I recently had the good fortune to attend a health promotion conference in Israel. On a tour, I seized the opportunity to ride a camel. Camels are stubborn and slow. They rise from the sitting position with their back legs first, thrusting the rider unceremoniously forward. My life flashed before me as this tall animal had me perched over the edge of a hill. Riding a camel is not second nature to me. Neither is exercise to many older adults.

Research shows that the barriers to participating in exercise change as we hit our senior years. For the rest of us time, energy and motivation are the factors which prevent us from getting to the pool or gym. Illness, injury and fear of injury are prominent concerns amongst older Canadians. Yet exercise, like good food, clean air and water, is essential to our health and well-being throughout our lifetime. We forget that our bodies are meant to move. In fact, according to Dr. Wojtek Chodko-Zajko, a renowned researcher on aging and physical activity who spoke in Edmonton recently, research shows that older adults may be the group that benefits the most from being physically active. The aches, pains and debilitation we come to expect in later life may be alleviated and even avoided by being active.

Many of my older relatives seem astonished at the idea that a 45-minute purposeful walk a day may be the best ‘medicine’ for their arthritis, heart disease, high blood pressure, depression or extra weight they are carrying, amongst other complaints.

As you may have guessed, the issue of WellSpring is focused on older adults. Included are articles on the Senior Friendly Tool Kit, Crime and the Senior Citizen, Tips to Becoming Physically Active, Older Adult Fitness and more. You will also come across a few success stories. There are many stories of people’s loves that are inspiring but are often unheard. We often hear of the tragedies and the misjudgments of older adults rather than the successes and triumphs. Thus we would like to share with you some stories of peoples’ lives, their successes and triumphs, and in essence their inspiration. We hope this issue will change some of your perceptions around older adults, enlighten you about their con-

Saging by Cynthia Smith

"Think of saging instead of aging"

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Reference

1 Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute

Saging to sit beside and learn from the experience of many active older adults who volunteer time to ALCANO. They changed my perspective about the sum total of our life. Think of it as "saging", gaining wisdom, serenity, balanced judgement and other attributes versus aging equipped with loss, wrinkles and chronic illness.

Reference

1 Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute
Active Living and Seniors

Guest Column by
Shirley McCollan
Minister of Alberta Community Development, Responsible for Seniors

As our population ages, the quality of life of our seniors is an increasing concern for many Canadians. As minister responsible for seniors, I’ve had the opportunity to meet with seniors from across the province, and what they have told me is that they want to live their lives in health, safety and dignity, and as contributing members of their communities.

Our government is committed to helping seniors do this by supporting their independence and well-being and ensuring that they have the supports they need to maintain a high quality of life. One of the keys to maintaining a high quality of life is active living.

Studies indicate that physical activity can increase average life expectancy by as much as two years. In addition to living longer, exercise also helps us lead healthier lives. It leads to relaxation, increased concentration, enhanced creativity and memory, better task performance and problem solving, increased self-esteem and self-confidence, relief of frustration, reduced aggression, and decreased anxiety and depression.

Active living can make the aging process more comfortable for seniors by increasing bone and muscle strength, strengthening the heart and increasing lung capacity and joint flexibility. Even small improvements in physical fitness can improve a senior’s overall health. Even more important, however, is the impact of physical activity on a senior’s independence. Being strong enough and flexible enough to feed and dress oneself can mean the difference between living at home or living in a care facility. When seniors can care for themselves, it is far better for them to live at home and remain active in their families and communities than to be in a facility. This also reduces the burden on our health system.

Last year, our government asked a committee of Albertans from various sectors to form the Active Living Task Force. The task force’s job was to consult with Albertans and develop a plan for action. They came up with 25 specific recommendations — a blueprint of how we can improve our quality of life both now and in the future and create a health and well-being advantage for Albertans. One of the task force’s recommendations was to help seniors’ retention provide their clients with opportunities for physical activity. All seniors can gain tremendous benefits from regular physical activity. This doesn’t have to mean jogging five times a week or swimming a kilometer a day. You can gain significant health benefits by maintaining consistent levels of moderate, daily physical activity. This could be walking to the grocery store, gardening, going fishing, or doing other recreational activities with friends and family.

The International Year of Older Persons is rapidly approaching in 1999. This is a perfect opportunity for all seniors to make active living part of their lifestyles.

...Older Americans are healthier than they used to be...

The proportion of those over 65 who were disabled or in long-term care facilities declined 15% between 1982 and 1994, according to researchers at the Center for Demographic Studies at Duke University. This decline translates into 1.2 million fewer elderly people with chronic disabilities and/or in institutions that would have been expected based on rates in 1982.

—Berkeley Wellness Letter, April 1998

Is housework considered physical activity?

You should burn 2,000 calories a week in exercise and physical activity to reduce the risk of heart disease substantially, and doing household chores can play a role if you do chores energetically. However, even the hardest chores (washing windows, for example) will rarely boost your heart rate for 15 to 20 minutes, and will probably not burn as many calories per hour as sustained vigorous exercise. For aerobic benefits, don’t rely on housework alone. Walk, run or play a sport.

Calories burned per half hour (150 lbs. person)

Housework

Cooking 85
Vacuuming 95
Mopping 150
Sweeping floors 185

Exercise & Sports

Walking (3 mph) 125
Square dancing 180
Tennis (singles) 275
Skiing, cross country (fast) 310
Jogging (6 mph) 340

UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, May 1998

Airbus Industrie, supplier of commercial airplanes to Air Canada and others, reports that people’s bottoms are getting wider by an inch every 30 years. “People don’t fit into a Boeing 707 seat any longer,” says Jonathan Schofield, chairman of Airbus Industrie of North America Inc., referring to the 1960s vintage airliner. Today’s seats are wider to accommodate the ’90s physique.

—WestWorld Alberta, March/April 1998

Towards a Society for all Ages
International Year of Older Persons 1999

Shirley McCollan

WellSpring
Research Corner
Heart disease in women: What's the worry?

by John Spence, PhD
Research Coordinator

A recent survey found 58% of U.S. women believe that a woman's risk of dying from a heart attack is the same or lower than the risk of dying from breast cancer (Legatos et al., 1997). Approximately 20% of Canadian women identify coronary heart disease (CHD) as their biggest health concern (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 1997). These numbers are disturbing considering that cardiovascular disease (including both heart disease and stroke) is the number one killer of women in both the U.S. and Canada.

Forty percent of yearly mortalities in Canadian women are due to cardiovascular disease while 29% of mortalities are due to cancer (Thomas & Hrudley, 1997). Women are eight times more likely to die from CHD than breast cancer (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 1997).

Why the confusion? Several possible reasons exist as to why Canadian women are either less concerned or less knowledgeable about the risk of dying from CHD. While it is true that the incidence of breast cancer is higher among menstruating women than men, anecdotally reports suggest that breast cancer is also perceived to be more severe than CHD. That is, breast cancer is thought to cause more pain and suffering while a heart attack is assumed to often result in instant death. The surgical "cure" for breast cancer usually results in some type of disfigurement, an outcome that is not appealing to women. Similarly, the chemical "cure" for breast cancer often results in loss of hair, an outcome that can have dramatic effects on self-esteem and body-image.

A second possible reason why CHD is perceived to be less of a risk by women is that it is often thought of as a man's disease. The perception is that middle-aged men have heart attacks not middle-aged women. To some degree this is true, the death rate for acute myocardial infarction (heart attack in 45- to 54-year-old men is approximately 45 per 100,000, while it is approximately 11 per 100,000 in females of a similar age (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 1997). However, once women reach menopause, the differences between these rates are lessened dramatically. Due to the protective effects of endogenous estrogen, most deaths from CHD in females occur approximately ten to twenty years later than in males. As the big population bulge that we know as the baby boomers goes through life, society has witnessed a mid-life surge of heart disease.

Women need to be educated about the risks of both getting and dying from CHD and other chronic diseases such as cancer. While somewhat cliché, education is important because if public health and/or health promotion programs about CHD are to be effective, women need to be aware of their risk of getting the disease. For example, when making the decision about whether to receive hormone replacement therapy (HRT), women usually have to consider whether they are at low risk for CHD or breast cancer. If left on their own, the studies by Legatos et al. (1997) and the Heart and Stroke Foundation (1997) suggest that most women would assume breast cancer to be more of a risk. If nothing else, women should be more knowledgeable about health risks and asking more questions of their health care providers.

In association with education of the general public, physicians and other health care professionals need to be educated about both the prevention and risk of contracting heart disease in women. For instance, sedentary women are twice as likely to experience CHD as active women (Eason et al., 1993; Felson et al., 1997). In a recent case-control study (Lemaire et al., 1997), the risk of having a heart attack was reduced by 50% among postmenopausal women with modest physical activity (equivalent to 30-45 minutes of walking for exercise three times a week). However, most physicians are not sufficiently knowledgeable to prescribe physical activity for patients (Kreuter et al., 1997). On the other hand, physicians have no problem talking about smoking and dietary cholesterol with their patients. Two new programs, PAGE (Caffee et al., 1996) in the U.S. and Green Prescriptions in New Zealand (Swinburn et al., 1997), have been developed to provide education about physical activity for physicians.

...as we know it. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.

References
Caffee, R. J., et al. (1996). A controlled trial of physician counseling to promote the adoption of physical activity, Preventive Medicine, 23, 225-233.
Lemaire, R. N., et al. (1999). Leisure-time physical activity and the risk of nonfatal myocardial infarction in postmenopausal women, Archives of Internal Medicine, 159, 2302-2308

Prevention and Promotion
While approximately 50% of the decline in CHD mortalities over the past decade is explained by reductions in primary (e.g., smoking, sedentary lifestyle) and secondary risk factors (Huntink et al., 1997), health promotion and disease prevention are still panners when it comes to the health research funding. Nevertheless, we have to recognize that prevention and health promotion are the keys to reducing the drastic burden that chronic diseases such as CHD place upon our society. Making practitioners and women more aware of the risk of CHD in women is a small step in that direction. Changing negative lifestyle behaviours such as smoking and physical inactivity would be a giant step.

Suggested Readings

"Nobody really lives long enough to die of old age. We die from accidents, and most of all, disuse."
—Dr. Walter Bortz
“If I knew I was going to live this long, I would have taken better care of myself”

- Mickey Mantle

Certifying Leaders in Older Adult Fitness

by Debbie Ponich, BA
AFLCA Program Coordinator

Have you ever wondered what type of training the individual has who teaches the walking class out of your community hall or the aquatic fitness class for seniors at the local pool? Well more than likely they are certified through the Alberta Fitness Leadership Certification Association (AFLCA).

The AFLCA, since its inception in 1984, has facilitated training and certification of fitness leaders and trainers in the areas of Fitness for the Older Adults along with Group Exercise, Aquatic Exercise, and Resistance Training. With the assistance of more than 250 agencies, fitness leadership programs are delivered under the guidelines and support of the AFLCA. It has become the "Standard in Fitness Leadership Certification" in the province providing professionalism, standardization and consistency of leadership.

Leaders certified in the Fitness for the Older Adult specialty possess theoretical and practical knowledge to deliver safe and effective programs which range from walking, sit-and-stand or the type classes and low impact aerobics (that focus on prevention and active living) to highly specified classes designed for groups with osteoarthritis, arthritis, or chronic illness.

Upon completion of certification in this area, leaders have knowledge of anatomy, exercise physiology, movement mechanics, basic nutrition, along with the physiology and sociology of aging, risk management, safety and common disorders. Leaders understand the aging process and through this comprehension, develop classes or programs suited to meet the needs of the clients. Leaders also benefit from national recognition through AFLCA membership within the National Fitness Leadership Advisory Council (NFLAC) and National Fitness Leadership Alliance (NFIA). This allows leaders to move freely from one province to another and increases credibility and recognition of certification.

As the population ages and the baby boomers reach middle age, statistics have shown that the percentage of older adults will reach an all time high. This creates a greater importance for the promotion of an active, healthy population now more than ever.

Certified fitness leaders, with knowledge and experience of the needs of older adults, will play a key role in the development of active, healthy lifestyles for our older population.

If you would like more information on certification for Fitness for Older Adults or any of the other specialty areas, contact the AFLCA office at (403) 492-4435. Courses can be designed to suit your groups needs.
Promoting Physical Activity Among Older Adults

by Jennifer Timningen, ACFWB Older Adult Coordinator

On Thursday, April 16, 1998, ACFWB partnered with Minerva Senior Studies Institute of Grant MacEwan Community College to host internationally renowned speaker Dr. Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko, editor of the Journal of Aging and Physical Activity. Dr. Chodzko-Zajko is a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) Scientific Advisory Committee, and he gave presentations on the WHO Guidelines for Promoting Physical Activity Among Older Persons to about 175 older adults and 75 health promotion practitioners. The attendees were inspired by his expertise and appreciated the reception that followed where Dr. Chodzko-Zajko made time to interact personally with the participants.

The following are excerpts from his presentations:

- **Physical activity and sport for all**
  - There is no specific age at which this concept begins, and there is little doubt that physically active lifestyles benefit individuals throughout their lifespan. Older adults of all ages and levels of ability can participate in physical activity.
  - At age 50, the benefits of regular physical activity may be most relevant in avoiding, minimizing, and/or reversing many of the physical, psychological, and social hazards which often accompany advancing age. These beneficial effects apply to all individuals regardless of health status and/or disease state.

- **In addition to the individual benefits of even a single hour of exercise, there are benefits to society when we have an active population.**

- **Reduced health care costs**
  - Physically active lifestyles can postpone the onset of physical frailty and disease.

- **Enhanced productivity**
  - Physically active lifestyles help older adults maintain functional independence and optimize their participation in society.

- **A positive image of older adults**
  - Older individuals have much to contribute to society, and a society which promotes a physically active lifestyle for older adults will benefit from the wealth of experience and wisdom of older adults.

As practitioners, we have a role to play in educating and disseminating information about physical activity and healthy aging to older adults as well as to those who care for them such as family members and other practitioners. There is also a need to stimulate greater appreciation for the importance of regular physical activity among international, national, and regional policy makers at all levels of administration.

To obtain the WHO Guidelines for Promoting Physical Activity Among Older Persons, see the web site www.who.int/w霭h/healthpromotion/policy/healthpromotion/backgr.htm.

The ACFWB has now fully integrated (what was formerly known as Project ABLE) Older Adult Physical Activity into its programs, research, and evaluation. As the Older Adult Coordinator, I will continue to promote the importance of physical activity for older adults through practitioners around the province. With the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP) fast approaching in 1999, there are numerous conferences and other events being planned to recognize older persons in communities across the country. The theme for the year is 'Canada: A Society for All Ages.' Also, October 1, 1998 will be declared International Day for the Elderly. If you would like to know more about the IYOP, please check the United Nations web site at www.un.org/esa/ceder/genera tion/aging/ageing_e.html.

101 Active Living Ideas Poster/Brochure

This free flyer/poster brochure lists various active living ideas for older adults to participate in around Alberta. This attractive poster/brochure is useful to seniors, family members, and practitioners working with older adults. Some of the ideas for contact numbers for further information and highlight some of the exciting opportunities that exist within the borders of our province.

ACFWB integrates Older Adult Physical Activity

by Jennifer Timningen, ACFWB Older Adult Coordinator

Recent ACFWB Older Adult Projects:

**Physical Activity and Exercise Programs for Older Adults (PAEP) Directory 1998**

A Directory listing over 200 physical activity and exercise programs for older adults offered within the city of Edmonton. The Directory is divided into five districts of the city providing an easy way for individuals to locate what programs exist in the area where they live. The type is large and easy to read and provides the location of the programs, accessibility, level of fitness needed to participate, and a contact number. Printed annually for a low cost of $10, you can contact 1-800-661-4551 (in Alberta) or 403-453-3692 for an order form.

Senior Friendly Exercise Guidelines:

The ACFWB has been involved with the development of the Senior Friendly Exercise Guidelines, which is a stand alone guide, but which also can be used with other senior friendly materials. Look up the Senior Friendly Exercise Toolkit on the Alberta Council on Aging website at: www.compass.ab.ca/aging/index.htm.

To effectively coordinate older adult physical activity in Alberta, one needs help. Please send me any new program information or rates of resources that you would recommend, so that I can pass them onto other practitioners working in the field. In the last couple of months, I have had a number of requests for program ideas and exercises for very frail seniors. Unfortunately we do not have much information in this area. Do you know of physical activity programs or stretching exercises that would be suitable for a frail population? Please phone, fax, write or e-mail me your ideas.

Jennifer Timningen, ACFWB Older Adult Coordinator
Older Adult Coordinator
1-800-661-4551 (in Alberta) or (403) 453-8092 Edmonton
403-674-6062 Barrhead
Fax: (403) 453-2092
E-mail: jennifer.timningen@ualberta.ca
Ten Tips to Becoming Physically Active!

1. Stretch and warm up before exercise.
2. Engage in regular physical activity.
3. Incorporate physical activity into daily life.
4. Set achievable goals.
5. Monitor progress and adjust accordingly.
6. Incorporate variety into your routine.
7. Stay motivated and committed.
8. Celebrate successes and acknowledge challenges.
9. Seek support from others.
10. Have fun and enjoy the process.

Ten Tips to Staying Physically Active!

1. Enjoy your activity.
2. Keep track of progress.
3. Take frequent breaks.
4. Incorporate variety into your routine.
5. Stay motivated and committed.
6. Seek support from others.
7. Have fun and enjoy the process.

Health Canada to Launch A Physical Activity Guide

Canadians have heard for decades that physical activity is a good thing to do. Still, being active is seen as a challenge by most Canadians whose lives are hectic. The Health Canada Physical Activity Guide is a living reference guide for Canadians to become more active in their daily lives. The guide is intended to help Canadians become more active and add variety to their daily routines. The guide provides clear and concise information on how to become more active and includes tips on how to make physical activity a regular part of everyday life. The guide is divided into sections on the benefits of physical activity, how to get started, and how to stay motivated. The guide also includes a section on how to incorporate physical activity into daily life and how to make physical activity a part of everyday life. The guide is also available in various formats, including a website, a mobile app, and a printed guide. The guide is intended to help Canadians become more active and improve their quality of life.
Active living advocates will find rich resource in Senior Friendly Toolkit

Given the link between active living and healthy aging, it's crucial for seniors to have access to exercise programs that make sense for them.

But we're not there yet. "Seniors from far corners of the province call us searching for exercise programs," notes Jan Reimer, Senior Friendly project director.

Why the search? First, we do not have enough Senior Friendly exercise programs to serve all seniors. Second, many Albertans are not aware of the excellent programs already in place. The Senior Friendly Toolkit addresses both those issues.

Senior Friendly Exercise Programs, an extensive section in the toolkit, walks through the steps needed to set up a strength-building program for seniors. It also provides contact information for existing programs, and highlights active living resources that will prove useful to both individuals and groups.

The expert team involved in creating this section of the toolkit includes Dr. Sandy O'Brien-Esmon, professor of exercise gerontology at the University of Alberta and ACFCWD Older Adult Coordinator; Jennifer Taintor, a perceptive living advocate from the Canadian Red Cross; Capital Health, YMCA and other area agencies.

You can request Senior Friendly Exercise Programs as a self-contained unit or as part of the larger Senior Friendly Toolkit. Simply contact the Alberta Council on Aging.

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General Guidelines for Serving Seniors

Facilities
- Accessible location
- Meals, close to a bus stop
- Easy to walk to
- Plenty of parking
- Adequate handicapped parking
- Covered drop-off areas

Safety
- Safe sidewalks
- Smooth surfaces
- Showers in winter
- Kneepads

Barriers-free entrance
- Sidewalk level
- Ramps

Doors that open easily
- Not too heavy and/or automatic

Water
- Wheelchair suitable
- Non-slip surface
- All rugs taut to the floor
- Acoustically absorbent

Appropriate seating
- Not too low
- With armrests
- Arranged for comfortable hearing

Convenience
- Color schemes and contrast make objects and main stand out from their surroundings
- Proper lighting
- Adequate, non-dim
- Non-glare lights and surfaces
- Do not use with blinds
- Generous signage
- Large print
- Logical planning
- Efficient
- Using well-known or obvious signs

Service
- Offer your services during the daytime
- Seniors say they feel safer in daylight
- Public transit runs more regularly
- Be Senior Friendly in all communication
- Be alert for hearing loss
- Allow for reduced sight
- Review your phone system with seniors in mind

Alert staff to seniors' specific needs and preferences
- Sponsor a Senior Friendly Workshop
- Use Senior Friendly stickers and buttons as reminders and rewards
- Equipment to serve seniors whose dominant language is different from theirs

Becoming a resource about opportunities for seniors
- Programs
- Services
- Events

Include seniors in customer service research
- Cross-generational studies
- Senior-specific surveys and focus groups

Take a personal approach
- Serve seniors as individuals, not stereotypes
- Be alert for signs of elder abuse
- Provide opportunities for seniors to socialize as you serve them

Actively promote senior services and programs
- Market your own Senior Friendly services
- Organize activities a senior-focused community efforts
- Participate in senior fairs and trade shows

Support employees with aging relatives
- Offer counseling and referral services to adult care-givers
- Allow flexible work schedules
- Address aging issues in staff newsletters, workshops, care-giver education final
- Offer group insurance plans that recognize older dependents
- Offer cost sharing for a care-giver who needs a vacation or weekend off

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WellSpring
A Day in the Active Life...
...of Gloria Morse

At 67 years of age, Gloria Morse is a woman filled with determination and wisdom. As a young child, she was struck with polio that permanently affected her hip. As a teenager, she suffered from the early stages of osteoarthritis, which worsened after having two children. However, these challenges have not discouraged her from living an active life. Aside from walking and doing housework daily, she participates regularly in low-impact aerobics, strength training exercises, hiking and trips to the park with her grandchildren.

Gloria is a woman of determination. There were many months when long distances could not prevent her from participating in her exercise class. She would drive one hour, each way, twice a week to attend her 9 a.m. fitness class.

Gloria feels that her rewards from participation in physical activity are numerous. "I feel like I have accomplished something; I feel good about myself. My walks allow me to really enjoy nature, the birds, animals, trees, and flowers. It is a stress reliever for me and gives me a feeling of well-being when I come home." Gloria is aware of the many benefits of physical activity, both physical and psychological, which have helped her to enjoy her life and her family. However, another very important benefit of physical activity for Gloria is the social benefit. "I have made so many friends that have been formed through the exercise classes. I interact with 25 people and then become a participant. Through all of these years, friendships have been strengthened and nurtured. Gloria's advice to all women is, "Get active and stay with it. Find an activity that you can enjoy. Feel good about yourself. Look good and feel good with the same values." She also added, "If you don't like the body you love it."

Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Aging
by Sandy O'Brien Cousins, PhD
University of Alberta

The Active Living Coalition for Older Adults (ALCOA) resumed its initiative in February 1998 on a physical activity guide for older Canadians. ALCOA proposed its week on the older adult guide in early 1996 to focus on developing the prototype for a general physical activity guide with the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology. The physical activity guide for older Canadians will be available in Spring 1999.

The older adult guide will provide a rainbow color template that matches the general adult physical activity guide. Both physical activity guides will be a reflection of the Canada Food Guide with simple messages and "bands" of activities. The small red band represents "do less" of sedentary activities watching, reading and computer work. Pictures representing a mix of gender, race, age and ability are displayed within the ever-bigger blue, green, and yellow bands. The action illustrations represent a range of low-intensity to vigorous examples of strength activities, flexibility activities, and endurance activities. Examples of general adult messages include:

- Physical activity improves health - people of all ages benefit from being active.
- Generally the more active you are the better.
- Accumulate 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days - preferably every day.
- Enjoy a variety of convenient activities from each of the three activity groups.

- Canadians are being asked to cut down on sitting for more than 30 minutes at a time.
- Get stronger 2-4 days per week.
- Move every 4-7 days per week, preferably everyday.
- Build more energy 4-7 days per week, preferably everyday.

ALCOA has been a strong source of influence in the design of the general guide, and now that it is being finalized, specific adaptations for the older adult population can be made. There are plans to tailor the wording slightly to make the guide more "senior friendly" and provide artwork that is fully representative of the frail to the fit older adult community. For example, one message for the older population will be, "You are never too old to start..." For more information, contact Diana Dampier, ALCOA Coordinator, (519) 970-1209.

A Day in the Active Life...
...of Art and Effie Hohden

Need a better night's sleep?
A study at the Stanford University School of Medicine showed that people over 50 - the group most likely to have trouble sleeping - sleep better if they exercise regularly. The men and women in the experiment, sedentary but healthy, were put on 30- to 40-minute exercise sessions four times a week (such as walking or stationary cycling). Compared with the control group who remained sedentary, the exercisers reported that they not only slept almost an hour longer, but also fell asleep in half the time.

—Beckley Wilkins, Lenox March 1999

To hear Art and Effie Hohden talk about their lives you'd think they studied the manual on successful aging. Not us, but this remarkable couple's lifelong, common sense approach to daily living could easily be a best seller! Married for 53 years, Art, who is 82, and Effie, at 80, reflect the vitality and quality of life that healthy, active living brings. "It's important to do one's best and giving back to the community that helps us grow," Art adds.

"It's our roots," says Effie. "Farm life taught us the value of honest work, fresh air, the importance of being in touch with nature." And they have passed these lessons onto their four children and seven grandchildren. Effie added, "We are nutritious home cooked meals, restricted junk food, and cooked fresh fruit and vegetables annually. Although they do longer live in the countryside, this day Effie tends a sizeable vegetable and flower garden to their yard (the neighborhood) delight.

Art's prescription for well-being includes a balanced diet, staying physically active, and good genes. Raised in a family of nine, they've lived in the same home and raised their five. For several years, they've practiced Tai Chi. It's a very physical workout; the slow continuous movements flow the entire body and are excellent for strength, circulation and balance. "You can do it at your own pace, anytime, anywhere.

It's also good for the mind, you have to concentrate on each of the 108 moves!" says both. "And the social aspect is very enjoyable." Effie feels that Tai Chi is a form of meditation, and she's absolutely convinced that it postponed an earlier hip replacement by at least a decade!

In addition to keeping physically active, these spunky octogenarians know the value and the benefits of staying mentally active. An accomplished artist, Effie produced a successful art show and sale, while in recent years, Art decided to master the computer. Both are well read and stay tuned to current issues in their community and world. They face hardship with resilience and hope. Their philosophy of life? "We simply try our best," the couple modestly concludes.

Come to think of it, I think that Art and Effie have written the book on successful, healthy living!
Crime and the Senior Citizen
by Constable Steve Matthews, Senior Coordinator, Edmonton Police Service

In-law. Most of these crimes are financial in nature.

With this in mind, seniors should not be deterred from leaving their homes. They should be cognizant of safety when leaving their homes, and with a few precautions, being out in the community is extremely safe. Edmontonians live in a relatively crime-free city with few incidents of violence directed at seniors. When crime occurs, it is very much in the news because it is not commonplace.

When you take into consideration the size of a city like Edmonton, these incidents are few and far between.

With just a few common sense precautions, you can reduce the likelihood of being the next victim.

• Admit to yourself that you could become a victim.
• Have a plan. Know what you will do if a dangerous situation comes up.
• Be suspicious. Too much "faith in human nature" can make you an easy target for a vicious criminal.

Here are some safety tips for going out into the community:

• Arrange to walk with or meet a friend or co-worker.
• Walk in the centre of the sidewalk to prevent persons in more vehicles driving by and allowing a passenger to reach out and grab your purse.
• Ensure you have eye contact with suspicious individuals so they know that you know they are there and what they look like.
• Travel well lit, busy streets.
• Whenever you can, call ahead and let someone know when you expect to arrive.
• Don’t take shortcuts.
• Always carry coins in your wallet or pockets for an emergency phone call to a friend or relative.
• Always know where you are and where you are going.
• Carry an extra cash and valuables as possible. Credit cards and cheque books should be your only valuables. If threatened, do not hesitate to give them everything. Your safety and health is paramount.
• Then go to the nearest phone and cancel your credit card and checking account and the culprits have runhing.
• Dine out in a strange to follow you home to an empty house.
• Have your house keys ready before you reach your front door. A strip of adhesive tape around the top of your house key will make it easy to find, even in the dark.

In conclusion, I would like to say that our seniors are the generation that has worked the hardest and suffered the most, and yet they are also the most trusting and sincere. It is predicted that by the year 2030 nearly 40% of the population will be over age 65.

Hence seniors’ issues will become more publicized and prevalent.

The Edmonton Police Service has devoted resources to seniors and their issues through a senior coordinator, such as myself, who provides crime prevention lectures to seniors groups and works with them toforge better ties. The Spousal Violence Unit has a detective who works with social workers and other resource agencies to follow up violent crimes against seniors. These team approaches to dealing with issues or problems have proven very successful in the past.

With all these things in place, seniors should be encouraged to enjoy the fruits of their years of labour and enjoy these golden years with little fear of crime. Should anyone have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (403) 421-3429.

Thank you

The ACFWB would like to thank Doug Wilson and Judah Kugel for all their work, expertise and participation on the ACFWB Advisory board since 1993. For the past three years, their input has helped shape the directions and successful operations of the Centre. We wish you both all the best with your future endeavours.

A Day in the Active Life...
...of Morris Jevne

If there was one recommendation Morris Jevne could make to older adults, it is to learn to appreciate wherever you may be in life, the environment that you happen to be surrounded by.

Raised in Wietaskwin and living there his entire life, Morris Jevne has become a man of example and of hope. Morris was raised during the depression and it was this situation that he learned to appreciate. He became very involved in farm organization, which in his words was an "economic function that could satisfy the needs of humanity". He spent four decades involved with the Co-operative Association and Co-operative movements at local, regional and international levels. This responsibility led him to travel great distances both nationally and internationally.

Now at 83 years of age, Morris is far from bowing down to age. His travel now covers less of a distance, but yet the purpose of his travel is still very important. He frequently travels to the hospital to visit old friends; he travels monthly to Calgary to visit his mother-in-law, and often through the week he travels to the farm to give his son and grandson "attab".

Morris Jevne is active, active for life and in life. He doesn't think much about physical activity - it's just a natural part of his life. Once a day after coffee at the Co-op, he spent the morning fixing a fence. Then planted the rest of the potatoes. Mowed the lawn and sharpened the lawnmower blade afterwords. The next part of the morning was a visit to the hospital to spend some time with a couple of old friends. After lunch he drove 100 kilometers to attend a farm sale, then home to entertain six guests for supper - preparing the meal himself.

Continuing Education for Older Adults

Minerva Senior Studies of Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton offers unique learning opportunities designed specifically for older adults. Older adult students can register in a wide variety of activities ranging from courses and workshops to walkabouts. From world history to birdwatching - there is something for everyone.

Classes range from length from a single afternooon workshop to longer, eight-week courses. Classes are conveniently located throughout the Edmonton - in shopping centres, community centres and at the three GMCC campuses. Some of the most popular activities during the year are the walkabouts, which are outings to number of notable locations for "behind-the-scenes" tours. Some of the walkabouts planning for this spring/summer are to Little Italy, Chinatown, the Heritage Centre, and the Religious/Architecture Walk-About of Edmonton Churches.

Other interesting classes will be starting soon and there is still space for you to register. Call (403) 497-5082 to get your free program catalogue or to find more about Minerva.

Thank you

Fresh air and physical activity make life better... photo courtesy of Boyle McCauley Health Centre
Enhancing Your Life with Art
by Barbara Johnson

"The effect in sickness of beautiful objects, of variety of objects and especially of brilliancy of colour is hardly at all appreciated.
I shall never forget the rapture of fever patients over a bunch of bright coloured flowers. People say the effect is only on the mind. It is no such thing. The effect is on the body, too."
—Florence Nightingale, 1888

The therapeutic and health-related benefits of the Arts and Cultural activities, affecting both individuals and communities, have been apparent for centuries. If you think this information has no practical application in your own life, you may be missing real opportunities for increased well-being. In fact, there are measurable advantages everyone can derive from either active involvement in, or passive enjoyment of, the arts, and these range from mental to emotional and even physiological benefits.

To make a drawing, play an instrument or learn to dance can launch a voyage of self-discovery. Through activities like these, an individual can develop transferable skills and win admiration of others, build self-esteem through a sense of accomplishment, and derive the satisfaction of gaining mastery of control over something. Making art is a positive outlet for intense feelings and for expressing and communicating passionately held views. "Involvement in art increases self-confidence, self-knowledge, individual responsibility and discipline, and an ability to express likes and dislikes developmentally. Therapeutic and a greater appreciation of the natural world; provides preparation for meaningful leisure activities and hobbies; and provides an excellent foundation for a primary or secondary career. Art is the force that helps people adapt to new circumstances, that stimulates new ideas, that promotes flexibility, that creates possibilities where before there were only obstacles." (Alberta Community Development)

There is increasing evidence that making or experiencing art can affect your physical well-being. For example, it is probably no accident that your dentist plays music in the examination room. There is a surprising amount of research which indicates that music helps us relax and cope with pain. On the simplest psychological level, it reduces stress and anxiety by taking your mind off your problems; but studies also indicate that music can significantly lower blood pressure and pulse rates and may trigger endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. Most artistic disciplines help develop co-ordination, stamina and endurance. Concert pianists usually get their palms up to 120-140, the range people work toward in arthritic exercise. Conducors get a constant upper body workout and are exceptionally long-lived, and opera singers and dancers can be as well conditioned as top athletes (American Health, April, 1987).

The arts are often the key factor in creating a shared sense of place. Think of Paris without the Eiffel Tower, or of the complex. The unique and special history and character of our communities, preserved or communicated through the arts, build our sense of belonging, and our understanding of who we are, where we live, and why we are distinctive. Art can also be an effective tool for strengthening community spirit and educating ourselves and our children. "Fine arts education provides youth and children with the opportunity to express, to create, and to develop their sensitivity and personality. These disciplines allow children to develop the necessary skills and competencies to be creative thinkers in life." (Edmonton Catholic School District)

Actions devise their lives to conceptual research and innovation. Artists invented or conceptualized, for example, the helicopter and the submarine (400 years ago), electronic miniaturization, the camera, and virtual reality. APPLE computer CEO, Steve Jobs has been quoted as saying: "That a creative arts education is essential for business.

The arts play a vital part in the economic health of communities too, creating jobs and diversifying local economies. In 1993, direct economic impact of the cultural sector in Canada was almost $15 billion, making it the fifth largest employer in the country, and contributing 2.5 percent of the total Canadian economy (Statistics Canada). Research shows that a vibrant arts community is a critical factor when corporations decide where to locate their base of operations, and helps to attract this type of economic activity to cities. The financial benefits of tourism are readily apparent when one considers an example like Stratford, Ontario, with its world-renowned theatre festival. Close to home, Medicine Hat, Alberta, (1891 population 48,000) attracts nearly 40,000 tourists every year, each of whom spends approximately $30 in the community because of its theatre, art gallery and craft shops (Alberta Community Development).

Healthy individuals are rare without healthy communities to sustain them. The arts have significant impact on the way we live together, affecting the shape and design of the manufactured products we use, the built and social environments we share, and the outward expression of our cultural identities. Healthy communities are rare without healthy communities to sustain them. The arts have significant impact on the way we live together, affecting the shape and design of the manufactured products we use, the built and social environments we share, and the outward expression of our cultural identities. Healthy communities are rare without healthy communities to sustain them.

To help you, our practitioners, understand the ACFWB's business, we have included below our mission, vision and guiding values. Mission: Supporting practitioners to improve the health and quality of life of Albertans through physical activity.

Visitors: Making a difference in Albertans lives by creating a future where all people value, understand, enjoy, practice and maintain a physically active way of life.

Guiding Values: Knowledge creation, communication and dissemination. Learning, growth and development.

Tourism: Active Living, Health & Well-Being.

Staff Updates: Tina Warchun, a fresh graduate from the University of Alberta Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation, successfully completed her practicum with us earlier this year, and will continue to work with us during the summer. Her major area of study is Active Living, Health & Well-Being, and she has a special interest in older adults.
The ACFWB would like to thank Sloane Hunter, who also successfully completed her practicum with us this year. Sloane's major area of study is Active Living, Health & Well-Being. We wish her all the best in her endeavours.

As of June 1, Gwen Furnsworth, Health in Action Research Assistant, will be working from her new home in Lacombe. She can be reached directly through e-mail at gwef@planet.net or by phone at (403) 782-3653.

104 Active Living Ideas for Older Adults

To receive this creative, informational poster/brochure, contact Jennifer Timmins, AGCFWB.

New Research Publication
Acta Review a new quarterly publication produced by the Research Team of the ACFWB, will highlight research on specific topics in the area of physical activity. This issue covers the following issues that effect women's Health. Specific topics are:

1. Bone mass in premenopausal women
2. Bone mass in postmenopausal women
3. Fibromyalgia & exercise
4. Pregnancy & physical activity

Active Review is available for $10 per year.

The Alberta Active Living Strategy

On April 6, 1998, the Alberta Community Development presented new strategies to encourage active living for Albertans. "Providing opportunities for Albertans to lead healthy and more active lifestyles to enhance quality of life is the objective of the 23 recommendations made by the Alberta Active Living Task Force, which was established by Community Development Minister Shirley McClellan."

Alberta is the first province to release such a strategy to address physical inactivity.

For more details, see the Alberta Community Development website: www.gov.ab.ca/pub/60077.htm
The Politics of Research: When the Assertions Don’t Always Correspond to the Facts

by John C. Spence, PhD
ACGWB Research Coordinator


Calendar of Events
For more listings, visit the ACGWB's website at http://www.health-in-action.org/Well-Being

1999 - Canada
Together for Healthy Kids June 25-26, Hamilton ON Together for Healthy Kids is hosted by the Canadian Paediatric Society and the Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse and will feature displays and activities for parents, kids, and families. Contact: 1-800-263-2846 or 416/969-2112; Fax: 416/969-2122; E-mail: thk@ospcc.org; Web: www.ospcc.ca/events/conferences/mt.html

Health Alberta Senior Games July 21-24, Three Hills AB Ph: 403/297-2703

International Multicultural Conference July 26-Aug 1, Edmonton AB Hosted at the University of Alberta. Web: www.ualberta.ca/events/ict/1999/conf/1999-htm.html

International Childhood Conference July 26-Aug 1, Edmonton AB Hosted at The University of Alberta.

Summer School "Planning and Evaluating Population Health Promotion Aug 17-21, Saskatoon SK Will build conceptual and practical skills needed to plan and evaluate population health promotion. Contact Prudent Region Health Promotion Research Center.

University of Saskatchewan, Health Sciences Bldg., 197 Wiggins Road, Saskatoon SK, S7N 0S3, Ph: 306/966-7939, Fx: 306/966-7938, E-mail: spensr@ukalums.ca.

Canada Senior Games Aug 19-22, Medicine Hat AB Ph: 403/264-4240


Health in Rural Settings: From the Ground Up Sept 5-8, Lethbridge AB This rural health conference is designed to address health issues from these perspectives: community mobilization, professional rural-based practice, and research and policy. Contact Regional Centre for Health Promotion, Community Studies (RCHPC), Ph: 403/329-7133, or School of Health Sciences, Ph: 403/329-2609, Ph: 403/329-2609, Fax: 403/329-2609, E-mail: shrf@ualberta.ca, Web: http://www.ualberta.ca/shr

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