

Summer 2014

Volume 4 ~ Issue 2

Inspiring vibrant and positive aging ∞ Promoting participatory arts ∞ Engaging civic stakeholders

““The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work.” ~ Emile Zola

Kayaker in Kananaskis Country

Photo by Sharon L. Moore, June, 2011



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Start by doing what’s necessary, then what’s possible, and suddenly you’re doing the impossible (Francis of Assisi).

Begin at once to live, and count each day as a separate life (Seneca).

Once you choose HOPE, anything is possible (Christopher Reeve).

“You can’t use up creativity. The more you use it, the more you have” (Maya Angelou).

Worth Viewing

***Cocoon* - Movie reviewed by Movie Review Editor: Zoe Greaves, MA: Volunteer Program Administrator, Calgary Seniors' Resource Society**

Directed by renowned director, Ron Howard, **Cocoon** is an instant classic. Made in 1985, it remains a favourite in my house, if only for the feelings of happiness it evokes.

Peaceful aliens from a planet called Antarea create a station on Earth 10,000 years in the past (later known as Atlantis). When Atlantis eventually sank, 20 of these aliens were left, alive only through the power of “cocoon” made out of rock. Returning to present day, a group of Antareans have come back to claim the missing aliens. Under the façade of being human, the Antareans rent a home next door to a retirement home – solely for the purpose of its swimming pool. The pool serves as a conduit for the “cocoon” and provides energy enough for them to withstand the trip home to Antarea.

Where the film gets interesting is with a couple of the residents at the retirement home. Joe, Arthur and Ben regularly swim in this pool – not realizing that the cocoons are actually giving them energy and making them feel more youthful and strong. On one such occasion, the leader of the Antareans finds them and although at first a bit shocked, allows them to continue swimming on the assurance they will not share it with anyone else. Like any good movie, this secret is quickly shared. Intrigued by the fact that this swimming pool is giving its swimmers more energy and making them feel young again, the residents of the retirement home all begin going to the pool. Perhaps due to the sheer number of swimmers, one of the cocoons ends up getting damaged and all the life force drained. The leader of the Antareans is furious; naturally.

Sadly for the Antareans, the cocoons are no longer able to withstand the trip back home but can survive in the Ocean. With all the characters assisting to put the cocoons back into the water, the leader offers youth forever to the residents of the retirement if they come to the planet Antarea. Only one declines. And with that, the film digresses.

Although perhaps this description makes Cocoon seem infantile, the underlying themes of aging, immortality and life having purpose are resoundingly adult. This is a movie for the young at heart, those searching for meaning and those wanting an afternoon of heart- warming entertainment.

Worth Reading

***My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey* - Book reviewed by Book Review Editor: Maureen Osis: “Post-career (aka retired) Gerontological nurse and marriage & family therapist and late-life blooming piano player”**

Jill Bolte Taylor was a 37-year old scientist whose work focused on the neuroanatomy of the brain. On December 10th, 1996, she experienced a stroke with massive bleeding into the left side of her brain; fortunately, she was able to seek help which saved her life.

Unlike many people who have no recollection of having a stroke, Taylor was able to observe and recall her experience as she lost all function in the rational left side of her brain. Taylor eloquently describes her euphoric nirvana as she felt totally at peace with an overwhelming sense of well-being while her right brain continued to function, in the absence of the judgmental and logical left brain.

Worth reading continued from p. 3

Taylor's recovery was initially aided by her amazing mother -- who, with no professional knowledge about rehabilitation, used her intuition to love, guide, encourage, and push her daughter on a path of recovery. Taylor says that her recovery took at least eight years -- a challenge to conventional thought that rehabilitation is a time-limited endeavour. In areas where she did not recover her abilities, she cultivated new ones. She acknowledges that she is not the same person now, and in some ways, she believes her life is better.

This book can be a valuable resource for anyone, family and professionals alike, who live with or work with individuals affected by brain trauma. I found it inspiring to learn more about the remarkable resiliency of the brain and her advice how to live more holistically, by understanding the right/left brain. Taylor challenges us to "step to the right"; that is to rely more on our intuitive right brain, particularly when facing stress. As we read her story, we realize that all of us have the potential to tap into this inner peace, if we can reduce the constant chatter of the left brain.

Age in Beauty – Beauty in Age

By Beth Perry, PhD, RN*

You are so lovely,
A beauty in body and spirit.

No matter how harshly time ravages you,
A beauty you will always be.

The transient beauty of
your hair,
your skin, and
your body,
simply pales against the permanent beauty
of your soul.

*Beth is an author and professor in the Faculty of Health Disciplines at Athabasca University.



Photos by Sharon Moore (editor)



Get to Know Your Board



John Vaillancourt

John Vaillancourt is one of our newest board members, joining us in May, 2014. He is currently the Senior Manager of Knowledge and Recreation at the Kerby Centre and has over 18 years of experience in the field of Gerontology including; Case Assessment /Management; program creation and implementation

for an older adult crisis centre; Program/ Recreation Manager for long-term care in B.C.; Policy and Program Advisor for a long-term care in England; Manager and Administrator in the retail sector; Project Management of various special events in the public, private and charity sectors; and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer for a municipal government.

John has a B.A. in Gerontology from Laurentian University, and an MSc in Gerontology from the University of Southampton, Centre for Research in Aging. John's areas of expertise are; social policy; program and leisure (analysis, design, and implementation); person centered care; dementia care; horticultural therapy; qualitative research; leadership; quality and risk management; project management; and an intricate understanding of policy issues facing older adults.

In his leisure time, John loves to travel, sight-see, hike, garden & design, water colour painting, oil pastels, work with copper, and collect old time radio (OTR) shows. Future endeavours include taking courses in language and stained glass, and working part-time on a PhD.

We welcome John to the board and looking forward to working with him over the coming years.

Fourth Creative Aging Symposium: A Success

The theme of the 4th Creative Aging Symposium was *Hope, Aging and Creative Expression* and was a great success according to the more than 75 attendees from across Alberta and B.C.. Dr. Ronna Jevne, psychologist, author and professor emeritus from Millett Alberta opened the conference with an inspiring keynote "*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Wrinkles*". Six workshops rounded out the conference program along with a fun closing which tapped into the creative skills of the symposium participants.

In the next several pages, you are invited to tour the summary of the workshops written by board members who attended specific workshops with the hope that you might be inspired to attend the next symposium. Many thanks for symposium photos contributed by Suzanne Clease, John Mungham and Sharon Moore.

Workshop: Spring from the Chair

Reviewed by Ruth Loughlin



On May 1st I had the honor to attend and participate in the Chair Yoga workshop presented by Spring Lambrakos. Spring's workshop focused on the fundamentals of Iyengar Yoga including breath work, alignment, challenges encountered and how to adapt to your body type by using chair yoga.

Spring exudes warmth and unconditional acceptance for all participants and ensured our safety. She offered adaptations and choices by using the chair for safety and support. She began our journey in Chair Yoga by introducing us to the Rules of Practice. She started with Restorative Yoga due her personal diagnosis of ulcerative

colitis and a knee injury. She was able to use Restorative Yoga to prevent her from having any surgeries.

This is her introduction to the Chair Yoga experience:

Do I feel Safe?

Spring emphasized the importance of speaking your truth and helping others to speak out. Speak your truth and give your voice to any concerns or challenges. Spring emphasized the need for safety and how to use adaptations including the chair for individual abilities. Spring stressed you should always ask and listen to any concerns or challenges you may have and support them with options and choices.

Once we felt safe and relaxed; Spring began our journey with the sincere, calming instructions as follows:

Breath is boss and it is soft, smooth and long. Tempo of the heart must stay calm.

One should never feel pain but only a small amount of heat and challenge, similar to standing in front of a fire. Feel the warmth not the burn.

Let your unique self, today's person, body and mind arrive and be present.

Remove your glasses to relax as you would have the same sensation at bedtime.

Always ask Do I feel Safe?

Close eyes gently and if not leave them open, gaze down and forward to quiet the mind.

Our journey continued with concentration on our breath and following breathing techniques to warm our body, quiet the mind, all in prepare for our chair yoga class. We began seated in a chair using proper alignment and concentrated on our breath. Concentration on breath is the most important factor of all. We moved with the support of our chair to successfully complete mountain pose. We warmed up our upper body and gently stretched and released our shoulders, arms, wrists, fingers, feet, ankles, hips. Using chair yoga we had all safely and proudly experienced the Garudasana Eagle, Malasana and Warrior 1 and Warrior 2 adding Utkasana, Parighasana gate pose and moving into Savasana. We performed authentic Yoga in a chair with all the same positive results of standard Yoga. She taught us yoga can be mobile and how to practice it in your everyday life. We all successfully completed our yoga journey utilizing the chair for stability and support and having many options for advanced movement.

Spring from the Chair: con'd.

My self and others in our class came out of class feeling fully relaxed, renewed and revitalized from the experience. I am personally pleased to learn as we age or face any health challenges we can still enjoy practicing Yoga. I am excited to share and introduce chair yoga to the seniors in my community, as a part of their creative expression and for its overall health benefits.

Chair Yoga is a safe, supportive movement, providing extended and recuperative health for graceful aging.

Namaste

Namaste literally means "bowing to you"

Workshop: Memories to Memoirs: A Writing Toolkit Reviewed by Ralph Hubele



Dr. Ronna Jevne, Professor Emerita, University of Alberta, provided an workshop on therapeutic writing as a method of creativity that can enhance hope and wellbeing in individuals. There were approximately 25 participants in the workshop.

She began the workshop by examining evidence of the positive emotional and physical benefits of expressive writing. These included things such as heightened immune function, lowered blood pressure, resolution of sleep disruption, enhanced memory to name just a few. Recommended reading around this research include an article by Karen Baikie and Kay Wilhelm, "Emotional and Physical Health Benefits of Expressive Writing", *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* (2005) 11: 338-346. Other benefits of this writing approach include such things as assisting us in noticing our life, dealing with vicarious trauma, and reducing transference.

Dr. Jevne also provided a discussion of some "tricks of the trade", to utilize in stimulating the writing process. These included the following suggestions: utilizing a journal, dating your writings, writing despite your mood, try different types of writing styles to learn which ones work for you, ignore grammar and spelling, being as honest as you can tolerate, use pseudonyms to protect other's identities, long hand is preferable, avoid answers and big truths, avoid making judgments, only write on 2/3 of the page leaving a wide margin for reflections later. She also suggested having your journal readily available, but ensure that it can be kept private.

A discussion was also held regarding techniques to get ones creative juices flowing. These included methods to encourage you to start writing, focusing your writing, taking different perspectives, and different creative genres to try in your writing. The participants then broke into smaller groups and experimented with writing with different approaches and then sharing the experience with the wider group. She concluded her workshop by providing a number of references on this topic for follow-up. She also noted that in undertaking this type of expressive writing it is important that the leader of the writing session have training to be able to support the individuals participating in this type of activity.

More information on Ronna and workshops she offers can be found at:

<http://www.ronnajevne.ca/ronnajevne/>

Workshop: Hope Puppets

Reviewed by Suzanne Clease



There was laughter and fun in Wendy Passmore-Godfrey's (photo on left) puppet making workshop. Through Wendy's professional guidance we began to see the many possibilities of puppets for engaging seniors across generations. Of particular interest to all was the idea of using this medium to share and preserve stories. Participants also played short games following the puppet building activity demonstrating how easy it is to make our creations come to life. All participants went home with their inspiring creations.

(On the right, a workshop participant shows off her creation)



Nursing Practice Instructor Julie Burns with three of her nursing students from University of Calgary who were just beginning a practicum placement with seniors.

L-R
Jackie DeGoeij, Alicia Lunz, &
Funmi Oteniya

Back: Julie Burns

More information on Wendy's work can be found at <http://www.wppuppet.com/>

Workshop: Vocal Toning & Sound as Healing Tools Reviewed by Dianne McDermid

Kim Polvi, and her mentor, Marsha Read, both retired school teachers and specialists in Sound Healing, led workshop participants through a Sound Healing exercise, using Jonathan Goldman's system for toning the chakras. This system uses vocalizations of different tone qualities to bring each chakra humming to life. For example, to stimulate the Root chakra, a deep "UUH" or grunting sound is vocalized. The Sacral or Spleen chakra uses a slightly higher pitched tone of "OOH." Starting from the Root chakra and moving progressively to the Crown chakra, we hummed sound vibrations to each chakra, resonating

Vocal Toning con'd

and aligning our body's energy centres. Vocal toning is used for health, wellness and a sense of a higher consciousness as well as being an excellent strategy for strengthening one's singing voice.

Kim also introduced us to singing bowls, enabling us to experience somewhat different vibrations that are also used for healing, meditation and relaxation. Needless to say, at the end of the session we were feeling refreshed and alert—a challenge for anyone giving a presentation to

individuals immediately after lunch.



Right: Singing Bowls

Left:: Workshop facilitator Kim Polvi

Lower right: Participants Barbara Bell & Ruth Loughlin



More on Kim's work can be found at <http://www.innervibrations.ca/>



Workshop: Engaging in Life's Third Act



Left:: Judy Steiert Workshop Facilitator

Engaging in Life's Third Act was facilitated by Judy Steiert Professional Sageing Leader, started off with an interesting discussion about the concept of sageing and reframing 'aging' from simply becoming old to aging consciously. She highlighted that sageing is both a philosophy and a set of psychological and spiritual practices, originally developed by Zalman Schachter Shalomi, that support living with passion, purpose, inner growth and commitment to service as we age. She then drew us into a variety of self-reflection and group activities fostering awareness and celebration that older adults have intelligence, experience, skills and wisdom. The session concluded with an active Q&A period.

Reviewed by Elaine Danelesko

Workshop: Looking for the Sun: Healing & Hope through Songwriting

Reviewed by John Mungham



Left: Singer Songwriter Cori Brewster with workshop participant Suzanne Cleese.

This workshop was well attended and pleasantly ended up requiring the full participation of the all those present. Cori Brewster, workshop facilitator is a professional singer songwriter living in Canmore. She is well known for her performances, an outstanding CD called Buffalo Street, and her annual weekend songwriting workshop. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to explore how music can evoke emotion and expression. Some participants identified how

helpful this can be working with older adults. It started with Cori explaining how she writes music and then she sang a song she wrote. With only two hours it was a challenge to just sit and write a song. Based on a theme the group quickly put a song together. They then went into teams of two. Each team of two sang a phrase of two lines and acted out the emotion that went along with it. Before long the whole group was singing, dancing and laughing joyfully. With little time for rehearsal, the group presented their unpolished song to the entire symposium. The opportunity to sing together, do physical expression, and laugh was a very cathartic moment that still

makes me smile when I think about it.



More on Cori 's work can be found at: <http://www.coribrewster.com/>

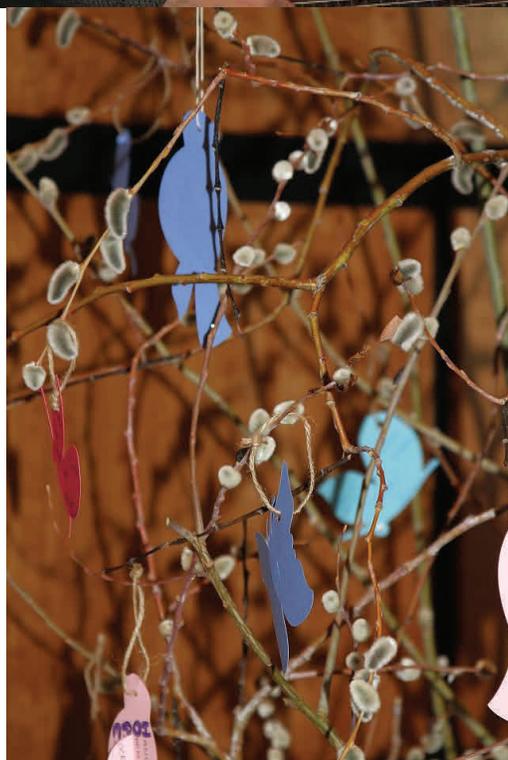
Symposium Closing:

Cori Brewster’s song writing class performed the song they wrote, entertaining the audience with song and dance and the audience was delighted to have Cori perform a song from her latest CD.

Closing the conference, father and son, John Mungham and Simon Billo performed a song called HOPE written by Simon. It was a song inspired by his own personal experience that he shared with the audience. It was such a fitting closure as it was a reminder of the difference that HOPE makes in all of our lives and in the work that we do with seniors. As people left the conference they took with them a message of hope from a hope tree that conference attendees had placed there during the day.



Left: Simon Billo
Right: John Mungham



Hope Tree

Networking and Connecting



Watch for news of the next symposium scheduled for May 2016

Upcoming Events

Event: Grey Matters Conference 2014-Seniors Services

Date: October 1, 2014

Location: Sheraton Red Deer

Info: jannet.schimmel@janpat.com

Event: Spirituality & Wholeness Workshop

Date: October 2, 2014

Location: Country Kitchen Catering Lethbridge

Info: (780) 989-3220 or cstevenson@gss.org

Event: Health Care Aide Conference-Prepared to Care

Date: October 3, 2014

Location: Chateau Louis Hotel & Conference Centre, Edmonton AB

Info: (780) 644-6370 or hca.conference@norquest.ca

Event: Landscapes of Aging-Critical Issues, Emerging Possibilities CAG 2014

Date: October 16-18, 2014

Location: Sheraton on the Falls, Niagara Falls

Info: 1 (855) 224-2240 or info@cagacg.ca

Event: Canadian Association on Gerontology – “Landscapes of Aging”

Date: October 16-18, 2014

Location: Niagara Falls, Ontario

Info: <http://cagacg.ca/>

Event: Spirituality & Wholeness Workshop

Date: October 17, 2014

Location: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, Sherwood Park AB

Info: (780) 989-3220 or cstevenson@gss.org

Event: All Hands on Deck-Connect, Create, Collaborate (Infection, Prevention & Control Southern Alberta)

Date: October 22, 2014

Location: MacEwan Ballroom, University of Calgary, Calgary AB

Info: 1 (866) 999-7111 or ipacsouthernalberta@gmail.com

Event: Music Care Conference-Training Caregivers in Therapeutic Use of Music

Date: October 25, 2014

Location: Rosza Centre, University of Calgary

Info: (905) 852-2499

Event: 24th Annual Palliative Care Conference - Education & Research Days

Date: October 28 & 29, 2014

Location: Fantasyland Hotel, West Edmonton Mall, Edmonton

Info: (780) 735-7727 or Kathy.robberstad@albertahealthservices.ca

Associations / Organizations that support Seniors participation in Arts

Alberta Association on Gerontology

www.albertaaging.ca

City of Calgary—Seniors Programs and Services

<http://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Pages/Seniors/Seniors-Programs-Services.aspx#recreation>

Kerby Centre for the 55 plus—Education and Recreation

<http://kerbycentre.com/calgary-adult-services/education-and-recreation/>

Greater Forrest Lawn 55+ Society—Activities and Classes

<http://www.gfls.org/activities--classes.html>

Confederation Park 55+ Activity Centre—Classes and Clubs

<http://www.conpark55.org/#!classes--clubs/cxin>

Ogden House Seniors—Activities and Calendar

<http://www.ogden50plus.org/calendar.html>

Alliance for Active Aging—Programs

<http://www.allianceactiveaging.ca/programs/>

Bow Cliff Seniors—Activities

<http://www.bowcliffseniors.org/Activities.html>

Parkdale Nifty 50's—Activities

<http://www.pdnf.org/Pages/Classes.html#>

Calgary FLC Seniors Club—Activities

<http://www.flcseniors.ca/activities>

Calgary Association of Life Long Learners—Programs

http://calgarylifelonglearners.ca/wordpress/?page_id=1859

Silver Stars Musical Revue Society

http://www.calgary-acts.com/view_member.php?MemberID=24

“Voices” Seniors Choir

<http://www.thirdagecommons.ca/resources/voices-seniors-choir>

SAG-Seniors Action Group

http://www.seniorsactiongroup.com/pb/wp_c06741e7/wp_c06741e7.html

Seniors A Go-Go

http://www.calgarysexualhealth.ca/aging_intro.html

Calgary Music Makers Senior Citizens Choir

<http://calgarymusicmakers.ca/>

Calgary Raging Grannies

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Calgary-Raging-Grannies/149773808411499>

Creative Aging Calgary Society

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John Mungham Ralph Hubele

Newsletter Editor: Sharon Moore

Phone: 1 403 678-2995

Membership Info

Memberships are available at no charge online:
www.creativeagingcalgary.com

Members receive event and information updates as well as newsletters three times per year.

Creative Expressions is the official newsletter for the Creative Aging Calgary Society (CACS). It is published three times a year and distributed electronically (www.creativeagingcalgary.com). Questions regarding article / photo contributions should be directed to the editor (Sharon Moore) at editor@creativeagingcalgary.com or 1 403-678-2995.

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Vision: Vibrant and positive aging

Mission

To increase awareness of the positive physical and psychological impact that arts participation can have on older adults

Strategic Priorities

Advocacy

Enhance awareness of participatory arts and aging programs with a variety of stakeholders

Practice

Foster connections between older adults, artists, professionals and interested community members

Research

Clearly communicate cutting-edge research specific to arts participation

Education

Share information about local arts-based programs and opportunities for learning

Governance

Generate an effective Board with membership that reflects our diverse community

Volunteer Here

The Creative Aging Calgary Society is relatively new group and is seeking volunteers to help with our various committees.

Please contact: info@creativeagingcalgary.com for more information related to:

Education & Programming, Communications, Membership, Sponsorship & Funding, Marketing & Promotion or Research.

Submissions Welcome

Articles, book reviews, event and special interest items related to Creative Aging are all welcome. Please contact the editor at editor@creativeagingcalgary.com for more information. Next issue: Fall, 2014. Submission deadline October 15, 2014.

Your Business Ad Here

Business ads are welcome: \$20/issue for 40 words (first ad free for members). Graphic ads, 1/8 page size, also welcome for \$75 per issue (members receive 20% discount). Please contact the editor at editor@creativeagingcalgary.com Next issue: Fall 2014. Submission deadline: October 15, 2014.

“**Creative aging** is about possibilities, freeing ourselves of limiting beliefs about aging and embracing the reality that individuals continue to grow, learn and contribute to their communities throughout the life journey.”

-Sheridan Elder Research Centre Sheridan College

The Creative Aging Calgary Society

welcomes new members

Benefits of Membership

- Appreciate the importance of arts and aging
- Discuss the benefits of professionally conducted, participatory arts and aging programs and why it is necessary to reach out to many stakeholders (artisans, elected officials, funders, partners, and policymakers)
- Explore how to design, implement, market, support, evaluate, and sustain arts and aging programs for older adults
- Experience examples of arts-based programs and services in and around Calgary (fee reduction for members)
- Network with individuals actively engaged or interested in creative expression and aging programs
- Receive an informative newsletter four times per year (advertisement opportunities available at reduced prices for members)

FREE memberships available online

www.creativeagingcalgary.com
