



Coming of Age

A publication of the Saskatoon Council on Aging

SPRING 2022

SCOA acknowledges that the land on which we gather is Treaty 6 territory, the traditional territory of the First Nations, and the homeland of the Métis.



Mental Health Week is May 2-8, 2022 – #GetReal about how to help. Let's stop polarizing and start empathizing. Be there for each other when times are hard and be ready to listen. You don't have to agree to understand, and you don't have to fix it to help.

#GetReal. Before you weigh in, tune in. [[Canadian Mental Health Association](#)]

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Age-Friendly Dimension: HOUSING



Mercedes Montgomery,
SCOA President

**Message from
SCOA President &
SCOA Executive Director**



June Gawdun
Executive Director,

In our Spring issue, Coming of Age continues its focus on Housing for Seniors.

Perhaps one of the most misunderstood statements in Housing vocabulary is Ageing in Place, which appears to have no standard meaning or interpretation. But knowing exactly what you are looking for and what will be provided in any new facility is good advice. How well do they match up?

Moving is a stressful life event and can be exhausting at any age. For older adults moving takes on more than a physical toll. It can be very difficult emotionally.

Mental Health Week in Canada is May 2-8, 2022 and the theme is having empathy for others. For more information, visit:

mentalhealthweek.ca

SCOA continues to offer programs that promote dignity, health and independence of older adults. Over 30,000 individuals use our services each year. When SCOA began 31 years ago membership totalled 400; in 2021 membership has grown to nearly 4000.

SCOA extends a huge thank you to our sponsors, grantors, donors, and all who recently renewed their membership. By receiving funds from various sources, we are able to offer free programs! Memberships run from April 1 to March 31.

The services of the Caregiver Information and Support Centre will be expanded throughout 2022 by providing up-to-date resources for informal/family caregivers in Saskatchewan through an updated caregiver website, a 1-800 telephone line, "Caregiver Cafés" and multiple presentations to help caregivers with their important role. Counselling will be provided to those who need it.

Thank you to all who took time to complete our "Beyond the Pandemic" survey and participate in focus groups, part of our research project to look at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and public health measures on older adults. We invite you to attend our SCOA AGM on June 23, and stay for a presentation on what we heard in our study - the challenges and resilience of older adults! Also come to hear how SCOA will use what we heard to influence decision-makers and to plan responses in the event of future lockdown situations. The report will also be on our SCOA Website at a later date.

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Coming of Age

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Elliot PausJenssen |

Mercedes Montgomery | Jane Richardson

SCOA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021-2022 June 23, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

The program for the Annual General meeting includes:

- Activity update April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022
- Audited financial report.

Following the business part of the meeting:

- Presentation by SCOA Organizational Sponsor Venture Rehabilitation Sciences Group
- Presentation of key findings from the SCOA Beyond the Pandemic Survey: 400 +older adults filled out the survey; eight focus groups were held. To register phone 306.652.2255 or

[TO REGISTER CLICK HERE](#)

To view revised Bylaws brought forward for approval at the Annual General Meeting [please visit our website link](#)

Plan to attend the AGM to hear about all we accomplished this past year with your support.



**I love my family. I also love my community.
I'm remembering both in my Will.**

Learn more about Will Power at willpower.ca/charities/saskatoon-council-on-aging/



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Should I Stay or Should I go?

By Ginnie Hartley, Retired Speech-Language Pathologist

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” When you were 8 or 9, the answer was probably something like, “A policeman, a nurse, a farmer.” Those projections maybe didn’t come true, but we were already thinking about our future. Making plans for the future is always a good idea, even if we think that “things are just fine the way they are ... and nothing will change.”

But things have a habit of changing with or without our permission. As we get older, it’s important to make plans for the possibility of change. Most people want to remain in their home for as long as possible. Canadians are living longer and are increasingly reaching the age of 100. The average lifespan for Canadian men is 80.9 and women 84.7. To stay in your home, it’s important to prepare. Preparation gives you control over your decisions and could prevent you from having to make hasty decisions in the future, especially when dealing with change resulting from a crisis.

The Government of Canada has a [handy checklist](#) to help you do just that or phone 1-800-622-6232 to request a copy.

The Checklist has 3 steps:

1. **Are you Ready to Age in Place:** Asks yes/no questions about 9 aspects of your life: health, home, transportation, finances, connections, safety, supports and services, community and partners. e.g. – “I recognize safety risks in my home and have taken steps to fix them”. Your score gives you an idea about how you are doing in preparing for your later years.

2. **Reflections:** Make notes on what you would like to do to address any concerns raised by the checklist. You can use this as a mini-planning guide. Quotes from older Canadians are given here: “The checklist makes me start to think seriously about my own healthy aging as opposed to it happening to other people.”

3. **Taking action on aging in place:** Create a personal plan: one action to work on now and another to work on later.

Where do you want to live as you grow older? The checklist is a handy way to take stock of your present living space and make informed decisions about the future, whether that means staying where you are or planning for alternatives. Making a plan for the future today helps you live the life you want tomorrow.

Other helpful websites include:

[National Seniors Strategy](#)

[Government of Canada: Programs and Services for Seniors](#)

“Home Sweet Home” – or perhaps not!

By Felicity Hogg, Occupational therapist. (Sask.)

The following points are important to consider whether you intend to stay in your own home or if you move to a new setting or assisted living residence where meals and other services are provided. The latter are built for seniors to live in; however, they are not always built with seniors in mind! When reviewing your options consider the following:

Mobility:

- Could 1 or 2 walkers/wheelchairs easily get around the suite?
- How far do you have to walk to the dining room, front entrance, other areas?
- Can you easily access the elevator?
- Can you turn your wheelchair around in the elevator?

Bedroom:

- Will you need a sask-pole used to assist with transferring in/out of bed? If you do, does the ceiling hide duct work near the bed? A solid ceiling is needed to install sask-poles.
- Is there room for a person using a walker to access the far side of the bed? (Two people sharing the bed and both using a walker).

Bathroom:

- Could you easily access the toilet or shower with your walker or wheelchair?

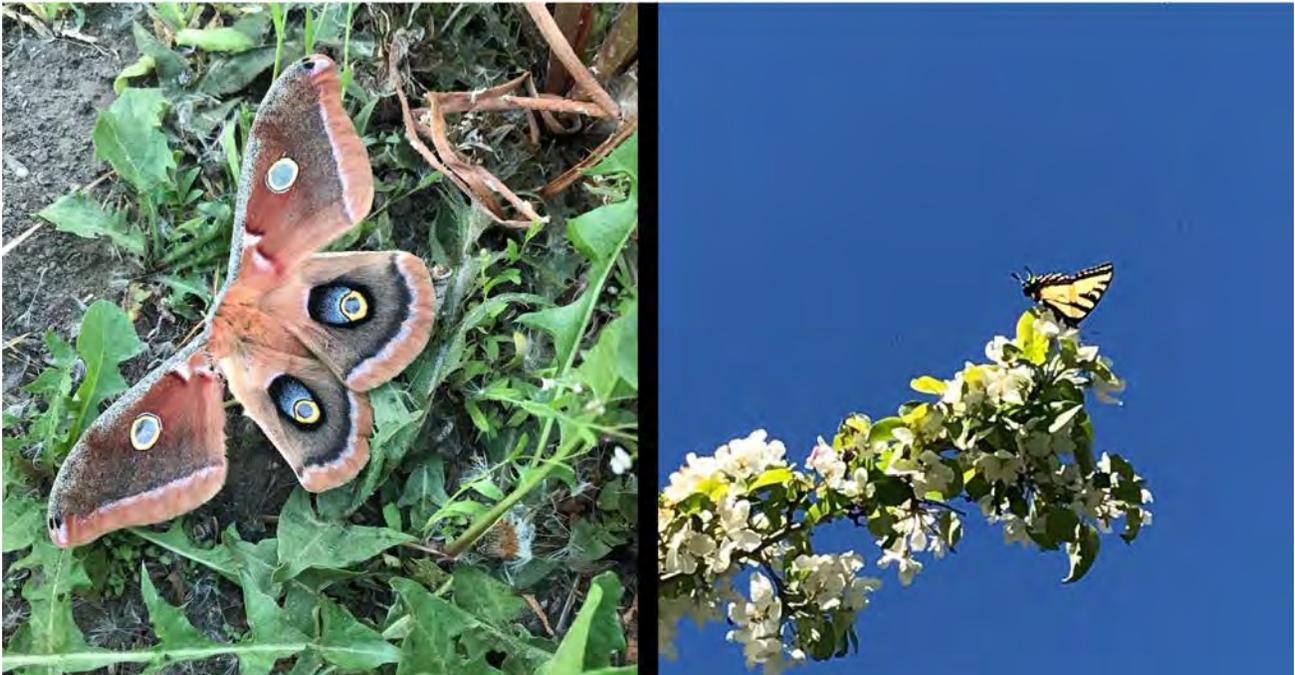
The shower stalls may have built in seats BUT:

- Will the seat be too low and/or slippery when wet?
- Can you reach the water faucet when seated?
- Does the seat get in the way of your own stool/chair?
- Does the distance between the door and the seat make it difficult to get into the shower?
- Does the shower door have a lip you can step over easily?

Check any existing bars:

- Is the bar actually a grab bar or is it just meant for your washcloth? If in doubt, ask the residence manager to find out the shower unit make and contact the company for specifications.
- Are grab bars properly installed, i.e., into the wall studs?
- Are grab bars by the toilet in the correct position? Try them out.
- Can you install your own grab bars? Is there room around the toilet for grab bars or toilet safety frame to be installed?
- Can grab bars be safely installed? Some tub surrounds do not allow the installation of grab bars because of a space between the surround and the wall behind it.

Continued on Page 8



Attracting Butterflies, Birds and Bees to Your Garden

What would a garden be without wildlife? Butterflies, bees and birds not only provide natural beauty but a balance to our outdoor areas. The bees that pollinate flowers and help produce fruit along with birds and butterflies that provide hours of entertainment are welcome critters to our backyard oasis. Join Jackie Bantle as she shares ideas on how to provide the best backyard habitat to encourage animal friends. **May 24, 10 am.** No cost. ONLINE ZOOM [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



Globe Walk Windup Celebration

MAY 11TH AT 1PM

MCCLURE UNITED CHURCH

Enjoy coffee, tea & cupcakes

as we celebrate

Globe Walk 2022



NO COST. [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#) OR PHONE 306.652.2255



Wine and Popcorn Trivia Night: May 27, 7 pm to 8 pm, Online via ZOOM.
 Cost: \$40: You receive 750ml and 375ml bottles plus various flavors of popcorn.
 Everything delivered the afternoon of event and a zoom link emailed to you.
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#) OR PHONE 306.652.2255

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Continued from Page 5

Safety System:

- Does the residence supply a safety system that you can wear or put in your pocket?
- If not, where are the cords to call for assistance situated?
- Are they difficult to reach behind furniture or on the far side of the bed?

General issues:

- Are there night lights in the hallways/bathrooms?
- Can you access the laundry machines?
- Can you reach the rods to hang your clothes?
- If there is a balcony, can you easily/safely get on to it?

TECH YOUR WAY!

One on One Lessons

Get to Know Your iPhone

For beginners: learn the basics of your iPhone in our one on one lessons.

Location: SCOA, 2020 College Drive [Field House] Cost: \$30 for 1.5 hours of instruction.
To register, phone 306.652.2255

Get the Most from Your Mobile Device

Get some tips and tricks for your iPad, Android phone or tablet, laptop in our one on one lessons. Email and apps.

Location: SCOA, 2020 College Drive [Field House] Cost: \$30 for 1.5 hours of instruction.
To register, phone 306.652.2255

iPad Lending Library - FREE

Our iPad lending kits come with basic instruction manuals to help you learn to use apps, play games, Facetime, ZOOM and much more. Learn at your own pace on your own time.

Phone 306.652.2255 or drop by our office in the Field House 2020 College Drive to borrow a kit.





Got talent? Audition! The Saskatoon Council on Aging seeks contestants for the Nifty 50s showcase. Older adults 50+: Bands [up to 6 members], vocalists, single musical performances and dance acts. Selected finalists perform at Nifty 50s Showcase Nov 4 at the WDM. **HOW: Call SCOA 306.652.2255 by May 1st.**

A green banner for SCOA recruitment. On the left, there is a small image of a person in a blue shirt with the SCOA logo (a white bird) above it. The main text is in white, bold, capital letters: 'INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING TO POSITIVE CHANGE FOR OLDER ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITY?'. Below this, in black bold text, is 'Join our board!'. At the bottom, in red text, is 'Click here to apply'. On the right side of the banner, there is a photograph of a group of people, mostly older adults, sitting at a table and eating, suggesting a community event or meal.

This One's For the Boys.

By Dakota Shaw, Physical Therapist, Venture Rehabilitation Science Group.

Throughout life, we often hear about the importance of physical activity to help us stay healthy. As we age, this becomes an important part of remaining strong and independent. Focus is usually put on cardiovascular health (heart and lungs) and muscular health, where people are encouraged to participate in walking routines and lifting weights. One area that is not often discussed is the role our pelvic floor can play in our health and independence.

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles, ligaments, connective tissues and nerves that support and help pelvic organ function. In men, these structures provide support for the bladder, rectum and other pelvic organs. For men and women alike, the pelvic floor may not be functioning as well as it should, which can result in disorders such as incontinence, constipation, abdominal pain and pelvic pain. Despite these topics being a bit awkward to discuss, these disorders are common and highly treatable!

There are conditions, specific to men, related to low back and pelvic regions, which can affect overall health. Weak muscles, poor posture, past surgeries and traumas can all cause imbalances and dysfunction of the pelvic floor. Common conditions that men struggle with include:

Bladder and/or bowel dysfunctions:

- As you age, your prostate gland enlarges, making it more difficult for the bladder to empty. Your bladder can also thicken and become overactive, which can cause urine leakage.
- Constipation can be caused by the inability to relax the pelvic floor muscles or to coordinate the pelvic floor and abdominal muscles which can leave you straining or in pain during a bowel movement.

Pain in the pelvic region, low back, hips and/or groin region:

- This pain can be stemming from the bladder, rectum, prostate, tight muscles or a combination of these structures

Urinary difficulties and pain following a prostatectomy surgery:

- You may require assistance to retrain the control mechanism for urination following a prostate surgery.

Erectile Dysfunction:

- Your pelvic floor muscles are important for sustaining blood flow and maintaining erections.

Communication with your doctor and other health care providers can be your first step to determine the best treatment for you. If you are struggling with a pelvic floor dysfunction, like any of the ones listed above, a physical therapist can help. It all starts with a personalized assessment to determine your needs and how to get you back to feeling a bit more like yourself.

Home Assessments: Making life better, safer and functional

by Elliot PausJenssen

"I hope this gets everyone off my back," Arne, my dear husband of 59 years, said to me minutes before the occupational therapist was due to arrive to assess our home. It was certainly not his idea. Our adult children, concerned one of us might fall on our steep, narrow stairs, suggested it. I jumped on the idea. I had heard the same concerns many times from my former colleagues on the Geriatric Assessment Unit. When I was younger, I ignored them. But now Arne and I are in our 80s and I know the years have brought changes. I talked with Arne and arranged the appointment.

You can understand why he felt everyone was on his back. It's not easy to think of saying good-bye to the home where you have spent decades, to treasured possessions that must be downsized, to your neighbours and your neighbourhood.

It is undeniable though that our home lacks features older people need and has some features that pose risks.

And so the occupational therapist came to our home. She quickly impressed Arne when she took measurements and explained what she found. We looked at possibilities for a lift on our stairs and reviewed other possible renovations. We discussed our needs now and in the future. We learned how to live more safely in our home until we move.

Our home assessment has been invaluable. We have made changes in how we do things, for example, walking backwards downstairs. When we move, we will have an assessment of our possible new home for features that are risky or cause unnecessary dependence that our untrained eyes do not see.

Photo Credit: GB Electrical & Building Services





Stay Connected - FREE TO JOIN!

Pen Pal Program - Older adults and students exchange letters for mutual learning and friendships.

To register phone 306.652.2255. No cost.

Telephone Buddy Program - Visit with a friendly volunteer over the phone. To register phone 306.652.2255. No cost.

Missed a SCOA presentation?

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www.scoa.ca

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Exercise and Mental Health

by Kim Nicholls, Recreation Therapist

Does exercise really affect my mental health? Short answer – absolutely! But let's take a moment to get into some of those long answer details.

When we think about the benefits of exercise most of us go straight to those physical benefits. Things like better sleep, more energy, less pain, increased strength and endurance so that we are better able to do our activities of daily living and protection against many chronic diseases. What most of us don't realize or consider is that exercise benefits our mental health as well.

Have you ever had one of those days where you feel kind of down, grumpy and generally just yuck? I think we all have. Think back to one of those days and consider what it was that helped you turn that feeling around. For me, it's almost always physical activity. One of my co-workers has this saying, "It's hard to feel blue, when your cheeks are pink." It's true that physical activity in any form – from light house-keeping to walking to taking a fitness class to going for a run, has a huge impact on our mental health. Being physically active gives us more mental clarity and reduces stress and tension. If we tap a workout buddy to join us, we get a chance for that much needed face-to-face socialization that we have all been craving.

That being said, with the pandemic (hopefully) behind us, many of us are in a place where we feel like we don't even know where to start. Some of the facilities where we used to exercise are open and some are not. Maybe our interests have changed over the last two years and maybe we don't have as much spunk or energy as we once did. But here's the thing about physical activity: it has to be something you enjoy doing or you aren't going to stick with it for long enough to see any benefits. So take the time to consider what you like to do. Do you enjoy walking? Tennis? Strength training? Pickle ball? Curling? Maybe you want to try something new or return to an activity you have been missing. Whatever you come up with is where you should start. ***While you are at it, tag a friend to join you – because we all know that sometimes you just need a friend to help get you going!***





Volunteer Corner

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Are you a numbers whiz and enjoy working with a team for a great cause? SCOA seeks a Chair, Finance and Fundraising Committee.

Some background in fund development, donor development, grant and fundraising experience would be helpful. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: Change Starts Here

Enjoy communicating ideas and information? The Saskatoon Council on Aging seeks volunteers for our Communication Committee. The Communication Committee promotes and develops ongoing communication, internally and externally, according to the mission, vision and values of the Saskatoon Council on Aging.

Contact Leslie leslie@scoa.ca or phone 306.652.4411 to apply



Seniors Neighbourhood Hub Clubs

**Mayfair Hub Club: Remembering When” – Saskatoon Fire Department
May 19 1:30 pm Location: Mayfair United Church, 902 33rd Street West. No cost.**

Join Dori Krahn, communication officer with the Saskatoon Fire Department, for a presentation of “Remembering When” – a program meant to help older adults mitigate fire and fall hazards in their environment.

**Mayfair Hub Club: The Old Tyme Rhythm Makers – June 16 1:30 pm
Location: Mayfair United Church, 902 33rd Street West. No cost.**

Join us for a live presentation of music by the The Old Tyme Rhythm Makers! This group of accomplished musicians will help us windup the season with a variety of traditional and contemporary music meant to trigger feel-good memories.

An age-friendly initiative of the Saskatoon Council on Aging

Be a **MEMBER**

1. Phone our office 306.652.2255
2. [Sign up online](#)
3. Visit us at the Field House

Single Membership - \$25
Couples - \$35
Non-profit - \$25
Corporate/Business - \$250
Memberships run April 1 to March 31

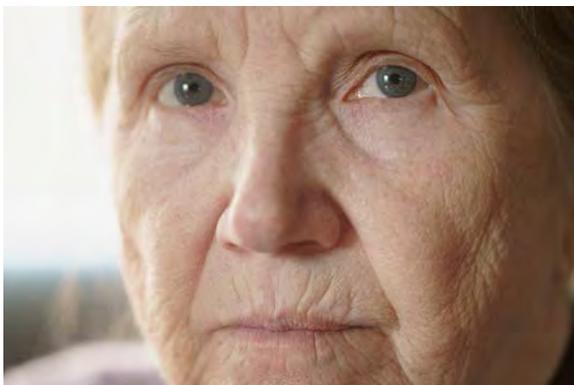
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throughout the pandemic
& beyond

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4. Visit us at the Field House - 2020 College Drive

Your membership fees and donations help SCOA provide free social and educational programs and crucial information services for older adults.