“Habemus Epistolam!” No puffs of white smoke, just much relief after several years of drafts, redrafts and meetings. The Letter of Understanding between UVRA and the University will be signed on February 2nd. Its purpose is to establish a framework for our efforts to enhance the relationship of retirees with our former employer, and to explore and codify the many ways we may support the mandate of the University, as it is defined in the University’s Strategic Plan and under the Universities Act of BC.

Practically speaking, the LoU will spell out in one document the benefits that retirees enjoy, and the specifics of our members’ cooperation with the University. The Letter is essentially a ‘head document’, but a ‘living document’, subject to regular review. Specifics are to be itemized in succeeding appendices. Overall, this marks a major improvement in our relationship, which acknowledges UVRA as the de facto ‘voice’ of retirees, but does not significantly alter our status as an independent body. In many ways, it resembles the relationship of UVic to its Alumni -- which brings me to this: our thanks are due in no small part to the advice and efforts on our behalf, of our university liaison officer, Terry Cockerline, Director of University Alumni Relations.
In a very tangible way, UVRA will be assisting the university’s mandate as we launch the new UVRA Graduate Research Scholarship. Since I reported the positive response to the idea at the June AGM in this space last September, we have been refining the details with our development officer, Moses Mukasa, and Lois Holizki, Manager of the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health. Since donors are ineligible, adjudicating applications will be the responsibility of the Institute. UVRA will match donations up to the first $25,000, the minimum requirement for a scholarship of $1,000. The ultimate goal is double that amount. The cause is certainly extremely valuable in terms of support for students in our increasingly expensive academic and regional context; and the outcome – improved research into the older population – potentially vital. In February, you will receive full details by email and on our website. Meantime, the secure site for making a contribution is:

https://extrweb.uvic.ca/donate-online/UVRA

We hope you will be able to help.

Looking ahead, your Board is planning meetings to try to make the Elder Academy more sustainable and less administratively onerous on our volunteer time. Lou Schmidt, in the office, has been a stalwart of the registration process, and without the energy and persuasive powers of David Docherty we would not be able to look back on 3 very successful years of fascinating series on science, health, wellness and music. (Stay tuned!).

A similar focus, and a natural follow-up to the LoU, will be our work towards a strategic plan of our own: what would make UVRA a more efficient, effective association? Paid administrative assistance, such as our retired colleagues across the Strait enjoy, would be a great start; but without a clearer sense of the time, skills, and budget required, we can not move forward. Defining those would be one outcome among several. With the help of a professional guide from the UVic Human Resources Department, and your ideas, we look forward to re-setting some of our goals.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find a synopsis of the main features of the Extended Health and Dental insurance policy that was negotiated by CURAC (umbrella organization for post-secondary retiree associations in Canada) with the Retired Teachers of Ontario (RTO). As time allows, we will customize this information for UVRA members, so that you have fuller information on all our insurance options.

The University Secretary has just begun the process of searching for 4 Convocation Senators, to serve from July 1st, 2018. I have found my three years ‘interesting’: reacquainting with a much more bureaucratic institution than I left 10 years ago; enjoying again the academic moving and shaking (shoving and making?) that is the role of Senate; fairly shamelessly exploiting any opportunity to raise the profile of UVRA and our desire to retire into, not from the University. Even the nitty-gritty of the Senate Committee on Academic Standards wasn’t nearly as daunting as a former registrar had warned me before the election (“Are you sane? they’ll put you on SCAS”).

Someone whom I’ll be nominating to take my place (with your help, of course), isn’t going to be phased by any of that. John Anderson, our VP and President-in-Waiting, has agreed to stand. He’s an ideal candidate who, in his 28 years on faculty, served two terms on Senate, was Chair of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies for 13 years, and is certainly not overly perturbed by meetings. If there are more than four nominees for these positions, an electronic election will be held from Monday, March 5, 2018 at noon until Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. Either way, you will hear from us again; a voice for retirees on Senate is crucial to the aims of UVRA and the LoU. By comparison, our colleagues at UBC have elected 3 of 10 convocation members of Senate to speak for retirees and their collective corporate memory.
To find out who can vote, and how, go to:
https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/voting/convocation-senator/

Finally, it is my sad duty, on the anniversary of Scotland’s best-known poet, to record the passing last October of a life-long bagpiper, a long-term member of the Education Faculty, and member of the UVRA Board, Walter Muir. Walter was what a friend called ‘a very good citizen of UVic, and what it stood for.’ Our condolences go to his family.

With best wishes to all for a peaceful, healthy new year,

Peter Liddell
President, UVRA
Editor’s Note

The new year is well underway with what seems to be endless rains and winds (and another batch of boats washed up on the shore of Cadboro Bay) — perhaps an omen of another wonderful sunny, dry and warm summer ahead.

UVRA events have also begun, with the Elder Academy offering a Saturday series on Becoming an Artist — with another to follow this February on Are You Prepared for the Inevitable? (see page 11).

Elizabeth Coey contributed an wonderful description of the UVRA visit to the Sea Cider Farm and Ciderhouse (see page 8)

Once again, I encourage members of our Association to send in notes of interest they have come across, photos of events or places, notes on accomplishments and activities, and other pieces that would be of interest to colleagues. To submit a note, photo, or article simply send as an attachment to me at:

anderson@uvic.ca

The deadline dates for submissions dates for each of the upcoming editions of Grey Matters! are listed below (but do not feel bound by these dates, send in submissions at any time). Best wishes as the spring season approaches.

John Anderson

2018 dates for Grey Matters!

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<th>Issue</th>
<th>Submission Deadline</th>
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<td>March 2018</td>
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UVic Library

The Library website now has an easy way to sign-up for their Newsletter—simply go to the library website (www.uvic.ca/library) or click on https://www.uvic.ca/library/about/home/newsletter/
Welcome to our new UVRA members

SEPTEMBER 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2017

Adrian, Raymond          Campus Security
Anglin, James              Child & Youth Care
Biedewieden, Susan         Nursing
Brown, Donna               Continuing Studies
Clamp, Keith               International Education
Downey, Angela             Gustavson School of Business
Eastman, Donald (Don)      School of Environmental Studies
Fisher, Barbara            Co-Op
Gruppuso, Vincenza         IALH
Hilmy, Hanny               History & Continuing Studies
Johnson, Fern              NEPTUNE, Can Assist
Moreau, Jeannine           Nursing
Palcic, Monica             University of Alberta
Smith-Jones, Kimberly      EOSC
Waldron, Mary Anne         Law (VPAC)
Wood, Paul                 History
MasterMinds Series 2018

The MasterMinds Lectures consist of a series of four lectures on divergent and important topics developed and delivered by one of our University of Victoria retirees. Each lecture will be presented on consecutive **Wednesdays in April at 7 p.m. on campus.**

The MasterMinds Series is made available through the generous support of the University of Victoria, The Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health, and the UVic Retirees’ Association.

The MasterMinds speakers for 2018 are:

- **Dean Goard**
  - **April 4**
  - *Colwell Diaries: Doctoring in India and Mesopotamia (1915-32) & the BC Coast (1933-45)*

- **Geri Van Gyn**
  - **April 11**
  - *Watching Learning Happen: From neural networks to social networks*

- **Mary Sanseverino**
  - **April 18**
  - *Let the images speak: Historic Re-photography in Canada’s mountain west*

- **Bob Crosby**
  - **April 25**
  - *Earthquake Early Warning for B.C.*

There is no cost to attend the Mastermind Lectures but because seating is limited, registration is recommended.

Please register by calling 250-721-6369 and plan to arrive early to secure seating.

If you do not have a parking permit, there is a charge of $2.00 to use parking lots on campus at night.

The locations of the lectures is still undetermined and once the auditoria have been confirmed their location and directions will be communicated.

For more information, visit [www.uvic.ca/masterminds](http://www.uvic.ca/masterminds)
Traditionally, Chinese New Year is a time for families to come together to celebrate over a meal. The UVRA family and their friends are invited to come celebrate this joyous occasion by sharing a veritable feast for the palate and timely information for the mind.

February 15, 2018

- **WHERE:** The Fountain Restaurant, located in Blanshard Plaza, 2680 Blanshard at Hillside. (Level entry into restaurant.)
- **TIME:** Registration and seating from 11:15am
  Lunch will be served at 11:45am sharp
- **MENU:** Beef and Lettuce Wrap; Deep fried Wonton, Honey Garlic Pork Chop, Ginger Chicken, Assorted Meats with Tofu Hotpot, Beef Broccoli, Stir fried Prawns, Salt Pepper Squid & Cod Fillet Combo, House Special Chow Mein, Pork and Shrimp Fried Rice.
- **COST:** $28.00/person
- **PARKING:** Free parking in Blanshard Plaza (3 hours maximum).

**SPEAKER**

**Pat Ferns, C.M., Order of Canada**

“CHANGING CHINA”

**REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT**

Please email the name(s) of the person(s) attending, along with information as to how you will be paying for this event to uvra@uvic.ca.

Deadline for registration AND payment: **Monday, February 5**
The event held on October 12th was well attended, 36 of your fellow retirees were treated to samples of Sea Cider’s award-winning ciders (my favourite, Rum Runner included). Our hosts provided an artisan plate of local cheeses, sausages, bread and pickles to nibble on while we sipped on our cider and enjoyed conversation with our table companions. Those who did not wish to drink (thank you to all of the drivers) had tea, coffee, or house-made apple juice. The merriment around the table was enjoyed by all, travel stories shared and experiences recounted.

Our host for the tour (two groups of 18) was Rachel. She was a delight. Her easy manner and sense of humour was appreciated by all. This truly is a local, family business - all apples and fruit is either grown on site or sourced in the community. Attention to detail and quality of their product is evident in the sense of pride shown by the staff. The winners of our raffle were Jane Milliken (a bottle of Bramble Bubbly Cider) and Victor Neufeld (a bottle of Rum Runner – brewed in actual rum barrels for extra taste).

A wonderful setting for an outing, great service, delicious cider - even the rain held off for the time we were there. Congratulations to the Sea Cider staff for making this a wonderful experience for us. Special thanks to Rachel who put everyone at their ease and no question went unanswered with her good humoured replies, and to Nicole Walz for organizing our event details. I am sure that members of the UVRA who purchased bottles to give as gifts etc., will be back for another visit soon.
UVRA Christmas Lunch

The legendary University Club Christmas buffet served as the setting for the annual UVRA Christmas lunch on Wednesday, December 13.

At the conclusion of the lunch for the substantial numbers of members and spouses and friends, Brian Christie, PhD., delivered an engaging presentation of his work related to aging, and maintenance and enhancement of cognition.

Dr. Christie is a professor of Medicine and Neuroscience at UVIC and recipient of the Michael Smith Senior Scholar Award. Dr. Christie is presently using electrophysiological, immunohistochemical, molecular and behavioral research methods to explicate learning and memory mechanisms in the aging brain. His presentation was entitled:

*Can Computer Games Enhance Cognition in the Elderly?*

Aging can be associated with a decline in cognitive processing speed, or the time necessary to integrate stimuli and perform tasks. Decline in processing speed extends to decline in other areas of cognition, and is correlated with a loss of independent activities of daily living (IADLs), such as grocery shopping and driving.

One of the main consequences of decreasing cognitive processing speed is a decline in visual processing speed. Interestingly, visual speed processing is a skill that can be trained, opening the possibility that video games that require visual speed processing may have some benefits for cognitive processing in the elderly. The presentation described the work he and his colleagues are engaged in and offered a demonstration of the computer-based visual tracking program (*NeuroTracker—more can be found out at: https://www.uvic.ca/research/labs/christie/participants/neurotracker/*) he has developed. In addition, he presented some of the preliminary data showing how working with a video game intended for high performance athletes may have benefits for aged populations.

The buffet and the presentation were excellent, and thoroughly enjoyed by all.
RTO Insurance eligibility criteria in brief

Many thanks to colleagues at CURAC, Wilfrid Laurier RA and UBC-APE for recent correspondence over some key criteria of the CURAC/RTO Extended Health insurance policy.

A comprehensive insurance-option report for UVRA will be compiled as time allows (watch for email and website postings).

RTO offers its insurance to ANY retiree of ANY educational institution ANYwhere in Canada and their spouses (including divorced spouses). Spousal membership is available, provided the retiree is a member of RTO before his or her death. Membership in a CURAC-affiliated association is not required; transition within 60 days from any other group policy, without medical questionnaire. Periodically, the RTO plan has windows allowing transition from an individual policy without medical questionnaire. Such an ‘open enrollment’ period is now in effect until March 31, 2018—for details check their website:

www.rto-ero.org/open-enrolment

Premiums are not age-banded, but may change annually. Overheads are low because of small staff and a volunteer board.

Useful websites:

- RTO: https://www.rto-ero.org/

- Application form:
  https://www.rto-ero.org/sites/default/files/eng_final_rto_member_app_frm.pdf

- UBC-APE site (note that these reports cover other options not available to UVRA members): https://www.emeriti.ubc.ca/benefits
  Look for “Choosing Extended Health and Travel Insurance to Meet Your Specific Needs” [soon to include RTO], and “New Extended Health/Travel Insurance Now Available.”
Elder Academy I
Are you prepared for the inevitable?

Preparing for death is not an easy conversation and it’s a topic many of us, and often our families, prefer to avoid if not ignore. This series will offer four different topics related to making important decisions as we approach the later years in our lives, decisions that should be made while we are still of sound body and mind. The UVRA Elder Academy has been fortunate to have arranged for five outstanding people in their field to share their insights and experiences on some difficult topics:

The presenters:

**Eike Kluge**: An international recognised authority on medical assistance in dying. Deanna Hutchings: Teaches Hospice Palliative Care courses.

**Kelli Stajduhar**: Addresses how integrating palliative care approaches into the care of people with chronic life limiting conditions not only improves quality of life but actually results in living longer.

**Bill Israel and Penny Allport**: Centre of Earth and Spirit Society. What is an advanced care plan and how do you get started? The second hour will offer alternative views and cultural practices associated with death and dying.

**Ethics of Medical Assistance in Dying**
Eike Kluge, PhD
February 3rd - 10:00am – noon; David Strong Building DSB C1103

**Scanning the Landscape of End of Life Care: What Can Support Me and My Family?**
Deanna Hutchings, RN, BSN, MN, CHPCN (C)
February 10th – 10:00am to noon David Strong Building DSB C103

**Living Well-Dying Well: An Introduction**
Bill Israel and Penny Allport
February 24th - 10:00am to noon David Strong Building DSB C103

**Let’s Talk about Dying and Why It’s Crucial to Your Quality of Life**
Kelli Stajduhar, RN, PhD
March 3rd – 10:00am to noon David Strong Building DSB C103

For more detailed information on registration see the next page.
Elder Academy I

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT OPTIONS

TO REGISTER:

Please email the name(s) of the person(s) attending; the session(s) wanted; and method of payment to uvra@uvic.ca If you are registering by phone (250-472-4749) or in person, please provide your email address.

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

1. If you are doing your banking on line, please consider paying with Interac e-Transfer. Easy how-to information sent to you on request.


3. In person: Office hours, when a volunteer is available, are 1:30pm to 3:30pm. If there is no one in the office to greet you, please leave your registration/payment in the tray on the right side of the office door. Deposit envelopes and pen are located in buff color envelope above the tray. If preferred, you can leave your registration and/or payment with Reception at the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health (IALH). The building is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

   IMPORTANT: FOR PARKING AT R-HUT: If you have a UVic parking pass, you can NOT use the reserved spaces in front of R-Hut. If you do not have a pass, please register your vehicle’s license plate # and you space # with IALH on arrival.

4. Paying at the door: Please bring a cheque made out to UVic Retirees Association. We can no longer accept cash at the venue.

PARKING: On Saturdays, all day parking costs $3.00. Monday you will have to pay by the hour (suggest minimum 3 hours). Cash or Credit Card. New parking regulations require you to enter your license plate number by buying your ticket. Suggested parking: Lot 4 (by the stadium).

CAMPUS MAP: uvic.ca/home/about/campus-info/maps/pdf/parking-map.pdf

BUS ROUTES: uvic.ca/home/about/campus-info/maps/maps/
Elder Academy II

The theory and practice of getting fitter and stronger
A collaborative series: Saanich Commonwealth & Cordova Bay 55+ Association

**Description:** This will be a four-part series geared to helping the already physically active older individual understand more about their body, and how it responds to various forms of exercise and physical activity. The assumption will be that people who attend already have a regular exercise routine, and are looking for some variety or insight into what they are doing, or could be doing. Each session will explain how you can increase your fitness and strength, as well as add some variety to your exercise regimen. The general approach will cover the why and how of exercise. Each session will include some basic physiology and anatomy, as it relates to specific types of training, and how the body adapts to different exercise programs. Practical examples will be given but this series will not include physical participation. There will be lots of opportunity to ask questions and address concerns as it will be a relatively informal and relaxed approach.

**Presenter:** David Docherty, B.Sc., M.Sc., Ph.D.

**Session 1:** Saturday, March 3rd  |  **Aerobic (cardiovascular) fitness**

**Session 2:** Saturday, March 10th  |  **Developing strength and muscular endurance**

**Session 3:** Saturday, March 17th  |  **Developing the core or protecting the back**

**Session 4:** Saturday, March 24th  |  **Developing flexibility**

**Location:** Cordova Bay Community Place

**Dates:** Saturday mornings, 10.00-noon, March 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th

**Cost:** $20.00 for four sessions or $6.00 per session.

(Fees will go towards the UVRA Scholarship and Families in Need at Cordova Bay Elementary).
Tax in Life and Death
Keeping taxes away from your savings and passing on wealth through estate planning.

Please join us for an informative panel discussion for retirees and individuals considering retirement, featuring specialists in tax, legal and wealth planning who will highlight important ways to prepare for the future and minimize taxes.

Hosted by

Ahsen Ansari
Investment Advisor
RBC Dominion Securities

Featuring Special Guest Speakers

Emma McArthur
Lawyer
Farris, Vaughan,
Wills & Murphy LLP

Rod Lindquist
Manager
Field & Company

Thursday, May 3rd 2018
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

The presentation will be followed by a Q&A period with all the speakers.
Light refreshments will be served

The location and registration information for this (free) event will follow in March, which is the earliest that rooms can be reserved on campus for this period.
Notes from IALH

Self-Management Programs – offered by Self-Management BC, an office of the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health

Self-Management Programs: Persons with chronic health conditions and family members can participate in self-management programs offered in communities throughout BC at no cost. These are evidence-based programs which provide information, teach practical skills and give people the confidence to manage their health condition(s).

You can search the Self-Management BC website to find upcoming programs in your BC community.

PUT LIFE BACK IN YOUR LIFE

Free Six-Session Workshops for Adults

- Learn techniques to better manage your health
- Set goals and problem solve
- Communicate more effectively with your family, friends and health care team
- Deal with stress and difficult emotions
- Take action and live a healthier life

Family Members and Friends Welcome

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

NEW SELF-MANAGEMENT HEALTH COACH PROGRAM

FREE one-on-one phone support will help you get the most out of life!

FREE SIX-SESSION
SELF-MANAGEMENT
WORKSHOPS

South Vancouver Island

Cancer: Thriving & Surviving

Cook Street Village Activity Centre
1 – 380 Cook Street, Victoria
Saturdays, Jan. 28 to Feb. 18, 2017
10:00 am to 12:30 pm

Hilside Seniors Health Centre –
Yakimovich Wellness Centre
1 454 Hillside Avenue, Victoria
Thursdays, Jan. 25 to Mar. 1, 2017
1:00 pm to 3:30 pm

Chronic Pain

Salt Spring Island Community Services
Seniors’ Wellness Program
129 Hereford Ave., Salt Spring Island
Wednesdays, Jan. 18 to Feb. 22, 2017
8:30 pm to 10:30 pm

Cook Street Village Activity Centre
1 – 380 Cook Street, Victoria
Tuesdays, Feb. 6 to Mar. 13, 2017
10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Diabetes

SHOAL Activity Centre
10030 Rethaven Drive, Sidney
Tuesdays, Feb. 7 to Mar. 13, 2017
6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

To register or for further information
www.selfmanagementbc.ca
604-940-3273 (Lower Mainland)
1-866-902-3767 (Toll Free)
selmgmt@uvic.ca
Volunteers are integral to the well-being of our society. Each year the Institute on Aging and Lifelong Health and the Eldercare Foundation sponsor the Valued Elder Recognition Award (VERA). This award recognizes dedicated volunteers who have given exemplary service to helping others in the Capital Regional District (CRD) for at least 10 years. We began offering the VERA in 2000, and have been privileged to meet and honour VERA nominees ever since. Each year we hold a recognition ceremony on or around October 1, the United Nations International Day of Older Persons.

If you know someone who has volunteered their time in the CRD for 10 years or more, consider putting forward a VERA nomination.

More information is available on our website:

https://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/aging/awards/valued-elder/
No Magic Bullet in Fight Against Dementia

This was the headline in a recent *Times Colonist* publication for an article written by Melissa Healy of the L.A. *Times*. She was actually citing a series of reviews that had just been published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* ([http://annals.org/aim](http://annals.org/aim)) in January, 2018. The four articles reviewed the research related to delaying or preventing the development of dementia later in life. The reviews examined the evidence for the efficacy of medication (prescription or over the counter); cognitive training; a single exercise regimen; and diet. The overall conclusion was that there is no single path to prevent or forestall dementia or cognitive decline. But do not be discouraged! The journal issue included an editorial by Dr. Eric Larson, an internist with a specific interest in Alzheimer’s Disease, who offered a more encouraging conclusion that there is highly suggestive evidence that some things were helpful.

In particular, he went on to list not smoking, engaging in regular physical activity, controlling diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol, and maintaining a healthy diet and weight may help to avoid or delay dementia. In previous articles I have presented the possible impact of regular physical activity on dementia and other neurological conditions and believe the link is well documented. I was also intrigued by a recent article by Monique Keiran (*Times Colonist*, January 14th, 2018) in which she discusses the cause of Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia. She suggests there is “growing evidence” that links insulin resistance, that leads to Type II Diabetes, and memory decline and increased risk for Alzheimer’s. Type II Diabetes is becoming an epidemic in North America and many other countries and is closely associated with being overweight. Being overweight has been found to be related to insulin sensitivity and glucose tolerance. It was once thought that fat tissue was inert but more recent studies find it is in fact metabolically active. Unfortunately, it releases several hormones that seem to interfere with the uptake of glucose (sugar) from the blood despite adequate amounts of insulin [http://fblt.cz/en/skripta/xi-regulacni-mechanismy-1-endokrinni-regulace/8-hormony-tukove-tkane/](http://fblt.cz/en/skripta/xi-regulacni-mechanismy-1-endokrinni-regulace/8-hormony-tukove-tkane/) It is this connection that is thought to link obesity and Type II diabetes.

Of course, in addition to a healthy diet, one very effective way of avoiding or controlling Type II Diabetes is regular physical activity which can also help develop or maintain a healthy body weight as well as increase glucose uptake. Monique Keiran concludes that exercise could be a key therapy for preventing and managing diabetes and is being extensively studied. I suggest research has already identified the role of exercise in preventing or managing diabetes and this could be one of the reasons why the research shows the effects of physical activity on preventing or delaying or managing dementia and other neurological conditions.
Dr. Larson in his editorial included cognitive stimulating activities and avoiding social isolation as also probably being beneficial. Those of us who attended the recent presentation by Brian Christie (UVRA Xmas lunch) heard about his enthusiasm for the NeuroTracker (check it out at: https://www.uvic.ca/research/labs/christie/participants/neurotracker/), and its possible contribution to cognitive functioning, as it offers something more than previous cognitive training programs. So it may be something worth exploring although in talking to other neuroscientists the jury may still be out on this one. However, any activity that causes us to use our brains is probably beneficial even if the research is currently lacking. The brain responds like most other organs in the body and “if you don’t use it you lose it!”.

Unfortunately, there does not appear a single magic bullet but there are some things we can do to help ourselves, although there are no guarantees, and physical activity still is high on that list!

David Docherty
Note of Interest—Age-Friendly Communities

Age-Friendly Communities—what are they and what has been accomplished?
A policy paper from the from the Health Care Policy committee of the
College and University Retirees Association of Canada

There’s a lot of buzz about Age-Friendly Communities (AFCs) these days and hundreds of Canadian municipalities have signed on to create entities that make “aging in place” a reality. The concept originated as part of the World Health Organization’s policies for healthy aging which specified how governments as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) could support physical and mental health for older adults. The WHO produced a guide to Global Age-Friendly Cities (2007) which built on the eight essential elements of AFCs: 1. Outdoor spaces, buildings; 2. Transportation; 3. Housing; 4. Social participation; 5. Social respect and inclusion; 6. Civic participation and employment; 7. Communication and information; and 8. Community support and health services (Plouffe, 2011). These can be grouped into three general and interrelated areas: the physical, the social, and the health environments. Accessible and affordable housing and transport as well as attractive public spaces for socializing and recreation are key to the physical infrastructure. Linked to the physical infrastructure is the social aspect such as opportunities to connect with others at seniors’ centres, in intergenerational housing or as volunteers in a respectful and inclusive setting. Communication and information are essential. Finally, the elements of healthy living need to be available—easy access to health services, pharmacies, and home care.

In 2006, the Public Health Agency of Canada released its “Healthy Aging in Canada” initiative aimed at health promotion and the creation of policies, services and programs that enable healthy aging. Four provincial governments participated in helping to develop AFC guidelines for municipalities as well as developing a similar guide for rural and remote communities. Most attention, however, has been given to cities and suburbs since the majority of older adults live in urban settings. According to one study, two-thirds of seniors live in car-dependent suburbs. (Miller, 2017) Now that seniors are living longer we need to think about how vision problems, chronic illnesses or cognitive impairments might prevent us from driving. As we age we need to think about access to shopping, recreational and social facilities, health services, etc. by public transport or walking. Age-adapted transport such as collective trips to stores or medical appointments would also be useful. In addition, our housing needs change so it is necessary to have places to live that can accommodate older adults whether that means retrofitting a house or living in multi-unit buildings close to public transport. As municipalities plan for the future they need to think about planning and development that includes universal design (buildings need to be accessible for all ages and abilities) in constructing new buildings. As one Nova Scotia study of affordable rental housing for seniors shows, merely building rental units without the goal of supporting healthy aging/aging in place is not enough; shared space, universal design, location, access to transportation and participation in decision-making are key (Leviten-Reid and Lake, 2016). Finally, thought needs to be given as to how to make winter more age friendly.

Connected to these physical considerations are the social. Social isolation is a health risk for older adults and thus living in places with meaningful social networks is important whether that means ties to family and/or friends. Some communities are experimenting with cohousing (two or more people share space and costs, common in Denmark) or intergenerational housing where there is a mix of age
groups. An example of the latter is the Humanitas Residential and Care Centre in Deventer, Netherlands, where students receive free rent in return for contributing 30 hours a month of activities with seniors. The emphasis is on connectivity and happiness rather than care. The community emphasizes control and autonomy, active participation, common purpose and positive attitudes. Community centres and seniors’ centres provide places for making friends and opportunities for volunteering as well as social interaction. Some older adults wish to take advantage of educational opportunities such as short courses, lectures or art and music activities. As University of British Columbia’s aging expert, Mary Ann Murphy, noted “boomers are no longer interested in bingo.” (Globe and Mail, June 12, 2017)

In terms of healthy aging, AFCs need to have not only a built environment that is accessible to all and a social infrastructure that provides opportunities for social engagement, communication and socially inclusive activities, but such communities also require access to health services, healthy food and community-based care giving. In Canada health care is delivered through hospitals, doctors’ offices and sometimes clinics. Accessing health care becomes more difficult as people age and experience chronic illness, vision problems or mental health issues. Our system is also very task oriented and hierarchical notes health reporter, Andre Picard. As one of his columns pointed out, there are other models around the world that may serve elderly populations better so that older adults can stay at home longer. He cites a Dutch example of neighbourhood care that developed in 2006 when some nurses founded the non-profit group, “Buurtzorg”. The group organized nurses into small, self-managing teams serving neighbourhood populations or towns of about 10,000 people providing a wide range of care in the home, including non-medical services. Care in the home was managed in collaboration with an individual’s doctor. One study found that this type of care delivered higher quality care and greater satisfaction; a second study estimated that this type of care was 40% cheaper than the traditional task-based care. While Canada’s medical system operates differently and lacks the Dutch commitment to a culture of care, such examples do suggest that there are other successful ways of making aging in place a reality. (Picard, Globe and Mail, July 11, 2017)

In addition, as Nova Scotia’s Action Plan for an Aging Population states, promoting healthy living means supporting a population health strategy that reduces the impact of poverty on health; this entails assessments of the various approaches to income security for low income older adults especially single people (most often women) struggling with the cost of living. Access to healthy, affordable food and the promotion of physical activity are also key. (www.davidharrison.ca)

So, how do we get Age Friendly Communities? Do we have any models? London, Ontario was the first city in Canada to join the WHO’s Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities in 2010 and it completed its first action plan in 2016. The plan stressed an enhanced focus on engaging older adults from diverse backgrounds, increased communication and information sharing and evidence-informed decision making. The Age-Friendly London Network features 245 network members, 8 working groups, and links to 37 related organizations. Perhaps most importantly, the City of London has incorporated age-friendly goals into its strategic plan, 2015-19. In addition, AFL with the assistance of provincial funding, is now developing an action plan for 2017-2020. Network strategies include: strengthening the AFLN, increasing outreach to older adults in immigrant, low income and other communities; working to bring an age friendly lens to agencies and organizations; using research to create an im-
Note of Interest—Age-Friendly Communities

While over 500 municipalities have committed to age-friendly goals, a recent study noted that mostly minor changes have been made and that AFCs are “works-in-progress.” (Miller, 2017) What’s lacking is the integration of AFC goals into mainstream planning and development. A study of 27 Ontario municipalities revealed that, of the 25 that passed a council resolution to commit to AFC goals, none had modified their development goals to incorporate AFC principles. Municipal plans need to incorporate AFC goals. Within municipal governments there needs to be clear direction as to which departments are responsible for taking action. When plans are reviewed, AFC goals need to be integrated into the process. In addition, the private sector has to be convinced or induced to build a mix of housing types suitable for older adults rather than specialize in one type. Higher density housing close to public transport and amenities makes sense for older adults. Provincial land use policies also impact what municipalities can do; there is a need for coordination between levels of government in order to facilitate the creation of Age-Friendly Communities that make “aging in place” a reality rather than just a work-in-progress.

www.davidharrison.ca “Building Healthier Communities”

“Care Facility: Deventer, Netherlands,” www.intergenerationalhousing.wordpress.com

Catherine Leviten-Reid and Alicia Lake, “Building Affordable Rental Housing for Seniors: Policy Insights from Canada,” Journal of Housing for the Elderly, 30, 3 (2016), 253-270

Glenn Miller, “No Place to Grow Old: How Canadian Suburbs Can Become Age Friendly,” IRPP, No. 14, March 8, 2017


For those UVRA members who have not taken advantage of the one-year free membership in the University Club, this would be a great time to do it, as there are a number of special events coming up in the first few months of 2018.

**Upcoming Events at the UClub**

**Valentines' Day Dinner**
- Saturday February 10
- Reception 5:30, Dinner 6:30
- (35.00+tax)
- Featuring a Three Course Meal and The Craig Henderson Trio

**Family Night Chinese New Year Buffet**
- Saturday February 24
- Dinner 5:00
- (22.95 adult/11.95 child + tax)
- Entertainment by the Ocean Rain Chinese Dancers

**St. Patrick’s Day Celebration Dinner Buffet**
- Friday, March 16
- Reception 5:30, Dinner 6:30
- (29.95 + tax)
- Live entertainment by Cookeilidh.

**Special events to watch for:**
- Family Easter Brunch (March 31)
- Mother’s Day Brunch (May 13).

For more details on these special events and also the weekly events, please go to the UClub website <club.uvic.ca>
Books of interest

Leonardo Da Vinci


Publisher’s Note

Based on thousands of pages from Leonardo’s astonishing notebooks and new discoveries about his life and work, Walter Isaacson weaves a narrative that connects his art to his science. He shows how Leonardo’s genius was based on skills we can improve in ourselves, such as passionate curiosity, careful observation, and an imagination so playful that it flirted with fantasy.

He produced the two most famous paintings in history, The Last Supper and the Mona Lisa. But in his own mind, he was just as much a man of science and technology. With a passion that sometimes became obsessive, he pursued innovative studies of anatomy, fossils, birds, the heart, flying machines, botany, geology, and weaponry. His ability to stand at the crossroads of the humanities and the sciences, made iconic by his drawing of Vitruvian Man, made him history’s most creative genius.

His creativity, like that of other great innovators, came from having wide-ranging passions. He peeled flesh off the faces of cadavers, drew the muscles that move the lips, and then painted history’s most memorable smile. He explored the math of optics, showed how light rays strike the cornea, and produced illusions of changing perspectives in The Last Supper. Isaacson also describes how Leonardo’s lifelong enthusiasm for staging theatrical productions informed his paintings and inventions. Leonardo’s delight at combining diverse passions remains the ultimate recipe for creativity. So, too, does his ease at being a bit of a misfit: illegitimate, gay, vegetarian, left-handed, easily distracted, and at times heretical. His life should remind us of the importance of instilling, both in ourselves and our children, not just received knowledge but a willingness to question it—to be imaginative and, like talented misfits and rebels in any era, to think differently.

Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump Whitehouse

Michael Wolff, Henry Holt and Co., 2018

Publisher’s Note:

With extraordinary access to the West Wing, Michael Wolff reveals what happened behind-the-scenes in the first nine months of the most controversial presidency of our time in Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House.

Since Donald Trump was sworn in as the 45th President of the United States, the country—and the world—has witnessed a stormy, outrageous, and absolutely mesmerizing presidential term that reflects the volatility and fierceness of the man elected Commander-in-Chief.

This riveting and explosive account of Trump’s administration provides a wealth of new details about the chaos in the Oval Office, Never before in history has a presidency so divided the American people. Brilliantly reported and astoundingly fresh, Fire and Fury shows us how and why Donald Trump has become the king of discord and disunion.