

Happy
St. Patrick's
Day

Bay Seniors
NEWSLETTER



IN THIS EDITION

What do you love about your community?

Shining a spotlight on dental health

Seniors praise our home repair crews

Cookies and CPR: a busy week at the Drop-in

Tell us what you love about living here

Helping seniors remain in their own homes is a big part of what Bay Seniors works to support, both through our own programs and through partnerships with other community groups, governments, and businesses.

One of our partners is the St. Margaret's Bay Housing Coalition, a local nonprofit working to increase affordable housing in our area.

The lack of such housing is a growing problem that affects many people, including seniors.

As part of its awareness building, the coalition wants to know what you love about living in the Bay area.

Comments from community members will be collated – your name will not be included – and used as part of the organization's advocacy. Complete the sentence in the panel, right, and email it to



smbhousingcoalition@gmail.com
by Friday, March 24 at 11.59pm.

You will be entered in a draw to win one of three \$50 grocery or fuel gift cards (your choice).

The coalition will not share your name or contact you for any other purpose.

This beautiful painting by the late artist Andrea Redmond is on loan to the St. Margaret's Bay Housing Coalition and can be seen at the CEC until March 24. Andrea's daughter, Emily McDonah, loaned the painting to the coalition as part of the "Tell us why you love living here" campaign.

"What I value most about living in [name of community] is..."

Our February meeting puts the spotlight on dental health of seniors

By Heather White

“In the 70s, half the population of older Canadians had no natural teeth,” says Shauna Hachey, a registered dental hygienist and an assistant professor at Dalhousie University in the School of Dental Hygiene, Faculty of Dentistry.

“Within the last two decades, that number is closer to 22 per cent of the population.”

That’s the good news. However, good hygiene and professional services are important.

Shauna and Rebecca Affoo, an assistant professor, and the director of the Oral Health and Swallowing Research Laboratory at Dalhousie, were the speakers at our February 16 meeting.

With retirement, insurance coverage for dental care is often reduced or lost.

The federal government has recently proposed a long-term dental care plan in Canada, providing coverage for households with an annual income of less than \$90,000 - slated to be in place by 2025.

Share your textile art

Are you a quilter or rug-hooker? The CEC would love to show your work in its rotating textile art gallery.

Contact Linda, the quilt coordinator, at coordinator@smbcec.org or leave a message for her at 902-826-1680.



All smiles at our February meeting. From left: Shauna Hachey, Elaine Brooks (Bay Seniors Programs Coordinator), and Rebecca Affoo. Brian C. serenades in the background.

Shauna's dental health tips

Dental hygienist Shauna Hachey shared these tips for good hygiene at home:

- Consider using high-fluoride toothpaste (5,000 parts per million) if you have a well.
- Brush twice a day, two minutes each time.
- Power toothbrushes are good to use for aging teeth and arthritic hands. Some have timers; some tell you if you are brushing too hard.
- Use an extra-soft or soft manual toothbrush. Don't be aggressive.
- Brush your tongue, back to front.
- Floss daily. Most disease is found between teeth, where your toothbrush doesn't reach.
- A dry mouth from medications reduces saliva, which plays an important role buffering plaque and food from teeth. Suck on ice chips, sugarless candy; sip water; use humidifiers. Eliminate products such as mouthwash with alcohol.
- Dentures can be damaged by toothpaste, encouraging bacterial growth. Use a mild soap or dish detergent.
- Keep an eye out for change in your mouth, such as red or white spots. “The rate of oral cancer is high in Nova Scotia relative to the rest of Canada,” notes Shauna.

March Monthly Meeting

"How can we stay in our home as we get older?"

Save the date: Thursday, March 16, 2-4pm, is our next Monthly Members' Meeting at the St. Margaret Sailing Club in Glen Haven.

Being able to remain in our own home as we age is the goal of many seniors.

At our March meeting, Brittany Keough will share information about private and public home care services available to support aging in place.

She will also discuss current aging trends, types of supports, and available community resources.

Brittany is the Director of Service and Engagement for Home Instead, Halifax and South Shore.

Our AGM will follow monthly meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay will take place at the end of our March Monthly Members' Meeting.

All current members of the association are eligible to vote. If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 2023, you can do so at the door.

Guard against shingles

The Bay Seniors' Shingles Program offers financial assistance to eligible seniors to be vaccinated against the illness. Call the Info Centre at 902-820-3334 for confidential assistance to determine your eligibility.



Our intrepid Nordic walkers. Left to right: Mary, Elizabeth, Janet, Mary, Brenda, Brian, with Pam in the foreground.

Nordic weather doesn't slow down our Nordic walkers

Pam Graham shares a recent photo of several members of the Nordic walking group enjoying a perfect winter morning on the trail.

New recruits are always welcome. You can bring your own poles, or borrow ours. The group meets at 10.15 at the CEC and walks for about an hour on the trail.

Check the Bay Seniors Facebook page Wednesday evening and Thursday morning for weather-related cancellations.

Submit your short story or poem to Winter in the Bay

Winter is a great time to stretch your creativity muscles.

Check out the Winter in the Bay art exhibit on the Winter in the Bay Facebook page, and get inspired to write a short story or poem using one of the works in the show as your illustration.

You're invited to submit a piece of previously unpublished fiction (maximum 2,500 words) by the deadline of March 10 at 11.59pm.

Submissions should be sent as Word documents to outreach.smbcec@gmail.com.



Bay Seniors needs your expertise

Bay Seniors is looking for volunteers to help with tech support and with videography.

If one of the volunteer opportunities below is of interest, please email Karen at volunteer@bayseniors.ca.

Tech Support

Bay Seniors needs someone who can help us set up our internal email addresses, update our email member list using Constant Contact, and support our office volunteers with their questions about using Dropbox.

This work is very sporadic, so you will usually be waiting in the wings – but it would be great to know you're there to call on.

Videographer

Bay Seniors' monthly meetings are not just social events. Presenters inform us about health care, finances, and other issues that affect our everyday lives. Some of our members are unable to attend these meetings, so we would like to make them available for viewing on the Bay Seniors YouTube channel.

If you can help us learn how to take and edit video, or even better, film and edit the videos for us, our members would be grateful. Meetings are the third Thursday of the month, September to June, 2-4pm, at the St. Margaret Sailing Club.

Our volunteers rescue member caught in burst pipe crisis

By Fred Dolbel

Over the past month, Home Maintenance Program volunteers have come to the aid of two households with problems.

One couple received help to fix closet doors and patch some drywall. They said: "We wondered if we should have sold our home last year, but now we can stay in our home for longer."

A Bay Seniors member experienced a burst water pipe in our infamous -20 C February 4 deep freeze. Another member called every local plumber, only to be told they were all too busy with other burst-pipe calls.

Two Home Maintenance Program volunteers arrived at that member's home and replaced the piece of burst pipe.

The homeowner said: "I was overwhelmed in a good way. I couldn't believe that these two members would come to my home and take time out of their day to help me. I can't thank them enough – it really warmed my heart. If there's a way for me to give back to Bay Seniors, I will."

So far, our program has three experienced volunteers with a wide range of talents offering free help to other members for minor home repairs.

If you are interested in helping fellow Bay Seniors members, or if you need some work done at your home, please email homemaintenance@bayseniors.ca, or leave a message at 902-820-3334.



Paint an egg for peace

If you sign up for a Ukrainian Easter egg decorating workshop (see Drop-in Update, page 6) you'll meet instructor Esmé Malanchuk.

Esmé's Ukrainian father died when she was young, but she taught herself many Ukrainian customs, including egg-decorating, or Pysanky. "I've been hosting Pysanky sessions with family and friends for about 30 years and I've often been amazed when novices produce the most beautiful creations," she says.

"The eggs symbolize the resurrection and the promise of eternal life. Ironically, they also represent peace at a time of war."



Our Saturday Sparkle jewellery sale raises more than \$500 for Food Bank

The Saturday Sparkle Facebook sale of donated jewellery on February 18 raised over \$500 for the SMB Food Bank.

Pictured right is Bay Seniors member Shelly Hurlburt, the delighted purchaser of the vintage choker she's modelling in the photo.

The next Saturday Sparkle event on Facebook will be on May 4-5.

In-person sale dates will be announced in this newsletter and on Facebook.

Donations are still being accepted – sterling and hard-to-find vintage jewellery sells especially well.



Shelly Hurlburt with the vintage choker.

You may qualify for help with your home heating bills

You may be eligible for a home heating rebate of up to \$1,000.

Apply online by March 31 to beta.novascotia.ca/apply-heating-assistance-rebate-heating-assistance-rebate-program.

Paper copies and help completing the form are both available at the Seniors Info Centre, located inside the CEC, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am-2pm, or call 902-820-3334.

The Home Warming Program is installing free heat pumps for eligible households, even if you've received previous assistance from the program.

To find out if you're eligible, call 1-877-434-2136.

Reader Round-Up: Your best decluttering or downsizing tip?

Kevin McGrath:

Make piles designated to go to different people and places. You can make someone very happy by giving them something you won't use, and the people you give things to may also be happy to share what you've given them with other people.

Harry Cook:

Step one – declutter your mind by attending an Open Mindfulness in the Bay session at the Tantallon Library on the third Sunday of the month, 2:30-4:30. Step two – declutter your house with a clear mind!

Olivia Schneider:

Put all your clothes hangers backwards in your closet. Then, when you wear a garment, hang it up with the hanger the right way. At the end of a time period you've designated, like a month or a season, look at the clothes that are still on backwards hangers. Figure out why you haven't worn them and decide if it's time to get rid of them.

Esmé Malanchuk:

Cheap little trays and baskets from the dollar store come in all shapes and sizes, and keep things organized in the kitchen, bathroom, or anywhere.

Drop-In Program update

Submitted by the Drop-In Program team

Delayed cookie-decorating workshop still spreads the love

The cookie-decorating workshop planned for Valentine's Day and delayed a week by the storm was still just as sweet.

Thanks to Lynn Whyte, who led the workshop, baked the cookies, and brought pretty toppings, including icing of every colour, sprinkles, and chocolates. Lynn even brought beautiful little bags to take cookies home.



Left to right: Janet O'Brien, Margaret Muise, Marilyn Mansfield, Cindy Skerry, Adrienne Harris, Becky Weickert.



AED demonstration by firefighters

On February 21, Bay Seniors members learned how to use the automated external defibrillator (AED) at the Black Point & Area Community Centre, home to the Drop-in Program.

Used to help someone experiencing cardiac arrest, the unit is light and compact. With the press of a button, the machine walks the user through the steps to deliver a jolt of electricity and subsequent cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Thank you to the firefighters who provided the training, and thank you to the event organizers, Captain Dave Pace and Ethel Smiley Marshall.

Our photo shows (left to right) firefighters Ahmad Elhaji (lying down), Alexis Wheeler, and Aonghus Garrison.

March Workshops. Seats are limited at the workshops, and preregistration is required. Email dropin@bayseniors.ca or call 902-820-3334.

Ukrainian Easter Egg Decorating Workshop, Tuesday, March 14 or Tuesday March 21, 9.30am-noon. Esmé Malanchuk will introduce participants to the art of Pysanky, painting Easter eggs using traditional Ukrainian colours and patterns (see page 4). Specify preferred date when you register. Materials (including eggs) and tools will be provided.

Acrylic Painting Workshop, Tuesday, March 28, 10am-noon. Add some colour to your life with this beginners' acrylic painting workshop, presented by a Bay Seniors member and experienced artist. The workshop will include some instruction and materials will be provided.

Let us know if you don't have access to transportation. We can help you arrange a ride with BayRides. Please allow at least 48 hours' notice for booking.

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 am - 2 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.