

d'Esterre Seniors' Centre Association

AGM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY

MARCH 20th, 2024

1:00 PM

In the Ballroom

Membership required.

Kindly have your membership card available for presentation.

President's Report for the AGM

January 1, 2023 to December 31st, 2023

Mission Statement: Providing people with a better quality of life as we age.

Leading through a changing and dynamic environment has been the theme for us in 2023. As we fully emerged from the COVID period, we saw all the wonderful things that make d'Estre Seniors' Centre such a wonderful place to meet and enjoy each other's company. We had a number of significant accomplishments and this is due to the leadership of the Board of Directors and the contribution of our staff and our volunteers.

During the past year we had the dual challenges of balancing rapid growth in members and the need to build internal capacity to manage this growth. Capacity building and centre development were the building blocks used to strengthen the Centre's organizational foundation.

We developed an Annual Work Plan, worked the plan and reviewed progress quarterly and the results are as follows:

- Communications with our members remains a priority and we do so through the following means: Monthly Newsletter, News Releases, Facebook, Member Survey, open invitations to monthly board meetings, publication of board minutes on the bulletin board, access to board members in person, access to Office for questions and issues, outcome of Strategic Planning review displayed in the Centre Cafeteria. The Newsletters and News Releases now reach 1400 subscribers.
- The website has become the go-to place for up-to-date information for members. For instance, current reports, information on rentals procedures, and a virtual tour of the Centre is now offered.
- Forty Activities, clubs, and classes full and ongoing. Space and time-slots remain at a premium.
- 1200 members including Life and Permanent members. In October 2021 we came out of the COVID darkness with a low of 650 members.
- Our 2022-23 Strategic Plan was released to members in Feb. 2023 and was posted on the website.
- Six Special Events ranging from a Volunteer Appreciation lunch, Christmas Craft Fair, Fashion Show, and two Christmas dinners. Nine monthly Information Sessions with a total of 465 attendees.
- Record Cafeteria sales in 2023 compared to previous years. Thanks to Dei and her dedicated team of volunteers for the great service that they continue to offer.
- The Gift Shop, under the capable leadership of Nancy Kramer, has exceeded all its operational targets. The Gift Shop provides a retail outlet for our crafters and artists producing revenue for both parties. A display renovation was completed successfully with grant funding from New Horizons for Seniors program. Rentals was another important source of revenue, in part due to our anchor tenant.
- Our members continue to enjoy the library which offers books, puzzles, DVDs, and the occasional sales of used inventory. Thanks to Roger and Lynn for that fine service.
- The most challenging change for the Office personnel in 2023 was the consolidation of class registrations and payments into the Office. Prior to that, Class Registrations were handled by the Class Coordinators. This has resulted in a greater workload in the Office. This change relieved the Class Coordinators of substantial responsibilities for registrations and transactions. This initiative allowed us to standardize policies, procedures, and revenue transactions.

President's Report for the AGM

- Completed a Member Survey in August. The results of the survey are posted on our website. It was gratifying to see that 370 members responded to the survey, 91% of whom indicated that they were Satisfied and Very Satisfied with the services offered and the management of the Centre.
- Completion of Centre Operations Manual documenting procedures and processes in the areas of financial transactions in the invoice payment, payroll, accounting, revenue and expenditures in Cafeteria, Gift Shop, and Classes. Completion of an Office Procedures Manual covering all processes and transactions regarding class fees and membership fees income.
- Completion of a Benchmarking Study comparing our Centre's Business Plan to four non-profit organizations in the Valley. This study yielded important data to use when making grant applications to funding organizations.
- We have a retired museum curator (Tom) and assistants now sorting and classifying archives. This task group is planning to publish a third booklet covering the Centre's history from 2012 to 2024. This booklet should be ready for the Centre's Golden Jubilee in 2025.
- We are fortunate to retain the services of Dei in the Kitchen/Cafeteria and Bill in Janitorial. We filled the Office Assistant position and the Centre Coordinator position during the current year.
- We were active in writing grant applications and had positive results from New Horizon for Seniors, BC Gaming, Comox Valley Community Foundation, and Coastal Community Credit Union. A special thank you to our funders.
- We established an account with Canada Helps in order to facilitate donations in support of the Centre's projects. Details are featured in our Monthly Newsletter.
- We now have 17 Sub-Committees ranging in mandate from Human Resources to Finance in order to distribute responsibilities more broadly. A member of the Board chairs one or two of these committees.
- We continue to have a positive relationship with the Town of Comox, our main partner and stakeholder. We, as tenants, are responsible for all programming, janitorial services, and light maintenance and care of the Centre.

Grass-roots support from our members, sub-committee leaders, Activity Coordinators, employees, and your board were the elements that made these year-end results possible.

Thank you again to all our volunteers, those mentioned and not mentioned. It takes many volunteers to keep our Centre in operation and we appreciate everything you do. Achieving this level of success has not been an easy proposition. Board burnout is becoming a concern with our current "working board" model operating without an Executive Director to support the board and run the day-to-day operations. We will be taking a serious look at our current business model in 2024.

I want to thank our staff for their commitment to the Centre, the work they do, and the empathy they bring to their relationship with the people we serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond Morin, Chair in 2023.

"From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs." Karl Marx, (1818-1883) German political philosopher, economist, sociologist and journalist.

d'Esterre Seniors' Centre Association
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
March 20, 2024 at 1:00 pm

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome (introduction of Board members and new Board nominees)
3. Approval of the agenda
4. Approval of the Minutes of AGM March 22, 2023
5. Treasurer Report - Approval of the financial statements
6. Remarks -Town of Comox Council Representative, Chris Haslett
7. Report from the President
8. Election/acclamation of Directors
9. Adjournment

d'Esterre Seniors' Centre Association
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AGM Nominees 2024

President: Vacant

Vice-President: Susan Toresdahl

Treasurer: Vacant

Secretary: Lois Higgins

Past-President: Raymond Morin

Julie Spooner

Ele Clarke

Nancy Kremer

Peggy Rasmus

*Cheryl Smith

*Myrna Holman

*Paul Dreyer

*Barbara Havers

*Jim Cooper

* indicates new nominees

**For Vice-President
Susan Toresdahl**

I like contributing to our Senior Centre by volunteering to sit on the Board. I truly believe d'Es-terre is a valued and extremely important part of our community. I think today's seniors bring a much-needed voice of experience to our society and I want to support that in some capacity. We need to nurture our seniors by offering reasonably priced activities and a comfortable place to meet and greet – all part of what happens at d'Esterre. I have attempted to “walk the talk” as they say by serving as a volunteer on the Board of Directors for the past seven years. Having said that, this will be the last year I put my name forward for a director position as all organizations need fresh input and direction. Please consider putting your name forward in the future and keep our centre flourishing.

**For Director
Julie Spooner**

I am honoured to put my name forward for Director of d'Esterre Seniors' Centre. Many of you have seen me around the Centre doing my work as Treasurer. The time has come to have more time to spend with my family and I am retiring as Treasurer at the end of this term. I have become very attached to the Centre: the members, the growth, the volunteers, the employees, and I would like to stay involved as a Director now. I am a lifelong learner and educator. I have served on the Board at ElderCollege, volunteered with ALSBC (Lou Gerhig's Disease) and was President of my strata council since retiring from School District 71 in the valley. I believe that I can continue to contribute as a Director with my knowledge of the finances of the Centre and the relationships that I have built with members of this active, committed Board and the members of the Centre. I look forward to an exciting year ahead.

**For Secretary
Lois Higgins**

I have served as a director on the Board for a year, and am the Kitchen liaison and work on Health and Safety.

I was born in the Comox Valley, moved when I was 12 and returned 10 years ago for work. My working career was in Long Term Care Facilities then group home settings for adults with developmental disabilities. I retired in 2022 and looked for somewhere to volunteer. I visited the Centre and I have been volunteering in the kitchen since October 2022.

During my working career I facilitated health and safety training courses for the BCGEU. When my agency was preparing for the accreditation process, I was tasked with the job of ensuring compliance with CARF standards by auditing all safety drills on a monthly basis and ensuring earthquake, first aid, and vehicle kits were up to standard. I also helped with Board Governance standards.

During my 33 years working for non-profit agencies, I had to report to the board as well as attend board meetings. I understand the workings of a board and what it entails.

When my children were younger I coached track and field in Duncan as well as coordinating the Stuart Channel Little League in Chemainus.

I am pleased to let my name stand for Secretary.

**For Director
Raymond Morin**

From a humble beginning as an Office Volunteer; I've now served on the Board of Directors for some six years. The last two years as President have been very challenging in dealing with our membership and programing growth.

My term as President has expired. My term as President has expired after two years. I now automatically become Past-President and will sit on the Board in 2023/24 in that position.

**For Director
Ele Clarke**

I have been a member of the Centre since 2013 and participated in the Spanish conversation group, and currently take a yoga class and play bridge. In the twenty-three years I've lived in Comox, I've volunteered on the Board of the Beaufort Childcare Center at NIC and the Comox Recreation Commission. I've been on the d'Esterre Board for 2-1/2 years. I joined as the Centre was re-opening after the many COVID closures to help the Centre return to full operations.

I participate on the Volunteer Coordinator Liaison committee, the Governance committee, and the Strategic Plan committee. I enjoy the collaboration with the dynamic Board team and look forward to another year of interesting challenges.

**For Director
Nancy Kremer**

I am presently the Gift Shop Coordinator since 2021 and past Special Events Coordinator of 2022/2023 events. I am very grateful for the success of both of these positions with the assistance of many volunteers.

Volunteering is rewarding and brings out one's best qualities. As a volunteer Director since 2022, I have had the privilege of working with a united Board of Directors. The Centre has achieved many accomplishments but still there is more to complete. The Board diligently works towards keeping our Centre community active and sustainable. To accomplish this we must all help to make this possible.

Comox Valley has been my home since birth. I retired in 2021 from retail/customer service. I am the mother of two daughters and grandmother of five. I enjoy Pilates, yoga, aqua fit, gym, walking, and boating.

I look forward to staying on the Board as Director for 2024.

**For Director
Peggy Rasmus**

I moved to the Comox Valley with my husband from North Vancouver in 2016 after retiring from our thirty plus years in the construction industry. With the construction company, I ran the office and took care of the accounting and bookkeeping.

We have two grown children, both living in Courtenay. During my retirement I'm enjoying working out at the gym, hiking, gardening, golf, and bridge. At d'Esterre I have participated in line dancing and Dancefit as well as bridge, and I look forward to serving as a director on the board.

**For Director
Cheryl Smith**

I am pleased to let my name stand for Director. I hope the experience, knowledge, and skills I have developed over the years will serve me well if I am elected to the board.

In my young years I was Lioness in Calgary and then Kelowna. I also was a member and trainer with the Kelowna General Hospital Auxiliary. I spent 15 years wintering in Mexico where I became a member of The Rotary of Costalegre. As of March this year I have completed my 3 year term as president and resigned from the club as we will no longer be spending our winters in Mexico.

I joined the d'Esterre Senior Centre two years ago. Currently I spend 2 mornings a week working with the extremely creative people in the glass studio while watching the potters spin their magic. Dei and the ladies work my butt off (if you consider laughing work that is) in the kitchen Wednesdays. The best part of my shift is indulging in one of Dei's fabulous Rubens. Tuesday nights we enjoy a spirited crib tournament. Somehow, Diana and Harry manage to keep 18-25 cribbage players organized and in line. I think the promise of an excellent cup of decaf coffee and a sweet treat helps;. So much fun.

I believe strongly in giving back, team work, and community service. I am looking for a new challenge.

**For Director
Myrna Holman**

I moved to the Comox Valley three years ago after a fulfilling career in both the profit and non-profit sectors. I have a son who also lives in the Valley. When I joined the Centre, I was very impressed with the variety of activities as well as opportunities to connect with others. Volunteering has always been a part of my life and I am currently the Vice Chair of the Comox Valley Hospice Society. I've volunteered in the past as a Board member for a professional theatre in Thunder Bay, Ontario, and I also reported to a Board as the executive director of 211 British Columbia. I'm looking forward to contributing to the Centre and learning from the current Board.

**For Director
Barbara Havers**

I am happy to put my name forward as a Director on the board of d'Esterre Seniors' Centre Association.

I moved to the Comox Valley from Vancouver in 1980. I had begun my career as a pharmacy assistant in the early seventies and was lucky to find work in retail pharmacy here in the valley. After taking a few years off to have a family, I resumed my career as pharmacy assistant at St. Joseph's Hospital for eight years, after which I became the pharmacy purchaser and kept that position for 15 years until retiring in 2015.

I have volunteered for Casa Esperanza, a St. Joseph's Hospital sponsored charity in Nicaragua which I visited in 2009 on behalf of our group. I spent a few years volunteering at MARS Animal Rescue Society after I retired.

I love our Centre and have enjoyed its hospitality since 2017, playing Mah Jongg and meeting new friends. Now it's time to show my appreciation and get on board with the board!

I will be happy to jump in wherever my help is needed.

**For Director
Paul Dreyer**

I have lived in Comox for 37 years. I retired from the legal profession in 2023 after 20+ years with Defence Counsel ICBC Comox Valley and 20 years in general practice in Cranbrook and the Comox Valley.

My involvement with service organizations includes 4 years as a member of Cranbrook Rotary and President of Strathcona Mall Strata Corp. in Comox.

I am married with two children, and my interests include my grandchildren, Travel & Photography, and most recently the d'Esterre Senior Centre. My wife, Dawn, is a volunteer in the office and I look forward to volunteering in the kitchen. I am happy to be standing for a position on the Board of Directors.

**For Director
Jim Cooper**

I retired to Courtenay following a career in carpentry, construction as a manager at Quaestar Construction, and education as an instructor in the Dept. of Trades and Technology at V.I.U.

I have enjoyed a lifetime of volunteer service, working with many different organizations including Big Brothers & Sisters, St. Peter's Church, C.H.B.A., Providence Farm Association, and Cowichan Valley Chamber of Commerce.

I took over as Wood Shop coordinator at the Centre and have been teaching and helping our members with various projects.

Some activities that bring me joy are time with my grandkids, boating and fishing, our Wood Shop, and our Centre community.

Volunteering provides me with deep satisfaction and a heartfelt sense of gratitude for the many blessings that I enjoy. With that in mind, I put my name forward to serve as a director on the Board.