



# SWESA News

## Membership

Did you know that SWESA started in 2011 with 5 people who stepped up to develop a seniors activity centre for SW Edmonton?

SWESA is truly a grassroots organization. Each year, a growing number of seniors choose to become members, help with volunteering and support fundraising activities. In 2020 there were 599 members.

Membership fees represent 7% of the overall operating budget. Will you show your support during this challenging year by renewing your membership?

The annual fee is only \$30.00. Instructions on how to renew your membership are on the website under the **Get Involved** tab.



## Spring is in the Air

Spring is in the air and we hope restrictions on social gatherings will soon be relaxed. The conversation surrounding COVID-19 is becoming more positive as we await announcements of vaccine rollouts and make appointments to get our shots.

We are looking forward to welcoming members back to in-person activities. Social gatherings and fitness classes will resume at Blue Quill as soon as government restrictions are lifted and it is safe to do so. Following the positive response to a pilot project of in-person classes last year, we want to expand our programs in 2021 while also exploring new ways and means to connect with members who may not yet feel comfortable attending programs in person. With a grant from the Edmonton Community Foundation and your support through the 2020 Annual Appeal, we've been able to cover the additional operational costs to facilitate socially distanced gatherings and enhance virtual programming. As well as fitness classes, we look forward to resuming card games, Toonie Talks, arts and crafts and other social activities.

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## SWESA Annual General Meeting

You are invited to attend a Zoom meeting on  
April 26, 2021 at 1:00 pm  
Watch the SWESA Weekly Bulletin for information  
on how to register.

### Membership still has its privileges

Despite the challenges during COVID-19, there are still benefits you can enjoy as a SWESA member.

- A growing range of on-line and in-person programs and activities
- Free or discounted program costs
- Priority registration
- Discounted membership fees at city recreational centres as they re-open
- Weekly online bulletin with upcoming activities and timely resources
- Vote at SWESA member meetings
- Detail of surveys and Board meetings

Age range of SWESA members:

Ages 55-64 6%  
Ages 65-74 38%  
Ages 75-84 41%  
Over 85 15%

In 20 years, one third of Edmontonians will be seniors!

### Spring continued from page 1

The SWESA Board continues its work to ensure that SWESA is well governed and positioned to support the needs of people 55+ in southwest Edmonton. Dr. Michael Alpern, a consultant with the Alberta Community Support Network, will be facilitating workshops this spring to review the goals and actions identified in our Strategic Action Plan. SWESA's objectives include exploring ways of working with other organizations to establish beneficial partnerships, developing board recruitment and succession strategies, generating sufficient annual income to sustain operations and support growth, and securing additional space to accommodate staff and our expanding membership. As a member driven organization, we are interested in everyone's opinions and ideas. Anyone with experience in strategic planning or an interest in planning the future direction of SWESA is invited to participate. Please email me at [president@swesa.ca](mailto:president@swesa.ca).

We look forward to welcoming you to our AGM April 26. I am proud to represent SWESA as your President and look forward to reconnecting with you in the near future.

Josie Richardson

### New newsletter for you

SWESA News is published to bring you information about our organization and answer membership questions. Please tell us what you think of this first edition and help shape what we do in the future. Email [info@swesa.ca](mailto:info@swesa.ca)

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## Want to become more agile in 2021?

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Meet Esther Sipos, the enthusiastic instructor for two of SWESA's new online exercise programs: **Body Weight** and **Total Body Conditioning**.



Esther has been passionate about teaching fitness since 1984. She loves how the group energy builds as people have fun. People in her class report feeling better, more agile and stronger. They report more stamina and balance and feel more confident. What more could any of us want?

When Esther isn't teaching she's mostly likely to be found outside. Each year she trains with a girlfriend to bike 100 km in a day. This winter - tobogganing!

## Blue Quill location

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In 2020 SWESA moved to the Blue Quill Community Centre for better staff space and a broader range of programming options.

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## Virtual Coffee and Chat

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When the news came last spring that people could no longer safely meet, even small groups, Rick Herder didn't want to give up the camaraderie of the SWESA Coffee and Chat. As a longtime SWESA member he knew how important friendship would be to get through the COVID-19 lockdown. So the group went virtual, sending out an invitation for anyone interested to join them over a Zoom call. Throughout 2020 and a long winter, the group kept up with their Monday and Thursday chats.

As a new SWESA member, Dora Archer says she felt welcomed right away and she liked how the times worked with her schedule. She loves the advice and ideas that arise as people share their experiences with everything from house services to shingles shots - keeping your glasses defogged when wearing a mask to bedding plants. Everyone gets to know each other and there are always good laughs.



See the website for information on how to join a group. You would be welcome!

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## Get your 50/50 tickets now!

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SWESA had a very successful Annual Appeal last fall raising over \$46,000. Kudos to all those involved! This year we are planning several events:

### SWESA 50/50 Mother's Day Online Raffle

Tickets are on sale now and will end May 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am; the draw will be made at 2:00 pm the same day. Buy now at

<https://www.charity5050raffle.com/r/Swesa5050Raffle>

### Taste of Edmonton – Planned for July 2021

On **July 26-30<sup>th</sup>**, SWESA has daytime volunteer shifts to fill, selling tickets. SWESA is paid for this volunteer work. The work is fun, it's safe and it raises funds for SWESA.

More information will be coming out on our weekly bulletins.

## Build a strong core

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Billy Yu teaches SWESA's new **Core and All** program, designed to strengthen the muscles around your torso and improve your overall strength, balance and flexibility.

In this brave new world of online classes Billy sees lots of advantages. Through Zoom he can watch all participants closely and suggest the adjustments that make all the difference in getting results and doing it safely. "Tuck those elbows in Bob". And there are lots of places and props in a house that can be utilized.

Billy initially worked as an Engineer before finding his true passion as a fitness instructor.



## Have a question for the Board?

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Send your questions to [president@swesa.ca](mailto:president@swesa.ca). We will post the answers to questions in the Fall SWESA News.

## The Value of One, the Power of Many

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April 18-24 is Volunteer Week, a reminder to all of us to be grateful for the contributions of volunteers - and to say thank you. SWESA simply would not exist without our volunteers!

## Think you might serve on the Board?

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If you are willing to roll up your sleeves and work with the team, you are well on your way to becoming a great candidate. Chances are your work or volunteer history would bring a wealth of experience to SWESA. Semi/retired members have so much to offer from their volunteer/work experience as: secretary, accountant, treasurer, property manager, governmental affairs, writing, communication and marketing, human resources and other committees and boards. Email [president@swesa.ca](mailto:president@swesa.ca).

## "Who you gonna call?"

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Our Seniors Home Supports Program (SHSP) has remained open throughout the pandemic, helping older adults (55+) find a safe, reputable company to hire for a range of home and personal services. Go to our website to contact Coordinator Barb Newell and learn more. Did you know:

- over 1200 adults 55+ have joined the SHSP at SWESA since 2017,
- most of the requests were for home maintenance repairs (including plumbers and electricians),
- new local businesses are vetted weekly and
- more than 60% of referrals are return clients who are happy with the program.

"When something needs repairing or I need a new service, I call Barb." SWESA Member, 59 yrs old.

## SWESA Grapevine

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In 25 words or less, what is the advice you would share with others for living well during a pandemic? Email [info@swesa.com](mailto:info@swesa.com) and mark your comment Grapevine. We'll share grapevine results back with you.

