

**The Shepherd's Welcome Centre  
Brockville, Ontario  
Annual General Meeting Wednesday, May 10, 2017  
Wall St. United Church Heritage Hall**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Introduction & history**

Imagine for a moment that some of the original members of the Brockville Ministerial Association came back to life and walked through these doors to view our current hub of activity for people over the age of 50. They envisioned a place where seniors could care for seniors back in 1980. They would see that some things have changed and some have remained the same.

The original centre was registered as the Brockville and District Ecumenical Care Community, as it remains today. It was first housed in the Comstock Residence at BGH and became known as The Shepherd's Centre. It had one paid Volunteer Coordinator who was funded by the Ministry of Health. It was her job to enable younger seniors to provide practical services to more housebound seniors; something we no longer do, as those services are being provided by Community and Primary Health Care (CPHC). At this point the centre closed and later regrouped under the new name of The Shepherd's Welcome Centre and the members once more enjoyed a variety of activities.

Visitors from the past would still see a similarity between the thirteen original activities and the current twenty that were offered during this past year. Those activities continue to have the purpose of strengthening the mental, physical and social lives of our members.

Some things have changed over time, but our core vision, their vision, remains as solid as a rock.

**Activities**

The original designers of this program would be pleased to see the quilting group still stitching up a storm, but perhaps surprised to learn that many of those quilts are currently being given to Interval House, a place for abused women and children.

Things have changed. This organization now includes music in a variety of forms. If our visitors from the past walked up to the church second floor on a Monday afternoon they would find 15 - 18 musicians playing guitars, keyboard, accordion, fiddles and

drums and launching occasionally into a folk or popular song or blues standard. The first semester once again included a course in Music Notation and the Women's Chorus continued to be developed. We enjoyed being entertained by them at our annual Christmas Dinner which was held, for the first time, at the Brockville Legion in a very festive atmosphere.

Exercise has always been a part of the Shepherd's Welcome Centre, but this year to our regular fitness, badminton, tai-chi and chair yoga classes, we added Pickle Ball. The Board purchased the necessary nets and paddles and watched the activity become a booming success!

Changing with the times, in 2016-17 the Board added Meditation classes to the schedule for those who wanted to try a new path to creating calmness in mind and body.

Tole Painting has been around for a long time and is still a crowd favorite; but in addition to it we added a second Art Studio, held at the Thousand Island Mall, where members work in oil, water colour and acrylic paint.

Two Book Clubs, Bridge (both now held at the Brockville Public Library), French, Spanish, and Photography continue to be important activities in this organization.

### **Volunteers**

The Board remains indebted to the wonderful people who step up to lead our activities. Some faithfully show up, take responsibility for equipment and make sure attendance is taken and others also put in a lot of time at home preparing to teach a weekly class. Everyone, like the original thirteen leaders, continue to function as dedicated volunteers, now without the support of a paid Volunteer Coordinator, I might add.

### **The Work of the Board**

Throughout the years there has always been a volunteer Board meeting on a monthly basis to take care of the operational details of the organization. Some things never change.

During the past few years Bill Carlyle, our Activities Director, has forged new ground in the area of care and maintenance of our volunteers. His bi-annual meetings with the volunteers help ensure that they get the direction & support they need. He has taken communication between our leaders and the Board to a new level.

Marian Rafferty our volunteer Office Manager & Bill Carlyle arranged four information sessions during the 2016-17 year. They included sessions on Fraud Awareness & Scams, Estate Planning & Investments, Elder Abuse and two question and answer sessions regarding personal computers and other technological devices. Another session on CPR & the use of a defibrillator was again made possible through the work of Marian. These sessions were all well attended and appreciated by our members.

Debby Greffe, the Social Convener, with the support of Marian and other volunteers, put together refreshments for our two registration days. They were held at the Brockville Legion in order to accommodate the large number of registrants who need parking on those days. They also organized a great Christmas dinner for our members and put together **the best display** on King St. for Culture Days last fall. They pulled together demonstrations in Tai Chi, displayed quilting and art, had our Women's Chorus sing and also had other live entertainment throughout the day.

As always, Ralph Greenhalgh, our Treasurer, has provided the Board with accurate and timely financial reports and he has with compiled useful statistics which help us with our planning.

Tony Dunbar has kept up the original tradition of creating a monthly newsletter for our members. He also regularly adds vital information, announcements and photos pertaining to our ongoing activities to the SWC website throughout the year. Our website is available for any newcomer to this area or for a newly retired person to learn all they need to know in order to step right into their activity of choice and start building new friendships. In this way we have moved on with the times while continuing to be a place where seniors help other seniors at an affordable price.

This year we have a couple of changes on the Board to report. Bill Checkley and Bev Nixon, unfortunately had to leave the Board. John Bonser and Barry Shaver were brought on board by appointment this spring. Their names will stand as nominees today. We are currently in need of a secretary for the Board.

During this past year the Board of Directors continued the work of gathering feedback from the participants regarding the possibility of changing the name we are known and conduct business by. Gail Hanton, a past President, presented her report on this subject at last year's AGM. Last week, following a week long referendum style voting process, it was decided by the participants, 140 "yes" to 38 "no", that we change our name to the **BROCKVILLE 50+ ACTIVITY CENTRE**. It was important to the Board that the voting process included as many people as possible so as to reflect the same democratic method that was used throughout the entire process of hearing the concerns of our participants.

As of last week **BROCKVILLE 50+ ACTIVITY CENTRE** is the name registered on our Ontario Master Business License. Throughout this year we will slowly alter all paperwork, and other general means of communication such as the website and newsletter, to reflect this change. Our incorporation name, as a registered non-profit, charitable organization, remains as the Brockville and District Ecumenical Care Community.

The name, as many things during the past 37 years, has changed; but I am confident that visitors from our historic roots, our founders, could easily recognize that their dream is alive and well.

Cheryl Nix