

# Mic Mac Mall keeps reputation as 'the community's mall'

**By Carol Johnstone**  
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Philip Marleau, general manager of Mic Mac Mall in Dartmouth, likes it here.

He's been in the mall business for more than 16 years, beginning in Sudbury, Ontario, his home town. When he graduated with his Bachelor of Commerce Degree, he was transferred to Vancouver. He's moved nine times in the last 10 years.

He got to Dartmouth with his wife Francine and two children, Kamay and Sean in February of '99.

"This is by far the nicest place we've ever lived and it's an absolute pleasure. We love it. We don't want to go anywhere. I've already told my boss 'leave me alone,'" he laughs infectiously.

Sales were up six per cent in volume and traffic was up seven per cent last year. The mall hosted over six million visits in 2001.

"We've probably achieved the lowest vacancy rate in Mic Mac history in 2001," Mr. Marleau says, "with a vacancy rate of less than one per cent, with 165 service and retail outlets."

A number of stores came on-stream, like Showcase, an "as seen on TV" type of store, clothing stores like American Eagle Outfitters, West 49th Degree, Eclipse, Fruits and Passion, and La Senza Girl and food court "players" Extreme Pita and Subway. A number of existing tenants either

relocated, expanded or renovated.

Two pride and joys are a new cube-shaped sign, 61' x 45' wide, added over the new main entrance, which he says "is really a gorgeous, gorgeous sign" and a glass-walled elevator in the centre court.

"Since it was operational in May, it has not stopped."

Mr. Marleau takes a proactive community view of his mall.

"A shopping centre is a great experience for a lot of people," he

says. "It provides a job for some people.. .like Sally, who always cake and coffee. They sit in the food court and have fun, some of them play cards, some of them play chess, and by 9:30-10 am., they're gone." "The buying part is really secondary. That's kind of like the icing on the cake, but tire cake and the whole substance of what we are is that whole outing, that whole community involvement We're the Most Niall, we're the community's mall. That's what we're here for."

Or, there's a club with two to three hundred seniors who at 6:30 am. are "knocking at our door; they're here to walk the entire shopping centre," he says. "The people are just dynamite. They have their montlrly cake cele-