

# Your Community Learning Centre

- Jennie Hurwood

“It is a community organization that links the students of Metis Beach School to community members and community groups. This enhances students’ learning and their appreciation of the surrounding community as well as becoming a centre for lifelong learning,” explains Lynne Bruce, the Community Learning Centre (CLC) Coordinator for Metis Beach School.

Lynne started with the school last fall and feels she is now getting into her stride. “The CLC Coordinators at other schools tell me it usually takes a year to settle into the role,” she says. Although looking at the number projects driven by the CLC this year you wouldn’t know it. “Mr Mitchell [the Principal] and the teachers really support the initiative by applying for grants and taking on projects,” Lynne explains, “their involvement makes a big difference for the students.”

One of the biggest challenges Lynne faces as CLC Coordinator is that the majority of students ar-

rive by bus from towns up to an hour away from Métis-sur-Mer. Not only does this make the school day long for students, but after-school activities and parent involvement do not occur nearly as much as the school would like. This means that almost all activities organized through the CLC have to take place during normal school hours. For the students, this is a positive thing because it means that the curriculum is presented in imaginative and engaging ways. However, it is more difficult to involve parents and community members who work during the day.

The sports program is perhaps the best and longest-running example of how the CLC initiative has complemented the Metis Beach School curriculum. As a small school with no gymnasium, and no space for a sports playing field, they have come up with a number of creative solutions to provide the students with their weekly physical activity. The program is funded through grants and private donations. It recently allowed the

school to buy snowshoes for the students so that larger groups can be taken out for hikes in the winter months.

Whether snowshoeing across the fields in Métis-sur-Mer, cross-country skiing in Baie des Sables or swimming in Mont Joli, it is clear that community volunteers are vital to the success of the sports program. It is also an excellent opportunity for students and community members to get to know one another. Lynne is pleased to mention that the school counts at least ten regular volunteers from the community who ensure the success of the sports program, but more volunteers are always welcome.

Another “side effect” of the students living far from one another is that they have fewer opportunities to socialize with their school friends outside of school. This is an important aspect that can affect their wellbeing and that works against initiatives to retain English-speaking youth in the region. Happily, the school and the CLC recognize this and work together to organize a number of educational trips throughout the year. Last fall, Secondary students went to Parc de la Gaspésie for a three-day hiking, cultural-exchange and canoeing trip linked to the sports program. They visited the park again in January of this year for a ski trip. Soon, students from grades 5-6 and secondary 1-2 will be visiting the enrichment class of Alaqsit’w Giptu (meaning “the eagle will soar”), a Listuguj First Nations school, where they will be taking part in traditional activities thanks to a grant awarded by the CLC initiative (see p. 3 for more about the Initiative).

The CLC also works to bring students from Metis Beach School together with students from l’Envol school. The fact that Lynne also works at l’école l’Envol must surely help. At the start of April, the fifth annual “Walk into Spring” event saw students from both schools walking from l’Envol to the Town Hall, where a healthy snack awaited. This event was organized in collaboration with Heritage Lower Saint-Lawrence as part



At the start of April, community members of all ages turned out to join students from both Metis Beach School and l’École l’Envol for a 2.8 kilometer walk to the Town Hall where they shared a healthy snack.

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# Historic Collaboration

Word from the President

With this issue we are welcoming our new executive director, Mélanie Leblanc. No stranger to the organization, Mélanie joined us as our new ED in January and has hit the ground running. Many projects are on the go, applications completed, meetings held and strategic planning sessions on the horizon. Mélanie is a relatively new resident of Métis-sur-Mer: she and her family have been living in the town since 2012, and have built a new home last year. With her background in community development, education and non-profit management, she brings a valuable new perspective to the organization.

Community organizations require collaboration and collaborators in order to progress; Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence (HLSL) is no exception. Over the years, HLSL has amassed an impressive list of collaborators. Whether it be the *Ville de Métis-sur-Mer*, the *Agence de la santé et des services sociaux du Bas-Saint-Laurent* or the *Réseau Biblio du Bas-Saint-Laurent*, it is with the help of precious collaborators such as these that HLSL can improve and diversify its service base.

I wish to take this opportunity to tell you about an exciting new collaboration on the horizon: The PatER (*Patrimoine, Enseignement, Recherche* or “Heritage, Teaching and Research”) project of the *Université du Québec à Rimouski* is working with HLSL for the benefit of teachers, students, researchers and heritage enthusiasts. PatER has developed a structured and collaborative online database of diverse regional heritage resources. The database contains information on topics ranging from heritage buildings, historically significant objects and archeological sites, to organizations dedicated to promoting regional heritage. The resource is designed to also work as a tool to link regional heritage with Quebec curriculum for elementary and high school students. This will help foster the sense of belonging in our region’s youth.

Through this collaboration with PatER, our organization is able to share and promote the extensive collection of documents, photographs, clippings and research material it has assembled, through both donation and acquisition, since its foundation. Carefully organized and enthusiastically shared by our in house curator, Pamela Andersson, the collection is unique. It specifically covers the history of the Anglophone community of the region but also more broadly illustrates life in the area.

Linking to the university in Rimouski is just one of several ways in which HLSL is seeking to reach out to stakeholders throughout the region. With almost 50,000 residents, not only is Rimouski the regional administrative center, it is also a hub for science and learning, a large number of residents being associated with the university, hospital, CÉGEP and research institutions. Rimouski also has the largest number of English-speaking residents in the region. Over the next few years, building bridges to Rimouski and its population will allow HLSL to better serve our English speaking community.

In the past, we have successfully reached English-speaking residents of surrounding communities by sharing the history and heritage of our English speaking population through various projects. The theme of heritage has driven the organization since its foundation, and this year, we will be launching our Walk My Heritage tour. Assembled by the HLSL team (Pamela Andersson, Jennie Hurwood) and journalist Susan Woodfine, the project builds on the work of heritage pioneers, like Alan Smith of Métis-sur-Mer. Walk My Heritage is a new audio-guided walking tour that takes visitors from site to site, from story to story. It will offer historical insight on the growth and development of the community, and will bring to light the personal stories that make up its unique fabric. Watch for upcoming details of the official Walk My Heritage tour launch, which is planned for June.

*Alexander Reford*

President, Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence



Photo: Claude Morin

Continued from page 1

of the 5/30 Health and Wellness Challenge activities for the community and saw more than 120 people take part.

The Metis Beach School CLC is not only concerned with physical activities. The Kindergarten students from both schools will also be getting together regularly as part of a project called Read with Me. Lynne explains that the 12 Kindergarten students will be paired up with 12 senior community members to read and improve vocabulary in their respective mother tongues. The project is bilingual, intergenerational, and will take place three times per month from March until June, mostly at the Métis-sur-Mer Public Library.

The older students at Metis Beach School were given the opportunity to meet and work with Darrius Garret, one of the Freedom Writers. The students read his book and watched the film adaptation of the story, “they knew his character, they just hadn’t actually met him, so they were really excited about him visiting,” says Lynne. This unique opportunity was opened up to the community with an evening talk held at the Métis-sur-Mer Public Library at the end of March. (For more information about the event please see “Freedom Writer, Freedom Speaker” on pages 4-5.)

The key to the success of the CLC and to student success is community involvement. As the old adage goes: it takes a village to raise a child. It is for this reason that a Community Learning

## Your CLC Coordinator

Lynne Bruce may originally be from Toronto but she is no stranger to the area – her mother was born here and from a young age, she regularly visited her family in Métis-sur-Mer.

You may well wonder how an office manager and department head in a large, fast-paced, quota-driven, Toronto marketing company would wind up in Métis-sur-Mer and how she’s adjusting to the change in pace. “A little more than two years before I left Toronto I was in a serious car accident,” explains Lynne, “I couldn’t work for two years because of my injuries.”

She was just easing back into the world of work when she got a call from the Rimouski hospital to say that her father had three to five days to live. “I came right away. I packed two suits and maybe enough clothes for a week. I wasn’t expecting to stay,” she says. When she saw her dad at the hospital he was going into palliative care, but he came out of palliative care and lived another 16 months. Lynne explains that she was able to work part time and take care of her father: “I was here and I thought: ‘if I leave he will have had to go into a nursing home,’ and I just couldn’t do



that.” By the time her father passed away, Lynne found that she was at home in Métis-sur-Mer; she had become part of the community here.

Not only is Lynne the CLC coordinator for Metis Beach School, she also works at l'Envol school and she has thrown herself into community life: “I volunteer at this, I volunteer at that, I volunteer at the lunches to wash dishes, I’m on the Comité des Loisirs.”

So how did she make the transition from the big Ontarian city to the small Québécois town? “It didn’t seem like such a big transition. There were bigger things going on in my life and I felt really welcomed into the community here,” Lynne says, seeming very happy with the quality of life on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

Conversation will be organised in the coming months to evaluate the needs of the community, how the school and community can work better together, and how resources can be better shared for the good of everyone. “We really need community members to tell us their point of view,”

says Lynne, “we want to hear from everyone who cares about education, youth, and lifelong learning.” More information about how you can contribute will be distributed with the help of Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence.



## The CLC Initiative at a Glance

- A CLC, or Community Learning Centre, is an English school in Quebec with a community-minded outlook.
- The CLC initiative, organized through LEARN Quebec, aims to bring students from English schools in Quebec closer to their communities in order to enhance student success and preserve the vitality of English-speaking communities.
- CLC schools open activities and resources to the community to promote lifelong learning and relationships between youth and seniors in the community.
- The CLC initiative promotes Community-Based Service Learning (CBSL) as a method to engage students in both their studies and with their community. CBSL in schools uses the local community as a classroom learning resource, and allows student activities to be a potential resource for the community. Students address real community needs while learning curriculum material. The material becomes more relevant to the learners and a community need is fulfilled.
- Each CLC is unique as it adapts to the community it serves.
- 37 English schools in Quebec, including Metis Beach School, are part of the CLC initiative.
- CLC schools have CLC coordinators who make the link between the students, the school staff, parents, local organizations, community groups and community members. This is usually done through collaboration on particular projects.
- CLCs are currently funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Canada-Quebec Agreement for Minority Language Education and Second Language Instruction and le Secteur des services à la communauté anglophone et des affaires autochtones at the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

# Freedom Writer, Freedom Spe

On Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence invited the author Darius Garrett, a member of the original Freedom Writers class, to be a guest speaker at the Métis-sur-Mer public library as part of his Canadian book tour.

The Freedom Writers were a group of students from Long Beach, California, along with their teacher Erin Gruwell. Together, they wrote the non-fiction book *The Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World Around Them*. It is the basis of the 2007 movie *Freedom Writers*, starring Hilary Swank. *The Freedom Writers Diary* is made up of journal entries that Erin Gruwell asked all her students to write, about whatever was important to them, about their past, present and future.

Gruwell developed unique teaching techniques that helped her students connect with each other and with their own identity as youth living in the powder keg which was mid-1990s Los Angeles. To this day, the Freedom Writers Foun-

dation continues the work with exercises and approaches similar to those Gruwell used in the original class, inspiring “young, under-privileged students to pick up pens instead of guns”. It also tracks the progress of the original and continuing classes, including many who have gone on to share this message both at home and abroad.

The evening with Mr. Garrett started with a reading of the first chapter of the author’s first book, *Diary of a Freedom Writer* which, according to the author, gives us perspective about how he ended up in Ms. Gruwell’s class. The book is a personal account of Mr. Garrett’s youth including where he is from, his reality, growing up in a neighbourhood divided into gang territories, feeling worthless and being introduced to crime. These experiences culminated with homelessness at the age of 13 when his mother kicked him out for being involved with a gang.

It is after living on the streets for a few months that he met Erin Gruwell, the teacher who would come to change his life. About Ms. Gruwell, Mr. Garrett has only kind words: “She embraced me, she accepted me,” he says, “She wrote the forward to my book and I still have her on speed dial.” According to Mr. Garrett, Erin Gruwell made a conscious decision not to give up on him, to believe in him even though he had given up on himself.

Throughout the evening, Darius Garrett shared his life and his thoughts. He also enthusiastically answered questions and participated in the informal discussion that followed. He showed curiosity and a keen interest in the reality of living in Métis-sur-Mer. He underlined his belief in the importance of helping youth stay in school, saying: “knowledge and curiosity are two very powerful tools to get a good start in life.”

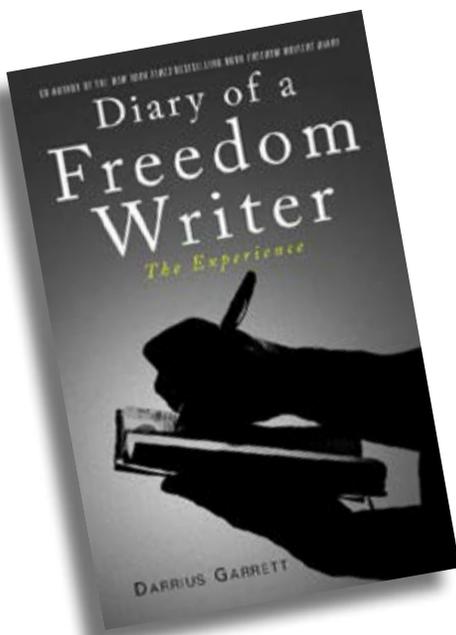
For Mr. Garrett, his life experiences help him connect to youth today, wherever they live and whatever they are going through: “There are similarities between all youth. Feelings of not being good enough and bullying are universal themes that so many of them struggle with, whether they live in Long Beach, CA or Métis-sur-Mer, QC.”

“Success is a person leaving their mark in the world by making it better for others. For that, you need to love people; you need compassion, not just talent”

Mr. Garrett uses a similar analogy with the story of Anne Frank, whom he refers to as an inspiration. “She didn’t live in my neighbourhood, or look like me, or listen to any of the same music, but there are similarities between what she experienced in the Second World War, and what I’ve gone through,” says Mr. Garrett, “Being secluded, struggling to survive in a war zone, hiding in fear for your life. These are the things we have in common. We were both involved in a war; I could have been a casualty too.”

Mr. Garrett, who was recently diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), admits that he has always struggled with mental health. It took a lot of courage for Mr. Garrett to ask for help as mental health problems are seen as something of a taboo for men in his family and in his neighbourhood. He explained that fear of judgment was the main obstacle: “Where I come from, admitting to struggling with mental health is always seen as a sign of weakness, especially for men. But one of the most important things I ever did was precisely to decide to talk about it, to get help.”

“I used to have panic attacks, and I developed a heart condition as a result of the stress I was under. Getting help for my PTSD became a life or death issue for me,” he adds, “It took a long time to finally decide to take medication for this but now that I have, my life has changed. I’m more in control and realize that everyone is different, unique. I’m glad to be who I am, PTSD and all.” Mr. Garrett states that finding the right person to talk to, like a psychiatrist, is crucial: “Not just anyone will be a good fit. You have to find the right person for you, which is what happened to me.”



Darius Garrett opened the evening by reading the first chapter of his book, *Diary of a Freedom Writer*.

- Mélanie Leblanc



Photo: Mélanie Leblanc

Community members of all ages turned out to meet Darrius Garrett (centre) and to hear him speak about perseverance, overcoming difficulties and how to make a difference in the world.

His message to youth is one of perseverance: “You can do what you want to do if you truly put your mind to it and really work hard for it. Things don’t come easily to all, and it takes practice and effort for most people to be successful at what it is they want to do.” Mr. Garrett believes success is measured not by the figure in your bank account - provided you are economically stable - but by what you do to help others, because the impact you have on others will last. “You can’t focus on just being good at something, you have to focus on being great, on being your own captain and always growing, improving,” he says.

Mr. Garrett spoke about leaving a legacy, or a positive impact on others. To him, “You benefit more from being a person of service than a person being serviced.” To the group who came to hear him, he revealed himself to be a kind, curious, generous man who has a genuine love of people.

“If you look at people who have made a difference in the world, money did not save their lives. Success is a person leaving their mark in the world by making it better for others. For that, you need to love people; you need compassion, not just talent.”

Darrius Garrett’s Book, *Diary of a Freedom Writer*, is available to borrow from the Métis-sur-Mer Public Library

For more information about the Freedom Writers and their outreach program in schools, visit: [freedomwritersfoundation.org](http://freedomwritersfoundation.org)

## Get reliable information about tough topics

## Youth News

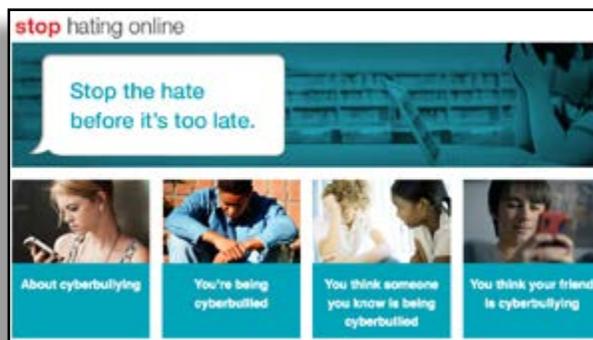
### Canada.ca/StopHatingOnline

You might call it drama, gossip or trolling; but whatever you call it, cyberbullying is serious. Cyberbullying is using online or electronic communications such as e-mail, text messages, instant messaging, chat rooms or social media sites to embarrass, humiliate, torment, threaten or harass someone else.

Cyberbullying is often more persistent than face-to-face bullying. As cyberbullying is delivered through electronic devices, the victim can be reached walking home from school, alone in their bedroom, or even on vacation.

Furthermore, because it can spread so quickly and to such a huge audience (particularly on social networking sites), cyberbullying has already involved a great number of teens, whether as the victim, the person who is bullying, the silent observer, or as someone who participates from the sidelines and becomes part of the problem.

Canada.ca/StopHatingOnline is a website for people of all ages but with a special section about cyberbullying for teenagers. Here you can find reliable information about what to do if you are the victim of cyberbullying, if you think someone is being cyberbullied or if you know someone who is involved in cyberbullying.



### Did you know?

8% of Canadian teens say they have been victims of bullying on social networking sites

35% of Canadian teens with a social network profile have seen mean or inappropriate comments online about someone they know

14% say they have seen mean or inappropriate comments about themselves on social networks

18% of Canadian parents say they have a child who has experienced cyberbullying

31% say they know a child in their community who has experienced cyberbullying

90% of Canadians would make it illegal to use electronic means to “coerce, intimidate, harass or cause other substantial emotional distress.”

# Spontaneous Creativity

- Jennie Hurwood



“We are like mosaics of cultural influences, made up of the places we’ve visited and the people we’ve met. There are no straight lines,” says Lisan Chng, mosaic artist and creator of the MosaicJam projects in Rimouski.

The idea behind MosaicJam has been developing gradually over the past four years. In 2010 Lisan, a native of Singapore, worked with a group of Chinese students to create a mosaic for an exhibition. She says that it was during this project that she discovered how much she enjoyed sharing her passion in a practical way.

The following year Lisan approached *Accueil et integration B.S.L.* (AIBSL) to create a project bringing together members of the immigrant population of Rimouski to create a mosaic that would be displayed at the Rimouski Intercultural Festival. However, the result was far more than just a beautiful mosaic: the project brought people of diverse cultures and languages together to achieve a common vision, “that was what really launched me into MosaicJam,” explains Lisan.

The 2012 project, called “Tree of Life”, brought together 12 immigrant women over a period of 12 weeks for regular workshops and work sessions, at the end of which lasting friendships had formed. The depth of the communication surprised Lisan as in the group there were people who only spoke English, people who only spoke French, people who spoke both English and French and people who were multilingual but whose common language with others in the

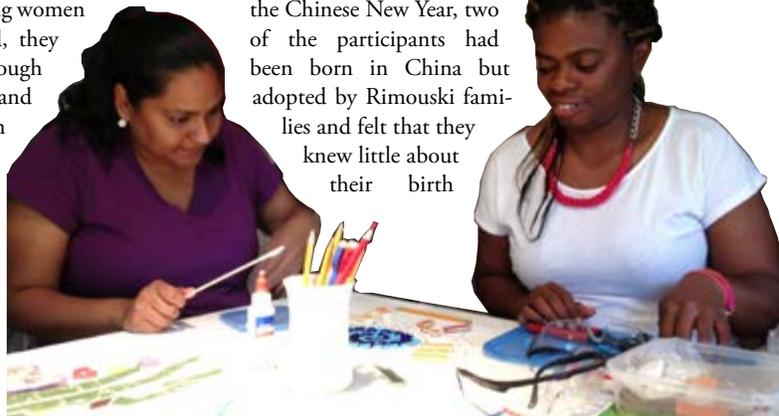
group was either English or French. “Language was not even an issue,” says Lisan, “we were creating art and when there’s work to be done, people just dive into it.”

Lisan tells of two participants in particular who overcame what might otherwise be seen as a language barrier. During the second collaboration with AIBSL, the “Treasures of the Ocean” project in 2013, an English-speaking participant from Trinidad and Tobago partnered with a newly arrived French-speaker from Gabon. “They spoke little of the other’s language when the project started but they gravitated towards one another, seeing an additional learning opportunity present itself,” Lisan explains. As well as creating a work of art, the sessions became a language exchange and a lasting friendship was formed. “I found it really great that the project brought these young women together. After it finished, they stayed close and it was through the woman from Trinidad and Tobago that the woman from Gabon found a new job in Rimouski.”

The nature of the project, in which each participant created a ceramic cultural symbol to be incorporated into the mosaic, led to the participants discussing their choices and what they meant to them.

“Through the creative process, we got to know each other on an intimate level,” explains Lisan. In planning the project Lisan consciously created space for these deeper discussions to occur: “I realised that although these people have a lot of similar experiences, they didn’t have a common meeting place where they could get to know each other. The project created that space.” Each work session began with some time to share thoughts and feelings about the project, leading naturally into discussions of identity as the participants chose how they represented themselves in the mosaic.

This “safe space” for cultural and identity discussions has become a signature element of the MosaicJam process. In Lisan’s most recently completed project, creating pieces for an exhibition for the Chinese New Year, two of the participants had been born in China but adopted by Rimouski families and felt that they knew little about their birth



*A language exchange through art: a French-speaker and an English-speaker teamed up to create together and learn each other’s native tongue.*



Opposite: *Tree of Life* - intercultural mosaic project that brought together 14 immigrant women to express their cultural roots  
 Above: Chinese New Year 2014 Exhibition group

culture. Lisan explains: "Sometimes it is hard to say who you are. For these young women to say: 'I'm adopted, I'm Chinese and I'm Québécoise' it was the realisation and freedom to say 'and'." Lisan is keen to note, however, that this project was open to anyone interested in Chinese culture and a number of native Rimouskois took part, not only in the creation of the mosaics but also in the discussions of identity: "It doesn't matter how old you are, how long you've lived in the same place, or what language you speak, given the opportunity, everyone can question their identity because no one fits into a neat little box."

The exhibition was opened in February at the *Université de Québec à Rimouski* (UQAR) and is now on display at UQAR in Lévis until the end of May. Lisan won a bursary for the project, awarded by *Culture pour tous* under their Cultural Mediation program which promotes the "process of building bridges between the cultural and social realms." Lisan explains that up to now, all MosaicJam's projects have been grant-funded and have been in collaboration with a particular partner. So far, for the creation and exposition of the projects she has worked with AIBSL, the *Ville de Rimouski*, schools, the *Association des étudiants et chercheurs chinois* (AECC) and the *Centre culturel oriental* (CCO).

She explains that she is now looking to formalise MosaicJam as a social enterprise that will combine workshops and teaching with community projects, bringing people together through art. As for the name, Lisan explains: "I am an immigrant with a multicultural background so I would like MosaicJam to bring people together from different backgrounds, to be inspired by others in the group and to spontaneously create - like when musicians with different instruments or styles improvise or 'jam' together."

Lisan's next project will take her out of the Bas-Saint-Laurent and back to her native Singapore

"Language was not even an issue [...] when there's work to be done, people just dive into it"

for three months as she embarks on her most ambitious mosaic project yet: "Over twelve weeks, 300 people will contribute towards a 120 square foot mural." The project, called "Project Hope", is for a hospital and will involve hospital staff, patients, their families, volunteers, students and members of the public. Fifty participants will be what Lisan calls "core participants" who will share their personal stories of hope and will be trained to show drop-in participants the basic techniques. It has taken a year to plan, but for Lisan it was vital to take this time to create the structure that would not only get the work done but once again create the space for discussion and exchange.

An intergenerational and intercultural project is lined up for her return to Rimouski. The project will bring together adopted youth from different countries and partner them with an adult from their country of origin. The idea behind this project is for the youth to learn about the country where they were born from someone who grew up there. The hope is that this will open up discussions around identity and culture while the participants create works of art which will be more meaningful as a result of the conversations.

While MosaicJam projects have particularly worked with the immigrant community, Lisan hopes that the project will grow and she would like the opportunity to bring other groups of people together: "I am definitely interested in creating a project that works to bridge the local English-speaking communities to the wider French-speaking community. I feel that art is the perfect medium for this because it speaks to you without words."

You can follow the progress of Project Hope and future MosaicJam projects on the new website and Facebook page:

[www.mosaicjam.com](http://www.mosaicjam.com)  
[www.facebook.com/MosaicJam](http://www.facebook.com/MosaicJam)

"We are like mosaics of cultural influences, made up of the places we've visited and the people we've met, there are no straight lines"



Three finished pieces from the Chinese New Year 2014 Exhibition project

# Desjardins Youth Work Experience Program

*A chance for youth to break into your community's the job market and take on new responsibilities!*

*A chance for employers to offer youth a valuable work experience in their community!*

This program is for you if:

You are 14-18 years old	You are an employer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are a member of a caisse or would like to be</li> <li>You are looking for your first real job</li> <li>You want to get involved in your community</li> <li>You want to learn something new and expand your skills</li> <li>You want to become more financially independent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your organization is a member of a participating caisse</li> <li>You run a business or a community organization</li> <li>You need extra help during the summer months</li> <li>You can offer a stimulating and positive work environment</li> <li>You are interested in helping youth develop their skills</li> </ul>

10 years ago, Desjardins got together with local businesses and community organizations to create the Desjardins Youth Work Experience program in order to offer students a unique opportunity to get their first summer job. The program was created to help young people prepare to enter the job market in a positive way, giving them a chance to acquire new skills by allowing them:

- A rewarding first work experience or first stimulating experience in the job market in their community
- To learn basic job search techniques

The program also:

- Focuses on informing young people about potential career paths and encouraging them to pursue their studies
- Gives young people a sense of belonging to their region and prevents an eventual exodus
- Promotes networking between young people and local businesses or community organizations
- Contributes to the development of businesses and organizations by helping them hire summer students
- Supports non-profit organizations
- Allows young people to enjoy a rewarding experience as members of their community

There are two components to the program:

**The Learning component**, enabling 14 year olds to establish a first contact with the job market. Participants become volunteers in local community organizations and receive a \$500 bursary when they complete an 80-hour internship throughout the summer.

**The Experience component** enables 15-18 year olds to acquire a first significant summer work experience (about 180 hours of work over 5-6 weeks).

This initiative offers students a work learning opportunity, and financially supports employers so that they may offer significant summer work experience to local youth.

Students and employers are invited to register with their local CJE from April to June. Desjardins Youth Work Experience is offered in participating Desjardins caisses throughout the region.

Territory	Contact info	Information	Deadlines
MRC Rimouski-Neigette	CJE Rimouski-Neigette Joanie Dubé 418-722-8102 # 234 www.cjerimouskineigette.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35 jobs</li> <li>• 15h/week OR 30h/week for 6 weeks</li> <li>• 15-18 year olds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline: April 17th</li> <li>• Registration form is on Website</li> <li>• May 3rd: job search workshop</li> </ul>
MRC de La Mitis	CJE de La Mitis Gervais Lévesque 418-775-6440 www.cjemitis.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually about 8-15 jobs</li> <li>• 30h/week for 6 weeks</li> <li>• 15-18 year olds</li> <li>• Students are interviewed then matched with employers related to their career interest fields</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline for both employers and youth: early June</li> </ul>
MRC de la Matanie	CJE de Matane Claudie Fillion 418-566-6749 #207 www.cjematane.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of jobs to be confirmed</li> <li>• Both components of the program should be offered</li> <li>• 14-18 year olds can register</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration on waiting list in April-May for both employers and youth</li> </ul>
MRC Les Basques	CJE Trois-Pistoles Marie-Claude Côté 418-851-1877 #225 www.cjerdlb.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 jobs</li> <li>• 30-35h/week for 5 weeks</li> <li>• All caisses except St-Éloi participate</li> <li>• 15-18 year olds can register</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline: April 23rd</li> <li>• May 3rd: job search workshop</li> </ul>
MRC Rivière-du-Loup	CJE Rivière-du-Loup Marie-Ève Fillion 418-867-4992 #123 www.cjerdlb.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unknown number of jobs</li> <li>• 30-35h/week for 5 weeks</li> <li>• 15-18 year olds can register</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline: April 23rd</li> <li>• May 3rd: job search workshop</li> </ul>
MRC Kamouraska	Projektion 16-35 Maryse Pelletier 418-492-9127 # 103 www.projektion16-35.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 jobs</li> <li>• 180 hours over 6-8 weeks</li> <li>• 15-18 year olds</li> </ul> <p>St-Pascal, St-Bruno, St-Philippe-de-Néri, St-Denis, St-Germain, Kamouraska and St-André</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration deadline: April 30th</li> <li>• Registration form is on Website</li> <li>• May 7th: job search workshop</li> </ul>



# Caring for Caregivers

It is believed that there are at least 300,000 family caregivers who provide support and care for senior citizens suffering from a loss of autonomy or requiring specific and continuing care over an extended period of time in the province of Quebec. As the population of the province is aging, this number is expected to increase. The exact number of family caregivers is difficult to verify, as many do not seek external support. Furthermore, this statistic from *L'Appui pour les proches aidants* does not include figures for caregivers of people in other situations, such as young people with chronic illnesses or disabilities. While there are many organisations throughout the province offering services for caregivers, in English as well as French, it seems that the information is not reaching everyone who would benefit from such support.

Earlier this year, Heritage Lower Saint-Lawrence invited community members to attend a free videoconference at the Métis-sur-Mer public library as part of the Community Health Education Program (CHEP). The interactive session titled "Who cares for the caregivers?" aimed to increase awareness about the experience of family caregivers and the fact that they make an important contributions both economically and socially, but often at the expense of their own health and well being. The session was well received and it was felt that the information merited being distributed more extensively.

Who are family caregivers?

Francine Ducharme, the Chair of *Desjardins Research in Nursing Care for Seniors and Their Families* and a member of the *Institut universitaire de gériatrie de Montréal* explains: "Being a caregiver simply means ensuring the well-being and quality of life of a loved one who needs support." However, the term "family caregivers" (also "natural caregivers") refers specifically to people who devote a large amount of their time, unpaid, to provide care to or support for a person close to them. Without this support, the care receiver would not be able to remain in their home.

Caregivers can be parents, siblings, children of all ages, grandchildren, grandparents, friends, or neighbours. They may be responsible for a multitude of tasks, depending on the needs of the care receiver. Usually tasks will include household chores, preparing meals, and providing emotional support. Frequently the caregivers will assist with finance management and in many cases they will also administer and coordinate health and hygiene care.

Why do we need to pay attention to caregivers?

Most family caregivers do not have formal training and the emotional burden of seeing a loved one lose their autonomy coupled with being responsible for their welfare can become overwhelming. Furthermore the time and energy devoted to caregiving will often affect the relationships, the work, the finances, the social life and the health of the caregiver. The obligations that caregivers take on can become a source of stress and lead to various psychological and physical problems. Caregivers often suffer from chronic headaches, sleep disorders, anxiety, irritability, exhaustion, or even depression.

"Caregivers who are unable to tend to their own wellbeing may impact their own health, limit the effectiveness of the help they can provide to relatives and increase costs to the health and social service systems," says Ella Amir, Executive Director of caregiver-support organization AMI Quebec. "To reduce the risks and enhance the benefits caregiving can provide to the caregiver and care recipient, adequate supports are vital."

Where can caregivers get support?

The importance of caregivers in our society is recognised by a number of community and non-profit organizations that offer support throughout the province. As many caregivers live in rural and isolated communities, a number of these services can be accessed by telephone or online.

The Caregiver Support Centre of CSSS Cavendish operates Care-ring Voice: a free, bilingual and confidential program that connects caregivers and families to information and support through the use of tele-learning. The program provides access to workshops by telephone on a range of topics as well as allowing caregivers to have the opportunity to learn from health-care professionals (who lead the workshops) and share with others in similar situations.

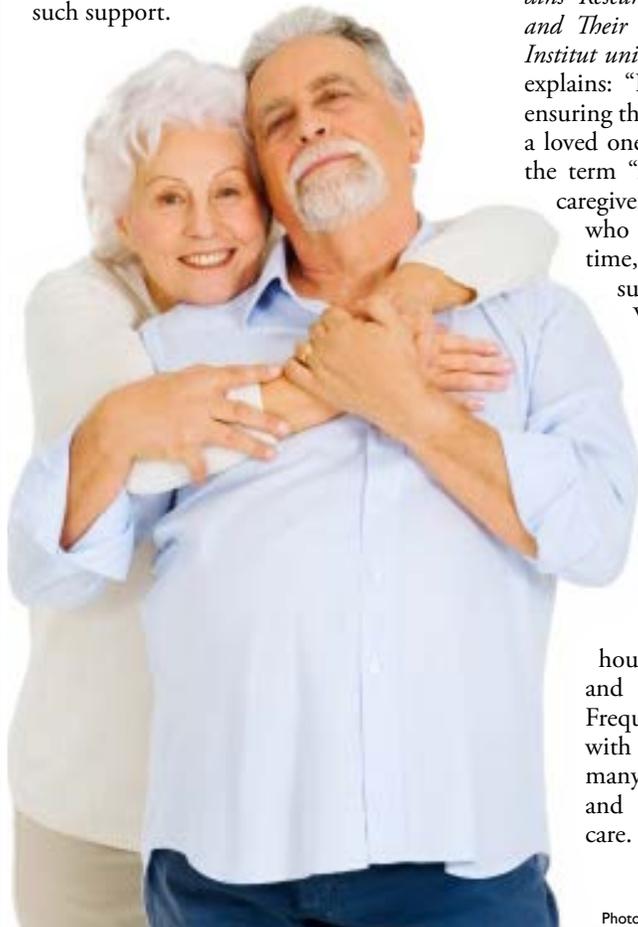


Photo: By Ambro from freedigitalphotos.net

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*Continued from page 9*

Please see the Distance Support & Learning schedule below for information on upcoming CSSS Cavandish Caregiver Support Centre sessions. Previous sessions can be listened to online at [www.caringvoice.com/tele-podcasts.php](http://www.caringvoice.com/tele-podcasts.php)

For more information or to register for a session, call **1-866-396-2433** or consult the website at [www.caringvoice.com](http://www.caringvoice.com)

The Info-Social service offered as part of Info-Santé offers free and confidential support for caregivers by telephone. This service is available 24/7 by dialing 811-2. Please see below for further details.

There are also a number of websites dedicated to caregiver support, including government and public health agency documents available to download for free. Here are five online resources that provide practical tips about managing stress and finding support:

1. Public Health Agency of Canada:  
*Self-Care for Caregivers*  
[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/oes-bsu-02/caregvr-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/oes-bsu-02/caregvr-eng.php)

2. Family Caregivers' Network Society:  
*Information Package for Family Caregivers*  
[www.fcns-caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/caregiver-information-package.pdf](http://www.fcns-caregiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/caregiver-information-package.pdf)
3. Caregiver-connect.ca: *Taking Care of You*  
[www.von.ca/en/caregiver-connect/caregiving\\_resources/taking\\_care\\_of\\_you.aspx](http://www.von.ca/en/caregiver-connect/caregiving_resources/taking_care_of_you.aspx)
4. The Family Caregiver: *Your Health*  
[www.thefamilycaregiver.com/quebec/caregiving/your\\_health.php](http://www.thefamilycaregiver.com/quebec/caregiving/your_health.php)
5. Family Caregiver Alliance:  
*Taking Care of YOU - Self-Care for Family Caregivers*  
[www.caregiver.org/taking-care-you-self-care-family-caregivers](http://www.caregiver.org/taking-care-you-self-care-family-caregivers)

If you do not have Internet access in your home, public libraries can provide this service. In Métis-sur-Mer the public library has a computer that can be used for free by members and the library volunteers are happy to assist you as necessary.

# Distance Support & Learning

## 24/7 Help: Info-Social and Info-Santé

**Info-Social**, the social and counselling telephone service offered by Info-Santé, is now available in the Lower Saint Lawrence 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Info-Social can help you with problems such as stress, anxiety, depression, grief, violence, heart-break, drugs and alcohol, relationship issues, parent/child relationships, sexuality, etc. The line also offers specialist help for caregivers including a reference service and support.

In less than 4 minutes and without leaving your home, you will be connected to a social worker who listens to you and help you access any other services you might need. Simply dial 811 and select option 2 for Info-Social. For English service, dial 9 as soon as the system picks up.

**Both Info-Social and Info-Santé are offered in English and French. The service is free and confidential. Everyone living in Quebec can call Info-Santé for themselves, their close family, or anyone they are close to.**

**Info Social 811-2  
Info Santé 811**

**Wednesday, April 23, 7 p.m.**

### **So You Have a Mental Illness, but you can still have a life, and a good one, Round Table**

This roundtable with Moira Edwards, nurse and psycho-therapist, will cover coping skills, resilience, and how to live well despite an illness.

Hosted by AMI Quebec. You can attend Roundtable Discussions by contacting your local Community Learning Centre at Metis Beach School

**Must register in advance! Call 1-866-396-2433**

**Wednesday, April 30, 12 p.m.**

### **End-of-life Quality Care for people with Alzheimer's and Related Diseases. Telephone-conference**

Will guide caregivers towards the best possible resources for themselves and the person being cared for.

Hosted by Alzheimer Society Montreal

**Register by calling 1-866-396-2433**

**Wednesday, May 21, 7 p.m.**

### **Living in the Moment: Improve Your Life With Mindfulness and Meditation Telephone-workshop**

Mindfulness and Meditation are powerful techniques proven to help people cope with a variety of mental health issues.

Hosted by AMI Quebec

**Register by calling 1-866-396-2433**

# Calendar of Events

**Tuesday, April 22, 12 noon**

## Senior's Hot Lunch

Easter Lunch and Hotels exhibition

\$8, Information and reservations: Linda 418.936.3431

**Metis Beach Town Hall, 370 Beach**

**Monday, April 28, 5 p.m.**

## Tensions and Conflicts Exhibit

Paintings by the graduating class of Metis Beach School. Refreshments will be served. Free entry, Everyone welcome!

The exhibit will be on display until the end of May.

Information: 418.936.3231 or 418.936.3239

**Métis-sur-Mer Public Library, 162 rue Principale**

**Saturday, May 17**

## Café sur mer Opening

Open weekends, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Open daily from June 21.

Info: 418.936.3936

**160 rue Principale, Métis-sur-Mer**

**Wednesday, May 21, 7:30 p.m.**

## My Prairie Home

Documentary musical about the singer Rae Spoon.

Original English-language version with French subtitles.

Presented by Paraloeil. Info: 418.725.1750

**Coopérative Paradis, 274 rue Michaud, Rimouski**

Join our mailing list to get activity updates via email: [info@heritagelsl.ca](mailto:info@heritagelsl.ca)

## Ongoing Events

**Tuesdays until April 22, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

### Seniors' Wellness Days in Métis-sur-Mer

An initiative to promote health at all ages in our community!

Information and carpooling: 418.936.3239

**Centre des loisirs, 10 rue de l'Église, Métis-sur-Mer**

**April 13 to 26, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

### Art Exhibit "À travers les saisons !"

Paintings by Baie-des-Sables artist Nico (Nicole Ratté)

The exhibition opening is on April 13 at 2 p.m.

**La Galerie d'art Caisse Desjardins de Rimouski de l'UQAR, 300, allée des Ursulines**

## Regular Events

**Every Monday, 5 to 7 p.m.**

### English Conversation "5 à 7"

Relaxed and friendly atmosphere, everyone welcome.

**Pub St-Barnabé,**

**50, rue Saint-Germain Est, Rimouski**

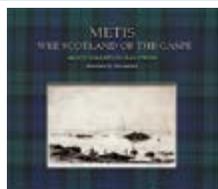
**First showing, every Thursday and Sunday evening**

### Original English-language versions of current blockbusters at Cinéma Lido, Rimouski

See [www.lidorimouski.com/affiche](http://www.lidorimouski.com/affiche) for upcoming titles and times

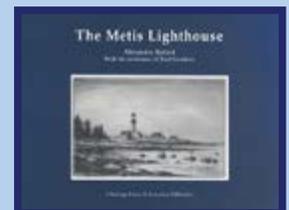
**92, 2e rue Ouest, Rimouski 418 722 LIDO (5436)**

## Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence Bookshop



Alice Sharples Baldwin's classic book on Métis history Available in English: *Metis, Wee Scotland of the Gaspé* and French: *Métis, un brin d'Écosse en Gaspésie* \$10

Written by Alexander Reford with the assistance of Paul Gendron, grandson of lighthouse keeper Octave Gendron, *The Metis Lighthouse* details the story of the lighthouse and profiles the lighthouse keepers who manned it for more than a century. Also available in French. \$10



Available at the HLSL office: **160a rue Principale, Métis-sur-Mer**. To receive a copy by mail or for more information, please contact Pamela Andersson at [pandersson@heritagelsl.ca](mailto:pandersson@heritagelsl.ca) or on **418 936 3239**

## Last word...

## Student Job Offer

It has been a year of transitions for Heritage Lower Saint-Lawrence and it is with great enthusiasm that I joined the team last January. With an impending relocation of our resource center/library and all of our offices to a single, bigger, brighter building in Métis-sur-Mer, HLSL is planning on reorganising its services and all of its documentation this summer. Also this summer, the launch of our very first audio walking tour of Metis-sur-Mer called Walk My Heritage, and a partnership with Metis Beach School to offer summer tours of the Anne Frank House exhibit, direct from Amsterdam.

To help the organisation better meet the new challenges ahead, HLSL is offering two summer employment opportunities for students: **Assistant Project Manager (Library / Archives)** and **Cultural/Heritage Project Assistant**.

We would like to hear from you if:

- You are Anglophone, or fluent in English but would like to improve your English skills
- You are planning to be a full-time student in the fall
- You want to build your work experience in a positive environment.
- For the full job descriptions please consult the HLSL website or contact Melanie Leblanc

Email: [mleblanc@heritagelsl.ca](mailto:mleblanc@heritagelsl.ca)

Phone: 418.936.3239

TOLL FREE: 1 855.936.3239

## Our Organization

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 Kathy Dodson . . . . . Vice President  
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 Jennie Hurwood. . . . . Communications Coordinator  
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### Contact Information

**Telephone: 418.936.3239**  
**Office: 160a rue Principale,**  
**Métis-sur-Mer, G0J 1S0**

[www.heritagelsl.ca](http://www.heritagelsl.ca)

**Find us on Facebook:**  
**Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence**



If you know of interesting activities coming up or have ideas for our newsletter, please email: [info@heritagelsl.ca](mailto:info@heritagelsl.ca)

If you would like to help Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence to be more environmentally friendly by receiving your copy of the newsletter electronically, please email [info@heritagelsl.ca](mailto:info@heritagelsl.ca)

**HERITAGE**  
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- I would like to donate books, CDs or DVDs to the Library   
 I would like to make a contribution of \$25  \$50  \$100  other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 I would like to receive the Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence newsletter by e-mail  mail   
 I would like to receive all Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence publications and notifications by e-mail

Please return to Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence, 160a, rue Principale, Métis-sur-Mer, G0J 1S0 - Thank you