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## Celebrating 15 Years

### Bay Seniors turns 15...and we have you to thank

The roots of the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay emerged from a shared concern of many organizations and individuals about the need for affordable housing in the St. Margaret's Bay area. As the housing goal was recognized as a long-term and costly one, it soon became apparent that the new society, registered in December 2009, could and should also support additional and immediate needs of the area's seniors. An information centre was established to help seniors and other residents access programs, services and government grants for which they were eligible.

Today, we have over 800 members. Our offerings now include the information centre, monthly members' meetings, fitness classes and activities, social opportunities, interest groups, creative workshops, a weekly drop-in program, excursions, a monthly newsletter, and more.

Bay Seniors has always served the wider community, too. We have played a role in the establishment of the Bay Treasure Chest Association, BayRides, the SMB



*The Bay Seniors Christmas in the Bay hot chocolate team (from left): Sheila, Shelley, Beverly, Marje, and Lisa. See story on page 4.*

Community Enterprise Centre, and the St. Margaret's Bay Housing Coalition, which continues to work on the ongoing important issue of affordable housing.

Our commitment to continuing to grow and adapt has been recognized nationally: Bay Seniors received Canada's Volunteer Award as the 2021 Social Innovator for Atlantic Canada. And in February 2023, the association was granted registered charity status.

To mark our 15th anniversary, we have a new logo, which we've introduced in this newsletter, and we're working on a refreshed website. Naturally, we'll be serving birthday cake at our December 12 Monthly Members' Meeting (see more about that event on page 3). Bay Seniors has grown and evolved over the past 15 years through the tireless and committed efforts of our volunteers and through the ongoing support of our members. We have reached this anniversary

as a thriving organization because of you.

Thank you—and here's to the next 15 years!

### Holiday wishes and warmest thanks

What a busy year this has been for Bay Seniors! As we mark our 15th anniversary, we look back on a year in which we have welcomed new members and volunteers, expanded some of our existing activities, introduced new ones, and offered excursions for the first time since before COVID. Thank you for your suggestions, your help, and your participation again this year.

Wishing you happy holidays and all the best for 2025!

*Pat Rodee  
President*

## Drop-in Program update

# Warm welcomes, fun, and creativity

Many thanks to all our Drop-in participants for contributing to this successful program, where all are welcomed, camaraderie abounds, and special friendships are formed. We wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and look forward to seeing you in the new year.

### Stitching in a good cause

Drop-in Program members very generously knit and crochet gifts that are donated to various charities and hospitals in the Halifax area. If you'd like to participate, drop in and join this wonderful group of dedicated members. We provide supplies, patterns and a supportive environment.

Read our Member's Story on page 5 about how one member's gift of a crocheted blanket found its new owner.

Contact [dropin@bayseniors.ca](mailto:dropin@bayseniors.ca) or 902-820-3334 to get more information about the Drop-in Program, register for workshops or inquire about arranging transportation with BayRides.

**Holiday closure:** Our morning activities and afternoon pickleball will not be held on December 24 or 31. We resume on Tuesday, January 7.

### Workshops

Acrylic Painting for Beginners with Nancy Chesworth is back! Join us on January 14 for an informative and fun hands-on experience.

Watch for information in our January newsletter about the clay ceramic workshop being offered in February.

Our workshops are designed for fun and creative exploration. All supplies are provided and there is no cost to attend. Spots are limited



*Caroline Hubbard and daughter-in-law Lyn Kellerman share a laugh (above), and Jacqui Tupper (below right) is all smiles showing her beautiful creation.*

and pre-registration is required.

Participants had a wonderful time at our November dry-felting workshop with Greer Kelley, as you can see from the photos.

### Drop-in holiday party

This year at the December 17 holiday party, we're playing a game of Guess Who? Can you guess which of our Drop-in participants the three cuties below are? We'll share the answer in the January newsletter.



## **Nordic Walking Group**

### **Fast or slow, you're good to go**

The Nordic Walking Group has welcomed a new lead, Janet Howard. Our warmest thanks to Pam Graham, who has stepped away as lead because of another commitment.

Janet, a longtime regular with the Nordic Walking Group, says prospective participants may appreciate knowing there are two walking speeds in the group.

“We have faster walkers and

walkers who go at a gentler pace,” says Janet. “But we have a meeting spot halfway, so the group reconnects.”

All Bay Seniors members—of either walking speed—are welcome to participate in the Thursday-morning walks. Participants meet at the SMB Community Enterprise Centre at 9:15 and walks are from 9:30 to 10:30.

## **Thursday Book Club has room for you**

The Thursday Book Club, which meets the last Thursday of the month (except this month), still has a couple of spots available for new members. Email [interests@bayseniors.ca](mailto:interests@bayseniors.ca) or call 902-820-3334 if you're interested in joining.

**Follow Bay Seniors updates and other community program notices of interest on our [Facebook page](#).**

## **Do you have an interest you'd like to share?**

With winter weather getting ready to settle in for a few months, it's a great time to get together with other Bay Seniors members to enjoy a shared interest. If you have an idea for a new interest group—and especially if you'd like to lead or help lead it—please email [interests@bayseniors.ca](mailto:interests@bayseniors.ca).

## **Monthly Members' Meeting**

**Please join us for our annual holiday gathering**

We hope to see you on Thursday, December 12, 2-4pm, at St. Margarets Sailing Club, 5 Foxberry Hill Road in Glen Haven. Recognizing how busy things get at this time of year, please note that our meeting is on the second Thursday this month instead of the third Thursday.

We will enjoy live music, refreshments, a carol singalong, and some fun Christmas games. Our talented sewing team will be selling their holiday items, which are great gift ideas, and the jewellery team will have donated jewellery for sale.

We will be drawing for the winner of the “All Things Barbie” quilt.

Be sure to join us for this great event of fun, food, and fellowship with your Bay Seniors friends.



## **Holiday closures for Bay Seniors activities**

### **Seniors Information Centre**

Closed December 24 to January 1, reopening January 2

### **Fitness**

**Chair aerobics** – no classes December 16, 23, 30, resuming January 6

**Aerobics** – no classes December 18, 20, 25, 27, January 1, 3, resuming January 8

**Tai chi** – ends December 4, resuming in January (details in January calendar)

**Zumba** – ends December 12 (next program dates to be announced in a future newsletter)

### **Other programs**

**Drop-in Program** (morning activities and pickleball) Closed December 24 and 31, resuming January 7

**Nordic Walking** Not taking place December 26 or January 2, resuming January 9

**Grocery Program** Not taking place December 26

**Thursday Book Club** Not meeting December 26

## Santa calls, and our members answer

Around 500 community members turned out for Christmas in the Bay on November 24 to get the festive season started. And, as always, around two dozen Bay Seniors members were there as volunteers, helping out with the organizing committee, décor,

hot chocolate, parking, popcorn, face painting, balloon animals, jewellery giveaway, marketing, and even serving as Santa's chief elf and doorman. Some of our members also belong to the Safety Minded ATV Association, which provides the wonderfully popular

ATV hayrides.

At the end of the afternoon, as Santa and elf Jingle stood waving good-bye to a long line of cars, Santa was clearly grateful to have had many other seniors join him in making the day special for local families.



*Santa and his chief elf, Jingle (aka Cindy), on their way to see the kids.*



*In the Red Roof Building, Suzanne helps the children pick out a piece of jewellery.*



*November? Rain? No problem. Gardeners Fred and Chris get the path ready on Saturday for Sunday's event.*



*Parking attendants Keith and Peter take a little warming break inside the CEC.*

## Member's story: Delivering a gift of warmth Adrienne Harris



*Pamela and her donated blanket.*

On Tuesday mornings at the Black Point & Area Community Centre, Bay Seniors members can drop in for games, crafts, and community. It is a wonderful mix of characters, and we enjoy our time together.

Pamela is there, usually with a knitted or crocheted blanket in the works. She finished a lovely one a few months ago and wanted it to go to someone who needed

a warm blanket. Knowing I often visit family in the city, she asked me if I would hand-deliver it to someone who is presently living unsheltered.

One afternoon, my husband and I were driving downtown after visiting our brother-in-law, and along our route was a large encampment. I pulled over, and my husband hopped out.

He heard a conversation in one tent and made his way to the entrance. His initial hello from outside the tent was met with a cautious growl—no doubt residents have to protect their space—but once the young man in his thirties came out of his tent, he was friendly. My husband told him the colourful blanket he carried had been made by an older woman from the St. Margaret's Bay area who hoped that someone who needed it would enjoy it. The young man seemed genuinely moved by the story, saying "It's not very often we get something homemade down here. Thanks very much."

This was back in September. It's hard not to hope that the young man now has the blanket, perhaps in one of the mini-shelters the city has been building for those experiencing homelessness. If not, he has a quality handmade blanket, crocheted with love and concern, to keep him a little warmer on cold nights.

## Last call to buy quilt raffle tickets

Raffle ticket sales on the "All Things Barbie" quilt will close on Wednesday, December 11. The draw is on December 12. Buy tickets for \$5 each or 3 for \$10 at the SMB Community Enterprise Centre or Otis & Clementine's Books and Coffee.

The quilt, made and generously donated by Glenna Earle in support of Bay Seniors programs and services, is valued at \$1,000. Thank you, Glenna!

And big thanks to Pauline MacDonald, our hard-working raffle ticket sales manager.



## It's that time of year...to renew your membership

Our membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Annual membership is \$10 per person. If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 2025, you can do it by:

- E-transfer to [finance@bayseniors.ca](mailto:finance@bayseniors.ca) (put Membership in the subject line)
- Cash or cheque at our December 12 Monthly Members' Meeting
- Cash or cheque at the SMB Community Enterprise Centre
- Mailing a cheque to: Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay, Unit 1 – 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon, B3Z 4R5

## Bay Seniors welcomes new volunteer coordinator

Judy Theriault



I am new to Bay Seniors and look forward to getting involved

with this vibrant community group. I retired from a 38-year nursing career in the summer of 2023. After kicking up my heels and thoroughly enjoying my freedom from work, I decided I would like to reconnect with my neighbours and my community. What better way to do that than by volunteering?

My husband Richard and I settled in the beautiful area of Queensland 20 years ago and raised our three sons in the area.

Although I am new to this group, I am not new to volunteering. I was very involved in the boys' schools while they were students. I was part of the "Save Shatford

School" committee, and involved with numerous fundraising events for school sports teams, music programs and band. I have been involved with Heart and Stroke Canada and Halifax Hospice, to name a few.

My interests are varied and, since retiring, I finally have the time to try new things! I enjoy outdoor activities like hiking, kayaking, biking and snowshoeing. I am an avid reader and enjoy travelling.

*Interested in volunteering with Bay Seniors? Watch this newsletter for volunteer opportunities. You can reach Judy at [volunteer@bayseniors.ca](mailto:volunteer@bayseniors.ca) or by leaving a message at 902-820-3334.*

### **Birders' Interest Group**

## Hardy birders brave the rain

Beth Sherwood

The Birders' Interest Group held our most recent walk at the St. Margaret's Bay Look Off Park on Monday, November 25.

At quarter to 9 that morning, the rain was seriously coming down. I arrived at the parking lot thinking I should have cancelled. Just as I was sending a message out to others, more cars pulled in. And, remarkably, the rain eased up. The consensus was to scan the water and then see how much of the park we could get through. We could always abort the mission if the mist got heavier.

After welcoming Liz to the group, six of us set out. Erika spotted a Bufflehead right off the bat, and we were off.

I'm afraid I missed the Bald Eagle, but everybody got good looks at Golden-crowned Kinglets and the Brown Creeper. And the grebes



were finally identifiable as Red-necked Grebes once they moved a bit closer to shore and out of the sparkling water. (Yes, the sun actually appeared briefly.)

By the time we got back to the wharf, we were damp and cold. All in all, though, pretty satisfied with the walk.

You can view the checklist from the walk here: [ebird.org/checklist/S203587685](http://ebird.org/checklist/S203587685)

*Interested in joining the Bay Seniors Birders' Interest Group? Please email [interests@bayseniors.ca](mailto:interests@bayseniors.ca). The group's co-leads are Beth Sherwood (birder walks) and Suzanne Borkowski (birder talks).*

## Read all about us in the December Masthead

A story about our 15th anniversary is on the front page of the December issue of *The Masthead News*. During the current postal action, the newspaper has added dozens of pick-up locations, and the SMB Community Enterprise Centre continues to be a regular pick-up location. You can see the list of locations and also read the paper [online](#).

## New Student Help list

The list of students available to provide casual help has been updated. Contact the Seniors Information Centre by emailing [centre@bayseniors.ca](mailto:centre@bayseniors.ca) or calling 902-820-3334 (leave a message), or stop by the SMB Community Enterprise Centre, which is open until December 23, then reopening on January 2.