

Entrepreneurs working on PEI in their chosen careers

by Stella Shepard

Creating your Path to Independence was the theme for the annual Entrepreneurship Forum hosted by The Rural Action Centre along with Community Business Development Corporation and Active Communities based in Montague. The event was held at the newly renovated Royal Canadian Legion in Souris.

The room was filled to capacity with people considering starting a business or expanding an existing business. Service providers focused on business development were in attendance.

There was also a panel of entrepreneurs who shared their stories of choosing to live and work on PEI.

Gretha Rose is the President and Executive Director of **Cellar Door Productions**, and she has led the way in PEI's television and film industry since the late 90s. She brought Hollywood to PEI with hard work and passion for the industry.

"To be successful, surround yourselves with good people who believe in you," Gretha told the audience. "Develop good partnerships with funders, be willing to work hard, and have passion for what you do. We can succeed and be proud, and we can fail and be proud. That is what makes us entrepreneurs. Failure should not limit us. We have to believe we are smart, capable, and strong enough.

"We grow from our challenges and successes, but we all need encouragement. We need forums to discuss our shared experiences, and we need champions and like-minded people. You have to find your own unique pathway that works for you, not just to survive but to thrive."



Submitted photo.

For more information about **Cellar Door Productions**, visit www.cellardoor.tv



Emily Carlaw: Freckles and Porcelain

"I'm from away, and I have vacationed on PEI since I was a kid," says **Emily**. "I was always amazed at how supportive Islanders are. That is why I moved here and started an antique and gift shop two summers ago in St. Peters Bay. I would not have had the courage to start a business if wasn't for community support."



For more information about **Freckles and Porcelain**, visit www.frecklesandporcelain.com



Brady McCloskey: Brady McCloskey's Photography

"About seven years ago, I began my year-round photography career," says **Brady**. "I also offer photography lessons. You can be an artist and entrepreneur at the same time and do well at it on PEI.

"When starting my business, one of the most helpful things I did was to go to Innovation PEI at Rural Action Centre in Souris for assistance and business guidance."



Submitted photo.

For more information about **Brady McCloskey's Photography**, visit www.bradymccloskey.com



Forum participant

Cameron Ross of Souris retired from a Paramedicine career and started a guided fly fishing tour business called **On the Fly PEI**. "It's important to attend business-related events like the Entrepreneurship Forum," says Cameron. "I secured new clients as a result of networking and finding out what is happening in my community. My clients are always looking for things to see and do while they are here.

Savannah Belsher-MacLean and Todd MacLean

shared their experiences. For the last 14 years, this creative, passionate entrepreneurial duo has owned and operated several cultural businesses on PEI. "A lot of the passion for what we do comes from wanting to work in the arts on PEI," says **Savannah**. "Living and working on PEI has been our goal, because it's where our families are."

"Ideas come to you for a reason," says **Todd**. "Follow up on your ideas and never hesitate to ask for help. We have a good tactic of wearing one hat at a time and focusing on each job we are doing."



For more information about **Savannah Belsher-MacLean and Todd MacLean**, visit www.hazelbrookhomestead.com

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Mike and Megan Cheverie: Souris Remedy's Rx & Seaside Medical Center

"I was working as a pharmacist in Halifax and Mike was working in construction," says **Megan**. "We wanted to start a family and live closer to our families living in the Souris area.

"Five years ago, we decided to move back home and open a pharmacy business. We built a medical clinic attached to the pharmacy and opened a drive-thru pharmacy. We just started a five-acre apple orchard business as well. We are happy to be home."



For more information about **Souris Remedy's Rx & Seaside Medical Center**, check their Facebook page.



Alan MacDonald: ANCO

"I grew up in Souris, finished high school, and got into the electrical trade in 1979," says **Alan**. "After working for other people, I took advantage of an opportunity to start my own electrical contracting company. To be successful, it took family support, hiring an accountant, and long work hours."

For more information about **ANCO**, contact **Alan MacDonald** at 902-583-2211.



"This forum helps me makes my clients' experience more memorable. I am blessed to live in such a unique part of the world and I enjoy sharing it with the people I meet."

For more information about **On The Fly PEI**, visit www.ontheflypei.ca or check Facebook.

