

East Hants  
**COMMUNITY  
LEARNING ASSOCIATION**  
Making Learning Accessible



East Hants  
**COMMUNITY RIDER**  
Making Life Accessible

Elmsdale  
**COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
Making Food Accessible



# 2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

## CHARGING AHEAD



# POWERFUL NUMBERS

The mission, vision and values of our organization are:

## MISSION

*Empowering individuals to live with a sense of freedom and confidence through accessible learning opportunities, transportation and food security*

## VISION

*The community of East Hants is supported to learn, grow and thrive*

## VALUES

Collaboration - Community - Integrity - Inclusion - Connection

## EHCLA

Learners Across All Programs: 269

Learning Programs: 17

Digital Literacy Sessions: 73

## EHCR

KMs: 462,476

Rides: 13,042

Vehicles: 8

## ECG

Plates of Food: 3,926

Community Lunches: 9

Pop Up Markets: 7





**TANYA BURKE**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# AN ELECTRIC YEAR

Spring is in the air, the birds are chirping, the tulips are standing tall, and all forms of life are starting to shed their winter coats. That means it is time to take a moment to reflect on our past year and prepare to “Charge Ahead” into a new year.

It comes as no shock to anyone that life has gotten extra expensive. We all feel the pinch of the extra costs at home and we are certainly not immune to it here at EHCLA. The cost of doing just about everything has risen - fuel, vehicle maintenance, paper and ink - they have all increased. One thing that hasn't risen in cost, and that is still relatively inexpensive, is our ability to collaborate with our partners and our community. This past year, EHCLA and our team have worked hard at getting ourselves “back out there” and reconnecting. This year we have offered classes in 3 off site locations, increased our fleet of vehicles, connected 3,926 individuals with access to food, and collaborated with many partners, businesses, individuals and community groups.

Despite some bumps in the road, this year has been productive. We have reached more learners through our East Hants Community Learning programs, with the most popular being Digital Literacy skills support. Our East Hants Community Rider service transported more youth than seniors for the first time in our history. Our Elmsdale Community Garden project offered more food than ever before and shows no signs of slowing down.



Whenever I am given a chance, and if you have ever met me you will likely agree, I really enjoy talking to people about our amazing team at EHCLA. It really does take a village to build a great community with great services for those who live here. I am grateful every single day for the dedication, support, skills and commitment of every single person who works and volunteers with us. You are truly the “rubber on our road,” the “nutrients in our soil,” and the “nurturers of skill development and personal growth.” I sincerely thank each of you!

The theme of this year's annual report is “Charging Ahead” and that is exactly what we intend to do. We will charge into 2024-2025 with fresh ideas, while continuing to offer the services that our community relies on. Please take a few moments to check out this year's report and, like me, I hope you feel inspired by the possibilities to come.





# EMPOWERING OUR LEARNERS



This year saw considerable growth for our adult learning programs. In addition to our regular offerings, we received funding through the Digital Literacy Exchange Program to expand our technology-based programs to help people learn skills like Fraud Prevention, Emergency Preparation Online Safety and much more.

We have had great success offering our classes outside of our home base. In addition to adult learning programs in Sipekne'katik and technology classes in Noel, we have also held a number of programs at the LWF Community Hall in Fall River. From our new Tales and Trails family literacy program to building confidence with computers, our programs are reaching people of all ages throughout the community.

One of the biggest changes that happened this year was in the partnerships we formed to bring a greater variety of programming to the community. This includes events like our Health Information Lunch & Learn and the session on Income Tax and Service Canada.

## THIS YEAR, WE OFFERED:

- **Adult Learning Programs Levels 1-3**
- **Digital Literacy Classes in Elmsdale, Fall River and Noel**
- **GED Preparation**
- **Everyday English Classes**
- **Paper Holiday Crafts**
- **Hot Chocolate Holiday Sing-a-long**
- **Fraud Prevention Workshops**
- **Emergency Preparation Workshop**
- **Online Safety Workshop**
- **Driver's Handbook Series**



**I sincerely want to thank all these beautiful people who make up this institution for all their work, effort, dedication, understanding and empathy.**

**I also want to thank the instructors for the valuable English classes that have been fundamental to overcoming the challenges I face. In my daily life, they have been of great value to me and my family.**

**Thank you for your willingness to give us a little of your time and to guide us on the right paths.**

**- Hector Acosta**







**JEAN WRIGHT**  
INSTRUCTOR

# PROJECTING POSITIVE ENERGY



**TOM RICHARD**  
INSTRUCTOR

## MORE PROGRAMS:

- Trip to Pier 21
- End of Year Trip to Burntcoat Head
- Income Tax and Service Canada Workshop
- Health Information Lunch & Learn
- Tales and Trails
- Youth Writing Workshop
- Managing Stress Series
- Worm Composting Workshop
- Sauerkraut & Friends Workshop
- 8th Annual Family Picnic

This year our Family Literacy Day event was led by Lynn Lapthorne and Barb Moxsom. These two local authors ran a weekend session for youth on writing, poetry, illustration and harnessing their creativity. It was exciting to fill our classrooms with enthusiastic young learners and to watch the creative process at work.

At the heart of our organization is community, and several of our events brought together people of all ages. From our heart-warming Holiday Sing-a-long to our fun-filled Family Picnic, we love to show how learning is not just time in the classroom.



**Wanted to let you know how much that I appreciated the courses at the Noel Legion on Tuesday and Thursday this winter.**

**Learned so many things. Made me comfortable with technology. I'm embracing everything with wonder.**

**Looking forward to participating in more classes this Fall and Winter.**

**- Richard Harvie**



Next year will see some changes, such as the new Canadian Adult Education Certificate (CAEC), which is replacing the General Education Development (GED). What will not change is our focus on programs that connect to the needs of our community. Whether it's a program for your workplace or training for yourself, let us know and we will work together with you to make it happen!





**HAYLEY MILLER**  
DISPATCHER / ADMIN

# CHARGED WITH NEW POSSIBILITIES



Electra - 2024 Hyundai Kona

Another great year accomplished!

This year we retired Lancelot, our 2016 Mitsubishi, with roughly 450,000 kilometers on it. Thanks to the Rural Transit Solutions Fund, we were able to purchase two new SUVs: a hybrid 2023 Kia Sportage and our first fully electric vehicle, a 2024 Hyundai Kona. This brings us up to 8 vehicles! Our fleet is growing fast to meet the needs of our community.

EHCR had more rides than ever last year, but due to a lot of local runs, our kilometres travelled were slightly less. It just goes to show how much need for transportation there is within our region. One program that helped a lot of passengers was the Fare Assistance Program, which reduced the cost of transportation for people with low income. Provincial funding for this program makes a big difference to many of our passengers and we're very grateful to be able to continue it this year.

We had two (free) Christmas shopping trips for seniors this December. The Community Rider transported more youth than ever before – ridership under the age of 18 was over 22% of our service this year! We increased the number of deliveries for businesses and families, including groceries, frozen meals and items from the food bank. This demonstrates the versatility of our service – it's for people of all ages and for any purpose you can imagine!



Class trip to Oakfield Park Zoomster - 2023 Kia Sportage



**"Just wanted to give you a pat on the back for excellent service we received from Community Rider. Easy to book, reasonable price and prompt, friendly and skilled drivers... Thank you for this wonderful service!"**

**- Trish Bekkers**

As we start another year, we are one step closer to launching our new system for booking rides, Blaise. We're hopeful this will increase the efficiency of our service and make it easier for people to book a ride.

It's also important to look back at the past year and see our successes: we reached more people, drove longer hours, and worked harder than ever as a team to support the needs of our passengers. Thank you to our amazing team: the drivers, our admin team and volunteers that support our work in the community. People are facing a lot of challenges, and, whether it's listening on the phone or providing a much-needed ride, we exist to make our community a better place.

## THANK YOU TO OUR DRIVERS!



**Neil  
Barr**



**Dave  
Hue**



**Brian  
MacInnis**



**Mark  
Lynch**



**Bev  
Clarke**



**George  
Morrison**





**TANYA ASHLEY**  
GARDEN COORDINATOR

# FEEDING OUR GROWING COMMUNITY



**KRESTIN MOSA**  
GARDENER



The Elmsdale Community Garden project is supported by a great team: Garden Coordinator Tanya Ashley, Krestin Mosa, Stanley (Junior) Ashley, and Becky Grant. We are fortunate to have the support of the EHCLA and Community Rider team and many dedicated volunteers who come to our events to help the project in many ways.

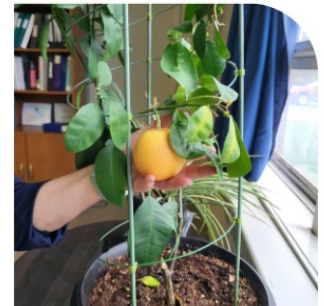
2023-2024 proved to be a productive year for the ECG. The pop up markets and freezer meals are especially popular with the community. The project had great support from Elmsdale Superstore and Withrow's Farm Market this past year. They assisted us by subsidizing the produce we purchase for pop up markets and the ingredients needed to keep the freezer full. We also rented the Elmsdale Legion for several events and have found it to be a great place to connect with the community. These partnerships have been invaluable.

New to the project this year is our greenhouse, built with materials donated by Elmsdale Lumber. This greenhouse will enable us to grow our own transplants, start the garden earlier, and plant multiple times per year. Special thanks to Junior, whose woodworking skills led to the construction of the greenhouse, as well as countless other jobs around the garden.

Thank you all, for everything that you do. We have had each and every one of the meals that we're done through this group each and every one was tasty, well presented.

- Dave Osborne

- Garden Boxes
- Harvest Dinner
- Pop Up Markets
- Community Lunches
- Freezer Meals
- Community Events



**This year, our indoor grapefruit tree bore fruit! We harvested 2 grapefruits from it - 1 was served up at our AGM!**



As the cost of groceries keeps increasing, the garden project is going to be even more important and necessary for our community.

Thanks to all for a successful year and I look forward to the upcoming gardening season.





# 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors is a group of dedicated volunteers that helps guide our organization and ensure that we stay true to our cause. From supporting us at events to policy review and everything in between, our board is there to help us connect to our community and achieve our goals.



Paula  
Wadden



Caitlin  
Patterson



Cathy  
MacDonald



Gennie  
Himelman



Gina  
Winfield



Cecil  
Dixon



Alicia  
Wilmot



Stacey  
Harrison



Leanne  
Taylor



Leah  
MacMillan



Wanda  
Hirtle

This year, our board undertook two big projects: a vision for the future with our **new 2023-2028 Strategic Plan** and a review of our **Policies and Procedures**. These documents will prove important in the days ahead to help us overcome the challenges of inflation, expansion and maintaining an exceptional working environment for our staff and volunteers.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **Community Engagement & Collaboration**
- **Adaptive Approach to Program Excellence**
- **Organizational Sustainability**



# 2023-2024 FUNDERS & PARTNERS

## FUNDERS

EHCLA, EHCR and ECG receive funding from a range of government and community supporters. This funding enables us to deliver free programs and offer subsidized transportation through the Community Rider.



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada



EAST HANTS



Shannex™



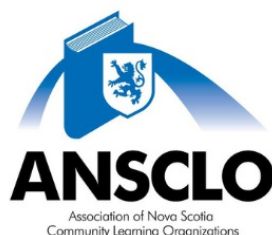
CANADIAN  
RED CROSS



EAST  
HANTS  
Community Health Board  
nova scotia  
health authority

## PARTNERS

We strongly value collaboration. We partner with many other organizations, institutions and businesses to help our programs reach further.





# 2023-2024 CORPORATE SUPPORTERS



Colchester East Hants  
Health Centre Foundation  
*Rooted in community support.*



East Hants  
Writer's  
Group



Connect with us online!  
[easthantslearning.com](http://easthantslearning.com)  
[communityrider.ruralrides.ca](http://communityrider.ruralrides.ca)

