

SEASHELL ECHO

JANUARY 2026

SECHELT SENIORS ACTIVITY CENTRE NEWS

The Mission of the Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre Society is to support and enhance the lives of our members, by providing mental and physical stimulation and social experiences.

In this Issue

- 1 Celebrating 40 Years
- 4 New Year Dance
- 6 Ushering in the New Year
- 7 Volunteers of the Month
- 8 Christmas Luncheon
- 10 Pinklemas Dinkathon
- 14 Halfmoon Crazies
- 19 Lunch Menu
Pickleball Schedule
- 20 Activity Schedule

Celebrating 40 Years – and The Story That Came Before

BY RICHARD WARD

In May 2026, the Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre (SSAC) will celebrate its 40th anniversary in the Trail Avenue facility, although the Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre Society was founded in 1999. In fact, the entire year of 2026 will be dedicated to marking this important milestone. The roots of our Centre reach back much further than 1999, in fact nearly two decades earlier, reflecting a long tradition of community, determination, and vision.

Much of the historical information shared here, and in upcoming editions of The ECHO, is drawn from the comprehensive record of the Centre's early years (1969–1999). This invaluable history was compiled through the extraordinary efforts of Elizabeth Derby, Larry Grafton, and Bonnie Hewitt. We extend our sincere gratitude to them for preserving the story of SSAC so thoughtfully and thoroughly.

The journey began on January 16, 1969, when our predecessors were granted status as Branch No. 69 of the Senior Citizens Association of British Columbia. In those early years, meetings and social gatherings were held in rented rooms at the Legion Hall on Mermaid Street.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



5604 Trail Avenue, Sechelt, BC
PO Box 564, V0N 3A0

Office: 604.885.3513
Manager: 604.885.8910



Office Hours:
Mon–Fri, 9 am–2:45 pm
Except Holidays



info@myssac.com
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CENTRE INFORMATION

2024-2025 Board Members

President: Richard Ward
Vice President: Mark Garland
Treasurer: Alison Kowalewski
Secretary: Valerie Galat

2024-2025 Directors at Large

Jay Alexov Gail Riddell
Andre Casaubon Birgit Stefani
Mark Patterson Jeff Weeks

Executive Director: Vicki Raw
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Community Information and Help Line	211
Healthlink BC	811
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Celebrating 40 Years . . .

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Modest donations covered rent and refreshments, and these gatherings quickly became vibrant social occasions, showcasing local musicians, singers, and performers. These activities laid the foundation for what remains a core purpose of the Centre today: meaningful social connection for seniors.

Throughout the early 1970s, the range of activities expanded, including the formation of a vocal group, an old-time dancing club, and the introduction of carpet bowling and shuffleboard. As participation grew, so did the need for a permanent home. When the Legion decided to sell its hall in 1974, SSAC seized the opportunity to purchase it for \$50,000, launching an ambitious fundraising campaign. Members volunteered countless hours, organizing raffles, bingos, bazaars, and events, while also seeking support from governments and granting agencies.

Despite financial challenges, perseverance paid off. Grants, donations, and tireless volunteer effort made it possible not only to purchase the hall but also to furnish it and keep programs running. The official grand opening took place in May 1975, marking a proud moment in the Centre's history. Over the following years, volunteers continued to maintain the building, manage rentals to offset expenses, and support a growing range of programs and services.

By the early 1980s, it became clear that the facility could no longer meet the Centre's needs. After years of investigation and planning, members approved the purchase of property on Trail Avenue and Spindrift Lane in 1984, for a cost of \$60,000. Once again, determination and community support prevailed, allowing the Centre to secure land for a new home and continue building toward a sustainable future.

In future editions of The ECHO, we will continue this story, tracing the decisions and dedication that ultimately placed SSAC in the strong position it enjoys today. Thanks to the foresight of those early members, the Centre now owns its own building, currently assessed at \$2.74 million, providing a lasting legacy for generations of seniors to come. •



Creative Crafts

- January 12** Nina - Watercolour Your Year
January 19 Ruth - Mindful Cards
January 26 Nicol - Well Being Word Play

Get creative with us! Drop by the Lunch Room every Monday from 2-4 pm and enjoy a fun, welcoming space to make art.



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Happy New Year!

We rang in the New Year with the Creek Big Band at a sold-out event—and everyone had a ball! Dominoes supplied pizza, Richard Corbet baked his famous carrot cake, and Yvette and Gordon Fleming shared their wedding anniversary cake with everyone. At 9:00 pm, guests raised a glass of bubbly as we welcomed the New Year alongside Toronto.

Congratulations to our door prize winners, Michael Nortch, Unni Claridge, and Alan Barnes. The winner of the 50/50 draw was Bill Foyle, who took home \$132.

Jay would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the dance committee for their dedication and support throughout the year: Ann Matthewson, Krystyna Wisniewska, Joy Germaine, Andre Casaubon, and Heather Himmel. She would also like to thank the many volunteers—beyond the dance committee—who help with decorating, set-up, ensuring the evening runs smoothly, and cleaning up afterward: Ron, John, Brent, Mike, Ruth, Louise, Cathy, Cheryl, Gill, Mark, Amanda, and Collene. Without these dedicated volunteers, there would be no dances.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming events!

January 24 features **The Big Easy Funk Ensemble**. Doors and bar open at 2:00 pm, with the concert running from 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm.

February 21 brings an evening dance with **Mitch Lazer Quartet - British Invasion**, featuring Mitch Lazer, Bruce Mortimer, Eddy Edrik, and Peter Van Deursen.

On March 21, enjoy an afternoon Midday Tea concert and dance with **Company B Jazz Band**, showcasing their three-part harmony and classic swing sounds from the 1920s and beyond.

Finally, on **March 28**, join us for a **Country Ho-Down!** The evening begins with a line dance workshop from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, followed by dancing with **Blue Western**. Calling all line dancers and two-steppers for this fun-filled night! •

- Jay, Ann, and the Dance Committee





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Ushering in a New Year

BY VICKI RAW

While December is a time for reflection, January is a time of inspiration. It is the perfect time to reset, recharge, and renew our focus on what truly matters here at the Centre and that's you, our members!

As we turn the page to a new year, our hearts are full of gratitude for every member, volunteer, and friend who made the Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre a place full of laughter, learning, and connection in 2025.

From dance lessons, delicious meals and yoga sessions, to pickleball, puzzles and friendship tea, every smile and shared moment has made our space more than just a building — it's a home for friendship and growth.

In 2026 we're excited to bring you even more activities, workshops, and opportunities to connect as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary. We look forward to sharing stories of how the Centre has evolved over the years and capturing special memories from those who have been along for the ride. Whether you are new to the Centre or a long-time member, we'd love to hear how you became involved and what keeps you coming back.



There is always so much going on every day at the Centre, so be sure to check your monthly Echo and watch our bulletin boards for special workshops, lectures and events, including opportunities to kick-up your heels and show off your moves in 2026, starting with The Big Easy Funk Ensemble on January 24th followed by Mitch Lazer English Invasion on February 21st and so much more. Consider purchasing your tickets early so you aren't disappointed.

Here's to a year of creativity, connection and community! I look forward to seeing you at the Centre.

Thank you for being part of our story. •



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Volunteers of the Month

Julie Anne Tronson & Jerry Dales



The dynamic duo of Julie Anne Tronson and Jerry Dales, a devoted husband-and-wife team, generously volunteer their time as dishwashers at our facility.

They work side by side to support our Monday-Friday meal service program with enthusiasm and care.

Their reliability, teamwork, and great sense of fun help keep the kitchen running smoothly, ensuring a clean, welcoming, and positive environment for all.

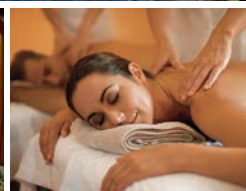
On another note, they truly value the friendly atmosphere in the dining room, along with the satisfaction that comes from giving back to the community.

Jerry also generously volunteers his time to coach beginner pickleball players—an effort that is very much appreciated.

The SSAC Board and Membership gratefully recognize and value their many contributions, which help make the Centre a welcoming and successful place for everyone. •



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When: Mondays | 9:30am - 10:30am
Tuesdays | 11:30am - 1:00pm
**except holidays*

Where: Seniors Gathering Place
(Resource Centre Office)
5674 Cowrie Street, Sechelt



No registration,
no cost, just drop in
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Supported by: United Way

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Special Event

Christmas Luncheon

On December 19th, the SSAC Annual Christmas Luncheon took place. 150 tickets (for members only) sold out very quickly. That's what a wonderful reputation the Luncheon has. Emily and her incredible crew worked tirelessly to create an incredible buffet with traditional turkey dinner favourites. And, of course, dessert was delicious.

President Richard Ward thanked the staff and volunteers

and was presented a Life Membership Award along with Barb Christie. The winners of the 50/50, and draws for wine donated by board members and gift certificates donated by Johnny Walker were announced along with the winners of the silent auctions for two beautiful cakes prepared and donated by Helmut Horn. Thanks to the Board members for donating the wonderful door prizes and, as always, thanks to the amazing volunteers who decorate, set up & take down. •



Congratulations to Barb Christie and Richard Ward - our new Life Members!



Activities

Social Bridge



Join us for Social Bridge every Monday from 1:00-3:30 pm in the Parish Room. Enjoy friendly games, great company, and relaxed play, led by Fran Engst. All welcome!

Badminton



Join us for Badminton every Friday from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Enjoy friendly games, light exercise, and social fun in a welcoming group led by Val Galat.

Table Tennis



Join us for Table Tennis every Wednesday from 1:00-3:00 pm. Enjoy energetic play, friendly competition, and plenty of fun while sharpening skills, with the activity led by Marilyn Heinrich.

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Saturday

Jan
24th

2:30

To

5pm

Doors open 2pm



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A reminder to all our members to continue to drop off Claytons grocery receipts. Don't throw those receipts away! They are as good as cash for the SSAC.

Competitive Festive Fun

Saturday, December 13th marked a highlight on the SSAC pickleball calendar as a full field of 32 enthusiastic and delightfully competitive players gathered for the third annual **Picklemas Dinkathon**.

While every SSAC pickleball session is a great opportunity for social connection, dinking tournaments like this one take socialization to another level, blending strategy, skill, and plenty of good cheer! Having so many enthusiastic pickleballers together in the auditorium created a wonderful social environment. Furthermore, eats and treats were shared among the competitors. Richard Ward once again ran the successful tournament, and there were laughs all around.

The Dinkathon is a fun, yet competitive tournament focused exclusively on dinking, with play confined to the kitchen area of the court. Players were divided between the Blue and Grey courts, with 16 competitors on each, and competed in a partial round-robin format. Partners and matchups were determined by a random draw, ensuring that each player teamed up with a different partner in every one of the eight rounds.

Games used rally scoring, with matches played to seven points. The total points earned by a team became each player's individual score for that round. With eight rounds and a maximum of seven points per game, the highest possible score was 56. At the end of round-robin play, the top two point earners from each court advanced to a two-game final.

On the Blue Court, Kim Stames claimed first place, followed by Doug Stewart. On the Grey Court, Barry Krangle finished first, with Margaret Ellis close behind. The first final game saw Kim and Margaret take on Doug and Barry in a tightly contested match that ended 7-6 in favour of the ladies, giving Kim and Margaret seven points each heading into the second game. For the final matchup, Barry and Doug switched sides, and



another nail-biter followed, featuring long rallies and sharp dinks. This time, Margaret and Barry emerged victorious with a 7-4 win. With seven points in both final games, Margaret Ellis stood alone as the only player to achieve that feat and was deservedly crowned the Picklemas Dinkathon champion for 2025.

A big thank-you goes to Cheryl Linsley and Bert Carswell, who served as court marshals and kept the tournament running smoothly by ensuring the right players were on the right courts at the right time.

If you enjoyed Picklemas, there's more dinking to look forward to - a **40th Anniversary Tournament** coming up in May, followed by the **4th Annual Serge Planidin Memorial Tournament** later this summer. Keep your paddles ready! •



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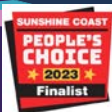
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Emeritus Professor Lecture Series

In our final Emeritus Professors' talk for 2025, Dr. Christine Pawley gave us a fascinating look into the creation of bookmobiles in 19th Century US. She also discussed the development of community-based libraries in North America. One really interesting aspect of Christine's talk was her description of how historical research is conducted at a university.



Emeritus Professor Lectures in 2026

Four retired professors from UBC and SFU will visit the Coast in the early months of 2026 to present a diverse and engaging lecture series. Topics include democracy in Canada, social change and gender equity, an exploration of how much certain words truly matter in our world, and a travel talk on India. Together, these sessions offer a rich variety of perspectives and fresh insights, generously shared by our four knowledgeable instructors.

The lectures are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 2:00 pm in the Lunch Room of the Seniors Activity Centre. They are free of charge, open to drop-ins, and do not require membership in the Centre. Donations are gratefully accepted in support of our subsidized lunch program. •



Emeritus Professors Lecture Series

Wednesday, January 21st, 2:00 pm

Dr. David Laycock

**Emeritus Political Science
Simon Fraser University**

Populist politicians frame politics as a struggle between 'the people' and elites who prevent the people from achieving their legitimate social and economic interests.

Democratic politics can be either enhanced or undermined by politicians claiming to speak for the people.



No preregistration necessary

Entrance by donation to Affordable Lunch program

Seating limited, SSAC membership not required

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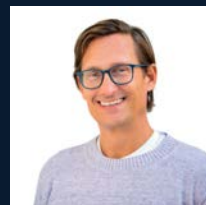
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Quilting at the Centre

The quilting group meets at the SSAC on a monthly basis. For 2026, we have scheduled our gatherings on Saturdays, Sundays, or both days to accommodate members.

The goal of the "Crazies" is to promote the joy of quilting and companionship, while also giving lovingly crafted quilts to local charities in our community.

The SSAC provides the "Crazies" with a safe and welcoming space to meet. The group has a minimal annual fee, along with the requirement that participants be members of the SSAC and pay the SSAC activity fee.

We are pleased to display a quilt for everyone to enjoy in the hallway; these rotate regularly so visitors can appreciate the creativity and diversity of our talented members, inspiring connection, conversation, and admiration throughout the Centre. •

Crazies Sew Dates for 2026

January	Saturday, January 10
February	Sunday, February 15
March	Saturday, March 14
April	Sunday, April 12
May	Saturday, May 9
June	Sunday, June 14
July	Sunday, July 12
August	Sunday, August 9
September	Saturday, September 12 Sunday, September 13
October	Saturday, October 10
November	Saturday, November 14 Sunday, November 15
December	Saturday, December 12





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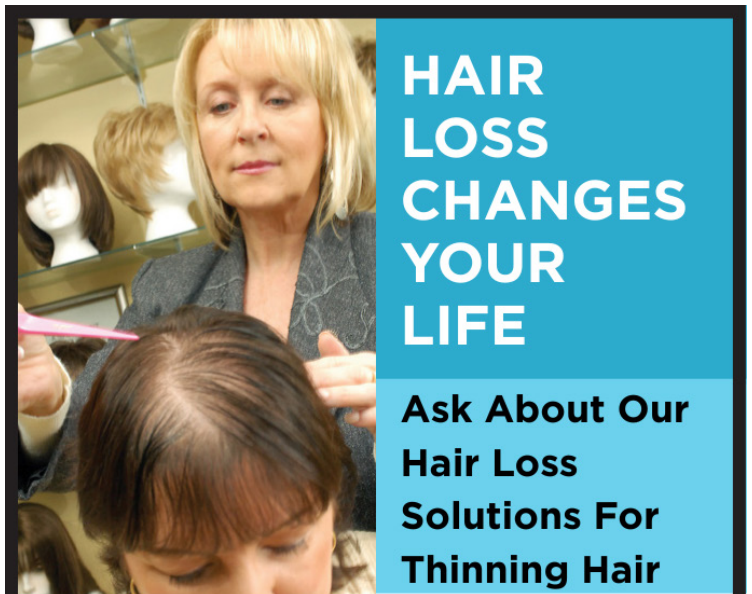
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Fun, Food, & Festive Cheer

Thanks to the incredible leadership of **Tanya Hall and her dedicated team of Rotarian volunteers** from the Sunshine Coast Rotary Club, along with generous donations from Paul & Kathy of Paul's Paintin' Place and Dr. Paul & Sarah Dhillon of Cowrie Medical Clinic, we were delighted to open our lunchroom for Christmas closure drop-ins this holiday season.

From December 22-24 and December 29-31, our doors were open from 12-3 pm, welcoming community members for warm food, good company, and holiday cheer. Guests enjoyed complimentary sandwiches, a rotating selection of hot meals (including soups, chili, meatballs, and macaroni and cheese), desserts and plenty of coffee and tea to keep spirits bright.

Adding to the festive atmosphere, each day leading up to Christmas, two enthusiastic members of the High School Interact Club offered free gift wrapping, while local entertainers, including Connie Yan with her keyboard, Lyndia Scott with her guitar, and Mark Trevis with his ukulele group, filled the space with music throughout the sessions. Crafts, activities, and even a communal jigsaw puzzle kept everyone engaged and connected.

For many who attended, these drop-ins were a meaningful part of the holiday season. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Tanya, the Rotarian volunteers, our generous donors, and our own Leigh Sandercock, who tirelessly kept the dishes moving through the dishwasher each day.

Our own staff and volunteers look forward to returning refreshed and ready to serve you again starting Monday, January 5th. •



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Every Tuesday
10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Lawyer Robert Hart provides FREE weekly 30-min. legal aid consultations (not criminal or ICBC matters). Book your appointment at the front desk.



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Friendship Tea

January 15 - 2 pm

Join us for treats and good company. **Friendship Tea** is held every month on the third Thursday from 2 to 4 pm. It's free!



In Memoriam

Ivor Moir Watson

December 12, 1932 - November 27, 2025

The family of Ivor Watson is deeply saddened to announce his passing on November 27, aged 92 years, at Sechelt Hospital.



Ivor will be sadly missed by his loving wife, Ann; two sisters, June and Margaret; three daughters, Kathleen, Lynne (Rick), and Maureen (John) five grandchildren, of whom he was very proud, Sam (Clare), Callum (Lan), Rhea (Jimmy), Lucas and Garrett; and three great-grandchildren, Bridget, Sybille and Charlie.

Educated at Dundee High School and St. Andrews University, Scotland, Ivor served in the school army cadets and the territorial army Black Watch regiment. He obtained a B.Sc. in Chemistry and Geology. Emigrating to Canada in 1957, he worked as an exploration geologist in every province (except P.E.I.) and territory. He contributed to the discovery of two mines: Newfoundland Zinc and the Yava Lead Mine in Cape Breton, and his exploration work extended the life of Black Dome Gold Mine in B.C. He also worked in Scotland, the USA, New Zealand, and Fiji, and, with his family, spent two years in Zambia.

In his younger days, he enjoyed playing rugby and later sailboat racing out of Hollyburn Sailing Club in West Vancouver.

After retiring to Sechelt thirty years ago, he became an avid golfer at Blue Ocean Golf Club, his home away from home.

Grateful thanks to the nurses, doctors, and staff on Level 2, North Tower, Sechelt Hospital, for their kindness to and patience with Ivor.

No service by request, a gathering of family and friends will be held at a later date. •



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JANUARY LUNCH MENU

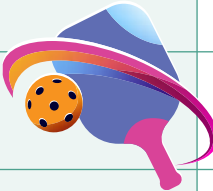
Lunch Service is available weekdays from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm.
Everything is made from scratch! We also serve soup, sandwiches and salads. Desserts vary.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
5 Butter Chicken	6 Ginger Beef	7 Ham & Scalloped Potatoes	8 Baked Salmon	9 Fish & Chips
12 Quiche & Salad	13 Lasagna	14 Roast Beef	15 Chicken Pot Pie	16 Fish & Chips
19 Chicken Souvlaki	20 Cabbage Rolls	21 Roast Pork	22 Turkey Cannelloni	23 Fish & Chips
26 Meatloaf w/ Mac & Cheese	27 Chicken Quesadillas	28 Chicken Cordon Bleu	29 Hot Reuben Sandwich	30 Fish & Chips

Members are welcome to bring guests to dine for a surcharge. Only items on the menu are available.
Frozen entrées are available on weekdays when the office is open from 9am to 2:45pm and are priced \$6 or \$8.

JANUARY | SSAC PICKLEBALL SCHEDULE

Beginners and New-To-Us players wanting to join - contact ssacpickleball@gmail.com

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
			7:30-9:30 Social Play	7:30-9:30 3.0-3.5+		
			1:00-2:30 2.5-3.0	1:00-2:30 w/ Coach 3.25		11:30-1:00 2.5-3.25
3:00-4:30 3.25-3.5	3:00-4:30 2.0-3.0	3:00-4:30 w/ Coach 1.0-2.0		2:30-4:00 w/ Coach 2.5-3.0		1:00-3:00 3.5-3.5+
4:30-6:00 2.0-3.0	4:30-6:00 3.25-3.5+	4:30-6:00 2.5-3.0	4:30-6:00 3.0-3.25	4:00-5:30 2.0-2.5		3:00-5:00 1.0-2.5
6:00-8:00 3.5+	6:00-8:00 3.0-3.5+	6:00-8:00 3.0-3.5+	6:00-8:00 3.5-3.5+	5:30-7:30 Social Play		5:00-7:00 3.0-3.5+

Watch for extra coaching and assessment dates. For more information, please contact ssacpickleball@gmail.com

JANUARY 2026 | SSAC ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

ACTIVITY	TIME		ROOM	CHAIR	COST
MONDAY					
Hatha Flow Yoga	10:00–11:15	AM	Auditorium	John McDougall-Goulet	\$6
Chair Yoga for Arthritis series	10:15–11:15	AM	Craft Room	Bobbie Seale-Cobiskey	\$48
Chair Yoga for Strength & Mobility	11:45–12:45	AM/PM	Auditorium	Tenaya Kivlichan	\$6
Duplicate Bridge	12:00–3:30	PM	Craft Room	Karyn Burney/Andy Hopkinson	\$4
Social Bridge	1:00–3:30	PM	Farish Room	Fran Engst	\$4
Carpet Bowling	1:00–3:00	PM	Auditorium	Katie Caple	\$4
Creative Class	2:00–4:00	PM	Lunch Room	Nicol/Nina/Ruth	\$4
TUESDAY					
Fitness with Jacqui or Lisa	9:15–10:15	AM	Auditorium	Jacqui Allan/Lisa Alexander	\$6
Memory Café	10:30–12:30	AM	Craft Room	Maryanne Brabander	\$6
Line Dancing - Intermediate to Advanced	10:30–11:30	AM	Auditorium	Jay & Ann	\$4
Line Dancing - Beginners	12:00–1:00	AM	Auditorium	Louise Parker	\$4
Craft Group	1:00–3:00	PM	Craft Room	Carol Maynard	\$4
Strength for Seniors	1:30–2:30	PM	Auditorium	Lisa Alexander	\$6
WEDNESDAY					
Emergency HAM Radio	9:15–9:45	AM	Farish Room	Larry Peterson	
Hatha Flow Yoga	10:00–11:15	AM	Auditorium	John or Marina	\$6
Line Dancing - Beg. to Low Intermediate	11:30–12:30	AM	Auditorium	Jay & Ann	\$4
Table Tennis	1:00–3:00	PM	Auditorium	Marilyn Heinrich	\$4
American Mahjong	1:30–3:30	PM	Craft Room	Nicol Mentis	\$4
THURSDAY					
Tai Chi	10:00–11:30	AM	Auditorium	David Carson	\$6
Ukulele Jam & Sing-along	11:15–12:45	PM	Craft Room	Mark Trevis	\$4
Chair Yoga for Strength & Mobility	11:45–12:45	PM	Auditorium	Tenaya Kivlichan	\$6
Mahjong	1:00–3:00	PM	Farish Room	Katie Caple	\$4
Painting Pals	1:00–3:00	PM	Craft Room	Peggy Halliday	\$4
Friendship Tea (3 rd Thursday)	2:00–4:00	PM	Lunch Room	Liz Hennessey	
Carpet Bowling	2:45–4:30	PM	Auditorium	Margaret Parker/Norm Ross	\$4
Strength for Seniors	2:45–3:45	PM	Auditorium	Lisa Alexander	\$6
Line Dancing - Experienced	3:15–4:15		Craft Room	Collene Sand	\$4
FRIDAY					
Hatha Flow Yoga or Yin Yoga	10:00–11:10	AM	Auditorium	John or Andre	\$6
Badminton	11:30–1:00	AM/PM	Auditorium	Val Galat	\$4
Poker	12:00–3:00	PM	Farish Room	Paul Groves	\$4
Games Group	1:45–3:15	PM	Lunch Room	Angelina & Gill	\$4
SATURDAY					
Quilting	9:00–4:00	AM/PM	Lunch Room	2 nd Saturday of each month	\$4/\$8

Non-members may attend an activity one time without a SSAC membership (still pay the activity fee).
 Memberships may be purchased from the office over the phone or in person weekdays between 9am and 2:45pm.
 You can fill your "Wallet" at the front desk or by phone 604-885-3513 or by e-transfer to etransfer@myssac.com -
 Include your membership # and the word WALLET in the note section. Pickleball schedule is on page 19.