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To provoke thought and action for the betterment of our communities.

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Submitting content**Share your community**

We love to hear and see what's going on in your area. Have something you'd like to share? A story or a photo you'd like to see in these pages?

Please send your contribution to colin.chisholm@herald.ca and it may appear in an upcoming edition.

The publisher reserves the right to edit, condense or reject submissions.

Please include your name, the community you're contributing from and contact information so we can get in touch.

Did you miss your paper?

Don't worry, you can view previous editions at saltwire.pressreader.com.

Introducing a tribe of successful women

CAROL ROBAR
RACHEL COOPER
VALLEY WIRE

"Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back."

The origin of this popular saying may be uncertain, but it is popular because it resonates with so many women in business.

Business organizations and networking groups have been around for a long time, each focusing on their purpose and working towards a common goal. Chambers of Commerce, the Centre for Women in Business, Rotary, and various industry groups, such as those in agriculture or tourism, work to support their members and build a successful economy in their community.

Valley Women's Business Network (VWBN) is a not-for-profit networking group run by volunteers. Our mission is to promote, educate and support women in business in the Annapolis Valley and we have been active for more than 20 years. We host monthly meetings, mostly online at present, where members can network and take advantage of the experience and knowledge of guest speakers.

We provide the opportunity to build relationships with other women who have



encountered or overcome obstacles associated with starting and growing a business. Being part of a safe and encouraging environment of support makes it easier to solve problems and inspire new thoughts.

VWBN also supports women in business internationally through Kiva microlending. Kiva is an international non-profit whose mission is to expand financial access to help underserved communities thrive. We participate in Kiva business loans to enterprising women in developing countries. We help them purchase what they need for their business, such as a sewing machine, animals for their farm, or a freezer to sell cold products in their store.

Every fall, as part of Small Business Week, we hold a fundraiser to raise bursary funds for women attending the business programs at the Nova Scotia Community College. Last fall, our in-person event's keynote speaker was



Corrie Melanson of SeaChange CoLab will present a workshop on Allyship in the Workplace during an upcoming Valley Women's Business Network event.

CONTRIBUTED

Tareq Hadhad of Peace by Chocolate. This fall, we're holding an online auction featuring donations from various local businesses.

We offer 10-week online business courses through Nova Scotia's Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration. These are free to participants and cover topics such as basic accounting, communica-

tion, marketing, social media and computer skills. Participants must be employed or self-employed and looking to boost their work skills.

Our website gives members an opportunity to promote their business in various ways and the monthly e-newsletter shares news from members as well as other business news and opportunities.

Supporting each other through building relationships, not just business contacts, leads us to the guest speaker for Sept. 14, at 6:30 p.m. (via Zoom). Corrie Melanson of SeaChange CoLab will present a workshop on Allyship in the Workplace, helping us develop awareness of biases, finely tune our words and strategies, and be ready for opportunities to create conversations that matter.

The evening will also be an opportunity to network with others interested in equity and inclusion. To register for this free event, email programs@vwbn.ca with the subject line Allyship Workshop.

For more than 20 years, the Valley Women's Business Network has worked together to support, educate and promote women in business in the Annapolis Valley. In this monthly column, we share news, interviews, business tips and more. For information about VWBN, visit <http://vwbn.ca/>.

Music, fun and good works

Deep Roots Music Festival set to go in Wolfville

JOEY FITZPATRICK
VALLEY WIRE

It's the perfect combination of music, fellowship and humanitarian aid.

The 2022 Deep Roots Music Festival will include a Red Cross Benefit concert for refugees on Thursday, Sept. 21 at the Horton Performance Centre. The entertainment will be provided by feature festival favourites Coco Love Alcorn and Ian Sherwood with a special appearance by the Annapolis Valley Honour Choir.

"It's a response to the situation in Ukraine, but we are aware that there are many refugees worldwide," says festival programming director Dave Carmichael. "We're partnering with the Canadian Red Cross and we'll have somebody from that

organization coming to speak with our audience about the work they do."

Presented by the Deep Roots Music Cooperative, the festival runs from Sept. 21 to 25. This will be the 17th annual edition of the event, which began in 2004, and endured a two-year pandemic hiatus.

"Last year we did an abridged, outdoor version and this year we're back to an almost full festival, but without the dances," Carmichael says. "We're hoping to ease our audience back into a safe environment for live music."

The main stage events include Maritime favourite Jenn Grant, the soulful sounds of AHI, folk star Kaia Kater, hard-core troubadour Scott Cook, the intricate harmonies of Marla & David Celia, Appalachian folk duo Factory Girls, blues legend Garrett Mason, and seasoned veteran Jamie Junger with his Jungernauts in tow.

The festival always includes a Sunday morning sing-along, called "Rise up Singing," this year featuring another appearance by the

Annapolis Valley Honour Choir at Festival Theatre. Food and cash donations will be accepted for the local food bank.

"It's a chance for people to come together and sing," Carmichael says. "It has a kind of old-time-religion feel to it without being connected to any specific religious denomination."

The festival includes free performances and there will be live music Friday afternoon and all day Saturday at the Just Us! festival tent in Clock Park, Saturday morning music at the Wolfville Farmers' Market and late-night shows at Paddy's Pub, where audiences can hear some of the main stage acts in a different setting.

Other popular free activities include the harmony workshop on Saturday morning with Sarah McInnis and Rebecca Fairless, drumming with Djudjug Ensemble, crafts and puppetry, kids music, and the ever-popular Fresh Beats Rhythm Parade, featuring Wee Giant Theatre.

Held in September, when

Acadia University students are back in town, the festival is the largest annual event by the Deep Roots Music Cooperative. Supported by both the Town of Wolfville and the university, the festival is built on countless hours contributed by more than 100 volunteers, and financial support from virtually all sectors of the Valley community.

Deep Roots Music Cooperative members come together through a shared love of music with a mission to create meaningful connections between cultures, community groups, artists and audiences. Each year Valley residents open their homes to billet the performers, while volunteers donate their time and energy to make the festival a reality.

"We have volunteers cooking, providing ground transportation and working backstage," Carmichael says. "It's really an incredible community venture. It's a lot of work, but we look forward to it every year."

Block print decor has a long history

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS IN YOUR HOME



CATHY REID

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Block printing has a very long history, originating in China nearly 4000 years ago.

The first block printed item in recorded history was a book. A picture book, the Diamond Sutra, was printed 300 years before the Gutenberg Bible. It took another 2000 years for block printing to become synonymous with India and fabrics.

The Mughal Dynasty began in India in the early 16th century and was a tremendous influence on the arts of that country, from fabrics and patterns to the building of the Taj

Mahal. The Dynasty lasted 200 years but the residual influence continues to this day. Block printing, particularly on fabric, was one way of building layers of colours and patterns in a consistent and repeatable manner. Little has changed in how block printing is still done today.

Blocks are hand carved from thick pieces of wood, with a rough handle on the back of each. Every part of the pattern has its own block so the more intricate patterns with several colours require a number of carved stamps. Plain-woven cotton is washed, beaten against rocks to make it softer, then left to dry and bleach in the sun. It's then dyed to the base colour. Once dry, the stamping begins. The fabric is stretched over a long table and a chalk line is drawn to begin. The stamp is dipped in ink and hand pressed or tapped with a hammer to create the pattern.

You can imagine how long it takes to fully stamp a floor rug or yards of fabric. As this is a stamped-by-hand process, no two items are exactly the same.

The colours and dyes change depending on the regions of production in India. A well-stamped pattern can be so perfect, it's almost impossible to tell it was hand done. Fabric could have two colours or a dozen, each one stamped individually to build the pattern. The printed patterns of intricate leaves, vines and flowers are still the most popular today.

In the past few years there has been renewed interest in block printed fabrics, in particular, on floor mats and table linens. The fabrics are soft and pre-washed to bring out the best in the cotton. The patterns are equally soft, a gentle blend of colours developed from natural dyes. The range of blues is quite lovely. Other colours are grey, terra cotta, ivory and

charcoal.

As we transition into fall, our home decor changes as well. We want to warm up the spaces, adding colours and textures to floors and tables, to couches and chairs. A number of new linens are block printed and add that fall feel. The pre-washed look of the mats and rugs makes you feel like you have an heirloom piece. The table linens add interest to your white dishes. And everything washes beautifully.

DID YOU KNOW?

The oldest dye colour in the world is likely indigo. A 6,200-year-old piece of woven cotton fabric found in Peru has been identified as dyed with indigo.

Cathy Reid is the owner of Absolutely Fabulous at Home in New Minas and offers information on consumer products every week.