

CURRENTS

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC

WINTER 2011, Vol. 11, No. 1

Opportunity Knocks

Work term leads to unique grad experience

Winning Touch

Memoir takes first place in writing contest

A World Apart

Learning about learning in South Africa

JUST DOING IT

TNR students use their skills for real-world results



Letter from the Editor

I've been thinking a lot about circles lately.

In this edition of Currents you'll find a few stories that touch on that theme – about people whose lives have come full-circle.

For me, becoming editor of Currents is such a story.

Although I've always been a Newfoundlander (born and raised in Gander and Glovertown), it's been more than 20 years since I've been able to call myself a resident of the province. Now that I'm home, in many ways it feels like I never left.

The day I decided to enrol in the Journalism program (at what was then Western Community College) was the day I began drawing my career circle.

I had been drifting aimlessly through my post-secondary studies at university, not quite sure of what I wanted to do with my life, but knowing that it would somehow involve writing. Here in Stephenville I learned the skills I needed to build the foundation of a 20-year career as a reporter, broadcaster, editor and now, communications professional.

In the meantime, my personal life took me across the country as well. In my travels I've learned a lot about human nature and I've found that not everyone yearns to return to their roots as Newfoundlanders and Labradorians do. But for me, the pull has always been strong, so when the opportunity to return to CNA was presented, it seemed a natural decision.

Now that I'm here, one circle is complete, but there are others in my life that are still waiting to be drawn. I'm looking forward to picking up my pencil and getting started.

Gina MacArthur

Contents

FROM THE COVER

A World Apart

Learning about Learning 6

Just doing it

Learning by doing 11

Opportunity Knocks

Experiencing Qatar. 18

Winning Touch

A winning family reunion 20

Stitching together a long career. 1

Industry Day broadens college students' experience ... 2

The many faces of Paul Tilley 4

The first love is the deepest 8

With friends like these. 10

GIS instructor embraces life on Canada's 'other coast'. 15

A lifetime of service ...and he's not done yet. 16

Qatar Project Office and CNA-Q news 17

An exhibit of confidence 22

Faculty and Staff Appeal gathers steam. 23

In case you missed it. 24

Chocolate truffles 25

Cover photo: Adventure Tourism Instructor Jeff Martin takes a break while hiking through the Lewis Hills on Newfoundland's west coast.

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STITCHING TOGETHER

By Pamela Sheppard

A LONG CAREER

Emily Foster reflects on 30 years in NL college system

When you can't find Emily Foster running up and down her campus hallways and solving problems, you can find her at home sewing, making wine with her husband, curling up with a good book, or volunteering in the community she has come to love. She has the most endearing appreciation for the small things in life and a humbling outlook on what family and friends really mean in her very busy life.

When Emily arrived at the doorstep of the Baie Verte District Vocational School, it wasn't what it is today. It was 1978, and she had never been to Newfoundland before. At the time she was quite content amongst the green grass fields of Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley. However, equipped with her brand new Home Economics degree from Acadia University, she was ready for an adventure.

Emily started as the pre-vocational instructor for foods, nutrition, sewing, crafts and textiles. She had students from the area high schools who came once a week to finish credits. On average, she had 100 students a year on top of the 100 pre-employment students attending the campus. But when the program she was instructing was cancelled, Foster was given another opportunity.

"The pre-vocational program was cancelled in the early 1990s but I was fortunate to have a degree behind me so I was 'grandfathered in' and deemed qualified to teach related academics to the trades students. Later in the nineties, I was on the Total Quality Management team for Central College. We did intensive training with the National Quality Academy and then conducted in-service sessions with all levels of our college personnel. It was a very lengthy process but interesting at the same time."

Over the course of her career, Emily has been involved in many projects within the campus. She has seen the name of the campus change from Baie Verte District Vocational School to Central Newfoundland Community College, then to Central Regional to the current College of the North Atlantic.

Through all of those name changes, she has remained

steadfast in her career with the college system. Her main goal is to help students learn; in any aspect. She believes that the value of education can be as simple as learning basic sewing skills or completing an Industrial Mechanic program. It doesn't matter what education one receives but that they receive it and do their best is most important.

"Over the course of my career I have taught in Continuing Education, acted as a coordinator, taught basic sewing on contract with Human Resources Labour and Employment, and spent some time in Adult Basic Education.

"I have also been involved in leadership training within the college and worked with the Baie Verte and Area Development Association on a project in the fall of 1988 to winter of 1989 to train people to make sealskin garments and fur coats."

Through all that, Emily has remained at College of the North Atlantic and in 2006 she was appointed to the position of Campus Administrator for the Baie Verte campus. She says that

although her campus has its challenges, staff continue to meet them with hard work, and strive to do their part for sustaining their rural area, which includes 21 communities on the peninsula and 22 more in the Green Bay region.

"As for the direction of the campus, we want to enhance our programming with some contracts and continue to play a role in sustaining the region. We hope to reach a wider demographic as our numbers of young people decline.

"We are a very community-oriented campus. We provide space for community groups to meet, we partner with the Family Resource Centre and are currently working on some new campus initiatives that will hopefully involve some new training opportunities within the community."

Emily says she has had a very satisfying career in the Newfoundland and Labrador college system and isn't ready to stop yet. She will continue doing great things for her campus for as long as she can with hopes of bringing an opportunity-filled future. *~*



INDUSTRY

broadens college students' experience

On November 22, thirty Architectural Engineering and Industrial Construction Electrician students from College of the North Atlantic's Ridge Road and Seal Cove campuses attended Newfoundland and Labrador's first Industry Day in St. John's.

Industry Day was created to help enhance students' knowledge of what it's like to work in their respective field once they graduate.

For students, learning skills in the classroom and actually being able to

"I think that this kind of day opens up the idea that College of the North Atlantic has multitudes of technology programs and that there's different types of students who will also be recourse for any construction company. It just reminds them that there are lots of options there when they do the recruiting."

It wasn't only an important day for Tapper, it was an important day for everyone involved.

"The day showed the students the

do it with because there's so many different fields that it's kind of hard to get in the one that you know you want. It's definitely important for students to see that what we're learning in the books is actually being done right now."

Roberts' classmate Robert Miller was pleased with the overall outcome of the event and feels his expectations were met. Needless to say he didn't walk away empty handed.

"Industry Day was important to me as

"They got the chance to try it out and at the same time maybe learn some things they wouldn't get in the classroom..."

implement those skills in the working environment are two very different aspects of the game. The day was a learning curve that will remain appreciated by many, if not all the students who took part in the day.

"I came up with the concept for industry day," said Gina Tapper, president of Hampton Holdings. "The idea came out of an advisory committee meeting where we were trying to find ways to interest students in coming into the construction industry and to open their eyes to the opportunities in Newfoundland for the students."

Tapper feels that Newfoundland and Labrador has been losing far too many graduates to out of province employers.

"There's a great opportunity for the day to turn out to be a very long interview for the students and the employers. It's good to get them out and introduce them to the business to see if they're interested," said Tapper.

safety requirements that are required," said Frank Collins, chair of the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association. It's a good day to just see what it's like to get out and work in the real environment and just to get the students introduced to everything and get them comfortable with it."

The temperature may have been a low -5 C, but students' hearts and spirits were held high with pride as the day progressed and they finally got down to the grit of their hard work.

For third-year Architectural Engineering Technology student Cassandra Roberts, the day delivered what it promised.

"To me it gives us a certain appeal to what we're going to embark upon when we leave the college," said Roberts. "It's so important for students to see this because it really determines what happens, whether this is what you really want to do or not."

"The construction industry is very hard to

a student," he said. "It was a chance to see how the industry functioned and how the different groups of contractors and sub-contractors were related to each other during the construction phase."

First year Construction Electrician student Melissa Rockwood had been working closely with her foreman Andrew Morrissey all day at the Rona development site. She feels her day turned into a great learning experience. No time was wasted.

"I learned that it's not always like it is in school. You're given more problems and you have to figure out how to solve them yourself. You've got your foreman but you usually have to find out your problems on your own and fix them the best way you can," said Rockwell.

John Oates is the campus administrator of CNA's Ridge Road Campus and he's seen a huge move in the industry. He predicts a big move over the next five to eight years,

DAY



Cassandra Roberts participated in Newfoundland and Labrador's first Industry Day in St. John's. Photo by Jonathan Myers.

which will be an exciting time for graduates.

"There are huge demands projected across the country and anywhere upwards to a million workers over the next 20 years or so are required," he said.

CNA president Bruce Hollett was more than impressed with the turnout.

"They got the chance to try it out and at the same time maybe learn some things they wouldn't get in the classroom about safety practices and actually see what it's like on the job site. It turned out to be a real opportunity for the students to say 'Yes, this is what I want to do,'" said Hollett.

Industry Day gave the students involved a chance to walk away with something new. Everyone got something different from their experiences.

"I was working with City-Lite Electrical Limited today and I feel very confident that I would be able to call up the employer to see if they were hiring and ask for a job,"

said Dave Gorman, a first year Construction Electrician student.

"I'll definitely be taking back some knowledge to my course that I didn't have before, like running the wiring in a ceiling. It gave me a sure idea of what my trade is going to be like because I haven't been on a real job site before."

The day definitely paid off for one first year student.

While on site with Jim Brown, vice president of operations of Cahill Group companies, first year Construction Electrician student David Tucker left the day with great impressions.

"Cahill helped us out in ways of reading blueprints and how to bid for certain jobs," said Tucker.

"We also looked over ways to look for mistakes in blueprints because there's actually a book of sorts of all the information of the blueprints that are always

right, but the blueprints can be wrong, so you want to be careful where your money is going in a project.

"Overall it was a pretty cool day. We were able to learn a lot more than what we would have in a regular school day. I had lots of fun and I would like to do it again."

Brown sees the day as a push to help ignite a fire within the students to get in the industry and make things happen.

"The work can only be done when the work is available to do," said Brown.

"The construction industry image of the past, of a guy with a pick and a shovel, is not our industry today when in fact it's a pretty professional industry. Young students need to be educated in order to make the right choices.

"For the next seven or eight years, until at least 2017, the work picture looks quite good for Newfoundland. It's a good time to be graduating." 



the many faces of Paul Tilley

instructor

treasurer

blogger

tv host

skier

councillor

curler

camper

volunteer

By Pamela Sheppard



To say that business instructor Paul Tilley has his hands in many pots would be an understatement. Beyond a doubt, this man is busy. From small town beginnings to an amazing career, Paul has come far, with many twists and turns along the way.

Paul grew up in Buchans surrounded by the notion of 'trade schools' even though there wasn't a trade school for miles. His father was a tradesman - a master machinist, who often worked with apprentices. There was no doubt that Paul was destined to have some relationship with the trades.

For Paul, part of the 1980s was spent obtaining his Political Science degree at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). He then worked within MUN for a period of time as everything from a university tour guide and computer room manager to a Faculty of Business computer lab instructional assistant. In the middle of all that, he completed a Bachelor of Commerce (Co-op) degree.

He credits a former MUN dean for some great support during that time.

"I give my thanks to Dr. Gary Gorman. He was a great person and a great teacher who had faith in me. I had three fantastic work terms that brought me to different places to meet new people. I worked in communications with Energy Mines and Resources in St. John's, accounting/computer work with Veterans Affairs in Charlottetown and database/research work with Indian Affairs in Ottawa."

In 1992, Paul was introduced to the world of College of the North Atlantic (CNA) as a business instructor at the Bonavista campus. Oddly enough, he started out instructing the business component of a quilting program.

"Like most people in the college system I did not start where I ended up," he explains. "I was originally hired as an instructor in a quilting program that was being offered in Duntara which is just north of Bonavista. I had a class of 12 wonderful ladies who were nothing short of great. As I am not a quilter, my job was to coordinate and teach the small business part of the program. Our class met in a church hall and over the course of 12 weeks I had 12 of the best mothers anyone could want. At graduation, they presented me with a beautiful quilt that I still have on a bed to this day."

After Bonavista, Paul was offered a position at CNA's Clarenville campus teaching in the business banking program. This is where he has been ever since. He says the Clarenville campus has been good to him and very rewarding.

"The campus is a fantastic place to work and grow and each year we are amazed by the great students that pass through our doors. One of the things we talk about in organizational behaviour is the concept of intrinsic (non-monetary) rewards of work.

"I always explain the concept by telling current students about the intrinsic reward I get when seeing where some of my former students are now. Many of them hold leadership positions from Clarenville to Fort McMurray to Iqaluit. To me, that is the real motivator in my job; seeing people grow and succeed. It's nice to share that success in some small way."

During the beginning of his Clarenville days, Paul decided that he needed to expand a little more on his education. After driving to

**"...The real motivator in my job;
seeing people grow and succeed."**

and from St. John's on a weekly basis while working on his MBA, he took a year's leave of absence to complete his master's degree in Business at MUN.

Outside of his CNA career, Paul has been involved in many projects from ski clubs to Junior Achievement, sat on many committees, has served as a town councillor and at one point, hosted a local television program. He is currently a blogger, co-manager of Clarenville's Facebook page, Anglican Church treasurer, and a volunteer tax preparer. He has a long list of previous community involvement that has led him down many different paths; all of which have enriched his already busy life.

His personal life involves spending time with his wife and family, curling, camping and spending some well-deserved time at the cabin. When he's not busy with all of this, you can find Paul tinkering with all things mechanical in his shed. Although he didn't pursue a career in mechanics like his father, he still has the family mechanical trait that has been passed down through generations. In some sense, the 'trades' will always be in his system.

He has certainly come a long way since growing up in Buchans. With an amazing education behind him and a career stretching out ahead of him, Paul continues to strive for more in both his instructing career and his community involvement. He has indeed become an asset to both. 



learning about learning

Canadians visit South Africa
to discuss early education

Dr. Wayne Eastman (second from right) and members of the Canadian delegation present a package of reading materials to the principal and students of the Chapel Street School in Cape Town.
Photo: Ingrid Crowther, ICC Lifelong Learn, Inc

By Gina MacArthur

Dr. Wayne Eastman has a message for anyone who thinks that Newfoundland is a tiny, isolated part of the world: in many ways, geography doesn't really matter.

The Early Childhood Education instructor at the Corner Brook campus is somewhat of a globetrotter, having visited every continent as an international expert in early education. What he's learned is that the world is shrinking, and what happens as far away as South Africa can have an impact right here in Canada.

Eastman is fresh off of a trip to Johannesburg, Cape Town and Soweto, South Africa, where he led a delegation of 11 of his colleagues – early education experts from across Canada – on a bilateral information sharing mission.

In advance of the journey, the goal of the delegation was to share best practices in Canada, compare them with those in South Africa and hopefully return with valuable lessons from their counterparts there to share with their colleagues across Canada.

For Eastman, the potential to learn from the South Africans is tremendous.

“We’re pretty naïve as westerners,” he says. “We may think that our society is more advanced, but other cultures have marvelous things we can learn from them.”

Eastman says he was particularly interested in seeing how South African teachers are educated, what they are paid and how they deal with childhood behavioural issues. And while the lessons learned may hold considerable value for Canadian

says. “It helps them build self esteem because they’ve earned it.”

During the trip, the group saw first-hand the economic and cultural differences between Canada and South Africa.

Just outside of Johannesburg, the country’s largest city, a series of shantytowns brought new meaning to the word poverty for the Canadians. They visited an orphanage where 120 children were fed only one meal a day, made up of whatever the caretakers could scrounge. “The day we were there all they could find was eight or 10 loaves of bread, and that was their only food for that day,” he says.

The regulations governing early education in South Africa are also worlds apart from Canadian standards. “Here in Newfoundland you have to follow a zillion regulations to set up a school, but there, you don’t even have to have running water - many of these places just don’t have plumbing,” he says. “We wanted to talk about distance learning, but then we realized that was absurd because many of the places there don’t have

**“We may think that our society is more advanced,
but other cultures have marvelous things we can learn from them.”**

educators, he says there will also be benefits to immigrant children who are learning in Canadian schools.

“When I went to Kathmandu, Nepal, I noticed that the children there don’t look you in the eye when they talk to you,” says Eastman. “Here in Canada that would be considered rude or it might lead you to think that the child was lying, but in Nepal it’s a sign of respect.” He says understanding those kinds of cultural differences can help Canadian teachers respond appropriately to children who’ve grown up in different countries.

“We are a tremendously multi-cultural country and what we learned in South Africa will have relevance for us in the context of how immigrant families perceive education,” he says. As an example, he says the group was continually impressed with the resourcefulness of the people they met in South Africa. “Here we have templates for our education systems. There, the template changes every day, because the needs change and survival is the first priority.”

“Grandmothers play a very important part in the education of the children there,” Eastman explains, noting that AIDS has decimated the middle generations. “In many areas survival is a priority over everything else, but these women manage with almost nothing. If they were in our country they would be our leaders.”

Eastman says he witnessed examples of how South Africa is more progressive than Canada. The delegation visited a place called The Sustainability Institute, where they found people working together to grow community gardens, and schools equipped with solar panels and water reclamation systems.

“One of the programs they had was a point system. For every bag of garbage the children collect they get a point and they exchange their points for things like toothbrushes or sneakers,” he

computers or even electricity.”

Eastman realizes that the Canadian delegation’s trip to South Africa was just the beginning for information sharing between the two countries.

“We went there to learn how education takes place in a Third World country, with an extreme interest in how we could help them. Some people brought examples of curriculum, and we talked about our patterns for training. But the critical thing is the business cards you get and the networking you do.”

Differences aside, Eastman says on a very basic level, Canada and South Africa have one very important thing in common. “The caring that we have for young children and the emphasis we put on education for the young is the same,” he says. “But they’re restricted by the situation they’re in. They’ve come a long way in the last few years through contact with Canadians to develop programs and policies. This trip was another building block in that process.”

As part of the trip, the delegation was accompanied by a photojournalist who documented the experience and will ultimately publish a book about it. Copies of the publication will be shared with the South African group who hosted the Canadians.

The delegation also donated packages of books by Canadian authors to the schools and daycares that they visited.

Eastman says more than anything, his group came back to Canada feeling inspired by the resilience and optimism they encountered.

“Our delegation came away with another view of the world and the knowledge that these people are doing such great, great work with so little, where we would have given up long ago,” he says. “They probably gave us more than we could possibly give them.” *u*

the first love is the deepest



PHOTO ABOVE BY LEANNE ROSE, INSET PHOTOS BY SCOTT GRANT

By Roger Hulan

The daily grind of emails, phone calls and meetings can take its toll. Some people thrive on it; others think, 'there has to be something else!'

In 2009, Scott Grant was the general manager at a successful car dealership in his hometown of Corner Brook. He had worked his way through the ranks (just about every position available) gaining valuable experience along the way, as he knew nothing about cars or the automobile business. After years of developing relationships with customers and honing his automotive skills under the tutelage of his father, something was missing.

"I kept thinking that one more position or one more raise would bring me happiness," he explained. "Eight years later, after working multiple positions and raises I was still searching for happiness."

With the birth of his daughter Sophie, came a new set of responsibilities to Scott and long time girlfriend Leanne. At the time he had just taken the manager's position and career stresses were at an all time high. Unfortunately, those stresses were making their way home after hours and he was starting to notice the effects. Something had to give and he didn't want it to be family. So he chose a change of career, "I chose to

follow my dream."

He went back to his roots - to his true love, the outdoors. Before the dealership, at 23 years old, he had enrolled in CNA's Fish and Wildlife Technician program, knowing he would need more than a high school education on his resume if he was to find a stable job and income. He quickly found that his childhood interest in the natural world hadn't faded and rediscovered his love of the outdoors.

"I've always had a firm belief that learning from text provides a great start to learning, but hands-on experience is what really teaches skills. CNA provided hands-on



climbing hills, picking their way through trees or hucking themselves off cornices and jumps, Scott would be scrambling to get into position for the perfect shot... sometimes putting himself within a few feet of a speeding 500-pound snowmobile.

"I bought my first camera, a digital compact point and shoot - a Fuji if I remember correctly. It was a 3-megapixel camera that cost a whopping \$400!" he jokes, pointing out while \$400 is nothing to laugh at; he has come to realize it isn't much in the world of professional photography.

"...Learning from text provides a great start to learning, but hands-on experience is what really teaches skills."

"Establishing a private venture is much different than working in a well established business. Even though I was bringing home the stress of working at the dealership, when I finished work for the day my work for that day was done. With your own business there is always work to be done or something new to learn as you're responsible for all aspects of a business. I would estimate that taking photos only accounts for about 20 per cent of my working time."

Scott has garnered quite a reputation for himself over the past 16 months. He has tried his hand at several subject areas; weddings, sporting events, portraits, and wildlife. However, sticking with his love for nature, he says photographing birds is at the top of his list, explaining it's the numerous factors involved in capturing these images that piques his interest.

"I love working with a long telephoto lens. Telephotos are almost a must to photograph birds, especially here in Newfoundland as most of the species are both small and quite wary of humans. They are also very challenging to photograph well."

Locating the more than 300 species of birds usually isn't the problem; it's being able to get close enough to them. Having a good light source and favourable wind conditions, and also having the camera and lens technique to photograph a sharp, well-exposed image all come into play.

Scott admits that funds are quite limited in a first year of private business. He's decided for now to limit himself to 'guerrilla'

marketing and word of mouth. He promotes himself extensively on social networking websites such as Facebook, photo sharing websites such as Flickr, and local websites such as www.lewishillbillies.com and www.nlphotogs.com. He has also donated images, prints and services to local/international charities and also for educational purposes. His resume continues to grow as he has partnered with the Canadian Avalanche Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, the provincial Department of Environment and Conservation (Wildlife Division) and the Humane Society

to date.

If things continue to head in the right direction he will carry out the venture for as long as he can both enjoy it, and make a living.

"I could easily work 16 hours a day, seven days a week. However, I have to try and make family time as I am learning there is a very fine balance between the two. Your own business venture is much more work than if you are employed for someone else, but I feel better about my working life than I did a year ago when I was working for someone else at a job I dreaded to go to every day."

In October, Scott was successful in his application to become a member of Nikon Professional Services. This means as a working professional photographer he now gets priority on emergency camera repairs, access to the equipment loaner program and first dibs on new equipment as it becomes available. All of which, he says, will enable him to offer the highest quality images he can to his clients.

"My business philosophy is pretty simply... offer professional service in a timely manner; promise the client 80 per cent of what I know I can deliver and work like hell to give them 110 per cent."

A virtue that stems from previous work experience, no doubt.

To find out more about RONiN Photography visit www.roninphoto.ca, www.roninphoto.blogspot.com or search RONiN Photography on Facebook. 

experience in spades though labs, weekly outings into the field and also through multiple camp experiences."

Taking a year's leave of absence from the dealership to pursue his dream, he decided to translate that hands-on experience and an interest in photography into a business venture, RONiN Photography.

Capturing images has been a keen interest of his since 2003, when he purchased his first snowmobile. At the time Scott was beginning to venture into the backcountry of Western Newfoundland and wanted to share what he was seeing with family and friends. Often times, while his buddies were



With friends like these

Marilyn Coles-Hayley, Connie Street, and Brenda Keel-Monks. Photo by Brian Hayward.

By Gina MacArthur

Connie Street has one message for you if you know someone with terminal cancer: don't pretend you didn't see them.

"I go up to the shop and people who used to talk to me will turn the other way," she says. "I suppose they're afraid they'll say something wrong and upset me, and I understand that. Cancer is a dirty word and it makes people uncomfortable. But not talking to me hurts me more than any awkward thing you might say to me."

Connie is a clerk in the Learner Services office at the Bonavista campus, and she's fighting her second battle with cancer. Eleven years ago she was successfully treated for breast cancer, but last spring, the disease returned. This time it's in her bones and her lungs, and while she's taking treatments she's been told it's unlikely she'll survive.

But Connie refuses to let that fact rule her life. "I'm living with cancer," she says matter-of-factly. "Everyone is going to die sometime, but for me, I know that it will be sooner than later. But who really knows? I could get hit by a bus tomorrow. I can't just stop living because I know I have cancer."

That's why Connie has returned to work on a part time basis. In fact, while she was on sick leave she checked her messages every day and even showed up at the college for registration day this fall, because she knew her help would be needed. And while Campus

Administrator Marilyn Coles-Hayley is quick to note how selfless she is, Connie also knows that she gets a lot out of going to work.

"If I got to give up the key to the school it's just as well for me to give up and call it off," she says. "This is a sanctuary for me. I do love my job and you just can't give up to this – I could be gone tomorrow but I can't sit down and dwell on that."

On those days when Connie's positive attitude starts to flag, she knows she can draw strength from Marilyn and fellow clerk Brenda Keel-Monks, who are two of her closest friends. "They have been wonderful," she says. "People out in the community don't see the other side – but Brenda and Marilyn do and that helps me get through it."

The day Connie received her diagnosis she told the doctor to just give her two years so she could see her daughter graduate from university. She knows her positive attitude will help her get there.

"I told my doctor I'm going to be a statistic, but I'm not going to be a bad statistic. You have to have this attitude. If you don't have the attitude to carry on you won't get two weeks out of it. I don't know how long I've got, but I'm going to do what I want and live each day to the fullest."

Those are words to live by. *m*

PHOTOS AND VIDEO STILLS BY CHRIS SLANEY, JOE MAY, AND EVAN WILLOUGHBY

Learning by doing

School of Tourism & Natural Resources

By Gina MacArthur

“You can know the name of a bird in all the languages of the world, but when you’re finished, you’ll know absolutely nothing whatever about the bird. So let’s look at the bird and see what it’s doing – that’s what counts.”

– Richard Feynman, American physicist

Richard Feynman’s observation about experiential learning may have been stated far from Newfoundland’s wilderness, but its essence lives in College of the North Atlantic’s School of Tourism and Natural Resources (TNR).

With programs ranging from Adventure Tourism to Fish and Wildlife Technician, students can count on learning by doing. And as a place that’s known for its wide open spaces and natural beauty, where else but Newfoundland and Labrador could provide such a complete educational experience?

 COLLEGE OF THE
North Atlantic



“You could read it in a book or see it on TV and someone could tell you about it, but until you get to **do it yourself** it’s not the same.”



Hands on education in the wilds of Newfoundland

Dr. Brian Hearn knows the value of hands-on experience. The forest wildlife ecologist with the Canadian Forest Service has spent the last 12 years studying small mammal populations with the help of TNR students in the Fish and Wildlife Technician program. Together they spend a week each fall setting live traps for 20 different types of animals and documenting what they find.

“I think it gives them some very practical experience in exposing them to a research project that they might be called upon to do soon after they graduate, if they get a job with the Newfoundland Wildlife Service or an environmental agency or the federal government.”

As a researcher, Hearn says there’s no better way for the students to learn. “They get to know some other people in the profession and they get to understand what’s involved in going out in the field,” he says. “Not just the going out and setting traps and so on. They’re required to take professional field notes, look after themselves, set up camp, break camp and do their own cooking. They have to look after themselves just like they were professional wildlife technicians working out in the field.”

Hearn says by the time they finish their fall camp, the students know exactly what to expect from a career in the field. “It gives them a good feeling for whether they enjoy this kind of work and whether this is the kind of thing they’d like to be involved in, in terms of doing wildlife research.”

Everett Sacrey was one of the students at this year’s fall camp at Red Indian Lake. He says the experience taught him a lot about what to expect from a career in the woods. “It’s very teamwork oriented,” says the St. Philips native. “When you’re setting up these trap lines you can’t just do it all by yourself, you need hands to help and it gets people to communicate better and teaches us skills that in our career we’re going to need to know.”

Sacrey said he enjoyed the program and the camp so much that he’s planning to continue his studies in wildlife management, and perhaps eventually work abroad. “I’d definitely like to go to Australia





and work with the animals there.”

“A lot of the courses here are recognized elsewhere so it offers you a lot of different doors you can open,” he says, noting that the hands-on nature of the program has given him an excellent foundation.

“You could read it in a book or see it on TV and someone could tell you about it, but until you get to do it yourself it’s not the same. There’s not too many places you get this hands-on training and the teachers are really knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach.”

Geographic Information Systems: More than ‘where’, it’s also about the who and the why

When College of the North Atlantic established its Geographic Information Systems program in 2009, it didn’t come with a marketing campaign to attract new students.

There was no doubt that the course would become popular, because employers were already looking for people with specialized skills in the field.

“Employers used to advertise for potential employees who had ‘some knowledge’ of GIS systems,” says instructor Darin Brooks. “But that’s not the case anymore. Now they’re looking for people who have specialized training – practical and hands-on experience with it.”

That’s why Brooks says graduates of the CNA program will be highly sought-

after once they’ve graduated.

“This is a post-diploma specialist program,” says Brooks. “It’s not necessarily training to be a pure GIS Analyst. It’s for people who already know what they want to do, and want to be better at their jobs or make themselves more attractive to potential employers.”

The program graduated five students in 2009, and after adding a bit of a promotional push, has quickly attracted attention, with 28 applicants for the 20 seats that were available in 2010/11.

Brooks says he’s not really surprised that the program has caught on.

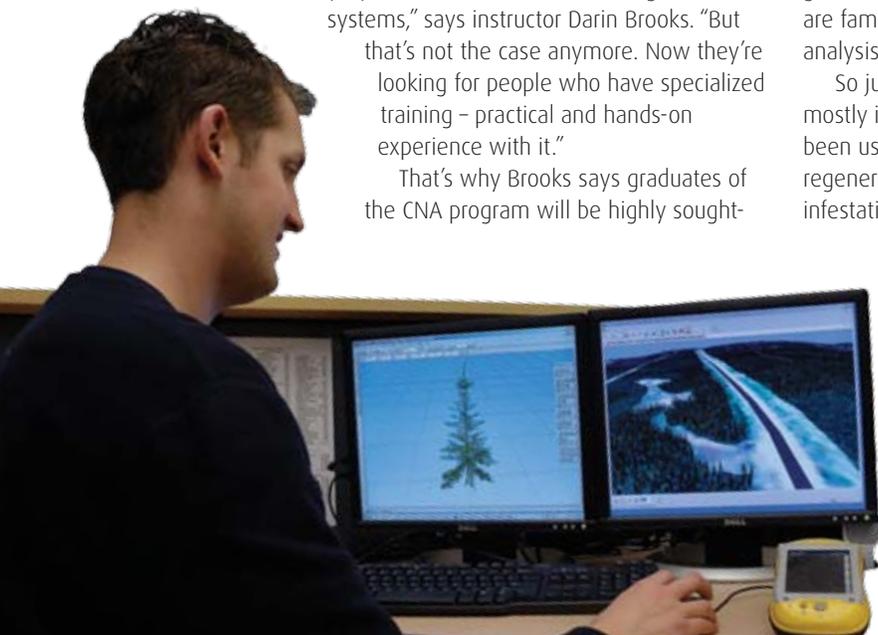
“It’s a bit of a paradigm shift. The flow of data was very segmented. People collected information and handed it off to other

“...They’re looking for people who have specialized training – practical and hands-on experience...”

people who analyzed it then passed it on to others who presented it,” he explains. “But GIS is the glue. Employers want employees to go out and collect their own data because they know what it is. They are familiar with it and they can bring it back and use it to develop analysis and reports that are practical and useful.”

So just what is GIS? Brooks says it’s been around for a long time, mostly in the natural resources and agricultural sectors. “They’ve been using GIS for things like mapping inventories and predicting tree regeneration, developing forest fire risk models and managing pest infestations.” He also explains that it’s about a lot more than ‘making maps’.

“It’s a lot more sophisticated than that,” he says. “Geographic Information Systems can bring together data from a variety of sources, and put them together to give you a clear picture of what’s happening in a community or geographic region, then help you find ways to manage resources or predict changes in the





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Lessons Learned

Everett Sacrey knows a thing or two about experiential learning. The St. Philips native was doing field training as part of College of the North Atlantic's Fish and Wildlife Technician program when he found an unexpected guest inside a live trap.

"I got a black bear cub in a rabbit trap... Little did I realize Mother Bear was about 30 metres behind it."

"We were in spring camp out in Gambo and I got a black bear cub in a rabbit trap," he recalls. "I thought the best thing to do was go and let it out. Little did I realize Mother Bear was about 30 metres behind it."

The angry sow turned in Sacrey's direction, so he dropped his gear and started running. Luckily for him, she gave up and Natural Resources staff were called in to release the cub. But Sacrey says he learned a valuable lesson.

"I've been a little bit wary about going in the woods after that without some sort of protection," he says with a nervous chuckle. *na*



environment. These days people in the medical field are using it to map the spread of disease and businesses are using it to analyze buyer spending patterns. The uses are pretty much limitless."

Brooks says administrators and instructors wanted to make sure they had designed the best possible curriculum and evaluation tools, so that graduates were well-prepared to put their skills to the test.

"The students in this program get hands-on training using the latest software and applying what they learn to real-life situations. We partner with a number of sponsors so that the projects our students work on are actually used by the sponsors in their day-to-day operations."

Brooks starts students off with a week of 'GIS Boot Camp' to show them what they can expect from the program. The week is also an opportunity for Brooks to assess the students' computer competency.

Last year's students worked with Western Health to evaluate data they had collected through their Ambulance Dispatch and Management System.

"The system captured data which provided Western Health an opportunity to evaluate the reasons patients were being transported by ambulance," Regional Director David Buckle wrote in his evaluation of the program. "We were also able to evaluate which health facilities were generating workload and which health facilities and ambulance services were doing the work as it relates to diagnostics, specialist appointments, emergency department visits, surgeries, etc.

"The data evaluation (done by the GIS students) provided a visual image of patient transport activity. Further, we were able to evaluate the actual cost of transport for each procedure. The results exposed an issue with patient transport, of which Western Health was totally unaware. Consequently, the issue

was addressed," he wrote.

"Our experience with CNA was very positive. The instructors and students were professional and very knowledgeable. Western Health is very excited to be partnering with CNA again this year."

Brooks gives much of the credit for the program's success to his instructional assistant, Neala Griffin. "She's amazing. She played a pivotal role in the development of new course material and course updates. And I would be remiss in not acknowledging all the hard work by Brent Howell and his team, who brought the program to the Corner Brook campus."

Another indication that the program is gaining attention came in the form of an announcement this fall by the company that produces the industry standard software for GIS systems.

ESRI Canada has named College of the North Atlantic as one of the recipients of their 2010 Scholarship Awards. Although the selection was based on the Geomatics/Surveying program at the Ridge Road campus, the company has agreed to allow the college to share the scholarship with the GIS program at the Corner Brook campus.

"The scholarship will go to a student at Ridge Road one year and Corner Brook the next year," says Brooks. "We'll be awarding it in the spring to a student who shows a real aptitude and some promise to go further in the field."

In addition to a cash award, the student will get a package that includes free software licences and memberships that total thousands of dollars. But Brooks says the real value of the scholarship will be immeasurable. "What it would tell the GIS community is that this person really is the best of the best," he says. "It will get them noticed in the field when they are looking for employment after completing the program." *na*

OTHER TOURISM & NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAMS

Interested in a career in the field of Tourism and Natural Resources? Check out these other programs offered by College of the North Atlantic:

- Adventure Tourism
- Conservation Law Enforcement
- Environmental Technology (Co-Op)
- Forest Resources Technician
- Hospitality Tourism Management
- Natural Resources Technician
- Northern Natural Resources Technician

Visit the School of Tourism & Natural Resources mini-site: www.cna.nl.ca/schools/tnr/ for course descriptions, campus locations and so much more!

GIS instructor embraces life on Canada's 'other coast'

By Gina MacArthur

No one could say that Darin Brooks doesn't have guts. The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) instructor at the Corner Brook campus had never laid eyes on Newfoundland when he accepted an invitation to head up the new program last year.

The British Columbia native had only ventured as far as Nova Scotia, but he was optimistic he'd come to love Canada's easternmost province.

"My wife and I had honeymooned in eastern Canada and we fell in love with it," he says. "My imagination was running wild about what Newfoundland would look like, but I moved here sight unseen, on a hunch and trusting that everything was going to be great."

As it turns out, administrators had been looking for someone like Darin for a while.

"It was very challenging to find someone and it speaks to the need to train more people and growth in the sector," says Tourism and Natural Resources Dean Brent Howell.

"We were extremely fortunate to get this guy. He has a skill inventory that's so hard to find and he's extremely student centred. We're totally confident we hired the right person."

Darin says he was fortunate he had experience in two different GIS disciplines.

"Most people come from one of two camps: vector or raster," he says, explaining that more and more companies are finding ways to integrate the two. "I had a good solid background in both and in project management, helping set up operational research projects and seeing them through."

Darin started his career with honours degrees in Geography, and Land Use and Environmental Studies from the University of Saskatchewan, and is working on his Masters in Ecology and GIS through the University of Northern British Columbia. He had also spent a considerable amount of time in the consulting world.

Darin's wife Marla was working on contract in British Columbia when he

accepted the position at CNA, so he came to Corner Brook by himself for the first year. She joined him this past fall, after landing a position at the Grenfell Campus of Memorial University. Along with their blended family of four children who range in age from 10 to 18, they are looking forward to getting to know Newfoundland and Labrador.

Darin says while his home province of British Columbia is breathtakingly beautiful, Newfoundland has no problem measuring up. "Sometimes it's tough to impress a BCer, but Newfoundland is everything BC is. We love the hiking, the ocean - we're both photographers and there's no shortage of things to shoot."

He says, so far, there's no doubt they made the right decision because Newfoundland is everything he imagined it would be. "The geography, the people - we're amazed at how wonderfully open and generous the people are," he says. "It's exceeded all of our expectations." *ra*



A lifetime of service

...and he's not done yet!

By Gina MacArthur

The honours just keep coming for former College of the North Atlantic instructor Leonard Vassallo.

Earlier this year Vassallo received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation. This fall, he found himself handling the hardware again, as he accepted an award for Outstanding Community Service from Memorial University's Alumni Association.

Vassallo came to Newfoundland in 1976 from Nova Scotia, with the intention of staying for two years. He ended up working for the provincial government for 10 years, and then helped design and deliver the Environmental Technology program at the Corner Brook campus of CNA, where he taught for two more decades.

From being a founding member of the Salmon Enhancement Aquaculture Committee, to serving on local recycling

committees and helping establish community gardens, Vassallo spent his 34 years in Newfoundland becoming a well known environmental activist and an expert in sustainability.

Earlier this year he 'dretired' back to Nova Scotia, but like most busy people, he still has plenty to do.

"I call it 'dretirement' because now I can choose to do only the things I really want to do," he says. One of the projects he's taken on is building his dream house and of course, it's going to be green. From geo-thermal heating to solar panels on the roof, he admits it's a full time job, but he still has time for his favourite subject.

He'll be making regular trips back to Newfoundland to teach composting for the Multi-Material Stewardship Board (MMSB) and to consult on other environmental issues.

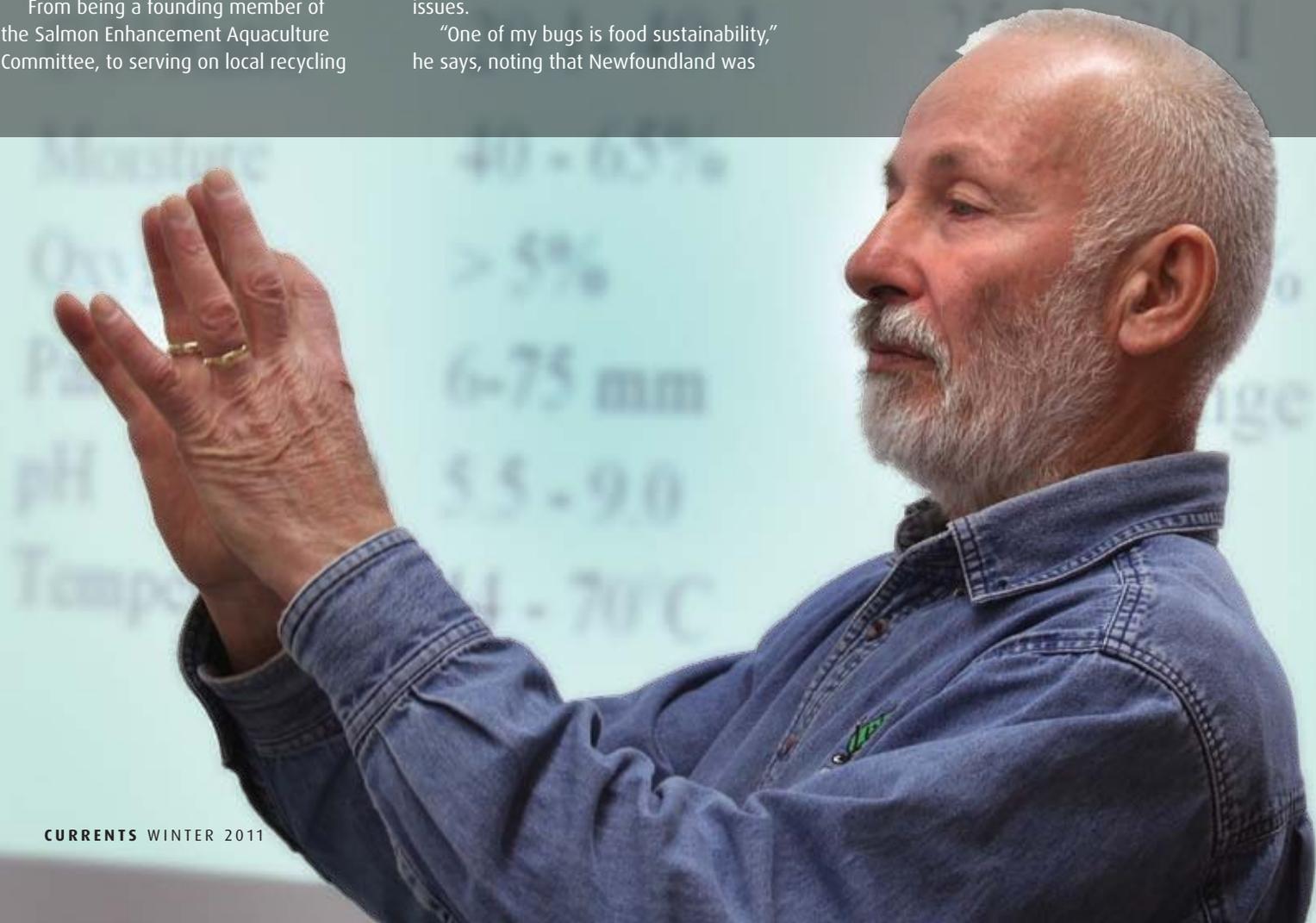
"One of my bugs is food sustainability," he says, noting that Newfoundland was

entirely self-sufficient in food production in 1945. "There's no environmental reason why we can't be sustainable now - we have the same population."

Vassallo says he's grateful for the opportunities he's had over the years to promote and advance environmental and sustainability programs in Newfoundland and Labrador, and he hopes that his contributions will be a foundation for future advances.

"A well known environmentalist once told me 'Technology doesn't do things, people do things,'" he recalls. "It just takes a few committed people to do it, and the technology falls in place." *~*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MULTI-MATERIALS STEWARDSHIP BOARD



Qatar Project Office and CNA-Q News

By Tanya Alexander

With the new format of *Currents* will come changes in how the Qatar Project Office (QPO) lets you know about activities at College of the North Atlantic-Qatar (CNA-Q). Instead of a four-page spread in *Currents* on QPO and CNA-Q news, we will be posting all noteworthy activities on the college website for your viewing pleasure. There, you will find stories about employees, student exchange, life in Doha, travel, job opportunities, photo galleries and other information pertaining to the Qatar campus and the QPO.

For now, here is a quick review of the past few months.

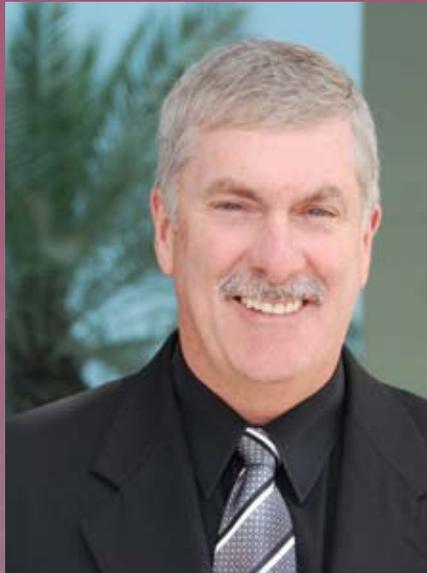
New Exchange Program

It was a busy summer at the Qatar Project Office, as we helped facilitate the exchange of 16 students for the official launch of the new International Work Placement Exchange between CNA and CNA-Q.

The exchange allows selected students the opportunity to complete their program work-terms overseas, where they can not only gain hands-on training but also experience a culture vastly different from their own.

Eight CNA students travelled to Qatar for several weeks this summer and eight CNA-Q students came to work with us in Newfoundland and Labrador. They were surveyed after completing their placements and 100 per cent said they'd recommend the experience to others.

For more information see *Canada's paradise woos Middle East students* at www.cna.nl.ca/news/, and the story about CNA graduate Matt Ford on page 18.



Ken MacLeod, CNA-Q President

New CNA-Q President

CNA-Q kicked off Academic Year 2010-2011 with an energetic new president. Ken MacLeod, who hails from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, joined the orientation of new employees at the campus in August. MacLeod has much to bring to College of the North Atlantic's international campus, with a prolific career in education that includes program development and design, pedagogy, international development, community affairs, technology and oil and gas training. In his first address as president, Dr. MacLeod spoke of the accomplishments of CNA-Q and the focus on student success.

Awards

A book created by instructors and students – *From Acacia to Ziziphus: Arabian Plants to Nourish the Body and Earth*, has garnered further accolades in addition to the Honourable Mention and international Platinum Hermes award received in June.

The book also won the Pinnacles Award of Merit for Special Publications from the International Association of Business Communicators in July and in August was presented with the Award of Excellence for One-of-a-Kind Green Publication by APEX, an international program recognizing excellence in publications work. Oil and Gas Magazine showcased the new plant book in their Spring 2010 issue.



Orientation Handbook

The handbook for first-time travellers to CNA-Q designed by the QPO has been well-received; based on valued feedback, it was augmented and new copies printed with additional material such as a map of Doha, a map of the campus and other pertinent information.

In addition, a need has been identified for an employee handbook for CNA-Q's new hires and the QPO will assist in creating this publication.

Please stay tuned for the launch of the new QPO web pages, where you can enjoy a virtual journey to the Middle East! 

Experiencing Qatar

By Pamela Sheppard

For Matt Ford, a recent CNA Business Administration (Human Resources Management) graduate, accepting a student exchange work term in Qatar was an opportunity of a lifetime. Ford spent three and a half weeks at the College of the North Atlantic-Qatar (CNA-Q) campus this past summer and he has nothing but wonderful things to say about his experience.

Working as a research assistant at the Teaching and Learning Centre, his responsibilities included helping with the administration and compilation of data from a survey which looked into how students like to learn and how they use technology. He also archived a website that was used as part of a research project and performed graphic design work on an instructional skills workshop handbook.

Ford says he didn't require much of an adjustment period when he arrived in Qatar.

"The adjustment period for me was not all that long. I am a really adaptable person and everyone at CNA-Q makes you feel really welcome from day one. Adjusting to the heat, however, is a different story. And you never really fully adjust to 55 degrees

(Celsius) with 75 per cent humidity."

Ford was very impressed by the CNA-Q campus and what it offers students and staff.

"The campus is beautiful," explains Ford. "The buildings are beautifully designed, a lot of small shrubs and different trees in the spaces between the buildings. The interior of the buildings are beautiful as well, and everything you need is on campus. There are recreation centres, cafeterias, book stores, libraries, everything you need as a student or as staff, right there on campus. The bus system that goes between campuses and the various apartments and villas is really convenient as well."

Ford's entire trip was interesting, from both a professional and social standpoint. He had the opportunity to go jet skiing in the gulf and sand duning a couple of times. He rode his first roller coaster in one of the malls, and he made many friends; most of whom he continues to keep in contact with.

"I do keep in contact with a handful of the people I met. One of my friends in particular I talk to a couple times a week on Facebook, if not more. He actually worked in Stephenville this summer for a month or so, and we hung out. We are both big into



This is it!



On the quad!



Wearing the traditional thobe



CNA President Bruce Hollett (right) congratulates Matt Ford during graduation ceremonies at the CNA-Q campus in Doha, Qatar. CNA Photo.

music, and have a few things in common, so we always have lots to talk about.”

Overall, he says that things are not all that different from here in Newfoundland and Labrador. He didn’t experience any culture shock while in Qatar and says that remaining open minded and learning to

the Qatari people and says that although it was easy waking up to the sun shining every morning, that makes it harder to start conversations. “Here in Atlantic Canada all we talk about is the weather; there however, the weather never really changes.”

During the month of June, while Ford

overlooked and there were political leaders from their country present as well as political figures from Newfoundland and Labrador.”

When asked what he learned from this experience, he says that it was more of a growing experience than a learning one.

“I would have liked to graduate with my friends back home, but it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and being part of the graduation ceremony in Qatar was amazing.”

adapt is what helped him adjust to the Qatari way.

“I was really open-minded going into the experience. As long as you are open to experiencing a new culture it’s not that different than our culture. People are really friendly, and with the exception of a few things, it’s not that different from home.”

Ford would definitely like to go back, and will probably do so in the future. He would prefer to visit there instead of work next time so he can experience more of the social side of Qatar. He appreciated the friendly nature and laid back attitude of

was in Qatar, his Business Administration class in Canada was celebrating their graduation. He mentioned this to someone at the Qatar campus, and they worked him into the graduation ceremony there.

“I would have liked to graduate with my friends back home, but it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and being part of the graduation ceremony in Qatar was amazing.

“The ceremony was quite long, but very nice,” explains Ford. “It’s a much larger ceremony than anything we have home, and there were a lot of flowers and decorations as well. No details were

“I definitely learned a lot on the trip, but more importantly would be the change in perspective it gave me. Like most CNA students in this province, I have grown up more or less in the middle of nowhere.

“There is nothing wrong with that and I love Newfoundland and Labrador. There is a lot to be said for rural life. But getting to see a culture so different than ours is something in itself. The entire experience has allowed me to grow as a person, much more than any one of the things I learned while in Qatar.” *u*



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHEILA ROBINSON

A winning family reunion

By Pamela Sheppard

Sheila Robinson, program developer at the Grand Falls-Windsor campus has earned recognition as a great storyteller after submitting a story to the Central Dairies storytelling contest and winning the grand prize.

Robinson's heartwarming story *Touchstone* won her a family reunion in the *It's the Stories We're Made Of* contest. After submitting her story, but before finding out that she had won, she decided to go visit her sister. They booked a flight on a whim and travelled to New York City for a mini vacation together. When Robinson got home there was a voicemail message waiting for her, saying she won \$5,000 toward the cost of a family reunion. Ironically, she and her sister had already had their family reunion together.

The judging process was partly done through online voting and for Robinson, this connected her to the past.

"Some of the judging was done by Central Dairies officials and rest was online voting," she explains. "I had so many people from my past email, phone or leave messages telling me how much they loved my story and how it reminded them of their own past. That meant more to me than anything; reconnecting with past friends and making new ones." *u*

Touchstone

By Sheila Robinson

Reprinted with permission from Central Dairies

There was a green and white ceramic horse on the corner shelf in my grandmother's kitchen, posed for infinity in a proud equestrian leap. Standing about twelve inches high, its base formed a bank to save coins. My grandmother told me once that Grandpa brought it to her; I don't remember where she said he got it. There was nothing remarkable about that horse, other than the space it shared in my grandmother's kitchen on a shelf filled with salt and pepper shakers and bits and pieces of accumulated bric-a-brac.

Grandma would sit in her rocking chair next to that shelf, her sharp brown eyes surveying her domain from her favourite vantage point. From that chair she could keep an eye on the pots dancing on the stove and her ever present knitting on her lap, chat with visitors, and keep an eye on Grandpa, who she could see up in the back field through the kitchen window.

I spent twenty five years winding my way up the path to "the house," as it was called. Surrounded by the homes built by their offspring - my own father included - it was the house, and all the other houses around it were minor nodes; spores blown forth like dandelion seed from the main. In the wintertime, the path to the house would be single file only. Grandpa would keep it clear by beating it down, walking back and forth until it was open again, a narrow trail not designed for the clumsy or the unfamiliar. And of course, we skittered up over it as easily as we raced through the grass in the summertime.

In my childhood memory, it seems to me that they were always seventy, locked like the ceramic horse in that stage of life while I got to grow up, go away to school, come home again, get married. Through all the stages of my own life they remained unchanged, a familiar comfort, a touchstone in my life.

The window in the kitchen overlooked the back of the house; the back field stretching into a forest that went on to the mountains. It offered a view of the shed where Grandpa kept his scythe, his axe, probably an occasional bottle of whiskey, and his "cachet" of money squirrelled away for "just in case."

If I were to survey the grandchildren, I bet we'd all say that none of us had ever entered that shed. Oh sure, we had all stood in the doorway at one time or another and peered in to the darkness, just checking to see if Grandpa was in there, and secure in the knowledge that Grandma could see us from where she was sitting in her rocking chair, and therefore safe from any possible wrongdoing or harm.

The back step leading into the kitchen of the house - like the shed, the fences, and the house itself - was built with Grandpa's own two hands, no doubt under the careful watch of Grandma's sharp brown eyes. It consisted of a landing, two narrow steps, and

then another landing in front of the door. I suspect that the first landing was designed to scrape mud and dirt and snow off the wearer's boots, or more specifically Grandpa's boots, which were perpetually filthy from his treks out around the field and into the woods. But Grandpa would ignore this convenience and come straight through into the kitchen and make his way to his chair, a plain wooden chair next to the wood stove, and the water from his boots would puddle around it as he whittled a few more splits for the stove. Grandma would knit her eyebrows in his direction, as she often did, knowing that he would never change.

That first landing on the back step was built shallow and hollow, and as a result, made a very distinctive noise when it was stepped on. I would also be willing to bet that every one of the grandchildren can remember that familiar "thunk" from their childhood. If you happened to be sitting in the kitchen with Grandma, you could see her look toward the window to see who was coming in, the step noise announcing each and every visitor. If you were the one entering, your face would be the one framed by the glass at the exact moment the step gave off its hollow thunk of welcome.

For 25 years my grandmother sat in her rocking chair next to the corner shelf and knit endless streams of woollen socks and finger mitts, and cooked endless pots of fish and potatoes, and baked countless loaves of golden white bread. And for 25 years I made endless treks up the path to the house upon which my childhood was centred, my right foot hitting the landing like a good luck talisman, making that magical musical thunk.

I would be summoned on birthdays, expected on Christmas Eve, and welcomed every day, through every season of my life. And my grandparents remained unchanged.

Over the years I brought my treasures to that house, carried in deliveries from the store, cans of milk or soup borrowed or returned, news of report cards, childhood achievements, and the only man I've ever loved. Each treasure punctuated by the ritualistic thunk of announcement, and met with delight.

On the day of my grandmother's funeral, I watched my grandfather lean over the grave and place a single red rose on the coffin. Turning around, he looked right at me and said "Well, well, well" as he lurched away, all locked up in grief and disbelief.

Later, we all made our way up the path to the house to sit with Grandpa on this day, the day the light in his heart ceased to shine.

That was the last day that the landing on the back step ever gave up its noise for me. With Grandma gone, it took me too long to be able to face that empty kitchen, and soon Grandpa was moved into a seniors home and the house torn down.

These days, my own home has a lovely front veranda with two wide steps leading up to the front door. My own steps are fitted with non-slip exterior rubber mats; safe, yet silent. The window of the front room overlooks the entrance, but is seldom used. Visitors arrive unnoticed until they ring the doorbell - sometimes twice, if we are busy.

Last night I made my way upstairs for the night, turning out lights and closing windows and locking doors. I silently opened my daughter's bedroom door and stood for a moment, listening

to the sound of a sixteen-year-old's quiet breathing as she slept. Already she has faced the pain of loss, and has graced our doorway and dinner table with an array of nervous beaus; nervousness magnified by her own casual, easy-going manner. I looked up to the shelf above her bed, where the familiar green and white ceramic horse sits, pose unchanged, carried to me by my grandfather only days after the funeral. "For the little one," he said, nodding toward my then three-year-old child. "For the little one."

Could he have known, I wonder, the significance of that piece of coloured plaster to my perpetual memory of my grandmother? Or did he sit in his chair in the kitchen to pull his boots off and look with expectation toward the empty rocking chair and realize that, without the centrepiece, the periphery had to be dismantled, dusted off, given away. He pulled it off the shelf and brought it to my child unselfconsciously, the way he brought it to Grandma all those years ago, because he thought she would like it.

If I could go back to that kitchen, I would have a million questions for my grandma. I would pay closer attention to her stories, her hopes, her dreams, her self. I would sit with her in that unchanging kitchen with its familiar sights and smells and listen for the distinctive thunk that announced another visitor being framed in the kitchen window, profile scrutinized and then welcomed by those sharp brown eyes as the newcomer entered by the kitchen door.

We all carry pieces of the past with us into our uncertain futures. I inherited the sharp brown eyes, the genuine pleasure derived from the company of good people, and, on behalf of my daughter, the green and white ceramic horse that sat for so many years on the corner shelf in my grandmother's kitchen. I have no way of knowing what my future will bring - generous portions of pleasure and pain, no doubt. But I carry with me the security of my childhood, and the memory of a strong woman who loved me best. *~*



An Exhibit of Confidence

By
Pamela Sheppard

For many older workers, it's hard to find employment in a fast paced workplace filled with computers and technology. There may not seem to be many options for someone who has just lost their income or is facing a change.

Several campuses of College of the North Atlantic have been participating in a program that's designed to help those particular individuals. The Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) is an eight-week federal-provincial-territorial cost-shared employment program that provides a range of employment activities for older workers who live in vulnerable communities and who have lost their jobs. These activities include skills upgrading and work experience in new jobs to help them stay in the workforce.

Participants between the ages of 50 to 65 can be

"Sometimes you don't realize that you already have some really great skills, you just need a little upgrade and a little confidence to use them."

accepted to enrol into the TIOW program and participate in activities such as vocational/and or learning assessments, peer mentoring, basic skills upgrading, skills training, as well as resume and interview skills. Each community has its own activities.

For some individuals, computer skills are an asset in today's workforce. For Dorothy Warren of Burin, gaining those skills was a must.

Warren completed the TIOW program at CNA's Burin campus in 2009. At the age of 63, she wanted to contribute to her family income and to gain not only computer skills, but also the confidence to head back into today's workforce.

"I learned to become confident with myself and my skills. Sometimes you don't realize that you already have some really great skills, you just need a little upgrade and a little confidence to use them.

"I knew I would need to understand computers more. I already knew some things but I just needed the



upgrade. I knew I couldn't do the job I was interested in without learning more about using the computer."

After completing her program, Warren did her work term at Step-A-Side Art Gallery in Burin. She has since been hired back and is now gearing up for the busy Christmas season.

"I am definitely enjoying my job here. I love meeting new people and it's a job that really suits me. It is very interesting work and I love assisting the curator while setting up new art exhibits or setting up for book signings.

"Doing the TIOW program has given me this position. I would definitely recommend this program to others. My experience overall was great and I didn't feel like an older person going back to school because my peers and fellow classmates were in my age group. They wanted to further themselves just as much as I did. This has been a fantastic experience."

The curator of Step-A-Side Art Gallery, Evelyn Grondin-Bailey, is pleased to have a skillful and very friendly individual working with her every day.

"Dorothy has a lot of practical experience that has become an asset to us here at the gallery. She communicates effectively with our customers as well as with our feature artists. Her computer skills are very compatible for this type of position. We have a really great working partnership and I am very pleased to have her aboard." *~*

Faculty and Staff Appeal gathers steam

By Gina MacArthur

Heading off to college is a heady experience for most students. For some it will be the first time they have lived on their own with all the freedom of being independent from their parents. For others, it is a step in a new direction, as they change careers or prepare for a return to the workforce. However, in almost every case it also means they will begin to amass a significant amount of debt.

At College of the North Atlantic, tuition fees are among the lowest in the country, but the cost of living still creates significant levels of student debt. In fact, it's estimated that the typical CNA student will owe more than \$27,000 by the time they graduate.

And while a high percentage of CNA students will find employment soon after graduation, many will still struggle to make their student loan payments as they begin their careers.

That's why the CNA Scholarship and Bursary Fund, established in 2009, is so important. The Faculty and Staff Appeal is a rewarding way for CNA employees to support the fund and help students by reducing the debt they will have to carry after graduation.

In its inaugural year, the fund awarded two scholarships – one for \$1,000 and one for \$500. The two students who received the scholarships have now graduated and moved on to further studies.

This year the number of staff who are contributing has increased by 14.5 per cent and contributions to the fund are up which means that next year four scholarships will be awarded. Lisa Shallow, Manager of Alumni and Advancement, hopes employee participation will continue to grow.

"We would really like to build it up so that more students who really need the help will get it," she says. "These scholarships are based on academic merit, financial merit and campus involvement, so the students who receive them are very deserving."

Shallow says scholarships help

students in a variety of ways, and they also pay dividends for CNA employees.

"Sometimes a scholarship can make the difference for someone to stay in their program, and sometimes it has a career impact on the student's transcript," she says. "Not only that, but donating to the Faculty and Staff Appeal fosters community spirit and gives employees a sense of pride."

Donors also receive a small token of appreciation (the Inukshuk pictured here), and this year there will be additional recognition on the CNA Alumni web page. "Donors can choose to have their name included in our online Donor Wall, or they can choose to remain anonymous, but either way, we want them to know that their generosity is appreciated," says Shallow. "Every contribution that they make is significant for our students and is a reason to celebrate."

Shallow encourages all CNA employees to consider making a contribution to the fund. And while one-time contributions are always welcome, she says many are choosing to give through payroll deductions.

"A commitment of a couple of dollars each pay period is easy for most people, and it adds up over the course of a year. But if you want to look at the longer term, think of how much you will be contributing over your entire career with CNA, and how many students will benefit from your generosity."

Shallow says there's really no deadline to start giving. "Our targeted appeal starts in the fall, but we really encourage people to visit our page on the website at any time and find out more about the benefits of being a contributor. They can even print out their pledge card from there and mail it in, or contact us by e-mail at alumni@cna.nl.ca for more information." *na*



In case you missed it...

E-health funding for training program

June 25, 2010—Representatives from the federal and provincial governments were in Grand Falls-Windsor to announce they would invest a combined total of \$370,000 to help the Excite Corporation launch an initiative designed to develop the region's e-health sector.

E-health allows health care professionals across the province and around the world to access digitized and electronically stored health care records and then teleconference and consult in relation to patients.

The nationally accredited diploma program will be developed by College of the North Atlantic in partnership with Excite Corporation and industry stakeholders. A second part to the project will be to develop and implement an action plan supporting the establishment of the e-health industry in Grand Falls-Windsor.

Graduate gaining world experience

July 6, 2010—Film and Video Production graduate Katie Green always wanted to travel. She spent a lot of her childhood watching slides of her mother's exotic adventures abroad. This summer, Green's dream to travel came true as she headed to Maputo City in Mozambique as a Canada World Youth (CWY) exchange ambassador.

As part of the exchange she lived with a host family and volunteered in the community. A Mozambican youth has also come to Canada and along with Green has headed out to British Columbia for three months helping out in the Cowichan Valley.

Dianne Whalen had long career at CNA

October 3, 2010—Municipal Affairs Minister Dianne Whalen, who lost her battle with cancer this fall, was a long-time CNA employee at the Ridge Road and Prince Philip Drive campuses. Starting out as a cafeteria cashier in 1972, Whalen moved on to work as a switchboard operator, bookstore clerk and secretary, spending time in the student services and registrar's offices before leaving in 2003 with 31 years of service.

Whalen was predeceased by her husband

Joseph and left to mourn her children Dean, Darryl and Kimberley Ann, along with a wide circle of family, friends and colleagues.

Instructor discovers ants

October 5, 2010—Carbonear campus biology instructor Barry Hicks discovered recently that there are indeed fire ants in Newfoundland. He has argued in the past that the European fire ants could not be found in Newfoundland but this fall he discovered them in the ground and in the air.

Although these fire ants can pack a nasty sting, he says that there is no need to be alarmed but that people with specific allergies are more at risk. The fire ant has been found in parts of North America and eastern Canada for a while now. Hicks found them in the Corner Brook area and now in and around Carbonear. He is currently on a mission to find out how widespread the ants are in this province.

Enrolment increase in recent registration

October 5, 2010—College of the North Atlantic's enrolment is up by 10.5 per cent for the 2010/11 academic year.

The increase was the result of additional marketing and the concerted efforts of faculty and staff to use innovative recruiting methods, after concerns about H1N1 influenza caused the cancellation of recruitment activities in the fall of 2009.

At a time when high school populations are decreasing across the province, President Bruce Hollett says it's encouraging to see that College of the North Atlantic is still an attractive option for students.

"Of course, it helps that we have an incredible slate of programs that is designed to meet the changing needs of an evolving Newfoundland and Labrador workforce," said Hollett. "This increase is also an indicator that our programs are relevant and prepare students for a high level of post-graduate employment in a variety of sectors."

CNA students receive scholarships

October 14, 2010—Twelve College of the North Atlantic students have received the Boeing Company Entrance Awards. Seven awards, valued at \$2,000 each were awarded to students entering the Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Technician program. Five awards, valued at \$1,500 each, were awarded to Aircraft Structural Repair program students. Both are based on financial need and academic merit in high school.

The Boeing Company is the world's leading aerospace company and the largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners and military aircraft combined. Boeing supports students on a limited basis through scholarships and awards, which may be available to students who attend one of the colleges and universities with whom Boeing partners.

From instructing to Indonesia

October 25, 2010—One of CNA's former instructors, Dr. Tony Brunetti, will be heading to Indonesia to lend some expertise and a helping hand. Brunetti will help expand sustainable development for the district of Nagekeo and will advise local government and planning staff on opportunities to develop food and agriculture security.

CNA wins supportive training award

October 25, 2010—College of the North Atlantic has received the 2010 award for the most supportive training institute in the Partners of Workplace Inclusion Program (PWIP).

PWIP provides job seekers with disabilities with tools to prepare for a career or secure employment. For more information about PWIP visit www.ccrw.org/pwip/.

Student receives bravery award

November 23, 2010—Ryan Burry, a Civil Engineering student at the Ridge Road campus, received the Governor General's Bravery Award. Burry was honoured for rescuing his aunt and her three-year-old daughter when their snowmobile fell through the ice near Boyd's Cove in January 2008. 

Chocolate Truffles

Recipe courtesy of Dereck Collier, cooking instructor at Seal Cove campus.

Ingredients

10 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon light corn syrup
1/4 cup brandy or rum (optional)
1/2 cup cocoa powder
8 ounces semi-sweet or bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
1/2 cup finely chopped nuts or toasted coconut

Directions

Melt the 10 ounces of bittersweet chocolate with butter over medium heat.

Combine the heavy cream and corn syrup, and heat to boiling in a separate pan. Pour the hot cream mixture over the melted chocolate. Let stand at room temperature for 2 minutes, then stir until smooth.

Stir in brandy, pour mixture into an 8-inch square pan and refrigerate for one hour.

Using a melon scoop, form into balls and lay on parchment paper.

Return to refrigerator for 30 minutes, then roll chocolate balls in chopped nuts, toasted coconut, cocoa or chopped chocolate.

Store tightly covered in freezer. *u*



Marcus Clark admits he's not a big chocolate fan, but the first-year cooking student at the Seal Cove campus says he still found it hard to resist these mouth-watering Chocolate Truffles.

"The hardest part is having the patience to roll them up and try to make them into perfect circles," he says, explaining that the trick is to keep the chocolate cool and follow the directions carefully.

The Fredericton, New Brunswick native says he's always had an interest in cooking, and likes to experiment with different combinations. He credits his older brother with inspiring him. "He's a huge cook and I was always trying to keep up with him," he says. *u*

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