



C - Seniors  
S - Seniors Aging  
gardening, fitness  
Autumn 2002  
paulkinson,  
exercise

# COMING of AGE

A Publication of the Saskatoon Council on Aging

## Bigger Senior Population Offers Opportunities, Too

**D**iscussion of the aging population as the Baby Boomers hustle towards 65 seems to focus on the problems that will arise, particularly in health care, and ignore the many opportunities that may be offer.

Here's an example: A Winnipeg nurse has started a travel agency for elderly people who would like to travel but are afraid to go alone, without medical help. She calls it Vacationcare.

Seniors now make up 11 percent of Saskatoon's population, and that's expected to jump to 14 percent, or 40,000 people, by 2016. There will undoubtedly be more need for hospital beds and many specialized services.

But there are opportunities here, too, for no one should expect the Baby Boomers to suddenly become frail, powerless, inactive, uninterested and lacking in buying

power — the all-too-common and all-too-wrong picture younger people have of the elderly. In fact, only a minority of seniors have severe functioning problems and less than half suffer from any functional disability. Most are healthy and active.

By Jenni Mortin

**A** few things to consider, suggested by the Canadian Aging Research Network and other researchers:

- Seniors are consumers whose buying power has increased significantly. Many are financially very sound, with little debt and substantial discretionary income.

- Although some seniors have low incomes and limited pensions and live in poverty, the incidence of

poverty among them is decreasing at a faster rate than for the rest of the Canadian population.

- Seniors are a varied group, but among the constants is the general deterioration of physical health. They want help dealing with those changes.

- For example, they need firm furniture that is not too low, but they want it to look like furniture and not hospital equipment. A business opportunity?

- They want functional clothes that are easy to put on — no back zippers or tiny buttons — but they don't want to look like frumps. Opportunity?

- Seniors wouldn't be alone in appreciating a VCR that's easier to program.

- Seniors can be divided into three general groups:

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# President's Message

**BY BETTY SECORD**

**PRESIDENT, SASKATOON COUNCIL ON AGING**

I hope everyone had an enjoyable summer and is looking forward to fall activities. At the Council, we are moving into our fall programs, after celebrating Seniors Week Sept. 30 to Oct. 6. Events included:

- Free blood pressure clinic, fall prevention presentations and Adopt-A-Grandparent presentations on Oct. 1.

- Open house at our Resource Centre and grand opening of our Seniors Drop-in Program on Oct. 2. This social and educational program with speakers and other activities is set for the third Thursday of each month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Resource Centre: Oct. 17, Nov. 21 and Dec. 19.

- Information table at the Saskatchewan Gerontology Workshop, "The Spirit of Healthy Aging," at the Saskatoon Inn on Oct. 4.

We hope to see you at the following events:

**General Meetings/Programs** at Frances Morrison Library Room 3 at 1:30 p.m.

- Nov. 28, 2002 - Seniors and Falls presented by Sarah Nixon-Jackle

- Jan. 23, 2003 - The Dangers of Gambling.

**Monthly Blood Pressure Clinics** at the Resource Centre - First Tuesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Thank you, SaskTel and Jerry Meckelborg, President of RPS Retirement Planning Specialists Inc., and individuals who have donated to the clinic. It is a great success due to the dedicated volunteers who have been coming out for nine years. We encourage you to drop in if you haven't done so.

## **Beginner Computer Lessons**

Registration has begun for October and November classes for Internet and word processing, which begin late in each month. Contact Karli at 652-2255 to register for classes, or you can register at any time for an individual lesson with a teacher.

We have received a \$20,000 grant from the provincial Community Initiatives Fund for the second year of our pilot **Adopt-A-Grandparent** program. It is starting to match grandparents with children. If you are interested, contact co-ordinator Toni Chasmar at 652-2255.

## More Seniors, More Opportunities

(Continued from Page 1)

- healthy and active people who seek to maintain that lifestyle
- those who have undergone health and mobility changes and need products that help them maintain their independence
- those with substantial health and mobility problems who are dependent on formal and in-

Each group has its own needs; meeting those needs offers opportunities in many areas.

Ideas like these were discussed at a day-long session on strategic planning for seniors

in Saskatoon held on Oct. 3. The Council on Aging played a significant part in planning the event and will participate in discussion and further developments that grow out of that day.

Based on information gleaned from *Neglected Needs and Emerging Opportunities in Seniors' Markets: An Argument for Future Research* by Zachary Zimmer and Neena Chappell, University of Victoria Centre on Aging (1993) and *Into the Age of Aging: Selected Findings* by the Canadian Aging Research Network (1996).

### **Coming of Age**

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# Love of gardens built well-known nursery over nearly 50 years

By Ginnie Hartley

**D**o you remember when Sutherland had a mayor? Arie VanDuyvendyk does. Sutherland was separate from Saskatoon when he and his wife Adrie arrived there in 1953.

But that's jumping ahead – let's go back to long before the VanDuyvendyks' Dutch Growers was part of the local gardening scene.

Born in Holland in 1930, Arie was working 12 hours a day as a gardener for the equivalent of \$5 a week when a friend who had immigrated to Canada persuaded him to follow. In April 1950, he left the crocuses and warm sunshine of Rotterdam and arrived in Regina to six feet of snow.

Luckily, he soon had his love to keep him warm; Adrie joined him in 1952. Arie was working as a greenhouse supervisor in Weyburn when the Immigration Settlement Service whisked him and his bride to Saskatoon. They fell in love with the Sutherland nursery they were shown. They had no money, but they were learning English and had plenty of enthusiasm.

On a rent-to-own basis, they were able to take over the 10-room house that came with the nursery, complete with contents, and all the machinery in the sheds plus a quarter-section of land.

They did everything at the nursery, with the first child (eventually there were six) in a carriage alongside. They started a landscape service in the University area and when they realized that their work would necessarily end for the winter, hired themselves out as cleaners at the Sanatorium.

As the nursery grew, so did Saskatoon. Arie bought another quarter-section by Beaver Creek and the city purchased all but five acres of his original quarter to build Attridge Drive. He has a painting of the original house and nursery in his den, and his love for the place is evident as he points out where roads now run through his former fields. The new buildings were opened in 1983, probably the first time the



*Arie and Adrie VanDuyvendyk have passed Dutch Growers garden centre to their children, but enjoy visiting its well-known windmill.*

Saskatoon Planning Department issued a permit to build a windmill!

Family and church are very important to Arie and Adrie. Over the years, they have gradually passed the running of Dutch Growers over to their children and their spouses, and now their grandchildren are involved. Decisions have always been made jointly. Arie's philosophy has always been "service, service, service – and good product," and that has been passed on, too. Dutch Growers is not open on Sundays as he always felt he and his family should be able to enjoy a day of rest together and attend church.

The VanDuyvendyks celebrated 50 years of marriage this year. While they are almost completely retired, they enjoy popping in to see what's happening at Dutch Growers, which celebrates a half-century in 2003. It has diversified over the years and now sells garden accessories and gifts as well as trees, shrubs and flowers. It runs craft classes and recently opened a bistro.

Arie and Adrie have a winter home in California and they travel to Holland every few years to visit family. They have a motor home and enjoy getting together with other seniors on their travels. They like bird-watching, they walk and bike, and they love flowers. Arie collects stamps (especially those with a horticultural theme) and Adrie makes beautiful greeting cards on parchment brought from Holland. They are still busy, happy people.

*Ginnie Hartley is a Saskatoon freelance writer with a special interest in seniors.*

# Seniors Take to ..... Shuffleboard

By Doug McConachie

**T**here's a new sport in town for seniors, a game in which many players don't really care whether they win or lose.

That's because shuffleboard is all about fun and friendship, says Dave Aldous, president of the Saskatoon Shines Shuffle-Boarders Association. They play Tuesday and Friday mornings, sometimes with eight or 10 players, sometimes with 30 to 50. More turn up in winter.

"For those too old to curl or who have back or knee problems, it's a perfect game," says Dave, 85. "It's something we both can do," adds his wife Doreen, 82. They pick different partners on game days and just enjoy.

"None of us knew each other until this," says Con Hildebrandt, who started playing this year. He and his wife have met many new friends through the game.

Dave and Doreen Aldous first played shuffleboard 25 years ago on a cruise, then again when they wintered in Arizona. They started the Saskatoon club last fall, looking for exercise and friendship in what they consider the perfect game for seniors.

It took time to find a permanent home, but they eventually located at the Soccer Centre, where two shuffleboard courts are laid on concrete. However, the Soccer Centre intends to eventually erect bleachers on that spot. The shuffle-boarders are relocating to Lawson Heights Pentecostal Assembly, 233 Pinehouse Drive, where they will have five courts. They hope to be there by mid-October.

There is no upkeep and no damage to the floors in this simple game in which players push four discs to a triangle in the far court. Accuracy and weight are crucial and those with a deft touch can knock their opponents out.

Ray Vander Linden, a regular, thinks he has a slight advantage because he used to curl. "They say if you can curl, you can play this game right away."

Dave says people are welcome to come out to watch or discuss joining. He can be contacted at 931-7772 for more information.

*Excerpted from a story by Doug McConachie, StarPhoenix Sports Editor, which appeared in the Saskatoon Sun; used with permission.*

## Recommended Videos

Available at the Saskatoon Public Library



### Grumpy Old Men (1994)

A comedy starring Jack Lennon and Walter Matthau as curmudgeonly neighbours. The pair have a long-running feud that becomes a battle for the interest of a newly-arrived attractive widow, played by Ann-Margret. Snowy Minnesota provides a backdrop for the many practical jokes and hilarious antics.

— Rita Ledingham

### Waking Ned Devine (1998)

Comedies set in small villages in Ireland, Scotland and Newfoundland tend to have a precious quality to them. This one has a few empty calories but it does a fine job of showing the human condition of the folks around Tullymore, Ireland, pop. 53 (or is it 52?). Someone in Tullymore has won the national lottery, ^6.8 million pounds. A chicken supper is held to ferret out fact from rumor, perhaps to learn who it

is. Ned Devine is the only no-show and a delegation of two is sent to his house to see what's up. And there is old Ned, dead as a doornail, clutching the winning ticket. Let the scheming begin!

— Michael Gillgannon

### 84 Charing Cross Road (1986)

This video has superb acting by a small cast. The address is that of a bookstore in London, England. An American woman (Anne Bancroft) who loves books begins ordering material by mail from the bookseller (Anthony Hopkins). A sensitive friendship slowly develops between them. She longs to visit London but by the time she does, the situation has changed and she is left with unfinished business. This gentle, moving film reveals something new each time you watch it.

— Jeanette Dean

# Life Goes On Well Despite Parkinson's

By Art Sumner  
with Jenni Martin

In six years of living with Parkinson's Disease, I've learned that I can still do most of the things I want to do, with the help of exercise and medication. The disease has not affected my life that much, and so I would say to those newly diagnosed:

***It's a fact, but don't lose a lot of sleep over it. There are many ways to overcome the restrictions and do what you want.***

Parkinson's is the result of a chemical imbalance in the brain, cause unknown. It's the second most common neurodegenerative disorder which generally affects people in later life. Tremor, muscle rigidity, slowness of movement, difficulty with balance and walking, and reduction in voice volume and inflection are symptoms, but it's a designer disease: different for each person.

My daughter, a physiotherapist who works with Parkinson's patients, noticed about six years ago that at 71, I had some jittering and unsteadiness. I was diagnosed, and I think I live with it fine, doing the things I've always done. I don't write legibly most of the time, but then I never did. My wife Edith and I still travel, spending two to three months in Victoria every winter. I use my computer a great deal, but voluntarily gave up driving about a year ago.

I'm more conscious of my health now, and because Parkinson's affects the joints, I'm aware that exercise is very important. I try to walk for 20-25 minutes almost every day; in Victoria's mild winter, we walk a couple of times a day. I take every opportunity to join an exercise class, including a special class at the Saskatoon Field House for those with Parkinson's.

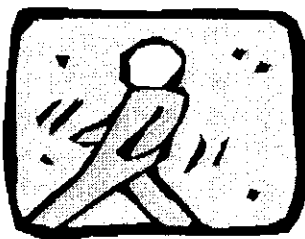
Once or twice a week a very helpful Home Care physiotherapist comes to our home, and I've been fortunate to get his assistance. He's given me a series of daily exercises, though I don't do them as

often as I should. Home support people looked over the house and suggested my favourite recliner be raised about four inches. They also recommended a helpful bar above my bed.

Parkinson's is a progressive disease, but the progression is not fast. I don't sit and worry about what my condition will be in a year or two; there are far worse things. In fact, right now my arthritis is causing me more difficulty! Encouragement from family and friends is important, and my wife has helped me greatly.

We're lucky to have neurologist Dr. Ali Rajput, a world-renowned Parkinson's specialist, working in Saskatoon. He has spoken to the Saskatchewan Parkinson's Disease Foundation, of which I am a member.

Thanks to researchers like Dr. Rajput, we understand that Parkinson's is associated with a deficiency of dopamine in specific areas of the brain. Drugs that replenish or mimic dopamine have proved most effective; I take six blue and pink Prolopa each day, a type of levodopa (levodihydroxyphenylalanine). It's a treatment, not a cure, but it's helping me get on with living my life to the fullest. Parkinson's may be my constant companion, but it's not my boss.



*Art Sumner is a former member of the Publications Committee; he recommends The Parkinson's Handbook by Dwight C. McGoon as the best book about the disease, and also likes the five-year-old Canadian magazine, Parkinson Post. Jenni Martin is editor of Coming of Age.*

# 5 in motion -- Chronic diseases and the role of physical activity

It's a myth that if you have a 'condition' or are unhealthy, you should avoid physical activity. The fact is that many diseases and their symptoms can be controlled through properly performed physical activity. Everyone, however, should consult a doctor before starting an exercise.



## Activity Suggestions to improve your heart, lungs, muscles and bones:

### Strength Ideas

- ◆ carrying groceries
- ◆ lifting weights to increase upper body strength
- ◆ climbing stairs

### Cardiovascular Ideas

- ◆ walking, jogging on flat surfaces and hills
- ◆ swinging the arms while walking
- ◆ bicycling
- ◆ dancing
- ◆ housework such as dusting, vacuuming

### Balance Ideas

- ◆ yoga, tai chi
- ◆ standing on one foot and then switching to the other. Stand by a chair or table for extra balance
- ◆ playing catch

### Flexibility Ideas

- ◆ yoga, tai chi
- ◆ stretching exercises
- ◆ dusting or reaching to high places

Visit the *in motion* web site at: [www.in-motion.ca](http://www.in-motion.ca)

**ARTHRITIS:** Pain and stiffness are the biggest barriers to being physically active with arthritis. Yet research shows that regular exercise, performed properly, can decrease pain and increase flexibility and overall fitness. When you are active, you are feeding your joints. Inactivity starves the cartilage that covers the ends of your bones to protect and cushion them, and it will crumble away. Cartilage needs movement of joints so it can absorb nutrients and remove waste.

Regular physical activity manages arthritic pain. Inactivity lets the muscles and other soft tissues around your joints shrink and stiffen, causing extra stress on your joints and increasing the pain when you move. Physical activity can also help weight control and therefore reduce the stress placed on your joints by your body.

Those with severe arthritis or joint deformity should consult a physiotherapist before beginning an exercise program.

For more information, go to [www.arthritis.ca](http://www.arthritis.ca).

**DIABETES:** Studies have shown that regular physical activity can halve the risk of developing diabetes. It improves your body's ability to use insulin by increasing glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity. Overweight, a main risk factor for diabetes, can be controlled through physical activity. Those with diabetes can control their blood sugar levels and reduce their need for insulin by being physically active.

**CANCER:** Research shows a reduction in the incidence of cancer in those who are physically active versus those who are sedentary or inactive. The reasons are not clearcut but we do know that physical activity reduces stress, improves the immune system and helps control weight, which are all risk factors for developing cancer.

For more information, go to

[http://www.cancer.ca/english/RD\\_PhysicalActivity.asp](http://www.cancer.ca/english/RD_PhysicalActivity.asp)  
[http://www.speakwell.com/well/2002\\_summer/1.shtml](http://www.speakwell.com/well/2002_summer/1.shtml)

**CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE:** Heart disease is the No. 1 killer in North America. Physical activity can help prevent or control many of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease. High blood pressure and body weight can be controlled, and stress reduced. Exercise also helps control cholesterol levels by reducing the bad cholesterol (LDL) and increasing the good cholesterol (HDL). Physical activity improves the efficiency of the heart, lungs and muscles, keeps the vessels happy and improves circulation.

Helpful pamphlets on all these diseases are available at the Council's Resource Centre

# TAPPING INTO THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

By  
**Gail  
Tennant**

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**D**id you know the fountain of youth is just a step away? It's not an exotic concoction and won't cost you a fortune, for it is..... exercise! Don't groan.

We all experience the effects of aging. It's an insidious process and can sometimes be ignored until it starts to interfere with lifestyle and well-being. Even then it's not too late to affect those changes. Scientific studies confirm that regular exercise can make you healthier and happier.

How does this happen? Muscles and bone respond to the stress of exercise by increasing in strength. The heart and lungs move oxygen more efficiently and your capacity for activity grows. Stretching improves flexibility so you can move, bend and reach more easily. Other positive effects include better balance, improved sleep patterns, weight loss and prevention or control of such conditions as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and obesity. That means you can still reach to that high shelf, power your tennis serve, clip your toenails, keep up with your grandchildren, get in and out of the tub, hike to the top with the rest of the group, garden with gusto.

To get started and keep going, follow these steps:



**Step 1-- See your doctor for clearance to go ahead,** to ensure you have no contraindications to exercise.

**Step 2 -- Choose a balanced exercise plan.** You should do a variety of activities, including stretching, strengthening and aerobic (continuous) exercise. Special equipment is not needed and it can all be done at home.

**Stretching** exercises improve flexibility and help prevent injury when you are active. A stretching routine should be done daily. Stretch all limbs and trunk by holding, not bouncing. Here's a sample shoulder stretch: stand facing a wall with toes a few inches away. Walk fingers up the wall until you're at full stretch. Keep chin tucked in, looking straight ahead. Take slow, deep breaths



as you hold for 20 seconds. Slowly slide hands down the wall. Repeat three times.

Strengthen using **resistance** exercise. Weights to provide resistance can be found at home, like soup cans, full water bottles or sandbags. Your own body weight may be enough for things like wall push-ups or step-ups. Do these exercises three times a week and work up to 30 repetitions of each exercise (3 sets of 10). Here's a way to strengthen the hips: Stand sideways to the counter, hang on for balance and stand tall. Swing the outside leg out to the side as far as possible. Repeat sets swinging your leg forward and then backward. To make it harder, use a sandbag around the ankle or tie wide sewing elastic around your thighs.

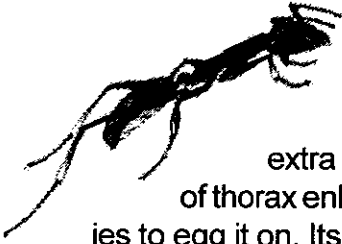
**Aerobic** (sustained) exercise improves your level of fitness. Walking, swimming and cycling are aerobic exercises. A target goal would be to slowly work up to 30-60 continuous minutes five times a week. Recent research indicates 'snacking' on exercise in at least 10-minute slices during a day improves health benefit. This is great news for beginners who would find 30 minutes of continuous exercise too strenuous or for those who can't set aside a block of time. Try setting your kitchen timer for 10 minutes and walking around the house – work up to doing this three times a day.

**Step 3 -- Look for ways to stick with it.** Find activities you enjoy that easily fit your daily schedule. Start slowly and gradually increase the amount you do.

Saskatoon has many fitness programs tailored to the needs of older people or those with certain conditions. Joining a supervised program may be right for you and you will learn how to exercise correctly and safely. For more information, contact the Field House or Civic Centres, YWCA and YMCA.

*Gail Tennant is a physical therapist at Sherbrooke Community Centre.*

# Ant's labours exhaust onlooker, offer lesson in determined effort



It was your average ant, no extra mandibles, no apparent use of thorax enhancement drugs, no groupies to egg it on. Its mission was to drag, push, pull and haul this large piece of something dead from the side of my garage to . . . somewhere else, I knew not where.

There was no way to tell how much the piece of dead thing (an insect, apparently) weighed. If you have a dog, you do the dog weighing trick. Hold the dog, step on the scale, release the dog, subtract the difference in weights. But this was an ant. Besides, the ant was still holding onto that dead thing. I would have to put the ant on the scale, then talk nice to it to get it to let go of the dead thing. And whether it did or it didn't, the reading would be the same. Zero.

So let's just say the dead thing was almost twice as big as the ant. Maybe it was a bit decomposed, maybe it had seen better days. Whatever. It was big. Bigger than the ant, that's no lie.

Most of the time the ant elected to pull the dead thing, rather than push it. This was in direct contravention to a commercial I saw on TV by one of those goody-two-shoes groups. They said it's easier on your back if you push your refrigerator instead of pulling it. I don't doubt their wisdom. They probably had a government grant to pay for the research behind their bold statement.

All I know is, this ant pulled her fridge. (Worker ants are always female.) And she didn't stop every 10 seconds to feel sorry for herself. She never stopped. By now she was to the first crack between patio blocks, and a treacherous chasm it appeared to be. Imagine pulling (or pushing) your fridge down into a little valley, across a creek bed and up the other side. No problem for this single-minded ant.

Now it was coming up on a real challenge — the garden hose, rippling like a mountain cordillera across the patio. But it was up and over that in no time, and with no help from Sherpa guides.

Not being a bee, the ant didn't know what a beeline was, and seemed to meander quite a bit, although its general direction was north toward the flowers and ferns bordering that side of the patio. This was a full 40 feet from where I first spotted her lugging her prize. An hour into the adventure, I lost her in the thicket, but assume she found her village and got a pat on the back from her associates and maybe a free cup of nectar at the local hangout.

All that exercise exhausted me and made me glad that ants haven't declared war on humans. Because they would win.

By  
Michael Gillgannon

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