

BROCKVILLE 50+ ACTIVITY CENTRE

Formerly the Shepherd's Welcome Centre

Newsletter November 2017

613-345-2412

www.swcbrockville.ca

President's Message

The fall 2017 registration stats are in. We currently have 401 people registered; 118 of whom are first time members of the Activity Centre (AC). People who participate here will soon discover that creating space for friendships to develop is our highest priority. We also aim to provide a place where individuals can try something that they have never done before in an encouraging atmosphere and at an affordable price.

Growth is good and it creates some new challenges. The Board has heard some of our members concerns and is working to resolve them in a variety of ways. For example, while we cannot invent parking spaces, we are exploring new spaces in which to house some of our activities. Any changes to class venues will be done in consultation with the leaders and members who attend an activity.

We are at mid-point in re-defining our Winter Weather Policy. The Board responded to concerns raised by some activity leaders and participants who found themselves unable to participate in their activity on days when the weather in Brockville was fine and yet the buses had been cancelled. The expansion of our local school board to a larger geographic area made using their decision about inclement weather to sometimes be an unreliable way to make a call for our purposes. If you wish to read the committee's full report on this subject, it is attached at the end of this newsletter. In the meantime, members of the committee and I have been meeting with the activity leaders to

help them work through this change. Hopefully before the first snow falls we will have brief, clear policies from each activity leader and we will have them available for members in the attendance folder of every activity. Most activities will continue to use the "Buses cancelled - activity cancelled" method.

Most important, I hope that you are enjoying all that you are doing here at the Activity Centre (AC); our numbers certainly indicate that such is the case.

Cheryl Nix – President

Question & Answer Session

Wed., November 1st 1- 3 p.m.

William Thomson, the owner of Tech Tutors, and past volunteer computer instructor for the Activity Centre (AC), has again set aside two hours for a Question and Answer Session for our Centre's members. His focus will be on helping people sort out problems they are having with personal electronic devices; phones, iPads, tablets, etc.

For the first time, we are hosting this Q & A at the **Bridlewood Retirement Residence at 1026 Bridlewood Dr.** They have kindly offered us the use of their space at no charge.

If interested in attending, please call the Activity Centre's office (613-345-2412), email (swcadmin@myhighspeed.ca) or stop by the office on the 3rd floor at Wall St. United Church between 10:00 a.m. and noon, Monday – Thursday, to reserve a spot. Parking at Bridlewood is primarily on the road in front of

the building. Everyone who enters the building must sign in & out at point of entry. Take the elevator downstairs to the Theatre Room.

These Q & A sessions with William have proven to be very informative for everyone who attends. William has a talent for explaining the answers to tech problems in a way that is very easy to understand.

Art Studio Show

Many members of the Activity Centre's Art Studio have been painting together for years; others have only joined the two groups within the last few semesters. Janet Sutcliffe, one of the Art Studio leaders, kindly organized a display of 27 of their paintings **at the Brockville Library**.

The works are done in oil, acrylic and watercolour and include a broad range of subject matter. Mary MacDermott, a trained artist, has shared her knowledge and skills with group members to help them create some wonderful works of art. Don't take my word for it. Take the time to travel to the fiction section on the second floor of the Brockville Library to see the show!

Security and Safety

All winter coats & boots should be taken with members to their classes (put wet boots into a plastic bag).

All AC members need to take a moment to notice where the nearest fire exit is no matter where their activity is held. We encourage all leaders to facilitate this too. If an alarm signal is sounded at the Wall St. United Church all leaders are to take the attendance sheet and leave the building with their class. All members are to gather on the Court House lawn until your leader has checked the attendance sheet to be sure that everyone is accounted for. Don't just hop into your car and go home! He/she must report to the fire

marshal before leaving the area. No one can return to the building until given the signal to return.

The Activity Centre (AC) offers CPR/Defibrillator classes annually for our members and members of the Church.

Everyone should be aware that the defibrillator is located at the top of the flight of stairs which are to the right of the entry near the gym and lead to the Heritage Hall. The unit is on the wall by the elevator door on that level.

Class Information

Cancellations:

All classes held at the Wall St. United Church facility will be **cancelled Nov. 23 & 24** due to their Yule Tide Fare.

Attendance:

It is very important to inform activity leaders if one chooses to stop attending a class as some activities still have people on wait lists who might like to attend some activities. If a class has a wait list and a person has not attended for a few weeks and has not said anything to the leader, the person may receive a call just to see if he or she intends to return.

Euchre:

A number of people have asked that we explore reviving sessions of this popular card game. It was on our programme for many years in the past. We have now initiated a poll on our website to gauge the level of interest.

To access the poll and vote click [Poll](#)

If there is sufficient interest, we will explore adding Euchre to our January 2018, second semester programme of activities.

Board News

- **Jo Ann Brinkworth**, who is an activity leader for one of the Pickle Ball groups has kindly agreed to be a Board Recorder. Jo Ann will not be responsible for any Board duties. She will simply attend the monthly meetings and provide the Board with minutes.
- Next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday November 7, 10 am at the Brockville Public Library. The library has been chosen as the venue for this meeting only, to allow board members the opportunity meet with some Library management and staff and to view the exhibit of paintings by our Art Studio members.
- The board of the Shepherd's Centre (Brockville) Foundation, the body that continues to provide our Activity Centre with an annual donation towards our operating costs, is actively seeking volunteers to serve on their board.

If you are interested, please contact our own AC Office Manager, Marian Rafferty, who is currently president of the foundation board.

Editor's Note

No, you didn't miss the October edition of our monthly newsletter. Due to my (Tony Dunbar) 5 week sojourn in foreign parts, there was no newsletter last month. Refreshed and renewed in body and spirit, I once more launch into my editorial task with this November issue.

My thanks to president Cheryl Nix for updating me and providing nearly all of the material appearing herein.

Reminders & Useful Information

- Office email: swcadmin@myhighspeed.ca
- Office Location: take the elevator to third floor, turn left
- Office hours: 10:00 – 12 noon, Mon. – Thurs.(except during June, July and August).
- AC Office phone: 613-345-2412
- Wall St. Church is a scent-free facility.
- If you are new to the Activity Centre, please be aware that our website, still under our old address www.swcbrockville.ca, is that place to go for the most up-to-date information regarding what's happening here.

Brockville 50+ Activity Centre Weather Policy Proposal

A weather event that affects the operation of the Activity Centre (A.C.) is usually one that is sufficiently severe to cause area bus cancellations. Our current inclement weather policy is tethered to this criterion, and many leaders are happy with this arrangement. However, a number of leaders who wish to control the choice to hold their activity if the weather permits them to get to the Centre (or one of its satellites) have operated on this leader-driven option quite successfully. It is desirable, therefore, to offer some policy options in order to accommodate the wishes of our leaders and our members.

Option One

Option One is similar to the blanket policy for inclement weather that the A.C. has used for the past few years. Classes will be cancelled and the office closed if the area school buses are cancelled due to a severe weather event (usually snow or freezing rain). However, there is one major change. Previously, the cancellation of buses triggered an e-mail message from our office to the effect that classes at the A.C. were cancelled and the office closed. In this new policy option, there will not be an e-mail message from the office regarding the cancellation of buses and the cancellation of classes and office closure. The onus will be on leaders and members to be aware of the probability of inclement weather, and to listen for or to call regarding bus cancellations.

School bus cancellations are announced on local radio stations (CFJR: 104.9; CBC Ottawa: 91.5). The phone number to call regarding cancellations is 1-866-629-0629. The status of bus cancellations can also be accessed from the STEO website www.steo.ca.

Option Two

This option provides a leader-controlled decision to hold or to cancel their classes. This option may take different forms:

- a) Some leaders choose to proceed to their activity if, in their judgment, it is safe to do so. Class members are to assume the class is on unless they receive an e-mail to the contrary.
- b) Some leaders choose to proceed to their activity if, in their judgment, it is safe to do so, and they send out an e-mail to all class members to inform of their decision to offer the class.
- c) Some leaders choose to proceed to their activity if, in their judgment, it is safe to do so, but do not wish (or are unable) to contact class members of their intention.

Considerations Relating to Weather Policy Options

- a) Option one is the preferred choice of many leaders. The course of action is straightforward and clear. No buses; no classes. This also avoids the frustration of arriving at the A.C. to find the church is closed.
- b) Option one has resulted in some confusion at times at the WSUC site. The problems stem from several factors. First, some classes (SLIE, Tai Chi) start before the office opens. These are usually large classes and there is more chance that some members may miss the bus cancellation announcement. Second, some members are unaware or confused about the weather closure policy. Third, there can be wide variances in weather over our area; the weather in Brockville area may be fine and so members leave for the activity without thought of a possible closure.
- c) Option Two allows leaders to base their decision to run or to cancel their activity on the local weather. They have control of their course of action. Bus cancellation decisions are made for a large geographical area within which weather conditions may vary widely. Also, the morning weather may be nasty, but conditions may improve dramatically which allow later classes to be offered. This is particularly true of freezing rain. Our off-site leaders have established clear weather cancellation policies with their classes and have experienced few problems. This may be partly due to size (small) and make-up (tight knit) of these groups.

d) Option Two enables leaders to make their own decision to hold or cancel their activity. However, class members must decide whether or not they feel it is safe for them to attend. People's risk/confidence levels in regard to driving in adverse conditions vary. Leaders are not making the decision to travel for their class members; they are only saying that they will be there if any members wish to attend.

e) Designated Alternate Leaders. Some classes may have a designated alternate leader who is prepared to lead the activity in the absence of the course leader. If the leader is absent for some reason, an alternate can enable the activity to continue as usual by performing the duties normally looked after by the leader. If a class has a designated alternate leader, and is governed by Option Two for severe weather, then in the absence of the leader, the alternate may take attendance, supervise equipment set-up and take-down or perform any other duties usually looked after by or shared with the leader. Alternate leaders must be designated as such to the Activity Director, to the Office and to the class members. Alternate leaders will be listed on the Activity Schedule.

A leadership tandem is not possible when the leader is the principal person needed to teach, to provide materials and to manage and direct the class. Also, an alternate is not needed when Option One governs whether the activity runs or is cancelled due to weather conditions. If severe weather causes the school buses to be cancelled, then the Option One action is that the class is cancelled.

f) The WSUC site is open as long as Trevor is able to clear the walkways. Although the church seldom closes, this eventuality must be kept in mind, and the church reserves the right to remain closed. Also, Trevor may leave the building locked if he is outside snow blowing walkways. There is the possibility that the walkways may not be cleared and salted before the first morning classes and this can pose a hazard to our members. Usually the church closure will be occasioned by very nasty weather which in all probability will have caused leaders to cancel their activities.

g) Clear communication is vital between the leaders and their class members. The leaders must inform their classes of the inclement weather option they will use. This may involve a good deal of repetition to achieve full comprehension by all participants. The weather policy will have to be clearly reviewed with leaders. The office will no longer be the key communicator to individual classes regarding their status.

h) Some leaders do not want the responsibility for informing class members that they are travelling to class in spite of inclement weather. It is crucial for these leaders to communicate this to their classes, emphasizing that they will travel to class unless the weather is too forbidding.

i) It is desirable that all leaders be provided with contact lists which they can use to inform their class members of their intention to hold or cancel their classes. Some leaders routinely contact class members if they intend to cancel class.

Submitted by:

Weather Policy Review Committee:

Tony Dunbar (Chair)

Bill Carlyle

Carron Szabo

John Bonser

Date: June 9, 2017