

RDÉE

Île-du-Prince-Édouard



*Your first stop for francophone entrepreneurial
and community economic development!*

2007-2008 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ENTREPRENEURIAL SERVICES



**The delegated organization's
accomplishment report
is integrated into
this report.**

sdba
LA SOCIÉTÉ DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DE LA BAIE ACADIENNE

Canada 

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Canada

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■ MESSAGE FROM RDÉE CANADA

RDÉE PEI a key partner in our national network

RDÉE Canada (Economic Development and Employability Network) has been working jointly with provincial and territorial organizations (12 RDÉEs) to support the development and fulfillment of francophone communities in minority situations for more than 10 years now. In addition to serving as a leader in community economic development in Acadian and francophone communities, the national RDÉE Canada office offers its provincial and territorial members a vast array of support and intervention services to help sustain them in their actions.

RDÉE Prince Edward Island is in fact a key partner in the Network and is a leader in community economic development in PEI's Acadian communities. I wish to thank Mrs. Louise Comeau and Mr. Francis Thériault, as well as their entire team, for their precious collaboration over the 2007-2008 year. Once again this year, their work has shown that the RDÉE is an essential resource in the preservation of the vitality of Acadian communities. We are very pleased to be able to count on their leadership. Congratulations on your many great accomplishments.

Together, let us contribute actively to the development of the Canadian economy. Let's stay the course!



Roger Lavoie
Executive director
RDÉE Canada



■ A NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Concrete results from one end of the country to the other



Over the past year, RDÉE Canada hired one of the most respected consulting firms in the country, “Ronald Bisson & Associates Inc.”, to conduct an independent evaluation of the operations and the impacts of its national network on the Acadian and francophone community of Canada. The study covered five years of operation – the fiscal years from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007 – and included the 12 provincial and territorial RDÉEs. (Please note that there are RDÉEs in all nine provinces and three territories where francophones are considered a minority group.)

The results are quite impressive, both on the national and provincial levels.

Overview for the Canadian network

The RDÉEs combined have approximately 130 employees, including 100 development officers.

Based on the 2006-2007 year only:

- Each permanent employee of the provincial and territorial RDÉEs creates an average of 24.25 jobs that would not have been created without their involvement. (Total of 3,007 jobs created, either on a permanent, seasonal, full time or part-time.)
- Each permanent employee of the provincial and territorial RDÉEs, on average, works with 45.22 volunteers who are actively involved in the projects (for a total of 5,607 volunteers).
- Each provincial and territorial RDÉE works with an average of 104.2 partners.

- The RDÉEs produced 688 business plans, strategic plans and community plans.
- In total, RDÉE activities involved 99,512 person-activities.
- The average development and implementation period for a project runs between two and three years.

The evaluation concluded that the RDÉEs make great progress in attaining anticipated results:

- Improved accessibility to quality services in French in the field of community economic development (CED);
- An improvement of skills in community economic development;
- Increased recognition of the RDÉEs’ contribution by various levels of government, particularly by the federal government and certain municipalities;

■ A NATIONAL OVERVIEW

Overview for the Canadian network... continued

- An increase in the number of pertinent CED projects carried out in French.

A few important observations:

- The evaluation acknowledges the beginning of the creation of a nation-wide francophone economic identity that is a key cog in the Canadian economy;

- The RDÉEs have a strong research capacity, which helps them to better understand the francophone communities in regards to community economic development;
- The RDÉEs often facilitate communication between the community and governments.

RDÉE PEI accomplishments

A section of the report highlights several of RDÉE PEI's major accomplishments. The consultants focused on these because they are different, unique, innovative or worthy of mention for a number of reasons. (Please note that several of these projects are discussed in greater detail later in this annual report.) The consultants mentioned several important initiatives:

- The PERCÉ program, which offers post-secondary students a work and mentorship experience in their field of studies with a PEI employer;
- The LAVAG evaluation tool, which serves to document all the actions taken to implement the Vision Plans, including all six regional plans and the provincial plan;
- The development of www.monile.ca web site which encourages people "from away" to settle on PEI;
- The establishment of a broadband network;
- The creation of the www.ilebranchee.ca one-stop portal;
- The Young Millionaires and Junior Achievers programs;
- The creation of the Alliance touristique acadienne et francophone de l'Î.-P.-É.;
- The development and support of the Carrefour d'immigration rural (CIR);
- The production of a series of socioeconomic profiles for Prince, Queens and Kings counties;
- The promotional tours of the team in all regions of the province;
- And support to the Association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'Î.-P.-É., particularly in the production of the "I Can Do It" DVD.

■ MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD'S CO-CHAIRS

The RDÉE is always present to help with community development



The Island's Acadian and francophone community has seen a number of major accomplishments during the 2007-2008 year. In addition to develop considerably closer ties with the new provincial government, the community has also seen, among other things, the opening of the new Centre Goéland, the launch of its new www.ilebranchee.ca one-stop portal, the offering of entrepreneurial services in French, the incorporation of the Alliance touristique acadienne et francophone de l'Î.-P.-É., a close collaboration with the aerospace industry, the hosting of an Atlantic forum between RDÉEs and ACOA, the organization of a major community-governmental forum and the establishment of the Festival Acadiversité.

If you look closely at every single one of these major projects, you'll see that RDÉE Prince Edward Island played a role, sometimes small but often major, in their development. Without this constant support, many of these projects would simply never have seen the light of day or reached the heights they have reached. More and more, we realize that the RDÉE has become indispensable to the economic development of our communities.

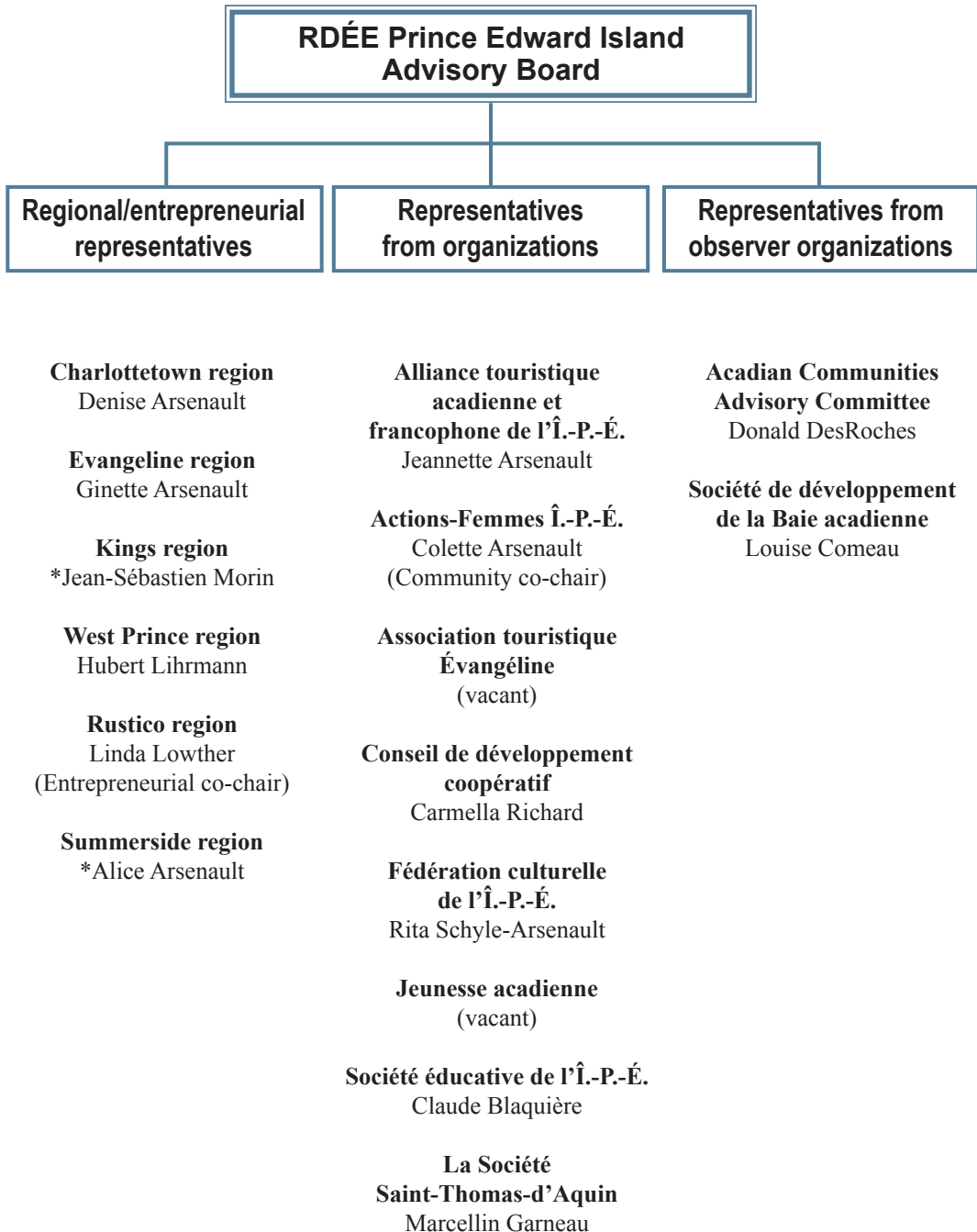
The RDÉE PEI Advisory Board sincerely congratulates and thanks the entire RDÉE team for its valiant efforts over the past year and encourages the team to keep pursuing its mission of "promoting economic development and job creation in the Acadian and Francophone communities of PEI" for many years to come. Thanks also to our delegated organization, La Société de développement de la Baie acadienne, for its constant support.

Our thanks are also extended to the government departments that provide the RDÉE with its core operational funding, namely Service Canada and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

Colette Arsenault
Community co-chair

Linda Lowther
Entrepreneurial co-chair

■ ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



** Elected June 3, 2008. These two representatives were elected to complete the mandates of Stéphan Ruest and Gilles DesRosiers who were unable to complete their terms.*

■ MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

Overview of 2007-2008, forecast for 2008-2011



The 2007-2008 year was extremely busy for the RDÉE, both from the entrepreneurial services angle and the community economic development angle.

We have added some important elements to our tool box by establishing partnerships with other Anglophone development corporations throughout the province and with the City of Summerside. We have also taken advantage of this past year to fine-tune newly acquired internal skills in regards to entrepreneurial development services and to open a new branch office in the provincial capital. At the publishing of this report, we have more than 70 names, from one end of the province to the other, on our list of entrepreneurial clients having requested our services, thereby affirming the great need for such support services in French.

The addition of entrepreneurial services in 2006-2007 has certainly not reduced our participation in community economic development (CED) projects. In fact, we worked towards the realization of more than 40 projects over the past year. Among these initiatives, the RDÉE pursued its role as a link between the community and governments and hosted two major forums, one at the provincial level and the other at the Atlantic level.

We have continued to maintain close working relationships with other RDÉEs at the Atlantic and national levels by participating in various joint activities, studies, plans and projects. The Bisson Report, launched this spring and encapsulating results of the national RDÉE network (2002-2007), clearly shows that RDÉE PEI is taking its rightful place and participates actively in the success of the national network.

The RDÉE is constantly seeking new strategic alliances to promote the development of our community. Following the establishment of a partnership at the national level, we have established close ties with some Quebec SADCs (Francophone equivalents of CBDCs), particularly with the one situated in the Magdalen Islands, where people face challenges similar to those seen here.

The triennial economic development plan for the province's Acadian communities, which will be completed in October 2008, will surely dictate the road to take for sustainable development in our communities for the next three years. At the same time, we are undertaking a strategy to ensure a greater presence in all Acadian and francophone regions of the province. Thanks to our relationships with various development corporations and agencies as well as with the school-community centers, we already have access to office space and meeting rooms in all regions of the province.

I wish to thank the Société de développement de la Baie acadienne and the RDÉE PEI Advisory Board for their precious support and advice during the past year. THANK YOU to our devoted RDÉE team who give their heart and soul to carry out their duties. A special thanks also goes out to our funding partners for their contributions, who, through their financial assistant, allow us to continue serving the community and to do what we love doing: supporting our communities in local and global development.

Economically yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Francis Thériault'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Francis Thériault, Manager, RDÉE PEI

■ RDÉE TEAM

Hard at work!

RDÉE Prince Edward Island is composed of a team of eight people devoted to the entrepreneurial and economic development of the Island's Acadian and Francophone community. It is comprised of four development officers and a support staff.

Each development officer is assigned as first point of contact for clients from one or two of the Island's Acadian and francophone communities. During the 2008-2009 year, the officers will make a particular effort to be more present in "their" regions. As well, each officer is given a priority domain (formerly called "sectors of intervention").

The RDÉE experienced a few staffing changes in the past year. Our financial administrative assistant, Simone Gallant, who had been with the RDÉE for a number of years, was replaced by Amy Richard. Janine Arsenault has returned from her maternity leave and has returned to her development officer (Tourism) position. Finally, Nicole Drouin now serves as development officer (Knowledge Economy).

DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

Name: Christine Arsenault
Areas: Charlottetown and Kings
Priority domain: Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship

Name: Janine Gallant
Area: West Prince
Priority domain: Tourism

Name: Giselle Bernard
Area: Évangéline
Priority domain: Rural and Urban Development

Name: Nicole Drouin
Areas: Summerside and Rustico
Priority domain: Knowledge Economy

SUPPORT STAFF

Francis Thériault, Manager

Amy Richard, Financial administrative assistant

Raymond J. Arsenault,
Communications and liaison officer

Yves Arsenault,
Programming and computer technician



The RDÉE PEI team is composed of : (from left) Yves Arsenault, programming and computer technician; Francis Thériault, manager; Amy Richard, financial administrative assistant; (standing) development officers Nicole Drouin, Christine Arsenault, Janine Gallant and Giselle Bernard; and Raymond J. Arsenault, communications and liaison officer.

■ OUR SERVICES

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED)

The community economic development (CED) concept is based on the following general principles:

- Stimulation of co-operation and partnerships
- Creation of sustainable jobs and new businesses as well as the expansion of existing businesses
- Greater level of participation of the community in determining its future.

RDÉE Prince Edward Island offers support to all groups and organisations from PEI's Acadian and francophone community in the various phases of CED projects.

STUDIES: In-depth studies and analysis of potential markets, current trends, community profiles, etc.

PLANNING: Development and implementation of a plan detailing all steps required to carry out a project, including attribution of responsibilities, timelines, etc.

MOBILIZATION AND TAKING CHARGE: Assistance in the motivation of partners and key players to encourage them to take charge of the implementation of their project and to form strategic partnerships.

IMPLEMENTATION: Assistance in the various phases of project implementation, including the identification of funding sources.

PROMOTION: Assistance in the development of a promotional approach for the project.

EVALUATION: Assistance in the evaluation of the project to identify successful elements and challenges met to enable an improvement of the project and a better orientation for future projects.

ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

RDÉE Prince Edward Island collaborates with a number of community and government partners to offer a wide range of services to Acadians and/or francophones wishing to establish or expand a business on Prince Edward Island. The RDÉE can therefore assist clients with one, several or all phases of the entrepreneurial project.

BUSINESS SET-UP: Assistance in all stages of the establishment of a business, including the development of its structure, registration, business planning, etc.

MARKET STUDIES: Professional analysis of the potential markets for a business, its products, its services, etc.

INFORMATION GATHERING: Research to find necessary information on an industry, on applicable rules and regulations, necessary equipment, etc.

BUSINESS PLANS: Development of plans describing all aspects of a business: operation, funding, markets sought, etc.

MARKETING PLANS: Development of plans describing the method to be used to bring a product or service to market, etc.

FUNDING: Assistance in finding sources for the necessary funding to start a business.

OTHER NEEDS: Talk to us about your other needs and we will do whatever we can to help you.

■ ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Office in Charlottetown



Caroline Landry, an officer with Canada Business, welcomes Francis Thériault, manager of RDÉE PEI, to Charlottetown.

Thanks to an agreement concluded with Canada Business, RDÉE Prince Edward Island now has office space in the Jean Canfield Building in Charlottetown. The RDÉE manager and the development officers will spend several days a week there and will be more than happy to meet with clients on an appointment basis.

This office will serve mostly for delivering entrepreneurial support services. The agreement allows the RDÉE team to access Canada Business' vast array of tools and information, which will help us better serve our entrepreneurial clients.

Our partnerships

Over the past year, the RDÉE has continued to broaden its network of partnerships with various organizations, including various Anglophone development corporations, from one end of the province to the other. These partnerships help facilitate its offer of services. These partnerships allow the exchange of knowledge and services at various levels.

Some of the partnerships have been formalized by the signing of collaboration agreements while others are informal partnerships. Among the partnerships that were solidified in the past year are Central Development Corporation in Bedeque, Resources West in Alberton, Active Communities in Montague, the City of Summerside, and the offices of Canada Business in Charlottetown. These can be added to the four previous formal partnerships that were established in the previous year.



Discussing the new collaboration between the Central Development Corporation and RDÉE PEI are, from left, Yves Régimbald, development officer with RDÉE PEI; Jeannette Arsenault, member of both the RDÉE PEI Advisory Board and the Board of Directors of the CDC; Norman Gallant, chairman of the CDC board; and Shane MacDougall, executive director of the CDC.

■ ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Many entrepreneurs supported

Each week, several existing and potential entrepreneurs come knocking on the doors of the RDÉE, asking for entrepreneurial services. Our numbers show the real need for such a service in French. The RDÉE is the only organization to offer the full range of services in French from one end of the province to the other.

Interesting facts

- More than 70 existing and potential entrepreneurs have asked for services.
 - More than 75 % have proceeded with their project.
 - The vast majority of clients are microbusinesses (employing 1-3 people) that operate on a local basis.
 - A few of our clients are major employers in the province (employing 10 to more than 50 people).
 - A few clients are involved with national and international markets.
- Our clients come from all three counties of the province (and outside PEI but conducting business here).
 - Our clients touch upon a wide variety of sectors:
 - Agriculture
 - Construction
 - Food services
 - Artistic production
 - Internet programming
 - Sales
 - Production
 - Services
 - Etc.
 - Among the services most often asked of us are:
 - Financial advice
 - Assistance in the preparation of a business plan
 - Participation in programs such as Self-Employment Benefits.



In September 2007, RDÉE Prince Edward Island launched its brand new entrepreneur's kit that its development officers will now give to clients who want to start or expand a business. Giselle Bernard, left, one of the RDÉE development officers, presented a kit to Johnny Gallant from Gaudet Fur Farm of St. Raphael; at the same time, RDÉE manager Francis Thériault presented the briefcase to Sylvie Toupin from Fibre-Isle International.

■ ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Seven entrepreneurs recognized for their contributions

Seven entrepreneurs, businesses and enterprising people were recognized March 15, during the 2008 Francophone Entrepreneurs' Banquet, for their contribution to the local and provincial economy and for their devotion to their community.

The banquet was organized by RDÉE Prince Edward Island, in conjunction with the Société de développement de la Baie acadienne. Four other organizations – the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of PEI, the Conseil de développement coopératif, Actions Femmes Î.-P.-É. and the Evangeline Tourism Association – joined the organizers to present awards to deserving people and businesses.

For a first time, the RDÉE presented its new JEFLIPE Award (which stands for, in French, Young Enterprising Francophone of PEI) to Andy Gallant of Charlottetown and formerly of Rustico.



Rustico native Andy Gallant, centre, who now lives in Charlottetown, accepted the new JEFLIPE 2008 award from RDÉE manager Francis Thériault (right) and event sponsor Fred Martin, pharmacist manager from Murphy's Pharmacy in Wellington.

The awards received by the winners were actually original, brightly colored paintings by Lucie Bernadette Bellemare, who conceived each piece according to the particular interests of the winners.



The seven winners who accepted awards during the 2008 Francophone Entrepreneurs Banquet were, from left: Cédric Richard, chairman of the Acadian Fishermen's Co-op; Ernest Arsenault, former manager of the Wellington Co-op; Andy Gallant of Charlottetown and formerly of Rustico; Evangeline Gallant, former owner of Chez Évangéline Bed and Breakfast; Réjeanne Doucette, executive director of the Centre Acadien de Prince-Ouest; Léo S. Arsenault, semi-retired owner of Lane Farm; and Gérald Arsenault, representing his father Tilmon Arsenault, retired owner of Cape Egmont Enterprises.

■ ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CED SERVICES

Fourth year for PERCÉ program



Donald Richard, one of last year's eleven PERCÉ program participants, completed his summer training in sound technology at the Harbourfront Jubilee Theatre in Summerside.

For the fourth year in a row, the PERCÉ program helped Island youth find summer jobs that are directly related to their university or college study. PERCÉ allows students to not only get much-needed experience, but also to establish valuable industry contacts. For the first time this past year, the program was expanded; a partnership was formed with Resources West to offer the program to two Anglophone students from the West Prince area. They were added to the nine Francophones who were registered in the program.

One of PERCÉ's main objectives is to encourage youth to return to PEI to make a life

and career for themselves once their studies are completed. During an orientation week, the participants explored the types of career possibilities available to them. They then participated in 10-12 weeks of paid on-the-job training and mentorship with an Island employer working in the student's field of studies.

This year's participants worked in a wide variety of fields: sports administration, speech therapy, optometry, youth activities coordination, preschool teaching, multimedia integration technologies, health care, sound technology, accounting, occupational therapy and sports/recreation leadership.

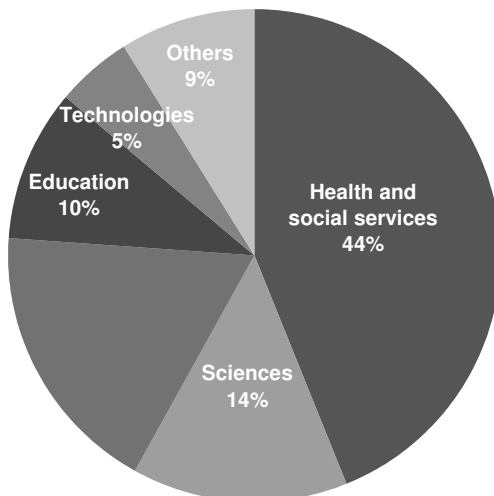
■ ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CED SERVICES

Fourth year for PERCÉ program... continued

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) sponsored the program again this year.

Premier Robert Ghiz was the guest of honour and guest speaker at a reception held to launch the 2008 version of PERCÉ and to celebrate the program's fifth anniversary. He noted that it is good for young people to leave the province to acquire new skills and experiences but then it is also very important to return to PEI to share their new-found knowledge with other Island citizens.

2003-2008 participants' fields of study
Total of 57 participants



Seen during a reception held recently to mark the fifth anniversary of the PERCÉ program and the launching of the 2008 version of the program were, from left, Premier Robert Ghiz (guest speaker), participant Linda Hébert, Louise Comeau, manager of La Société de développement de la Baie acadienne (PERCÉ's host organization), participant Jean-Luc Poulin, and Caroline Landry, representing the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

■ ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CED SERVICES

Young Millionaires launched summer businesses



Nathan Marcoux is doing good business this summer with his “PEI Pots and Jams” business, thanks to training received from the “Jeunes millionnaires” program. Nine other youth also participated in this French-language version of the Young Millionaires Program.

This past year, Jeunes Millionnaires (the francophone version of Young Millionaires) supported 10 young participants, from the Charlottetown, Summerside and Evangeline regions, in the establishment of a small summer business. These young entrepreneurs produced and sold merchandise of all kinds, from jams and vegetables to denim handbags and necklaces. The program first offered participants a series of training sessions on the basics of entrepreneurship, including setting up a company and preparing a business plan.

They then received a grant – a maximum of \$100 for single proprietorships and \$150 for partnerships. Next, they began producing and selling their products or services. In August, a group visit to a real business was organized to give youth a chance to meet adult entrepreneurs and to ask questions. Finally, in mid-August, the youth participated in a final workshop on public speaking. During a recognition night, they presented their short speeches to their parents and invested guests and then receive a participation certificate.

“Jeunes entreprises”: 200 youth in learning

More than 200 young Francophones and Francophiles, from one end of the province to the other, had the opportunity this year to benefit from entrepreneurial session, thanks to the “Jeunes entreprises” program (the French version of Junior Achievement). The RDÉE coordinated and delivered the sessions The Economics of Staying In School

to older youth and Business Basics to younger youth. Each program required four hours of training and exercises. The first series touched on pertinent topics, such as the importance of obtaining a good education and making the right career choice. Business Basics addresses the various facets of entrepreneurship.

■ CED SERVICES

New Centre Goéland officially opens



Participating in the official opening of the new Centre Goéland Feb. 8 were, from left, Giselle Bernard, development officer with RDÉE PEI; Father Éloi Arsenault, the centre's founder and member of the management committee; Senator Gerald Comeau, representing the federal government; Sonny Gallant, MLA for Evangeline-Miscouche representing the provincial government; and Father Eddie Cormier, member of the centre's Board of Directors.

This past February, after more than five years of planning and lobbying, the Acadian and francophone community of PEI was finally able to officially open its new Centre Goéland in Cape Egmont.

The construction project, valued at more than \$1.2 million, was carried out to develop a modern centre that offers an interesting and comfortable experience for clients attending a business, wellness or spiritual retreat. The project included the construction of a new retreat centre along with the addition of a new laneway and addition parking spaces.

The new centre, in spite of its modern facets and appeal, still retains the former centre's peaceful, safe and ecologically-sound ambiance. It will be able to serve a wide range of clients, from cultural and educational groups to human resource development events.

The facility can now lodge about 50 people at a time in this natural atmosphere, which is



The new Centre Goéland.

very appropriate for meditation, reflection and planning. The management committee and new manager Anne Arsenault are currently developing a marketing and programming plan. The centre has remained extremely busy since its opening.

RDÉE PEI is proud to have participated so actively in the development of this major project.

■ CED SERVICES

The www.ilebranchee.ca one-stop portal launched

The Island's Acadian and francophone community celebrated the official launch of its brand new online one-stop services portal, www.ilebranchee.ca, on February 29th. More than 80 people attended the launch and reception at the Carrefour de l'Isle-Saint-Jean in Charlottetown.

In addition to posting and distributing upcoming events notices and job offers through its news section and its daily emailed newsletter, the portal will also give an opportunity

to organizations and governments to exchange information and documents of all kinds and to share a vast series of online management tools through an intranet network.

Organizers explained the portal's operation and paid homage to those who had established the original "Une île branchée" project. As well, a contest was launched to encourage people to subscribe to the newsletter. The new project was funded by Industry Canada's Francocommunautés virtuelles program.



Representatives of the project's main partners participated in the event. They are, from left, Alex Robert, president of the Carrefour's board of directors; Francis Thériault, manager of RDÉE PEI, the organisation that revamped the portal; Bob Brewer, Atlantic regional director for Industry Canada's Spectre sector; Edmond Richard, president of the Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin; and Claude Blaquière, executive director of the Société éducative de l'Î.-P.-É.

■ CED SERVICES

CIR funding renewed

The three-year pilot project to establish the Carrefour d'immigration rural (CIR) Évangéline came to a close at the end of the fiscal year. Luckily, CIR funding has been renewed since the funding organizations are extremely impressed with the results that have been attained.

The RDÉE is pleased to have collaborated with the Conseil de développement coopératif to establish this great project as well as the Coopérative d'intégration francophone de l'Î.-P.-É., which manages the CIR.

Under the direction of manager Georges Monfray, the CIR continues to oversee the work of an energetic team that has invested itself into a number of projects over the past year. Among the more prominent events were European missions, public information sessions, school events and the new Festival Acadiversité, which was a huge success.

Over the past year, the CIR has created a solid partnership with official from the provincial government's Population Secretariat.

The CIR's objective is to prepare the community to welcome new people and to facilitate the integration of these newcomers into the community. Over the coming year, the CIR will broaden its services to cover the West



Perpétue Muramutse, originally from Rwanda but now living in Montreal, visited PEI to offer sessions on cultural integration. (Photo provided by La Voix Acadienne.)

Prince region. In the new fiscal year, it will continue to develop its welcoming strategy and to implement its awareness campaign. It will organize the Festival Acadiversité once again and will stage a play.



■ CED SERVICES

Alliance develops tourism passport



The Alliance touristique acadienne et francophone de l'Î.-P.-É. (PEI Acadian tourism alliance), which was officially incorporated October 2nd, 2007, is presently developing its first major project – a provincial francophone tourism passport. This little booklet, which will be distributed to French-speaking visitors, will include descriptions of about 10 tourism

businesses and attractions that are participating in the project and that guarantee a quality service in French at all times. Tourists are encouraged to visit each of the identified locations and obtain a stamp in their passport. Those who have obtained a stamp from all the participating attractions will then receive a small reward. The passport, which will also contain other tourism information about PEI, will be launched in time for the 2008 tourism season.

In other matters, the Alliance is hoping to be able to prepare an inventory and to conduct an evaluation of francophone tourist businesses to determine the level of service that is available in French.

The RDÉE has been involved in every one of the Alliance's projects, from its establishment to the development and implementation of its action plan.

Charlottetown overtaken by Francofolies

The first edition of the festival “Les Francofolies de Charlottetown”, spread over two days, was held in the summer of 2007. The event was quite successful. Wanting to solidify and expand the festival, the group approached the RDÉE, which supported the committee in the preparation of funding proposals, the structuring of the event and the organization of the 2008 version of the festival.

This major event once again took place on Richmond Street's Victoria Row. For three days in June, the entire street, decorated in Acadian colors, gave visitors a chance to take in a variety of visual arts and Acadian music.

Among the featured musicians this year were Mario Robichaud, Yves Lambert and the Bébert Orchestra, Vishten, Suroit, La Virée and Jean-

François Breau. Admission to all shows was free! In the Kier Gallery, visitors could admire works of art by Acadian, Francophone and Francophile artists of PEI.



Francofolies coordinator Ghislaine Cormier checks out the festival's promotional material with event chair Éric Godin, centre, and treasurer Martin Marcoux.

■ CED SERVICES

A provincial three-year CED plan being developed

Every year, RDÉE PEI develops its own internal action plan to guide its interventions. In addition to that regular plan, the RDÉE has this year accepted to prepare a three-year, provincial community economic development (CED) plan for 2009-2012. This initiative thereby addresses a resolution adopted at the last annual general meeting of La Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, asking "that the SSTA take on the leadership in the elaboration of economic development strategies for the Island's Acadian and francophone communities and that this undertaking include an objective analysis and evaluation of economic-based interventions in our communities".

It is expected that this planning project will provide a development plan identifying business opportunities and other needs in regards to infrastructure, human resources development, etc., that fall into the orientations that the communities will have given themselves. RDÉE PEI, in collaboration with its community, government and entrepreneurial partners, will call upon the services of a consultant to facilitate the process.

The project will begin with an in-depth analysis of the environment (changes, tendencies, challenges, etc.) The process will then include consultations with community economic stakeholders and entrepreneurs in each of the six

Acadian regions of PEI, members of the RDÉE PEI Advisory Board, provincial organizations interested in economic development, government collaborators and groups interested in CED at the national level (RDÉE Canada, SADC, etc.)

Next, in addition to examining the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities that will have been identified, the consultants will analyze infrastructure needs related to economic development in all six regions (types of infrastructure requested, capacity required, needs in relation to support and related services, etc.) Opportunities for new businesses, as well as for existing businesses requiring reinforcement or expansions, will be looked at. Of course, the capacities of human and community resources, in regards to economic development, will also be studied.

The consortium of consultants hired to carry out the project (formed of Ronald Bisson and Associates, XO Consultants and Shift Central) will then write a preliminary report, which will include a provincial plan as well as a plan for each community, to be discussed and validated by the planning committee. Finally, a three-year operational plan will be prepared. It is expected that the whole process will be concluded by the end of October.

Majority of Vision Plan activities accomplished

At this writing, only 10 months in the implementation phase of the five-year Vision Plan and the vast majority of projects have been completed. Those that aren't finished are mostly in various phases of development or implementation. And a few, here and there, were not undertaken because they are no longer pertinent for various reasons, including changing priorities in the regions.

The Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, which serves as the organization responsible for the implementation of the Vision Plan, is now looking at the next global development plan for the province. It will therefore evaluate the process that was used for the Vision Plans to determine which elements could be used for a future plan.

■ COMMUNITY-GOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

Sharing and exchanging at Community-Governmental Forum



Attending the Community-Government Forum were, from left, Claude Blaquière, community co-chair of the FRDC; Rachel Clark McDermid, cultural development officer with Canadian Heritage; Marcel Bernard, community development officer with the Department of Development and Technology; and Marcellin Garneau, vice-chair of the Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin.

Eighty-two people from the Acadian and francophone community of Prince Edward Island, as well as from the provincial and federal governments, gathered in Summerside February 20th, 2008, during the first-ever Community-Governmental Forum. Organized by the Francophone Resources Development Committee (FRDC), a tripartite committee working towards the community economic development and fulfillment of the Acadian community, the forum was an opportunity to share information and discuss potential collaborations and projects.

The event, which was coordinated by RDÉE PEI and Canadian Heritage, surpassed the FRDC's expectations. The forum attracted representatives from more than 40 community organizations and from about 20 different federal and provincial departments. Many participants have expressed how pleased they

were with the information they received during the presentations and with the contacts they established during the one-on-one meetings. Organizers are certain that several concrete projects will eventually rise from these meetings.

At the beginning of the day, Edmond Richard, president of the Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, provided participants with an overview of the community, its needs and its priorities. He also suggested a number of positive measures to be taken when government wishes to deal with the community. Several departments made presentations on topics such as employment, health, education, tourism and economic, technological, community and cultural-artistic development. As well, 12 departments and two community organizations had the opportunity to distribute information at kiosks throughout the day.

■ COMMUNITY-GOVERNMENT COLLABORATION

FRDC Action Plan: Mission Accomplished

Two years ago, the Francophone Resources Development Committee (FRDC) adopted a four-pronged action plan. A vast majority of activities from the plan have been accomplished or are being completed. Here are some of the projects accomplished within each objective.

Objective A: Partnerships and strategic alliances

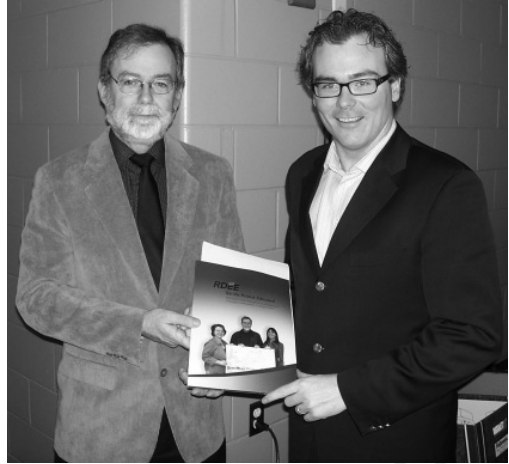
- Establishment of the www. ilebranche.ca community portal
- Creation of a community-federal-provincial communications committee
- Organization of a community-governmental forum
- Development of information sheets suggesting positive measures that should be used by governments when they wish to deal with the community.

Objective B: Entrepreneurial and community economic development

- Establishment of a provincial support service for francophone entrepreneurs by the RDÉE
- Partnerships with numerous anglophone development corporations and agencies.

Objective C: Immigration and youth

- The federal and provincial governments have agreed to continue funding the CIR Évangéline, following the completion of its three-year pilot project. This initiative aims to promote integration of newcomers into the region. The program will be broadened to cover other regions of the province.
- The PERCÉ program has been expanded for the new year, thanks to continued funding from ACOA and, for a first time, thanks to an injection of provincial funds.



Co-chairs Claude Blaquière (community) and Patrick Dorsey (governmental).

Objective D: Community capacity development and innovation

The Société éducative de l'Î.-P.-É. has...

- established a mentorship program called “Leadership entrepreneurial communautaire” (LEC);
- established a training program for community personnel and volunteers in partnership with the SSTA
- obtained from the province the official status of French-language community college
- developed innovative literacy programs for Acadians and francophones from the Evangeline and West Prince regions.

■ ATLANTIC COLLABORATION

Atlantic RDÉEs and ACOA organize exchange forum

More than 50 people gathered in Summerside Jan. 16-17 to participate in the Atlantic Exchange Forum, organized jointly by the four Atlantic RDÉEs and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The theme of the gathering was “Harmonizing Efforts To Optimize Results”. In addition to representatives from the partner organizations, the forum also attracted several other federal departments and community organizations.

Following a banquet on the first night, a presentation on RDÉE Canada, presentations on major accomplishments by the four provincial RDÉEs and an overview of ACOA were delivered to delegates in the morning. During afternoon workshops, participants discussed

avenues of collaboration to fill out the joint RDÉE-ACOA action plan.

A committee, formed of representatives of all four Atlantic RDÉEs and ACOA, gave itself two main objectives for the 2007-2009 period. The first consisted of the sharing of action plans and economic information and the second focused on contributing to sustainable economic and entrepreneurial development.

This joint committee’s vision is to create an environment where the Acadian and francophone community of Atlantic Canada can develop itself on an economic and entrepreneurial basis. Its mandate is to take on collaborative actions to reinforce the community’s economy.



Following the forum banquet, from left, are Louis-Philippe Gauthier, chairman of the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick; Josée Dalton, manager of RDÉE Newfoundland-Labrador; Francis Thériault, manager of RDÉE PEI; guest speaker Hermel Vienneau, vice-chair of ACOA’s New Brunswick region; Pierrette Williams, interim manager for ACOA’s Official Languages and Multiculturalism sector; Louise Comeau, manager of La Société de développement de la Baie acadienne; Yvon Samson, manager of RDÉE Nouvelle-Écosse; Roger Lavoie, executive director of RDÉE Canada; and Johanne Lévesque, manager of RDÉE New Brunswick.



sdba

**LA SOCIÉTÉ DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DE LA BAIE ACADIENNE**



Toward a new beginning...

■ RAPPORT ANNUEL DE LA SDBA



Goal and mission of the SDBA

La Société de développement de la Baie acadienne, from Prince Edward Island's Evangeline region, is a francophone organization which, in collaboration with privileged partners and by adhering to a strategic plan, ensures economic development by undertaking innovative projects. It offers support services to both developing and existing private businesses, co-operatives and community organizations to stimulate economic growth and to facilitate transition towards the new economy. It encourages the implementation of provincial and national mechanisms that will help promote socio-economic development.

Territory

La Société de développement de la Baie acadienne focuses its activities in PEI's Evangeline region but it can intervene in any region of the province where Acadians and Francophones reside, in accordance to the SDBA's mandate as delegated organization for the RDÉE.

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■ CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Toward a new beginning

We are arriving at an end as well as at a beginning for the SDBA. We say an end because we have completed our three-year plan and we are at the point of starting over to ensure the continuing development of our region. And yes, we are talking about a beginning because next year will be a year of consultation and planning as we set objectives that are as realistic as possible to follow the projects that are currently underway. We must reflect on the development of our community for the next few years, we must look ahead past the recent work that we have accomplished, focusing beyond the horizon, in order to develop a long-term vision.

This planning will force us to evaluate the results obtained over the past three years, to analyze the pertinence of these results in a world that is constantly evolving and to reflect with the community on the needs and challenges that we face today and that we anticipate for the future.

Why is this kind of planning so important? The answer is simple. We are in a very competitive and changing world. Our most important resource, our francophone human resources, is in demand all over the globe. How are we going to attract and retain these resources in our communities in order to ensure the vitality of our regions? What can we do to maintain an adequate work force? How will we ensure the survival of our rural community in our small province of Prince Edward Island, in this large country on this huge planet?

In this sometimes confusing world, full of great possibilities and multiple options for the development of our community, it is essential to clearly identify the issues, the challenges and the best practices in order to make the best choices. During the coming year, the SDBA will speak with the citizens of this region in order to find out what kind of community we want to build for future generations and what



vision we should have for them. We invite the community to participate actively because it is the community who will be impacted by the results.

Stephen Arsenault, Chairman

Board of Directors of the SDBA

Stephen Arsenault

Chairman
Entrepreneurial sector representative

Marcel Caissie

Representative for the Municipality of
Abram's-Village

Ronald Caissie

Vice-president
Tourism sector representative

Audrey Gee

Representative for the Municipality of
Wellington

Louise Gallant

Secretary
Agricultural sector representative

Angèle Arsenault

Co-operatif sector representative

Vacant position

■ MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGER

Responding to the needs of the community



In 2005, the SDBA set objectives for the next three years focusing on three key strategies in the Vision plan for the Acadian and francophone communities of the Island. These were **economic positioning, entrepreneurial culture and adapting and diversifying the economy.**

In the context of the realities identified in the Vision plan in 2004, as well as the reality of all our regions on Prince Edward Island, the SDBA wanted to put its efforts towards objec-

tives which adhered to the recommendations of the plan and to the realities of the rural regions of our province, also identified by our anglophone counterparts, as well as by our various levels of government.

We decided to put in place tools, programs, practices and models which would contribute toward the solutions to the challenges our communities face. Witnessing the exodus of our youth, the falling birthrate, the aging of the population, the migration towards larger centers, the diminishing workforce, the SDBA realized that there was only one route to take and that was to be proactive in order to counter these challenges.

In the summary of our last planning period, from the time the Vision plan was launched, up until today, we find activities that are results-based and endorsed by the community. We are confident that the community made good decisions based on the context at the time and it's been a pleasure for the SDBA to work in partnership with various organizations as well as the three levels of government. You will find, in this report, the summary of activities we took on to respond to the needs identified by the community.

I would like to thank the board of directors for its continuous support. I would also like to sincerely thank the employees of the RDÉE. Without their energy and their abilities, we would never have been able to attain the results which we have attained. Thank you also to the provincial and federal governments for their financial support and for their collaboration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Comeau'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Louise Comeau
Executive director

■ WORK TEAM

A very busy team



The SDBA staff is composed of, from left, PERCÉ co-ordinator Léona Bernard, manager Louise Comeau and administrative assistant Noella Richard.

The Société de développement de la Baie acadienne benefits from the services of three very busy employees: Louise Comeau – manager, Noella Richard – administrative assistant, Léona Bernard – coordinator of the PERCÉ program

The RDÉE team complements our services, as needed, anywhere on PEI where there are Acadians and francophones.

Building management

The SDBA continues to manage three important buildings in Wellington :

- a) **The Centre d'affaires communautaire**, a community business centre that houses the offices of the SDBA and RDÉE PEI team, the offices of Access PEI and of the provincial Acadian and Francophone Affairs Division, offices and classrooms of the Collège Acadie Î.-P.-É., the offices of the Conseil de développement coopératif, of MindSWEEP and of the accounting firm Schurman Sudsbury and Associates, as well as a space for the Evangeline Tourism Association.
- b) **Place du Village**, a commercial centre that houses a store operated by the PEI Liquor Control Commission as well as the offices of Career Services, The Cooperators and the law firm Key, McKnight and Maynard, Murphy's Pharmacy and Café Plus. Wellington Co-op's grocery store is also attached to this building.
- c) **La Promenade acadienne** serves as an incubator mall for new business and provides commercial spaces in addition to housing other businesses. The General Store and The Horse Shack are currently located there. The Coopérative d'intégration francophone de l'Î.-P.-É. also has office space in the facility.

■ ACTION PLAN ACTIVITIES

Implementation of the 2007-2008 action plan

1. Infrastructure management

We carried out some major renovations to the Place du Village mini-mall in Wellington (See page 29). We then attempted to fill vacant spaces in the properties managed by the SDBA. We were able to rent a space in the Place du Village by leasing it to Murphy's Pharmacies. At the Promenade acadienne in Day's Corner, three of the spaces are now occupied by incubator program participants. The Centre d'affaires communautaire in Wellington is completely full.

2. Lobbying and frequent communication with various levels of government

We participated in several meetings with ministers, deputy ministers, elected officials and senior provincial and federal officials, as needed, to ensure the advancement of certain projects. We were able to achieve a good collaboration between both levels of government as we received financial support for several projects and programs. We also witnessed a good level of support and participation by both levels of government at the Community-Governmental Forum as well as on the Francophone Resources Development Committee (FRDC). Finally, the province is more and more open to collaborating with the Acadian and francophone community of P.E.I.

3. Management and supervision of human and financial resources

We reviewed the employee handbook and ensured that the policies in the handbook were being followed. We clarified the job descriptions and we conducted employee evaluations. We are proud to have a competent team that attains results. The employees know their strengths and their weaknesses, which helps them to develop their abilities. The team participated in professional development days as well.

4. Up-to-date financial reports and loan consolidation

The board of directors is kept up to date in regards to our financial situation. This year, we made arrangements to consolidate the SDBA's

loans, which considerably lowered its monthly payments.

5. Creating strategic alliances and partnerships

(See page 9)

6. Annual evaluation of the impact of the SDBA

We participated in a greater number of community economic development initiatives (business services, community projects, training, development of tools).

7. Exploring the possibilities of developing a wind turbine park and a wood pellet factory

(See page 32)

8. Establishment of a mentoring program

The SDBA participated in the establishment of the LEC program (Leadership entrepreneurial communautaire), in collaboration with the Société éducative de l'Î.-P.-É. and other partners. This program, which lasted 10 months, consisted of six training modules. The participants took part in classroom sessions, benefitted from mentoring, learned strategic awareness techniques and participated in a community of practice. Seven people completed the program and were certified.

9. Reviving of the business incubation program

The SDBA renewed this program. Clients are presently benefitting from it.

10. Participation in the development of a succession program

(See page 31)

Please note: The SDBA action plan foresaw two other activities, namely to work toward the development of a tourism initiative concerning added value in the fishing sector and to carry out a survey to determine the need for infrastructures in the region. Preliminary efforts have been made however there are no results to report at this time. These activities are to be completed during the upcoming year.

■ ACTION PLAN ACTIVITIES

La Place du Village renovated and modernized

Over the past year, the Place du Village mini-mall in Wellington, which is owned by the SDBA, was renovated and modernized, inside and out. Many changes were made, including remodeling and rebuilding the entrances, changing the windows and replacing the siding.

We expanded the complex by approximately 2,500 square feet, at the Wellington Co-operative end of the building, in order to better meet the needs of the local clientele. (The co-operative took advantage of this expansion to update its own space, to build new offices and

to change its display areas.) Inside the centre, a lot of painting was done and the hallway leading to the co-operative and washrooms was widened. Overall the building is more attractive, thanks to its new colors and its new modern “look”.

Contributions from ACOA, Service Canada and the government of Prince Edward Island towards this project total \$786,634.00.

There remained a balance of \$85,940.00 to cover, so the SDBA and the co-operative decided to share responsibility for the mortgage.



After the renovations.



Before the renovations.

■ ACTION PLAN ACTIVITIES

The Evangeline area welcomes a new pharmacy



Fred Martin, pharmacist-manager of the Murphy's Pharmacies store at Place du Village in Wellington, and his assistant, Sarah Paynter, are pleased to welcome and serve customers.

The Evangeline area felt a great void after a pharmacy in Wellington had closed its doors more than two years ago. Several partners in the community had attempted to negotiate with various pharmacies to try to bring a similar service back into the region.

It was therefore a glorious day when the SDBA announced that it had signed an agreement with Murphy's Pharmacies to locate a new store in the Place du Village mini-mall. The pharmacy opened its doors Feb. 11th, 2008, with a full service prescription dispensary, as well as over-the-counter products. It is open from Monday through Friday. In no time, the community was going there to have their prescriptions filled.

Having a pharmacy in our own community means that our seniors, our young families and our entire population won't need to travel to Summerside in order to purchase their medication.

We hope that this will be beneficial to the region when trying to secure the services of a doctor for the area. The pharmacy being located in Wellington also encourages people to do business with the other stores and services located within Place du Village.

The well-known pharmacist from Maximeville, Fred Martin, was hired as the pharmacist-manager. His assistant is Sarah Paynter from Kensington.

■ ACTION PLAN ACTIVITIES

SDBA a partner in the S.O.S. Relève project

Every business, whether it is in its very beginning stages or whether it's been in existence for decades, should have a succession plan to ensure a well-planned transfer of the business to a new owner, after the retirement, the departure or the death of its present owner. Convinced of the importance of this type of planning, the SDBA became a partner in the project S.O.S. Relève, an online training program for francophone entrepreneurs who want to prepare a succession plan for their business. The other partners are the New Brunswick Community College (Dieppe campus), the Université Sainte-Anne and the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

S.O.S. Relève, which was officially launched in April 2008 in Halifax, N.S., is an innovative project that uses unique approaches to guide Acadian and francophone entrepreneurs from all over Canada, and even all over the world, in planning for the future of their business. During

the first phase of the project, 12 interviews with entrepreneurs (three of which were from the Island – Henri Gallant, Réjeanne Arsenault and Alfred Arsenault) were filmed. These clips will be used throughout the training program.

During the second phase, five online training modules, lasting 10 hours each, were developed. The modules deal with the following topics:

- the reflection process in relation to succession planning
- the health of the business
- the choice of a successor
- the fiscal and legal implications of succession planning
- the succession plan.

This project was made possible thanks to a financial contribution from Industry Canada's Franccommunautés virtuelles program. More details about S.O.S. Relève can be obtained by visiting the website www.sosreleve.ca.



The partners in the S.O.S. Relève project, at the official launch in Halifax, N.S. are, from the left: Pierrette Melanson from the New Brunswick Community College, Dieppe campus; André Robert from Université Sainte-Anne; Louise Comeau from the Société de développement de la Baie acadienne; Marie-France Prayal also from Université Sainte-Anne; and Nathalie Poirier from the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse.

■ ACTION PLAN ACTIVITIES

Studying alternative energy sources



For several years now, the Société de développement de la Baie acadienne has had in its plans the intention of studying the production of alternate energy supplies in order to enable the community to benefit from them. This past year, it has had the opportunity to examine and study two projects that could have great benefits for the region.

The first study looked at the establishment of a factory to produce wood pellets that are used in specialized furnaces to heat homes and commercial buildings. They leave very little ash residue and emit very limited amounts of

pollutants in the air. The best part is that the production of the wood pellets requires only wood chips, sawdust, as well as branches and previously cut wood, all of which are by-products deemed useless by the forestry industry. There is no need to destroy more trees. There is also a possibility of developing pellets using agricultural products such as straw, hay and other plants. There is a growing market here in North America and in Europe for this type of heating. We are presently in negotiation with a private entrepreneur who is interested in becoming a partner in such a project.

Secondly, we are exploring the possibility of establishing a wind turbine park in the area, more specifically in the woodland along the Cannontown Road. A tower was erected last summer to measure the winds in the area to determine if there is enough wind to turn the blades of a wind turbine and to produce an adequate level of wind energy. A working group, formed of municipal and parish representatives, as well as other key partners (Alfred Arsenault, Aubrey Cormier, Father Éloi Arsenault, Robert Arsenault, Ivan Arsenault, Alcide Bernard and Roger Gallant), was established to look at all facets of such a project. Louise Comeau, Francis Thériault and Giselle Bernard also sit on the committee to facilitate the group's work.

Several private firms from the wind turbine industry were consulted in order to gather information about different models and structures that are available. The goal of the committee is to find a partner who can provide the necessary expertise and experience and who is ready to equitably share the profits of the project with the community. We would like to see the land owners compensated for the land they would lease to the project but that the community in general would be able to benefit as well. In the fall, the committee will begin a public information campaign on this subject so that the citizens of the community will be well informed when comes the times for them to decide on the future of the project.

■ TRANSFORMING OBJECTIVES INTO REALITIES

Activities undertaken to reach the objectives set for 2005-2008

After an intensive research and consultation process to elaborate its strategic plan for 2002-2005, the Société de développement de la Baie acadienne chose to focus on three key strategies: economic positioning, entrepreneurial culture and adapting and diversifying the economy.

The efforts of the SDBA, over the past three years, were in large part devoted to developing the necessary basis to ensure the desired positioning in relation to the goals of the organization. In order to ensure the success of the complementary activities for this positioning, it was necessary to better understand the profile of the community in terms of the needs of its business clientele, the essential infrastructure needed for community economic development and the identification of the capacities and challenges of our human resources in order to level fulfill our needs.

Keeping in mind the basic principle that the greatest riches of our communities lie within our human resources, the SDBA saw that an investment in those resources was of utmost importance. The SDBA created alliances with organizations within its community, and other partners, to ensure, among other things, the rationalization of its resources and the sharing of knowledge with its members.

It is with this background philosophy that the SDBA states its objectives for the next three years. It is therefore important to carry out a logical follow-up on the accomplishments of the last three years since these make up the foundation of our development as a community.

The main objective of sustainable development for the Evangeline region, as summarized in the Vision Plan, is to “promote a sustainable economic development approach which promotes the adaptation and diversification of the economy in the Evangeline region”. This objective is defined by the SDBA through the 10 following goals. Following is an update of these objectives as of Dec. 12th, 2007.

1. Initiation of activities that will encourage our human resources to stay and to come back to the area.

The SDBA developed the PERCÉ initiative in order to inform and entice postsecondary students about the opportunities and benefits of returning to our regions after they complete their studies and also to help them create a network of contacts in their field of studies here on the Island. In our fifth year of the program and having offered the program to 38 postsecondary students to date, we will soon be able to collect data to show the results of this initiative.

The RDÉE took on the management of this initiative and hired a project coordinator each year. Last year, we also welcomed two Anglophone participants to the program. This year, the program is being offered to 10 Francophones and 10 Anglophones from one end of the province to the other. (See page 12 of the RDÉE report.)

2. Positioning of the Evangeline region as a favorable location to live and work

An agreement was signed with the Prince Edward Island Aerospace Human Resource Sector Council expressing a willingness to collaborate in welcoming Francophones who wish to come to the Island to work in the industry and to participate in staff recruiting.

3. Participation in the collective efforts of organizations and governments in attracting immigrants to our region.

The SDBA, through the RDÉE and in collaboration with the Conseil de développement coopératif, played an important role in the establishment of the Carrefour d’immigration rural (CIR) in hopes of attracting immigrants, particularly Francophones, to the Evangeline region. We continue to collaborate closely with the CIR. (See page 17.)

■ TRANSFORMING OBJECTIVES INTO REALITIES

Activities undertaken to reach the objectives set for 2005-2008... suite

4. Communication with partners to raise the population's awareness regarding employment possibilities and shortages in certain trades in the region

With the objective of countering shortages, the SDBA undertook, in 2004, a detailed study addressing francophone human resource shortages in the province. To follow up on the results, which showed major gaps in the trades sector especially over the long term, the SDBA contacted the Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard to initiate training programs in the trades with the most pressing needs. The first round of courses should be offered in the fall of 2008.

5. Implementation of the necessary tools and services to increase the chances of success of our local business people

and

6. Promotion of the use and adaptation of new economy tools among business people and their staff

The SDBA was given the mandate and funding to facilitate the services offered to businesses and entrepreneurs by the RDÉE officers over the past year. Thanks to ACOA, which provided the necessary financial resources for the first year of the service, we were able to assist 40 small, medium and large businesses over this period and we hope that the funding continues. The SDBA also supports entrepreneurship through a business incubation and mentoring program for new businesses and by offering rental space for others.

7. Support to the tourism sector in order to ensure the success of the sector's positioning

Our RDÉE tourism officer invested a lot of energy and time into the establishment of the Alliance touristique acadienne et francophone de l'Î.-P.-É., which supports tourism entrepreneurs in the province. (See

page 18.) The RDÉE team also supports tourism initiatives in the region in collaboration with the Association touristique Évangéline.

8. Negotiation with government for job creation projects

The SDBA had the opportunity to lead discussions and to negotiate with both levels of government, often successfully, to obtain various projects. Some examples of these negotiations were projects that had an impact on the outcomes for our regions, whether in terms of infrastructure, in studies or in training. Included on the list, among others, are the Centre Goéland, the revitalization of the Place du Village, the PERCÉ program, business services, the broadband project and the internship program. One project that was not successful, even after several attempts, was the establishment of a call centre in the region; the lack of francophone human resources for this type of job was the main challenge that prevented this project from becoming a reality.

9. Establishment of programs that aim to develop entrepreneurship, including youth and women's programs

RDÉE officers greatly contributed to the entrepreneurship development, especially through business services, the youth programs PERCÉ, Jeunes millionnaires, Jeunes entreprises and JEFLIPE, the development of the web portal www.monile.ca and the one-stop portal for community services www.ilebranchee.ca, participation in the establishment and the orientation of the employment publication "La Voie de l'emploi", and collaboration in women's initiatives such as "Femmes équité Atlantique" and "Équilibrer revenu, travail et santé".

10. Annual evaluation of economic impacts our activities

Each year, the SDBA and the RDÉE team collect data regarding economic impacts for the community. These results are presented in the annual report.