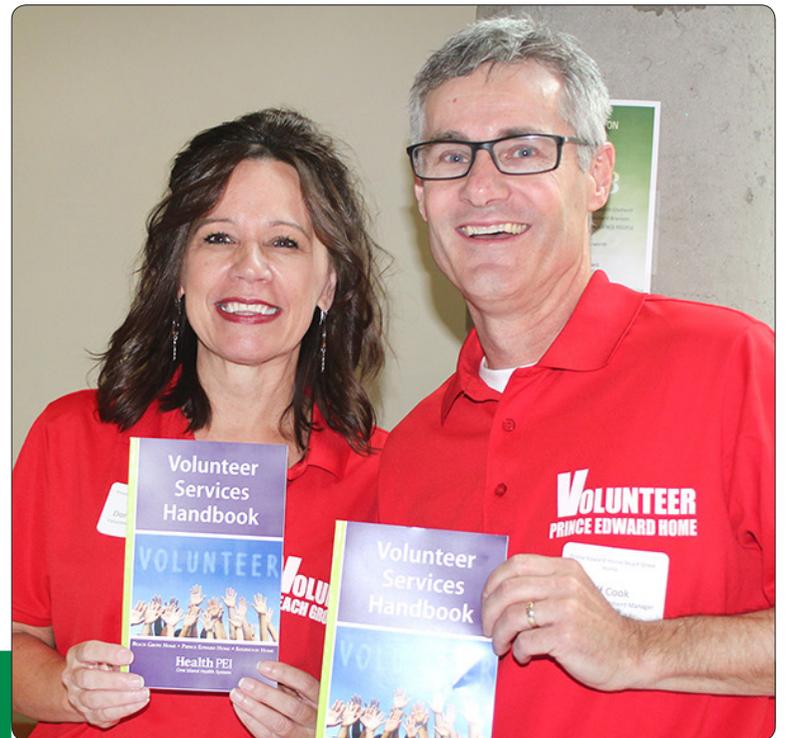
PEI Food Exchange - search **Food Exchange PEI** on **facebook**

PEI Humane Society - Apply online – search **PEIHS** on **facebook**

Scouts Canada PEI Council - www.scouts.ca

SpayAid PEI - www.spayaidpei.com

United Way PEI - www.peiunitedway.com



Donna Sheehan, Volunteer Program Assistant, and Jeff Cook, Recreation Department Manager.

Project advancing entrepreneurship across the Island

by Stacy Dunn

Since 2014, **Island Advance** has produced a series of videos, workshops, conferences, and more to promote and grow the PEI economy.

“We celebrate people who’ve taken the plunge to start businesses here and created employment for themselves and others,” Advisory Board Chair **Ron Keefe** says of the initiative, which is guided by volunteers who are retired, established, or aspiring entrepreneurs.

“Our steering committee, advisory board, and outside parties look at ways to entice and grow capital,” says Ron. “We intend to mobilize the private sector to lead initiatives which will have long-lasting effects and grow the Island economy. These initiatives will also help retain business-minded immigrants.”

Supporting others

Island Advance has partnered with Chambers of Commerce across PEI, Junior Achievement, PEI BioAlliance and other groups to advance entrepreneurship.

Last year, it co-hosted *Advancing Island Connections* with PEI Connectors. “Between 400 and 600 immigrants and Islanders networked at this event,” Ron says. “It helped immigrants get comfortable with the PEI business community and see what opportunities for investment are available here. The third-annual event was held in November in Charlottetown.

“We bring people together, and encourage them to share information,” says **Patricia Devine**, Project Manager with Island Advance. “We held symposiums last January and September on youth entrepreneurship, where 30 to 35 stakeholders attended.

“Some collaborations have happened as a result of these meetings, such as PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada partnering with the Young Millionaires Program to have 10 immigrant youth start a business. It’s win-win, creating future entrepreneurs and retaining immigrants in our community.

“Junior Achievement representatives met with people from Summerside’s Young Leaders Program, which pairs local businesses with youth. JA thought this mentoring program would help its own company program find recruits in Summerside.”



Ron Keefe, Island Advance Advisory Board Chair, meets with Madelyn Deveau, Island Advance Communications & Marketing Coordinator, left; and Patricia Devine, Island Advance Project Manager.

“We are shifting the way PEI looks at entrepreneurship by supporting public policy that enhances innovation,” Ron says. “Hopefully, it will increase our tax base and create more jobs.”

To view the entrepreneur videos, go to www.youtube.com and search **Island Advance**.

Visit www.islandadvance.ca

