

Turning your hobby into a business

A thought provoking session for youth with Joan Westland.



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

As part of the Career Day event held in Potton on Saturday, Apr. 6, the Missisquoi North Youth Centre and Municipality of Potton invited Joan Westland-Eby to animate a thought provoking, discussion starter and soul searching session with the youth who attended the event who ranged in age from 12 to 30+.

Joan Westland-Eby has a Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science. She has worked in the field of policy and program development, especially in the areas of employment equity and human rights for the federal government and was the Canadian delegate to the UN Economic and Social Commission.

Through her involvement in many social issues in her region, as the former mayor and Vice-Chairperson of the Conseil de la MRC de Memphrémagog, Joan has a lot of knowledge and her people skills enabled her to ask questions, present ideas and provide some thought provoking feedback for the youth.

A group of fifteen youth gathered for the one hour session held at the Missisquoi North Youth Centre in Mansonville. Joan presented a handout with "10 key questions you should ask yourself before starting your own business." Questions included: "Could turning a favourite hobby into a business be too much of a good thing?"

This question immediately raised some thoughtful responses. "Would you lose your passion for your hobby if you did it all the time," Joan asked?

Some youth felt that it would be a bad idea to mix business with pleasure while others felt that they could do something they loved 24/7 with little fear of boredom or difficulty.

"Is there a market for your product? Are you ready to put in the effort and



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the youth who attended Career Day posing with workshop Animator, Joan Westland-Eby following her session with them on Saturday.

manage your business slowly," continued Joan.

These questions as well as several others created a comfortable opportunity for youth to ask exchange ideas and express opinions.

Joan presented suggestions to the youth of the best places to go to for information and she emphasized that their Municipal office is a good place to start with questions about zoning, rules for the type of business one might want to pursue and so on... She also explained

that having a sit down with an accountant or tax person is a good idea to determine how starting a business can affect your finances and taxes...

Things that Westland-Eby suggested that the youth ponder upon were as follows:

-Are you prepared to invest in yourself?

-What might change in the next four to five years?

-What are your expectations for your business?

-Be honest with yourself about your own time investment

-The name of your business, the cost of your product, where will you market and promote the product and what will be the cost of the promotion and marketing?

And finally she reminded the youth to be realistic!

Joan Westland's one hour session with the youth was the perfect addition to the Career Day event. Likely, this type of exchange would benefit anyone who is doing a little soul searching in regards to their career path.

Joan Westland-Eby was invited and graciously accepted to return to the centre for future exchanges with the youth.