

# READ BY 100,000 SK SENIORS

SSM 2009 Annual Conference

## 'United Against Elder Abuse'



Alison Leaney

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism Conference and Working Forum, 'United Against Elder Abuse', held on May 5-7, 2009 at the Delta Hotel in Regina, was well attended by people from all walks of life that represented the senior population from across Saskatchewan.

Senator Sharon Carstairs, our keynote speaker, gave a very informative presentation about the results of a senate study on seniors' needs that was well received by all. It was also a great pleasure to have a recorded video message from Senator Marjory LeBreton showing her great concern for finding a solution to elder abuse across Canada. We were privileged to have groups from across Saskatchewan who are currently working on the elder abuse issue come together to share best practices from their areas of the province.

These groups included: STOPS to Violence, Victim

Hon. Don McMorris

Services, Public Trustee's Office, South West Council on Aging, Saskatoon Council on Aging, Community Against Family Violence and the Seniors Education Centre. Other speakers included: Constable Christina Wolf (Ottawa Police Service), John Connolly (HRSDC), Elliot Paus-Jenssen (Canadian Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse) and Patricia Humenny (National Seniors Council). The information shared highlighted successes in other jurisdictions. This allowed those present, under the guidance of Alison Leaney (BC Association of Community Network Response), to start to create an inter-agency community intervention elder abuse strategy for Saskatchewan. A big thank you to Alison for her commitment and leadership!

*Our thanks goes to our valued sponsors: New Horizons for Seniors, Saskatchewan Parks and*  
*(Continued on page 4)*



Senator Sharon Carstairs



Hon. Judy Junor with conference participants



**Editorial Committee**

John Knight (Chair), Trevor Quinn,  
Shirley Lomheim, June Mitchell

**Technical Support**

Lynne Couzens

All editorial matter published in *Gray Matters* represents the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the publication's editorial board or the S.S.M. Statements and opinions expressed do not represent the official policy of S.S.M. unless so stated.

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

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

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# Celebrating lives well lived



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## Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism



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

### 'Seniors Working Together'

**Donations to SSM to support our seniors programs are gratefully accepted. Charitable receipts will be issued for gifts of \$15.00 or more.**

*Organizations represented on the SSM Board are as follows:*

- Saskatchewan Retirees Association
- Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association
- Saskatchewan Seniors Education Corp.
- Saskatoon Council on Aging
- Fédération des Aînés Fransaskois
- Senior Power
- Regina Senior Citizens Centre Inc.
- Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan
- National Association of Federal Retirees
- Saskatchewan Seniors Association Incorporated
- Saskatchewan Federation of Union Retirees
- SaskTel Pioneers Chapter 59
- Women of the Dawn

**SENIORS INFO LINE 1 – 888 – 823 – 2211**

OR CHECK OUR WEBSITE

**[www.skseiorsmechanism.ca](http://www.skseiorsmechanism.ca)**

## How Do Seniors Want to Live in Today's Society?

At a recent Working Forum about Senior Abuse, seniors identified many of the things they would like to have in their lives today. They included:

- Seniors having a choice in how they live;
- Financial security;
- Seniors feeling safe in relationships;
- Reduced worry;
- Healthy families/communities;
- Empowered seniors – confident;
- Respect for all, dignity;
- Needs met – mental, emotional, physical & spiritual;
- Be involved – seniors valued and contributing members of society instead of 'pensioners';
- Valued and included, caring;
- Treated as well as everyone else by systems (health, justice, etc);
- Physical environments accessible;
- No ageism;
- Choice of lifestyle;
- Acknowledge wisdom, knowledge, experience;
- Positive image of seniors;
- Older adults in positions of leadership;
- Attention to frail elderly
- Appropriate legislation and resources – comprehensive safety nets;

Does this ring true for you?

## Senior Abuse Together We Can Make a Difference!

If you, or a family member, have been impacted by senior abuse, you know how discouraging it is to reach out for help only to discover there is no "clear-cut" answer. The reason there is no clear-cut answer is because the issue is extremely complex. It is believed that certain authority figures understand what to do, but in reality they do not understand all the complex relationships that make a situation ripe for senior abuse. This perhaps is a result of not understanding seniors in general.

Recently, there was strong commitment by many groups from around the province to work together to find better solutions for seniors who are victims of senior abuse. Although obtaining the support of the provincial government was identified as a key step in supporting senior abuse victims in Saskatchewan, the community-based organizations (CBOs) in attendance know victims of abuse cannot wait. Therefore, these CBOs committed

to coordinating a provincial response informed by seniors.

Right now there are pockets of support around the province for seniors who are victims. Those working in the senior abuse arena are often working in isolation, and are often unaware of tools that are being used in other jurisdictions that could assist them to improve how they respond to victims of senior abuse. The goal is to get these groups talking on a regular basis to share strategies that are working in their jurisdictions, and to simply raise awareness in an attempt to bring in people who can be part of the solution.

This is a huge hidden problem with no easy answers. However, lobbying to make senior abuse a priority, and creating tools that can get into the hands of our most vulnerable, are the first steps this group will take.

Call us to find out how you can help!

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“More Than Just a Health Food Store”

*(Continued from page 1 - United Against Elder Abuse)*

Recreation, Canadian Mental Health Association-Problem Gambling, Chartwell Renaissance Retirement Residence, Speers Funeral Chapel and Four Leaf Clover-Seniors Independence Club. Those who donated door prizes and conference bag items were: Administration Centre, Casino Regina, City of Regina, Canadian Mental Health Association-Problem Gambling, Delta Hotel, Philips Lifeline and Seniors Education Centre. It is through their generosity that we were able to present this conference.

In the coming year, it is our plan to further pursue the solution for this vast but often hidden problem that exists across the province. Together, with agencies from across Saskatchewan, we are now in the beginning stages of making a difference!



Al Morrison—SSM Pres.



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This exhibition is organized by the Moose Jaw Museum & Art Gallery. Image: Dorothy Knowles, *Reeds and Wildflowers* (detail), 1990, Collection of the Mendel Art Gallery. Purchased with funds donated by Estelle and Bert L. Gladstone, 1993.

# **SASKATCHEWAN SENIORS ASSOCIATION INC.**

## **NEWSLETTER**

Please send all your news and comments about the SSAI newsletter to:

Fern Haight, Box 393, Hanley, SK.

Fax: 544-2757, Email: fern.h@sasktel.net

### **President's Message**

The Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. (SSAI) has some 180 senior centers scattered across the province with a total membership of approximately 8000. The greatest number of these senior centers by far are situated in rural Saskatchewan or as I like to say, small town Saskatchewan.

These senior centers provide a full range of recreational and social activities which in turn becomes physical and mental wellness activities for all those seniors in the area.

Seniors come together to enjoy playing cards, shuffle board, pool and a wide variety of other games and sports. They come together to enjoy pot luck suppers, birthday parties and educational information sessions. Many of these centers also act as wellness health centers by hosting foot care, blood pressure and diabetic care clinics, which are done generally with no funding from Saskatchewan Health. Most importantly though, is that senior centers are places where seniors can go for companionship and genuine good fellowship. It's a place also where widows and widowers can go and feel comfortable. They are able to socialize with those who they have something in common with. Being with friends eases the pain and anguish and helps seniors to move on after losing loved ones.

The centers also provide in some small towns, a place that the community at large can use for various activities which the seniors themselves are responsible for initiating, planning and carrying out.

The cost of running a senior center has escalated over the last 10 years. The only funding comes from a membership fee that is purposely kept low so that all seniors may en-

joy the center and none are excluded. The cost of energy, power and telephone alone is becoming more than those centers can handle. As a result of the escalating utility costs 107 centers across the province have had to close their doors over the last 10 years. Fund raising for people whose average age is 80+ is really no longer feasible, especially as it is not a one shot deal, it goes on month after month, year after year.

The enforced closure and absence of senior centers in rural Saskatchewan will leave many seniors feeling lonely, isolated and with a sense of being among the forgotten people of Saskatchewan. With a lack of physical and emotional stimulation seniors can easily fall victim to depression and other health related problems. This can lead to a greater demand on Long Term Care homes and possibly hospitals, which in turn places a greater financial burden upon the government.

SK Trends Monitor stated that as of 2004 there was an estimated 147,450 seniors over the age of 65 living in Saskatchewan. Of these at least 50% were between the ages of 65 and 74 and 76,925 seniors were between the ages of 75 and 90 plus. Add to those figures the natural increase in the number of seniors since that year plus the fact that seniors are the fastest growing segment of the population and we can begin to see the enormous pressures that are going to be placed on the health care system in the future.

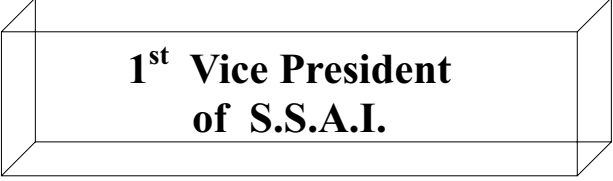
Any measure that can lead to a reduction on those future health care costs should be seen as an important factor when budgetary matters are being considered. Funding senior centers should be seen in this context and receive a great deal of serious thought when effective cost saving issues are considered. The thought that a cent spent wisely now can lead to a dollar being saved down

the road should not be too far away when discussions on this important topic take place.

The 69<sup>th</sup> annual convention of SSAI took place in 2009 at the Tropical Inn in North Battleford on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> June. Along with a noted speaker at the banquet we had presentations from SGI, Sask Power and Nagel Travel. In order to be included in the convention booklet, resolutions had to be forwarded to myself or Tom Breckner in Colonsay by May 15<sup>th</sup>. All coordinators were invited to attend the board supper meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> June held in the Battleford Senior Center.

For now though keep active and stay healthy.

*Len Fallows. President SSAI.*



My spring Gray Matters inflation rant brought friendly responses from two very alert and knowledgeable readers.

Respecting tax return contribution to our Old Age Security fund, Karl's email corrected my decade long memory lapse. Yes, this commenced in 1962 rather than 1952. I was having too damn much fun in 1952 to be thinking OAS. Karl also commented that the contribution increases were 1% in 1963 and 1964 with the change to General Revenue file happening in 1966. That may well be—but my point was today's seniors paid for their OAS and the tax contribution didn't reduce when the fund was rolled into general revenues.

Karl's articulate, seemingly thoroughly researched message offers some different dates from my article "do you remember" that was based strictly from memory, while also including some opinions on 'tax credits' over the past decade to help seniors cope with inflation.

This is good—causing seniors to dig a little deeper to pursue and compare re-

flections is in itself a success. Our seniors, collectively, hold a wealth of information and knowledge—too often not widely shared. They are the kind of people seniors' volunteer groups seek, team players who offer diverse contributions of ability, as seniors stay involved in our vast society.

A \$4,000 provincial personal and spousal tax credit increase for 2008 was indeed beneficial.

- I stand by my galloping inflation rant concerns.
- Gasoline at \$1.04 per litre is trying to find a comfort zone. It took 3 phone calls to corporate and retail outlets to get today's rate-information. This is not freely given. While traveling south on March 12, Estevan gas pumps advertised \$.92/litre. About 40 minutes into the USA at Kenmar, N.D., I paid \$1.99 US for a 3.8 litre US gallon. Prices dropped to \$1.84 further south, about \$.46 US per litre and probably with Canadian gas.
- SaskPower just announced their residential 8.5% rate increase; not far off the 28 month Saskatchewan CPI index since the Feb. 1, 2007 last increase. Sadly again, you will note that October 1, 2008, January 1, 2009 and April 1, 2009 all repeat the ZERO OAS quarterly inflation adjustment while we in Saskatchewan celebrate the highest inflation rate in Canada.

Sandra Carricat, recently elected treasurer of the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation responded to my Gray Matters column from her Ontario auto worker retiree prospective. I share Sandra's comments with her approval:

..... "Right now in Ont., we are in a real fight to keep our pensions especially as a CAW member. The media doesn't tell the real story. They are probably constructing the bankruptcy with Chrysler.

The public has been given the misconception that the Chrysler workers make \$76 an hour. The reality in short, is that Chrysler has about 19,000 retir-

ees and the workers pay into our pension fund.

Because there are so many of us the cost is substantial and they roll it into the pay per workers. In reality they only make about \$32 an hour, about \$2 less than Honda.

We are making the public aware that this is an attack on the seniors and our pensions as a whole. We don't know if we will be successful in turning the tide and ground swell of lack of support from the public.

Yesterday, I was talking to an 81 yr old woman on her own, because she has been retired for so long. She has a very small pension from Chrysler, but it's enough to keep her in her home.

If Chrysler goes bankrupt she could lose her pension and her home as a consequence.

She was crying, she made me cry.

Why do we have to come to this time in our life and be put into this kind of a struggle.

Hope to hear from you again. Sandy."

As a Canadian, as a senior—this writer feels great empathy for our senior brothers and sisters across Canada who are caught up in this massive economic melt-down! Let's all try to buy Canadian whenever possible.

On another pensioner issue, as a Saskatchewan retiree board representative, I have attended Canada Pension Plan investment board presentations—generally results were positive with 75 year liquidity promised. My voiced concerns of the day, like the medical profession, was critical of tobacco and war arms as CPP investments of questionable ethical consideration.

May 22<sup>nd</sup> Leader Post/Financial Post reported on the CPP investment board's \$23.6 billion loss on the March 31, 2009 fiscal year. That represents about 3 ½ years at last year's \$6.6 billion worker/ employer rate of pension investment. It seems a very fine line exists between prudence and greed.

The Cover of my personal portfolio

investment file carries this reminder:

"much as one might like to shift responsibility of managing my finances to somebody else, nobody else will take as great an interest in my affairs as I do as nobody stands to gain-or lose-as much as me!"

The upside of the Saskatchewan economy is that our children and grandchildren are enjoying tremendous employment and academic opportunity near home. Society is optimistic. Those privileged with the good fortune of being raised in the Saskatchewan work ethic are resilient and will not shirk responsibility. Our founding pioneers have left us a great legacy to grow and protect. No one should be excluded.

The Federal New Horizons Program has been a huge SSAI success story. So many seniors' centres across this province are benefiting with major improvement funding.

Our recent 'Seniors Drug Plan' maximizing prescription costs at \$15 is a great benefit; increasing the level of supplementary drug and health benefits to the Senior Income Plan was a positive step.

Creation of a national pharmacare plan is the objective of our national seniors' organizations. For seniors, there is always work in progress on our to-do list.

R.A. (Bob) Walker  
1st VP, SSAI

## Celebrating Poets over 70: Call for Poems

Tower Poetry Society and the McMaster Centre for Gerontological Studies are soliciting poems written after the age of 70. Selected poems will be published in a jointly sponsored anthology. "Celebrating Poets over 70" will be the tenth volume in the *Writing Down Our Years* series published by MCGS.

A maximum of four typed poems may be submitted. Send poems and a 50-word biography by email to Ellen Ryan ([ryanb@mcmaster.ca](mailto:ryanb@mcmaster.ca)) or by mail to: "Celebrating Poets over 70", Tower Po-

etry Society, c/o McMaster University,  
1280 Main St. W., Box 1021, Hamilton,  
Ontario L8S 1C0.

Individuals with poems selected will  
receive a free copy of the anthology.

**DUE DATE:** November 15, 2009

**To SSAI Region A Annual  
Meeting-in Edam May 12,  
2009**

With Seniors' numbers hitting their  
maximum in 10-15 years one of the big-  
gest problems for small communities is-  
How do we keep our seniors here in their  
towns with their families and friends?  
Edam is losing too many life-long citizens  
because they can no longer live alone  
safely but they do not qualify for Level 3  
or 4 care.

We need enriched housing/assisted  
living units here in our towns and villages.  
We are finding that our governments are  
not providing leadership in an area which  
should cost them very little. Condo-type  
units could be sold to seniors when they  
sell their home and could be rolled over to  
another buyer when they are no longer  
needed.

Since this is municipal election year,  
let's all get out and lobby all three levels  
of government to show some leadership  
so that we can keep our seniors in their  
home communities for as long as they  
want.

*Larry McDaid  
Mayor -Edam*

**IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE  
OVER**

by Erma Bombeck  
*(written after she found out she was dying from cancer)*

I would have gone to bed when I was sick  
instead of pretending the earth would go  
into a holding pattern if I weren't there for  
the day.

I would have burned the pink candle

sculpted like a rose before it melted in  
storage.

I would have talked less and listened  
more.

I would have invited friends over to dinner  
even if the carpet was stained, or the sofa  
faded.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the  
'good' living room and worried much less  
about the dirt when someone wanted to  
light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my  
grandfather ramble about his youth.

I would have shared more of the responsi-  
bility carried by my husband.

I would never have insisted the car win-  
dows be rolled up on a summer day be-  
cause my hair had just been teased and  
sprayed.

I would have sat on the lawn with my  
grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while  
watching television and more while watch-  
ing life.

I would never have bought anything just  
because it was practical, wouldn't show  
soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of  
pregnancy, I'd have cherished every mo-  
ment and realized that the wonderment  
growing inside me was the only chance in  
life to assist God in a miracle.

When my kids kissed me impetuously, I  
would never have said, 'Later, now go get  
washed up for dinner.' There would have  
been more 'I love you's' More 'I'm sorry's.'

But mostly, given another shot at life, I  
would seize every minute. Look at it and  
really see it... live it and never give it  
back. STOP SWEATING THE SMALL  
STUFF!!!

Don't worry about who doesn't like you,  
who has more, or who's doing what. In-  
stead, let's cherish the relationships we  
have with those who do love us.



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## looking at life from the bottom of the hill

time  
like our dreams  
slip-slithers away  
an avalanche carrying us in her arms  
  
we hurtle through life  
chunks break off and fly  
no time for goodbye  
  
we avoid being trapped  
under snowdrifts of fears  
whistle past forests of yesterday's tears  
delight in the beauty of hillside and sky  
  
then zip to the end  
in an instant it seems  
and we're back in the land  
that we've known in our dreams

-June Mitchell

## Community Announcement Column

Please send event, place, date and contact info to:  
[ssm@skseniorsmechanism.ca](mailto:ssm@skseniorsmechanism.ca)

\*info will be included in Gray Matters as space permits  
\* Newsletter published Jan, Apr, July, Oct.—deadline for submission is 1st of previous month (ex. For April issue—deadline is March 1st)



## Grandkids

After putting her grandchildren to bed, a grandmother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin.

Finally, she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings.

As she left the room, she heard the three-year-old say with a trembling voice, 'Who was THAT?'



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## Resolutions

**The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism AGM was held on May 26, 2009. The following resolutions were submitted and passed by the delegates in attendance.**

**Resolution #1:** The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM), actively promote the expansion and enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), the Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to have the base amounts as a cost effective measure that would help keep seniors out of poverty.

**The motion was amended to read:**

The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) actively lobby the Government of Canada to promote the expansion and enhancement of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), the Old Age Security (OAS) and the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to have the base amounts increased as a cost effective measure that would help keep seniors out of poverty.

**Resolution #2:** The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) actively support Saskatchewan Federation of Union Retirees (SFUR) in their efforts to fight for improved protection for workers and retirees in Defined Benefit Plans by advocating for a ban on employers taking contribution holidays; and, in dealing with solvency deficiencies the employers need to be made responsible for making up these deficits by setting up separate trusts for making these payments and, by ensuring that short term relief for dealing with solvency deficiencies be assessed on a case-by-case basis only.

**Resolution #3:** The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM), actively support Saskatchewan Federation of Union Retirees (SFUR) in their efforts to fight for Pension Plan protection for retirees in Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution Plans by fighting for Good Governance practices including clear disclosure of pension finances; accountable and transparent practices for ethical and responsible investments; and lobbying the federal government to implement stronger regulations for managing pension fund money and financial markets; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that

The SSM along with the SFUR advocate on behalf of retirees to ensure retirees have a say in how their pension plans are run; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that

The SSM and SFUR support efforts to establish an Employer Funded National System of Pension Insurance to ensure working people and retirees' pension plan protection.

**Resolution # 4:** The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) actively support and promote the Primary Health Care Model; a model particularly well-suited for rural areas that focuses on early intervention, health promotion with a holistic, patient driven, team work approach to the delivery of services; that is a more efficient delivery model offering comprehensive and accessible services under one roof; and is a cost saving measure for the health care system.

**Resolution #5:** The Government of Saskatchewan be lobbied toward providing an office know as the Seniors Secretariat that would steer governmental policy direction for seniors. Government services for seniors in Saskatchewan would also be enhanced by centralization in a Seniors Secretariat.

**Resolution #6:** The Government of Saskatchewan be lobbied to complete a Legislative & Policy Review for appropriateness with respect to senior abuse.

**Resolution # 7:** The Government of Saskatchewan should set aside a week to recognize caregivers.

**Resolution #8:** The Government of Saskatchewan moves to more standardization, accreditation, regulation and supervision of care in long-term care facilities, private or public.

**Resolution #9:** The Government of Saskatchewan institute training initiatives on the needs and care of older adults.

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## PRECIOUS MEMORIES OF PRAIRIE WAR HEROES



The Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism was delighted to write a book honouring Saskatchewan and Alberta WWII Veterans. It is our desire that these stories be handed down to the next generation as a legacy to freedom won. While this book is serious in nature, we have tried as well to incorporate a humorous, or light-hearted, side to better portray real-life situations encountered by those who served overseas.

We are pleased to offer '**Precious Memories of Prairie War Heroes**' to the public for \$21.00 plus \$2.00 for shipping & handling. If you wish to order, please send your cheque to:

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## Yeah But.....

'Yeah But' I don't feel good today.....  
'Yeah But' it's raining and cold.....  
'Yeah But' my neighbor's dog soiled my lawn.....

'Yeah But' - the list goes on as we look at all the negatives that effect us everyday, sometimes every hour. These 'Yeah Buts' can take us down, change our attitude, make us grumpy, unhappy, even sick.

We need to change these around instead of:  
'Yeah But' I don't feel good today.....  
We should say: Boy, it's great to be alive.

The reality is that if we don't feel that great today, there are millions of people in the world that feel worse. We must face the world with a positive attitude and help lift those around us that are maybe not as positive. Life does give us lemons. So let's make lemonade and share it!

-John Knight



## FOUR LEAF CLOVER SENIORS INDEPENDENCE CLUB

Do you, or someone you know, need transportation or a friendly connection to remain active and participate in the community? Please call us!

Also, Four Leaf Clover is looking for more volunteers to assist seniors in Regina. Interested?

**Four Leaf Clover 502-0305**

The club serves active living in the community!

# CRYPTOCORNER

CLUE:G=I

E U D L V E Y Y W T D P G I X , O D L X Z W P K  
E C D L O E S Z , W Y S D I E G K , " V C I G S  
J E I Z D I E J E Q A L W V X Z D I W C P X Z D  
K C I X W A D T D L Q K E Q P G A D ." - I W ,  
E P J E Q I R D D F E I W Y U G Y Q W C L  
Z D E L X .

*Solution Page 15*

## How much of an exaggeration??

Two patients, A and B, limp into two different medical clinics with the same complaint. Both have trouble walking and appear to require a hip replacement.

Patient A is examined within the hour, is x-rayed the same day, and has a time booked for surgery the following week.

Patient B sees the family doctor after waiting a week for an appointment, then waits eighteen weeks to see a specialist, and then gets an x-ray, which isn't reviewed for another month, and finally has his surgery scheduled for three months from then. Elapsed Time? 35 weeks!

Why the different treatment for the two patients?

Patient A is a German Shepherd. Patient B is a senior citizen on Medicare.

*best wishes for an enjoyable*  
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## Message from the Executive Director

This will be my last contribution to the Gray Matters newsletter. Recently I was offered a position with a professional industry association, so July 31<sup>st</sup> will officially be my last day at the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism.

It is with a sad heart that I make the decision to leave SSM. I believe the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism has great potential to improve the quality of life for seniors. I see the good work being done by individual member organizations. I see how hard my staff works in the office to meet the needs of the organization. I have grown to love being an advocate for seniors needs. I know how difficult it is for many of our province's seniors to survive in today's environment, and because seniors are a proud people, often they do not speak up even when their concerns are very valid. They often tell me they don't feel they are being heard, and so they just give up.

We at the Mechanism are a voice for seniors and we try to make a difference in seniors' lives. We try to inform those who have the influence to make changes on behalf of seniors. We encourage groups working on behalf of seniors to work better together. Wherever possible, we try to make people aware of resources that will improve the quality of seniors' lives.

Over these last years, I have seen how many people care about our older adults, and who work selflessly to effect change. Unfortunately, there are still too many people working in isolation to support our seniors. We need more groups reaching out to one another to share information, to advocate together, and to work side by side to address seniors concerns. No one person, organization, or arm of government can change the quality of seniors' lives in Saskatchewan by itself. Only through identifying common concerns, and then working together in a very real way will things be different for our province's older adults. Communication is the key.

I hope all those who care enough to make a difference will sit down after reading this and think about how they can make a contribution. I hope those involved in organizations supporting seniors will think about how they can reach out to form real partnerships so they can work effectively together for the good of seniors. We all need to leave our own specific agendas behind and be team players. We need to demonstrate to decision makers that we are all in this for the same reason – to support Saskatchewan's older adults.

Also, no more can we allow government's primary focus for seniors to be "end of life care". This is far too paternalistic. While it is important, it should only be one of many strategic initiatives to celebrate Saskatchewan seniors. Our seniors are vibrant, contributing members of society that deserve quality of life, just like everyone else. If decision makers continue to ignore seniors today, won't they be surprised what they find when they reach their retirement years?

I will miss you all!

Beverly MacLeod  
SSM Executive Director

## DO YOU AGREE??

No one has the same beliefs at age 60 as they had at 20 and yet one of the oldest, simplest and most direct paths to the success we seek in life is that of an optimist, to face every day with a positive attitude.

The old saying, "your attitude determines you altitude" is really true. The extent to what happens to us in life really does depend on our attitude.

Sir Winston Churchill said, "I am an optimist. It doesn't seem too much use being anything else."

Abraham Lincoln observed, "The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity, the optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty".

W. Clement Stone once said, "I can't guarantee you will be successful with a positive attitude, but I can guarantee you won't be without one".

Life is tough—Get used to it!  
Life isn't fair—Get over it!

Most of our decisions are based on our present state of mind and the attitude we decide to have everyday. The facts state that if we repeat something for 21 days, it becomes a habit in our life.

Abraham Lincoln said, "We are about as happy as we make up our minds to be."

Psychiatrists say the first encounter of the day affects the next 13! They also say that if you have a positive attitude and live to 60, you will have no chronic illness.

A positive attitude really does give you altitude! Let's resolve to live our lives in a positive way. Let's flush the negative out of our lives. We need to jump up in the morning and shout out, "I am glad to be alive". If we do this our lives will change!

-John Knight



## SSM WEBSITE

[www.skseniormechanism.ca](http://www.skseniormechanism.ca)

### Seniors Education Centre OPEN HOUSE & BIG BOOK SALE!

Friday, September 4th &  
Saturday, September 5th  
9a.m—4 p.m.

Gallery Building on College Ave  
at Cornwall Street

*Join us for tours, computer demos, displays, great books at great prices, and sign up for fall courses.*

**For more info call 585-5816**

What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." Pericles

# CRYPTOCORNER

SOLUTION:  
A GERMAN NOVELIST, BERTHOLD AUERBACH, ONCE SAID, "MUSIC WASHES AWAY FROM THE SOUL THE DUST OF EVERYDAY LIFE." - SO, ALWAYS KEEP A SONG IN YOUR HEART.

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— Myron Crocker, Grande Prairie, AB.

Army, WWII, Grande Prairie Legion, Branch #54

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## SENIOR POWER

Senior Power is an organization dedicated to serving the best interest of the Senior Citizens of Regina. Since March 1986, Senior Power of Regina has been providing Advocacy Services for seniors in Regina and surrounding area.

We provide two kinds of services:

### Individual Advocacy

We solve problems with:

- Pensions and income tax
- Disputes with the city or province
- Problems with contractors, direct sellers, service providers or neighbours
- Letter writing and documents
- Wills and small claims actions

### Group Advocacy

We speak out on issues impacting society, seniors, our children and grandchildren:

- Publish the Seniors' Voice newsletter
- Prepare briefs, make presentations
- Appear on TV and radio programs
- Speak to various groups
- Serve on various government boards, commissions and advisory committees
- Emphasize important role seniors play in our society
- Promote intergenerational appreciation and understanding
- Hold regular monthly meetings with guest speakers

The annual Senior Power membership fee includes a yearly subscription to the Seniors' Voice newsletter.

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### Grandkids

She was in the bathroom, putting on her makeup, under the watchful eyes of her young granddaughter as she'd done many times before. After she applied her lipstick and started to leave, the little one said, 'But Gramma, you forgot to kiss the toilet paper good-bye!'



# Century Club Corner

Muriel Knox

## 100th Birthday Celebration

April 15, 2009



On Saturday, April 18, 2009, a birthday tea was held at Pioneer Village, Regina, SK to greet and chat with Muriel and to celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Her grandson, Ian Rogers compiled her life story on DVD to be shown during the afternoon.



Friends and relatives came from all over—Rouleau, Ituna, Pense, Regina, Saskatoon, Mexico and a sister-in-law Alma Medhurst and family from Edmonton.



*The Knox sisters  
Back row: Joyce Wellings, Alma Medhurst  
Front row: Muriel Snell*



*Muriel's son & daughter  
Keith Knox & Evelyn Rogers*



*Muriel enjoying a chat with (L to R) Jean Nelson, Florence Emmins and daughter, Evelyn Rogers*

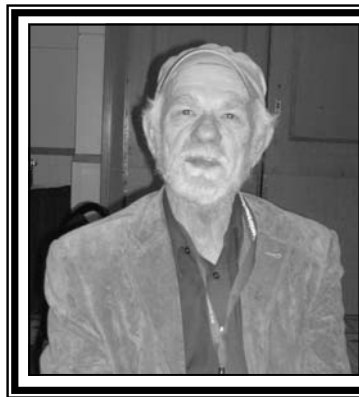


*Some of the friends celebrating with Muriel*

Many congratulatory messages were received from dignitaries like Governor General Michaëlle Jean, Queen Elizabeth II, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Lieutenant Governor Dr. Gordon Barnhart, Mayor Pat Fiocco, other dignitaries and special friends.

Instead of cards or gifts, we were given a sheet of prepared questions, “How you knew Muriel Knox?” etc. Evelyn will read these to ‘Mom’, reminisce and have a few laughs.

*-submitted by Gladys Watt*



A big thank you to **KEN MITCHELL** for the biographies he has written for the Century Club Corner. I know it has become one of my favourite parts of Gray Matters, as it probably has for many of you. Ken will no longer be contributing a story on a regular basis as he is moving on to other endeavours. We are going to miss your contributions Ken !

## **SASKATCHEWAN CENTURY CLUB**

### ***The Century Club is***

- ◆ *A province wide association of Seniors who have reached the age of 90 years and beyond*
- ◆ *And are determined to live in as full and active a style as possible to the age of 100 and beyond*
- ◆ *Pursuing physical activity, mental agility, social and spiritual creativity*
- ◆ *There is no membership fee*

### **You may join the Century Club by calling :**

- ◆ Toll free 1-888-823-2211 or 359-9956 (Regina)
- ◆ or send a note to:  
Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism  
112-2001 Cornwall Street,  
Regina, SK S4P 3X9.

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



Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism proudly presents...

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- ✓ **Are you a community minded individual who would be interested in helping test this valuable tool?**
- ✓ **Do you live in rural Saskatchewan and believe this would be a great toolkit for your community?**
- ✓ **Are you an older adult, or do you know an older adult, who would like more information on how to protect yourself?**

**If you answered YES to any of these questions, contact us today!!**

*Remember, knowledge is power...let's spread the knowledge so that no one becomes a victim of frauds or scams!*



**306.757.1898**

[www.skseniorsmechanism.ca](http://www.skseniorsmechanism.ca)  
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