

Age-Friendly *Forum*

Senior Citizens Advisory Committee

Chair : Carol Sernasie, *Vice-Chair*: Rose Dzugan
Denise Bourque, Joan Churchman, Jeanine Hughes, Linda Oaks, Carol Rae,
Doug Rapelje, Arthur Rendall, *Councillor*: Leo Van Vliet

Purpose To serve in an advisory capacity to City Council and staff on matters that impact the quality of life of senior citizens in the City of Welland.

Some of the issues the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee has dealt with since it was formed in 2010 include the following:

- Compiled information relevant to older adults and all citizens of Welland for distribution in the *Age-Friendly Forum* Newsletter;
- Created an Age-Friendly Business Guide for local businesses to follow to improve day-to-day activities of citizens in Welland;
- Hosts Annual Seniors' Day celebration at the Welland Community Wellness Complex;
- Hosts annual Alzheimer's Coffee Breaks fund raiser at the Wellness Complex.

Portable Space Heater Safety

- Purchase a heater with the seal of a qualified testing laboratory.
- Keep the heater at least 3 feet (1 m.) away from anything that can burn, including people.
- Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection.
- Place the heater on a solid, flat surface.
- Make sure your heater has an auto shut-off to turn the heater off if it tips over.
- Keep space heaters out of the way of foot traffic. Never block an exit.
- Keep children away from the space heater.
- Plug the heater directly into the wall outlet. Never use an extension cord.
- Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave the room or go to bed.

Andrew Allen
Fire Prevention Officer
905-735-1700 ex 2407.

Funds for Needy Seniors

Many seniors in the region struggle to pay for basic needs such as eyeglasses, walkers and hearing aids.

But a new fund for the aging population is about to slightly change this scenario, said Tamara Coleman-Lawrie, United Way Niagara director of community impact.

A grant received through the David S. Howes Fund and Niagara Community Foundation will allow United Way to put \$20,000 annually from 2020 to 2022 into the pockets of struggling seniors who don't have access to government benefits, or don't receive enough to get by.

Community partners such as Niagara Region public health, Niagara Poverty Reduction Network and local optometrists will help promote the funding availability with eligible seniors, she said.

There is also an application available on United Way Niagara's website, or by calling 905-688-5050 ext. 2115.

A letter of reference from a social service worker or representative from a support agency is a requirement. Applications will be received starting Feb. 3.

Crime Stoppers Launch Elder Abuse Program

The Niagara Aging Strategy and Action Plan has identified as a priority for seniors needs "safety and security" and that includes freedom from abuse. How good it is to see progress made in that direction.

With the Ontario Trillium funding, Crime Stoppers of Niagara is conducting a year-long study, to map Niagara's current response to elder abuse and identify gaps in service delivery.

On January 9, 2020 Crime Stoppers of Niagara launched an Elder Abuse Program. Crime Stoppers Niagara are to be commended for recognizing the need and launching an Elder Abuse program and study ways to improve how we deal with elder abuse.

So do your part as a caring citizen. If you are aware of elder abuse, call Crime Stoppers 1-800-222-8477 and report anonymously.

Doug Rapelje, Former, Director Regional Niagara Social Services and Senior Citizens Department and member Niagara Age-Friendly Leadership Council

Niagara Health System

Niagara Health System is a multi-site hospital amalgamation comprising six sites serving over 450,000 residents across the Niagara Region.

The Welland site's services include: Emergency, Clinics, Diagnostic Imaging, Long Term Care, Dialysis, Surgery, and Ophthalmology Specialists.

Seniors and Social Isolation

Social support and being a part of a community may not be the magical cure to end senior isolation, but it is definitely an important part of your loved one's health and well-being.

Benefits of social support

- increase in self-esteem and confidence;
- emotional support;
- a sense of belonging and purpose;
- health and safety checks.

Help prevent social isolation

- have phone calls with your loved one(s) regularly;
- use technology such as video chat, instant messenger and social media profiles (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) to help the senior feel more socially connected;
- suggest the senior in your life join classes at a local community centre;
- spend quality time together by going on walks, cooking meals together, listening to music, watching television and running errands.

Save the Date in June

The Senior Citizens Advisory Committee for the City of Welland will be hosting an event Celebrating Seniors month on Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at the Welland Community Wellness Complex.

An official flag raising, guest speaker, a free lunch and door prizes will be included in this event. Limited seating and tickets.

Further information will be advertised and posted at the Welland Community Wellness Complex.

What is special about dancing?

While we are all aware of the benefits of exercise, we may not have considered the benefits of taking a dance class designed specifically for seniors. Dance programs are offered for people with dementia, Parkinson's, and those who wish to dance with a partner. Some of the numerous outcomes of dance include:

- Use it or lose it;
- Learning and recalling, responding, sequencing, predicting, anticipating;
- Moving to music improves gait, posture, dynamic stability, rhythm;
- Exploring space through time extends our movement repertoire;
- Enjoying the company of others;
- Movement is emotionally engaging and promotes positive feelings.

*Dr. Nancy Francis
Professor of Kinesiology
Brock University*

Age-Friendly Niagara Network: progressing on several fronts

The Age-Friendly Niagara Network (AFNN) has made significant progress in the last year.

The AFNN Leadership Council has spearheaded campaigns at each of the 12 local municipal councils in Niagara to create Age-Friendly Advisory Committees, and now 11 are now in place. To help make them more effective, the AFNN has helped form a collaborative of the local municipal advisory committees to share experiences and to hold information forums and workshops.

Stay tuned for the implementation of “Let’s Chat” park benches, a forum in Pelham in May on healthy active aging, and opportunities for older adults to participate in the International Federation on Ageing Conference in Niagara Falls later this year.

Check our website for additional information: agefriendlyniagara.com

*Dominic Ventresca,
Co-chair, AFNN*

Campuses of Care for Seniors

In their wish list for Ontario’s 2020 funding, advocates at AdvantAge Ontario (an association of not-for-profit long term care, housing, and services for seniors) are asking the provincial government to support more “campuses of care” for seniors.

Lisa Levin, CEO of AdvantAge Ontario, said campuses give seniors a range of housing options as they age, including assisted living, affordable housing, retirement homes, life leases and long-term care.

“One of the benefits of campuses is that you get seniors with different abilities together in one area,” said Levin. “They can share different services and supports. As seniors age, and become frailer, the idea is they would go from one part to another.”

Jill Knowlton, who sits on the board of the Ontario Long Term Care Association, said the ministry is increasingly open to the campus concept.

Toronto Star

The single **best** way to prevent seasonal **flu** is to get vaccinated each year, but **good** health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help stop the spread of germs and prevent respiratory illnesses like the **flu**.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention