

Celebrating **Healthy** **Active Lives**

ALCOA Members – Making a Difference for Older Adults





A Note from the
Executive Director

Planning Ahead

With the fall upon us and those colder winter months fast approaching, let's enjoy those last few warm days outside, but also start thinking about the winter activities ahead of us. One great suggestion is to go to Florida in February and play in the Canadian Shuffleboard Tournament. Or we can stay here and start up a Nordic Pole Walking club. It is a great activity for any season, in any region in Canada. The Saskatoon Council on Aging is developing an Age Friendly Initiative, to encourage active aging within their communities, in any season. The Cummings Centre has developed a wonderful adaptive program to allow individuals with movement disorders the opportunity to be active. The Town of Whitby has recently opened a new centre in Brooklin, Ontario, with a dedicated senior's room, and a variety of classes. They will be set for the winter ahead. And Arnold Nett, at the young age of 78, continues with his acrobatics. The acrobatics group of nine members, reside in Alberta and amaze audiences around the world.

So there seems to be lots of ideas and opportunities for us all to keep active regardless of the season. Please do contact the authors of the articles if you would like more information about their programs.

Keep moving!

Patty Clark
ALCOA National Executive Director



This publication is supported by funding from the **Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Foundation**. The Canadian Bridge Federation is the national bridge organization for organized bridge in Canada.

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: alcoa@ca.inter.net
Web: www.alcoa.ca

Celebrating Healthy Active Lives

Editor: Patricia Clark

ALCOA Executive & Guardians Executive

Past Chairman

Don Fletcher, Winnipeg, MB

Chairman

Bill Krever, Toronto, ON

Vice Chair

Bert Taylor, Oro Station, ON

Secretary

Mike Sharratt, Kitchener, ON

Treasurer

Philippe Markon, Ste-Famille, I.O.

Guardians (include Executive)

Jim Hamilton, Winnipeg, MB

Clara Fitzgerald, London, ON

Mary MacLellan, Stellarton, NS

Carol Miller, Gloucester, ON

Rosanne Prinsen, Edmonton, AB

Holly Schick, Regina, SK

Executive Director

Patricia Clark, Mansfield, ON

At the ripe young age of 78, Arnold Nett keeps busy as the Canada 55+ Games Technical Director. He also performs with a group of senior gymnasts, the Edmonton Dynamos, who performed at the World Gymnaestrada in Lausanne, Switzerland in July, 2011, with 20,000 other participants.

The 9-member group range in age from 55 to 80. Their routines incorporate artistic, acrobatic and rhythmic elements. According to Arnold, as far as he knows, the Dynamos are the only group that does the artistic and acrobatic gymnastics. Many groups do perform aerobic routines.

The Jasper Park Community League is the location for the group of nine to practice twice a week with coach, Teresa Wanat. The team members balance on balls, snake across the floor with ribbons, tumble, lift one another using both arms and legs, and build elaborate human pyramids – moves difficult for anyone to do, let alone those in their Golden Years.

Anne Black and Arnold Nett are the two remaining members from the original Dynamos that started in 1996.

The Dynamos have performed all over the world, including Costa Rica, Jamaica, Nicaragua, and at the last two World Gymnaestrada festivals, in Sweden (2003) and Portugal (2007).

Most of the groups' members have been involved in recreational pursuits, but few have gymnastic backgrounds. The Dynamos' goal, Nett says, is conveying a message to seniors to stay active.

An excerpt from the Edmonton Examiner

Older Adult Acrobatics



Anne Black and Arnold Nett

Designed For Participants with Movement Disorders

Adapted programming at the Cummings Centre provides a range of classes and activities designed to engage and motivate individuals with a neuro-muscular illness or movement disorder who require adaptations in order to participate with ease in a community setting. The programs are geared specifically to respond to the needs of those who have had a stroke and are post rehab, those who have mobility issues or have had a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease or Multiple Sclerosis.

Adapted Exercise classes aim to improve the quality of life of individuals with movement disorders by combining cardiovascular training with boxing, dance, and balance programs. Classes take place in the Adapted Exercise Clinic and are taught by professionals with a background and training in Exercise Physiology.

In addition to the Adapted Exercise Clinic Program, a range of unique classes and activities have been designed to respond to the participant's needs and interests:

- ♡ The Broadway program innovated at the Cummings Centre, targets specific symptoms of Parkinson's disease. The class combines breathing techniques and visualization exercises, dance movement which improves proprioception and vocal exercises to address the rigidity, stiffness and anxiety as well as the hypophonia associated with the condition.
- ♡ Sing Me Your Story is designed using the theory of Melodic Intonation Therapy and is for individuals with a loss or reduction of language skills (Aphasia). It consists of aerobic activity using rehabilitation equipment as a warm-up followed by a music and vocal program to encourage personal expression and communication.
- ♡ Adapted Tai Chi, Adapted Yoga, Specialized Aqua Fitness, Massage Technique, Meditation and Visualization as well as Adapted Art round out the program. A semi-annual public lecture provides the latest information and features health care professionals and researchers working in the field. Regular excursions offer enjoyable opportunities to socialize and volunteer opportunities provide a great way for participants to experience the satisfaction of giving back to the community.

The benefits of this program cannot be overstated. The state of the art equipment, effective program design, exceptionally qualified staff and the supportive community environment all contribute to a positive setting within which those with neuro-muscular illnesses are empowered to work towards maintaining optimum function and improved quality of life.

For information: Stefani Novick 514-342-1234 x 7201 or Stefani.Novick@cummingscentre.org

Age Friendly Saskatoon Initiative

With Canada's senior population on the rise and baby boomers poised to swell the numbers, communities must confront the realities of an aging population. Communities can address these challenges by becoming age-friendly and providing supports for active and healthy aging. Age-friendly communities have structures, facilities, services and policies which support people of all backgrounds and abilities to age positively and actively.

A key part of the Saskatoon Council on Aging's vision of Positive Aging for all, is that the Age Friendly Saskatoon Initiative will support older adults to lead healthy independent lives and to be active and socially engaged. In the absence of a provincial or local strategy, the Council intends to involve older adults in the development of a strategy for seniors in Saskatoon and area. The initiative is Phase One of the World Health Organization (WHO) age-friendly city model which identifies eight key features of urban environments that support active and healthy aging.

Funded by the Government of Canada New Horizons for Seniors Program and Affinity Credit Union, the Age Friendly Saskatoon Initiative is overseen by a Steering Committee made up of older adults and key community stakeholders. The initiative facilitated 24 focus groups comprised of seniors, caregivers, seniors groups and service providers and conducted 300 surveys to learn about the experiences growing older and to identify barriers to active aging in Saskatoon. The findings from this project will form a base for a planning document for implementation of an age-friendly model in Saskatoon. The initiative also complements the City of Saskatoon's strategic planning process: Saskatoon Speaks.

Older adults continue to be a valuable asset to society. If they enjoy good health and their needs are met, older adults can continue to contribute their knowledge and experience in varied ways. Communities that can utilize the expertise of older adults can find ways to address many complex challenges and provide much needed services. An age-friendly city benefits the economy, provides secure neighbourhoods, supports and services needed, increases mobility and independence and enables volunteer work and employment. An age-friendly community enhances quality of life not only for older adults but for citizens of all ages.

For more information please contact:
Virginia Dakinewich,
Phone: 306-652-2522,
email: virginia@scoa.ca



Saskatoon Council on Aging – Age Friendly Initiative Steering Committee

A New Centre in Brooklin, ON

The Town of Whitby was pleased to celebrate the opening of The Brooklin Community Centre and Library on Monday, November 1, 2010. This 40,000 square ft facility has a dedicated Seniors Room, Youth Room, Pre-School Room, Computer Commons, Boardroom, Craft Room, Meeting Room, Library, Multi-Purpose Room, a Coffee Served and a Gymnasium.



A variety of classes, workshops and drop-in programs are offered to the senior population from Arthritis Exercise, Drumming for Health, Twenty, Twenty, Twenty, Zumba, Duplicate Bridge and Euchre to name just a few.

A special event was held to make the senior community aware of this new site; so with funding from the Ministry of Health Promotion, the Town of Whitby Seniors Services held a senior's conference and health fair in March 2011. Workshops, classes and 16 displays related to seniors healthy living was featured. Over 200 seniors enjoyed the day.

One of the activities was an 8 Week Healthy Life Challenge where 25 seniors were challenged to improve their health and wellbeing through weekly fitness challenges and incentives. The results of the challenge proved small changes in lifestyle factors translate into substantial changes in health and wellness. The results of our 8 Week Healthy Life Challenge were as follows.

- ☞ 94 % of participants had a decrease in Resting Blood Pressure
- ☞ 68 % had a decrease in Resting Heart Rate
- ☞ 95 % decreased their waist circumference (average decrease was 8.6 cm per person)
- ☞ 79 % decreased their Total body Weight

This is valuable support to encourage more seniors to incorporate fitness into their daily lives, as it improves ones health. These results help form the basis for the types of activities that are offered to seniors.

The community of Whitby has embraced the centre and we are proud to be able to increase the opportunities of providing quality programs and services for older adults. For more information please contact Debbie Wilson.

Debbie Wilson, RN, BScN, MHS
Supervisor of Seniors Services
Town of Whitby
905-668-1424
wilsond@whitby.ca
visit us at: www.whitby.ca

The Active Living "Shuffle"

One of the best ways to promote active lifestyle for seniors is through participating in games that require moderate physical activity combined with mental activity. The game of Shuffleboard combines both of these activities without any risk to the participants.

The game of shuffleboard can be played with two or four people. The object of the game is to propel discs, by means of a cue, on to the scoring diagram at the opposite end of the court, to score, to prevent the opponent from scoring, or both. Shuffleboard is a very popular outdoor sport in Florida, where some 30,000 players, mostly seniors participate each year.

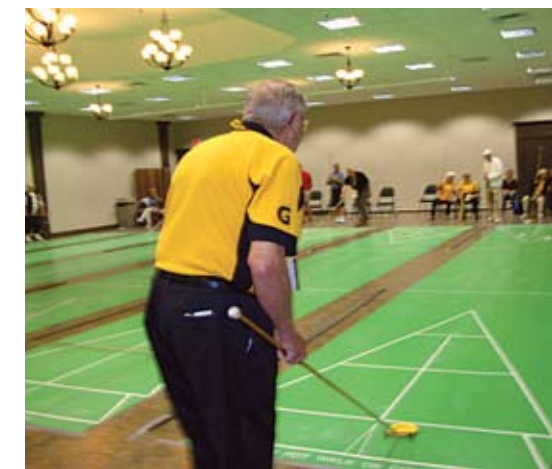
The advantages of the game are numerous:

- ★ Good exercise
- ★ Needs no protective dress
- ★ Provides good fun and fellowship
- ★ Provides exercise for the brain
- ★ Anyone can play, even in a wheelchair
- ★ Equipment is not expensive
- ★ Provides seniors with a good reason to become active outdoors
- ★ Provides opportunity to travel to matches

For the past twenty-eight years, the Canadian Shuffleboard Tournament Association (Florida) Inc., has organized a Tournament in Florida specifically for Canadians. Trophies are awarded to each of the eight winners. The next tournament is scheduled to take place on February 7, 8, 2012 at Silver Lake Park, St. Petersburg.

For further information, contact Carl Smith at 1-709-586-2628 or 1-709-782-1760.

Submitted by
Carl Smith, Trinity Bay, NL



The Yukon Team at the
Canada 55+ Games



Active Living in Norman Wells – Thanks to Caren Burke

Nordic walking improves endurance, circulation, upper body strength, heart and lung capacity and it is easy to learn. Caren Burke, the Regional Coordinator for Prevention & Health Promotion for the Sahtu Health & Social Services Authority recognized the many benefits of Nordic walking and has been very successful in delivering a Nordic walking program for the residence of Norman Wells.

The NWT Recreation and Parks Association (NWTRPA) works with communities across the Northwest Territories to promote healthy living through active recreation. The NWTRPA targets older adults, people with diabetes and pre-diabetics through the Nordic walking program, which lead to the introduction of Nordic walking to Norman Wells. The NWTRPA visited Norman Wells in September 2010 to provide a Nordic walking workshop, train Caren as a leader and provide poles and resources to start a Nordic walking community program. Since the initial visit Caren has been instrumental in improving the lives of young and old alike in Norman Wells.



Caren Burke is wearing the yellow jacket, third from the right.

Now in its second year, the program has five more certified facilitators, forty seven registered participants and has a committed group of residence dedicated to improving their health. In a community with a population of eight hundred it is outstanding how many people attend the weekly walks. "I feel good and loosened up after Nordic walking and it gets us out" states Mitzi Hodgsons an Elder in Norman Wells.

Not only does Caren make a difference through the Nordic walking program but she also impacts the lives of Elders in her community through lunch time activities. Caren organizes regular exercises for Elders followed by a healthy lunch. She has introduced activities such as chair yoga, balls and balance exercises and she also provides Elders a chance to socialize over lunch while listening to local music.

The NWTRPA would like to commend Caren for all her efforts and will continue to support her and the community of Norman Wells to stay active through the Nordic walking and Elders programs.

For more information NWTRPA programs, contact Sheena Tremblay at stremblay@nwtrpa.org