

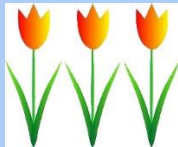


NEWSLETTER #4, April 2022



IN THIS ISSUE

- Word of welcome
- What's new
 - Hybrid classes
 - COVID measures
 - Financial information
 - New courses/teachers
 - Updates & reminders
 - Mark your calendar



CONTRIBUTORS

- Jane Archer
- Carole Bayard
- Marilyn Csik
- Joy Jude
- Pat Kirk
- Marie-Claire Zirpdji

WORD OF WELCOME

At last, spring is right around the corner!

With it comes the longer days, lighter breezes, budding trees, bushes and flowers, birds chirping outside a window at 4 in the morning – Mother Nature's rebirth.

This year in particular, after 2 long years of COVID restrictions, on and off lockdowns, and social isolation, it is a form of rebirth for all of us. ENCORE is pleased to announce that it is reopening its doors for in-person classes.

We have not seen nor heard from many of our members during this long period and we hope that most of you will gradually return.

It is true that everyone is at a different comfort level with regards to 'returning to a normal life'.

Some are more at risk than others; some have to be more cautious because of other family members and some are more than ready to move on.

Regardless, the most important thing is that we all respect one another in those choices. There should be no pressure and no judgment.

We will all have COVID stories to tell – some will be happy and some will be sad. Be prepared to listen with your heart and be generous with your time. We all need to reconnect.

Happy spring to everyone!

Welcome back to all!

WHAT'S NEW



Hybrid Classes

Hybrid classes is the term being used to describe a class that is given with some participants attending in the traditional face-to-face setting while others attend simultaneously on a web online setting – in our case ZOOM.

With our Spring Session II, ENCORE will be initiating its own first set of hybrid courses.

Special equipment has been purchased, installed and tested; but with all things new, we may experience some technical difficulties. We urge you to be patient as we, and particularly our instructors, become more proficient in using this technology.

It is our intention to offer hybrid courses in the future as it allows for a lot of flexibility – for members who live out of town, or those with reduced mobility or even for all on those icy winter days.

When registering for the next session, each course will be clearly identified as

- 1) an 'in-person' only,
- 2) a ZOOM only or
- 3) a hybrid class.

In the case of the hybrid class, you will have to indicate whether you are signing up for the 'in-person' or the 'ZOOM' option.

This will be important for the registrar to limit the number of 'in-person' registrants so we can maintain some social distancing.

Once the limit is reached, the remaining registrants will be notified that they will have to attend the course on ZOOM.

Should you have any questions regarding this when you are registering, do not hesitate to call the ENCORE office (514) 543-0629 or send an email to infoencore9@gmail.com.



COVID Measures

While the government restrictions regarding COVID keep changing, the Board of Directors at ENCORE has decided to implement specific measures for the return to in-person classes with the Spring Session II. Each member is expected to adhere to these measures without exception. It is our sincere hope that we will thus be able to promote a healthy and safe environment, thereby allowing members to feel confident about returning to a more 'normal' life.

The list of measures/guidelines is as follows:

- 1) The **wearing of a mask** inside the elevators and the classrooms is **mandatory**.
 - a) Exception – exercise classes may opt to remove the mask; this will be at the discretion of the instructor and the participants.

- 2) Hand sanitizers will be available in each of our classrooms. Please make an effort to use them regularly.
- 4) When placing your chair, keep a meter distance from the other members (unless you have come with someone you know)
 - a) Exception – Bridge classes
- 5) If you are not feeling well or show any signs or symptoms of COVID, **please STAY HOME**.
If the class is of a hybrid nature, send an email to infoencore9@gmail.com and we will send you the link so you can attend via ZOOM.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Financial Information

As you all know, COVID-19 caused a great deal of financial hardship for everyone. As an organization, ENCORE was not spared.

Despite the fact that we were able to transition to the ZOOM platform, after losing a complete session, many members were either not equipped to go online or they were not keen to learn a new technology.

As a result, over the last 2 ½ years, our registration numbers have dropped by 45-50%.

Were it not for the government rental subsidy which we were eligible to receive, it is very likely that ENCORE would not have survived.

Since the lockdowns have now come to an end, so have those government subsidies.

In order to address this problem, it is necessary to raise the price of our 6-week course from \$48.00 to \$54.00. This increase is effective with the Spring Session II program which you will receive around April 22nd, 2022.

Hopefully, this measure along with the increase in registrations from members returning to the classroom will be sufficient to put us on the road to financial recovery.

New Courses and New Teachers

ENCORE is very proud to announce that the following courses are back!!

Beginners' Bridge

There was a great demand for Beginner's Bridge prior to the pandemic but because in-person learning was not possible, we could not offer this course.

We are now in a position to do so once again and with a new instructor.

Read all about it in the upcoming program and Teachers' Description documents to follow.

Theatre

A new theatre course will be introduced at ENCORE entitled "Exploring Theatre from Page to Stage". Check it out in the upcoming program!

ENCORE Updates and Reminders

- 1) Membership fees are payable once a year. ENCORE's 'year' runs from September 1st of a current year to August 31st of the following year.

Membership renewals will be required with the Fall Session I 2022 registration; the renewal will be valid from September 1st, 2022 to August 31st, 2023.

- 2) If you sign up for a course and find that it is not to your liking, you can switch to another one or ask for a credit before the second week of class.

- 3) Payments can still be made by cheque though we do encourage e-transfers.
 - a. If paying by cheque, remember to make your cheque payable to ENCORE.
 - b. If you are sending an e-transfer, note that the security question and answer is no longer required.

- 4) **REGISTER ON TIME – PAY ON TIME**
 - a. While some things are out of our control and there will always be exceptions, this request is important.
 - i. It is important because it alleviates the number of times the registrar has to send a revised list of participants to the teachers; and the number of times the teacher has to update his/her distribution list.
 - ii. It is important because last minute changes often lead to omissions and mistakes resulting in the late registrant not receiving the ZOOM link on time or missing the first class altogether.

- 5) With the Spring Session II program, we are implementing a **late registration fee of \$15.00** regardless of the number of courses you are signing up for.

Mark your calendars – Ladies and Gentlemen!

Activity	Spring II
Program Sent	April 22nd
Registration Start/End dates	April 22 – May 5th
Late Registration	May 6 th onwards
Start of Classes	May 9 th 2022

