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Volunteers get briefings on community services

Our team of volunteers is now better prepared than ever to support seniors in the St Margaret's Bay area.

Forty people attended at our Volunteer Support Meeting on November 15, offering their time and talent to help deliver the community services we provide and support.

The meeting was part of a volunteer recruitment drive run by Beverly Carlsen and Heather Thompson.

We rely on volunteers to help with everything, from Bay Expo to the weekly grocery run to just visiting a senior and sharing a cup of tea.

The volunteers were briefed by representatives of Caregivers Nova Scotia, the VON, and the Chebucto Community Health



Members of the Seniors Aerobics group (above) enjoyed Christmas lunch at Lefty's. The group meets on Wednesdays and Fridays at the Bay Community Centre. Leader Linda Hubley says newcomers are always welcome.

Team. They were also reminded about the services provided by Bay Rides.

Here are some of the points discussed at the briefing.

- 1 in 3 Nova Scotians gives unpaid care to a family member or friend;
- 98% of seniors who are home care clients would be unable to remain safely at home without the help of a family member or friend;
- resources available to caregivers include Caregivers NS, the Alzheimer Society of NS, and the VON;
- the NS Department of Health and Wellness offers a caregiver benefit of \$400 per month, and a supportive care program of \$500 per month;
- VON programs include Volunteer Visiting (there's a wait list), Adult Day Breakaway, Caregivers Support, Vial of Life, meal delivery, and transportation;
- Chebucto CHT free programs include Risk Management, Nutrition and Weight, Physical Activity, Mental Health Management.

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.



Caregivers praised for playing a vital role, offered support

Our November meeting provided an introduction to the Atlantic Caregivers Education Association.

ACEA is a health care team focused on offering support to those who provide care to family and friends.

ACEA work with caregivers to give them confidence to tackle basic care at home, including bathing, skin care, and moving people from one place to another.

The ACEA Team (pictured above) stressed how important it is for caregivers to identify the vital role they are playing in the health and safety of their loved one, and to recognize that supports can make their role easier.

The ACEA team can help people understand how to use a new assistive device or mobility aid, or determine

when it's time for a new device. They are planning a series of free workshops for caregivers, which they'll be rolling out in 2018.

They also have a survey, the results of which will help them to tailor their programming to needs in the community. To complete the survey, please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ACEA2017>

or call the Info Centre if you would like a paper copy.

Lions' program offers walkers, wheelchairs

The St. Margaret's Bay Lions Club HELP (Hospital Equipment Loan Program) provides assistive devices like walkers and wheel chairs. Contact refns2@eastlink.ca or call 902-826-2732, for more information.

Upcoming Events Christmas party

**Thursday, December 7,
Shining Waters, 2pm.**

Join us and get into the Christmas spirit. We are pleased to welcome members of Cardinal Points and friends, who will lead us in the singing of holiday favourites.

Claudy and Karen, from the St. Margaret's Bay Gardening Club, will show us how to create festive greenery for the season and one lucky attendee will take the display home.

We encourage you to bring your favourite holiday treat to share with your friends.

This event is always a fun time and a great way to get into the holiday spirit.

**Health advice - Thursday,
January 18, Shining
Waters, 2 pm.**

The first meeting of 2018 will feature local physician, Dr. Holly Zwicker. Dr Zwicker will discuss preventive care measures for seniors.

Info Centre takes a holiday break

Our Info Centre will be closed between Christmas and New Year to give our hardworking volunteers an opportunity to be with their families. [Emails](#) will be answered and the Info Centre will reopen as normal on Tuesday, January 2.

For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, visit our website www.bayseniors.ca or contact the Seniors Information Centre: email centre@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.

Tai Chi: it's so much more than a gentle work out

By Halina St James

Seniors in the Bay have found the fountain of youth, or something very close to it... Tai Chi. This ancient Chinese martial art is so popular, our beginners' class has been extended to December 11.

Becky Weickert, the president of the Seniors Association, says Tai Chi is perfect for seniors: "You're not overdoing it, but you're getting a lot of exercise and strength and balance training from something that is really quite simple to do."

Tai Chi is the softest of the martial arts. It's been shown to improve balance and flexibility, improve memory, and lower blood pressure and anxiety.

The Association offers two Tai Chi classes - beginners and intermediate. Bob Found, the



leader of the beginners class, did karate for 20 years before he became hooked on Tai Chi. "Tai Chi keeps me young," he says.

Don Evans, who teaches the intermediate class, has practiced Tai Chi for nine years. "I've never had an exercise so easy make you feel so good afterwards."

You don't have to practice for

Bob Found (above) leads the beginners' class. Don Evans (below) works with the intermediate class.

years to see the benefits. Jim MacDonald, who's only been practicing Tai Chi for six weeks, says: "I see some fluidity, and I want to keep at it."

Rowena Morrison sees Tai Chi as a low-impact way to better muscle strength and coordination, improved balance and memory, and fall prevention

And there's another benefit. Patricia Ryall summed it up best: "It's the people. I miss everybody when I don't get here."

Make Tai Chi part of your life. Come for the exercise. Come for your health. Come for the community.

Beginners and intermediate classes begin again January 8 at St. Nicholas Anglican Church, 29 Westwood Blvd, Upper Tantallon. Any queries can be addressed to taichi@bayseniors.ca



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Help make Legion dinner a big success

Volunteers are needed to help with the 48th annual Legion Christmas Dinner on December 9.

There is a job for anyone willing to share a little time and effort: peeling and preparing vegetables, carving turkey, setting-up before the dinner and cleaning-up afterwards.

Help is also needed to deliver meals to those who are at home.

Please contact Beverly at 902-876-7963.

Re-cycle those old Christmas cards

Do you have old Christmas at home that you would like to repurpose?

Bring them with you to our Christmas Party on Thursday, December 7 at Shining Waters at 2 pm.

We'll cut them up to make gift tags which will be donated to the local Food Bank.

Share your stories

We're always happy to hear from you. Is there something you would like to share with SASMB members? Comments? Photos? Observations?

Send your submissions to chantal@bayseniors.ca



Don't let winter slow you down

It may be getting colder outside, but there are lots of great ways to stay active over the winter months.

The [St. Margaret's Centre](#) offers a variety of programs, from skating to pickleball.

And, starting this month you can play washer toss.

Yoga is great for all bodies, and with so many local studios it's not hard to find a program that meets your needs.

And you can always bundle up to explore the Rails to Trails walk.

Volunteer awards

Do you know someone who has made our community a better place to live? Consider nominating a person or group for the HRM Volunteer Awards. Awards are presented in three categories: youth, adult and community group. Visit the [HRM website](#), or call 902-869-4202 for more information. Nomination deadline is December 15.



Free service can speed your search for help

We were reminded at our volunteer support meeting (see Page 1) that navigating all the community and social services provided by government and the not-for-profit sector can be challenging.

But help is just three keystrokes away. Dial 211 and you get access to more than 4000 community and social services available across the province.

Whether you are looking for volunteer opportunities, or need support for yourself or a loved one, you can find the information you need by calling 211 or visiting ns.211.ca.

It's flu season

Ask your doctor or pharmacist about getting a flu shot.

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