



ELDERS ROCK

FEBRUARY 18, 2009

URBAN ABORIGINAL ELDERS NEWSLETTER

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Aboriginal Voices

You may have noticed that there is an Aboriginal section in the newspaper. Aboriginal Voices will be published every Thursday, with the hope that it will solicit enough interest to run more often. The forum will provide an opportunity for Aboriginal people to discuss relevant issues that are affecting their lives. If you have a topic that is near and dear to your heart and you are looking for a chance to talk about it, this forum is for you. If you have a story to share and don't know how to get started, we can help you to develop your article and check for grammar. Please contact Linda at 250.562.6325 for more information.

Nechako Métis Elders: AGM and Potluck

The Nechako Métis Elders have an AGM and potluck coming up this March. Please contact Joyce at 250.562.6325 for more details.

Sharing Circle

The Elders have been invited to participate in the Sharing Circle at the Firepit. It takes place Thursday February 26th at 11.00 am. Contact 250.562.1172 or bireland@positivelivingnorth.ca for more details.

Aboriginal Act Now BC Project

The Prince George Métis Community Association is working on a project to bring together Aboriginal People in Prince George, focusing on Health and Wellness. They do Tai Chi, Aquafit, adult Jigging, and walking. The activities are free and it's not too late to join in on the fun. There are more details in the "Upcoming Events" section, and for a complete calendar please phone Marianne at 250.561.2665.

2009 Aboriginal Writers and Storytellers Festival

UNBC is hosting an Aboriginal Writers and Storytellers Festival in the fall. They already have an exciting line-up of authors attending, and on top of that they are planning a local performers night, writing workshops, author readings, a gala event and a dinner and community event. If you would like to get involved, or for more information please contact Laura at 250.562.6325 or Marianne Sprague at spragu0@unbc.ca.

Our Nations Elders Speak: Ageing and Cultural Diversity

Written by Susan Judith Ship with the assistance of Reaghan Tarbell

"To age well is to feel whole."

Different Histories, Some Common Issues

"Our Nations' Elders Speak" is a joint project between the National Indian and Inuit Community Health Representatives Organization and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council. It addresses the multiple dimensions of unwanted isolation faced by Elders in Aboriginal and Ethnocultural Minority communities. Their particular needs as members of culturally marginalized groups are usually not addressed by the mainstream agencies and services working with seniors.

This unusual partnership between cultural is rooted in a shared concern for promoting and encouraging ways of working with Elders from Aboriginal and Ethnocultural Minority communities which are culturally sensitive, relevant and responsive to their needs, values and experiences. Despite significant cultural differences and histories, Elders from Aboriginal and Ethnocultural Minority communities face common issues involving unwanted isolation which result from language barriers, cultural barriers, minority status and limited access to services, accentuating the problems of unwanted isolation.

Seniors and Elders

A senior is a person over the age of 65. As Aboriginal people have low life expectancy in Canada, an Aboriginal senior is any person 55 years and older. Given the relative dependence and vulnerability of many immigrant seniors who never fully integrate into Canadian society, an Ethnocultural Minority senior is also any person 55 years or older.

There is no single definition of Elder. In most Aboriginal and Ethnocultural Minority cultures, Elders are those people who are recognized by the community as possessing wisdom and are called upon as an authority to advise or act on important family and community matters. The term "Elder" in some cultures, referred to and may still refer to any older person to indicate respect, honor, and special status as ageing in many cultures is associated with experience, wisdom, the transmission of cultural heritage and language, leadership roles in the community, and in some cases, spiritual knowledge.

The term Elder has come to mean many different things to Elders themselves. It may mean frail elderly, may signify wisdom, experience and/or spiritual knowledge. It may define a state of being to achieve or it may just mean old. We have chosen to use the term Elder rather than senior to refer to all people age 55 and older to celebrate the vitality, knowledge, experience and positive contribution of our nations' Elders to our common future.

Some Demographic Trends:

- People aged 65 and older are the fastest growing segment of Canadian society. These growth rates are lowest in the Aboriginal communities and highest in the Jewish community.

- Women outnumber men in the population 55 and older, particularly in the Caribbean communities but not in the Dutch, Italian and Inuit communities.
- Fifty-five per cent of Aboriginal Elders aged 65 and older and 44 per cent of those over 55 claim an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue, with Cree, Inuktitut and Ojibwe the most widely used. Fifty-one per cent of Chinese Elders, 29 per cent of South Asian Elders and 21 per cent of Southern European Elders speak neither English nor French. Far more women than men, age 65 and older, are unable to speak either official language.
- The main source of income for people aged 65 and older are government pensions, particularly among Aboriginal Elders. The average income for Aboriginal and Ethnocultural Minority Elders is between \$5,000 and \$14,999 with women having substantially lower personal income levels than compared to men.

Elders at Risk

Old age is "whenever health and functioning deteriorate to a level that results, as we age, in decreasing independence and mobility."

Traditional cultural practices do not negatively affect the health and functioning of older individuals from Aboriginal and minority communities. The social and political status of cultural groups in Canada, which results from our very different histories, poverty, cultural disruption, racism, sexism and ageism negatively affect Elders' access to resources and to services which in turn affect their life chances, health, well-being, quality of life and ageing itself. In this respect, Aboriginal Elders are particularly at risk.

The majority of Aboriginal Elders have experienced unhealthy living conditions and poorer health than all other cultural groups in Canada for most of their lives - consequences of the "legacy of disadvantage" resulting from European colonization. Aboriginal Elders have the lowest life expectancy of all groups in Canada, are more likely to suffer degenerative diseases normally associated with old age, as well as experience the social and psychological consequences of old age such as loss of friends, spouse or relatives earlier in their lives. Many Elders have experienced a loss of self-esteem and independence resulting from the negative impact of Native residential schooling and the loss of traditional ways of life.

The health status of Elders in minority communities is generally more favorable than is the case with Aboriginal Elders, although this may vary from community to community and by social class background. Migration, immigration and resettlement are associated with a wide range of physical and mental health problems, in particular, a complex array of stresses and anxieties related to culture shock, culture conflict, loss of social status and narrowing social networks, to which older immigrants are particularly vulnerable. Refugee women are particularly prone to post-traumatic stress, depression and suicidal

"Ageing well has the same basic meaning regardless of a person's cultural background."

feelings as well as infectious diseases such as TB, hepatitis B and reproductive health problems, as a direct result of trauma, including rape, torture and the loss of family members.

The normal ageing process involves:

- Gradual sensory loss.
- Diminished hearing, sight, taste, touch and smell.
- Decreased mobility (including access to public transportation or driving a vehicle).
- Increased health problems with less resilience.
- Narrowing social network, including fragmented families and other social losses related to death, incapacity or institutionalization.
- Growing dependence on others.
- Isolation and loneliness.

Essential Elements of Ageing Well Include:

- Physical, mental-emotional, social and spiritual well-being.
- Empowerment (ability to make decisions about one's life).
- Awareness of and access to information about existing programs and services.
- Easy access to medical, social and other support services.
- Ageing in place, with respect and with dignity, for as long as possible (independent and interdependent living).
- A supportive social environment.
- Continued community involvement and participation.
- Financial security.
- Adequate and affordable housing.
- Accessible and affordable transportation.

Unwanted isolation appears to be a common problem for many Elders, irrespective of cultural background. However, language barriers, cultural differences, minority status and limited access to services accentuate the problems of unwanted isolation for Elders from Aboriginal and minority backgrounds.

Barriers to Ageing Well: The Problem of Unwanted Isolation

Physical Isolation can occur as a result of:

- Geographic isolation.
- Lack of transportation.
- Poor physical health.
- Inadequate housing.
- Poor diet.
- Physical inactivity.
- Mobility problems.
- Limited access to health care.

Social Isolation can occur as a result of:

- Lack of information about programs and services.
- Lack of home care and home supports.

- Lack of support services, weak family, social and community networks.
- Lack or participation in recreational, social and community activities.

Spiritual Isolation can occur as a result of:

- Inability to observe religious and spiritual practices as a result of lack of access and opportunity
- Loss of meaning and purpose in life.
- Loss of sense of connectedness and belonging to something larger than oneself.

Mental or Emotional Isolation can occur as a result of:

- Mental disabilities.
- Low self-esteem.
- The impact of cultural change on the status of Elders.
- Difficulties accepting ageing.
- Communication problems with family or community health workers as a result of language and cultural barriers.
- Communication.
- Ageist, sexist, racist attitudes.
- Stress.

A Wholistic Approach to Unwanted Isolation:

The way we think about health and disease is culturally shaped. As Stewart points out, "The bio-medical model one-culture system of North American health care service is based on the assumption that one can take a piece of a person and mend it, without reference to the whole person, much less the social environment."

Aboriginal and "non-Western" cultures take a different approach to health, well-being and disease - concerned with the whole person and not merely the part of the person that is injured or diseased. Good health means more than the absence of disease or illness but rather emphasizes the whole person and the harmonious functioning of body, mind, emotions and spirit. This view of health is only now coming to be accepted by the modern health care establishment.

A wholistic approach which takes into account and integrates all aspects of health - physical, mental-emotional, social and spiritual - is appropriate to understanding and addressing the multiple dimensions of unwanted isolation by Elders from Aboriginal and Ethnocultural Minority communities. This approach also views the individual in relation to the family, the family in relation to the community and the community in relation to the larger society.

This article was provided by NIICHO's In-Touch Library:
<http://www.niichro.com/Elders/Elders7.html>

Recipe of the Month: Artichoke Hazelnut Soup for Diabetics

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Cooking Time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup fresh chopped onion
- 1 medium garlic clove, crushed
- 2 cups fat free, reduced sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 tsp ground oregano
- 1/2 cup chopped hazelnuts, roasted
- 3 tbsp white all purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cup evaporated skim milk
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 2 tbsp garlic and herb feta crumbles

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 cup	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories:	264
Total Carbs:	21.6g
Dietary Fibre:	5.4g
Sugars:	3.6g
Total Fat:	16.4g
Saturated Fat:	1.2g
Unsaturated Fat:	15g
Potassium:	373.1mg
Protein:	8.7g
Sodium:	637.4mg
Dietary Exchanges	
3 fat, 1/4 starch, 2 1/2 vegetable	

Directions

- 1 Heat oil over medium heat in a three quart pot, sauté the onion and garlic until soft.
- 2 Add in artichokes, broth, oregano, and hazelnuts, and cook until tender (about 5 minutes).
- 3 Blend the flour in with the evaporated milk, and wine.
- 4 Add flour mixture to pot and cook, stirring, until slightly thick (about 5-7 minutes)
- 5 Garnish with feta cheese.

TIP: To lower the sodium, eliminate the feta cheese garnish.

Fun and Games

Proverbs

Problems can become opportunities when the right people come together.
~ Robert South

I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends.
~ Abraham Lincoln

People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges.
~ Joseph Fort Newton

Jokes



Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were taking a walk one fine March day.

One remarked to the other, "Windy, ain't it?"

"No," the second man replied, "It's Thursday."

And the third man chimed in, "So am I. Let's have a coke."

Bible Joke

A new pastor was visiting the homes of his parishioners. At one house it seemed obvious that someone was at home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door. Therefore, he took out a card and wrote "Revelation 3:20" on the back of it and stuck it in the door.

When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found that his card had been returned. Added to it was this cryptic message, Genesis 3:10."

Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter.

Revelation 3:20 begins "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." Genesis 3:10 reads, "I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid, for I was naked."

How to Handle Teens

A wise old Elder retired and purchased a modest home near a junior high school. He spent the first few weeks of his retirement in peace and contentment. Then a new school year began. The very next afternoon three young boys, full of youthful, after-school enthusiasm, came down his street, beating merrily on every trash can they encountered. The crashing percussion continued day after day, until finally the Elder decided it was time to take some action.

The next afternoon, he walked out to meet the young percussionists as they banged their way down the street. Stopping them, he said, "You kids are a lot of fun. I like to see you express your exuberance like that. In fact, I used to do the same thing when I was your age. Will you do me a favor? I'll give you each a dollar if you'll promise to come around every day and do your thing." The kids were elated and continued to do a bang-up job on the trash cans.

After a few days, the Elder greeted the kids again, but this time he had a sad smile on his face. "This recession's really putting a big dent in my income," he told them. "From now on, I'll only be able to pay you 50 cents to beat on the cans."

The noisemakers were obviously displeased, but they did accept his offer and continued their afternoon ruckus. A few days later, the wily retiree approached them again as they drummed their way down the street. "Look," he said, "I haven't received my Social Security check yet, so I'm not going to be able to give you more than 25 cents. Will that be okay?"

"A lousy quarter?" the drum leader exclaimed. "If you think we're going to waste our time, beating these cans around for a quarter, you're nuts! No way, mister. We quit!"

And the old man enjoyed peace.

She's Angry With You

Worried because they hadn't heard anything for days from the widow in the neighboring apartment, Mrs. Silver said to her son, "Timmy, would you go next door and see how old Mrs. Kirkland is?"

A few minutes later, Timmy returned.

"Well," asked Mrs. Silver, "is she all right?"

"She's fine, except that she's angry at you."

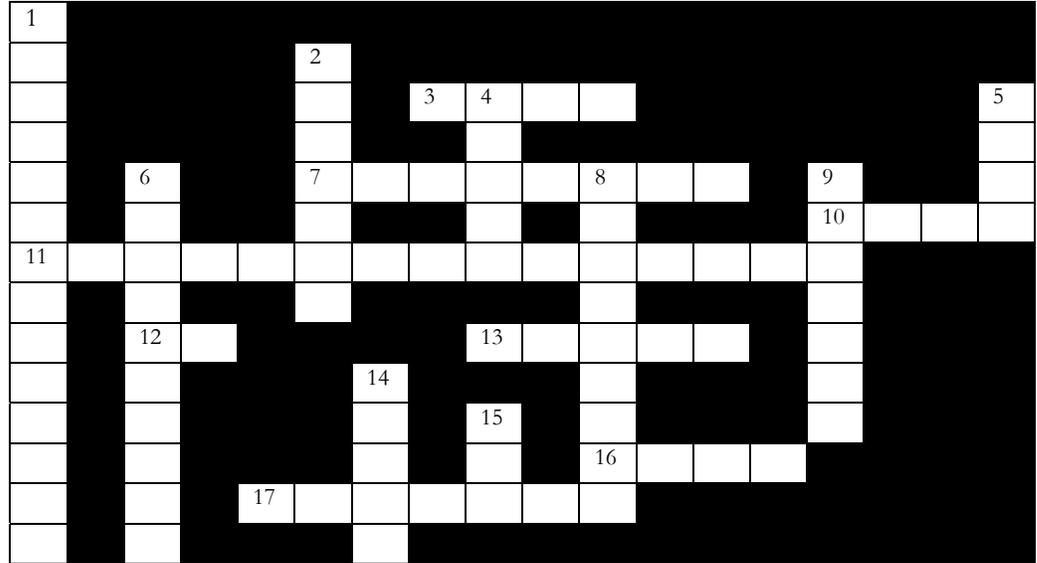
"At me?" the woman exclaimed. "Whatever for?"

"She said 'It's none of your business how old she is,'" snickered Timmy

Puzzles

Michif Crossword Puzzle

How well do you know the Michif language? The hints are in English, the words are in Michif. Answers on last page.

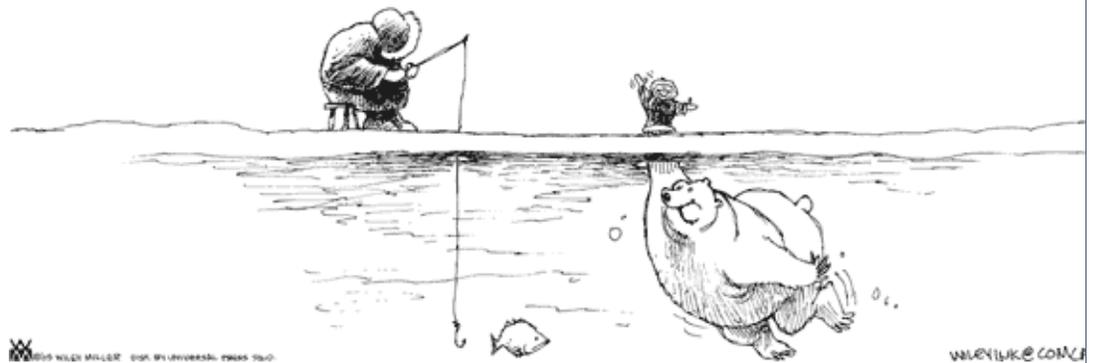


Across

- 3 Hammer
- 7 Take it all
- 10 Ate it
- 11 Has a good sense of humor
- 12 Here
- 13 Before
- 16 Say it
- 17 Lost it

Down

- 1 They love us
- 2 Chopped
- 4 Good
- 5 Dances
- 6 Baking
- 8 He or she is kind
- 9 They ate it
- 14 Take
- 15 Bring



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Upcoming Events

Beginners Computer Classes

FREE Beginners Computer Classes for Seniors will be starting soon.

Learn how to send and receive email and *'surf the 'net'* safely.

Location: PG Council of Seniors 1055 5th Avenue

Date: February 3rd – February 28th, 2009, every day

Cost: FREE

Contact: Lola-Dawn 250.564.5888

Adult Jigging

Join us in a really fun adult jigging class.

Location: Bladerunners Office

Date: Wednesday, February 18th

Time: 7pm – 8pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

Chess Knights

This is a weekly chance to get together to play chess. No registration is necessary....just show up to find a match. All skill levels are welcome.

Location: Café Voltaire – 1685 3rd Avenue

Date: Thursday, February 19th

Time: 3.30 pm

Contact: Marilyn 250.562 9580 or tajichuan@hotmail.com

Aquafit

Take part in a free aquafit class.

Location: Four Seasons Pool

Date: Thursday, February 19th

Time: 7.05 pm – 7.55 pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

The Gong Show

Great entertainment and lots of laughs.

Location: Treasure Cove Casino hotel

Date: Friday, February 20th

Time: 7.00 pm

Price: \$10.00

Phone: 250.564.4605

Winter Gardening Workshop

The Winter City and WinterLights committees are co-hosting a Winter Gardening Workshop presented by Cynthia Rebman, Landscape

Horticulturist.

Location: Coast Inn of the North

Date: Saturday, February 21st

Time: 10.30 am – 12.00 pm

Cost: \$10.00, pick up tickets at the French Community Centre

Contact: Renee 250.561.2565

Senior's Fun Fair

Senior's join us for a day of fun , fashion and games no admission fee.

Location: Hart Pioneer Centre, 6986 Hart Highway

Date: Sunday, February 22nd

Time: 10am – 4pm

Cost: FREE

HYHC Walk

Join the Honor Your Health Challenge group walk.

Location: Coliseum

Date: Monday, February 23rd

Time: 12 noon

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

Tai Chi

Take part in a free Tai Chi class.

Location: Connaught Youth Centre

Date: Monday, February 23rd

Time: 6.30 pm – 7.30 pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

HYHC Walk

Join the Honor Your Health Challenge group walk.

Location: Coliseum

Date: Tuesday, February 24th

Time: 12 noon

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

Aquafit

Take part in a free aquafit class.

Location: Four Seasons Pool

Date: Tuesday, February 24th

Time: 7.05 pm – 7.55 pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

Foot Care Clinic

Nurses from "We Care" do complete foot care. By appointment only.

Location: Senior Activity Centre 425 Brunswick Street

Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2009

Time: 9am – 3pm

Cost: \$20.00

Contact: 250.564.3287

Wellness Wednesday's

Monthly Wellness Promotion Workshops

Location: PG Council of Seniors 1055 5th Avenue

Date: Wednesday February 25th, 2009

Time: 12 – 1pm

Cost: \$1.00

Contact: 250.564.5888

Adult Jigging

Join us in a really fun adult jigging class.

Location: Bladerunners Office

Date: Wednesday, February 25th

Time: 7pm – 8pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

HYHC Walk

Join the Honor Your Health Challenge group walk.

Location: Coliseum

Date: Thursday, February 26th

Time: 12 noon

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

Aquafit

Take part in a free aquafit class.

Location: Four Seasons Pool

Date: Thursday, February 26th

Time: 7.05 pm – 7.55 pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

HYHC Walk

Join the Honor Your Health Challenge group walk.

Location: Coliseum

Date: Friday, February 27th

Time: 12 noon

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

Elders Social and Luncheon

The focus for this social is Awareness for Elders Health and there will be presentations as well as tables set up for some of the Elders groups and community service organizations for Elders. This event is not exclusive to Elders but I ask that you keep small children at home as we will need to focus on the presenters and activities.

Lunch will be provided and there will be door prizes and draws for larger prizes.

Location: Moose Hall 633 Douglas Street

Date: Friday, February 27th

Time: 10am – 4pm

Cost: FREE

Contact: Marianne 250.561.2665

The Gift of Years – Book Discussion

In her book, The Gift of Years, Joan Chittister explores the many aspects of aging. She focuses on the mental and spiritual attitudes we bring to the varied challenges we face as we grow older. Come journey with us as we discuss this wonderful reflection on going forward to the life that is waiting for us.

Location: Domano Renewal Centre 110 6500 Southridge Avenue

Date: Tuesday March 3rd, 2009

Time: 10 – 11.30am

Cost: \$5.00 per session

Contact: Norma Heffernan 250.964.4475 or drc@netbistro.com

All My Relations

There will be AA meetings on Sunday nights, followed with an after session smudge ceremony.

Location: Alano Club

Date: Sundays

Time: 6 – 7 pm

Cost: Free

Contact: 250 563 9517

Contact Information

Aboriginal Business Development Centre – 250.562.6325

Crisis Line – 250.563.1214

Dak’elh Elders - 250.614.7731

Lheidli T’enneh - 250.963.8451

Nechako Métis Elders - 250.563.4411

Prince George Métis Elders - 250.562.2771

Prince George Native Friendship Centre – 250.564.3568

Residential School Crisis Line – 1.866.925.4419

Residential School Settlement: Common Experience Payment –
1.866.699.1742

Michif Crossword Puzzle Answers

Across

3 Hammer - Martó

7 Take it all - Otinamok

10 Ate it - Mówew

11 Has a good sense of humor –

Móchikeyitákoshiw

12 Here – Óta

13 Before - Chipwá/

16 Say it – Itwe

17 Lost it – Wanitaw

Down

1 They love us –

Nzháweymikonánik

2 Chopped – Nikotew

4 Good – atNitá

5 Dances – Némiw

6 Baking – Kézhitepówin

8 He or she is kind – Méyotishiw

9 They ate it – Kémówewak

14 Take – Otina

15 Bring - Petá

Is there something you would like to see in the newsletter? Contact Laura Blumhagen at 250.562.6325 or blumhagen@bcgroup.net – this is YOUR newsletter!