

#### IN THIS NEWSLETTER

Driving refresher proves popular

Why staying active is key to staying healthy

First details of Bay Expo 2017

Volunteers needed for simple acts of kindness

### Savvy seniors take course to upgrade their driving skills

How's your driving? As responsible road-users it's a question we should all be asking ourselves - especially as we age. StatsCan figures show that people aged 70 or older have a higher accident rate per kilometre driven that any other age group except young men. With that in mind, 15 seniors from the St Margaret's Bay area attended the 55 Alive Driver Refresher Course at the Tantallon Sobey's. The course has been designed by the Canada Safety Council. It is designed to help mature drivers maintain their independence and driving privileges by keeping them mobile and safe. As drivers age, changes may be experienced in hearing, vision, flexibility, and reaction time.



Some of the 15 enthusiastic participants in a 55 Alive Driver Refresher Course. Don't worry if you missed it - you can book now for our February session. (See below).

The course helps drivers understand and cope with those challenges.

It provides advice on dealing with a variety of road and weather conditions, plus elements on road signs, pavement markings, alcohol and medications, and vehicle readiness. Participants received a workbook, packed with driving and safety tips, plus self-assessments to help identify potential problems.

The Seniors' Association is sponsoring a second session on February 8th.

The refresher is free for those over the age of 65 who have not taken the course previously. For more information, or to register, please contact Judy Beaton at judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca or call 902-826-9175.

There are no exams and no risk of losing your licence by attending.

The Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay is a not-for-profit registered society whose purpose is to provide housing and accommodation options and assistance for seniors, to represent interests of seniors in the greater St. Margaret's Bay area, and to share in development of wellness living for seniors in the area.

## Why staying active is key to healthy aging

Did you know that physical inactivity is the primary cause of most chronic diseases? It is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, responsible for more than three million deaths every year.

That's the bad news, according to <u>Dr. Derek</u>
Rutherford from Dalhousie
School of Physiotherapy, the guest speaker at our January meeting.

But there is good news.
Regular moderate intensity
physical activity – such as
walking, cycling, or
participating in sports – has
significant benefits for
health. It can reduce the risk
of cardiovascular diseases,
diabetes, colon and breast
cancer, and depression. And
physical activity can
decrease the risk of a hip or
vertebral fracture, and help
control weight.



Dr Rutherford addresses a packed house, and (right) with colleague Rebecca Moyer and students Sara Saleh and Michelle Jones

Dr Rutherford's theme was managing osteoarthritis and mobility. Osteoarthritis can be identified when changes in the joints happen faster than is expected with regular aging. Osteoarthritis tends to start in one joint and then progress to both joints (hip or knee). If you think that the only option is a hip or knee replacement, keep in mind that Nova Scotians can wait up to 800 days for a knee replacement, or 750 days for a hip replacement. In other



parts of the country wait lists are less than 200 days.

What can you do to avoid needing a joint replacement, or to manage pain related to osteoarthritis?

Physical activity is the most important thing. For example, you can make your daily tasks more active (and more fun). Consider grocery shopping – pick up a bag of potatoes, put them in your cart and walk around the store three times. Put the potatoes back (unless you need some for supper) and then continue with your regular shopping.

Pain and structural changes in your joints are not necessarily linked. Let pain guide you, but not control you and your physical activity. Being active through pain will not cause structural damage to your joints. And remember that extra weight puts extra strain on joints.

## CANADIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES (AGE 65+)

- For health benefits, do a total of at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous aerobic physical activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more
- Add muscle and bone strengthening exercises using major muscle groups at least two days a week
- Anyone with poor mobility should perform physical activity to enhance balance and prevent falls
- More physical activity provides greater health benefits

For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, visit our website www.bayseniors.ca or contact the Seniors Information Centre: email info@bayseniors.ca telephone 902-820-3334. The centre is inside The Doctors' Office at 5181 St Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon. It's open 10 - 2 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

# Upcoming Events Learn how to boost your heart health

February meeting – Heart Health. Do you know your top five numbers for heart health? The Chebucto Community Health Team will show you how to improve your heart health, and talk about the Heart Healthy Living program. February 16 at Shining Waters, 2 pm.

Intro to pickleball. The St. Margaret's Centre will host two workshops on February 1 and February 8. Each session is \$5 and you need to register with the St. Margaret's Centre at 902-826-2100.

Sea level rise in the Bay.

Join <u>Transition Bay</u> St.

Margaret's on February 12, from 2.15 - 4.45 at the Tantallon

Library to learn about the issues facing our area regarding climate change and sea level rise. For more, check this link.

Advance notice - Our March meeting is all about hobbies and interests. It's a chance to display examples of your arts and crafts, and learn about others. Contact Judy Beaton at <a href="mailto:judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca">judy.beaton@ns.sympatico.ca</a>, or 902-826-9175, by February 28 to book a spot. This is not an expo where items will be sold. Only members who have paid their membership fee in advance of the meeting will be able to display items.



### Volunteers sought to help with Bay Expo '17

The Seniors Association is pleased to announce that the 2017 Bay Expo will be held on Saturday, May 27. And we are looking for helpers.

Bay Expo is a community event with something for everyone. Last year, visitors were entertained with music, a cafe, and Tai Chi demonstrations. Face painting was a popular attraction for children.

You can play a part in the success of this community venture. The organizers of Bay Expo 2017 are looking for volunteers to assist with planning, and to help on the day of the event. Contact Carol Evans at <a href="mailto:caevans@bellaliant.net">caevans@bellaliant.net</a>

This year's Expo will take place at the Estabrooks Community Hall in Hubley. Stay tuned for more information and updates.

#### News from our partners Looking for help? Try calling 211

Finding your way around the network of community and social services provided by government and the not-forprofit sector can be challenging.

Now one phone call - to 211 - gives you easy access to more than 4000 community and social services available across Nova Scotia.

211 is a free, confidential information and referral service. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

A staff member will help you find the service you're looking for. If you prefer, you can search the database at <a href="https://www.ns.211.ca">www.ns.211.ca</a>.

Are you a member of an organization or service who should be listed on 211? Please check the database to see if you are listed, and if not, include your information. Make sure your community organizations and services are represented.

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#### Rebate offers help with heating bills

The <u>Heating Assistance Rebate</u>
<u>Program</u> (HARP) helps lower
income Nova Scotians with the
cost of home heating. You qualify
for this program if you pay a
heating bill at your current
address and meet ONE of the
following criteria:

- live alone with an income of \$27,000 or less
- live with others, with combined income of \$42,000 or less
- receive Income Assistance from Community Services
- •receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

If your personal or financial situation has changed since last year, you still may qualify. Examples of changes include becoming widowed, getting divorced or legally separated, losing your job, or having the custody of your children change. Contact Service Nova Scotia to find out if you qualify.

<u>Click here</u> for an application form or contact the Seniors Information Centre.

Your application must be mailed by March 31, 2017.

## Do you need someone to walk your dog for you?

Would you like help to walk your dog? Our recent survey showed some members would like assistance ensuring their pets get daily exercise. <u>ElderDog Canada</u> can help. Contact <u>social@bayseniors.ca</u> for more information.

### Volunteers needed to spread the helping hand of neighbourliness around St Margaret's Bay

There are people living in our community around St Margaret's Bay who feel isolated, vulnerable, or need help in some way. There are shut-ins who would enjoy a cup of tea and a chat. There are some who need help getting groceries. There are preschoolers who would love to be read to.

The Seniors Association of St Margaret's Bay wants to help. And we are asking you - our readers and supporters - to join us.



We are looking for volunteers to reach out to anyone who would benefit from a helping

hand. We need drivers to accompany seniors to the pharmacy and/or medical appointments. We'd love to hear from anyone who could spare a little time to help folks with shopping, or sit and read to them, or just drop in for a chat.

What we're talking about are simple acts of good neighbourliness... acts that many of us take for granted. We shovel the walk for a neighbour who struggles or his or her own; we take chicken soup round to another neighbour who is sick.

We want that helping hand of friendship to reach a little further afield... to people we may not know yet, but who are still our neighbours in the Bay. Former US politician Hubert Humphrey once said "The impersonal hand of government can never replace the helping hand of a neighbour".

So we are looking to create a network of helping hands. If you enjoy meeting people, and have a little time to spare, you could help us enrich the lives of others who live around St Margaret's Bay.

Your help is needed. Even if you can only donate an hour of your time, please come and join us. We're calling this initiative Friending, and it will be the subject of a regular column in future editions of this newsletter.

To help, or for further info, please contact Beverly Carlsen at 902-820-3334 or 902-876-7963

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