

October 2025

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secretary@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

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activities@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

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Office Manager

office@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Julie Daxon

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volunteers@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

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rick@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

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communications@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

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carl@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Paul Pechan

Member at Large

paul@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Eileen Quinn

Member at Large

eileen@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Alex Loshak

Newsletter Editor

newsletter@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Website

www.fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Message from our President

Tom Beach

Welcome back to Brockville 50+ activities.

We are in full swing with our highest number of activities and the highest number of participants we have ever experienced. Beyond what we thought – again!

If you experienced any difficulty with the process, or disappointment in not getting into what you had hoped to, please remember that Brockville 50+ is a totally volunteer-run organization and the volunteers are all seniors, and that you are one of a large number of seniors in Brockville and area we are here to serve.

A very dedicated group of volunteers has worked for months to accomplish the registration of over 900 participants. We are the reverse of the Wizard of Oz. Instead of a fancy machine with lights and sound out front and one person behind, we have a very modest office but a large cast of very committed volunteers working behind the scenes from home and in the office. They begin well in advance, pulling together the list of activities and organizing venues, schedule and equipment, communicating information to past participants and the general public, and putting the online and office processes in place to accept and process applications to participate in activities — activities led by more very dedicated volunteers. Thank you Leaders and thank you to Activity Admin Assistants who help with the registration process.

I don't want to list people in case I miss someone, but I do want to give a special thanks to Mike Libbos who not only created our online application system, but has monitored it through the past three registrations and continued to refine it. Also to the Kaesler team — Sharon, our office manager and Klaus who shares the office workload. These three put in many days of work to get lists to leaders and people into activities.

We are already starting preparations for the next application period in December and we could use more volunteers. I urge you strongly to complete the volunteer questionnaire and let us know how you can help keep this amazing organization thriving. We have over 900 participants but don't wait for others to come forward, we need you to contact us now. Ideally we want people to start soon so they can shadow others through the application and registration period for the Winter semester and learn the ropes before things gear up for the Fall 2026 term, so don't delay, do it today.

A late addition: we received a request from researchers at the University of Ottawa to help promote the research gathering they are doing. Please read the article on Optimizing the Wellbeing of Solo Retirees in Canada. Interesting and very pertinent research that is worth participating in to express your views and insight.

Tom Beach, *President*

Important Dates

When Wall Street United Church is closed, so is the 50+ Office.

November 2	Daylight Saving Time ends — clocks go back one hour
November 20–21	Wall St. United closed for Yuletide Fair — No activities
December 6	Midnight is the deadline for newsletter submissions
December 13	Newsletter distribution
December 1–31	Online Registration for Winter Session
January 26, 2026	Winter activities begin this week.

Membership Services Committee

Rick Fry

Fall Semester Registration Summary

A big thank-you to everyone who registered for the Fall Session online. Our new system is working well, and our registration team is committed to improving it by identifying changes that can be incorporated into the next registration process.

Here are the actual numbers from the Winter registration:

Number of Activities available	58	Average number of Activities enrolled in	2.5
Number of Participants	901	Range of number of Activities enrolled in	1 to 10
Participants enrolled on first day	404	75% paid by eTransfer	Thank you!!

I would also like to recognize volunteers Mike Libbos, Sharon Kaesler, and Jane Ozon for their time and effort. Their commitment and dedication made it possible for 50+ to begin the Fall programs in September. Thank you!

The Benefits Of Volunteering

Michael Lewis

Think retirement is all about kicking back and taking it easy? Think again! For folks over 50, staying volunteering isn't just good for the soul — it's a powerful booster shot for your health.

Let's break it down. Science shows that lending a hand is a fantastic workout for your mind. Tackling new tasks, like organizing a fundraiser or learning how to socialize a shy shelter puppy keeps your brain sharp. Studies have found that volunteers have a lower risk of dementia. It's like a sudoku puzzle, but with more purpose and fewer number two pencils.

Feeling a little lonely sometimes? You're not alone. Volunteering is a wonderful way to build a new social circle. Sharing a common cause fights isolation and builds deep connections. It's a built-in community where you can meet great people (and you already know you have something in common!).

And don't forget the body! Many volunteer roles get you moving. Whether you're walking dogs, tending a community garden, or helping at a local 5K run, you're staying active without the dreaded "E" word (exercise). This can help keep your heart healthy, your joints limber, and your energy levels up.

So, what are you waiting for? Find a cause that sparks your joy. The benefits are a two-way street: you'll leave a positive mark on your community and get a fantastic health kick in return. Now that's a bargain.

News from Activity Groups

Pickleball for Beginners — Wednesday

Once again, this program offering maxed out at registration and we are happy to welcome another full class of eager and enthusiastic participants to the 50+ Beginner's Pickleball program. This also marks our inaugural debut of hosting this specific activity at the Centennial Road Church facility.

If the first few classes are any indication, we have another group of very engaged and willing-to-learn participants. The class has already covered off, safety considerations, basic game rules, basic game terminologies, and the introduction to the Serve. Instruction has been re-enforced with little competitive drills and team challenges.

Kim and Steve are looking forward to working with the class to cover and practice all of the nuances associated with playing this fun and social game.

Leaders: Stephen Graham & Kim Barr



Pickleball Skills and Drills — Thursday

This 50+ activity also has a full class for the Fall 2025 semester. This program offering has also been moved to the Centennial Road Church gymnasium.

The class has already identified the individual skills that they personally would like to improve on during this semester. To assist with achieving these participant's personal goals, we will once again utilize a skills development tool that focuses on developing consistency, applying body position and ball placement awareness, understanding depth and control, teaching the types of spins to add to a shot and understanding the use of and limitations of power.

Kim and Steve are thrilled to see the receptiveness of this group to go out and to try and to apply what is being taught thus far.

Leaders: Stephen Graham & Kim Barr



BROCKVILLE
50+ Activity
Centre

As a gentle reminder, all of our facilities are scent-free. We kindly ask everyone to refrain from wearing fragrances of any kind, including scented hair products, soaps, lotions, and perfumes.

We know that scents can sometimes feel like a small detail, but for individuals with allergies, asthma, or sensitivities, even light fragrances can cause significant discomfort or health concerns. By keeping our spaces fragrance-free, we ensure a safe and welcoming environment for everyone.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping us make our programs inclusive and accessible to all.

Feel the Beat: How African Drumming Tunes Up My Life

Michael Lewis

Forget the fountain of youth. What if the secret to vibrancy was a drum? Not just any drum, but the deep, resonant pulse of an African djembe. For those of us 50+, participating in African drumming isn't just a music class—it's a full-body tune-up.

Let's start with the hands. This isn't about gentle tapping; it's about conversation. Hands become my voice, fingers get sharp sounds on the edge of the drum, full fingers slap out high tones, palms make mid tones and hands thump out deep bass notes, too. It's a dance of its own, a fantastic workout for hands, wrists, and arms, fighting stiffness and keeping arthritis at bay.

Then, there's the sound. It's more than something you just hear; it's something I feel. The powerful rhythms travel through the air, stimulate the solar plexus and penetrate straight into your bones. That deep vibration is like an internal massage, shaking loose the day's stress and replacing it with a primal, joyful energy.

It's magic. My eyes watch the others in the group and there's a feeling of oneness. My brain experiences a trance-like timelessness. Tasked with following complex polyrhythms, my brain gets a serious workout. There's no room for worry when I'm locked into the groove. Mentally, it's a meditation. Socially, it's a celebration—not just making noise, we're building community, creating one powerful heartbeat together.

So, answer the call of the drum. It's a chance to move, connect, and rediscover a rhythm that's been inside you all along. Your mind, body, and spirit will thank you for the jam session.



Volunteers Wanted

Carl Insley

Brockville 50+ is a true success story! Having over 900 members it is entirely run by volunteers, and because of that, we're able to keep our fees extremely low.

As a member of the Nomination Committee, I'd like to suggest you consider helping. There are a number of Board vacancies (the term is two years) and there are plenty of committee opportunities available.

We have members with all kinds of skills and knowledge, and I encourage you to let us know if you have talents to share.

If you have an interest in volunteering to help keep our organization strong, please take a few minutes to complete the online questionnaire:

<https://fiftyplusbrockville.ca/volunteer-questionnaire>

For the latest information, please check the website
www.fiftyplusbrockville.ca



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Opportunity to Participate in a Research Study: Optimizing the Wellbeing of Solo Retirees in Canada.

The Life Research Institute at the University of Ottawa is launching an innovative project to **enhance the quality of life and optimize the wellbeing of solo retirees**. A **solo retiree** is someone who has *never married/partnered, is separated, divorced, or widowed, or is currently living apart from a partner and has retired from full-time employment or is nearing retirement*.

The first step is a national, bilingual study that will collect data from **October 1, 2025, to November 15, 2025**, followed by the **release of findings and evidence-based resources**.

The Team would like to invite you and your network to **participate in this exciting research**.

You are eligible to participate in the survey if you are...

- Retired (or are soon to be retired) and solo as described above, and
- Have a primary residence in Canada, and
- Willing to share your experiences through an online questionnaire.

Your contribution to this important work requires you to ...

- Complete an online survey.
- Be prepared to spend about 45 minutes answering all the questions.
- Complete the survey in one sitting, or pause and resume as often as you like, as long as you use the same device (computer, tablet, or phone) each time you log on. Each time you log in, you will pick up from where you left off previously.
- Remember, you can change your mind and quit at any time, no questions asked!

Protecting your privacy is a top priority.

- Any information you share in the survey is completely confidential.
- All information gathered will be used exclusively for research purposes.
- The research and data collection adhere to the University of Ottawa's strict ethical guidelines to ensure your privacy and safety throughout.

You are in control...

- Your participation is completely voluntary.
- The final decision about participation is yours alone.

Getting Started

- Simply click on the link below to access the survey.

GET STARTED — https://uwaterloo.ca/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0Ijq06KORZ7F92e

If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to reach out to Professors [Dr. Wayne Corneil](#) or [Dr. Christopher Belanger](#) at the University of Ottawa.

We truly value the experiences and perspectives of solo retirees and believe your participation could make a meaningful difference in this important area of research.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to contribute to a better understanding of solo retirement

About the Life Research Institute

The [Life Research Institute](#) was established to create meaningful changes in individuals' experiences by collaborating with stakeholders from various sectors. Its primary goal is to harness the exceptional knowledge generated by uOttawa researchers and their partners to influence whether people live long, live well, and live with voice and choice.

About Solo Retirees

In Canada, people typically retire between their mid-50s and late 70s; however, most retire around the age of 65. Some prepare for retirement years in advance, while others leave it to the last minute.

According to the 2021 census, nearly 40 percent of people aged 65 and above are single, and approximately 70 percent live alone. That's roughly 2 million people in Canada.

Despite the high number of solo retirees, we know little about their wellbeing, quality of life, and lived experiences. This study will capture the voice of solo retirees.

Evidence gathered in the study will provide insights into the wellbeing of solo retirees and will lead to customized retirement planning, inclusive public policies, and respectful and welcoming community programs.

About the Project Team

The Research Team will gather and analyze data on key areas that affect the quality of life for solo retirees, including health and wellbeing, financial security, living arrangements, access to care, social support, community living, social activities, and transportation.

The Research Team is led by University of Ottawa Life Research Institute Professors [Dr. Wayne Corneil](#) and [Dr. Chris Belanger](#), and includes Drs. Bryan Smale and Steven Mock (University of Waterloo). The research team has extensive experience in conducting social science and epidemiological research, as well as informing public policy.

The Knowledge Activation Team will expedite research-to-practice by developing evidence-based curricula for workshops, seminars, and resource materials for seniors and soon-to-be seniors, financial advisors, social workers, community program providers, family members and caregivers, retiree associations, and retiree peer support groups.

The Knowledge Activation Team members are [Nora Spinks](#), a consultant to business, community, labour, and government leaders, who leads innovative evidence-based solutions to address complex issues, and [Suzanne Nault](#), an executive coach, psychologist, speaker, and author, focused on helping individuals navigate transitions in their lives, specifically retirement.

Collaborators

The National Association of Federal Retirees is a collaborator with the Solo Retiree project



National Association
of Federal Retirees

Association nationale
des retraités fédéraux

For the latest information, please check the website
www.fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Expanding 50+ activities into the late afternoon and evening hours

Paul Pechan

Over the past three years, I have thoroughly enjoyed participating in the various activities offered by our 50+ activity centre. One aspect I have always wished for, however, is the opportunity to enjoy some of these activities during the late afternoon (4 to 6 PM) and evening hours (7 to 9 PM). Currently, our activities are day-oriented, which can be limiting for those of us who also like to do something in the evening.

By extending our activities into the late afternoon and evening, we could not only diversify our program but also alleviate the overcrowding in daytime sessions. Moreover, late afternoon and evening classes would provide an opportunity for those of us who are still working or have daytime obligations to enjoy the full range of benefits that the 50+ membership offers.

Since joining the 50+ Board this year, I've had the chance to explore how much support there is for this idea. Our Board members recently held a brainstorming session, and I can assure you that we came up with plenty of exciting new topics ideas! Some suggestions include a games night (focusing on lesser known global games), karaoke (featuring music from before the 1990s), a film club (adjunct to the existing Brockville efforts), and a series of talks on topics like health, aging, diet, environmental issues, and current affairs of interest to 50+ age group.

These are just a few ideas, but now we want to hear from **you**—our members. What do you think? What evening activities would you like to see offered? To help us better understand your preferences, we are preparing a brief survey with just 8 questions. This will allow us to gauge interest in evening programs and determine which activities would be most appealing.

Of course, the implementation of late afternoon and evening activities will depend on factors like finding qualified instructors, securing appropriate venues, and considering costs. But your input will be crucial in helping us shape these programs.

I hope you will take a few moments to complete the survey, which will be sent out by email. Your feedback will be invaluable in helping us create an even better Brockville 50+ community.

Lastly, if you have expertise in a particular area and would be interested in leading a late afternoon or evening class, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.



Dear Members,

Your lifetime of experience is a treasure. We invite you to share that gift and help us create a vibrant, welcoming place for all.

We would be delighted to have you join our team of dedicated volunteers. There are so many ways to help and make a real difference.

Ready to join us?

Tell us how you would like to help.

[CLICK here](#)

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www.fiftyplusbrockville.ca

BROCKVILLE 50+ Activity Centre

Meet & Greet

On Thursday, September 11, there was an opportunity for Leaders, Co-Leaders and AAAs to get to know one another and share ideas in a relaxed and friendly setting at Wall Street United.

This led into the Member, Board, and Leaders' Social, kindly organized by the Events Committee. Light refreshments, muffins, and cookies were provided.

Entertainment was provided by Rob Power.



For the latest information, please check the website
www.fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Message from your Newsletter Editor

Alex Loshak

You'll notice an emphasis on volunteering in this issue of the newsletter, and that's because without them, this organization wouldn't function. Either that, or the registration fee would have to increase.

When I first became involved with Brockville's 50+ Activity Centre there were about 400 members. This semester we have more than 900! The growth of the organization has been amazing, and there's no reason it can't continue to grow, but for two things: volunteers and venues.

Board member, Paul Pechan, is our new Venue Scout, and he'd love to hear from you if you know of a location that might suit one of our activities. This semester there were 58 activities, also a record number.

The newsletter too, is going through some changes. The Communications Committee, under the leadership of Chair, Michael Lewis, is moving towards streamlining our ways of keeping in touch with members. There will be fewer issues of the newsletter, as more information will be posted to the website, and work behind the scenes means email distribution will be easier.

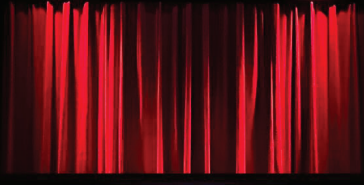
As always, please send any comments or suggestions you have, and if you'd like to contribute something for publication, the deadline for the next issue is midnight, Saturday, December 6, with distribution December 13.

News from other non-profit organizations in Brockville

ARTS HUB BROCKVILLE PRESENTS

A Sentimental Journey

CELEBRATING THE LIVES AND LEGACY OF
BRUCE & HOWARD ALEXANDER



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2025, 2:00 PM
ARTS HUB BROCKVILLE - 32 PARK ST
FREE ADMISSION

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT ARTSHUBBROCKVILLE.COM



Winter Driving

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) will be offering a one-hour long presentation about winter driving at the Wellings Clubhouse, 3064 Parkedale Avenue, Brockville.

Tuesday, November 4, from 2-3pm.
Light refreshments will be served.

Agape Brockville, a refugee sponsorship group, is looking for housing for a family of 8 who will arrive either in mid-October or November. If you know of anything available on either a permanent or temporary basis, please contact Julie Case at juliaicase@gmail.com or leave a message at 343-260-9184.

Website: <http://fiftyplusbrockville.ca>

Email: office@fiftyplusbrockville.ca

Office Address: 5 Wall St, Brockville 613-345-2412

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