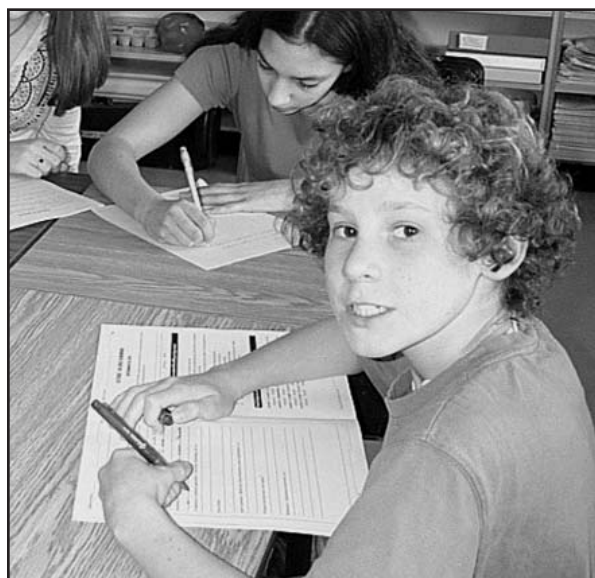


Economic Development and Employability Network of Prince Edward Island



Tourism



Youth



Knowledge economy



Rural Development

RDÉE Île-du-Prince-Édouard Advisory Board

Representatives of provincial and regional organizations

Association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'Î.-P.-É.
Colette Arsenault

Evangeline Tourism Associatoin
Léona Bernard

Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I.
Richard Harvey

Conseil de développement coopératif
Angèle Arsenault

Fédération culturelle de Île-du-Prince-Édouard
France Fournier

Jeunesse acadienne Itée
Maurice Haché

Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard
Gilbert Ladéroute

Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin
Maria Bernard

Regional representatives of entrepreneurs

Charlottetown: *Denise Arsenault*

Evangeline: *Marie-Anne Arsenault*

West Prince: *Roger Gallant*
(up to March 15, 2004)

Rustico: *Jacques Gaudreau*

Souris: *Suzanne René*

Summerside: *Gilles Desrosiers (president)*

Representatives of observer organizations

Acadian Communities Advisory Board
Jean-Paul Arsenault
(until November 21, 2003)

Baie acadienne Development Corporation
Louise Comeau

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Canada

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A year of great accomplishments!

RDÉE Prince Edward Island has given itself the mission of promoting the socio-economic development of the province's Acadian and francophone community. It accomplishes its mission through strategic partnerships with various community organizations and members of its advisory board.

This Advisory Board is made up of all the major stakeholders in the Acadian and francophone community's socio-economic development and private sectors. It is essentially a collaboration and consultation forum for the various economic development organizations in the province.

Since the board has its ears quite close to the ground in regards to community needs, it can help the team to stay in touch with the realities of the various communities it serves. The board provides a general orientation and validates the directions and actions taken by the team who, in turn, takes concrete measures to support the development of community projects that have a socio-economic aspect.

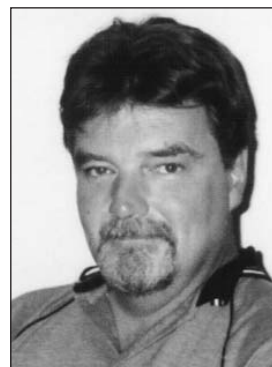
It has to be said right away: the team undertook a huge quantity of such concrete measures over the past year! These range from organizing the 2003 Economic Conference and collaborating on the broadband project to developing the PERCÉ project (aimed at bringing our youth back to P.E.I.) to assisting with the Mont-Carmel Parish's promotional video and the Vision Project.

All you have to do to see the proof that RDÉE P.E.I. has kept extremely busy to fulfill its mission this year is to leaf through the pages of the special edition of this information bulletin.

On behalf of all the organizations that have benefited from the numerous services offered by the RDÉE P.E.I. team, I want to sincerely thank the officers and the coordinator for their accomplishments and their devotion.

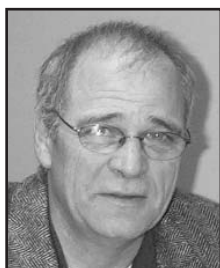
It should be mentioned also that last summer, the Advisory Board signed a tripartite memorandum of agreement promoting greater collaboration between the community and the federal and provincial governments. Thanks to this agreement, the board and the community can be heard directly by high-ranking government officials.

I want to sincerely thank each and every one of our board members for their important contributions to the discussions that help solidify RDÉE P.E.I.'s action plan.



Gilles Desrosiers
chairman

Chairman's message



**Raymond
Arsenault**
chairman

It is with pleasure and pride that the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation associates itself with RDÉE Prince Edward Island as a member of the network and as the organization delegated by the network to ensure the leadership for the implementation of multiple socio-economic community projects throughout the province.

The past year has seen the results of a devoted team working to fulfill the objectives set out by the Advisory Board in the network's action plan, which was devised to meet the needs of the Acadian and francophone community of P.E.I.

Community socio-economic development remains a challenge that we would not be able to meet without the support of our funding bodies. When governments invest in our Acadian communities, they generate countless positive benefits for the entire province.

The spin-offs that the federal Support Fund has helped generate are the result of the creation of new partnerships, new visions and appropriate mechanisms developed to meet the needs of the community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank the members of the Advisory Board for their commitment to the community. This year is quite special for our Acadian communities. The celebrations for the 400th anniversary of Acadia will certainly help our people to resonate with pride. As a network, we have every reason to be proud of RDÉE P.E.I.'s accomplishments. We wish the network a long life of leadership in the socio-economic development of P.E.I.'s Acadian community.

General manager's message

Our province may be the smallest one in Canada, but our RDÉE is certainly not the least active. We have to admit that this past year has been extremely busy. The team's contagious energy has often spurred communities to want to take extra steps in their journey, to want to further develop their capacities and to create partnerships that have proven to be quite beneficial for several regional projects.

Since the establishment of the network on P.E.I., the four sectorial officers have become precious facilitators that are indeed indispensable to the development of community capacities.

This past year has clearly shown that the RDÉE's start-up phase is completed and that the communities have integrated their network as a necessary mechanism for their community and socio-economic development.

In spite of the adaptations our human resources have had to make, they have arisen better equipped and better prepared to face challenges. They have developed a spirit of collaboration and co-operation that makes their team extremely versatile.

Over the next few years, the network will have to work together even more to unify ideas to meet the needs that have been expressed in the communities' Vision strategies. The vision of the Acadian and francophone community of P.E.I. will determine its own survival. I am convinced that more great partnerships will be formed as the projects of this vision become a reality.

I want to thank and congratulate the RDÉE P.E.I. Advisory Board, its work team, the committees and the administrative team. I also thank the SDBA's Board of Directors for their commitment in regards to the network.



**Louise
Comeau**
*general
manager*

Who are we?

RDÉE Prince Edward Island (the economic development and employability network of P.E.I.) supports Acadian and Francophone socio-economic development by making a range of services available to local organizations in order to stimulate job creation.

Sponsored by the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation (SDBA), RDÉE P.E.I. is a partner in the national network called RDÉE Canada, which aims to improve economic development and employability among French-speaking Canadians. Thanks to this affiliation, RDÉE P.E.I. has access to francophone economic development resources throughout the country.

RDÉE P.E.I. strives to create a favourable climate for the socio-economic development of Acadians and Francophones by offering its

clientele various human, financial and material resources and by sharing best practices.

RDÉE P.E.I. is able to carry out its mission thanks to strategic partnerships with various community organizations and with members of its Advisory Council. It works primarily in the sectors of rural development, the knowledge economy, youth in economic development and tourism.

The team is composed of one officer per sector, in addition to a coordinator, a communications and liaison officer and an administrative assistant.

RDÉE P.E.I. is funded by the Support Fund, an initiative of the National Committee for the Development of Francophone Canadian Human Resources, funded by the Government of Canada.

Governments and community sign memorandum of understanding



Participating in the ceremony were the two co-chairs, sitting from left, Derek Gee, Regional Director General of Human Resources Development Canada for P.E.I., and Gilbert Ladéroute, executive director of La Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. Standing in the back are, from left, Maria Bernard, president of La Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, Leo Walsh, deputy minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Rory Beck, vice-president of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Gilles Desrosiers, chairman of the RDÉE P.E.I. Advisory Board.

A Memorandum of Understanding of historic significance, between the federal and provincial governments and the Acadian and Francophone community of P.E.I., was signed last July in Charlottetown. Representing the federal government were Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA); the Government of Prince Edward Island was represented by Intergovernmental Affairs; and RDÉE Prince Edward Island and La Société Saint-Thomas d'Aquin signed on behalf of the Acadian and Francophone community.

This new Memorandum of Understanding helps to advance the socio-economic development of the Acadian and Francophone community through the delivery of appropriate programs and services in French.

Through this agreement, a Francophone Resource Development Management Committee will be established. It will be co-chaired by Derek Gee, Regional Director General of Human Resources Development Canada for Prince Edward Island, and Gilbert Ladéroute, executive director of La Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard.

"Our Francophone Resource Development Management Committee will exchange information on strategic development projects in the Acadian and Francophone community, look for flexibility within current programs and services and work together to support the community's strategic plan," said Mr. Gee.

Another committee, the Francophone Development Working Group, will work closely with community representatives to share new ideas and useful information, and work collaboratively to identify and recommend funding within existing programs for community projects.

"This memorandum will provide us with a solidified mechanism of direct contact with high-ranking government officials, an opportunity to be heard directly by the decision-makers," said Mr. Ladéroute.

RDÉE P.E.I. : an integral part of the community



Francis Thériault

As the coordinator for RDÉE Prince Edward Island, my first role is to manage and to provide a general orientation for our team of officers, in accordance with the strategic plan laid out by RDÉE P.E.I. and RDÉE Canada.

The fact that it is part of a national network specializing in socio-economic development is essentially what enables RDÉE Prince Edward Island to answer to the needs of its clients. This network encourages the continual exchange of information and knowledge between its members. In other words, when you deal with an officer from RDÉE Prince Edward Island, it's pretty well the same as having a consultation with about 50 socio-economic development officers at the same time.

The RDÉE has obviously been involved in numerous socio-economic initiatives over the past year. Communities have received countless benefits thanks to the involvement of our sectorial officers.

In this annual report, you will find just a few examples of many concrete projects that have contributed to the socio-economic fulfillment of the Acadian and francophone community of P.E.I. Numerous direct and indirect jobs that have been created or maintained would not have been possible without these interventions.

In spite of its relative youth, RDÉE Prince Edward Island has already become an integral part of the community and is well recognized and respected by funding bodies. It acts as an effective link between the community and various provincial and federal departments.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the RDÉE P.E.I. Advisory Board for their participation in the orientation of our action plan throughout this past year. They have offered us indispensable advice and support. We truly appreciate it.

We should of course not forget the Board of Directors and the general manager of the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation. We want to thank them sincerely for listening to us and for offering us their support throughout the year, especially in the more difficult periods.

I also congratulate the team for their enormous patience and professionalism, and for the accomplishment of their duties. In spite of the challenges, they have managed to persevere, without giving up. This document shows you the results of their devotion.

It's a pleasure to keep serving you!

Promotional tour visits Acadian regions

During its promotional tour, undertaken jointly with the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I. last spring, the RDÉE Prince Edward Island team had the opportunity to meet 73 people in five regions of the province.

During these breakfast and luncheon meetings (in the Evangeline, West Prince, Summerside, Charlottetown and Rustico areas), the coordinator, the communications and liaison officer and the four sectorial officers were able to explain to participants RDÉE P.E.I.'s mandate, to speak about the various projects it is involved in and to invite them to come and discuss socio-economic projects in which it could offer assistance.

"We consider this promotional tour to have been a huge success in all the regions we visited since, after our presentation, people told us they now knew a lot more about RDÉE P.E.I. and how it could get involved in their community socio-economic development projects," notes coordinator Francis Thériault.

"As well, we were able to reach not only people we

already knew but also quite a few new people to whom we were delivering the message for the first time. The results of this tour have without a doubt surpassed our expectations."



Summerside region



Charlottetown region



Rustico region



West Prince region



Evangeline region

Continued support for rural regions



Giselle Bernard

RDÉE P.E.I. works with community groups to create more and better employment opportunities. It also works at creating a favourable environment for socio-economic development and employability.

Giselle Bernard held the rural development officer position until January 2004 when she accepted the new position of special projects officer, created thanks to a partnership between the SDBA, the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I. and the Conseil de développement coopératif.

Janine Arsenault then became the new rural development officer.



Janine Arsenault

Collaboration agreement signed by three partners

Three partners -- the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I. (CCAFLIPE), the Conseil de développement coopératif and the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation -- have just concluded and signed a collaboration agreement.

With this agreement, the three organizations want to jointly:

- support the development of new and existing businesses and co-operatives,
- organize promotional and training activities for businesses and co-operatives;
- establish a location for knowledge management for the fulfillment of co-ops and businesses;
- and develop relationships with other organizations to promote economic development.

The three partners have also combined their resources and energies to hire a special projects officer; the person hired was Giselle Bernard.

RDÉE P.E.I. is pleased to have been able to encourage this type of partnership, which allows the community an opportunity to maximize its resources.



The three partners recently signed a collaboration agreement to facilitate entrepreneurial and co-operative development. They are, from left, Louise Comeau, general manager of the SDBA, Richard P. Harvey, president of the CCAFLIPE, and Angèle Arsenault, president of the Conseil de développement coopératif.

Renewal of co-operative development council

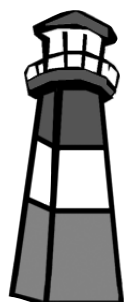
Several francophone co-operatives in the Evangeline region, missing the involvement of the former Conseil de développement coopératif (CDC) in co-operative development over the past few years, contacted RDÉE Prince Edward Island seeking help to put the CDC back on its feet. Local co-ops were brought together to discuss the idea. The message was loud and clear: they definitely wanted to have access to the services that had once been offered by the council. The participants then reformed the CDC, electing a new board of directors.

Thanks to a contribution from the new federal fund, the Co-operative Development Initiative, the council hired a coordinator to conduct its promotion and development projects.

As well, the council was able to host the 57th annual convention of the Conseil Canadien de la Coopération, held in the Evangeline region last summer. More than 120 co-operators from all over Canada participated actively in the various activities of the gathering. Under the theme "Co-operation and Economic Development", the convention featured interesting discussions, workshops and activities.



Attending the official opening of the 57th annual convention of the Conseil Canadien de la Coopération were, from left, Jean-Yves Lord, executive director of the Canadian Co-operative Association, Sylvie St-Pierre Babin, executive director of the CCC, Robert Revet, president of the CCC, P.E.I. Lieutenant Governor Léonce Bernard, former vice-president of the CCC, Angèle Arsenault, president of the Conseil de développement coopératif of P.E.I., and Wilfred Arsenault, MLA for Évangéline-Miscouche.



**Projet
VISION:**
*Ensemble,
éclairons notre avenir!*

Community develops its vision

Over the past year, la Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin conducted the Vision Project for Prince Edward Island, which was funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Rural Secretariat.

Through this project, a provincial consultation was conducted, leading to the preparation of five-year strategic plans for the six Acadian and francophone regions of P.E.I. as well as a provincial plan for the overall Acadian community of the Island. RDÉE Prince Edward Island participated actively in the local planning process and continues its involvement, particularly in getting the proposed projects that involve job creation and employability developed and implemented.

Acadian women and RDÉE P.E.I.: an important partnership

RDÉE Prince Edward Island works closely with l'Association des femmes acadiennes et francophones de l'Î.-P.-É., the Island's francophone women's association, to help eliminate the difficulties faced by women in getting jobs and to address the topic of low salaries. This partnership seeks particularly to promote job and entrepreneurship opportunities for women.



CCAFLIPE
Chambre de commerce
acadienne et francophone
de l'Î.-P.-É.

CCAFLIPE flying on its own power

After working intensively with a group of entrepreneurs looking to form a networking and information-sharing organization, RDÉE Prince Edward Island was extremely pleased to see the birth of the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I. (CCAFLIPE) at the start of the 2003 year. The chamber evolved quickly, soon surpassing its membership objectives. It organized a number of breakfast meetings, receptions and networking opportunities.

Over the last few months, the chamber was able to start flying on its own power, thanks to the hiring of a coordinator. A few weeks ago, for the first time ever, the CCAFLIPE organized the 2004 Entrepreneurs' Banquet and presented the two first Distinguished Entrepreneur Awards.

To better equip stakeholders

RDÉE Prince Edward Island strives to provide electronic tools to entrepreneurs and socio-economic stakeholders and to promote opportunities for learning and discussion in order to strengthen their capacities and skills. Marcel Caissie occupied the position of knowledge economy officer all year long.

He is a member of a working group,

led by RDÉE Canada, whose duty is to set up sectorial communities of practice within the network. They participated in a series of workshops and conferences on this topic in Winnipeg in 2003.

They also collaborated with the Centre francophone d'information des organisations (CÉFRIO) in Quebec to help perfect the concept.



Marcel Caissie

P.E.I. hosts first sectorial conference

In June 2003, RDÉE Prince Edward Island had the honour of hosting a sectorial conference for knowledge economy officers from RDÉE Canada's national network. The 17 participants were able to exchange ideas about the successes and failures they've encountered in their home provinces, giving the opportunity to others to learn from the experiences of their peers.

"These meetings allow people to establish networks as well as formal and informal relationships to exchange information and knowledge," said Gilles Vienneau, director of research and analysis for RDÉE Canada. "The biggest result of these meetings, however, is that they allow us to learn about the realities of other regions."

On the first day following their conference, the participants visited the Community Business Centre in Wellington, La Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, the North Cape Wind Test Site and the Confederation Bridge.

On the second day, they visited the Atlantic Technology Centre in Charlottetown where they also participated in a professional development workshop on using communities of practice as a tool for sharing knowledge generated by the RDÉE network. They also had the opportunity to discuss various Internet search tools. They said they were extremely impressed with the super modern facilities at the centre, including the training lab and the interactive theatre.

Vienneau said RDÉE Canada definitely wants to continue this professional development to ensure the officers become "the best in Canada".

These sectorial meetings, for each of the four sectors of RDÉE Canada, are held twice a year in various locations of the country. This was the first time P.E.I. hosted one of these meetings.



Among the locations visited was La Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard in Wellington. Colette Aucoin, second right, in charge of the society's programs, gave an overview of the educational facility's teleconferencing system. Getting a look at the system are, from left, Karine Massé, communications director with RDÉE Northwest Territories, Gilles Vienneau, director of national sectorial collaboration and research for RDÉE Canada, and Marcel Caissie, RDÉE P.E.I.'s knowledge economy officer.

"It was a real pleasure for us to organize this conference," says Marcel Caissie, RDÉE P.E.I.'s knowledge economy officer, who coordinated the event.

"We wanted to show them a bit of down-home Island hospitality, along with Acadian dishes and local entertainment. But we also wanted to show them some of the province's technological marvels since they work in the knowledge economy field. And, according to the many positive comments we've received, we've achieved our goals."

Learning the ABE's of e-business

A number of people, including entrepreneurs and professionals who work in socio-economic development, participated in a series of sessions called "Learning Your ABE's", offered by the Community Chamber Program for e-Business in January and February 2004 in several Island locations.

The sessions offered in Wellington were coordinated by the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I., in collaboration with RDÉE P.E.I.'s knowledge economy officer.

This series consisted of four sessions, whose main mission was to explain to participants the numerous benefits of doing on-line business.

The first week's session was called "A Practical Guide to Doing Business on the Internet" while the second one was "Preparing Your e-Business Marketing Plan".

"Success Stories & Local Vendors", the third week's topic, was presented by companies and web developers who've successfully integrated e-business into their businesses. During the final session, "Government Support for e-Business Adoption", federal and provincial government officers, a Student Connection representative and various educational institutions spoke about their programs that offer assistance to businesses wishing to integrate e-business into their companies.



Participating in the second session of Learning Your ABE's were, from left, Giselle Bernard, special projects officer with the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation, session leader Jean A. St-Amand, president of eCentrics in Nova Scotia, Cuyla Allen, student advisor with Student Connections, and Gilbert Ladéroute, executive director of La Société éducative de l'Î.-P.-É.



Notre réseau national

Our national network

The Canadian RDÉE network is formed of RDÉE Canada and the 13 provincial and territorial RDÉEs. During the past year, the network gave itself a new visual identity. Please visit the Website www.rdee.ca to find out more details about his national network, in which RDÉE Prince Edward Island is evolving.

Broadband infrastructure

RDÉE Prince Edward Island is actively interested in the broadband infrastructure that the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation, its delegated organization, is establishing to serve the area from Miscouche to Tyne Valley, including the Evangeline region, of course. This service would provide direct access to a modern infrastructure, thereby opening up many opportunities in job creation and training.

To develop an entrepreneurial culture for youth



**Christine
Arsenault**

RDÉE Prince Edward Island continues to work with Jeunesse acadienne and its other partners to develop an entrepreneurial culture that fosters the involvement of youth in the socio-economic development of their community, all the while trying to counter their migration from the province.

Janine Arsenault held the position of youth officer for most of the 2003-2004 year, while the regular officer, Christine Arsenault, was on maternity leave. Christine returned in January 2004.



**Janine
Arsenault**

Young entrepreneurs start their own businesses

The 20 youth from various Acadian and francophone regions of the province who participated in the Entrepreneurship Jeunesse program this past summer are very proud of what they have accomplished.

Despite the challenges of setting up a new business, each participant found the entire experience to be very rewarding.

The program, formerly known as I Want To Be A Millionaire, gives participants a good initiation into the world of business.

After receiving start-up grants of \$100 (for individual entrepreneurs) or \$150 (for partnerships), the youth learned how to prepare a business plan and a budget, and received tips on marketing, managing production and growing their sales.

This year, the youth produced a wide variety of products, including bracelets, necklaces, various handcrafts, fridge magnets, calendars, decorated plates, candles, key chains and T-shirts.

They sold their products at farmers' markets, flea markets, festivals and events, and at tourist attractions, such as Spinnakers' Landing in Summerside and the Cavendish Boardwalk.

One of the boys even exported some of his products to



European countries.

Entrepreneurship Jeunesse is the French component of the Business Builders Program, which is managed by the Central Development Corporation and funded by ACOA.

Other projects underway

The youth officer, during the past year, has also worked on various projects regarding youth integration, including the development of tools that will be used to promote job and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth, and the development of the entrepreneurinc.ca portal for Atlantic Canadian youth, initiated by a partnership of various youth organizations and which includes a telementoring subproject.

Youth get an introduction to entrepreneurship

About 200 young Island Acadians and francophones received an introduction to entrepreneurship in French in the spring of 2003, thanks to a strong collaboration between Junior Achievement and RDÉE Prince Edward Island.

Junior Achievement has been offering its programs on P.E.I. for a number of years in English only. Realizing that young Acadians and francophones were not getting an opportunity to receive these training workshops in their own language, the RDÉE took steps to ensure the French version of the program would become available on the Island. Junior Achievement obtained the program material from its francophone counterpart, Jeunes Entreprises du Canada, and authorized the RDÉE take the steps to ensure the program could be offered for the first time in French on P.E.I.

This first part is called *Initiation aux affaires* (the French version of Business Basics). Participants received four sessions, lasting about an hour each, on organization, management, production and marketing.

The second part of the program is called *Les études : un choix économique* (The Economics of Staying in School).



These Charlottetown students benefited from workshops offered through the Jeunes entreprises program.

The objective of this portion is quite clear: to get youth to think about the advantages of pursuing their education until they've acquired the knowledge, the attitudes and the abilities they will need to attain their long-term objective of a successful career.

PERCÉ mentoring project will help counter youth exodus

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) recently provided a contribution of \$60,564 to a new mentoring project conceived to encourage qualified Acadian and francophone youth from P.E.I. to pursue a career on Prince Edward Island.

The Baie Acadienne Development Corporation (SDBA), in partnership with RDÉE Prince Edward Island, will coordinate this Island-wide project, named PERCÉ, which, in French, stands for "Regional, Community and Economic Entrepreneurship Program." Its ultimate goal is to counter the trend of Island youth moving elsewhere to find work.

"Ten young Acadians or francophones from P.E.I. who have recently completed their post-secondary studies or their second last year of university or college studies, will first receive a week of orientation at the start of May 2004," explains Janine Arsenault, rural development officer with RDÉE P.E.I. "They will meet a number of entrepreneurs and employers, visit several workplaces, and receive information on employment and entrepreneurship possibilities on P.E.I. They will also learn about various entrepreneurship assistance programs and be invited to become familiar with the Island again."

The participants will then receive 10 weeks of work placement in an Island business that specializes in their field of study, so that they can put into practice their new-found knowledge. A portion of their time will be devoted to learning how to do the work while the rest of the time will be dedicated to mentorship. During the mentorship phase, the participants will shadow the entrepreneur to learn how he or she manages his or her business.

Upon completion of the project, it is hoped some of the employers will be able to retain the youth or hire them once their studies have been completed.

Giselle Bernard has been hired as project coordinator for a period of eight months.

A second phase of the program will consist of the development of a data base of young francophone graduates of P.E.I., indicating their level of education, their expertise, their work experience and their contact information. When an employer will be seeking an employee with skills in a given field, it will then be easy to provide this person with the names of potential employees. The SDBA has already started compiling a data base of francophone entrepreneurs. Access to the two lists will allow quicker matching of employers and employees.

To support Acadian tourism product



Renée Coughlin

RDÉE Prince Edward Island works with several partners to develop new tourism products and to improve and promote existing products, putting emphasis on the cultural heritage of communities.

Réjeanne Arsenault, who served as tourism officer for several years, decided to retire from the position to take care of personal projects.

Renée Coughlin, who had worked as tourism development officer for the Evangeline Tourism Association, took over the position at the RDÉE as of September 2003.



**Réjeanne
Arsenault**

400th anniversary of Acadia being celebrated in style on P.E.I.



At the official launching ceremonies of the guide for the 400th anniversary of Acadia are, from left, Wilfred Arsenault, MLA for Evangeline-Miscouche, provincial coordinator Monica Arsenault, Premier Pat Binns and assistant coordinator James Langevin.

Acadia is in full celebration this year! It is marking the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first Acadians on its shores; it is celebrating four centuries of accomplishments by a nation that continues to shine through its vitality, its cultural riches and its never-ending

wish to affirm itself.

Such huge celebrations certainly can't be organized in the blink of an eye. Preparations have been in the works for several years.

The RDÉE P.E.I. tourism officer sat on the P.E.I. 400th Anniversary



Working Group for several years, contributing expertise and professional advice to help ensure the socio-economic success of the event. It is this committee that was able to access large sums of money from the federal and provincial governments to coordinate and promote the celebrations.

On P.E.I., the diversity of activities is endless. A bit of everything is being planned, from concerts and exhibitions to festivals and conferences.

It is anticipated that the celebrations will have a sizeable impact on the tourism economy of Acadian regions in particular as well as of the entire province.



Atlantic Fiddlers' Jamboree gets new lease on life

In the past, the Atlantic Fiddlers' Jamboree, held over the course of a full weekend each summer in the Evangeline area, had known a considerable success, attracting huge crowds of tourists. In recent years, however, its scope and economic impact had diminished significantly. RDÉE Prince Edward Island therefore worked with the Evangeline Tourism Association, the jamboree's parent organization, to restructure the event's organizing committee so that it would become more stable and dynamic, and thereby promote job creation.

Thanks to these efforts, the jamboree has gained a brand new momentum. The 2003 version of the event was a huge success, attracting a greater number of visitors and showing a much better organization.

A new award was also instituted; the Golden Fiddle was presented to Eddie Arsenault, a legendary Acadian fiddler who has inspired no less than three generations of Acadian, Scottish and Irish fiddlers throughout North America.

Update on the old fish factory project

Following a contribution from RDÉE Prince Edward Island for the development of business and marketing plans for the "La vieille factorie" project last year, the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation (the RDÉE's delegated organization) ensured that talks would continue to get the project up and going.

The SDBA formed a working committee, which includes the Acadian Fishermen's Co-op, the Abram's Village Port Authority, the Evangeline Tourism Association, the SDBA and RDÉE P.E.I., to keep this eco-tourism development project moving along.

The committee is proposing the conversion of a former fish factory in Abram's Village into an interpretation centre for fisheries and fish processing (with a particular accent on lobster). Also proposed are a café, a gift shop as well as a rental service for bicycles and kayaks (for trips up the Ellis River).

As well, it is hoped that a pontoon would transport visitors between the existing wharf and the Maximeville sand dunes just on the far side of the bay. This facet of the attraction would allow people to discover the beauty of the dunes, all while protecting the ecosystem.

Such a project should have important spin-offs for the community, especially in regards to the economy and to job creation.

A public meeting this winter showed people are quite interested. The citizens backed the project in principle; they will be consulted as the project develops.

P.E.I. hosts CTACA's annual convention

The Evangeline Tourism Association (ATE) had the honour of hosting the third annual convention of the Commission du tourisme acadien du Canada atlantique in September 2003. RDÉE Prince Edward Island formed a partnership with the ATE and the commission to ensure the organization of this major event in the Evangeline region. Some 40 stakeholders from the Atlantic Canadian tourism industry participated in the four full days of discussions and deliberations. The topic of the celebrations for the 400th anniversary of Acadia was of course a main focus during the convention.

The Commission du tourisme acadien du Canada atlantique brings together tourism businesses and stakeholders that offer an Acadian product or that operate in the Acadian regions of the Atlantic Provinces. Through the establishment of a marketing strategy, the commission aims to promote the value of Acadian tourism products and specifically the Acadie trademark. Its targeted markets include Atlantic Canada, Quebec and the New England States, which support Atlantic government efforts.

L'ACADIE
www.acadievacances.com

To communicate RDÉE P.E.I.'s good news

RDÉE Prince Edward Island's general objective, in regards to communication and liaison, is to help its potential clients and the public in general to know and understand its identity, orientations and priorities, services and expertise and, of course, its countless accomplishments. During the past fiscal year, the communications and liaison officer attained these objectives via the following activities:

- publication of the Infobiz newsletter, published several times during the year;
- publication of the virtual newsletter "Les petites nouvelles de RDÉE Île-du-Prince-Édouard", distributed by e-mail to some 350 people on our distribution list;
- publication of an information booklet on RDÉE Prince Edward Island and printing of a kit folder;
- distribution of pertinent information, through e-mail and other methods, to other members of the team and members of the Advisory Board, as needed;
- preparation of advertisements for events, as needed;
- writing and distribution of press releases, highlighting activities undertaken or accomplished with the help of RDÉE Prince Edward Island;
- preparation of materials for our Web site, ipe.gazel.ca;
- organization of press conferences, as needed;
- regular communication with medias to encourage them to cover events and projects in which RDÉE Prince Edward Island is involved.

OTHER PROJECTS

The communications officer also participated in several other major projects:

- promotion of the 2003 Economic Conference;
- promotion of the 2004 Entrepreneurs' Banquet;
- co-coordination of the 2004 P.E.I. Smart Communities InfoFair;
- arrangements for the signature of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Acadian and francophone economic community of P.E.I. and the federal and provincial governments;
- general orientation of new employees and members of the RDÉE P.E.I. Advisory Board.

In addition, the communications officer is in charge of all secretarial work, logistics arrangements and some of the follow-ups for:

- the RDÉE P.E.I. Advisory Board;
- the Management Committee of the Francophone Resources Development Committee;
- the Working Group of the Francophone Resources Development Committee.



**Raymond J.
Arsenault**

Participants had opportunity to start "Thinking Smarter" during InfoFair



About 60 Islanders who work in technological, community and socio-economic development gathered March 9 in Summerside to participate in the 2004 P.E.I. Smart Communities InfoFair.

Louise Comeau, general manager of the Baie Acadienne Development Corporation, the host organization of this

provincial fair, is extremely pleased with the results of this day of information sharing and exchanging, which was sponsored by Industry Canada.

"The evaluation forms clearly show that participants truly appreciated the quality and quantity of the information presented throughout the day," she said.

The objective of the InfoFair was to spread the good news about the newer and "smarter" way of doing things, meaning the use of modern infrastructures, methods and technological tools to facilitate communication and information sharing in regards to knowledge and ingenuity. The theme of the day was therefore "Thinking Smarter".

Organizers were seeking to showcase existing projects that could inspire other Islanders to develop their own projects using the "smart communities" concept.

The event's co-coordinators, Raymond J. Arsenault and Marcel Caissie, both members of the RDÉE Prince Edward Island team, therefore organized several interesting sessions touching on a wide array of projects.

Economic conference considered huge success

Organizers of the "Rencontre économique 2003" - the Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I. (CCAFLIPE) and RDÉE Prince Edward Island - are extremely pleased with the results of this French-language economic conference, which involved about 50 people Saturday, Oct. 25, at the Centre Belle-Alliance in Summerside. The day's activities focused on the theme "Challenges and Opportunities".

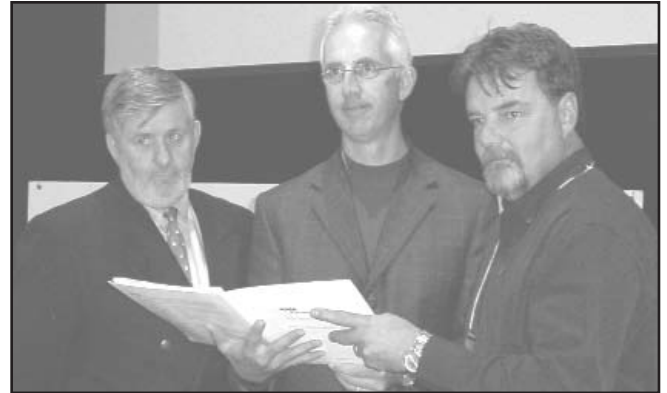
The morning keynote speaker, Pier T. Furness, vice-president of the Pizza Delight Corporation, concentrated mostly on the differences between successful and unsuccessful businesses. In his talk, entitled "The Recipe for Success: The Art of Thinking Outside the Pizza Box", he spoke of the three ingredients necessary for success: focus, discipline and dominance.

Following supper, the motivational speaker Joanne Cormier from Cocagne, N.B., succeeded in giving participants a great gust of energy and enthusiasm through her speech, entitled, "Life Is Short and We're Dead for A Long Time".

Those who attended had the opportunity of participating in three interesting afternoon workshops.

The first got entrepreneurs to think about the amounts of money they invest in marketing but especially about the possibilities and advantages of conducting joint marketing with other businesses.

The second workshop addressed some of the biggest challenges of the work market, including those faced by both entrepreneurs and employees.



Pier T. Furness, left, from the Pizza Delight Corporation, chats about his conference with Richard Harvey, centre, from the CCAFLIPE, and Gilles Desrosiers, president of the RDÉE P.E.I. Advisory Board.

The third workshop was entitled "Baby Boomers and the Generation X: Tattoos, Piercings and Retirement Funds". It generated a lot of lively discussion since it addressed attitudes and perceptions of business people from both age groups in regards to the other group.

RDÉE P.E.I. coordinator Francis Thériault hosted a little game to get participants to know the RDÉE a bit better. Angie Cormier also provided an update on the Vision Project.

The entire day was made possible by a contribution from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

Two distinguished entrepreneurs honoured



Alice and René Maddix from Maddix Construction, as well as Alphonse and Florence Arsenault from Wellington Construction, accept their 2004 Distinguished Entrepreneur Awards from CCAFLIPE president Richard Harvey.

The Acadian and Francophone Chamber of Commerce of P.E.I. (CCAFLIPE) presented its two first Distinguished Entrepreneur Awards to Alphonse Arsenault of Abram's Village, owner-founder of Wellington Construction, and René Maddix of Urbainville, owner-founder of Maddix Construction, during the 2004 Acadian Entrepreneurs Banquet Thursday, March 11. This event, organized jointly by the CCAFLIPE, the SDBA and RDÉE Prince Edward Island, was sponsored by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

"These two Acadian entrepreneurs have certainly distinguished themselves, not only in their own community, but also throughout the entire province by the great quality of their work and by their enormous support of the greater community," notes CCAFLIPE president Richard Harvey.

Alphonse Arsenault founded Wellington Construction in 1972, originally employing five people. Today, 32 years later, the company employs 22 people. Alphonse had to retire for medical reasons last year. His sons Roger and David, who have been partners in the firm for several years, now manage the business.

In 1977, René Maddix, his wife Alice and their eldest son Reginald formed their own company, Maddix Construction. The company has employed up to 25 people at a time. Over his 25 years in business, Maddix paid out more than \$5 million in salaries. Now retired, René continues to play around with small construction projects.



Our provincial winners

Every two years, RDÉE Canada presents national awards called "Lauriers de la PME" to honour francophone business people who have distinguished themselves in a special way in their business sector. Each province can nominate

one entrepreneur per sector (for a total of four). Following a provincial competition, RDÉE Prince Edward Island honoured the P.E.I. winners during the 2003 Entrepreneurs' Banquet, held in March 2003 in Charlottetown.

Rural Development : HMS Office Supplies



In 2002, HMS Office Supplies Ltd. of Summerside celebrated two decades of selling office supplies, office furniture and computers. This business enjoys an enviable reputation, not only for the great quality of its products but mostly for the high level of service offered to its clients, both during and after the sale.

Mr. Henri Gallant and Mr. Paul Arsenault founded HMS Office Supplies in 1982, setting up shop in the former location of the H.M. Simpson Ltd. store. Two moves over the next couple of years brought them to their present location, on Water Street in Summerside. In 1999, Mr.

Arsenault sold his half of the business. Mr. Gallant and his wife Gloria Gallant purchased his shares.

More than three years ago, a national chain established itself in the Summerside area. HMS prepared itself for decreased sales. The hit was much harder than anticipated. Sales dropped dramatically. The owners spent many sleepless nights. At a certain point, they even began to ask themselves if they should close their store. But following numerous prayers and intense discussions with staff, they decided to not let the company get blown to the wind.

Henri and Gloria understood they could never compete with the giant national chain on the basis of price nor with the enormous selection of products. However, they believed they could remain firmly in the game on the level of customer service.

Staff provided a wide array of suggestions to help improve service. These efforts bore fruit; they succeeded in stabilizing and improving sales. The majority of clients who had left have returned, saying they much preferred the service offered by HMS.

The company marked its 20th anniversary with a great economic recovery, crowned by the announcement that it had been awarded a huge contract to provide all the furniture required by the new Prince County Hospital in Summerside (all desks, filing cabinets, seats and chairs, including medical chairs).

Knowledge Economy : ImageWorks P.E.I. Inc.

Some people may not recognize the name of Marc Dagenais, owner of ImageWorks P.E.I. Inc. However, everybody on the Island has certainly seen one or more of his products. For about a dozen years, this business has produced the popular P.E.I. Handbook and continues to produce the anglophone and francophone editions of the P.E.I. Visitors' Guide, along with the provincial map, for the government of Prince Edward Island.

ImageWorks produces the vast majority of francophone tourism pamphlets developed on P.E.I. On the multimedia side, the agency continues to rank among the best in Atlantic Canada, offering a wide range of technological products, including the development of Web sites, CD-ROMs and various other applications.

Mr. Dagenais launched his business in 1993. The following year, ImageWorks received an exclusive contract for distribution of tourism publications through the Marine Atlantic ferry service, which provided transportation across Northumberland Strait separating the Island and New Brunswick. The company therefore developed the P.E.I. Handbook, which became the company's most profitable product.

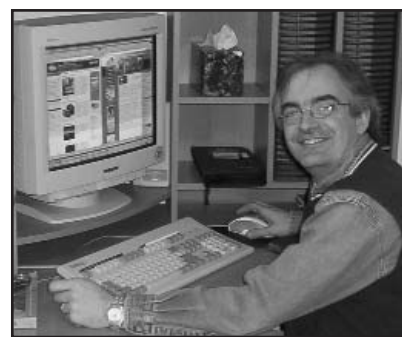
Clients began to request other types of services and products, including graphic design, marketing, project management and interactive media. The company therefore began working on a vast array of products, including restaurant menus, logos and various magazines.

As well, in 1996, ImageWorks launched a new interactive

media division, diversifying its market beyond the tourism sector. The company started focusing more on a market that would require hi-tech products for distribution through Internet and CD-ROM.

Meanwhile, the P.E.I. Handbook project faced an almost certain doom with the 1998 opening of the Confederation Bridge between the Island and New Brunswick. The brochure, which had previously been distributed to all vehicles disembarking off the ferry, represented about half of the company's income. The company invested hefty sums to develop new technologies and to hire additional distribution staff.

While sales in the first few years following the bridge opening dropped somewhat, the publication remains the most popular tourism publication on the Island, thanks to a new distribution system the company was able to develop. In fact, more than a quarter-million copies were distributed in 2002.



Our provincial winners

In addition to winning the provincial trophies, the four Island winners earned a free trip for two to the Gala des Lauriers de la PME, held at the Château Laurier in Ottawa the following week, to meet the winners from the other

provinces and to compete at the national level.

Once again, we heartily congratulate the four P.E.I. winners, who continue to distinguish themselves by the quality of their products and services.



Youth : Fleuriste Oceana



Oceana Florist is renowned throughout the community for its unique products, its community involvement and the impeccable service it offers its clientele.

This business, which is both a flower shop and a gift shop, continues to

expand in spite of aggressive competition from large multinationals.

The company, which is owned and managed by Alice Arsenault and Karen Gallant, operates two stores year round and another one on a seasonal basis for three summers.

Alice explains the secret to the company's success: "Our mission is to help clients the best we can to leave our store pleased with the product they have bought and the service they received. We must always respect their needs and their

financial means. We certainly don't push the more expensive products; we work within their budget."

Mrs. Ruth Gallant, Karen's mother, founded the business in 1991. After successfully operating the business for nine years, the owner decided to retire. Alice and Karen, both employees of the business, decided to step up and buy the company.

Soon after their purchase, the new owners learned that a commercial space had just opened up in the Spinnakers' Landing boardwalk in Summerside. They could not let this golden opportunity slip by so they opened a second store, calling it O'Hara's Gifts and Things. It was a huge success during three summer tourist seasons (2000-2002). In the fall of 2002, Alice and Karen also purchased a flower shop in Alberton that was going to close its doors.

At its peak, the company provided employment to 18 people, some full time, some part time and some seasonal.

The owners have never forgotten that people had did them great favours by hiring them when they were still young, so they try to continue this tradition by giving similar chances to other youths.

They often hire young people, ranging in age from 16 to 20, at their stores, often through summer employment programs or work placements through career integration programs and high school programs.

Tourism : Chez Nous Bed & Breakfast

The Chez Nous Bed and Breakfast, owned and operated by Paul Gallant of Cornwall, offers a service that always distinguishes itself by the superior quality of its product.

It offers a huge, charming backyard, four marvellous bedrooms decorated in rustic styles but equipped with modern amenities, luxurious bathrooms with Jacuzzi baths and a large living room with a fireplace.

Chez Nous began its operations in 1973 with only two rooms for rent and continues to operate at the same location at 203 Ferry Road in Cornwall. A first addition to the house in 1981 allowed the Gallant family to increase its number of rental rooms. In 1996, two other renovation projects added private washrooms with Jacuzzi baths for each of the four rooms.

These improvements, along with the personalized, bilingual service, the gourmet breakfasts and the overall high quality of the establishment, have raised its ranking to four stars, according to the Canada Select norms.

The tourist home, which is licensed to serve fine wines, is equipped with an office, complete with fax and Internet access, for its customers.

The company employs two people part-time, in addition to its owner-manager.

Chez Nous Bed and Breakfast was accepted as a member of the Inns of Distinction group a few years ago. This affiliation allows the company to participate in various joint marketing

efforts, thereby reaching a greater number of potential clients from around the world. Gallant has served as secretary for the organization, which includes some 20 businesses, and sat on its marketing committee.

In 1991, Chez Nous was featured in a special edition of the Japanese magazine, Seventeen, which focused on Prince Edward Island. In 1999, Kellogg's chose Chez Nous and another Island bed and breakfast for its guide of the best Canadian bed and breakfasts.

The establishment is usually opened from June to the end of September. In 2002, the season was extended until the end of October.

Mr. Gallant explains the entrepreneurial philosophy of Chez Nous: "It's to ensure that the people who come to visit with us feel as comfortable as they would at home."



Business is our business!



**RDÉE Prince Edward Island serves
all Acadian and francophone regions of P.E.I.**

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**Do you regularly receive our francophone virtual newsletter of socio-economic news, entitled "Les petites nouvelles de RDÉE Île-du-Prince-Édouard" by e-mail?
If not, subscribe yourself to our distribution list by sending an e-mail to raymond.arsenault@rdee.ca and you will start receiving our newsletters.**