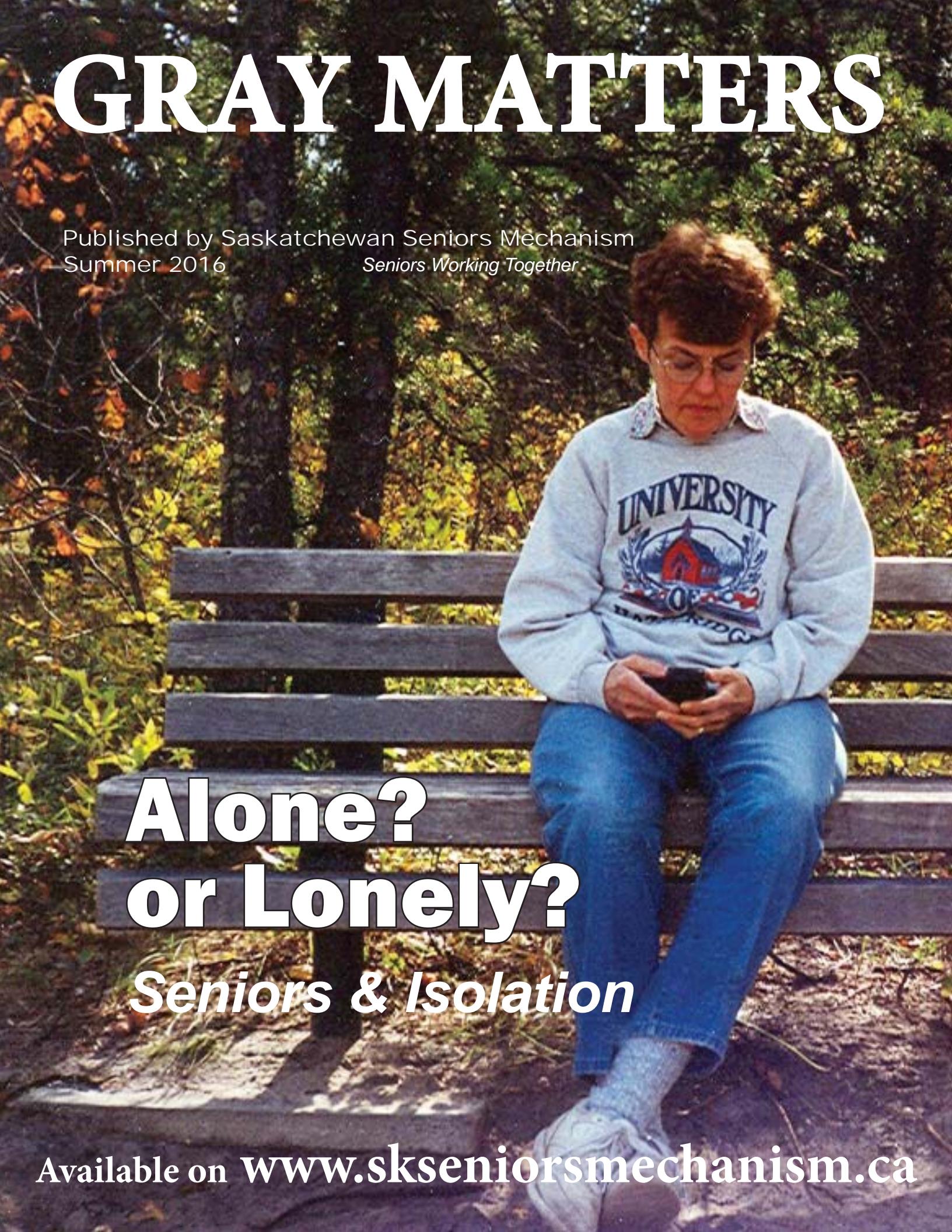


GRAY MATTERS

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair and glasses, wearing a light blue sweatshirt with a 'UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO' logo and blue jeans. She is sitting on a wooden park bench, looking down at a black smartphone in her hands. The background is filled with autumn foliage, with many yellow and orange leaves on the ground and trees behind her.

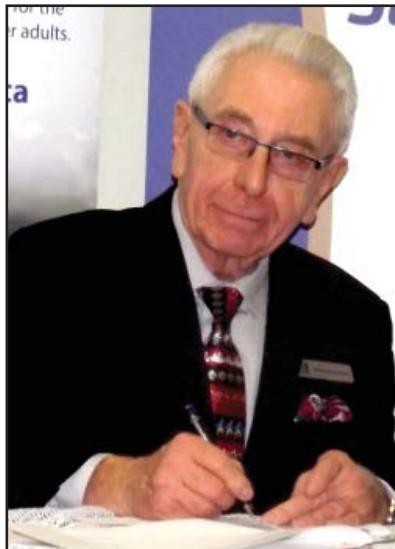
Published by Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism
Summer 2016

Seniors Working Together

Alone? or Lonely? *Seniors & Isolation*

Available on www.skseniorsmechanism.ca

From the President's Desk



Many of us have thought about what we might do if we won the lottery. SSM has won a lottery of sorts. We recently received New Horizons Pan-Canadian funding amounting to \$727,900 over three years. This funding is part of a shared impact plan with the Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit (SPHERU), the Saskatchewan Red Cross and the Alzheimer Society. The University of Regina Lifelong Learning Centre and the Fédération des aînés fransaskois will share part of SSM's funding as well.

This grant will go far in helping SSM and the other sharing organizations realize some of their projects. For instance, it will allow SSM to continue its Age-Friendly/Inclusive Communities initiatives. As well, we will do some research on media and public perception of older persons and work to change ageist attitudes. It is all part of ways SSM and the partner organizations can work at reducing seniors' isolation. It will definitely have an "impact" on SSM's and the partner organizations' work over the next three years.

Thanks to Executive Director Holly Schick for her extensive work on the funding application.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the contributions made by Jeanne Alexander and Shirley Arnold who will be leaving the Board at the end of this term. You will be missed. Thank you! Welcome to new Board members George James (one year term), Nancy O'Donnell-Monk, Sunil Pandila and Mae Wesley. Linda Anderson, Randy Dove and yours truly were re-elected. Additional members of the Board whose term was not up are: Andre Nogue, Margaret Gailling, Brian Harris, Wilma Mollard and Louise Nichol. Les Lye is our Past President.

Happy Summer!
Robert Wuschenny, President

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GRAY MATTERS

Volume 21 Issue 1
Summer 2016



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Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism
Seniors Working Together

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism is an umbrella organization that brings together groups of older adults who offer their wealth of experience, knowledge and time to work together in the interest of seniors in Saskatchewan. From a wide range of backgrounds, these groups work selflessly to better the life of older adults, whether advocating about issues of interest to seniors, providing specific types of programming, or sharing information to benefit seniors in our province.

SSM Member Organizations:

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Moose Jaw & District Seniors Association
National Association of Federal Retirees
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All editorial matter published in Gray Matters represents the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the publication's Communication Committee or the SSM. Statements and opinions expressed do not represent the official policy of SSM unless so stated.

Look for Gray Matters to be available quarterly: January, April, July, October.

Articles for consideration for publication are welcomed. Reports of past, present and future activities and programs associated with member organizations are also invited. Deadline for submissions is the first day of the month preceding publication.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by Gray Matters or SSM. Information regarding rates and policy available on request. Gray Matters can be contacted at #112 - 2001 Cornwall St., Regina, Sask., S4P 3X9. Phone (306) 359 - 9956; fax (306) 359 - 6922, e-mail: ssm@skseniorsmechanism.ca



SSM Annual Conference

The following articles highlight some of the work being done to address social isolation by those presenting at our conference.



Mental Healthcare Needs of Rural Seniors

As individuals age, it is not uncommon to experience increased loneliness and social isolation. This isolation is often the result of a combination of factors including grief and loss, changes to mental health status, declines in physical health, lack of transportation, communication barriers, and reduced financial resources. For older adults who live in rural locations, these factors are further impacted by geographical barriers and reduced access to support services.

In 2014/2015 a community-based research study was conducted in Sunrise Health Region to identify the mental healthcare needs of community-dwelling seniors in rural Saskatchewan, and to examine the factors that contribute to emotional wellbeing and prevent social isolation. Data was collected in three ways. First, individual qualitative interviews were conducted with 27 rural seniors aged 65 – 91 years of age who lived in and around the rural communities of Preeceville, Norquay, Ituna, and Melville. Second, focus groups were conducted with individuals



Social Isolation is a Major Issue for People with Dementia

A report released by Alzheimer's Australia in February of 2015 revealed that social isolation is still one of the major issues associated with a diagnosis of dementia. In a survey, more than half of the participants surveyed felt that people avoided spending time with them because of their diagnosis. The report also showed that dementia can have devastating impact on the social lives of people with dementia, with more than one third saying that they wished they had more social contact with people in the community.

This report is consistent with findings released by Alzheimer's Disease International in 2012 that indicated that one in four people with dementia (24%) hide or conceal their diagnosis citing stigma as the main reason. Forty percent of people with dementia report not being included in everyday life and two out of every three people with dementia and their caregivers believe that there is a lack of understanding of dementia in their country. One of the most devastating effects of dementia is the



New Red Cross Friendly Visiting program

What is Friendly Visiting?
The concept is simple – just like it sounds, Red Cross trained volunteers are matched with a senior who could use this service. Friendly visiting is one on one, personal visiting for an hour at least once every two weeks. Companionship is the key – depending on their interests, the pair may chat, play a game, do a craft or discuss the news. Our volunteers are also trained to identify and flag physical and emotional risks in client seniors and ensure that assistance is offered. The Saskatchewan program is targeted at those who are isolated or find it difficult to leave their home and especially rural communities. There is no charge for this service.

Yorkton was originally chosen as the pilot site and we launched the program there in spring of 2015. We are excited to be moving forward as part of a Pan-Canadian New Horizons project in Saskatchewan. As part of a collaborative project with fantastic partners like SSM, Alzheimer's Society and

all articles continued on page 18



Do You Agree?

-John Knight

"But You Didn't"

I looked at you and smiled the other day
I thought you'd see me but you didn't
I said "I love you" and waited for what you would say
I thought you'd hear me but you didn't
I asked you to come outside and play ball with me
I thought you'd follow me but you didn't
I drew a picture just for you to see
I thought you'd save it but you didn't
I made a fort for us back in the woods
I thought you'd camp with me but you didn't
I found some worms'n such for fishing if we could
I thought you'd want to go but you didn't
I needed you just to talk to, my thoughts to share
I thought you'd want to but you didn't
I told you about the game hoping you'd be there
I thought you'd surely come but you didn't
I asked you to share my youth with me
I thought you'd want to but you couldn't
My country called me to war,
you asked me to come home safely...
But I didn't.

Written by: Stan Gebhardt

This poem I believe talks a lot about life. We tend to spend a lot of our time looking after and chasing after the things that are not important to us and not enough time building memories and becoming a better person by helping others. We only have to pick up a paper or listen to the news and we hear about people abusing wives, children and other people. My father always said to me, "If you don't have anything nice to say, keep your mouth shut".

continued on page 17 Do You Agree?

daniellechartier

MLA Saskatoon Riversdale

Critic for health care and senior's issues



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THE BEEHIVE GROUP OF BUSINESSES



It's important that we encourage our aging loved ones to remain active in their hobbies and interests, and provide them with opportunities to socialize with family, friends and peers.

The Honourable Dustin Duncan

Minister of Health

With the summer season in full swing, it's the perfect opportunity to enjoy all the benefits that the warm weather brings. It's a time for family gatherings, catching up with old friends and getting back to our outdoor hobbies.

Unfortunately there are some of us who struggle to participate in such social activities. While seniors are an active group in Saskatchewan, it is not uncommon for some older adults to experience isolation and loneliness.

As we age, we tend to lose touch with social contacts due to retirement, relocation or simply lack of mobility. Whatever the reasons may be, the feelings of being alone can have a negative effect on both physical and mental health.

It's important that we encourage our aging loved ones to remain active in their hobbies and interests, and provide them with opportunities to socialize with family, friends and peers.

One way we can do this is by helping seniors to stay in close proximity to their existing social circle, in their homes and communities, near the people and places that they are familiar with.

That is why our government is committed to initiatives that support seniors to live safely and comfortably in their homes as long as possible.

The Home First/Quick Response projects work to enhance supports in the community so seniors can remain independent at home, and to facilitate transitions back home for individuals who present at emergency departments. Home First/Quick Response is available in the Regina Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon, Prince Albert Parkland and Prairie North health regions.

The Seniors' House Calls pilot program focuses on helping seniors who have complex health conditions and require medical care and support at home. This

allows health care providers, such as physicians and nurse practitioners, to attend to clients in their own homes, which helps those clients avoid unnecessary trips to acute or primary health centres. This program is currently available in Regina and will be expanded to Saskatoon.

Our government also acknowledges the excellent work that the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism is undertaking with the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan initiative. Efforts to help build safer, more welcoming communities for seniors will go a long way to reducing the isolation of older adults.

We all share the goal of ensuring that Saskatchewan's seniors can live a connected, active and engaged lifestyle.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy summer.



Cathay WAGANTALL

Member of Parliament for Yorkton-Melville

Helping Canada's Seniors

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answer page 9



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BBB Torch Awards

The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism was very pleased to be selected as a finalist for the Better Business Bureau Torch Awards in the Non-Profit Organizations Category. This award recognizes the actions of businesses that display ethical business decision-making and integrity in business practices resulting in a positive impact in the community. Although we were not the award recipient, we felt very honored to be nominated. Eight representatives of SSM enjoyed a Gala Evening at the Queensbury in Regina on April 21, 2016.



Yeah But...

You know as we age, we do not become less of a person. We might walk a little slower, we might have some extra health problems but we do have some strong benefits of wisdom and knowledge. We have lived life and can be a great wealth of knowledge.

My parents, God rest their souls, taught me a lot and I spent a lot of time with them in their later years learning from their wisdom.

The real 'Yeah But..' to this is rather than saying 'Yeah But...' he or she is just older, is to say I could learn a lot from him or her.

Age is just a number!

-John Knight



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Crypto Corner

Answer (from page 7)

Aging opens many opportunities for enjoyment.

Two of my favorite delights are ice cream and chocolate. At our age, it's a good idea to use discretion to avoid intake of excessive quantities of these choices.



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REGINA AIRPORT AUTHORITY LOOKS FOR INPUT FROM SASK SENIORS MECHANISM

Regina Airport Authority (RAA), operator of the Regina International Airport, prides itself on providing excellent facilities and services to our many stakeholders in Southern Saskatchewan. Excellent customer service and a positive passenger experience are the key service deliverables that are priorities for the organization. Fundamental to RAA's success is ensuring that feedback and input from our diverse stakeholder groups is actively sought, a process which often brings new and unique perspectives to what will only make the organization better.

Accordingly, in 2015, RAA reached out to the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism about assistance from an "Age Friendly Resource Team" to review how our facilities and services could be improved to better serve this important demographic. What started out as an initial evaluation focused on safety issues became an all-encompassing on-site review examining passenger flows and a follow-up brainstorming session that covered issues such as:

- Exterior and interior signage
- Flight information displays
- Escalator and elevator
- Post security areas
- Arrivals area
- Seating
- Customer Service

Excellent discussion took place and valuable advice was received from the participants. Work on addressing priority action items as shown below began almost immediately. RAA appreciates the relationship developed with the Sask Seniors Mechanism and looks forward to additional information exchanges going forward.



New Elevator Sign



Easier to read flight information format

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- The result of your Tip is inputted into a formula which calculates the reward amount
- Your Tip and the amount is presented to our Board of Directors which authorizes the amount to be paid to the Tipster.
- The Tipster is contacted and advised of the amount they are rewarded; if it was a Web or Text Tip...if it was a call Tip, we have to wait for the Tipster to call us back to advise them of their reward.
- The Tipster is asked what financial institution and date they would like to pick up their cash at.
- Our Accountant will then mail a cheque to the manager of the financial institution with instructions to cash the cheque and place the cash in an envelope with the Tipster's unique number on it.
- The Tipster attends the Bank on the date they requested...asks the manager for the envelope with their number on it...and the manager hands them the envelope; with no questions asked.

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Sgt. Rob Cozine presenting at SSM Annual Conference



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I also offer a Special Seniors Marketing Plan and Promotion. For more information please do not hesitate to contact me.



CAA Saskatchewan Safe Summer Driving Tips

Whatever your summer plans are – perhaps driving to the cabin, lake or campground – here are some tips to help ensure you have a successful road trip:

- Check your vehicle's brakes and steering components, battery, fluid levels and tires. The **Regina Battery Depot, Car Care Centre and CAA Approved Auto Repair Service** facilities can assist you with your automotive needs.
- If you are pulling a trailer, don't forget to inspect the tires and wheel bearings/lug nuts.
- Pack a motorhome roadside kit containing a two-ton aluminum jack, automotive tools, large wheel wrench, spare coolant hoses, accessory belt, engine oil and antifreeze.
- Take along an emergency roadside kit - available at your local CAA Store.
- Plan your route ahead of time. Let others know your travel plans. If you experience delays let them know.
- Take rest breaks if needed.
- Eliminate driver distractions such as use of mobile phones, eating, drinking or engaging in long conversations. If you're the driver, ask one of your passengers to check your mobile phone, use the navigation systems or read maps.
- Not comfortable driving at night or during rush hour traffic? Best to plan your trip accordingly. Visit **Seniorsdriving.caa.ca** for helpful tips.
- Slow to 60 km/h on Saskatchewan highways for emergency vehicles such as tow trucks, law enforcement and ambulances, assisting other motorists.

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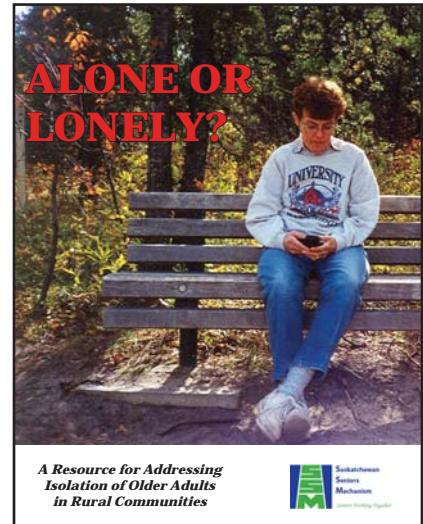


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ISOLATION PILOT PROJECTS

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism, with funding from New Horizons for Seniors, embarked on pilot projects in three Saskatchewan communities aimed at alleviating social isolation for older adults living in rural communities. Our goal was to develop a program which could be volunteer-led by seniors within the local community, thus promoting volunteerism among the older adults. Programming was designed by the community so it would best fit their needs. The three communities involved in the pilot project are **Hanley, Strasbourg and Lumsden**.

In addition to the three pilot projects we have developed a resource for addressing isolation. It describes what isolation is, who is at risk, why it is important to address this issue, what are some simple solutions communities or individuals can take on and how they can implement these ideas to alleviate isolation in their community, even if it is one person at a time. This resource is available to communities.



HANLEY



The Hanley Seniors have been **planting flowers at our Memorial Park and Community Hall** for many years. We are very fortunate to have two greenhouses nearby who provide the plants. This year we involved grade 5 and 6 students who took the job very seriously. In front of the community hall, we had two large pots that needed to be filled with two flats of bedding plants. One young boy would run back and forth checking where they planted a particular one so they could do the same in their pot. The students were really "into it". They made sure the flowers were all planted "the same" and really cheered each other along during the project. There were 25 students who attended along with 10 seniors who provided guidance. Other seniors sat on lawn chairs and watched the goings on while sipping lemonade. It turned out to be a wonderful learning experience for the children and a very low-cost, enjoyable event for all age groups.

Tuesday afternoons are assigned to **quilting**. After many, many hours of sewing, stitching and tying, 85 quilts were completed and donated to M.C.C. Relief, the Y.W.C.A., the new Children's Hospital and the Diabetes Association. Here Marg Peters is working on a beautiful quilt with a Saskatchewan theme - "Land of the Living Skies".



Hanley is a very active community and is doing a wide range of other activities. These activities include: weekly *Forever...in motion* classes, pole walking, knitting program, Monday morning coffee etc.



continued on page 16

Isolation enables elder abuse



Isolation can lead to abuse and neglect of older adults. Abuse leads to further isolation as older adults are prevented from doing the things they want to, accessing the services they need or having the money to meet their needs because their finances are being depleted by abusers.

The following information is taken from from “It’s Not Right!” Neighbours, Friends and Families for Older Adults.

WHAT IS ABUSE OF OLDER ADULTS?

The terms “elder abuse” or “senior abuse” are often used to describe the experience of older adults who are abused, usually by someone they know and often by someone they care about.

It is abuse whenever someone limits or controls the rights and freedoms of an older adult. The older adult is unable to freely make choices because they are afraid of being humiliated, hurt, left alone or of the relationship ending. Abuse causes harm to an older adult.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines abuse of older adults as “a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person.”

When a spouse is abusive, it is called domestic violence. When abuse is used to maintain power and control over a spouse, it is called coercive control. Women are most often the victims of coercive control.

WHO ARE THE ABUSERS OF OLDER ADULTS?

Abuse of older adults often occurs within the family, by adult children or grandchildren. However, other relatives, friends, neighbours, paid or unpaid caregivers, landlords, financial advisors or any individual in a position of power, trust or authority can also be abusive. When a spouse is abusive, it is called domestic violence.

Socialization helps prevent elder abuse



HOW YOU CAN RECOGNIZE ABUSE

Abuse happens in different ways, and usually becomes worse without help of some kind. Older adults often experience more than one form of abuse. All abuse is serious and causes harm.

1. Financial Abuse
2. Psychological Abuse
3. Spiritual or Religious Abuse
4. Sexual Abuse
5. Neglect
6. Physical Abuse

It is abuse whenever someone limits or controls the rights and freedoms of an older adult.

WHO IS AT RISK?

There are a number of risk factors that may cause concern:

- Isolation—physical, social or cultural
- History of domestic violence
- Shared living situations
- Dependency on an older adult (for shelter or financial help)
- Addiction issues
- Depression and other mental health issues
- Cognitive impairment

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Neighbours, friends and family members can learn to do three things:

- 1. SEE it!** Take your concerns seriously, learn the warning signs.
- 2. NAME it!** Overcome your hesitation to help. Talk to the older adult you think may be abused (without the person you think is abusive present) about what you have seen or heard. Use non-judgmental language.
- 3. CHECK it!** Ask questions: Are you ok? Do you feel safe? Is there anyone hurting you or making you feel uncomfortable? What do you want to do? How can I help?

Strasbourg



We had decided initially to focus on **revitalizing the Seniors Centre**. We hosted a Seniors Open House and approximately 30 people attended! Since then, the average attendance has been approximately 20, previously it was 3 or 4. It certainly did not take a lot of effort and the results were very rewarding.

January was a busy month. We organized a **Pay it Forward/Random Acts of Kindness Month** where community members were encouraged to visit or phone isolated seniors in their community. Both seniors and non-seniors took part.

Also SSM came out in January and introduced us to the **age-friendly** concept. We look forward to moving toward becoming an age-friendly community.



This community is also working on further ideas such as a taxi service for seniors to get to appointments and activities.

Lumsden

Lumsden is unique in that its pilot project is taking place in an assisted living residence. Even when living in a seniors complex, it is possible to become isolated.

Weekly **Friday afternoon tea parties** and Tuesday outings to have **coffee** in the community have been a success with several seniors participating.

The local Lions Club hosted an evening of food and entertainment for seniors in the community. It is an annual event and much anticipated by the seniors. However, not all have access to **transportation** to get themselves there. I posted a sign-up sheet for anyone who required a ride, and we were able to transport 7 seniors to the event. A good time was had by all.



Isolation is a serious threat to quality of life for older adults both urban and rural. It needs to be addressed, alleviated, and indeed, prevented. As part of our work on Age-Friendly Communities, SSM will continue to address the issue of isolation.

We have several copies of the resource, *Alone or Lonely*, in the SSM Office and would be happy to distribute them to communities that would like ideas on how to address this issue.

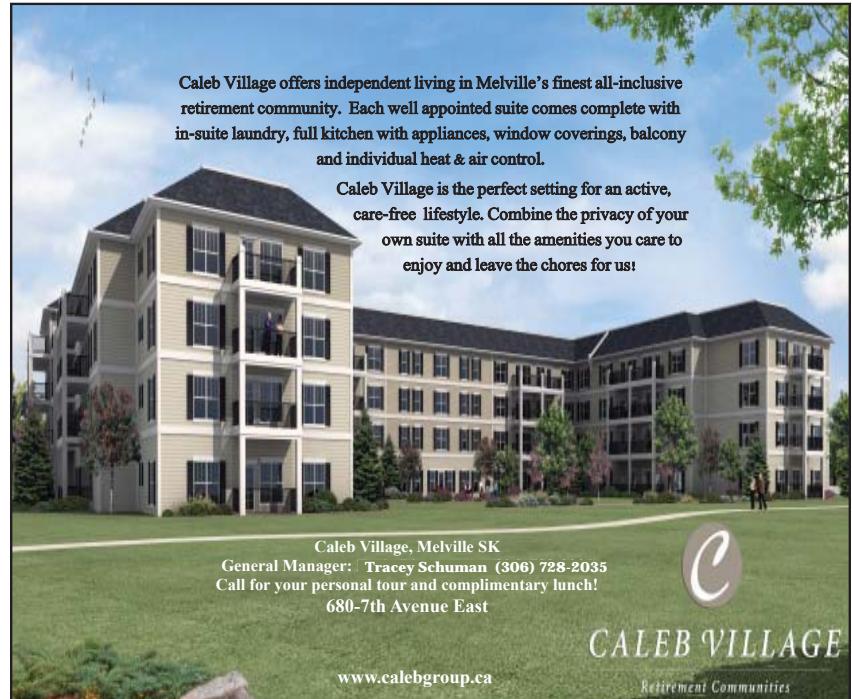
Remember: You can make a difference! Look for ways that you can enrich someone else's life by being a friend!

continued from page 5 Do ou Agree?

One of my daughters had great empathy for seniors and if she ever disappeared in a store or out on the street, we could find her sitting talking with an older person. I asked her once why she enjoyed talking with older people and she said they always seem lonely and they are always kind. You know the saying, 'out of the mouth of babes'. It is true.

Now that I am in this group I find that it can be lonely out there. Some people treat us as if we have nothing left to give and believe, I guess, that we should just go away and not bother them. This is a sad but true commentary on what is so prevalent in our world.

Seniors are people and have contributed a lot to society. It would be great if society and government treated us with kindness, caring, love and, even if nothing else, gave us a smile and a few kind words.



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SPHERU continued from page 4

who work and volunteer with older adults including home care staff, physicians, nurses, social workers, clergy, town administrators, and older adults who volunteer at seniors drop in centres. Third, additional data was gathered at two community workshops held in June 2015 in Preeceville and Ituna. Preliminary data gathered from the study was shared at these full day events, and a World Cafe format in the afternoon included all participants in a process of discussing, verifying, and adding to the research results. Both community workshops were well-attended, with 80 people participating in Preeceville, and 40 people participating in Ituna.

This research study identified four areas that impact directly upon the ability of older adults to maintain good emotional and mental health including: a) independence, b) access to services, c) the availability of a variety of services and supports (for medical and social interaction needs), and d) aging in place. As a result of this research study, a community intervention has been developed to directly address social isolation identified during this study. Working collaboratively with the Canadian Red Cross, a Friendly Visitor Initiative has been developed to be delivered as a pilot program in Sunrise Health Region.

This research study was conducted by Dr. Nuelle Novik. For info contact nuelle.novik@uregina.ca

Dr. Nuelle Novik
Faculty of Social Work, U of R
Research Faculty, SPHERU

Dementia continued from page 4

stigma and social isolation that follows for the person with dementia, and their family caregivers.

The number of people with dementia is increasing across Saskatchewan. In 2016 there were over 19,000 Saskatchewanians who have Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia and that number is expected to grow to over 28,000 by 2038.

Approximately 60 percent of people who have dementia live in the community in their own homes with the support of family caregivers. Communities across Saskatchewan will be challenged to become Dementia Friendly Communities to help people with dementia to live well in their communities.

The Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan will be gathering information from surveys, focus groups and a Dementia Advisory Committee over the next year to determine what is important to people with dementia and family caregivers to make their communities better places to live well with dementia. This information will then be used to develop tools and resources to help communities become Dementia Friendly Communities.

If you are wondering how you can better support people living with dementia, I encourage you to contact the Alzheimer Society to learn more about Alzheimer's disease and dementia. You can learn more at www.alzheimer.ca/sk or by calling 1-800-263-3367.

Joanne Bracken
CEO, Alzheimer Society

Red Cross continued from page 4

SPHERU, we have a new "jump start" to this program. We are excited to really expand the program in rural East Central SK, move into West Central Saskatchewan; hopefully diversify by working with the Fédération des aînés fransaskois and possibly training Francophone volunteers to do visits en français. We look forward to expanding into north east SK (Melfort-Tisdale-Hudson Bay area), and to begin reaching out to First Nations and Métis communities to gauge interest.

How you can get involved

Support, spread the word, VOLUNTEER, donate, refer others...

For just an hour once every week or two, you can make someone's day! Training resources and support will be provided.

Contact:

Yvette Crane

Lead, Health Programming SK

Yvette.crane@redcross.ca

306-721-1645



Red Cross Volunteer
Sandra Leitch



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by Kerrie Strathy, Lifelong Learning Centre, University of Regina



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Aboriginal Grandmothers Caring for Grandchildren Support Network

Lifelong Learning Centre has outreach programs which bring together older adults who might not otherwise benefit from learning programs. One of these is the Aboriginal Grandmothers Caring for Grandchildren Support Network. This Network brings together older women who are struggling to raise grandkids and who did not realize they were not alone prior to coming to a Support Network meet-

ing. It is very exciting to see members of this group engage in physical exercise, share their stories and struggles, and fellowship and laughter over tea and bannock. These women have overcome social isolation and in the process they have learned how to work together to improve the lives of the kids they are caring for.

Older Adult Abuse Presentations

Another LLC outreach program involves a group of volunteers who were trained in how to make presentations to assist to address older adult abuse. Over the past year this group of dedicated volunteers made over 40 presentations to seniors and

community groups, and to students in Social Work, Nursing, and Police Studies. One of their key messages is to keep older adults socially engaged because isolated seniors are more likely to become victims of abuse.

Social Isolation

Over the past year a group of LLC students worked with students in a University of Regina Social Work class to explore social isolation of older adults in Regina. They learned a lot from this joint initiative and came up with recommendations to assist other older adults to overcome social isolation. They rec-

ognized that some factors contributing to social isolation require systemic changes to be addressed, while others are simple things anyone can do, like spending time with older adults they know who do not get out often or inviting them to go out with them to community events or courses at LLC.

Did you know that over 30% of older adults in Canada are at risk of being socially isolated? This involves having fewer social contacts and fewer social roles, as well as the absence of mutually rewarding relationships with others. Older adults who are socially isolated are at increased risk of being uncomfortable around other people, they may be at greater risk of becoming abused, or may develop negative health behaviours. Those who are sedentary and do not eat well are at greater risk of falling and being hospitalized than are older adults who are active and engaged in their community. Studies have shown that the lack of a supportive social network can increase the risk of dementia and decline in older adults. LLC is looking forward to working with SSM and others to provide more opportunities for older adults to remain engaged and interact with younger folks to avoid becoming socially isolated.

Learn to live, and live to learn!

LLC has a wide range of longer courses designed to enhance the well-being of older adults physically, intellectually, and socially. In addition to these longer courses we have many regular noon hour forums, such as monthly Wellness Wednesday Forums with presenters talking about health issues of concern to older adults. For more information about Lifelong Learning Centre courses see our website [www.uregina.ca/cce/lifelong](http://www uregina ca/cce/lifelong) or call 306-585-5748. For information about how to become a volunteer at LLC to assist with our outreach programs to address social isolation, increase awareness of how to prevent older adult abuse, and more call 306-585-5766.

Matilda Walter

as told to daughter, Leona Morrison

During the warmer days in the late winter, Dad had gone with his team sleigh to Grandpa's homestead where poplar and aspen trees grow in abundance in thick bushes for miles around. There he had chopped down trees for several days, to secure a supply of fuel for the next winter. This would augment the coal that had to be bought for fuel for these harsh Saskatchewan winters. A crew of four or five men would later come with a motor-driven saw to cut these timbers into suitable sized logs for the furnace. These would then be piled to be dried or cured for next winter's fuel.

Getting up at four o'clock, doing chores for cattle, horses, hogs and chickens by lantern light, a quick breakfast, then driving for miles by horses and sleigh to chop trees, trim branches off, drag them to accessible piles until late afternoon, then the long drive home and facing chores again was exhausting work. Dad needed a break and decided it was time to haul the trees home before a thaw would soften the snow, making hauling impossible.

Mother had been left at home with her infant of two months for days on end. She had done her best to help with the evening chores, but she too needed a break before 'cabin fever' set in. So one beautiful calm sunny

day, they decided that she and the baby [Matilda's sister] would go to Grandma's to visit, wrapped in many layers of baby blankets, which were pinned into place, leaving only a small breathing place exposed. In the sleigh, a heavy blanket covered mother and baby.

Dinner over, and a very pleasant visit completed, Dad helped Mom climb up on top of the load of trees which reached three feet up above the sleigh box. He handed up the baby, wrapped tightly like a little sausage, and off they started for home. The country was hilly, the snow deep and the rutted trails heavy, so their progress was slow.

But it was a pleasant time to relax and enjoy the beauty of the hills and trees in a white quiet world. The jingle of the harnesses and the fresh air soon soothed the baby to sleep in its little cocoon.

Then suddenly, without warning, disaster struck. On one side the sleigh runners cut down through a soft spot in the snow, tipping over the load and sending everything and everyone sprawling into the snow. Dad immediately sprang to the horses to calm and control them. Then



In the early years, many cords of wood were cut for use in the winter.

Picture submitted by Lynne Couzens

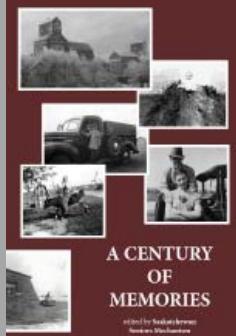
he hurried back to free Mother whose leg was pinned under the trunk of a tree. Miraculously she escaped injury because of the deep soft snow under them. They realized they could have both been under those trees, crushed to death possibly. Instantly they thought of the baby. In fright and consternation they frantically searched all around, but couldn't find her. In panic they righted the load, expecting the worst. But no, there was still no baby to be found. Then Dad happened to glance down the side of the hill to the trees. There lay a little white bundle down at the foot of the trees. Baby had rolled all the way down the hill, coming to a halt at the bottom. When they hurriedly picked her up, they found to their amazement and joy that she was unharmed and still asleep, oblivious to all the commotion around her.

Thanking God for his mercy and protection, they continued on home. Mother decided to stay home safely with her baby after that adventure.

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism recently published a book. Those 90+ in our province sent in their memories and we were excited to compile them into a book. A Century of Memories includes true stories about real people who pioneered the province of Saskatchewan. The story on the facing page is included in this 367 page book.

A Century of Memories

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If you live in Saskatoon, please call Saskatoon Council on Aging (306-652-2255) to register.

SASKATCHEWAN SENIORS ASSOCIATION INC.

NEWSLETTER

Please send all your news and comments about the SSAI newsletter to:
Fern Haight, Box 393, Hanley, SK.
Fax: 544-2757, Email: fern.h@sasktel.net

President's Message - Fern Haight

By the time Gray Matters is published our Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. convention will be over. (June 7, 8 & 9th). I hope the people that attended enjoyed the event.

This convention is your opportunity to present and discuss seniors' issues. Anything you are concerned about may be presented to the Association at this convention and at any other time during the year. Following the convention the Board makes presentations to the appropriate government, either in written form or by personal visitation.

Some of the concerns which surface include transportation, care homes, housing, lack of finances (fixed income people), health issues (need for glasses, dentures) and homelessness. These are only some of the circumstances that create many serious problems for some of our seniors. Sometimes to the extent of wanting to look at classifying it as abuse of the elderly, during their twilight years.

Looking at transportation for instance. People reach a stage in life when they no longer can drive. They are also advised to stay in their own home as long as possible. At the same time government passenger buses are removed from roads in certain areas of the province. No support comes from the government for volunteer driving programs, in these now isolated communities. What are seniors supposed to do when they have a doctor's appointment, need medication or even need groceries? This can become a real dilemma. Family and friends are wonderful, but you cannot expect them to care for all of your needs.

In this present day there are many, many issues concerning the welfare of seniors and it will only worsen as the senior population increases. But you know seniors can help this situation by voicing their concerns. Let the government know the problems you are facing. Don't suffer in silence. You must "SPEAK OUT".

Do have a safe, enjoyable summer!

1st Vice President's Report

Lorna Weldon

Recommendations for Government

- Have more nursing homes in small communities.
- Help senior centres to stay open.
- Help low income seniors with glasses, hearing aids and dentures.
- Have something in place to help seniors in small communities to get to medical appointments in the city.
- Have government work with seniors.
- Have low cost rent for seniors. Leave them something for a little enjoyment.

These are topics I have heard seniors discussing. There is probably lots more we could recommend.

DIRECTORS' OPINIONS

Seniors' Voice

Mike Kaminski – SSAI Director

How does the voice of a senior get heard in rural Saskatchewan? Does this senior have to move to one of the cities just to be heard? As a senior, does your voice get louder if you live in Regina or Saskatoon? From a science perspective, the answers are very basic. The senior's voice is heard in the same manner, and at the same sound level as anywhere else. However, from a social and political perspective, the answers are totally different. Somehow or other, seniors in rural Saskatchewan are hardly ever heard or listened to. It does seem that the voice of seniors in cities is louder than that of those in other areas. From a human perspective, seniors should be heard and treated the same no matter where they live. All seniors should be afforded the same rights to enjoy life with quality and dignity regardless of their place of residence.

The voice of seniors tends to be heard more if they express their concerns in a unified manner. The impact of what is being voiced is much more effective when it is done by a collective group of seniors. Throughout the province most seniors are involved in clubs for social interaction, activities and celebrations. Saskatchewan seniors are represented by the clubs which are integrated in districts and regions according to general interests or professional affiliations. Examples of seniors' provincial organizations structured in this manner are the Saskatchewan Seniors Association Incorporated and the Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan. Their memberships are drawn from all the regions of the province. Such collectives definitely represent the Voice of Seniors from the whole province.

In a similar sense, provincial groups need to work in concert to be heard at the national level. Some organizations have that linkage to other seniors in a national collective. Acer Cart is the national voice for superannuated teachers; however, the National Pensioners Federation is the strongest and most effective voice of seniors across Canada. In a strategic move, many of these national groups (over sixty of them) have formed a larger voice based on common concerns and issues. Yes, they will be effective and likely listened to by the federal government. You may have guessed the name of this large national collective. Yes, it is **Seniors' Voice**. This collective of organizations representing seniors across Canada is in the process of putting together a **Declaration of Health Care**. This declaration is comprised of the following principles: Quality Care, Wellness and Prevention, Health System Integration, Primary Health Care, Training of Healthcare Providers, Appropriate Prescription Medications, Home Care and Community Support, Acute and Specialty Care, Long-term Care and Assisted Living Facilities, Palliative Care, and End-of Life Care and End-of-Life Decisions.

The members of **Seniors' Voice** are in agreement "that Canada needs a national seniors strategy that is reflective of a society that is just and compassionate and equal. Our current universal health care system, Medicare, does not fully reflect these values or the changing needs of our population. We believe that Medicare still largely addresses the priorities it did fifty years ago. At that time it was designed to meet the health care needs of a younger Canadian population

requiring treatment for acute health concerns which could be resolved in a relatively short period of time. We agree that acute care needs must still be met and be adequately funded. Today, however, our population has a much larger proportion of older citizens who often require care for multiple chronic conditions to be managed over long periods of time, and who almost always prefer care in home or community-based settings. Our current health care system does not reflect these changing needs and preferences, and urgently needs to do so. We believe that health care innovation and reformation, through a national health care strategy that takes into account our country's changing demographics, would enhance health care delivery to all – to older and younger Canadians alike. We urge governments to coordinate endeavours to establish this strategy to improve health care in our country."

Seniors' Voice urges "federal, provincial, territorial and local governments to collaborate in the establishment of a national health care strategy for seniors that meets the changing needs of our population; and that protects, transforms and strengthens our national health care system for all Canadians."

My Wish List for All Seniors

Marie-Ange Rancourt, Director, Region F

1. That Federal and Saskatchewan Governments provide leadership and support for seniors responding to their needs.
2. That essential medical services for seniors be made more easily available.
3. That concerns regarding home care be addressed. Re: Funding.
4. That long-term care has more quality care, including more beds, and be more affordable. There is a lack of services in various languages to meet religious needs.
5. That seniors issues with transportation be taken more seriously, not just passed over, example: removing Saskatchewan transportation company from rural areas and in many of these rural areas there is no other bus service, so what is left?

6. The consumer price index does not meet the requirements for seniors. Many seniors depend solely on OAS/CPP, yet everything is costing more. Some seniors are at the point they have to choose between medication or food.
7. My wish list could go on and on for seniors. But most of all treat all people equal, with respect and dignity, whether you live in a high rise or sleep under a bridge.

ODDS and ENDS

Region G, District 21

Submitted by Co-ordinator, Lorna Weldon

On April 13 we held our winter games windup at Ituna. Started the afternoon with entertainment, music, jokes, poems and lots of snacks, followed by a very nice supper.

Wishart senior club was invited to take part, really enjoyed it and want to “Thank” everyone.

Ribbons were presented for the following events.

3Spot

1. Lawrence Prisiak & James Patras, Wishart
2. Gerrit & Traus deGooyer, Kelliher
3. Vicky Cariou & Carmen Bonneau, Ituna

Scrabble

1. Cecile Lambert, Kelliher
2. Louise Eckel, Quinton
3. Isabel Eckel, Quinton

Schuffleboard

1. Gerrit deGooyer & Tom Copper, Kelliher
2. Aileen Sabiston & Lorna Weldon, Wishart
3. James & Alvena Patras, Wishart

Norwegian Whist

1. Agnes & Mary Brockman, Quinton
2. Cecile Lambert & Sonia King, Kelliher
3. Hughenia Watson & Marjorie Yanowich, Quinton; Collette Brockman & Alice Sich, Quinton

Carpet Bowl

1. Alvina Patras, Robert Kroeskamp, James Patras, Lawerence Prisiak, Wishart
2. Gladys Perry, Lorna Weldon, Aileen Sabiston, Ed Weldon, Wishart
3. Cecile Lambert, Elsie Kayter, Tom Cooper, Winnie Yanks, Kelliher

Cribbage

1. Carmen Bonneau & Vicky Cariou, Ituna
2. Tom & Josie Cooper, Kelliher
3. Josephine Halterman & Mary Brockman, Quinton

Trump Whist

1. Sophia Grebinski & Lil Krywaulek, Ituna
2. Elsie Kaytor & Eve Pawluk, Kelliher
3. Helen Kanciruk & Rose Braden, Ituna

Bowling

1. Louis Szeman, Kelliher
2. Mike Tereposky, Kelliher
3. Sonia King, Kelliher

Bean Bag Toss

1. Alvena & James Patras, Wishart
2. Margaret Voman & Mike Tereposky, Kelliher
3. Cecile Lambert & Mike Yanks, Kelliher

Bowling Report, March 2016

The 2015/2016 “Senior Bowling Tournament”
Event Organizer, Sheila Righi

With ‘38 teams’, entered it turned out to be an excellent tournament.

I ordered ‘Turkey Pins’ with a 10 on them to commemorate our 10th anniversary, a welcome addition. This tournament has proven to be a successful event for the Organization (S.S.A.I.) as well for our ‘Seniors’ as it is the only one in Saskatchewan.

My ‘Sincere Thanks’ to Derrick and Don Sr. Hlewko, Mento Bowl owners and their staff for all the help and support. My ‘Special Thanks’ to the following people for ticket sales, setting up, etc. – Lorna & Ed Weldon, Gladys & Ed Simonar, Nettie Caruk, Larry Balon, Marie-Ange Rancourt, Ann & Joe LeClerk, Lyla & Maurice Hopp, Clara Alloard who also prints all the signs and helped set up the auction. Grace Strobel who has always helped at registration, Ethel Hlewko for all her help, wherever required.

The winner of the team entry fee was 'Rolling Stones' from Regina, a first time entry. Doris Skibecki of Prince Albert won the 'Set of Bowling Balls'. The 50/50, drawn a week before the tournament, was won by Bert MacIntosh of Prince Albert, who received \$44.00. My 'Sincere Thanks' to 'Individuals' and or 'Clubs' that donated money or prizes towards our 'Silent Auction'. Everything and everyone was very much appreciated. Thank you to Donny Parenteau, for the entertainment after the Banquet. Well done! Thanks also to the 'Prince Albert Inn' who catered to the banquet.

Winners of Tournament

2016 Gold Medal Winners – Rosetown

Minds in the Gutter,

- Walter Fernets
- Dorina Marischel
- Duane Sweatman
- Wanda Sweatman
- Les Wardrop

2016 Silver Medal Winners – Spiritwood

Turkey Hunters,

- George Switzer
- Peggy Giroux
- Larry Siegel
- Barb Szasz
- Peter Weibe

2016 Bronze Medal Winners – Rosetown

Rosetown Rollers,

- Hope Smith
- Dale Der
- Bob Smith
- Brian Anderson
- Bill Shkolny



2016 Gold Medal Winners

"Minds in the Gutter" – Walter Fernets, Dorina Marischel, Duane Sweatman, Wanda Sweatman, Les Wardrop



2016 Silver Medal Winners

"Turkey Hunters" – George Switzer, Peggy Giroux, Larry Siegel, Barb Szasz, Peter Weibe



2016 Bronze Medal Winners

"Rosetown Rollers" – Hope Smith, Dale Der, Bob Smith, Brian Anderson, Bill Shkolny

Did you know?

*The railway track from Regina to Stoughton used to be the longest stretch of perfectly straight track in the world, at 85 miles.

*The very first Dairy Queen was started in Melville in 1953. The original owner was Donald M. Patrick.

Now you know!

Please send me your club news so I can put it in Gray Matters. Thank you.

Fern Haight

7th Annual Saskatchewan Senior Volunteer Awards

presented by Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism



Banquet Speaker
Alvin Law



Awards Banquet

Sunday, Sept 25, 2016

Reception 5:00 p.m.

Dinner 5:30 p.m.

Conexus Arts Centre, Regina

Tickets: \$50.00



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