



COMING of AGE

A Publication of the Saskatoon Council on Aging

Council Opens Office

In just over a year, the Saskatoon Council on Aging has formed, prepared bylaws, found funding, elected an executive and produced the newsletter *New Wrinkles* and this publication.

Its membership has climbed to over 200: individuals over 60, and representatives of seniors' organizations and agencies working with seniors in Saskatoon.

But probably the achievement most important to the hard-working volunteers who brought the Council into being, helped by Patricia Zipchen of the Saskatoon Community Health

Unit, is the creation of the Seniors Education and Information Resource Centre in its new office at 240 - 22nd Street East.

The Centre's name says it all. It will contain information on all resources and education opportunities available for seniors. Helped by a \$4,000 grant from the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Dianne Johns has gathered material and set up the information system, on computer and in files.

Seniors and others can browse among the Centre's flyers, pamphlets and newsletters. They can ask its staff to find specific information, such as seniors' housing in the city, or general data about agencies and groups concerned with health, for example. They can telephone their questions.

Questions about pensions? The Centre has helpful phone numbers and information. Its staff can explain how to arrange Meals on Wheels for a parent, or where to express concern about the safety of a senior who lives alone.

This is the basis of the Centre, but, says past Council president Delores Dzubin, it "will develop its own personality once we find out what everyone wants from it."

**GRAND
OPENING
COUNCIL OFFICE
and
SENIORS EDUCATION
AND INFORMATION
RESOURCE CENTRE**

240-22ND ST. EAST
Thursday, June 6
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Like the Council, the Centre is ready to serve the nearly 20,000 Saskatoon seniors, their families and the community.

Conveniently, Services for Seniors is on the same premises.

Anyone interested in helping, answering phone calls or sorting materials, is urged to volunteer. The Council's phone number is 652-2255.

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Standards and Licensing Promised for Saskatchewan Personal Care Homes

By Mary Helen Richards

Personal care homes provide accommodation, meals, supervision and assistance to non-family persons in a residential setting. There are about 70 such homes in Saskatoon, not including special-care homes.

There are all sorts and conditions of personal care homes in the city, some licensed, others operating without any inspection or supervision; some very good, others poorly run.

To establish standards for all homes, the Personal Care Homes Act was passed by the Legislature in 1989. It deals with construction, operation and maintenance of homes, and requires them to be licensed. Once the Act is proclaimed, regulations concerning staffing, residents' rights, and the elements of care will take effect. Non-family residents in such homes will be limited to eight.

Remembering the bad old days when some personal care homes packed up to 18 people into a small house, regulations seem essential.

Since April 1, 1991, the Saskatoon Council on Aging has been recognized by Revenue Canada as a charitable organization and can give numbered receipts for income tax purposes.

Dealing with fire and health, food and space, they will be designed to correct the worst offences and lead the way to a high quality of comfort and safety for persons who need this assistance in daily living. They will spell out details of staffing, programs, health and safety.

Written Agreement

Admission procedures will include a written agreement between the resident and the operator and an initial assessment to see that the person's needs can be met by the home.

A list of residents' rights and privileges will be included to ensure that residents are treated with respect, dignity and kindness in a home-like atmosphere.

Lynne Waring, manager of Saskatchewan Health's personal

care home division, says operators seem willing to comply.

Even before the new Act has been proclaimed, some have made major changes such as installing the required sprinkler systems.

In Saskatoon, two members of her division, Susan Malin and Irene Ositis-Schmeiser, have been meeting with operators of homes.

However, Lynne Waring says that responsibility for maintaining a high quality of care also lies with residents of personal care homes and their friends and families.

She urges anyone with concerns about a personal care home to phone the Saskatoon office at 933-5179 or contact her in Regina at 787-3664.

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Leaders Look Ahead

Wilma Mollard, co-president

Wilma participated in the Discover Choices workshops of Health and Welfare Canada in early 1988, which found that Saskatoon needed "a co-ordinating, networking kind of organization" for seniors. Out of that came the Saskatoon Council on Aging and the new Seniors Education and Information Resource Centre.

"Hopefully, we've done it with people," says Wilma, a nurse by training. She hopes all the people involved with the Council will look together at the needs of seniors in Saskatoon, and together identify solutions. Then they can work together to achieve those solutions. The Council and the Seniors Education and Information Resource Centre are the first steps.

A second co-president is being sought.



Delores Dzubin, past-president

Delores has been actively involved with seniors in Saskatoon for years; a nurse by training, she was a gerontological counsellor at the Saskatoon Community Clinic when she retired.



Through the Discover Choices workshops, she became involved in setting up the Saskatoon Council on Aging and was on the interim board. She likes the team approach to the presidency, since she is often away, and is impressed with people's willingness to work.

She does blood pressure tests at seniors' centres, but the Council takes up much of the rest of her time. She is happy to be carrying on her parents' tradition of community service and to have time to visit them and her children and grandchildren.

Program Co-ordinator Starts

Nancy Monseler is now the Council's part-time program co-ordinator. Under the board's direction, she will ensure the Seniors Education and Resource Information Centre has on its shelves and in its computer the information seniors and their families want, with a tie-in to the Access to Leisure group. She will set up education programs, and hopes to encourage a "bank of volunteers" for the Centre.

Nancy continues to work part-time with Well Information Service for the Elderly, encouraging senior centres to establish wellness clinics. She was executive director of the Saskatoon YWCA for 16 years.



Muriel Jarvis, advisory president

The need to co-ordinate information on what is available for seniors and make it easily accessible has long been a concern to Muriel. "We need a very, very good directory of some sort," she says. She sees that co-ordination as one of the Council's main roles: the others are to take a broad view on issues of concern to seniors, "a bit of an advocacy role"; and to emphasize healthy aging, an educational task.



Muriel began working in the long-term care field in 1957, and spent 16 years at Sherbrooke Community Centre, latterly as director of education. Now retired, she is president of the Saskatchewan Association of Special Care Homes, and on the board of Lutheran Sunset Home.

Getting to Know One of Saskatoon's Seniors: **BROCK WHALE**

By Ginnie Lawman

Brock Whale seemed surprised that I wanted to interview him for a seniors' publication. He doesn't think of himself as a senior, though he retired from his position as professor of extension at the University of Saskatchewan last year.

"Age isn't a limiting factor," he said, and by the sound of it, retirement won't be either. Typically, he began it by starting a new job.

He's been involved with St. Andrew's College (which trains United Church ministers) for 10 years, and when he was asked to be acting president while the president was on sabbatical leave, he didn't take long to decide to take on the challenge. He handles its administration part-time, an excellent way to ease out of working life.

Brock's ideas for his retirement years sound more like the course requirements for a general arts and science education than plans for taking life easy. He wants to re-learn some geography — Africa and the Middle East as he studied them years ago no longer exist. The politics and cultures of these regions fascinate him, too.

Bird-watching has been a lifelong passion for which he now has more time, and he also enjoys photography, though he finds putting the two hobbies together frustrating! And he would like to dust off his clarinet, if there's time when he's not singing in the Men's Choir or busy with church committees.

As he looks back over his life, Brock says he can see a pattern which often was not evident at the time.

He was born on an Ontario farm where he first watched birds come to the bird feeder. He particularly admired the sparrows because they are survivors. His love for animals led him to a degree at the Ontario Agricultural College (now the University of Guelph), and then to a job as a farm journalist for the Farmers' Advocate. He sold feed and flour for a few years, and then went into advertising, handling agricultural accounts.

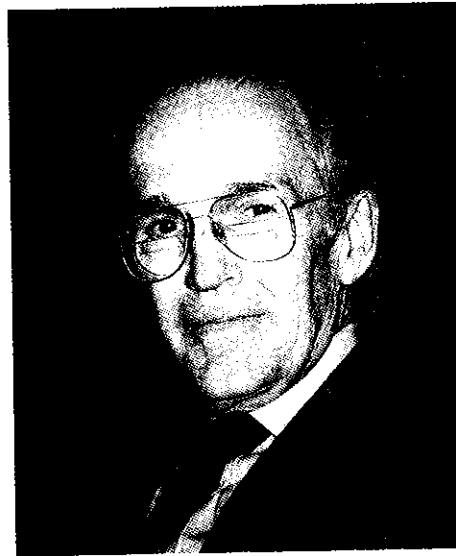
When he found that there were "not too many people with grey hair" in the advertising business, he went to graduate school and earned a doctorate in adult education program planning at age 40.

Twenty years or so ago, a new graduate of his age was considered a risk, but someone he had known as an undergraduate "took a chance on an old guy", and eventually he became director of the University of Saskatchewan's Extension Division.

The Extension Division attempts to make education available to particular groups of people - seniors, for example. Some seniors take extension classes for credit,

but many attend for the satisfaction of learning. (In some cases, fees are waived; information can be found at the Council on Aging office.)

Brock attributes some of his success to being in the right place at the right time. But his curiosity and wide-ranging interests have let him see opportunities where others may have passed them by. Like his undergraduate friend, he's a risk-taker, and like the sparrows back on the Ontario farm, he is a survivor.



'Age isn't limiting': Brock Whale

Health

Troublesome Memory

By Mary Helen Richards

Of all the fears we seniors may have, the fear of losing our mind must rank at the top. We may joke about it, "Oh, I can't remember his name! I must be getting Alzheimer's!" But it still is a major concern.

It is true that aging can bring some changes in memory, but not all types of memory change. Short-term memory — looking up a telephone number and writing it down, habits like brushing teeth, general knowledge like simple arithmetic — is likely to stay the same.

What does alter in many people is the swiftness of problem-solving, reaction time, recalling information (like the name of a neighbor). We go through the alphabet until the name pops up. The information isn't lost, it just takes longer to remember. Also we are easily distracted.

But seniors can learn, memorize, problem-solve with great ability. It just may take longer.

However, Alzheimer's disease does affect about one per cent of 65-year-olds and perhaps 20 per cent of those over 80. A neurological disorder causing a deterioration in intellectual abilities, it is a disease and not a normal part of aging.

Loss of memory is a major symptom. Not just forgetting a name, but being unable to play bridge when you were once a champion; forgetting the meaning of simple words; being unable to remember a phone number long enough to write it down.

Along with memory loss can go changes in behavior, loss of judgment, becoming withdrawn, paying little attention to personal

hygiene, inability to care for oneself. At this point, a family member or friend must urge a visit to the doctor.

It will take a physician to sort out the symptoms of Alzheimer's from those of several other illnesses.

Depression, acute illness, side effects of medication, poor diet, social isolation, all can bring loss of memory and confusion. All are treatable.

While at this point Alzheimer's has no cure, it can be slowed down. Exercise, proper diet, social contacts, mental stimulation will help sharpen memory.

There are aids to a good memory, too.

- Pay attention. Repeat information and write it down.
- Keep to a routine: a place for everything, everything in its place; set times for eating, sleeping, taking medication.
- Use reminders: notes, lists, timers, calendars.

SENIORS MONTH Saskatoon Public Library

Frances Morrison Branch:
Writing Contest - poetry and reminiscences.

Deadline May 31

Prizes awarded June 25
at Open House and Tea
Music by the Silver Strings

**Carlyle King Branch and
Cosmo Civic Centre
Seniors Day**

June 13 - Drop-in aerobics,
refreshments, slide show on
historic Saskatoon, tours

Cliff Wright Branch

June 6 and 7 - Orientation
and tours for seniors

Rusty Macdonald Branch

May 28 - Sask. vacation spots
June 11 - Bicycle maintenance
June 18 - Films of Bill Mason

J.S. Wood Branch

June 3 - Environment-
friendly living in Saskatoon

Mall-walk for Fitness

The ice and snow that made outdoor walking so treacherous have disappeared, but the walkers at Confederation Mall are still enjoying their indoor circuits.

Walking began there in January and about 40 people - many of them seniors - have registered in the Walk-A-Mall Club, received a badge, kit and mileage chart, and are hard at it, says Dan Quon, Confederation Mall manager.

It will go on year-round in the controlled environment, he said. The walkers keep records on each circuits of one-seventh of a mile and get special pins for 21 miles.

"It's really an excellent idea," says Linda Mickelson of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Saskatchewan, which supplies participants with information kits on nutrition and exercise.

Books Come to the Door

By Jenni Mortin

Every second Tuesday, just about 9 a.m., the Saskatoon Public Library comes to call on William Grant.

Its courier brings a bag of books chosen especially for him, and takes away the bagful he has read plus his request list - often gleaned from radio interviews with authors.

Florence and Stanley Graber also receive a sackful of books each Tuesday. "I'm sure my wife couldn't get by without it," Mr. Graber says about the library's homebound service, and the large-print books which she now needs. Library staff do a topnotch job of choosing books they enjoy, he says.

Until Jan. 1, the homebound service was operated by the Frances Morrison Library's fiction specialists, Marion Sim and Elizabeth Loran, and long-time clients like the Grabers (two years) and Mr. Grant (three years) are devoted fans.

They seem to have the wavelength of their readers, says Mr. Grant. Arthritis makes it hard for him to get out and the library connection "is sort of a link with the outside for me. It keeps me in connection with life."

The public library's homebound service for readers who can't choose books in person, because of illness, age or disability, is just one of its facilities for seniors. Its Community Services department - which now

includes the homebound service - has many programs of interest to them.

One program which Christine Drever of that department would like to expand is the book deposit service. It puts 200 books for three months in each of more than 40 nursing and special care homes and apartment buildings where many seniors live.

'BAGS
OF BOOKS
ARE
A
CONNECTION
WITH LIFE'

All that is needed is a volunteer co-ordinator who will pick up and return the books.

"This is a service that is really well received," she says, and she is eager to provide it to everyone in Saskatoon who needs it. Each deposit is a mix of large-print books and others chosen according to the residents' needs and wishes.

Its large-print books - 10,000 of them, she estimates - are popular with seniors and

others, but the library also has about 2,000 'talking books' available to registered borrowers, as well as magazines and cassettes.

Twice a year, the Frances Morrison Library offers a series on health and lifestyle for seniors. The next will be in the fall. Branch libraries also have special programs.

The downtown library has five magazines that are specifically for seniors: Aging, Good Times, New Choices, Modern Maturity and The Saskatchewan Senior. Coming of Age is also found there.

Many seniors attend its regular program of films and slides called Fridays at Two. Mrs. Drever regrets, though, that groups of seniors seldom ask for tours of the library, which her department would like to provide. "Some people don't go upstairs," she believes, thus missing out on the music and art departments, and the Local History Room.

Many seniors have found their way to the Local History Room, however, to help identify its large collection of photos of early Saskatoon, says Ruth Miller. They are "a big, big help and it is really important work," she says. "As the older people die, no one will know about these photographs."

And they "have a picnic" recognizing pieces of their past - and the city's, she adds.

Cultural Studies Attract Many

By Hector MacDonald

Saskatoon Seniors Cultural and Creative Studies Inc. is preparing for its ninth year this fall. In eight years, we have presented 94 non-credit courses to a membership that started at about 50 and has grown to 280-plus.

Established in September 1982, SSCCS offered its first courses in 1983. Founding members included Gertrude Callin, Alice McCrimmon, Stan Roberts, Eugene Anderson and the late Laura Glazer, Ross Walker and Joe Foffanof.

The University of Saskatchewan Extension Division is a co-sponsor. Herb Clarke, and more recently, George James of the division provided invaluable assistance by organizing courses, professional instruction and facilities for classes.

The only requirement for membership is that you be 60 and pay a \$5 membership fee. You must apply for each session in order to qualify for course offerings. Course fees were originally \$10 per subject, but have had to go up to \$15.

We have been offering seven to nine courses each fall (October/November) and spring (March/April) session, and three each winter (January/February) in eight weekly two-hour sessions, usually on weekday afternoons.

The courses are as varied as your imagination, and have included literature, art, archeology, music, sciences, computer, psychology. If the university has it, we can usually get it. Special lectures on topics of current interest are being considered this year.

Enrolment is limited to 40 and usually averages 30. Most courses have been presented at Place Riel on the university campus, but other locations are sometimes necessary.

We also have interesting social activities: a Christmas luncheon at a hotel with speakers and entertainment and in May a one-day bus tour to places of special interest. This year we will visit Wanuskewin, Batoche and Duck Lake.

SSCCS is incorporated as an independent organization under the Saskatchewan Seniors Education Corporation and comes under the general umbrella of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism for liaison with government and other senior organizations.

We receive some government operating grants but rising costs have pushed up membership fees, and may do so again. It is still the best bargain in educational, cultural and intellectual advancement ever offered in this province.

Brochures and application forms are available at the Frances Morrison Library. For more information, contact us at Box 8695, Saskatoon S7K 6S5. To learn about courses, contact George James, Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon S7N 0W0. Phone 966-5560.

(Hector MacDonald is SSCCS vice-president)

My Role Model

The Saskatoon bus station had its usual crowd of people milling around the door waiting to board the bus to Regina. I saw her sitting quietly on a bench off to one side. She was dressed all in black with flat black shoes, and had a small suitcase at her feet. She was tiny and very frail.

"Poor little old lady," I thought. "She'll never get a seat on the bus. When the line starts, I will get her in front of me."

I need not have worried. By the time the door opened, she was already at the head of the queue and she got there all on her own. I watched her do it. With a sideways shuffle of the feet, a bit of a wiggle of the hips and a gentle thrust of the suitcase, she cut right through that crowd.

Certainly not helpless, making good use of what she had, not dependent on the kindness of strangers - that's my kind of role model.

Mary Helen Richards

Volunteer opportunities with Home Care

"The people you do things for appreciate it so much."

That was Ted Ratcliffe's answer when he was asked what he considered the best part of volunteering for Saskatoon and District Home Care.

To prove his point, he told about the time he and his wife Ethel had taken a 93-year-old client with failing eyesight to pay bills and get groceries. When they returned to her home about 6.30 p.m., she invited them in for supper.

Mr. and Mrs. Ratcliffe declined the invitation but the client insisted vigorously, adding that she wanted him to check her stove because there was something wrong with it.

Since they had to unload the groceries anyway, the Ratcliffes went in and found a turkey supper warming on the stove and the table set for three. Of course, they stayed.

Not all clients of Saskatoon and District Home Care can show their appreciation to volunteers in such a generous way, volunteer co-ordinator Melody Neufeld-Rocheleau says, but they do appreciate the efforts of every volunteer. The staff at Home Care also appreciate the volunteers, for without them the agency could not offer the level of service it does.

Volunteer opportunities at Home Care include delivering Meals on Wheels, providing friendly visits, transportation assistance, shopping and errand help or palliative care support. Each requires a time commitment of about two hours a week and, except for friendly visits, access to a vehicle.

Home Care needs help to maintain its quality volunteer services. To register or get more information, call volunteer co-ordinators Donna Roy or Corinne Waldner at 934-2112.

YMCA for Seniors

The Saskatoon Family YMCA offers a variety of programs for older adults which may not be specifically for seniors but are popular with them.

Aquafit, a workout in water for swimmers and non-swimmers, is offered six days a week. It is easy on joints, recovering injuries and aging muscles because of the water's buoyancy.

Seniors also enjoy fitness classes followed by a swim, swimming lessons, lane swims, the Y's Men's Club, which combines fellowship and fund-raising, and the full-time masseuse. Income tax clinics are offered for seniors on low incomes.

Feedback, Please

Let us know what you think of Coming of Age. We would like to publish your letters about its contents or other subjects, and get suggestions for the next issue.

Call Publications Chairman
Mary Helen Richards
at 652-1623
or write
Box 7091,
Saskatoon S7K 4J1.

YWCA Offers Club 60 to All Seniors

The Saskatoon YWCA is the home of Club 60, a specially-designed gym and swim fitness program for men and women 60 and over, which offers fun, fitness and friendship to its members.

It runs from September to June with three 12-week sessions, each including two 45-minute gym or aqua exercises per week. It is a vigorous active program which has made a significant contribution to a healthy lifestyle for its members.

There are social events such as potluck lunches and Christmas suppers, a newsletter and other events.