



# Welcome News



*Brockville ON, December 2015*



## President's Message

It's that very special time again when we celebrate with family and friends the wonderful festive season of Christmas and New Year's.

We at the SWC, directors, instructors, volunteers and participants, have had a good year in 2015 as together we engaged in programmes and activities that help us to remain active and healthy in mind and body.

We have just celebrated the season in the form of our annual Christmas Dinner. This was attended by close to 80 participants and guests at the church gym on December 9 and was hugely successful.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to new board director and social convenor Debby Greffe for her time and work in preparing for and organizing the event. In addition, Debby also did a terrific job in acting as a lively and engaging MC on the day itself. Many thanks Debby. Thanks also to SWC secretary and office manager Marian Rafferty for helping Debby with the many details involved.

We have an exciting line-up of new activities to offer for the second semester commencing January 2016. These are referenced in the **Course News and Updates** section below. Bill Carlyle is busy working to incorporate these and our other returning activities into an overall schedule. This is no easy task, but once complete we will post on the website and get the word out through email, regular mail, etc.

In closing, I would like to wish all members of the SWC family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

*We may be getting older but we're not old yet!*

*Tony Dunbar*

## Winter/Spring Registration

*Mark your calendars now!*

Date: Wednesday, January 6

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Place: Wall St. United Church

Fee: \$25

## Course News and Updates

### French

Madeleine Austin is retiring as the SWC French teacher. Since 2007 Madeline has provided an interesting and enjoyable learning experience for many SWC members. We are grateful for the expertise she has shared and wish her well. Au revoir et merci beaucoup, Madeleine.

Conversational French will continue to be offered.

## Spanish

Spanish will not be available for the Winter/Spring semester.

## Low impact exercise

Low impact exercise will be continuing throughout the winter months due to the efforts of three leaders who are going to juggle their winter getaways around their teaching responsibilities. We appreciate their dedication to their volunteer positions and their willingness to be so flexible on behalf of our members.

## Pickle Ball

In response to many requests by SWC members, Pickle Ball may be offered as a weekly activity next semester. This game has been described as a cross between badminton, tennis and table tennis; requiring a low net, paddles and a light ball that is about the size of a baseball. If you might be interested in signing up for Pickle Ball in January, and need further information about this game, simply "Google it."

**However, here's the catch, we need a leader or leaders in order to make it happen!** The leader's main responsibilities are to get out and put away the Pickle Ball equipment and to ensure that the attendance file is available for the participants to sign. If you are willing to help out in this way, please phone or email the SWC office staff. Your name will then be given to the Activity Director so that Pickle Ball equipment can be purchased. Let the games begin!



..And now, on a few musical notes...

## Learning to Read Music

The response from last month's survey indicated there is interest in offering a course on learning to read music. No instruments are

required for this course, as it is about learning about notes and rests, clefs and tempos, etc.

## Do You Like to Sing?



**Consider joining one of two new SWC musical experiences this January.**

In addition to the opportunity to learn to read music, the SWC Board is also excited to offer our members two different opportunities to sing, with leadership provided by Rod McAvoy.

Rod McAvoy comes well qualified, with university training in organ and choral music and many years leading amateur church singers. He is not a professional singer himself, so he has a personal understanding of the challenges that the amateur and aging voice can face. Members of his choirs have always praised his ability to improve their singing and breathing technique, and to help them move beyond what they thought they were capable of. He's also known to be friendly and outgoing. Although a strong leader when conducting, he also recognizes the value of honest and collaborative planning. His experience also includes composing or arranging music for the specific voices he's had available in each choir he's led—a very useful skill!

## **1.) Community of Song**

**A Programme for people who like to sing for fun, and especially for those who were told they couldn't sing!**

Singing is a natural function of the human body, and everybody benefits from singing regularly! Singing has been proven to promote health and to prolong vocal functioning for people with some kinds of illnesses. It is a

natural mood-enhancer and brings extra oxygen into the lungs and bloodstream.

Community of Song is for anyone who wants to sing without any performance expectation or critique. Sessions begin with some gentle stretching, breathing exercises and some warm-ups to get the vocal chords awake and ready. We then spend about 30 minutes singing folk songs, spirituals, rounds, and other music that is not under copyright (and therefore available for photocopying).

Rod McAvoy developed and led the Community of Song programme in Cobourg for four years before moving to Brockville. He likes to say that we all have a condition for which singing is beneficial – it's called being alive!

Attendance every week is not essential; these sessions are not rehearsals but simply times to gather and sing. However, consistent and regular participation will certainly increase the benefit that these sessions potentially offer.

**Wednesdays 1:30 – 2:15**

## **2.) An SWC Choir**

Some people have been asking for a choir where they can sing a range of material of varying difficulty, both for their own enjoyment and to entertain people who live in area retirement and long-term care facilities.

This choir will be primarily (but not exclusively) for people who have some experience at singing in a choir. Some music will be challenging enough that reading music at a basic level or better will be helpful. Selections will be from classical music of different eras, Broadway and musical theatre, Spirituals and other music from specific cultures, and seasonal music. As the group evolves the suggestions of members will play into the selection process. Absolutely no photocopies will be used unless the music is in the public domain. This protects the livelihood of living composers.

This programme will require an attendance commitment from those who sign up, so that the rehearsal process can be productive and the ultimate purpose—community service—will be reached.

**Wednesdays, 3:40 – 4:00pm**

## **What Are You Reading?**



In addition to the two successful SWC Monthly Book Clubs, a new idea around the love of reading is being put on the table in January. The intent of this monthly gathering is to share information about books one has read and enjoyed. Each participant will be invited to bring a title and author to the meeting and take a few minutes to talk about the book and why he/she enjoyed it. The Board's Activity Director is working on the final details of when and where this activity will take place.



## **SWC Board News**

### **Survey Follow-up**

During the Spring 2015 Semester the SWC Board sent out a survey regarding Members' experience of the courses and activities in which they participated. The Board discovered, as usual, a high degree of satisfaction with SWC activities and leaders.

One question on that survey was designed to gather your thoughts regarding our current name. As follow up to the survey the Board has struck a sub-committee to review your feedback and to evaluate the pros and cons of

a possible name change. The committee consists of Gail Hanton, Bill Checkley, Cheryl Nix and Ralph Greenhalgh. You are welcome to approach any of the committee members with your thoughts on this subject. He/she will relay your thoughts to the committee when they meet in January. No action is being taken on this subject at the current time.

### **Seniors4Kids Volunteer Program**

Terry Grimes, facilitator presented the Board with information on a new program funded by the government of Ontario, called Seniors4Kids. This program will focus on increasing the number of older adults and seniors volunteering with children and youth in our community. For example, Terry is looking for individuals who would be willing to be matched with a child in a local school to share a skill like knitting, reading, cooking, etc. Terry felt that the SWC population would benefit from knowing about this opportunity. For more information about this program, contact Terry Grimes at the following email address [Seniors4Kids@volunteercentre.ca](mailto:Seniors4Kids@volunteercentre.ca)

### **The SWC Website**

The SWC Website address is always included in the monthly newsletter ([swcbrockville.ca](http://swcbrockville.ca)). But did you know that our website has been developed and maintained over the past 2 years by our current President, Tony Dunbar. Before Tony, only our phone number and a brochure were in the public domain. Tony has seen to it that newcomers to this area aged 50+ can find out about our activities and SWC members can stay on top of all things pertaining to this organization very easily. Take a peek at the website, if you haven't already; you will find news, information on courses, upcoming and past events photos, our history, and much more!

If ever you want to tell a friend about SWC courses, activities and events, simply send them to the website. It is thorough, well written and designed. Thank you Tony for the hours

upon hours you have dedicated to the task of bringing SWC into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Brockville Arts Centre Discounts**

It has been brought to our attention that the Brockville Arts Centre is able to give a discount to SWC members on only SOME performances. It would be applied to the following:

The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber  
February 13  
Group rate is \$23.50 +HST

9 – 5 The Musical  
April 14 – 16  
Group Rate \$30:00 + HST

The BAC staff regrets any miscommunication regarding this matter.

### **Reminders & Useful Information**

- SWC office 613-345-2412
- **The SWC office will be closed from Friday Dec. 18 through Thursday, January 7.**
- email at [swcadmin@myhighspeed.ca](mailto:swcadmin@myhighspeed.ca) Location - take the elevator to third floor, turn left
- **Website:** [www.swcbrockville.ca](http://www.swcbrockville.ca)
- SWC leases space from Wall St. Church and is a separate organization. Please take all questions and concerns to the SWC office.
- Wall St. United Church is a scent-free facility.



Newsletter Editor: Cheryl Nix