

LMI and NMI make improvements in freight management

Season starts on June 14; NMI accepting freight June 8

When delivery trucks arrive at the Port of Goose Bay to drop off groceries and supplies for the north and south coast, they will notice that some things have changed. No longer will they offload outside. Drivers will back up to one of two new doors and their freight will be unloaded and stored inside the terminal until it's ready to be containerized and shipped north or south on the **Kamutik W.** They will also go to a newly constructed office inside the warehouse to get paperwork and the delivery receipt signed off.

Those are some of the changes carried out over the winter as Labrador Marine Inc. (LMI) made improvements to streamline the freight delivery and handling process at the terminal. LMI is also providing a new and improved management system to enable better tracking of freight.

2019 was the first year that Nunatsiavut Marine Inc. (NMI) provided shoreside services for the north and south coast freight and passenger service. With the entire operation run from Goose Bay, the terminal handled more than twice the freight of previous years, when the service was run out of both Goose Bay and Lewisporte. At times, the volume of freight and the challenge of storing it, posed an issue. LMI has sourced collapsible pallet boxes, which NMI purchased for smaller or mixed freight loads.

BETTER USE OF FREIGHT TERMINAL

NMI will also make more efficient use of the interior terminal space in 2020. Last year, all freight inside the

terminal had to be stored on the floor until shipment. This winter, NMI worked with LMI to remedy that issue by purchasing and installing metal racking to allow for the vertical stacking of freight. "This will enable more efficient storage in the warehouse," says General Manager Gary Latimer. "It will allow us to put more freight in the warehouse until it's ready to be containerized and shipped out. We also purchased two new electric forklifts to work inside the warehouse with the racking system."

The new racking system is designed for standard 4x4 pallets. "We know there will still be a few challenges," says Latimer, "because not all freight fits on a 4x4 pallet. A lot of freight isn't standard-sized. But we feel this system will make things less challenging than last year. The improvements that we've made in the terminal will minimize storing some goods outside in containers. These changes will give us the capacity to store it in the terminal."

PORT MANAGER HIRED

The operation will be overseen by a Port Manager in 2020. NMI has hired George Eldridge for the position. He had previously been Port Superintendent. "George has the experience to do this job well," says Latimer. "He knows warehouse management and freight distribution. We're also hiring an assistant Port Manager to work alongside George. This will ensure there's the necessary support so that NMI can do its job well in 2020 and in the years to come." 🏢



NMI focused on staff and customer safety during COVID-19 pandemic

A plexiglass barrier designed to protect NMI staff and customers was recently installed in the terminal at the Port of Goose Bay. (Photo: Tom Lyall)

NMI General Manager Gary Latimer and his team had lots to do this winter as they prepared for the second season of providing shoreside services to Labrador Marine for the north and south coast freight and ferry service. High on the list was the hiring of a Port Manager and improvements to the shipping terminal at the Port of Goose Bay to bring extra efficiency to the freight service. Then came COVID-19 and the competition by businesses everywhere to find adequate supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to keep staff safe as they went about their work.

"It was very challenging," Latimer says of the task to locate and purchase PPE. "In Goose Bay, we used a couple of suppliers and they would put us in touch with local people. We'd ask, 'where did you get your PPE?' We would track those people down and they would have a couple of things that were on our list and they'd provide some additional contacts. One contractor found masks up north. We opened some purchase orders with a couple of businesses and as they came across PPE, we'd ask them to put it on a pallet for Nunatsiavut Marine."

Latimer's own story about getting an adequate supply of hand sanitizer for use at the Goose Bay terminal underlined the challenge. He already had two 20-litre pails of alcohol-based hand sanitizer. But that product dries the skin when it's used frequently. A better product is one with glycerine and aloe. Latimer found it at his local hardware store. "I walked in and saw that they had 700-ml bottles on the shelf," says Latimer. "I know the owner and asked how much of a supply he had. He checked and found that he had 800 bottles in

stock. I purchased 48 for our team to use in Goose Bay." With the NMI team scouring the market for suppliers and contacts, Latimer believes he now has enough to keep his employees safe.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

But it isn't just PPE that Latimer and the NMI team have to prepare for in 2020. Public health authorities have emphasized the importance of physical distancing as a critical element in stopping the spread of COVID-19. With a dozen employees on shift during shipping season, truck drivers dropping off goods for shipment, and passenger traffic for the ferry, it was necessary for NMI to make changes at the terminal to allow people to keep a safe distance apart.

"We hired Nunatsiavut Construction to make some changes to help keep everyone safe," says Latimer. "They installed a plexiglass shield in front of the customer service desk and will install a second glass between the two employees who work at that desk. We're building a separate office for the freight checker and supervisor. In order to limit contact and practice physical distancing, only one customer at a time is permitted into the office. Our customer service agents already work behind a plexiglass shield. There will be a one-way flow of traffic through the ticket office. We removed some of the seating from the passenger waiting area to allow physical distancing and to provide appropriate space for people with disabilities. We also plan to have additional security on the scene to ensure that the guidelines are followed and that everyone stays safe."

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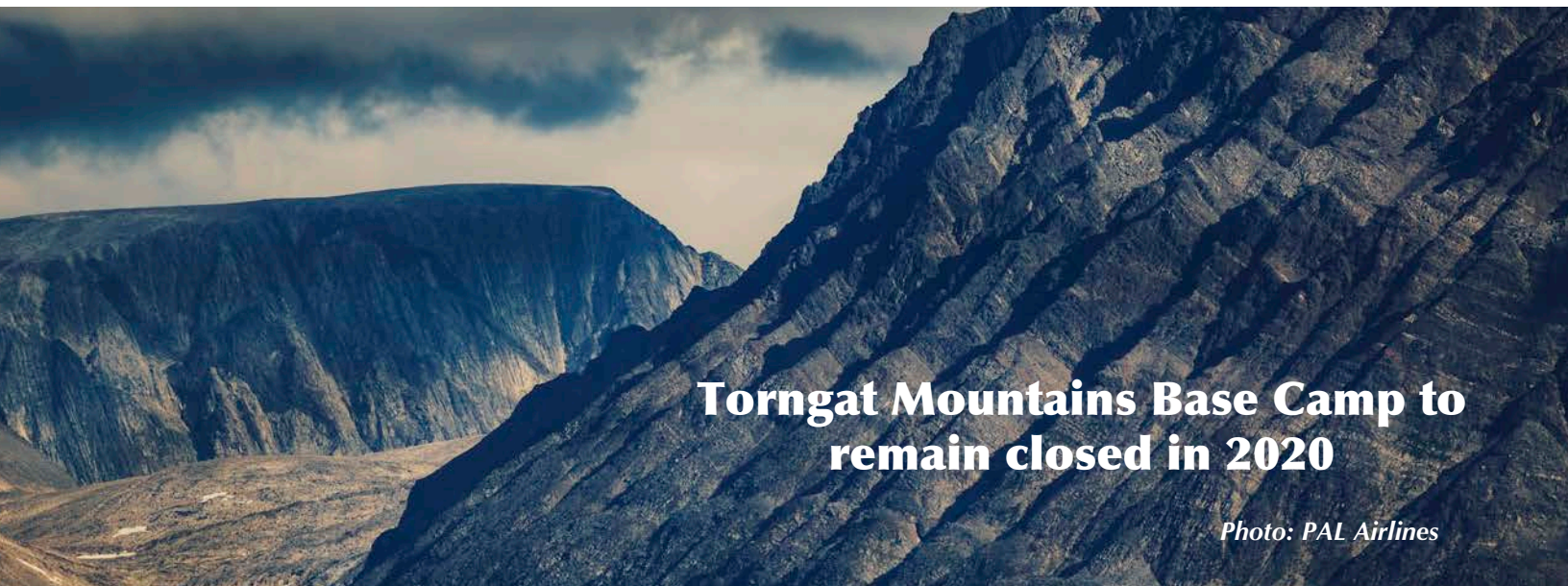
NMI focused on staff and customer safety during COVID-19 pandemic *cont'd*

FOCUS IS ON STAYING SAFE

NMI's role as shoreside contractor to the freight and passenger service is critical to providing essential service to the north and south coasts. Latimer says planning for working safely during this crisis required a complete review of how NMI operates. "Just take our crew that will be onsite everyday accepting freight, loading it into containers, and then loading the ship," he says. "Activities like loading and unloading make it difficult to stay two metres apart. That's where PPE such as masks and gloves will help. But there are other things we can do to help people keep the appropriate

distance. We will stagger breaks and lunch so that smaller groups are off at a time."

People visiting the terminal can expect to see adequate signage. "We're placing posters around advising people to wash their hands and how to do it properly," says Latimer. "There will be decals on the floor showing how to properly distance from others. We're looking forward to starting out the new season and getting everyone back to work safely. And in making sure that we have the right procedures in place to keep our clients and customers safe." 🏠



Torngat Mountains Base Camp to remain closed in 2020

Photo: PAL Airlines

The Nunatsiavut Group of Companies and Air Borealis have announced that Torngat Mountains Base Camp and Research Station will not operate this year. The facilities are located on Inuit-owned land next to the southern boundary of Torngat Mountains National Park.

Jim Lyall, the Nunatsiavut Government's Minister of Language, Culture, and Tourism pointed to the COVID-19 pandemic as the cause for the decision.

"The ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis does not allow for camp to operate safely and practically at this time," said Lyall. "We are committed to continuing to work with Air Borealis, the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies and Parks Canada towards implementing sustainable, long-term programming that will let visitors, researchers and Labrador Inuit experience our homeland."

NGC's Chief Operating Officer, Sarah Leo, said there

was little choice but to suspend operations for 2020. "It is unfortunate that we won't be able to showcase the beauty and majesty of the park along with Inuit culture and tradition," she says. "But we have to keep in mind the importance of having everyone stay safe. This is the right thing to do."

While Base Camp remains closed, NGC and Air Borealis will lay the groundwork for the start of the 2021 season by implementing a year-round booking system. As well, the two parties have agreed to make enhancements to their marketing plan, upgrade facilities at the site, and develop visitor experiences.

Base Camp provides three to seven-day packages that allow visitors to experience the Park's natural beauty and Inuit culture and traditions. The Research Station offers logistical and research support for scientific activities in the Torngats region. 🏠

Message from President and CEO Chris Webb



When I communicated with you through our first newsletter during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in late March, businesses and organizations were closing their doors and asking staff who could, to remain at home. Many employees across our Group of Companies had to remain on the job, in order to provide essential services to our people. I'm thinking of the staff who kept Air Borealis aircraft in the air, maintaining a critical supply link to the north coast. I also think of TSI's staff who provided the services to keep the Vale site in maintenance mode. NCI employees were at work building and installing safety barriers to keep people safe on their job. To all of them, and to all other NGC staff who worked productively and effectively from home, thank you.

We are now in a happier spot. Our province continues to keep the virus at bay and our attention is now focused on getting back to work. It might not be work as usual, but as you will read on these pages, leaders across all our companies are working out the details to bring us back and to keep us safe as we do our jobs.

We are planning to re-open the NGC Corporate office on Royal Street in Happy Valley-Goose Bay on June 8. Our staff has obtained supplies such as masks, gloves, wipes, and other sanitizing products. We will be closed to the public except for urgent business that cannot be completed by phone or email. We are installing a plexiglass barrier to protect staff when those face-to-face visits are necessary.

In this newsletter, you will read of the steps that are being taken in all of our companies to get on with business in a safe manner. TSI has returned to about two-thirds of its complement of workers at the Vale site. Nunatsiavut Marine will bring back its staff in the first week of June to get freight moving to north coast communities. NMI has also made improvements to freight handling that will enhance service for those who depend on it. Nunatsiavut Construction has projects planned in several communities and will move forward based on advice from public health officials, including the Nunatsiavut Government.

On May 27, Universal Helicopters announced that it was ceasing operations. NGC has been associated with Universal since 2013, when the Labrador Inuit Capital Strategy Trust invested in the company. Universal posted a poor financial performance in 2019 and the current COVID-19 pandemic, and its associated impact, compounded the company's problems. The Trust was supportive of Universal's attempts to work with its lenders to find solutions that would keep the company in business. Regrettably, those efforts were unsuccessful and the company's Board of Directors decided to cease operations. We won't know the status of the Trust's investment until Universal's assets are liquidated.

On other fronts, our leadership continue to work at finding new opportunity. Since we became a founding member of the Inuit Development Corporation Association in late 2018, this group of northern development corporations has been working to influence national policy decisions relating to the north and to advocate for business opportunities. We see potential in areas such as broadband, renewable energy, and in providing services to support the North Warning System. We are currently advocating our case with Senators, Members of Parliament, and federal cabinet ministers.

NGC believes strongly in partnerships as a way of leveraging the strengths of organizations that would otherwise be competitors. This is working for us at Vale, in our Air Borealis and Integrated Nunatsiavut Logistics partnerships, and in our role as shoreside services provider with Labrador Marine.

The Hall of Fame basketball player Michael Jordan might have said it best about the value of collaboration:

"Talent wins games, but teammates and intelligence win championships."

Keep safe and stay well.

Chris



TSI employee numbers grow as Vale resumes operations

ATCO Photo

Torngait Services Inc. has doubled its staff complement on the ground at the Vale project since the middle of May, as the project resumes operation. During the “care and maintenance” period, which began when Vale announced on March 16 that it would suspend all but maintenance operations, TSI had approximately 50 people onsite, divided into two-week shifts. By the end of May, TSI anticipated having approximately 118 people back at work, with 59 on each shift.

Eight people were brought back to site for the arrival of the **Umiak I** on May 24. An additional 14 people returned to work in the crushing operation, a job that will itself ramp up as Vale now plans to add a night crushing crew. This will double the crew complement. Four supervisors are also part of the ramp-up crew.

“It means we have about two-third of our employees back on site,” says TSI General Manager Wyman Jacques. “That is good news. But I also know it’s disappointing for our Beneficiary employees who live on the north coast. Because of travel restrictions that remain in place there, none of our 37 employees from the north coast have been able so far to return to the project. They are a valuable part of our team.”

That matter has been the subject of discussion between Vale and the Nunatsiavut Government. “I

haven’t been involved in those discussions,” says Jacques. “But I know that both parties understand the issue as it relates to north coast Beneficiaries not being able to get back to work. My understanding is that they have been looking at options to address the situation. I feel confident that they will find a suitable solution.”

TSI has been site services provider on the Vale project since 2005. Jacques says that being off work is an unusual and perhaps unsettling fact for some people. “For years, people have gotten used to being onsite at Vale for two weeks and then going home to their family and loved ones,” he says. “When that pattern is disrupted as it’s been this spring, with the uncertainty around COVID-19, and the impact on people’s income, that can be troubling to people. I want all our staff to know that TSI has an excellent Employee Assistance Program that’s there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It’s free of charge and completely confidential. If you want to talk to someone, just pick up the phone and call. It really is that easy.”



**TSI EAP coaching, counselling,
and support**
Available 24 hours a day at
1-800-663-1142.

Air Borealis focused on safety

Investigating increased passenger capacity



Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Air Borealis has instituted a rigorous cleaning protocol for its fleet. At right, engineer Jamie Baikie uses a fogging machine to coat the aircraft interior in a disinfectant that clings to all surfaces. Once the disinfectant is applied, the crew uses hot water and an approved cleaner to wipe down all surfaces.



Photo: Mark Gardner

As the province moves closer to loosening COVID-19 restrictions and adopting Alert Level 3, Air Borealis is considering increasing capacity on its flights to and from the north coast, from 6 passengers to 10. "We are following the Alert Level system put in place by the province," says Travis Barbour, Director of Air Borealis. "As we've moved along in the pandemic, there's much more awareness about safety. We will use the Alert system as a guide to move forward. Our belief is that the demand for air travel will be 6 to 10 people for the foreseeable future."

SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT

Each night, the Air Borealis Twin Otters that travel between the north coast and Goose Bay undergo a thorough cleaning. The aircraft are brought into the hanger and a piece of equipment called a fogging machine is placed inside the plane. The machine sprays a fine mist of disinfectant that sticks to each surface that it touches and kills germs and viruses, including coronavirus. Once the fogging is complete, an employee comes onto the aircraft with hot water and an approved cleaner and wipes all surfaces, ensuring the aircraft is fully cleaned. High-touch areas, such as seats and seat belts, walls, ceilings, and

doorways are wiped clean. Those cleaning measures will continue, even as travel restrictions are loosened.

Air Borealis has been operating this way since early March when COVID-19 began to impact the airline industry. Passenger traffic declined. Air Borealis decided to reduce passenger capacity from 15 to 6 on each flight. Several measures were put in place to allow for physical distancing. The row of seats behind the pilots was removed. Passengers were seated in a staggered arrangement and remaining seats were labelled "do not occupy." Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes were placed on board for passengers and crew. On April 20, the wearing of a mask became mandatory for passengers.

Air Borealis implemented safety measures early in the pandemic. "Early on, we heard from the Nunatsiavut Government and Inuit Community Governments about their desire to not have people travelling into the communities unless it was essential travel," Barbour says. "We used that as a guiding light as to how to move forward. And once the Nunatsiavut Government developed its own criteria about who could travel, we adopted those measures."



Air Borealis navigating COVID-19 *cont'd*

IMPACT ON OPERATIONS

COVID-19 has had a major impact on the airline. Regular passenger traffic dropped significantly as soon as the pandemic began and demand for the airline's charter business has been at a minimum. But there's one part of the Air Borealis operation that has thrived during the pandemic. Cargo flights have increased as people reacted to perceived food and supply shortages. "Wholesalers brought in more food

every day. "They are responsible for keeping Air Borealis in the air to provide this essential service to the north coast," says Barbour. "I know many had concerns about their own health and would have preferred to be home with their loved ones. They stepped up. We all owe them a debt of gratitude for the job they've done so far and the job that they continue to do. And even though our staff who could work from home weren't on the front lines every day, they



Air Borealis crew loads food and supplies for shipment to the north coast, May 28. (Aircraft photos: Paul Roberts and Rowan Cochran)

and supplies," says Barbour. "Retailers shipped in extra stock and residents in north coast communities brought in their own supplies. Overall, the volume of food shipments has increased and with the reduction in passengers, we were able to accommodate the additional cargo volumes."

APPRECIATION FOR AIRLINE EMPLOYEES

Air Borealis staff who weren't needed on the ground to support the passenger, medevac, and cargo operations were able to work from home. But those who maintained the aircraft, were involved in freight and cargo operations, checked in passengers, and the pilots who flew the planes, all had to be on the job

provided the support to keep the rest of the operation going. Our team is doing a phenomenal job."

MOVING FORWARD

As Air Borealis moves toward increasing passenger numbers, it will be done with safety as the number one priority. "We will move as the public health advice says it's safe to do so," says Barbour. "We won't take steps that will set back the progress that we've made in fighting this virus. Physical distancing, wearing masks, and deep cleaning our aircraft will be part of our lives for a long time yet. We provide an essential service and we are determined to do it safely for our passengers, our crew, and our communities." ✈



Working safely key focus as NCI gears up for 2020 season

Tom Lyall, Nunatsiavut Construction's General Manager, lists some of the projects his team has on the books for 2020. A large-scale rock crushing season for Nain. Facelifts to the Morhardt Building and upgrades to the Sandbanks Building in the town. Repairs to the Little Bay Healing Lodge near Hopedale. A commitment to develop four housing lots in the community for Torngat Regional Housing Authority. That's just part of his list of committed projects. There are other projects that NCI has bid on but haven't yet been awarded.

While he and the NCI team keep their eye on work that will help the company meet its business targets this year, they're also doing what every other company has been focused on since the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, and that is, finding a supply of PPE to keep employees safe while they work this year.

"We have quite a substantial stock of some PPE, like gloves and non-medical masks," says Lyall. "But other PPE, like N-95 masks and Tyvek suits that are necessary for jobs like drywall and installing insulation, are very hard to get. We do have a small supply of the suits but if we get busy, we will need 300 to 400. We will keep looking." The focus on safety and physical distancing will be critical on every job that NCI carries out this year.

WINTER PROJECTS INSTRUCTIVE

The company developed some good insight this winter into what's required to work safely. It carried out renovations on NMI's terminal at the Port of Goose Bay and at its own offices at Corte Real in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Those jobs were useful

exercises in having two people work at a safe distance from each other.

The new workspace has several features that will allow Lyall and NCI staff to operate safely. "The doors leading to hallways and common areas have self-closers. The fans and lights in the washrooms are automatic and come on as soon as you open the door. The towel dispensers are handsfree. We had this in our plans before the pandemic. This will be a valuable addition going forward."

The team has also developed a plan to keep the office clean and free of germs. "Every person is responsible for disinfecting their own workspace, including doorways," says Lyall. "There won't be any sharing of phones or computer monitors or desks. If we need to share files with colleagues, we will email or send it to their printer. We will spray washrooms with a disinfecting agent to kill germs."

IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION PLAN

The focus on safety in the workplace and on the job is the foundation of a successful operation. Over several years, NCI has developed the capacity and skillsets to successfully and expertly carry out construction projects on the north coast. There's ample proof of that through North Coast Communities. Homes that have been repaired in every community through the Nunatsiavut Government's Home Repair Program. Private home construction. Community projects like the Interpretation Centre in Portville and extensive renovations for NLHC. Transitions houses in Nain and Rigolet.

Working safely key focus as NCI gears up for 2020 season *cont'd*

Nunatsiavut Construction Inc. renovated office space at Corte Real in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The office is outfitted with several features for hands-free operation, a critical asset during the current pandemic. (Tom Lyall photo)



NCI also wants to be in a position to take advantage of construction opportunities in central Labrador. "Expanding our region of delivery gives the company a further opportunity to develop," says Lyall. "We see ourselves operating on the north coast and central Labrador. We will continue to keep our assets on the north coast so that we continue to do excellent work there. When we secure work elsewhere, we will tool up for that separately. This is a strategy that is intended to make NCI an even stronger company and to ensure that it continues to be a critical asset for Nunatsiavut and for Beneficiaries."

One project NCI won't be completing this year is the Home Repair Program. The company was outbid. This is the first time in several years that it won't be renovating homes in north coast communities. "We submitted a fair bid based on our experience doing this

work. It just works out that way sometimes. You don't always get the work that you bid on." Lyall's hope is that other work currently on the books will help fill the gap for NCI employees on the north coast. He's also confident that some other projects will materialize for 2020.

NEW SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

A key part of NCI's effort to obtain new work fell into place in mid-May with the hiring of a senior project manager. Larry Cavaliere had most recently worked on the Muskrat Falls project. His first days at NCI were spent being oriented to the company and the work that it's doing. "After he's settled in, Larry will begin chasing work for NCI," says Lyall. "We want to welcome him to the company and we look forward to his contribution." 🏠



NGC News is a publication of the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies.

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Nunatsiavut Group and Air Borealis step up to assist facemask drive

Photo: Kathi Kitchen

An ambitious project to supply every person in Labrador with a cloth mask got a final push in the past couple of weeks with a \$3400 donation from the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies. The project began in Happy Valley-Goose Bay when Joyce Law, Cathy Jong, and their sewing team set up a Facebook page on April 8. The goal was simple. Enlist community sponsors to assist in purchasing cloth material and encourage volunteer sewers in each community to make the masks. The International Grenfell Association got the project rolling with a \$25,000 donation. The Labrador Friendship Centre hosted the project.

NGC was anxious to see this worthwhile project succeed and had approached the Clothmask group to ask how the organization could help. The group came back with an application for funding and NGC's donation helped put the project over the top.

"We were delighted to take part in this project to help protect the health of people in Labrador, and especially our Beneficiaries," says NGC President and CEO Chris Webb. "The organizers needed additional funds to purchase cloth and other materials. NGC is a critical part of the Labrador community, and especially for Beneficiaries on the north coast and in central Labrador."

And it isn't just NGC that's helped. Air Borealis, one-third owned by Nunatsiavut Beneficiaries through the Labrador Inuit Capital Strategy Trust, transported materials to and from north coast communities free of charge. "We availed of the offer to send material to

Natuashish and Postville recently, and it has saved us transportation costs," says Cathy Jong, one of the project coordinators. "Nunatsiavut's Department of Health and Social Development has been shipping our boxes of mask supplies to Inuit communities, also free of charge to our project. These contributions have been very helpful in reducing our project costs."

'ClothMasks4Labrador' is the official name of the project and its real champions are more than 80 volunteer sewers. 34 are from communities along the coast, including 12 in Nain, eight in Makkovik, three in Rigolet, three in Postville and seven Hopedale, along with 50 sewers in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, North West River, and Sheshatshiu.

And mask production is equally impressive. More than 3000 masks have been sewn in the Upper Lake Melville region, more than 600 in Nain on the way to their goal of 1200, and about 400 in Rigolet.



Linda Tibbo of Nain was part of the volunteer sewing team that is working toward the community's target of 1200 cloth masks for the project. (Photo: Elsie Russell)

Sewing Up a Storm in Rigolet

The volunteer Rigolet team is made up of Joyce Allen (left), her daughter April, and Bailey Flowers. April wrote about how her mom took on the challenge of helping produce the community's quota of 327 masks, despite some serious health issues.

My mother and I had a wonderful time sewing the masks. When I told her about it, she piped up and said I'll help.

She is 76 years old and recently had a heart attack in October 2019. She suffers from a deteriorating back and she is mostly confined to her wheelchair. Through the pain she sewed without complaint.

In the beginning of the project, the sewing machines that we had were not functioning very well. After countless hours of picking apart, cleaning, and reassembling, it felt as though we weren't getting anywhere with the project. I reached out to the town Mayor, who kindly loaned us two sewing machines.

By the end of the week, we had completed 276 face masks. Together with one other local volunteer (Bailey Flowers), we've reached our goal of 327 masks for the community.

Joyce and April at work making masks for the project. The Rigolet team completed their community target of 327 masks, but with some cloth remaining, they kept going. The Rigolet team has now sewn about 400 masks!



Setting up for future success

NGC Human Resources lays groundwork for succession planning



NGC Human Resources Manager Russell Banzet near the Churchill River, west of Churchill Falls.

It was March 17 when the Nunatsiavut Group of Companies announced that its Happy Valley-Goose Bay office would be closed to the public. All but urgent travel for employees was cancelled and where it was possible, employees were given permission to work from home. On that same day, NGC closed the café at the Illusuak Centre in Nain. The day previous, Canada advised travellers entering the country to go into self-quarantine for 14 days. A day after NGC made its decisions about operations during COVID-19, the Canadian government announced further travel restrictions. Foreign nationals were banned from entering the country. Canadians travelling outside the country were advised to come home. Non-essential travel between Canada and the United States was suspended.

As business shut its doors, organizations that could, maintained their operations from home. NGC's Human Resources manager, Russell Banzet, went to work with Steve Downey from NCI to revise the organization's Health and Safety manual by including a section on pandemic policy. "We knew that we would begin to see cases in the province," said Banzet. "We wanted to put a proper policy in place so that our companies could do their part to prevent a spike."

SUCCESSION PLANNING

It turns out there's been little downtime for Banzet and others in NGC's leadership team. One of the organization's long-term goals has been to place every employee's file in a secure data base, a key asset when NGC is looking for new talent to fill positions.

The current disruption in regular routine has been just the time to put that plan in place. "We want to be able to identify Beneficiary employees who have the potential to move into more senior positions," Banzet says. "By committing everyone's files to a data base, we can know at a glance the type of education and training that they have, the jobs they've been in, where we might be able to see what expressions of interest they've had in positions. We might see where there are gaps in their skillset and help them address those."

It's a strategy that aligns with NGC's vision to be Inuit-led and to be business leaders in the north. "This is a major step forward," says Banzet. "It will work for our existing employees as we look to fill vacant positions or plan for the day when people leave NGC. It will also benefit our new hires who want to have a future in the organization."

FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH

In the early days of the pandemic and the resulting public health orders to stay at home, Banzet focused on the importance of good mental health for NGC employees and their families. He created 10 Guidelines to Maintaining Positive Mental Health and Well-being. The guidelines discuss the importance of eating well, staying physically active, maintaining routine, and taking up new interests or hobbies. While some of the public health restrictions around the pandemic are being loosened, it is worth continuing to practice the positive messages. NGC News has reproduced them on pages 14 and 15 of this newsletter.

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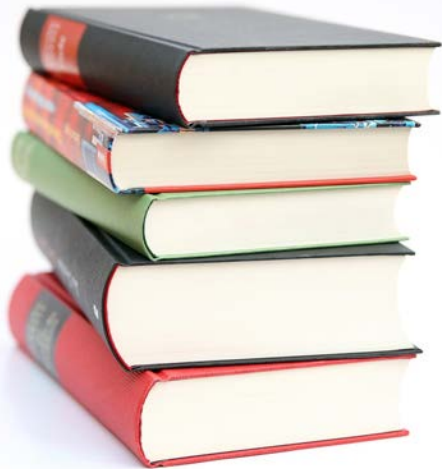
NGC Human Resources sets up for future success *cont'd*

KEY LESSONS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Organizations and businesses will take away many lessons from this pandemic, including how ill-prepared most were for an event of this magnitude. Companies are committing themselves to stocking up on Personal Protective Equipment when it becomes available and there is considerable talk about the benefit of working remotely. Russell Banzet says he's learned that people can work effectively, even when they're not in the office. "We've done mainly

teleconference meetings within NGC," he says. "Technology is a tool that can make remote work effective and productive."

An equally important lesson? "It's that the health and safety of our staff and stakeholders and the public is paramount. It's meant that for the next while, we won't have 'a normal' like we had it before. That will take getting used to for everyone." 🏠



NGC Scholarship Deadline Extended to July 15

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting interruption to the secondary and post-secondary school years, NGC has extended the deadline for applications to its scholarship program. The new deadline for applications is July 15, 2020.

NGC offers four scholarships of \$1250 annually. One award is reserved for students enrolled in business, one for construction/mining trades, one for marine, and one is reserved for female candidates in either field.

Applicants must be a Beneficiary of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement and enrolled in a post-secondary, professional development, or college program. In addition, applicants must have completed one block or year of post-secondary training.

Apply through the NGC website at ngc-ng.ca. Under the "In Our Community" tab, click on Scholarship Application.

NGC's **10** Guidelines to Maintaining Positive Mental Health and Well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic

At NGC, we recognize that the ongoing COVID-19 crisis has forced us to take unprecedented measures to adjust our lifestyle in order to help flatten the curve of the epidemic. Our communities have responded by following the stay-at-home and social distancing requirements put forward by the various levels of government. The role that we play during this time will be critical in minimizing COVID-19's impact on our communities in Labrador. NGC recognizes the necessary sacrifices that come with social distancing and staying at home, and that it can take a toll on our mental health and well-being. We have put forward several guidelines that will allow the people of our communities to maintain positive health and well-being during the COVID-19 health crisis.

1



Eat Well

Maintaining a healthy diet during the COVID-19 crisis is essential for good mental and physical health. While you're stuck at home for most of the day it might be tempting to eat unhealthy snacks that are lying around the kitchen. Instead of consuming processed foods that can be high in sodium, sugar, and preservatives, try to utilize your time by cooking new recipes. There are plenty of resources online that can inspire you to increase your culinary skills while allowing you to eat healthy in the comfort of your own home.

2



Maintain Physical Activity While Social Distancing

Physical activity is linked to positive mental health and well-being. While we must maintain social distancing in accordance to the policies and guidelines of the government, we can still participate in individualized forms of physical activity. Push-ups, sit-ups, and stretching are all examples of some of the activities that we can do around the house. If you are lucky to have exercise equipment, then be sure to include it into your routine.

3



Engage With the Outdoors

Physical activity does not have to be limited to home workouts. We have some of nature's best scenery just outside our front door. While we do have to be cautious in maintaining social distancing, we are allowed to go for walks to get fresh air and exercise (not to socialize). This can be therapeutic when most of our day is spent in our homes. Feel free to go for a jog, or to take a leisure walk. Just remember to maintain a distance of at least two meters when approaching anyone. At home, be sure to open the blinds during the daytime to allow plenty of natural light to enter the rooms of your home.

4



Stay Connected

Technology allows us to connect with people through Facetime, Facebook Messenger, Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp, or just by simply calling and texting. If you feel that you're beginning to struggle, take some time to connect with a friend, family member, or colleague. Tell them how you feel. If you need some advice or someone to speak to, NGC is here for you. Feel free to reach our HR Manager, Russell Banzet, at anytime for a confidential discussion to go over how you are feeling and to discuss options for overcoming challenges faced from staying at home during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. **Russ is available at (709) 899-0795.**

5



Limit Your News Intake to What is Needed

It's hard to turn on the TV, browse the internet, or check Facebook without seeing alarming news about COVID-19. If you find that the constant 24/7 coverage of coronavirus is impacting your mental health, particularly on social media, you can opt out. According to the World Health Organization, "a near-constant stream of news reports about an outbreak can cause anyone to feel anxious or distressed." While it's important to stay informed, limiting the news to two or three times a day can be more beneficial to our mental health than having the TV on all day, or continuously checking Facebook.

NGC's **10** Guidelines to Maintaining Positive Mental Health and Well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic



Avoid Alcohol, Smoking, and Drug Use

Sometimes we can develop a sense of cabin fever when a large portion of the day is spent at home. We should never try to alleviate our feelings by turning to things that will only make our mental health worse. Please avoid the use of alcohol, smoking, and drugs, and focus your energy towards positive actions, especially at a time like this. Anyone who is suffering with an addiction is encouraged to call the **Provincial Mental Health and Addiction Services at (709) 729-3089**.



Maintain a Sense of Routine

You may find yourself spending the entire day in your pyjamas or remembering at 4pm that you haven't showered yet because you knew you wouldn't be seeing anyone. In the short term, it can feel nice to be lazy, but in the long term, this isn't going to be good for your mental well-being. Maintain as much of a routine as you can. Wake up and go to bed during the times that you normally would to ensure you get enough sleep. Eat at your usual time. Schedule a couple of hours into your routine for different forms of entertainment including going for a walk, playing games, or self-development.



Don't Get Drawn Into a Negative Spiral

It can be a negative experience for our overall mental health to have too much time to think critically about life. When social distancing, there is a lot of time to think about ourselves. Rather than focusing on negative energy, it's important to try our best to stay positive. Create goals in your mind about things that you'd like to achieve with your family and friends, and even on your own. Reach out to someone for guidance. If you need someone to talk to, NGC will be here for you.



Don't Spend All Day in Front of a Screen

Aside from work requirements, sitting in front of a screen all day is not the best way to spend long periods of time. This is because the blue light from devices like smartphones, iPads, and computers can be disruptive to your sleep and overall well-being. Take a break from your screens in order to optimize your mental health.



Do Something That You Enjoy

Participate in and develop new hobbies from home. These can include anything that you are interested in such as drawing, painting, sewing, reading, or any type of craft that you enjoy. Some people write songs and play instruments. These activities and hobbies are beneficial to you and your family.