

Creative Minds flock together

Networking opportunity proves popular

More than 100 folks crowded into Osterhout Henry Hall on a summer evening last week in the second of a series of gatherings organized by Dan Taylor and his staff at the County economic development office.

Like a previous gathering at Glenora, this event brought together a broad range of individuals most of whom toil away quietly in creative endeavours in the County.

Taylor's key message to the group was that creative economies pay well and offers a bright future for those communities that attract and retain these individuals and businesses. He noted too Richard Florida's work in identifying the main economic zones worldwide.

"He has found that there are 42 major economic zones," said Taylor. "We are smack dab in the middle of the fifth largest of these. The opportunities are boundless."

He says connectivity is the key.

"A lot of you are invisible," said Taylor. "And many of you prefer it that way. But there are connections you can make—some in this room—that will advance your business or activity and enrich the economic prosperity of this community. It is already happening in a big way."

Taylor also observed that creative rural economies are faring much better than those of mid-sized Ontario cities that have traditionally relied on manufacturing and industry to fuel their economies.

The event showcased a variety of brand new businesses and then paused to recognize entrepreneurs who have made a difference in the economic vitality of the County.

Mark Henry and Lynne Ellis were recognized for the energy, vision and heartache they have put into restoring the farm and iconic barn.

"Our drive has to keep this barn alive," said Ellis.

Said Henry, "I often think it would be easier raising hogs, but we really appreciate the quiet support offered to those of us going down a road less travelled."

Steve Campbell's contribution to the story of Prince Edward County was also observed.

Campbell used the podium to distance himself from divisive comments swirling around the community.

"The County changes all the time," said Campbell. "It has always changed and will continue to change."

Of his ability to endure in the publishing in the County, Campbell wryly observed, "This business needs more tenacity than brains."

Peta Hall was recognized for her working in developing

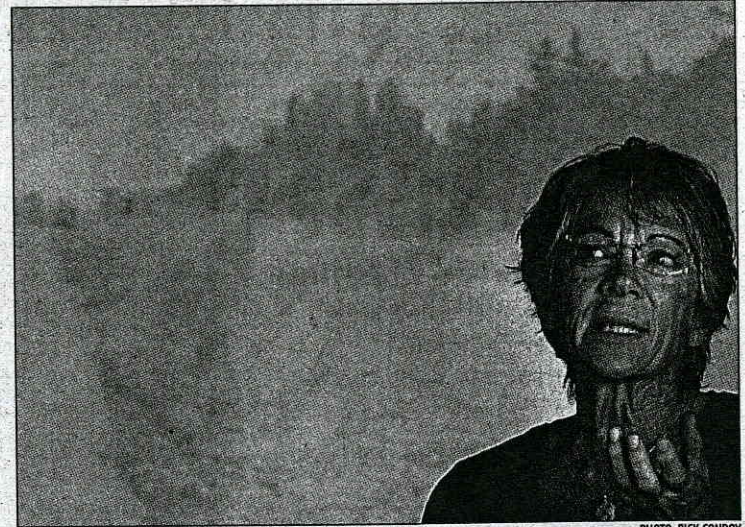


PHOTO: RICK CONROY

Potter Peta Hall describes the collaborative spirit that resides in the County. A spirit that has allowed the Studio Tour to grow and thrive.

and nurturing the annual studio tour of artist galleries across the County.

"I came 15 years ago seeking an artistic community," said Hall, "and I found a very nice place to live. It is a wonderfully collaborative community—we all have the mentality that we belong. That is wonderful and it is to be cherished."