



Bay Seniors NEWSLETTER



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What does winter in the Bay look like to you? Check out this art show and writing contest

Now that Christmas in the Bay has wrapped up its successful first online version, the volunteer co-coordinators are working on 'Winter in the Bay', an in-person and online art exhibit that will serve as inspiration for a March writing contest that is open to members of the community.

The Community Enterprise Centre (CEC), The Peggy's Cove Area Festival of the Arts (PCAFA), local quilters and Bay Seniors have begun to collaborate on the art and quilt exhibit to be hosted by the CEC. Art by PCAFA members and quilts from local quilters whose works grace the walls and niches of the CEC's rotating art gallery can be seen in person throughout February at the CEC, and also online on participating organization's websites and social media.

The theme of the month-long



This gorgeous painting by artist and PCAFA member Debbie Smith reminds us of the beauty of a Nova Scotia winter, which will be celebrated during the February 'Winter in the Bay' art and quilt exhibit, to be hosted in person by the CEC and online by participating groups.

exhibit is 'Winter in the Bay', which is also the theme of the writing contest that will follow. More details about the writing contest will be

announced later. Organizers say the art and quilt show will take place entirely online should Covid restrictions prohibit an in-person version.

Reader Round-Up

What's one goal for 2021?

We asked Bay Seniors board members to tell us one goal they have for 2021. Here are their answers.

Rebecca Weickert: "To initiate and complete the many services and projects that were interrupted by Covid, as the work we have done and are doing is of such importance to our senior community."

Fred Dolbel: "To enjoy the enthusiasm and energy volunteers bring to our many projects and activities."

Melan Sapp: "To make it to 2022 and hug my sons and grandchildren."

Heather Thompson: "To travel safely again, meeting up with family members who live at different locations across Canada."

Michelle MacLean: "To have the Bay Seniors Social Committee provide interesting topics for monthly meetings that will encourage our members to join in, either by Zoom or by a combination of Zoom and limited attendance."

Carl Breckenridge: "To reduce the thousands of old emails I have in my in-box."

Keith Innes: "To be of service when I am available."

Yvon Madore: "To be vaccinated against Covid-19, and visit and hug my grandchildren again."

Snowstorm doesn't stop gift bag delivery



Although delivery day coincided with the first real snowstorm of the season on December 17, Michelle MacLean says the Gift Bags for Seniors project went very smoothly, and was greatly appreciated.

Thanks to generous donations from businesses and community members of items, including puzzle books, pencils, pens, small games, socks, hand lotion, sanitizer, facial tissue, chocolate and candy, there was enough to fill to the brim 75 bags provided by Bay Seniors sewing volunteers, who also supplied 75 fabric face masks.

Michelle says she's grateful to everyone who donated items, money, help and time, though many donations were anonymous, so it's impossible to thank people individually. "We just want everyone

Michelle MacLean and husband Chuck (above) working on routes for delivery volunteers. Bay Seniors board member Yvon Madore and his wife, Wendy Prichard-Madore (below) get ready to deliver gift bags.



involved to know how much people who received these gifts appreciate the generosity and kindness of our community."

Early Covid-19 vaccine roll-out announced

Nova Scotia received its first allotment of 1,950 doses of the Pfizer-BioNtech Covid-19 vaccine on December 15, and Halifax nurse Danielle Sheaves became the first Nova Scotian to be vaccinated on December 16.

During the first three months of 2021, the focus in Nova Scotia will be on immunizing:

- Long-term care residents and staff;
- Frontline health-care workers closely involved in the Covid-19 response;
- Seniors living in the community, beginning with people who are over 80 years old, then those over 75, and then those over 70.

After that, other health-care workers and essential workers will be immunized.

The Nova Scotia government estimates the wider community will start being immunized in the summer of 2021.

Infectious diseases specialist Dr. Lisa Barrett of Dalhousie University says she feels comfortable recommending the vaccine, but people who are immunocompromised should check with their physician.

Public health reminds Nova Scotians to continue infection control measures, including washing hands often and well, wearing a mask indoors or when distances cannot be maintained outdoors, keeping a 2-metre distance from others, and following rules on the size and composition of gatherings.

Kids cheer seniors with Christmas cards, gift tags



Christmas in the Bay organizers helped spread the news that Bay Seniors was again asking area kids to make cards for local seniors.

And, once again, Bay kids and their parents responded enthusiastically, making 80 cards. Another 100 gift tags were made by three student groups, thanks to coordination efforts by parent Aileen Woodman, who says it was “so great to see such enthusiasm from our community to help make Christmas even just a little more jolly” for local seniors.

Our photo shows some of the 180 cards and tags created by local children and teens.

School students volunteer to clear snow for seniors

Need help with snow removal? Students for Seniors is a group of secondary school students working with Bay Seniors to provide volunteer yard work and snow removal. Email centre@bayseniors.ca. If you do not have email access, call Keith at 902-826-2217.

How our Bay community helped each other in the year we pushed 'pause' on life

A year ago, Michelle MacLean, the Bay Seniors board member responsible for organizing the association's monthly meetings, had speakers lined up for months ahead. Carl Breckenridge, the board member who co-manages Bay Expo, the association's popular annual community showcase in May, was meeting with his team to work on the 2020 event.

Like the rest of us, Michelle and Carl couldn't imagine how the whole world was about to change.

The March 2020 Seniors newsletter is a reminder of how much has changed, with write-ups about presentations at the February monthly meeting, information about the March and April meetings, calls for volunteers for Bay Expo, and notices of fitness classes and community events.

By the third week in March, everything was cancelled. Bay Seniors, like the rest of the world, had pushed the pause button on regular life.

But if 2020 was a year of cancellations and challenges, it was also a year of creativity and caring. And Bay Seniors definitely showed up for that, too. Here is a summary of the association's special programming in response to the extraordinary year we've just had.

Masks: symbol of 2020



The symbol of 2020 around the world was the face mask. And the symbol for our Bay Seniors year was the fabric face mask.

From March to December, around 20 sewing team members, led by Betty Learning, with leadership support from Betty Dolbel and Glenna Earle, made thousands of masks.

The first 400 went to Northwood, which also received 52 gowns and 52 scrub caps from Bay Seniors sewing volunteers. Northwood reported the colourful masks, gowns and scrub caps were appreciated by staff and residents alike.

The team continuously researched, tested, learned,

taught, met, shared and sewed, and sewed, and sewed. After making face masks for Northwood residents and staff, they started making them for Bay Seniors members and community members, young and old.

As the seasons changed, so too did the selection of masks: bright colours for the summer, back-to-school and kid-friendly masks for September.

The sewing volunteers noted how many teens wanted plain black masks, amused that face masks had become another way to fit in with peers. Fall leaves, black cats and pumpkins took over in October, and as the year drew to a close production switched to holiday-themed masks for Christmas gifts.

Needless to say, ocean-themed and Nova Scotia tartan masks flew out the doors as soon as the volunteers brought them in.

This Covid-related sewing project became a true Bay effort, with residents donating fabric, and the often hard-to-find elastic and thread needed by the sewing team.

By the end of 2020, our volunteers had made an astonishing 3,000 fabric face masks.

In addition to the hard work of the sewing teams, Bay Seniors offered a number of other programs and services because of Covid, either alone or, often, in partnership with other groups and with area businesses and residents.

Here's a brief review:

March: Special Covid-19 Newsletter

A second edition of the monthly newsletter, this one with a Covid-19 focus. Created by newsletter team member Neil Everton, a retired journalist, the

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What a year! We look back on 2020 and forward to the New Year

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special edition was, said one reader, “a really valuable and reassuring thing to receive.”

April: Friendly Neighbour

A Bay Seniors grocery and medication shopping and delivery service, available not just to association members, but also to others in the community as needed.

One service recipient said, “As much as I needed those groceries, standing outside to chat with the nice person who brought them to me did me even more good.”

Friendly Neighbour volunteers also helped deliver prepared meals to Bay residents as part of a program created and supported by Delish Fine Foods, with volunteer and financial contributions from groups and private individuals.

April: Joan's Friday Funny



Joan Redmond, who tells a couple of jokes at the association's monthly meetings,

began to supply a weekly 'Friday Funny', usually a cartoon, for the Bay Seniors Facebook page. Joan hasn't missed a week, and has now provided 39 Friday Funnies, and counting.

April: Kids Cards for Seniors

Area children and teens created greeting cards for local seniors, using card kits created by two volunteers. The kits included a card, an envelope and some embellishments. Over 75 kids made cards in response to a single Bay Seniors Facebook post that was shared and shared again by the enthusiastic parents of participating children.

May: Online fitness and activities, ongoing phone support

Bay Seniors board members and volunteers sourced fitness, educational and social activities available online to share with members. Recognizing that not all members are online, however, the telephone contact provided to more than 30 members by volunteer Barb Mulrooney was recognized as more important than ever before.

June: Joan's Monday Musings

Joan Redmond's wit and whimsy led to a second weekly Facebook feature, Monday Musings, in which Joan shares gently humorous reflections on

life. Joan's 30 Monday Musings to date have helped increase traffic on the Bay Seniors Facebook page to more than 4,000 visits each month.

July: Art Show

Bay Seniors joined other community partners, including the Peggy's Cove Area Festival of the Arts and the Community Enterprise Centre, for a combined in-person and online art show that took place over 16 days at the CEC. While members missed our usual summer excursions, Bay Seniors members were among the 300 visitors, volunteers and artists at the show.

August: Bay Seniors fabric tote bags at the CEC



These popular bags made a welcome return, and began to be sold again regularly at the CEC and at Covid-cautious community events, with 125 made from September to December.

September: Share the Harvest

Another partnership event at the CEC, this time outdoors,

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with over \$900 in cash and several boxes of food raised for the SMB Food Bank. Bay Seniors members volunteered, donated surplus food from their gardens, and bought locally produced food, while enjoying a physically distanced community event on a beautiful Saturday.

October: Member survey

A total of 97 people responded to our members' survey, providing valuable information for serving your needs and interests during this time of limited physical contact. While Covid's second wave has put some ideas temporarily on hold, the survey gave us an opportunity to hear directly from a lot of members.

November: Jewellery sales

Association and community members responded generously to our call for donations of fashion and costume jewellery, for ongoing occasional small in-person and weekly online jewellery sales, with all proceeds to the food bank. The jewellery committee is discussing a physically distanced 'front porch' sale close to Valentine's Day 2021. As of December 20, \$500 was raised.

November: Christmas in the Bay online

Bay Seniors provided sponsorship support and lots of volunteer help with this annual

holiday kick-off, which was all online this year (see follow-up to our December newsletter story on page 1).

December: Gift Bags for Seniors



Board member Michelle MacLean and a small volunteer

committee took on the big but rewarding task of putting together 75 Christmas gift bags for local seniors (see update on page 2).

December: Kids' Christmas Cards for Seniors

Bay kids made over 80 cards and over 100 tags for the gift bags and to send to other local seniors (see update on page 3).

March to December: Fabric face masks

The sewing continued...

Looking forward to 2021

Whatever comes, our community will face it together

While almost all the activities described here are not things we expected to do at the start of 2020, they happened because our association's leadership, volunteers and members had two goals: to help out and to stay in touch.

And while we all worked together on activities to meet those goals, Bay Seniors has had its biggest increase in membership in many years.

**Thank you for being part of the Bay Seniors community.
Thank you for working together to be there for the St. Margaret's Bay community.**

We look forward to having your input to a new members' survey we will send out in mid-January, looking for your specific suggestions on how we can best meet your needs and interests, and asking about skills and interests you're willing to share.

A big thanks to all the volunteers who made all our activities possible in 2020. Whatever 2021 may bring, this year has proven that we'll face it together.

Happy New Year!

Have you tasted our Tuesday Table treats?

Nutritionist Edie Shaw-Ewald shares a tasty and easy recipe on the Bay Seniors Facebook page the second Tuesday of each month in our new Facebook Tuesday's Table feature.

In December, Edie gave us a 'Lazy Lasagne Soup' recipe.

Stop by the Bay Seniors Facebook page on Tuesday, January 12 to see Edie's recommendation for another tasty and healthful meal you can make quickly, easily and economically.

The remaining Tuesday's Table posts are an opportunity for Bay Seniors members to share and request recipes and dishes at <https://www.facebook.com/bayseniors/>.

Frozen meals just a phone call away

The VON's Frozen Favourites meal program is available for pick-up or delivery in HRM.

All meals are \$5 each, and a minimum of 5 individual meals must be ordered to qualify for free delivery.

There are over 20 meals to choose from, with delivery to the St. Margaret's Bay area on Thursday mornings.

Orders can be placed by calling 902-454-5755 Monday through Friday 9 am to 4 pm. Please place your order at least two days before delivery day.



Don't miss our Saturday Facebook jewellery sale

Saturday Sparkle happens on the Bay Seniors Facebook page every Saturday at 3 pm. Gently-priced donated jewellery is available each Saturday in an array of 12 to 15 items. All profits will be donated to the food bank.

Buyers can confirm their intention to buy online, and pay for and pick up items at the CEC during the following week. Unsold items remain available to buy.

Out-of-province purchasers can buy posted items beginning on Sunday afternoon at 3 pm, and purchases can be mailed (buyer pays shipping and insurance if applicable): <https://www.facebook.com/bayseniors/>.

Warm Line: non-crisis support by phone

If you're feeling a little blue, lonely or anxious, a new Warm Line offers non-crisis support and it's just a phone call away. Friendly, caring volunteers are available to listen and chat at 833-927-6546.

Warm Line hours are:

Mondays, 1 – 5 pm

Tuesdays, 1 – 8 pm

Wednesdays, 4 – 8 pm

Thursdays, 1 – 5 pm

Warm Line is a resource for all Nova Scotians, and is operated by the Shelburne Mental Health and Wellness Association. For more information, go to www.shelburnecountymentalhealth.com.

Members' Marketplace

Are you interested in chair yoga classes? Classes with experienced instructor available at home through video, and may be available in small group size in person. Email fitness@bayseniors.ca.

Need help learning how to use Facebook safely?

Students for Seniors have created a guide to help new Facebook users create an account and protect their privacy online. Email sharon@bayseniors.ca if you'd like an electronic version of the guide.

Volunteer needed for occasional shipping of purchased jewellery. Job involves emails with buyer, confirming insurance, wrapping, addressing and mailing parcels, and following up with purchaser.

Bay Seniors seeks a volunteer to recruit, train and support program and event volunteers. Contact centre@bayseniors.ca. Our warmest thanks to Beverly Carlsen, who filled the role so wonderfully, and has moved on to new challenges.

Member Story

As communications coordinator, I want to hear your stories

by Sharon Jessup Joyce

I accepted the role of communications coordinator for Bay Seniors a year ago, and quickly realized how fortunate I was.

I have a professional background in writing, editing and teaching, as well as in the not-for-profit sector, so I speak from decades of experience when I say the association's vibrant, skilled and community-focused leaders, volunteers and members are doing wonderful, valuable work.

My husband, Bob, and I have four grown children, two in Nova Scotia, one in Ontario and one currently in the Northwest Territories.

We became delighted first-time grandparents to twin girls in December.

We also have four rescue pets, three cats and a dog. Depending on the day, we will tell you the pets are either keeping us young or ageing us rapidly.

I fell in love with St. Margaret's Bay on my first visit, when I was



Sharon Jessup Joyce

19. It took a long time, but my dream of living here became a reality in 2012, when Bob and I bought a house overlooking Shut-In Island.

Much as we relish the stunning views our home has, we treasure the friendships we've made and the sense of community even more.

Please reach out to me anytime with submissions for the newsletter, the member update and our Facebook page, or with story requests to

sharon@bayseniors.ca or by message at 902-820-3334.

Established in 2009, the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay (Bay Seniors) is a not-for-profit registered society whose purpose is to promote and participate in the development of wellness living for seniors; to research and represent the interests of seniors living in the greater St. Margaret's Bay area; and to provide housing and accommodation options for seniors. 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 located at Unit 1 – 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon, NS, B3Z 4R5. It's open 10 - 2 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.