

Celebrating Healthy Active Lives



ALCOA Members – Making a Difference for Older Adults





A Note from the
Executive Director

Staying Active and Warm

Staying active in the cold winter months in Canada can be challenging for young and old alike. The articles in this issue of *Celebrating Healthy Active Lives*, reinforces the importance of not only keeping our bodies active, but also our minds – and the good news is that mental activities can be done indoors in the warmth of your community centre, or your own home with friends playing bridge. There is also a DVD available for you to exercise indoors, once again in the comfort of your home or your community center with a group of friends.

If you live in Nova Scotia, staying active both physically and mentally will also have you ready to participate in a *Walk for a Purpose* in May 2010. There are lots of other walks across Canada that benefit many charities, however in this issue of *CHAL* we are highlighting the successful program of *Walk for Memories – Nursing Home Challenge*.

ALCOA would also like to extend our congratulations to Herb Finkelberg from Montreal, for being selected a Torch Bearer for the Olympic Games.

Stay warm, stay active, stay healthy.

Patty Clark
ALCOA National Executive Director

Contact Information

Active Living Coalition for Older Adults

P.O. Box 143
Shelburne ON
L0N 1S0
Toll Free: 1-800-549-9799
Phone: 519-925-1676
Fax: 519-925-3955
Email: alcoa3@ca.inter.net
Web: www.alcoa.ca

Celebrating Healthy Active Lives

Editor: Patricia Clark

ALCOA Executive & Guardians

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Meet Herb Finkelberg — Olympic Torch Bearer

Montrealer, Herb Finkelberg has been the Executive Director of Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors (formerly known as Golden Age Association) since 1980. The Cummings Centre is a multi-faceted, community-based senior centre which plays an important role in the lives of 6000 adults aged 50+.



Herb has a Master's of Social Work degree from Wilfred Laurier University. He began his career as a communal worker in the children's camping field in 1967 serving as Executive Director of two summer camps in the Quebec Laurentian mountains. Then he moved to his work with older adults in 1980.

He has an unwavering, lifelong commitment to healthy, active living and his daily exercise activities include biking, swimming, and running. Herb has a passion for action and a strong belief in the essential role that exercise and a healthy diet play in the lifestyle of all seniors. He has been the driving force behind the development and outstanding success of the 20 year old and thriving CJCS Wellness Centre which promotes exercise and active living for over 850 seniors each year. He strongly supports the rights of all older adults through the Cummings Centre based social action committee.

Herb carried the Olympic Torch for RBC in early December, and on behalf of all Montreal area seniors, he served as a fine example of the benefits of a healthy active lifestyle.



Submitted by Elaine Shapiro



Promoting Bridge Across Canada

The mission of the Canadian Bridge Federation is to promote bridge within Canada and protect and advance the national interests of Canadian Bridge, including the selection and support of Canadian bridge teams and players for international bridge competition:

- ✎ Promote Duplicate Bridge in Canada;
- ✎ Run National Bridge Championships, for Open, Women, Senior and Junior competitions;
- ✎ Promote new players and support Junior and Youth players;
- ✎ Administer the CBF Charitable Foundation.

Bridge is more than a pastime, it's a passion. It is a great mind game where you try to beat people up with your brain. It is a game where card sense, a strategic bent and general smarts can put a teenager on par with a grandmaster, or let a bus driver contend with a billionaire. Players return to the table time and time again for the mental challenge, competition, and the company of other players. Bridge is experiencing a resurgence with an estimated 25 million players in North America.

A 2003 study by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine found that playing bridge (or chess or music) significantly lowered the risk of Alzheimer and other forms of dementia. A 2005 study tracked fifth-graders – one group learned bridge, the other did not. The bridge group had greater test scores across all five subject areas, from language to science. Other research has

shown that an 'active mind' playing bridge boosts the body's immune system and thereby keeps bridge players healthy and wise.



The franchised bridge clubs run charity games and donate the funds raised to help others. The charity focus for 2009-2010 is "Focus on Seniors – organizations that assist and improve the life of Seniors".

Visit the website: <http://www.cbf.ca>. It provides links to information on duplicate bridge clubs in Canada and where you can learn to play bridge.

Submitted by Gim Ong, CBF Foundation Chairman

Canadian Bridge Foundation Supports ALCOA

The financial support from the Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Foundation is greatly acknowledged. ALCOA is pleased to have received a grant from the CBFCF in the amount of \$3,000 in 2009. The funds were used to help ALCOA disseminate information and resources about active living for seniors. To date, CBFCF has supported worthy causes in Canada with over \$1.1 million. ALCOA is grateful for this donation to the Coalition.

Brain Fitness—The "New" Fitness

Today, one in eleven Canadian seniors has Alzheimer disease or a related dementia¹. In a recent document published by the Alzheimer Society, entitled *Rising Tide*², it states some startling statistics. In 30 years, if nothing is done, the number of Canadians with dementia will double.

Projected incidence:

- * In 2008 – 103,700 new dementia cases per year, or one new case every 5 minutes
- * In 2038 – 257,800 new dementia cases per year, or one new case every 2 minutes

Projected Prevalence:

- * 2008: 480,600 people or 1.5% of the Canadian population
- * 2038: 1,123,200 people, or 2.8% of the Canadian population

Rising Tide states the first intervention for prevention is an increase in physical activity and their research is very compelling. It identifies the significant value of cognitive stimulation in the prevention of dementia and improving the quality of life. Decades of medical research have confirmed that cognitive stimulation can help prevent dementia – reducing the risk by more than 60 percent.³

As noted on the Alzheimer Society of Canada's web site, 'Brain Fitness' promotes the circulation of blood to the brain, which nourishes the cells with nutrients and oxygen, and may even encourage the development of new cells. Stimulation to increase the networks of connections in the brain does not only have to be through physical activity -- cognitive exercises and social interaction also create mental stimulation which enhances brain activity.

Here are some cognitive exercise suggestions from the Alzheimer Society of Canada web site:

- * Play games to challenge the mind – chess, word and number puzzles, jigsaws, crosswords and memory games.
- * Pursue a new interest such as learning to play a musical instrument, taking a course or going to the theatre.
- * Break the routine – take a different route to the store or change the order of the morning routine.
- * Involve one or more of the senses in a novel way –

write your name with your opposite hand or count out coin change by using your sense of touch.

- * Read a book – discuss it with a friend.
- * Pursue cultural activities like going to plays, museums, concerts, galleries.
- * Keep up hobbies such as sewing, carpentry or take up a new hobby.
- * Cross train your brain – try a variety of mental challenges.
- * For some great ways to take action on brain health, visit their BrainBooster™ pages at http://www.alzheimer.ca/english/brain/brain_boost.htm

The Alzheimer Society also recommends that older adults stay socially connected. The research shows that people who regularly interact with others maintain their brain function better than those who don't. Socializing appears to have a protective effect that may help lessen the risk of developing Alzheimer Disease.

Their web site provides tips to staying socially connected:

- * Maintain old friendships and make new ones.
- * Stay socially active through work, volunteer activities, travel, hobbies, family and friends.
- * Be open to new experiences.

Staying active and involved with life sends healthy messages to the brain and body. Being involved with others also helps to reduce stress, boost mood and keep relationships strong.

As a Fitness Practitioner you can share this wonderful news with your members and their families. It may be the 'carrot' that encourages an older adult to make that little extra effort to join a class, pick up the cross word puzzle, or reconnect with an old friend.

For more information on "Brain Fitness", visit the Alzheimer Society of Canada's web site at www.alzheimer.ca, or http://www.alzheimer.ca/english/brain/brain_intro.htm for specific information on brain health.

1. www.alzheimer.ca;
2. *Rising Tide: the Impact of Dementia on Canadian Society*, Executive Summary, 2010;
3. www.dakim.com.



This DVD was supported by the Oshawa Seniors Citizen Centre (OSCC) with funding received from Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. Toni Johnston, the author and instructor for the DVD is a registered nurse, Seniors Fitness Specialist, and President of Active 4 Life. She has been a trainer of the Seniors Fitness Instructor Course for the CCAA since 2002, and has completed a Gerontology Certificate from Ryerson University in Toronto.

The Low Impact Exercise DVD includes the following components:

- Precautions/considerations before beginning an exercise program
- Warm up
- Cardiovascular work out and cool down
- Balance training
- Muscle strengthening
- Muscle stretching and final cool down

The one-hour program can be viewed by individual sections or as a continuous program. Included in the DVD package is an information booklet and a Thera-Band®.

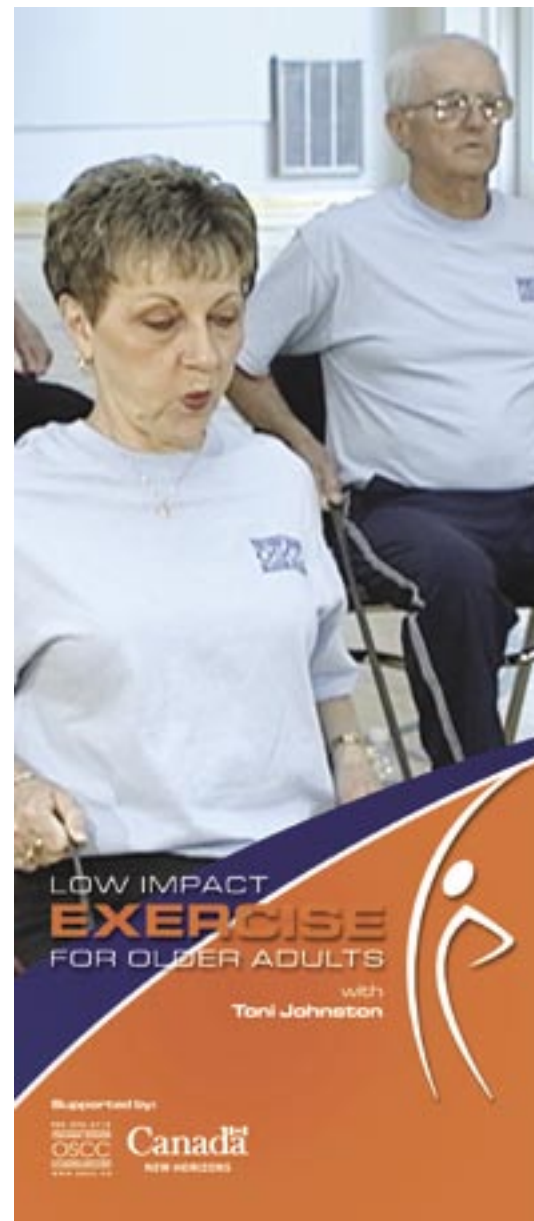
The DVD can be helpful for use in training, education and participation by:

- Seniors Centres
- Older Adult Group Fitness Leaders
- Individual older adults
- Community organizations where older adults meet to participate in physical activity programs

For more information on the DVD and to order your copy, please contact Kim Evans, Leisure Programs Manager at the Oshawa Senior Citizen Centres at: 1.905.576.6712 ext. 2875, or at kevans@oshawa.ca. The cost of the DVD package is \$30.00 plus s/h.

Please note that ALCOA does not support or endorse any products or services.

Older Adult Low-Impact Exercise DVD



This past year, 20 Nursing Homes from around the province participated in the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia's *Walk for Memories — Nursing Home Challenge*.

While the nature of the Challenge is to raise funds to support the Society and the 15,000 people in Nova Scotia who have the disease that the Society serves — it also is a chance for residents to socialize and exercise; two vital tactics in preventing Alzheimer Disease and other dementias.

From ice cream socials to silent auctions, art classes to BBQ's, each facility designs the event to meet their strengths and their abilities. There is

even a walk that takes place where the local third grade class walks with each elderly patient.

In 2009 we asked everyone in the province to *Walk with a Purpose* — their destination — a Nova Scotia without this disease. While those who participate in the Challenge do raise funds, they also raise the importance of Active Living amongst the older generation, while walking in a group of two or a group of a 100!

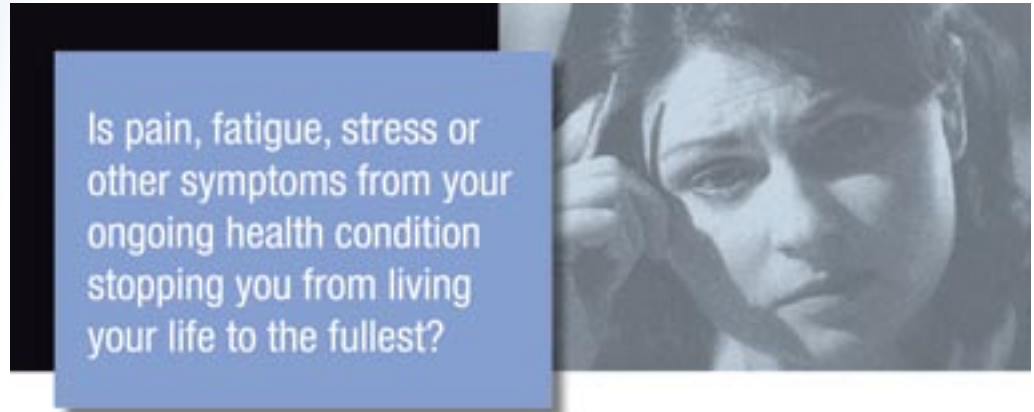
This year's walks in Halifax and Sydney are scheduled for May 16 and the Nursing Homes can do theirs at any time in May and June.

For more information on our Nursing Home Challenge please visit www.nswalkformemories.ca, or call your local Alzheimer Society today!

Submitted by Sarah Lyon



Announcing a new national research pilot project on self- managed chronic diseases



Learn ways to get control of your life so you can do the things that matter to you!
Take part in a free, online self-management pilot program and research study.

We are looking for people:

- from across Canada with ongoing health conditions
- with any level of computer experience

What: A free, six-week online workshop

Where: Anywhere you can access the Internet

When: Log on at your convenience 2-3 times a week, for a total of about two hours per week

Register online at
www.healthylivingcanada.org

For more information, email
LearnMore@healthylivingcanada.org

This Canada-wide pilot project is sponsored by the Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services.



A national on-line self management pilot project has just been launched as a joint venture between Alberta Health Services, Stanford University and National Council on Aging. This national research project is open to all Cardiac Rehabilitation/ Chronic Disease Care program participants. This 6 week, on-line program may be of particular interest to programs that do not have their own self-management programs or as a supplement for those that do. The program is open to all those over 18 years of age where pain, fatigue, stress or other symptoms from ongoing health conditions are stopping someone you know from living their life to the fullest.

Submitted by Marilyn Thomas, CACR Executive Director