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This Month: We Salute Our Volunteers

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Our programs and activities are growing, and so is our membership.

Although we regularly stay in touch with our members through our newsletters and on Facebook, we think it's a perfect time to contact you personally with a brief phone call.

One of our friendly volunteers will phone you this month to update you about what Bay Seniors has to offer, and we've sent out a card to our members to let you know the call is coming.

Although we have many programs, activities and services, the volunteers will

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In this month's issue we focus, through pictures and stories, on the amazing work of our dedicated volunteers. We start with our new board of directors (above).

Eight returning members and four new ones were voted in at the Bay Seniors March 16 annual general meeting. Rebecca Weickert, who served as president of the association for six years, has been succeeded by Pat Rodee.

Front row, from left: Elaine Brooks, Heather White, Cindy Skerry, Karen Damtoft, Beverly Carlsen, Rebecca Weickert. Back row, from left: Melan Sapp, Fred Dolbel (adviser to the board), Keith Innes, Nancy LaPaix, Pat Rodee. Missing from photo: Yvon Madore, Heather Thompson.

Celebrating the work of our volunteers

As the saying goes, “If you want something done, ask a busy person.”

Many of our Bay Seniors members are busy people who make time to volunteer for Bay Seniors and other organizations and projects in our community. Here are a very few of our many members who donated their time and talents in March to make our community a better place.



Bay Seniors members Margo Mosher-Swain (left) and Shelley Webb (far right) are all smiles as they present Conor Kelly with a writing prize for his nonfiction essay in the Winter in the Bay writing contest.

Margo and Shelley are both WITB volunteers.

The prize was donated by the St. Margaret's Bay Tourism Association, which Shelley represents.

Conor holds the painting by Margo on which he based his essay – a painting purchased for him as a surprise by daughter Eimear (second from left).

Thank you, Bay Seniors volunteers

By Karen Damtoft, Volunteer Coordinator

With National Volunteer Week coming up April 16-22, you would think we would give you the week off, right?

Sorry to get your hopes up, but we just can't do without you.

Every day of the year we depend on our volunteers to deliver programs, help with projects, plan events and provide leadership. Whatever your role is with Bay Seniors, please know how much you are valued and appreciated.

Volunteers working together have made Bay Seniors what it is today – a vibrant, effective and important organization.

Together, we strengthen the fabric of our community.



Bay Seniors member and volunteer Esmé Malanchuk (left), provided two Pysanky (Ukrainian Easter Egg) workshops again this year at the Drop-in Program. Helping out was member Suzanne Day. See story, page 8.

Celebrating the work of our volunteers



Pam Graham, who leads the Bay Seniors Thursday morning Nordic Walk, captured this photo on the trail of Brian Wilmshurst (left) and Kevin McGrath, Bay Seniors members and volunteers.



Peter Covey volunteers with the Bay Seniors Home Maintenance Program, helping our members keep their homes in tip-top shape.



Bay Seniors member Nancy Chesworth (centre front, wearing Nordic cardigan), is surrounded by delighted participants who attended her acrylic painting workshop at the Drop-in Program. See story, page 8.

Did you know?

8/10 Canadians volunteer regularly.

The average number of volunteer hours each Canadian volunteer donates per year is 137.



Bay Seniors member Nancy Gilbert (centre), in her role as president of the St. Margaret's Bay Housing Coalition, presents draw prizes to Betty Guzda (left) and Beverley Kenyon, who are both Bay Seniors members and volunteers. Betty and Beverley responded to a community outreach activity carried out by the Coalition.

'Tough and tender' tribute to retiring president Becky

"The words 'tough and tender' come to mind," says Nancy LaPaix, the Bay Seniors recording secretary and a brand-new board member, about recently retired Bay Seniors president Rebecca Weickert.

"As Madam President, Becky had a real gavel she would bring to the table from time to time to keep order," adds Nancy.

"On the other hand, a heartfelt 'thank you' expressed to her could bring tears to her eyes."

Sharon Jessup Joyce remembers, shortly after she started serving as Bay Seniors' communications coordinator, forgetting to include something Becky had given her for the newsletter.

"I apologized, of course," says Sharon. "She told me I could put it in the next newsletter, and then said, 'You know, if people don't make some mistakes in a new position, they're probably not trying hard enough.'"

New president Pat Rodee says, "We at Bay Seniors owe a huge debt of gratitude to Becky for the six years she served so efficiently as president.

"And as I have told her many times, she's not escaping from us!

"In her new role as past president, we – and particularly I, as the newbie president – will be calling on her to lend her experience and guidance as we move forward."

Adds Pat, with a laugh, "You can run, but you can't hide, Rebecca!"

A message from outgoing president Rebecca Weickert

After six years serving as president of the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay, I am stepping down. It has been my privilege and honour to have served in this capacity, and I will continue to serve on the board.

The association has had a very successful run with many projects, activities and courses. Our fitness classes, Tablets for Seniors computer classes, Drop-In Centre, Home Maintenance Program, Monthly Members' Meetings, and more have continued successfully, despite some challenging times.

This has all been a team effort, and I wish to thank my board and our volunteers for their hard work and dedication, and our members for their loyalty to our association.

The executive committee members deserve a special thanks, as they take on the responsibility of planning and executing all these activities and events and following up on their progress.

Fred Dolbel, our historian and a charter member, is an extremely valuable asset, and we thank him for his continued support; our vice-president and now president, Pat Rodee, has really stepped up to the plate and served on many committees with great enthusiasm; Melan Sapp, our chief financial officer, has managed our money extremely well, keeping us solvent even in difficult times; as well, he was instrumental in our receiving charitable status this year; Heather Thompson, our secretary, has handled many portfolios during her tenure very successfully, and we thank her for her commitment.

Nancy LaPaix, our recording secretary, has provided timely and accurate meeting minutes, which are much appreciated. Also, our communications coordinator, Sharon Jessup Joyce, has done an amazing job keeping everyone informed and enthused about our association.

Our crowning achievement this year was being awarded the Canada Volunteer Award for Atlantic Canada, in the category of Social Innovator. Many thanks to our entire team for this accomplishment, with a special thanks to the Community Enterprise Centre for nominating us.



Rebecca Weickert, Past President

April Monthly Meeting

"You may be healthy... but is your well?"

Save the date: Thursday, April 20, 2-4pm, is our next Monthly Members' Meeting at the St. Margaret Sailing Club in Glen Haven.

April's Monthly Members' Meeting speaker is Fred Bonner, executive director of Rural Water Watch, a nonprofit dedicated to educating and providing creative strategies to Nova Scotians for maintaining the health of their wells.



March Meeting

How homecare can support aging in place

By Heather White

Gary's been known to say, "It's been a good, fun day," when he's tucked in at night, says his daughter-in-law on a video presented to the crowd of 60-something Bay Seniors members at our monthly meeting on March 16.

"We wanted to keep him at home on the farm as long as we could, but we also needed a back-up or assistance plan."

Gary and his family are not alone, of course, hence the growth of private agencies that provide health care support at home.

Our March speaker was Brittany Keough, Director of Service & Engagement at Home Instead (pictured).

"Some people have a combination of set-ups, both private and public," notes Brittany. "For example, for people with cognitive impairment, it's helpful to have the same person visiting. And Continuing Care may offer up to \$1,000 per month to pay for private services."

Hoping to age in place? Consider...

- The safety and accessibility of your home if mobility becomes an issue.
- Whether your community is age-friendly and offers abundant programs for seniors.
- Whether there is community transportation if you need to stop driving.
- Different types of homecare, from housekeeping to nursing support and more.

Saturday Sparkle fundraiser needs more bling

The Bay Seniors jewellery team is looking for more donations of previously loved jewellery.

They're getting ready for three more Saturday Sparkle events: in person on Saturday, April 22, 1.30-3pm at the Community Enterprise Centre during the June's Quilt draw; on Facebook on Saturday, May 6, beginning at 3pm; and at Bay Expo on Saturday, June 10.

All sales go to support the SMB Food Bank.

Vintage, sterling silver, and artisan-made jewellery are especially appreciated by buyers.

Watches are unsellable unless they are in working order with a new battery.

Drop donations off at the Community Enterprise Centre, 9am-4pm weekdays. There is a mail slot for after-hours drop-offs.

Information Expo geared to seniors

Bay Seniors, along with Serving Seniors Alliance, a group of businesses and organizations that provide services to seniors, is co-presenting an information expo geared to seniors' needs on Saturday, April 29 from 9.30am to 2.00pm at the St. Margaret's Centre, 12 Westwood Boulevard, Upper Tantallon.

Presentation topics include fall prevention, hearing as it relates to balance and falls, braces and compression, Nordic (pole) walking, information about added services pharmacists can now provide, public and private homecare services, aging in place, downsizing, selling your home and exploring housing options, and grief and loss.

There will also be Information tables and take-home materials. A light lunch will be provided.

The event is free, but pre-registration is required. To register, call 902-820-3334 Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Home Maintenance team needs wood storage space

Do you have space in your yard where the Home Maintenance team can pile and split logs?

If so, the team would love to hear from you. The split wood will be moved away quickly to people who need it, so it won't accumulate.

A spot fairly close to the junction of St. Margaret's Bay Road and Peggy's Cove Road would be helpful.



Interested in joining a second Bay Seniors book club?

There is a waiting list to join the Bay Seniors book club.

However, because the library kits the current club uses include 10 books and the club meets in members' homes, 10 is the maximum size the club can be.

If there are enough members interested in joining a Bay Seniors book club, a second one will be started.

Please call the Bay Seniors Information Centre at 902-820-3334 if you're interested.

Calls are answered and messages are returned Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am to 2pm.

Know who to call for a known or suspected poisoning

Each year, over 1,500 Canadians lose their lives and nearly 8,000 are hospitalized due to accidental poisoning by medications, cleaners, cannabis products, and many other household items.

In Nova Scotia, if you know or suspect someone has ingested something that may be poisonous, call the Atlantic Canada Poison Centre at 902-470-8161.

The service is available 24/7. And while it's intended primarily for humans, the service also has information on substances that are poisonous to pets.

It's recommended you add this number to your phone contacts, to make sure you have it available right away if you need it.

You can also call 1-844-POISON-X (1-844-764-7669), the new toll-free national number.

The national number will transfer callers in Nova Scotia to the Atlantic Canada Poison Centre.



Bay Expo now collecting items for flea market and silent auction

The Bay Expo team is busy getting ready for the June 10 event.

Do you have anything languishing in your basement or shed that someone else would love to take home and use?

The Bay Expo flea market volunteers are starting to collect donations. Please drop off your donations of intact items in good condition to the Community Enterprise Centre between 9am and 4pm weekdays. If you're not sure whether an item is suitable, please email bayexpo@bayseniors.ca.

Would you like to donate brand-new items for the Bay Expo silent auction? Please email bayexpo@bayseniors.ca to discuss your donation of a product, service, or package, or drop items off at the Community Enterprise Centre.

Be sure to include your contact information and the donation's dollar value. If you're donating for your business, we will display your logo, so please provide it with your donation.

Upcoming community programs

Seniors' Social & Luncheon, last Thursday of each month, beginning April 27, 11.30am-2.30pm, St. Luke's United Church, 5374 St. Margaret's Bay Road. Lunch, music, games, mingling. Register by April 20, 902-826-2523. Program is free, but donations will be gratefully accepted.

Connections Program, Tuesday, April 25, 2-4pm, Tantallon Public Library. Presentation by the Alzheimer Society: what we can do to keep our brains as healthy as possible as we age. Discussion, light refreshments, and social time. Free, and registration is not required. Need transportation? Call BayRides at 902-820-6600.

Stay alert: seniors prime targets for fraudsters

Fraud is on the rise, and seniors continue to be one of the scammer's prime targets.

Recent news coverage has described a scam involving artificial intelligence to mimic the voice of a target's family member asking for money urgently.

The RCMP says we should never act on such a request. Hang up and call the family member that was supposedly calling, using the phone number you have for them.

Bay Seniors launches outreach program

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focus on only a few.

In addition, the volunteer will tell you about a new pilot program we're launching later this spring: the Friendly Neighbour program. Trained volunteers will visit members who may have difficulty getting out on a regular basis, either by telephone or in the member's home. If you would like to have someone visit you once a month, or you know of someone who might be interested, please tell the volunteer who phones you and we will follow up.

If you have questions about anything Bay Seniors offers, please let our volunteer know. If you're not interested in speaking with the volunteer, of course that's okay. Just let them know when they call. Our goal is to offer a friendly connection, to let you know that we are here and that we care. We look forward to speaking with you soon!

We urgently need a refreshment helper for our Drop-In Program

Our Drop-in Program is looking for one or two volunteers to help with refreshments.

Every Tuesday morning at the Black Point & Area Community Centre from 10-noon, we offer a space for members to get together.

Members spend their time doing what they are in the mood to do: chatting over coffee, playing a game, knitting, rug hooking or walking laps.

Hot drinks, nutritious food and treats are offered as well.

Volunteers help to prepare and lay the table and to clean up afterwards.

If you are interested, or would like more info, contact volunteer@bayseniors.ca.

Need a ride to our Drop-In Program?

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.

Submitted by the Drop-In Program team

Colourful month at the Drop-In Program

March was a special month for the Bay Seniors Drop-in Program, with colourful paints and a full house of participants. **Esmé Malanchuk** led her much-sought-after Pysanky (Ukrainian Easter Egg) decorating workshops on March 14 and 21.

More than 20 participants created beautifully dyed eggs, carefully packaging them in a little box to take home.

Although designing required artistry, some might say blowing the eggs out first was the hardest part.

Many thanks to Esmé and Suzanne Day, who supported both workshops, for bringing their expertise to the drop-in program.

On March 28, artist

Nancy Chesworth led a beginner's acrylic painting workshop for 10 participants, all of whom left with a vivid masterpiece of a parrot.

Nancy offered some formal instruction about the elements and principles of art, with emphasis on colour and shape. Then everyone got down to work, drawing the parrot, mixing their colours, and applying the paint.

This was the first time for this workshop, but the positive reviews mean we hope to bring Nancy back.



Carol Fader blowing out her egg before painting it at the Pysanky workshop.

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.