

## Town of Pelham Quarterly Report

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

**Subject:** Quarterly Report for the Reporting Period: January, February, March 2026

**Department:** Recreation, Culture and Wellness

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### Recommendation:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive the Q1-2026 Recreation, Culture and Wellness quarterly report, for information.**

### Department Overview and Statistics:

#### Overview

#### Meridian Community Centre

January 2026 started the year off very busy at the Meridian Community Centre, as we hosted the annual Pelham International Silver Stick tournament. This year's tournament drew 76 teams and over 16,000 visitors to the facility over four days of gameplay, with spectators cheering on their teams. The Town of Pelham's Recreation, Culture and Wellness staff worked tirelessly, in collaboration with local service clubs, during the International Silver Stick opening ceremonies, operating multiple bars, serving food, and keeping all 76 team participants happy and creating memories. Over the month of January, just under 65,000 visitors entered the Meridian Community Centre for various programming, events, exercise, sports, and spectating. This was a slight decrease of less than 1% from January 2025, but a 7% increase from 2023.

February was another busy month at the Meridian Community Centre, with hockey and basketball teams playing towards the playoffs, Recreation, Culture and Wellness hosting another memorable Family Day event, and all our community members taking advantage of the internal programming. In February, the Meridian Community Centre welcomed 64,973 visitors. This was almost a 9% increase from 2024 and an even greater 12% increase from last February in 2025.

March marked the peak of the 2025/2026 recreational sports season at the Meridian Community Centre. The facility buzzed with playoff energy for many of Pelham's sports teams, as numerous spectators and family members cheered them on. Pelham Minor Hockey Association, Southern Tier Admirals, and Junior Panthers all saw their seasons conclude in the playoffs and finals. The Pelham Basketball Association season is nearing its close with the Ontario Basketball Association playdowns in our gyms, and

the Niagara Centre Skating Club is hosting its annual Gala at the Accipiter arena. Over the month of March, 59,000 visitors came through the doors of the Meridian Community Centre. This was a 1% increase from March 2025 and just over a 7% increase from March 2024.

The positive trend across the Recreation, Culture and Wellness department continues to demonstrate growth and development within the Town of Pelham’s recreational hub, offering a range of internal programming, cultural, and wellness opportunities for all our community members. The total number of visitors and community members at the Meridian Community Centre was 188,225, representing an almost 4% increase from the 181,452 visitors in the first quarter of 2025.

### Meridian Community Centre Usage



Meridian Community Centre – Facility Usage By Hour – Q1

**For the months January 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 compared to January 1<sup>st</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026**

	2025	2026
	Hours	Hours
<b>Arena</b>		
User Group Ice Rentals	- 1078.58	- 1212.75
Pelham Raiders Lacrosse	-	-
Private Ice Rentals	- 569.75	- 597.00
Recreation & Wellness Programming (Shinny, Stick & Puck etc.)	- 1963	- 2463
Private Gym Rentals	- 176.00	- 145.25
User Group Gym Rentals	- 1081.50	- 1097.25
<b>Arena Usage Subtotal</b>	<b>4868.83</b>	<b>5515.25</b>
<b>Multi-Purpose Space</b>		
Room Rentals MCC	- 935.00	- 872.25
Room Rental OPTH	- 256.00	- 296.75
Recreation Programming (Yoga, 55+, drop-in basketball etc.)	- 1632	- 1894
<b>Multi-Purpose Space Usage Subtotal</b>	<b>2823</b>	<b>3063</b>
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>7691.83</b>	<b>8578.25</b>



## **Pelham Farmers' Market**

The Farmers' Market executive met in January to discuss the 2026 season. Vendor applications were available online from February 1st to March 1st. The executive met again in March to select vendors. The 2026 season will feature 19 vendors, including 9 farmers and a non-profit booth. The season will begin on Thursday, May 7th, and run every Thursday until October 1st, 2026. This season, the Pelham Farmers Market will be held in the adjacent parking lot, increasing visibility and accessibility. The executive has planned a few community engagement opportunities throughout the season. More information on the Farmers Market, including vendors, is available on the website: [www.pelham.ca/farmersmarket](http://www.pelham.ca/farmersmarket)

## **Summer Chill Supper Market**

Town Staff have begun planning the 2026 Summer Chill Series Supper Market. This year's series will start on Thursday, June 11th, and run each Thursday until September 10th. As in previous years, the event will feature local entertainers, food vendors, a bike valet, a green zone, lawn games, shuttle service, and a picnic area. The food and entertainment applications have been submitted and approved. This season, 11 local food vendors will offer a variety of offerings, and local entertainers will start each week's event. The Terry Fox Foundation has once again committed to volunteering weekly in the Green Zone. In addition, local businesses can sponsor the bike valet, with one already committed to sponsoring once a month. The Bandshell Concerts will run from June 18th to September 10th. The Bandshell Concert lineup will be announced on April 9th, 2026. This year, Town Staff has secured an additional shuttle bus to help attendees get to and from the event and alleviate parking concerns.

## **Big Band**

The Town of Pelham's Big Band Dance Night, featuring the Jimmy Marando Swing Band, takes place every third Tuesday of the month in the Accursi Room. It is a night filled with swing, jazz, classical music, and dancing! This event offers free admission, with food and beverages available for purchase. It welcomes those of all ages.

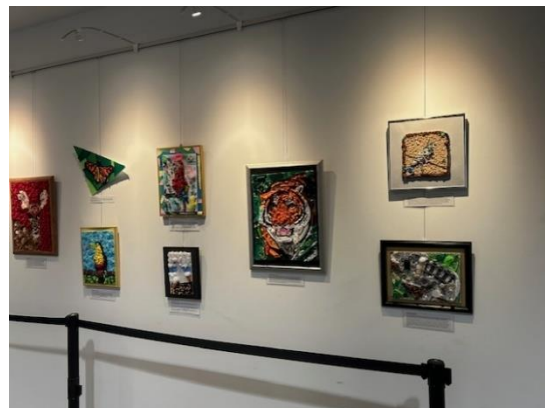


## MCC Art Walls

During Q1 of 2026, art displays were showcased on the MCC art walls. In January, a St. Catharines artist showcased his incredible drawings and paintings of hockey players and other influential figures in the MCC Atrium. For the remainder of Q1, the Pelham Art Association showcased its artwork. Both shows brought vibrancy to the atrium walls and received many compliments.

E.L. Crossley students continued to display their work in the MCC upper hallway throughout January 2026. In February, the upper hallway featured watercolour paintings by Niagara artist Joanne Hoekstra. In March, the Quilt Guild of Niagara showcased some of their quilts for National Quilt Month. These quilts broaden perspectives on what art can be. There have been many positive comments about the display's quality and craftsmanship.

The MCC Art Walls are booked with artists through July 2026. Staff continue to connect with local artists to display their work throughout the MCC. The Pelham Cultural Advisory Committee continues to receive 15% of sales to help maintain the art walls and other cultural projects in the community.





### **Comedy Night in Pelham**

On February 28, 2026, the Garden City Comedy Festival hosted "Comedy Night in Pelham," featuring an incredible line-up of comedians, including Simon Rakoff (JFL/CBC), Rebecca Reeds (Winnipeg Comedy Festival/The Debaters), and Gerry Hall (JFL42/Sirius XM), with Niagara's own David Green (JFL Toronto/Canada's Got Talent) as host. It was a sold-out show with 181 in attendance, filling the Accursi Room. Bar service and food were available for purchase and operated by Town staff. It was a great evening filled with laughs!

The next Comedy Night in Pelham is planned for Saturday, July 11th, 2026.

More information and tickets will be available at [www.gardencitycomedyfestival.com](http://www.gardencitycomedyfestival.com) closer to the event date.



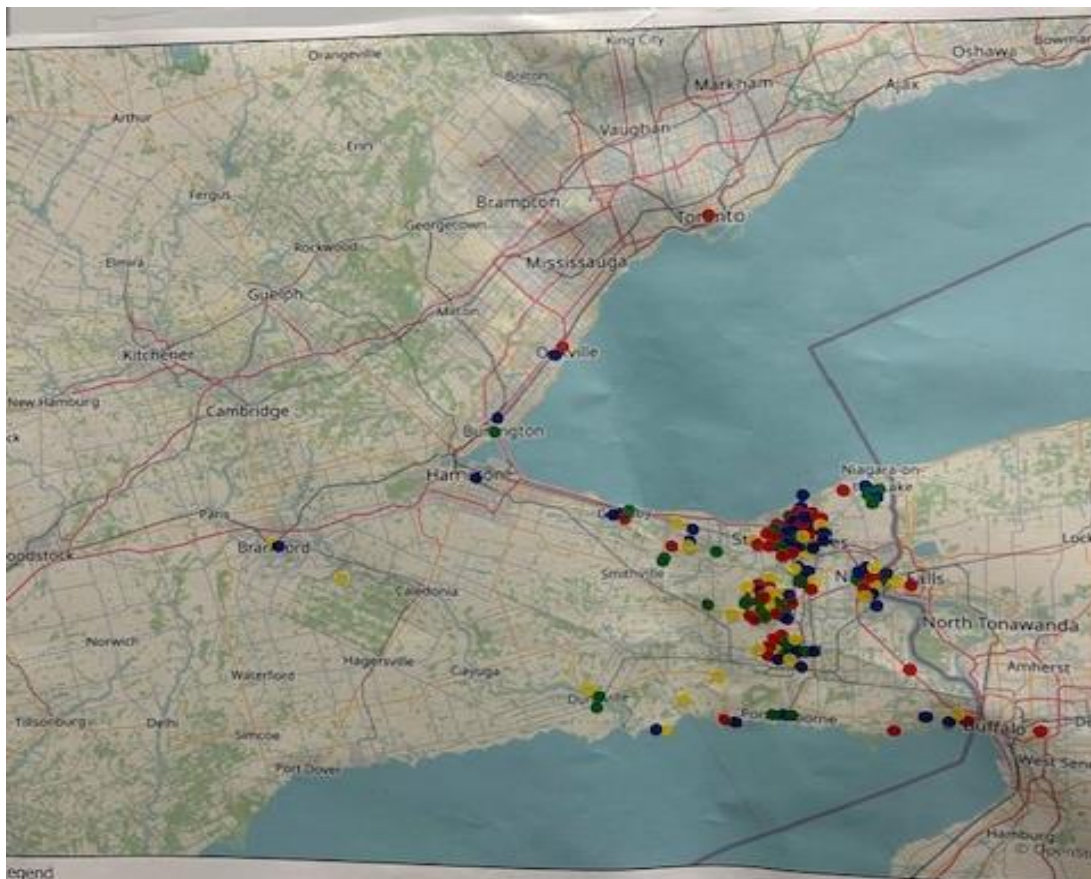
## Canada Day

The Canada Day Working Group began meeting in Q1 to plan the 2026 Canada Day event at Harold Black Park on July 1st. The day will include a Grande Parade down Haist Street, live entertainment, a licensed area, a Kids Zone sponsored by the Rotary Club of Fonthill, food and craft vendors, including the food pavilion run by the Lions Club of Fonthill, and will end with a beautiful fireworks display.

## Culture Crawl

On Sunday, March 8th, the Town of Pelham, the Niagara Geopark, and the Brown Homestead hosted the second annual Culture Crawl in the MCC's Accursi Room. Thirty-two historical societies, museums, and heritage and cultural organizations set up interactive booths throughout the room for families and attendees to explore.

There were 309 attendees, including representatives from all 12 municipalities in the Niagara Region. The photo below shows where attendees came from.



The event was well-received by both the organizations and the attendees. It provided a space to connect and share information about community heritage projects,

preservation efforts for historical landmarks and buildings, and museum programming, and to promote local volunteer opportunities.

The Culture Crawl also featured the Niagara in Focus project. Developed, facilitated, and hosted by The Brown Homestead in partnership with Niagara Geopark, Niagara in Focus is a community place-making project inviting residents to share a single photograph that captures their relationship with Niagara. Collected images were curated by decade, displayed at the Culture Crawl, and then moved to the Brown Homestead for ongoing community connection and reflection.

### 2026 Participants

Niagara Geopark/GeoClub  
NPCA & Ball's Falls Heritage Village  
Nelles Manor Museum  
Save Ontario Shipwrecks  
Thorold Museum  
Lincoln Museum  
Brown Homestead  
Historical Society of St. Catharines  
Wainfleet Historical Society  
Wainfleet Relics  
Riverbrink Art Museum  
Author Roger Bradshaw  
Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum  
Port Colborne Heritage & Marine  
Museum  
Welland Central Fire Hall  
The Colonel John Butler (Niagara)  
Branch of Loyalists

Heritage Thorold  
Ontario Ancestors  
Niagara Railway Museum  
Welland Museum  
Willowbank School of Restoration Arts  
The Pelham Historical Society  
Niagara Falls Museum  
Lincoln Pelham Public Library  
Author Mark Wilkie  
Your Homegrown Niagara Magazine  
Town of Pelham  
Niagara Academy for Indigenous  
Relations  
Amusement Park History  
Barefoot Bushcraft  
Lundy's Lane Historical Society  
Brock University Department of History



## **Carousel Players Theatre Show**

RCW staff hosted a children's theatre show on Saturday, March 28th, in the MCC's Accursi Room. Carousel Players Theatre performed "Like it or Not" by Katey Hoffman, a story about two Grade 6 friends as they navigate coming of age and what it means for their friendship. The show was recommended for ages 8 to 12. There were 32 people in attendance. The performance was very well received, with positive remarks from participants and strong audience engagement during the post-show question-and-answer period.



## **Lighting/Utility Box Project**

The Pelham Cultural Advisory Committee has begun planning to wrap three utility boxes in Pelham again this year. The project includes having E.L. Crossley students design an art piece that will be manufactured as a vinyl wrap and installed on utility boxes. The goal is to wrap three boxes in 2026.

## **Family Day**

The 2026 Family Day event welcomed about 2555 people to the MCC. Families enjoyed open family gym time featuring activities such as the learn-to-play lacrosse area run by the Pelham Raiders, bouncy castles, arcade games, pickleball, basketball, and more! Families lined up for interactive opportunities, including face painting, balloon animals, laser tag sponsored by the Mayor's Youth Advisory Collective, and, new this year, a virtual reality simulator. The Rotary Club of Fonthill sponsored a public skate on the Duliban Insurance rink. This year also featured a drop-in workshop: The Fabric of Our

Being, which honours the International Decade for People of African Descent. Participants helped shape the creative direction of a large community quilt by exploring their own experiences and developing an individual 8.5-by-11-inch art tile.

This fun-filled day also included a Community Expo, which allowed 8 community volunteer groups, service clubs or sports teams to engage with the community and share information on their upcoming seasons, projects, and volunteer opportunities.





### **Lights, Camera, Community!**

On March 12, the Town of Pelham, in partnership with Niagara College's Acting for Film and Digital Media program, hosted "Lights, Camera, Community!" at Old Pelham Town Hall. The event highlighted local cultural opportunities and gave the sixteen attendees a behind-the-scenes look at television and film sets. In small groups, Niagara College student actors presented prepared scene work, complete with costumes and props, while being filmed. The performances provided a venue for students to sharpen their skills, boost confidence, adapt on the fly, and connect with the community. Thirteen second-year students performed a series of short scenes, allowing audiences to experience emerging talent in an intimate setting and giving the actors a chance to apply their training in front of a live audience.



### **Seniors Writing Workshop**

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, Yvonne Van Lankveld will host a free Seniors Writing Workshop from 3:30 pm-5 pm in the Kinsmen Room of the MCC. The workshop will guide participants through the basics of writing, why it makes your brain happy, common mistakes, and

what it takes to get your work published. For more information or to register, visit: [www.pelham.ca/culture](http://www.pelham.ca/culture)

### **Black History Month – Tales of Tubman Presentation**

On Thursday, February 12th, the Kinsmen Room of the MCC hosted Rochelle Bush, a trustee and the resident historian of the Salem Chapel, Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Site, and the owner and operator of Tubman Tours Canada. The presentation highlighted the legendary Underground Railroad (UGRR) conductor Harriet Tubman, tracing Tubman's life journey from the United States to Canada and back. It covered her life in bondage,



Civil War service, and, more importantly, the decade she spent in the Town of St. Catharines plotting her “Southern Raids,” aka rescue missions. Attendees provided positive feedback and praised the presenters' comprehensive knowledge of Tubman's journey.

### **PD Day Camps**

The Town of Pelham hosted 2 PD Day camps in January and February, welcoming 31 campers to the MCC for fun activities, including crafts and gym time. PD Day camps provide care for campers from 9 am to 4 pm and include a hot lunch from Cook's Corner.

### **March Break Camp**

Registration for March Break Camp filled up quickly in 2026, welcoming 65 campers! This program grew, based on the community's need and interest, from a maximum of 49 campers in 2025. Campers participated in traditional camp activities, skated, travelled to the movies, and had visits from the library and a magician throughout the week! New this year, the Town partnered with the Little Medical School Inc. to offer a Little Veterinarian: Equine Specialty Camp over March Break for campers ages 6-11.

## **Summer Camp**

Preparation for Summer Camp programs has begun, with staff hiring complete and registration open. Camp activities for the 2026 season include trips to Centennial Park, skating at the MCC, crafts, weekly out-trips, and surprise camp guests each week! This year, the Town will also offer specialty camps in partnership with Pelham Soccer, the Pelham Fire Department, Little Medical School, and Evolve for Scooter and Skateboard Camp.

## **MYAC**

MYAC hosted a Regional Youth Group meeting, welcoming other Youth Advisory groups from across the region to network, brainstorm and collaborate. The event, hosted at the MCC, welcomed over 65 youth from Welland, Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Thorold and the library. This was an extremely successful way for youth to meet like-minded individuals, network and collaborate on future projects and initiatives. MYAC hopes that this will be an annual opportunity. MYAC is planning to host an upcoming Public Skate in April to raise funds and awareness for Pathstone Mental Health.



## **Active Programs**

### **SeniorFIT**

This year, SeniorFIT programming added 5 participants per session to account for increased community interest.

**Membership Usage Numbers**  
 556 Members  
**Plus Drop-In Program Admissions**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
55+ Aerobics	50
60+ Shinny	130
Activity Drop In	15
Adult/Preschool Skate	133
Adult Only Skate (Adult)	312
Adult Only Skate (Senior)	11
Adult Public Skate	468
Basketball Drop In	21
Chair Yoga Drop In	79
Family (Adult/Preschool)	24
Family Music Drop In	147
Family Public Skate	123
Flexagility	10
Hatha Yoga Drop In	25
Lift & Sweat	15
Meditation Drop In	1
Men's Shinny	267
Mom and Baby Fitness Drop In	39
Orchestra Music Drop In	84
Parent & Tot Drop In	93
Pickleball Drop In	969

Pickleball Drop In Youth	1
Step Drop In	20
Stick & Puck (6 to 13)	165
Stick & Puck (14+)	75
Stick & Puck (55+)	158
Student/Senior/Child Public Skate	802
Ticket Ice	55
Volleyball Drop In	78
Women's Learn To Play Hockey	9
Women's Shinny Combo	37
Women's Shinny Hockey	67
Yogalates Drop In	25
Youth Drop In	57
Zumba Drop In	125

### Registered Program Admission Numbers

Program	Quantity
Adult Learn to Skate – Beginner	15
Adult Learn to Skate – Level 2	12
Adult Power Skate	21
Babysitting Courses	19
Carousel Theatre	25
Gentle Aerobics	25
Home Alone Course	6

Junior Music Theatre	8
Kinder Music Theatre	20
PD Day Camps	31
Pickleball Advanced Clinic	7
Spin	68
Spin & Strength	11

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**Pelham Winterfest**

Pelham Winterfest concluded with the International Silverstick Hockey Tournament, hosted by the Pelham Minor Hockey Association. The tournament ran from January 8th to 11th and featured more than 65 teams from across North America. Opening ceremonies on January 8th included pin trading, a parade, and a performance by the local band The Figure Four. Over the weekend, 17,745 athletes and spectators attended the tournament.

The last Winterfest Workshop of 2025/2026 was held on January 9, 2025. The Wonderful Winter Lino Cut Print Workshop was facilitated by Pelham resident Sherry Wilkinson. The workshop was sold out, with 12 participants who provided positive feedback on both the workshop and the instructor.



## Pelham Summerfest

The Pelham Summerfest Working Group has been diligently handling sponsorship and logistics for Pelham Summerfest 2026. The vendor and entertainment applications are now closed and under review by the working group. Pelham Summerfest will return to downtown Fonthill from July 16th to 19th.

## Volunteer Fair

On March 5th and 7th, a Volunteer Fair was held in the atrium of the Meridian Community Centre. The fair showcased a variety of local organizations and the volunteer opportunities they offer in the community. Dozens of residents and visitors attended and gathered information about upcoming volunteer opportunities. Staff received positive feedback from both attendees and participating organizations. Participating organizations included the Fonthill Lions, the Kinsmen Club of Fonthill & District, Pelham Art Festival, Niagara Geo Park, Pelham Advocates for Trees and Habitat, the Niagara Centre Skating Club, Town of Pelham Recreation, Culture & Wellness Department, Town of Pelham Clerks Department, and Pelham Summerfest.



## Volunteers

As of March, the RCW department has received five new applications for events including Summer Chill, Canada Day and Summer Fest. These applications were submitted following the volunteer fair hosted on March 5th and 7th in the Meridian Community Centre Atrium. Community organizations reported positive outcomes from their involvement in the fair, which has led to plans to make it an annual event. The RCW Admin completed 25 follow-up contacts with applicants from the end of last year. Additionally, 36 former volunteers were contacted to introduce them to their new contact, provide updated volunteer roles and descriptions, and gauge interest in 2026 events.

Volunteer shifts across all events have started to be filled, and with continued follow-up and engagement, it is likely this will be a successful volunteer event season.

### **Dedication Program**

In Q1, there were inquiries regarding the dedication program. These are in progress and relate to the Fonthill Cemetery and North Pelham Park. Additionally, a request was made to update an older bench plaque due to wear and tear. The plaque has been purchased and will be reattached to the existing bench.

### **Seniors and Community Services**

During the first quarter of 2026, Seniors and Community Services programming continued to focus on supporting the well-being, independence, and social connection of older adults in Pelham. Programming during this period included educational workshops, wellness initiatives, community partnerships, and the successful completion of a grant-funded recreation program.

### **Seniors at Play Program**

The Seniors at Play initiative concluded in March 2026, after a successful program period that began in September 2025. Funded by the Seniors Community Grant, the program featured recreational and exploratory components to encourage movement, social interaction, and participation in Town programming.

Average Bi-Weekly Bocce Attendance: Approximately 25 participants  
Bocce Tournament (March 19, 2026): 24 participants (12 teams of two)  
Try-It Passes Distributed: Over 160

Participation remained consistent throughout the program, with strong engagement in the biweekly bocce drop-in. The concluding tournament highlighted the connections, skill development, and positive social environment fostered by the program, underscoring the continued value of low-barrier seniors' recreation opportunities.



## Seniors at Play Workshop Series

A variety of educational and wellness-focused workshops were delivered during Q1 as part of the Seniors at Play initiative and broader seniors programming:

Self-Defense Workshop – Daw Martial Arts (January 15, 2026)

Attendance: 65 participants

Mindfulness Workshop – JoySoleVitality (February 12, 2026)

Attendance: 87 participants

Grief and Loss Workshop – Hospice Niagara (March 12, 2026)

Attendance: 22 participants



Attendance across workshops varied by topic, with strong participation in safety and wellness sessions. The series offered opportunities for learning, reflection, and personal well-being, reinforcing the importance of providing diverse, responsive programming for older adults.

## **Community Engagement & Partnerships**

### **Masters of Applied Gerontology Program – Guest Lecture (February 6, 2026)**

Katie Kilbreath, Seniors and Community Services Programmer, was invited to deliver a guest lecture in the Community Services for Older Adults course for the second consecutive year, providing students with an overview of municipal recreation programming for older adults.

The presentation highlighted the role of municipalities in supporting age-friendly communities, reducing social isolation, and enabling older adults to age in place. Real-world examples and program insights were shared to deepen student understanding and bridge theory and practice.

The course instructor's feedback indicated that the presentation was comprehensive, engaging, and impactful for student learning. This opportunity also strengthened ongoing relationships with post-secondary partners and encouraged future student placements within the department.

### **Pelham Seniors Advisory Committee (PSAC)**

Regular updates and ongoing communication with the Pelham Seniors Advisory Committee continued throughout Q1. Staff provided program updates, shared feedback, and supported the committee's advisory role on seniors' services and initiatives in the Town.

### **Art Your Service (AYS) Updates**

Art Your Service (AYS) is a virtual seniors programming platform offering free online programs to subscribed Pelham residents through a Town-funded membership.

Subscribers: 135 (as of the end of Q1)

Subscriber levels continued to grow throughout the quarter, reflecting heightened awareness and interest in accessible virtual programming options for older adults.

### **Seniors Database Email Newsletter**

The Seniors Database Email Newsletter continued to be updated and distributed during Q1.

Subscribers: 1107

Issues Sent During Q1: 3

The Q1 subscriber count increased from 1076 in Q4 2025. The newsletter remains a key communication tool for sharing program information, upcoming events, and relevant resources with older adults across the community.

## **Summary**

Q1 programming demonstrated a continued focus on holistic well-being, combining physical safety, mental wellness, and emotional support through a variety of workshops and partnerships. Strong workshop participation, particularly in safety and mindfulness, highlights ongoing community interest in both preventive and wellness-based programming.

The successful conclusion of the Seniors at Play program further demonstrated the impact of consistent, low-barrier recreational opportunities in fostering social connection, skill development, and community building among older adults.

## **Food & Beverage**

The Food and Beverage team (F & B Team) has expanded Cook's Corner's concession menu to drive revenue and developed an in-house catering menu tailored for meetings and intimate events. Additionally, we've added local vendor Oliver's Butcher and Catering to our supplier list; they supply 100% beef burgers for Cook's Corner and support larger catered events. At Ciolfi's Corner, we've introduced a variety of lighter fare options, including nachos with queso, and a new selection of seasonal beverages to better serve a wider range of guests. This quarter's highlight for the F&B Team was the smooth execution of the International Silver Stick Tournament. From January 8 to 11, 2026, the F&B Team generated over \$23K in revenue, serving more than 5100 guests.