



***Community Links***  
*Seniors • Communities • Action*

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# **Annual Report 2011**

*Community Links gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the  
Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness*

## ***Our Mission***

**Community Links** is a provincial organization that promotes healthy, age friendly communities and quality of life for Nova Scotia seniors through community development and volunteer action.

## ***Our Vision***

Seniors in Nova Scotia are informed, active and engaged in their communities, have a voice in public policy, and are able to age in place with quality of life.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**– Terry Smith**



To all Community Links members, Board members and staff. I wish to thank you for the honour of being your

president for the past year and what a pleasure it has been to work with you all.

Much work has been done this past year in planning for the future of our organization. We have updated our strategic plan to reflect the fact that our Preventing Falls Together Program will be consolidated into our core program. This has resulted in a new vision which will involve Ageing Well Together Coalitions located in various regions of the province forming an integral part of Community Links' work in advancing the quality of life for seniors in Nova Scotia. Ageing well encompasses active aging within age friendly and healthy communities across the province.

Community Links is entering a time of transition and also of tremendous opportunity. Maintaining the coalition model which was developed through the Preventing Falls Together Program and broadening its focus on seniors' issues is a crucial step in the evolution of the organization. Through its ongoing support for both the core operation of Community Links and for the Preventing Falls Together Program, Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection, (now the Department of Health and Wellness) has clearly shown that the work we have undertaken aligns with its own priorities and that health promotion as it applies to seniors in the province, is largely being addressed by this work.

The staff and the board have endeavored to outline a road map for the future by creating a strategic plan that will help Community Links attain its mission: "to promote healthy, age friendly communities and quality of life for Nova Scotia seniors through community development and volunteer action."

In the next few years adjustments may very well have to be made in order to keep meeting the needs of our ever increasing senior population. Poverty within this population is one the things which we must keep uppermost in our minds.

I most sincerely want to mention our Executive Director who has been a hardworking dedicated visionary. The rest of the staff and in particular Anne Corbin deserve a very heartfelt thank you for all their efforts. To our eyes and ears in the community, that being our memberships at large, we say thank you to you for your input and feedback and for being our true compass leading us in the right direction.

Yours Respectfully,

Terry Smith

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## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**- Sandra Murphy**



It is always a pleasure to have the opportunity to report to members on the work of Community Links and its terrific volunteers and staff. This past year was a transitional one that

involved all of us in rethinking what we do and how we operate.

We began the work of integrating the Preventing Falls Together Program into the core work of Community Links and towards

recognizing that the work that is done by coalitions and staff in that program addressed a greater agenda of seniors well being. We invited coalition members to tell us what they would like to see happen in a new structure. We pulled staff and advisory committee and board members together to plan how this would move forward building on the great work of the past. We worked closely with our funder, the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, (now Health and Wellness), to develop a concept for how this would move forward so it addressed its priorities and our own. We revamped the Community Links Strategic Plan and are currently working to revamp staffing structures. We are ready to move forward with our newly named Ageing Well Together Coalitions. These will still focus on preventing falls but will also be acknowledged for the much broader impact they have on seniors' ability to age well in their communities.

We have paved the way for what we hope will be an exciting future for Community Links and we look forward to the official launch of the Ageing Well Together Coalitions in the fall. This, however, is the time to report on our accomplishments under the old Strategic Plan in fiscal year 2010-2011.

**I. Seniors Well-Being:** *Seniors across the province are encouraged and supported to lead healthy, safe, and active lives which in turn promotes their ability to be independent and productive members of their communities.*

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Preventing Falls Together continued to be a major focus for encouraging and supporting seniors' well-being. (See Separate Report).

- Transportation for seniors and others who are transportation disadvantaged was a major focus of my work. I chaired Community Transit –Nova Scotia, which began work to support the development of a provincial strategy on transportation. CT-NS also provides support to local transportation service providers.
- Community Links continued its efforts around the issue of Seniors and Gambling. Skits were developed, senior volunteers recruited, and pilots done in two regions of the province before March 31st. Presentations and dialogues on the issue are continuing around the province.
- Community Links has worked at a provincial level on seniors' well-being through involvement with the Group of IX, the Seniors Legal Information Project, the Nova Scotia Seniors Housing Network, the Seniors Abuse Advisory Committee of the Department of Seniors, and the Provincial Inter-sectoral Falls Prevention Committee.
- Community Links encouraged and supported senior engagement by holding Mini People's Schools in Louisdale and Sydney.
- Community Links entered a partnership with Caregivers Nova Scotia to offer Tyze, an online support system for family caregiver networks.

**II. Volunteerism:** *Nova Scotians are engaged in volunteer action and are supported to be productive in their efforts and to feel valued for their contributions.*

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Community Links was an active partner with Health Promotion and

- Community Links partnered with Health Promotion and Protection – Volunteerism and Imagine Canada to coordinate a Provincial Gathering for approximately 100 voluntary sector staff and volunteers in November 2010.
- Community Links worked with the Atlantic Charities Learning Exchange as a Nova Scotia partner in delivery of training around compliance in fundraising reporting to CRA by small and rural charities.
- Community Links engaged over two hundred volunteers, province wide, in its efforts in the past year.
- Community Links delivered training in leadership and public policy engagement.
- I presented on behalf of Community Links at the 21st International Association for Volunteer Effort Conference in Singapore in January 2011.

**III. Communications:** *The membership of Community Links is well informed of and has input into issues and activities of importance. Community Links is well recognized for its work on seniors' well being, volunteerism and advocacy.*

- Board members regularly contacted members in their districts, recruited new members and reported on members' activities and concerns at board meetings.

- Board members have represented Community Links at events in their districts.
- Community Links produced and distributed four newsletters on issues of concern to seniors, 12 e-bulletins; and circulated information to members on many activities and events.
- The web site continues to provide information on Community Links' activities and attracted 8553 unique visitors over the year.
- Community Links provides a monthly column to six community newspapers around the province.

**IV. Advocacy:** *The issues affecting Nova Scotia Seniors are represented to government, businesses and other organizations.*

- Community Links continues as the Nova Scotia Division of Canadian Pensioners Concerned and has provided input into its work on seniors' issues at a federal level.
- Community Links serves on the Group of IX, the Seniors Advisory Council of Nova Scotia, which provides advice and input into seniors' issues to the Department of Seniors and the provincial government.
- Community Links met with the Minister of Health and Wellness.
- Community Links continued to work on the implementation of Seniors Influencing Public Policy in Nova Scotia: An Action Plan.
- Community Links advocates for affordable accessible transportation services through its work on Community Transit-Nova Scotia.
- Community Links provided feedback to the Department of Seniors on the progress of implementation of the Strategy for Positive Aging.

- Barbara Carthew, Past President, represented Community Links and seniors on the planning committee for a provincial conference on poverty.
- Community Links encouraged and supported involvement of municipalities in the Age Friendly agenda.

This is a brief snapshot of the work that has gone on this year in the organization. We have been very lucky to have engaged board members, who under the leadership and inspiration of Terry Smith, have served well in their own districts and have stepped forward on many occasions to represent Community Links on provincial committees and events. Anne Corbin, Carla Malay and Brenda MacKinnon have given exceptional support to the coalitions with which they work and also to the broader work of the organization. Contract staff Cheryl MacQuarrie and Debora Pollock, have also done an excellent job. We have also been blessed with many volunteers who have served in many capacities across the province on our behalf. We also wish to acknowledge the support both financial and moral of our main funder - Health and Wellness.

Annual meetings are also about departures. We were sorry to say good bye to Susan King, Provincial Coordinator for Preventing Falls Together, in December. I want to acknowledge the contribution of Sheila Hoeg from District 6 and to our Past President Barbara Carthew, who are leaving us this year. All have played a tremendous role in the success of Community Links over their years with us.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sandra Murphy  
Community Links

## Key Partnerships

Community Links continues to work with and gain strength from our many partners, which include:

- Caregivers Nova Scotia –partner in the TYZE Network project
- Community Transit-NS –ED chairs the Board
- Community Services Council of Newfoundland and Labrador – partner in the Atlantic Charities Learning Exchange.
- Department of Seniors
- Gambling Awareness Nova Scotia
- Gerontology Association of Nova Scotia
- Group of IX – a member
- Health Promotion Clearinghouse
- Imagine Canada
- Labour and Advanced Education - Volunteerism)
- Nova Scotia Seniors’ Housing Network (NSSHN)
- The Nova Scotia Network of Networks - Supporting Volunteers and Voluntary Sector Organizations.
- Public Legal Education Society of NS

## Membership

Community Links’ membership continues its steady growth, with about 20 new group and individual members joining this year bringing our total number of members to 271.

As our Preventing Falls Together Coalitions evolve into Ageing Well Together Coalitions and become integrated into the core work of Community Links, we are pleased to welcome all Coalition members as current or new members of Community Links.

Members of Community Links receive our newsletters and monthly e-bulletins, as well as information and resource sharing, local area workshops, and invitations to our AGM and other events. Members are also considered to be associate members of Canadian Pensioners Concerned.



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## **PREVENTING FALLS TOGETHER**

**- Anne Corbin**

This has been a year of change and some exciting new

developments for Preventing Falls Together. With the official four-year program winding down in March 2011, staff and coalition members willingly took up the challenge to expand our horizons and think about how our PFT Coalitions can evolve into more broadly based Ageing Well Together Coalitions. Since many of our activities over the years have encompassed age friendly issues like physical activity, medication use and municipal improvements, the move to a more broadly based ageing well philosophy was not a big leap. We do however, remain dedicated to the goal of preventing falls, and will continue our work in this important area.

Last December, our Provincial Coordinator Susan King left the organization to take up a position as Executive Director of Atlantic Coastal Action Plan- Cape Breton. We wish her continued success in that demanding role. Susan would be pleased to hear that we have settled on spelling ageing with an “e” as she was a strong proponent of that option! Our ED Sandra Murphy has acted a team lead for the program since then. In January, we welcomed Cheryl

MacQuarrie as part-time coordinator of the CBRM Coalition. Cheryl has led the effort of this group to establish senior parking spaces in the Sydney area, and so far Mayflower Mall has come on board, joining a number of other businesses in the province.

Our work this year has achieved some notable results. Foremost among these are our Mobility Workshops. We received funding from New Horizons to organize Mobility: Now You’re Going Places workshops in many areas of the province. The workshop itself was developed by Christine Flegal and her colleagues at the BC Institute of Technology. Using an existing program allowed regional staff and coalition members to get right to work setting up an impressive number of workshops, often in fairly remote communities. The purpose of these sessions was to remove some of the stigma around using assistive devices like canes and walkers, and to inform seniors about how to properly fit, use and obtain such devices. Response from seniors was overwhelming. In many cases, where two sessions were held in the same community—more people showed up for the second session than the first – a true test of popularity! Over 400 seniors have attended the workshops to date.

These sessions could not have happened without the generous participation of community physiotherapists and occupational therapists from the DHA-s, as well as local pharmacies, and of course the seniors themselves, who championed the workshops, acted as leaders, and very importantly, arranged for meeting halls and refreshments. We continue to receive requests for these workshops and hope to expand the numbers in the coming year.

Another accomplishment was our year of Ageing Well 2011 Calendar, produced by HRM Coalition with sponsorship by Halifax and Dartmouth Community Health Boards as well as four corporate sponsors.

Response was so positive that we are planning a provincial version for 2012, and already have funding commitments from seven CHB-s in the province.

Working with community partners is very much part of our ageing well and age friendly approach. For example, we have partnered with Dalhousie University and Lunenburg-Queens District Health Authority on a research project involving seniors called Balancing Health, Home and Happiness, and with the Lunenburg County Age Friendly committee on an age friendly checklist for businesses. During this past year we were able to and present to officials from municipalities, as well as having recreation directors from municipalities actively participate on our coalitions.

The regional staff for Preventing Falls Together sincerely thank all the members of our coalitions, and in particular those current and former Community Links Board members who have served and still serve on these groups. We also thank Julian Young, Coordinator, Injury Prevention and Control at the Department of Health and Wellness, for his enthusiastic support over the last four years, and for his department's continuing generous support.

Submitted for the regional PFT team:

Brenda MacKinnon  
Cheryl MacQuarrie  
Carla Malay  
Anne Corbin

## Canadian Pensioners Concerned



Canadian Pensioners  
Concerned Incorporated  
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Community Links continues as the Nova Scotia Division of Canadian Pensioners Concerned. Once again, we were pleased to support Board member Alma Johnston to attend the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation (NPSCF) meeting in Ottawa in October, where she represented CPC on our behalf at the meeting. CPC National President Winnie Fraser- MacKay was elected Member at Large of NPSCF from PEI.

Canadian Pensioners Concerned is the only national seniors' organization which is represented on the Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health (CCSMH). This organization works to promote seniors mental health by connecting people, ideas and resources. Winnie Fraser Mackay, national president of CPC, serves on the Coalition steering committee and was active on its planning committee for the national conference on Seniors Mental Health which was held in Halifax in the fall of 2010 and attracted 250 people from across the country.

Community Links continues to serve on the Group of IX, the Nova Scotia Seniors Advisory Council as the representative of Canadian Pensioners Concerned.

**COMMUNITY LINKS**  
**Statement of Revenues and Expenditures**  
**Year Ended March 31, 2011**

	Budget 2011	2011	2010
<b>Revenue</b>			
Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection	\$ 110,000	\$ <b>110,000</b>	110,000
Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection	154,000	<b>154,000</b>	154,000
TYZE Project	12,500	<b>12,500</b>	-
Other Revenue	67,372	<b>57,861</b>	84,156
Transfer (to) from deferred revenue	34,328	<b>7,449</b>	(22,683)
	<u>378,200</u>	<u><b>341,810</b></u>	<u>325,473</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
General Operations (Schedule 2)	\$ 187,975	\$ <b>172,529</b>	\$ 155,002
Preventing Falls Together program (Schedule 3)	190,225	<b>163,058</b>	164,971
	<u>378,200</u>	<u><b>335,587</b></u>	<u>319,973</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditures for the year</b>	\$	\$ <b>6,223</b>	\$ 5,500

**Auditors:** Sutherland Watt  
Chartered Accountants

For a copy of the complete audited financial statements, please contact the office at:  
422-0914 or  
[admin@nscommunitylinks.ca](mailto:admin@nscommunitylinks.ca)

## Community Links Board of Directors 2010-2011

Terry Smith	President	DISTRICT# 2 Shelburne/Yarmouth/Digby
Bill Poole	Vice-President	DISTRICT# 3 Annapolis/Kings
Doris Soley	Secretary- Treasurer	DISTRICT# 5 Cumberland
Barbara Carthew	Past-President	
Sandra Meister		DISTRICT# 1 Lunenburg/Queens
Wayne Burley		District # 4 Colchester Until November, 2010
Sheila Hoeg		DISTRICT# 6 Pictou
Elizabeth Henri		DISTRICT# 7 Antigonish/Guysborough/ South Richmond/Inverness
Emerson Jessome		DISTRICT# 8 North Inverness/Victoria/Cape Breton
Alma Johnston		DISTRICT# 9 Halifax Regional Municipality/West Hants

## Community Links Staff 2010-2011

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<b>Anne Corbin</b> Coordinator, Admin and Communications Coalition Development and Support—HRM	<u>Provincial Office Address:</u> 5516 Spring Garden Road, Suite 201 Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 1G6 Phone: 902-422-0914 Fax: 902-422-9322 Email: <a href="mailto:admin@nscommunitylinks.ca">admin@nscommunitylinks.ca</a>
<b>Susan King</b> Provincial Coordinator, Preventing Falls Together	Until December 10, 2011
<b>Carla Malay</b> Coalition Development and Support—Western Nova Scotia	Phone: 902-682-2090 Email: <a href="mailto:nswest@preventingfallstogether.ca">nswest@preventingfallstogether.ca</a>
<b>Brenda MacKinnon</b> Coalition Development and Support—Central Nova Scotia	Phone: 902-863-5040 Email: <a href="mailto:nscentral@preventingfallstogether.ca">nscentral@preventingfallstogether.ca</a>