

Bay Seniors

January 2026
NEWSLETTER

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Happy
New Year!

Looking forward to another year together

Happy New Year!

As we greet 2026, we invite you to take advantage of the benefits your Bay Seniors membership provides: social and creative opportunities, fitness activities, educational and entertaining presentations, the chance to enjoy shared interests with fellow members, information of value to our area's seniors, excursions, and more.

You can learn about everything we do on our refreshed website at bayseniors.ca, or through our Seniors Information Office, this newsletter, and on our [Facebook page](#).

If you haven't been as involved as you would like in the past, maybe this is the year you join one or more of our interest groups, stop in to the Drop-in Program, participate in a fitness class, or sign up as a volunteer.

Whatever you choose to do with us, we're happy to have you.

Wishing you health and happiness in 2026!

Winter weather

If Bay Seniors activities need to be cancelled because of inclement weather, watch for an email from the program lead or check the [Bay Seniors Facebook page](#)



Betty and Fred Dolbel in 2018, when Fred was presented with a TD Bank national volunteer award by then branch manager Jeremy Zwicker, who nominated Fred. In his remarks, Jeremy said, "He's not advertising what he's doing; he's just quietly working away behind the scenes, making our community a better place for everyone." Fred and Betty chose to donate the \$5,000 in award money to Bay Seniors.

Thanking Fred and Betty Dolbel

And now there's more time for gardening

After helping to plant the seeds for Bay Seniors 16 years ago and then staying around to keep feeding and watering the organization as a board member, volunteer, and then board adviser, it seems fitting that Fred Dolbel was recognized at the Bay Seniors December 2025 Monthly Members' Meeting with a gift certificate for gardening supplies.

In her remarks, Bay Seniors President Pat Rodee thanked Fred and his wife Betty for their many contributions, acknowledging that they have more than earned some additional time to work on their own garden, a showcase of Fred's veggies and Betty's flowers.

Fred responded by saying that, while he was stepping back from an official role and many of the amazingly varied

jobs he has taken on for the association over the years, he "will still be around," a reassuring bit of news for all the Bay Seniors volunteers and members who appreciate the dedication, historical knowledge, and continuity he has provided as the only one of the organization's founders still actively involved.

The nearly 150 members at the meeting rose for a sustained standing ovation to show their appreciation. With typical modesty, Fred later said he had been touched by that response, "but also surprised." He was surely the only person in the room who was.

See some of Fred's recollections of the early days of Bay Seniors on page 2.

Fred shares memories of Bay Seniors' early days

Today, Bay Seniors has over a thousand members. But Fred Dolbel, who was one of the association's first board members, can point to a membership list of just 37 names in 2011.

The association started with five members: the board of directors, which included Heather Cochrane—the first president—Fred Dolbel, Carol Evans, Joan Murray, and Doug Poulton.

“We added members slowly over the first two years. I entered each



Beverly Carlsen (left) and Jen Green, in the first Seniors Information Office, with space provided by Dr. Saunders.

name in a scribbler,” says Fred. Originally established to pursue a goal of dedicated seniors’ housing in the St. Margaret’s Bay area, it didn’t take long to recognize that goal would be a very big long-term project. Meanwhile, certain



Maryvonne Walsh with the Bay Seniors cookbook.

other needs could be addressed immediately by the fledgling association.

“We found that people needed help just to find services to stay in their own homes,” says Fred. “Hence, we formed the first iteration of the Seniors Information Office.”

That first program was started in 2010, with the aid of a \$5,000 grant, space donated by a local physician, and a lot of volunteer hours.

A monthly speakers’ series, the forerunner of the current Monthly Members’ Meetings, as well as the association’s first website, were the other initial offerings.

Funding was a perennial challenge in the early days.

“The association was technically

insolvent at one point,” says Fred. “We couldn’t pay the phone bill until some membership dollars came in.”

After relying on hot dog sales to bring in \$300 or \$400, the association launched its first major fundraiser in 2013, with a cookbook called *A Matter of Taste*, a project spearheaded by Maryvonne Walsh that raised over \$2,000.

Fred says the secret to the growth and success of Bay Seniors comes down to one key factor: “Bay Seniors grew from humble beginnings thanks to contributions from many committed volunteers.” Smiling, he adds, “Many with a Type A personality.”

Tai chi sessions, part two

The part two tai chi sessions that begin this month are for Bay Seniors members who have previously participated in part one, either during autumn 2025 or previously. Contact fitness@bayseniors.ca for more information.

The next intake for members who are new to tai chi will be in autumn 2026.

Restart dates

Please check the January calendar, emailed recently, for January restart dates for our Bay Seniors programs and activities.

A reminder that meeting dates for Bay Seniors interest groups are not included in the calendar. Interest group leads provide that information directly to group members.

Learn to protect yourself against investment fraud

The annual reported loss from investment fraud in Canada is over \$310 million. And this type of fraud committed against older adults is a common form of financial elder abuse. Do you know how to recognize a fraudulent “investment opportunity?” Most people who fall for one thought they could—

until they were a victim.

David Harrison, investor education and communications officer with the Nova Scotia Securities Commission, will explain how specific investment frauds work, and the red flags to alert you. David's presentation will include a fraud bingo game, with

a chance to win small prizes while learning about investment fraud prevention.

Join us on Thursday, January 15 at the St. Margaret's Bay Legion #116 in Seabright, 11169 Peggy's Cove Road. Doors open at 1:30pm with the presentation starting at 2:00pm.

Have you had a chance to renew your membership?

The Bay Seniors membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Membership is still just \$10 a year per person.

You can renew your membership by e-transfer to finance@bayseniors.ca. Please put “Membership for [your name]” in the subject line.

You may mail or drop off your renewal to Bay Seniors, 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Unit 1, Upper Tantallon, B3Z 4R5. Our Seniors Information Office is open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10am to 1pm and is located in Office A inside the SMB Community Enterprise Centre.

You may also renew in person at the Monthly Members' Meeting on January 15, or at the Drop-in Program.

Note that we do not collect past dues. Any membership fee paid this year is automatically applied to 2026.

Interest groups updates

Beginner Contract Bridge

This is for those who want to learn the game. If you have previous contract bridge experience and haven't played for a long time, you may also benefit and are welcome.

Location: Black Point & Area Community Centre Black Point & Area Community Centre, 8579 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Black Point.

Date and time: Start date is Tuesday, January 13 during the Drop-in Program, 10am-noon.

Lessons will run for 3 or 4 weeks, with increasing level of difficulty. There is no pressure, and everyone should feel empowered to share in the learning—and laugh at the mistakes. We will play hands every day. A binder to take home and keep, containing all the lessons and much more, will be given out on the first day.

If interested in joining please email interests@bayseniors.ca

Sassy Seniors Sing

This group is a drop-in. Members can come to play—if you have an acoustic instrument, bring it along—sing, or just listen. Got a favourite song? Bring it with you. Enthusiasm and a love for music are all you need to be part of this group.

Location: St. James Anglican Church (The Yellow Church), 6991 St Margaret's Bay Road, Boutilier's Point.

Date and time (this month): January 6 and 20, 1-3pm.

Third Book Club

If you're interested in joining our newest Book Club, email interests@bayseniors.ca. Names will be placed on a list, and when we get at least 6 or 7 people, we will form the new club with a maximum of 10 people. One or two people in the new group could become the lead(s). Support for getting the club started will be provided.



For tired feet: Not everything the Well Preserved home canning group has done together is edible. In their last session of 2025 on December 10, in addition to a couple of types of cranberry preserves, the group made foot soak/bath salts with Epsom and coarse salt, herbs, and lemon and orange zest.

Calligraphy

Those who signed up at our Open House in September 2025 have filled the current group, which starts the middle of January. Future intakes will be publicized in future newsletters.

Record attendance at Holiday Social

On December 11, we gathered for our annual Holiday Social. And gathered...and gathered. A total of 140 members and 28 guests attended, many dressed in their festive finest.

Attendees had a chance to browse the offerings at the Bay Seniors Sewing Group's tables and at the Saturday Sparkle donated jewellery tables, and there were tasty refreshments to enjoy.

Fred Dolbel was recognized for his 16 years of significant contributions to Bay Seniors (see story, page 1).

Entertainment kicked off with the debut performance of new Bay Seniors' interest group Sassy Seniors Sing, performing several songs, with audience members joining in. Lead Greer Kelley



It was a full and festive house at our December 11 Holiday Social.



Some of the members of the line-dancing class got toes tapping.

offered a charming Bay Seniors-themed take on "The 12 Days of Christmas." See more about how you can join the fun with this drop-in interest group on page 3. A lively line-dancing performance followed, led by instructor Janice Coyle. This drop-in activity is on Wednesday evenings, and no previous experience is required. See the January Bay Seniors calendar for details.

Our Christmas trivia game had members thinking in teams, with



The Crossroads Community Choir offered a mix of lively and tranquil seasonal songs that put everyone in the holiday mood.

the winning group, The Dancing Divas, taking home the prize basket.

Cindy offered a humorous song about stressful holiday entertaining.

The entertainment wrapped up with the beautiful harmonies of the Crossroads Community Choir. Almost 20 choir members were there to put us in the holiday mood.

The party concluded with door prizes and lots of smiles, as members headed home filled with the holiday spirit.



Sassy Seniors Sing had the crowd singing along.

Drop-in Program updates

February 10 beading workshop

Brighten your backpack or purse with a beaded zipper pull and learn how to make beaded earrings by attending our workshop on February 10. The workshop, suitable for beginners, will be held from 10am to noon at the Black Point & Area Community Centre.

All supplies will be provided. Seats are limited and pre-registration is required.

Email dropin@bayseniors.ca or call 902-820-3334. Many thanks to our multi-talented instructor Shanna Balogh for leading this workshop.



Our interior decorators “add the cozy”

For several years, blue mats have protected the walls from pickleball shots and sundry mishaps at the Black Point & Area Community Centre. To create a softer and less sporty atmosphere when needed, custom-made curtains can now conceal the mats, thanks to a determined group of design volunteers from Bay Seniors and BP&ACC, in a collaboration typical of the strong partnership between the two organizations.



Putting Santa's elves to shame, the volunteers didn't take a break as they made curtains on December 9 for BP&AAC's walls. Above, from left, Robyn, Ethel, and Beverley, and, below centre, Nancy and Adrienne.



Greer, reprising her Bay Seniors-themed “The 12 Days of Christmas” at the Drop-in Program on December 16.



BP&ACC provides our Drop-in Program its space at no cost and, as a thank you, Bay Seniors purchased the material for the curtains. There were many volunteers involved in planning and preparation.



Ethel and Mark installing curtains on December 16.

Drop-in Program updates

Learn-to-crochet workshop is full

The learn-to-crochet workshop on January 20 is full. If you are on the waitlist, you will be contacted should a seat become available. Many thanks to Margaret Muise and Rosalind Watt for instructing this workshop.

Calling all pickleball players

Get some exercise and meet friends at our drop-in pickleball sessions on Tuesday afternoons, 1-3pm, at Black Point & Area Community Centre.

We encourage beginners to join our friendly games. Our players will welcome you and teach you how to play. We provide the equipment and the drop-in fee is only \$2. No pre-registration is required.

Just make sure you bring indoor shoes, please – we want to protect the floor, especially during the messy winter months.



Technology for Seniors Program

A New Year's resolution to make friends with your computer?

Our tech trainers are looking for tech trainees. Bay Seniors members are invited to take advantage of their expertise and perhaps make a special New Year's resolution: "I will come to grips with these pesky devices: my smartphone, my tablet, my laptop!"

Knowledgeable high-school student tutors provide tech instruction during after-school

hours in a private office setting at the SMB Community Enterprise Centre, with appointments arranged at the trainer's and learner's mutual convenience.

The training is personalized to your needs and interests. Perhaps you want to organize the photos you took with your phone, start doing your banking online, or just get help finding out exactly what

programs and services your device can provide.

To learn more or to book a session, please email technology@bayseniors.ca or call 902-820-3334, and leave a message. The program lead will return your call and respond to any questions you may have.

Grocery Program update

January dates and fee reminder

A reminder that participants in the Grocery Program are now being charged a nominal fee of \$5 for each trip, to help offset costs associated with the program.

Grocery trips this month are on January 15 to the Superstore, followed by the monthly social, and on January 29 to Sobeys.

This service is open to Bay Seniors members without transportation who would benefit from physical assistance or other support while grocery shopping. Participants must live within the BayRides catchment area. If you or someone you know is interested in joining the program, please contact us by

leaving a message for the Grocery Program at 902-820-3334, or emailing grocery@bayseniors.ca.

Winter weather reminder: The grocery program will not run during inclement weather if the schools are closed, buses are not running, or BayRides is cancelling service.