

GRAY MATTERS

Published by SSM
Summer 2025



Take a Break
BUILD STRENGTH FOR THE FUTURE



When we are passionate about something, it is easy to get consumed with it. Advocating strongly for a good cause, trying to get someone elected, showing others how to achieve success through teaching and leading; all are activities that most of us have experienced at one time in our lives. I am very familiar with how all-engrossing my strong belief in something can get for me and how much time it takes in my day's activities, and in my head! This edition of Gray Matters focuses on the idea that sometimes we need to step away or "take a break" in order to make sure we can devote the right amount of energy and brain power to what is important to us.

At SSM we are pretty passionate about getting more home supports developed in this province. We are excited and eager to see our introduction of social prescribing take off and get embedded as a critical element in the health system. We try to visit and talk with every community across the province that might want to pursue age friendly initiatives. But it can be exhausting when we have limited resources and encounter roadblocks or delays. Those roadblocks and delays can be a natural result of the world we live in — I could do with a little less red tape from government and other organizations at times, and, if only everyone would just see my way as the best way — but we have to learn to pace ourselves and sometimes just stop and smell the roses. Appreciating the here and now is just as important as envisioning what the future can look like.



Focus is important. But focusing on one thing too much or to the exclusion of other things can be counterproductive. In fact, with those puzzles I do every morning in the paper, I know that if I get a hard one that is challenging, the more I try to break the code, the less likely I am to solve it. If I step away for a few minutes for another cup of coffee or even do something else for an hour or two and go back to it later I can often see what was right in front of my nose that I had been overlooking!

The old saying is "a change is as good as a rest". At SSM when we confront the roadblocks to our work we deliberately try to find new ways of going at the problem and see if we can try a new approach.

BUT, sometimes we agree to simply put something on the shelf to await another time and place for action. Our bodies and our minds are the same. We need to recognize when the frustration is blocking the way and we need to recognize when the noise of the world is overwhelming us, when our dissenting opinions are creating an impasse, or when unacceptable decisions at whatever level of decision making are being made, to step away. Take a nap, take a holiday, retire something indefinitely. No matter what age we are, we sometimes need a "time out".

I hope this summer is a time when many of us can take a break and spend leisure time with family and friends. If instead of holiday time summer is your busy time — you're a farmer or work in construction or other seasonal work — then I hope you are able to approach that work with renewed focus and remember to take breaks as needed! Enjoy our prairie summer.

Shan Landry

President, Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism



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SSM

Older Adults Moving Forward

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

SSM Member Organizations:

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National Association of Federal Retirees
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contents

- 2 **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**
- 4 **AGE-FRIENDLY: Make a Break for it**
- 5 **AGE-FRIENDLY: Community Recognition**
- 6 **MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: CBSS**
- 9 **MESSAGE FROM MINISTER OF SENIORS, LORI CARR**
- 11 **CELEBRATING SENIORS EVENT**
- 13 **SOCIAL PRESCRIBING: Caregivers Need a Break to Recharge**
- 15 **THEME: Take a Break — Build Strength for the Future**
- 21 **BLOOMING PERENNIAL: Terri Hetterly**
- 23 **ASK AUNTIE AGEISM**
- 25 **FITNESS: 5 Ways to Stay Active in Summer**
- 27 **CENTURY CLUB CORNER: Memories**
- 28 **SSAI NEWSLETTER**

All editorial matter published in Gray Matters represents the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of SSM. Statements and opinions expressed do not represent the official policy of SSM unless so stated.

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Seniors Working Together

Make a Break for it



Summer: the perfect time for taking a break. Long, slow, easy days. Morning coffee on the deck. Sunshine and swimsuits. Popsicles melting down our chins. Lying on blankets or beach towels, looking for shapes in the clouds. Daydreaming.

How do volunteer-run organizations take a break that sounds as idyllic as all that? It's difficult because volunteers tend to give 110% all the time! But, do they really need to 'keep pushing through' all year long?

There are a few ways that Age-Friendly Committees can take a break to renew and refresh themselves. Often, these groups meet less frequently over the summer due to busy seasonal schedules and personal vacations. Another way to take a break might be to step back and re-evaluate the priorities of the group. The Age-Friendly process is an evergreen one where assessing the needs of the community is ongoing and revisited regularly. An assessment, while still an activity, does give a committee pause to ensure that their actions are appropriate, moving forward.

Moosomin and Shaunavon recently received Age-Friendly Provincial Recognition for their efforts from the Government of Saskatchewan. Residents and dignitaries joined Age-Friendly Committees in each community to celebrate this achievement. Cake and coffee were served, of course! It's important to take breaks to celebrate people and accomplishments.

Coffee breaks are certainly one of the more popular 'breaks' in our society. Age-Friendly Committees gather six times each year for a Coffee Hour where they share best practices and ideas with one another.

This is another way that Age-Friendly Committee members can take a break from their own activities, to learn about other communities' successes and challenges.

Bench projects are a tangible example of what some Age-Friendly Committees have done to provide the opportunity for people to take a physical break. The need for additional benches in downtown areas or along walking trails was identified through needs assessment in many communities, and the Age-Friendly Committees found solutions!

Whether it's a park bench or a summer vacation that literally helps you stop and take a break, or an opportunity to step back and assess a situation or to celebrate achievements, all of these 'breaks' help to build strength for the future!

Wishing you a sunshine-filled summer and may all your coffee breaks be on the deck!



Age-Friendly Community Recognition



Top Left: Age-Friendly Moosomin

Top Right: Linda Pratt, Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Committee Chair; Cal Vance, Mayor of Shaunavon; Debbie Olesen, Chair of Age-Friendly Shaunavon, Minister Carr

Bottom Left: Murray Gray, Mayor of Moosomin, Minister Carr, Casey McCormac, Economic Development Officer for Moosomin

Bottom Right: Age-Friendly Shaunavon Committee: Kathy Towle, Ruth Elliott, Terri Hetterly, Debbie Olesen, Honourable Lori Carr, Minister of Seniors (Missing: Joy Frenette, Brenda Waldron)

The Saskatchewan Government, represented by the Honourable Lori Carr, Minister of Seniors, recognized Moosomin and Shaunavon as Age-Friendly Communities at two separate community events this spring. Moosomin's event was held on April 25 at the Moosomin Legion Club Room and Shaunavon's event followed on May 30 at the Grand Coteau Heritage & Cultural Centre in Shaunavon.

Each community completed four Age-Friendly milestones: establishing an Age-Friendly Committee, achieving local government support, assessing the community, and implementing an action plan. They join other communities already recognized: Rosetown, Saskatoon, Regina Beach/Buena Vista/Kinookimaw, Strasbourg, Kipling, Moose Jaw and Regina.

Age-Friendly communities seek to create vibrant communities for all, focusing on eight categories or domains: outdoor spaces & buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect & social inclusion, civic participation & employment, communication & information and community support & health services.

Linda Pratt, Chair of the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Committee of SSM (Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism), attended both events to bring greetings

from the provincial committee and commended both on their extensive work in the eight domains and encouraged them to ensure that Age-Friendly communication and efforts continue to include "all ages" rather than only focusing on seniors or older adults. An Age-Friendly Community is 'all ages friendly'.

We congratulate Moosomin and Shaunavon and express our appreciation to Minister Carr and the Government of Saskatchewan for attending each event in the local Age-Friendly Communities. SSM is grateful to have provincial recognition as a part of the Age-Friendly journey.

SSM provides support to communities seeking to become Age-Friendly. For information: www.agefriendlysk.ca or call Wendy Thienes, Age-Friendly Communities Staff at 306-294-7383.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS



Member Organizations at Community-Based Seniors Services

Our member organizations, along with other organizations, participated in “Strengthening Senior Services in Saskatchewan: An Ideas Exchange & Working Session” an event that SSM hosted in collaboration with HelpAge Canada. At our event Holly Schick and Randy Dove were part of the planning and Randy was the MC.




The event was part of the follow-up to a Community Based Seniors Services (CBSS) summit held in Ottawa in June 2024 that SSM executive director Holly Schick was involved in planning for and attending, sponsored by HelpAge Canada. HelpAge is a Canadian-based charity dedicated to supporting community organizations and the older people they serve. The CBSS sector is broadly defined as including all municipal and non-profit services that provide programming for older adults including recreation centres, community centres, multi-service agencies, seniors’ centres, and community coalitions. Holly is now part of the Canadian CBSS Interim Leadership Council (ILC), an interim advisory group created out of the summit.

HelpAge Canada with the support of the ILC is holding a series of regional consultations, both online and in community, to delve further into the



challenges, issues, opportunities and needs of the sector. The insights gained from these community consultations will be part of developing a framework for establishing a collective voice for CBSS organizations.

The Saskatchewan event was held twice – once in person and once online. Included on the agenda was a presentation by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) on the findings for Saskatchewan and Manitoba from their 2024 survey Perspectives on Growing Older in Canada. Participants engaged in two working sessions – the first focusing on building CBSS in Saskatchewan and the second on a Canadian CBSS sector. Discussion centered on the following:

Saskatchewan Perspectives

-  In your region, what are the top challenges and where are the opportunities?
-  What are some points of strength within the CBSS sector that can be scaled to support a strong, provincial CBSS sector?
-  In 3-5 years, what will the CBSS sector in Saskatchewan look like?

Canadian Perspectives

-  What needs to be done at the Canadian level to support the desired state of CBSS in Saskatchewan?
-  Thinking about a Canadian CBSS sector, what does success look like? How will we know we are making an impact?

The discussions were animated and creative and the comments fit in with SSM's advocacy work. The importance of being proactive and focusing on the social determinants of health and opportunities for initiatives that reduce the need for accessing health system care was identified. The CBSS sector needs to be actively involved in encouraging government to "focus on aging at home, rather than using long-term care as the main seniors' strategy. Advocacy can also be used to amplify seniors' voices and influence policy."

One of the strengths identified was Age-Friendly, "which has programming, infrastructure, data analysis, leadership, and a community-development model that can be broadened and used as a framework for scaling. Their community-development



model has been shown to work, helping with communicating resources, organizing people to shovel and mow, and connecting volunteers to perform small tasks."

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The **Saskatchewan Union Retirees Federation (SURF)**: is a provincial group representing retired public, private & trade union members; offers a united voice to lobby all levels of government on issues affecting retirees & seniors; is an affiliated supporter of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM); is a chartered affiliate of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC).



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The Honourable Lori Carr

*Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health*



Earlier this spring, our government announced Budget 2025-26, which continues our focus on ensuring Saskatchewan seniors have access to high-quality services. I will highlight a few that will be of particular interest.

I hear from many seniors that living in their own communities is important to them. In this year's provincial budget, we made a \$7.1 million funding increase to deliver enhanced home and facility-based continuing care services for residents of all ages, from seniors to children with complex medical needs. Our investment also supports full operation of 115 long-term care and convalescent beds located in Saskatoon to transition patients out of hospital into the most appropriate community setting.

We also know that many people living with diabetes, including seniors, have asked for help in managing the cost of their supplies. Beginning April 1, we invested \$23 million to expand full coverage for Continuous and Flash Glucose Monitors (Advanced Glucose Monitors) to seniors aged 65 and older and young adults aged 18 to 25. This monitor uses a sensor on the skin to send a glucose level reading to a smart phone or other electronic device to help diabetics track their glucose levels, minimizing the risk and frequency of potentially life-threatening low-blood sugar episodes.

This year's budget also offers several other measures to support seniors such as expanding the Personal Care Home Benefit as of April 1, 2025, so it bridges the gap between seniors' monthly income and \$3,500 per month. In addition, the Seniors Supplement is increasing by \$500 annually for four years.

We are also pleased to continue our partnership with the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism on the Age-Friendly Communities Recognition Program, which recognizes communities that create programs and activities to be more inclusive of seniors, helping them live safely, enjoy good health and stay involved. As a government, we are proud to participate by providing formal recognition of the great work done by communities across Saskatchewan. Since 2018, nine communities have been recognized, with Shaunavon and Moosomin receiving this honour earlier this spring.

Our government provides a range of additional services to assist seniors in their communities. Some of the services include free home-based nursing care, subsidized home care support, and reduced costs for publicly funded long-term care. Ambulance trips are capped at \$135, and prescription drugs listed on the Saskatchewan Formulary, or approved under Exception Drug Status, are limited to a maximum cost of \$25.

As Minister for Seniors, I am honoured to be a voice for older adults in our province and I welcome your ideas and concerns.

Please feel free to contact my office at:

Email: ministerrrhe@gov.sk.ca,

Phone: 306-798-9014 or

Send me a letter at:

Room 208,
Legislative Building,
2405 Legislative Drive,
Regina, SK, S4S 0B3.





Thrive at Home

Enhancing community-based care and supports for older adults

ABOUT THRIVE AT HOME

The population of seniors aged 65 years and older is projected to increase as much as 57% by 2043. As the fastest-growing segment of the population in Canada, it's more important than ever to ensure older adults have access to the supports they need for healthy aging.

That's why we're bringing together key partners from community, social, and health sectors to explore opportunities for better alignment, accelerated learning, and improvement in care.

Together, **Thrive at Home** aims to strengthen community-based care and supports for older adults so they can thrive wherever they call home.

ACTION COMMUNITY

When it comes to transforming our health and social care systems, change at this scale won't happen overnight – nor can it be done in isolation.

The work of Thrive at Home is guided by a diverse network called the **Action Community**.

This community is comprised of partners involved in supporting older adults, including those with lived experience, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, academia, and community-based organizations.

United, we're co-creating a future where everyone can grow older with dignity, choice, safety, and a true sense of belonging.

TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Since the launch of Thrive at Home, we've heard loud and clear the need for action.

Inspired by the energy behind this collective, the Action Community is coming together in focused working groups, called **Action Hubs**, to address challenges impacting older adults.

As a community, we've identified several opportunities for collective action, including:

- **Navigation** — navigating our health and social systems to promote health and well-being
- **Transportation** — getting from place to place safely for health, social, and business needs
- **Home supports** — accessing services and assistance that enable aging in place

Together, we're demonstrating the power of community-led collaboration, data-driven strategies, and scalable outcomes in delivering meaningful change for those who call Saskatchewan home.

COLLABORATE WITH US

If you're interested in learning more about how you can partner with us to improve the health and well-being of older adults, visit our website:

saskhealthquality.ca/thrive-at-home



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The National Association of Federal Retirees (Federal Retirees) is the largest national advocacy organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors.

With close to 170,000 members, including more than 60,000 veterans and their families, the Association has been advocating for improvements to the financial security, health and well-being of our members and all Canadians since 1963.

Federal Retirees is committed to building an Association that values diversity, equity, and inclusion by encouraging and supporting respect for the dignity, beliefs and values outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and all applicable provincial Human Rights Codes.

We believe every Canadian, today and in the future, should benefit from better retirement income security and a strong, sustainable health-care system.

Saskatchewan is the home of six branches in North Battleford, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Moose Jaw and Regina.

**For more information please
refer to: www.federalretirees.ca**



Social Prescribing: *Caregivers need a break to recharge*

As we move along in our everyday life doing the best we can to support other people in their everyday lives, we sometimes forget to take a time out for ourselves.

In our communities we have many individuals who spend their time not only working in the community but also volunteering in the community. This has always been good for a community to ensure that it continues to thrive, and people want to continue living amongst people who care.

However there comes a time when, for whatever reason we can't continue at the same pace, and people or things start to suffer. **We "Burn Out"**. It's not that individuals no longer want to support the things they enjoy doing or meet with people they have grown close too, it's a time when an individual has concerns of their own that they need to address but they still continue to do what they have always done, no matter the cost.

That cost may be to their own health, and if their own health suffers, then how can they continue to give 100% to the person who needs their help.

We all know of those individuals who have given 100% of themselves to help others even though the helper's health is failing, and they are no longer with us. We have to **allow** individuals (helpers) to take a break and **give permission** to helpers to take a break.

We have to remember to "Take a Break" from what has become, in many ways, what we have always done. It allows us time to recharge and come back to what we had been doing with a new and fresher view of what we have to do, to allow us to live our lives to the fullest.

Taking a break doesn't mean we no longer want to do things. Have you never been in the middle of writing a letter or doing a job at home or in the office and found yourself losing the track of what comes next? We usually take a break and come back later with a new sense of what we need to do to finish the task.

When we allow individuals or organizations in our communities to take a break from providing the service they provide, even for a short period of time, you will always find that there will somebody else who will pick up the slack in the short term. When we work together and collaborate and plan around taking breaks, everyone benefits in the community. By just doing these small things we can "Build Strength for the Future" in our communities, our programs and ourselves.

– Rod McKendrick,
Social Prescribing Coordinator, SSM



Social Prescribing
in Saskatchewan

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Build **STRENGTH** for the Future

We can all learn something from our feline friends. When you have explored and chased and observed intently you can always take a break – just flop down and relax in your own unique way.

Given the first 5 months of 2025 as well as the previous year, many people may feel that the pace and stress is just too much! Yet, they may also feel that it is their duty to just keep going – because their work and caring is needed, especially now. Whether as an individual or part of an organization, you may be aware that the coming months don't look like easy ones – your contributions may be even more necessary.

How to prepare? Take a break! Take a break for your health – so you can be healthy for others. Remember that this applies to individuals, groups and organizations.

Sometimes the most productive thing you can do is relax and recharge. If you get tired, learn to rest, not to quit. Hint: quitting is what you may have to do if you don't learn that it is OK to take a break from time to time. This summer think about vacations – very short or much longer. The most valuable thing we can do for the psyche, occasionally, is to let it rest, wander, live in the changing light, not try to be or do anything whatever.

This edition of Gray Matters has articles about taking breaks – Why, When, and many suggestions about How. We hope that the quotes sprinkled in these pages will also relax and inspire you – and your friends and colleagues.

– Linda Anderson, Communications & Ageism Awareness
(Special thanks to our feline models, Linda's cats!)

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”

– Anne Lamott



Staff summer reading suggestions

SSM staff thought about books they have read, or are reading now, and envisioned a day this summer when they could read for as long as they liked. Some of us get caught in a book and suddenly find it is 4 am. Some enjoy opening the day with a good read. Here are some of our favourites. Most can be obtained through the Saskatchewan Library System.



Beth

Home Away from Home

by Cynthia Lord

Sixties Girl

by MaryLou Driedger

Beth suggests two intergenerational books that would be good for older adults and kids aged 8 or 9 to 12 to read, then talk about (either in person or via Facetime or Zoom). Both books feature a kid spending time with a grandparent and learning more about the grandparent as well as themselves over the course of the story. Both feature grandparents who are active and well, although aging, which Beth appreciates. Both grandparent and grandchild benefit from their relationship with each other.

a dead body she discovers on her newly acquired property. It is the first in a series of books about Lane's adventures.

Peculiar Crimes Unit Series

by Christopher Fowler.

Arthur Bryant and John May are older adult detectives who head up London's Peculiar Crimes Unit. The unit's members and methods are as unusual as the crimes they investigate. Their thoughts and actions are delightfully unconventional, intriguing and sometimes illegal, but they get results. (Linda A is reading the first book, *The Water Room*, and Holly is reading *The Victoria Vanishes*.) Books can be read in any order.

in multiple murders separated by decades. Going to Beautiful brings us unexpected, under-represented characters in settings that immediately feel familiar and beloved. Beautiful is a place where what you need may not be what you were looking for.

The Women

by Kristin Hannah

This is a book I never would have picked up by choice. Thanks to the persuasion of my book club, I began reading the free chapters through Google Play Books – and guess what? I was hooked! I purchased the remaining chapters and loved it.

When her brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, Frankie McGrath joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path. *The Women* is the story of one woman gone to war, but it shines a light on all women who put themselves in harm's way and whose sacrifice and commitment to their country has too often been forgotten.



Holly

A Killer in King's Cove

by Iona Whishaw

This book introduces us to Lane Winslow, a former British WWII spy, who has moved to the Kootenays region of BC to start a new life. Lane is inquisitive, intelligent, and determined to solve the mystery of



Kerri-Lee

Going to Beautiful

by Anthony Bidulka

International Toronto chef Jake Hardy has it all. Until one day when a tragic accident tears it all apart. Struggling to recover, Hardy finds himself in a small Saskatchewan town. As the sun sets in the Land of Living Skies, Hardy and his glamorous, seventy-eight-year-old transgender neighbour find themselves ensnared

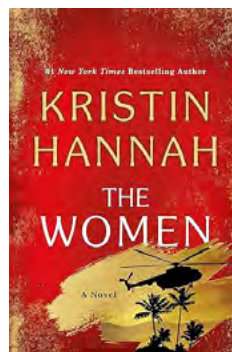
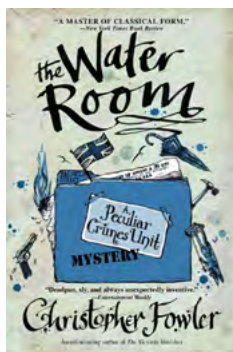


Linda A.

Maisie Dobbs Series (18 books)

by Jacqueline Winspear

The novels, set between 1929 and





1945, follow the adventures of private investigator and former World War I field nurse Maisie Dobbs, and examine the impacts of culture, class status and war. If you like Maisie, you might want to read more. It is important to read in order because each one follows Maisie's chronological story. The writing is exquisite and the characters human and complex.

Divided, edited by JoAnn Jaffe, Patricia Elliott and Cora Sellers

This book contains essays from many contributors about the history of politics in Saskatchewan "Populism, Polarization & Power in the New Saskatchewan". In *Divided*, diverse voices describe the impact on their lives and communities when simmering wedge issues burst open on social media and in public spaces. The collection dives deep into the long set-up to this moment, from the colonial past to the four decades of neoliberal economics that have widened social and economic gaps across all sectors. Having lived this history, I find the analysis and points of view intriguing.



Linda R.

The Stone Angel

by Margaret Laurence

A 90-year-old woman looking back on life as she considers the possibility of being placed in a nursing home. It goes through her memories, challenges and prideful experiences.

The Outlander

by Gil Adamson

A 19-year-old widow flees into the beautiful wilderness in Canada after killing her abusive husband and is chased by her vengeful brothers-in-law. It is a story of survival. The book has won several awards.



Red

Anam Cara: A book of Celtic Wisdom

by John O'Donohue

John O'Donohue is known as a poet, philosopher and scholar, who has a way of guiding you through the spiritual landscape of the Irish imagination. Anam Cara, which in Gaelic means soul friend, walks you through the ancient teachings, stories and themes of Celtic wisdom. It provides universal themes about friendship, solitude, love and death, to name just a few.

I found and still find this book to be very moving and a book that is a delight to read. There was so much to this book. It was an easy read that sometimes you don't want to put it down and other times you want to put it down and consider what you have just read. The Celtic element and the description of the great scenery and light of the west of Ireland allows the imagination to wander in a place that the author has described. I can see myself reading this book many times and, in some cases, just picking out the sections that mean the most at the time, especially the "Friendship Blessing".



Sybil

The Truths We Hold: An American Journey

by Kamala Harris

It is about Kamala's life story. She draws on the hard-won wisdom and insight from her own career and the work of those who have inspired her. She communicates a vision of shared struggle, shared purpose and shared values as we confront the great work of our day. Provides insights into the influences of her life – most of all her mother, a breast cancer researcher.

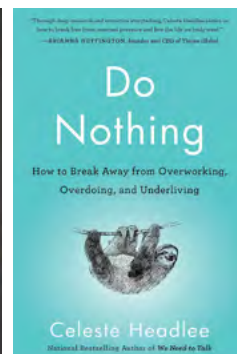
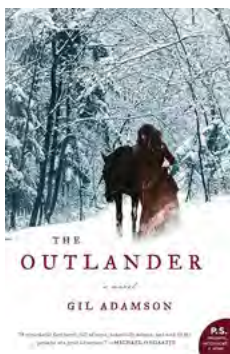
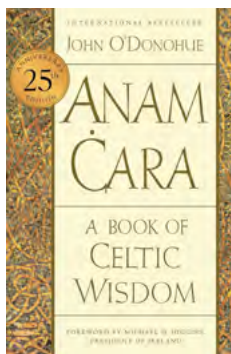
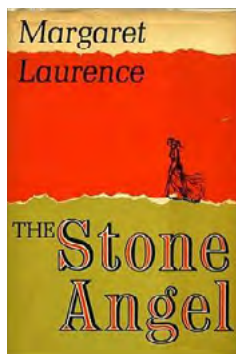
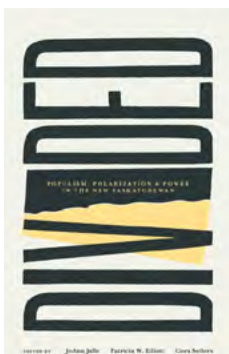


Wendy

Do Nothing: How to Break Away from Overworking, Overdoing, and Underliving

by Celeste Headlee

The author is asking us to re-examine our 'efficiency culture'. "Despite our constant search for new ways to "hack" our bodies and minds for peak performance, human beings are working more instead of less, living harder not smarter, and becoming lonelier and more anxious. We strive for the absolute best in every aspect of our lives, ignoring what we do well naturally and reaching for a bar that keeps rising higher and higher. Why do we measure our time in terms of efficiency instead of meaning? Why can't we just take a break?"



Saskatchewan Getaways

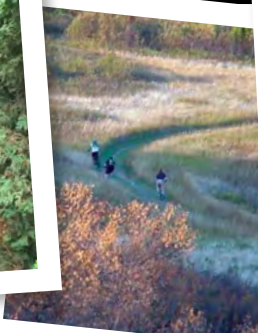
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4



5

Special options for a getaway – most are close to cities yet provide escape for a break. PLUS, a night option for an extraordinary trip.

1. Saskatchewan's two Dark Sky Preserves

- **Grasslands National Park** is one of Canada's largest and darkest and an astrophotographer's dream.
- **Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park** is home to the Dark Sky Observatory and hosts an annual star party.
- Come and see for yourself why Saskatchewan is known as the Land of Living Skies.

2. Boffins Public Gardens

- at U of S property
- lots of seating to enjoy views and listen to nature.

3. Wascana Valley Nature Recreation Site

- a half-hour drive northwest of Regina.
- It features beautiful trails and is known for its peaceful ambiance.

4. Sturgeon Lake Regional Park

- near Prince Albert
- similar natural beauty, less crowded than Waskesiu.

5. Wakamow Valley

- just outside of Moose Jaw
- 20 km of trails and silence, augmented with songs of 190 bird species.

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✉ activity@diamondhouse.ca



2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month
10 a.m.-12 p.m.

The Glen at Crossmount
10 Crossmount Road
Crossmount, SK S7T 0X6
☎ 306-374-9893

✉ wellness@crossmount.ca

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- Enhanced overall quality of life
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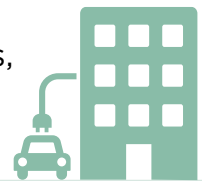
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➤ saskatoon.ca/EV

Living in a **multi-unit building**?
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 **City of
Saskatoon**



We are grateful to Terri for agreeing to share her story of how it is difficult to bloom when life's struggles are overwhelming. It was wonderful to meet her in Shaunavon and to hear how and why she once again can bloom.

"I felt drained physically, mentally, socially and emotionally after COVID, eight years of caregiving and my husband's death. So, I went searching for something to make me feel better and give my life meaning again. After 4 years, I ended up back in my hometown where a nurse practitioner helped me discover allergies were the cause of my physical exhaustion. Reconnecting with people I knew growing up and meeting new ones helped relieve my social exhaustion. Having my sister living close by and the support of people in my apartment building, as well as the community as a whole have eased my emotional exhaustion. I was reminded that I am not facing life alone and it's okay to ask for help.

I was feeling so much better I became a board member of Age-Friendly Shaunavon, not realizing that within 4 months we would be left scrambling to keep the organization afloat after the sudden death of our Co-ordinator. Since I had previous experience with grants, running programs, working with volunteers and a board, I agreed to try to lead us through the restructuring process. The community and board have thanked me for helping them out, but I feel I



Terri Hetterly, Age 76



have gained more than I have given. The mental stimulation and social interaction on a daily basis, along with the improvement in my physical health has given me back my life.

I still have a way to go. But I know things will continue improving for me now that I again have a purpose, a social network, mental stimulation and a supportive health practitioner. I am looking forward to what lies ahead for me instead of just subsisting. It can sometimes feel like a daunting task to climb back up after life knocks us down, but I have experienced that it is worth the effort!"

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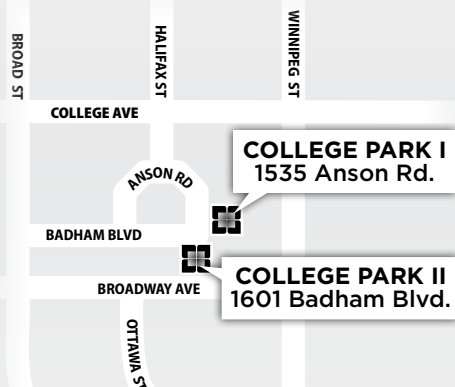
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PROUDLY CANADIAN



Ask Auntie Ageism



Dear Auntie,

I am the treasurer for a software development business in a medium-sized Saskatchewan city. I am now part of the Search Committee for a new Marketing Director, who will be expected to grow our clientele and provide leadership as part of the Executive Staff team. I have been part of the business since its inception 8 years ago. I am 59 years old and enjoy the atmosphere and the creative staff who are committed to the business.

When the Search Committee met this week to review and short-list the candidates, I was surprised to feel uncomfortable as we talked about who we might choose. There were several applications from young people (20's & 30's) who had formal education in this field. One application stood out for me. It was from a man aged 64 who had worked in communications and marketing for over 30 years. He took "early retirement" from a large organization and discovered he missed the work world. When we compared our rankings of the applicants to decide on the shortlist, I was disappointed that I was the only one who was enthusiastic about the older experienced man. Two were quite negative based entirely on his age. They said things like: "He can't be depended upon – he retired once already. He probably will only want to work part time and to work from home. He won't want to try new ideas." I couldn't persuade the others to add him to our interview list. I think the decision shows how ageism can lead to unwise and unfair decisions.

Wilbur

(for privacy reasons, not my real name)

Dear 'Wilbur',

Of course, I can't comment on the wisdom of the Search Committee's choices, but I hope that your firm will find a good person to be the Marketing Director.

However, the reasons for not including the older man on the shortlist are blatantly and stereotypically ageist. I am astounded by how easy it seems to make judgements and exclude people. This definition of ageism describes how it works within individuals and in organizations: Ageism refers to the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age.

On the other hand, here is an encouraging example from Atlassian, a very successful Australian-based proprietary software company that specializes in collaboration tools designed primarily for software development and project management. An article on Atlassian's website offers these ideas:

Age is often overlooked as an element of diversity, but research shows that teams with generational differences in the workplace are more productive.

Multigenerational colleagues work better together when they understand what each generation is like and why. (Just watch out for falling into the trap of stereotypes and ageism.)

Reaping the full benefits of diversity requires not just hiring people but also building a culture that encourages learning from each person's unique perspectives and experiences.

<https://www.atlassian.com/blog/teamwork/the-irony-of-ageism-insulting-our-future-selves>
(QR code below)

Perhaps you can subtly raise awareness about ageism and how to avoid its negative effects by offering information, asking questions and making suggestions when appropriate.

Good luck – Auntie knows that change can take a long time!

— Auntie Ageism



Auntie Ageism highlights how anti-ageism critiques and challenges the ageist attitudes that are prevalent but often unrecognised in our society. Let's ALL do our part to challenge ageism.

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* See clinic for full details.

EMBRACE THE SUMMER:

5 ways to stay active and thrive

This article is from a June 19, 2023 blog post from McMaster University

Summer is a season that beckons us to step out, soak up the sunshine, and embrace the great outdoors. For older adults, maintaining an active lifestyle during this time is not only enjoyable but also essential for physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Engaging in regular physical activity can maintain independence, improve overall health, and enhance quality of life. Here are five ways to stay active this summer and embrace the season to the fullest.

1. Take a walk each day

Walking is a simple yet highly effective form of exercise that people of all ages can enjoy. It requires no special equipment, can be done at a comfortable pace, and offers numerous health benefits. It's a great opportunity to explore local neighborhoods, parks, or nearby trails during the cooler parts of the day. Walking not only improves cardiovascular health and strengthens muscles but also provides an opportunity to connect with nature and enjoy the beauty of summer.

2. Try a water-based activity

Water-based activities are a perfect way for older adults to stay active and beat the summer heat. Swimming, water aerobics, or even walking in a pool are excellent low-impact exercises that put minimal stress on joints. These activities enhance flexibility, cardiovascular health, and muscle strength while offering a refreshing and enjoyable experience. Many community centers and local pools offer aquatic classes, making it easier to join like-minded individuals and even make new friends.

3. Spend time in the garden

Gardening is a wonderful way for older adults to stay active and connect with nature. It offers a range of physical movements, including bending, stretching, and lifting, that can help improve strength, flexibility, and balance. Seniors can start by planting flowers, herbs, or vegetables in their backyard or even in pots



on a balcony or windowsill. There are also community gardens for those who do not have access to one of their own. Gardening not only provides physical benefits but also promotes mental relaxation and a sense of accomplishment as they witness their plants bloom and flourish.

4. Explore a new fitness class

Many fitness centers and community organizations offer specialized fitness classes designed for older adults. These classes often focus on activities such as yoga, tai chi, or gentle aerobics, which promote flexibility, balance, and overall strength. Attending these classes provides a structured environment, expert guidance, and the opportunity to socialize with peers with similar interests and goals. Prefer to try something new from the comfort of your home? Online fitness resources provide a convenient way for seniors to engage in virtual classes.

5. Participate in a group activity

This could include group walks or hikes, outdoor picnics, or even outdoor games like bocce ball or croquet. By engaging in these activities, older adults can enjoy the benefits of physical exercise while building and nurturing social connections. Being part of a community and sharing experiences with others is an important aspect of healthy aging.

Summer is a season of vibrancy and vitality, and older adults have many opportunities to stay active and thrive during this time. By taking daily walks, engaging in water activities, exploring gardening, attending senior-friendly fitness classes, and organizing outdoor group activities, older adults can embrace the season while reaping the physical, mental, and social benefits of an active lifestyle. It's never too late to start, so get ready to seize the summer and make the most of each beautiful day.

For many actively aging adults in Saskatchewan, your days can often be filled with change, challenge and responsibility — from navigating health concerns to supporting family members, volunteering in the community, or simply trying to stay connected in a fast-moving world.

If you've found yourself feeling tired, mentally drained, or stretched thin, you're not alone. And here's something important to remember: it's okay to take a break. In fact, it's one of the most powerful things you can do for your health, your peace of mind and the people who depend on you.

REST ISN'T "DOING NOTHING" — IT'S DOING SOMETHING IMPORTANT

Taking a break doesn't mean you're giving up or slowing down for good. It means you're choosing to protect your health so you can stay strong — physically, mentally and emotionally.

Rest helps lower blood pressure, improves sleep, supports mental wellness and boosts resilience.



WHAT DOES A BREAK LOOK LIKE?

Breaks can take many forms and don't have to be big or expensive. Think about what helps you feel calm, refreshed, or reconnected.

That might be:

- A quiet walk through your neighbourhood or garden.
- Sitting with a good book or favourite music.
- Taking an afternoon nap without guilt.
- Saying "no" to something that feels like too much right now.
- Turning off the news and enjoying nature.
- Spending time with a grandchild — just to play, not to solve problems.

Even five or ten minutes of quiet can help reset your day.

FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR OTHERS

Many older adults are still active caregivers — for partners, adult children, grandchildren, or others in your community. **If this is you, please know that you deserve rest, too.**

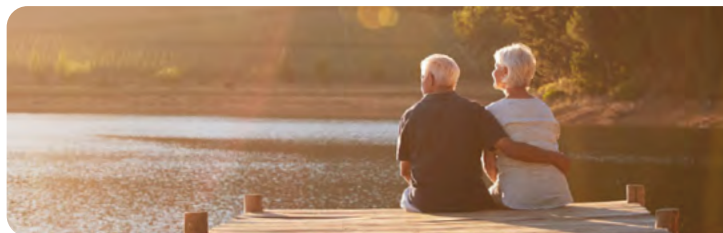
Caring for others requires energy and patience, and those things are harder to give if you're running on empty. Taking a break is not selfish — it's smart, loving, and necessary. It helps ensure that you can keep showing up for the people you care about with the strength and compassion they deserve.

LOOKING AHEAD WITH STRENGTH

The more we look after ourselves now, the more prepared we'll be to face what comes next.

So take that break, protect your time, rest your body and calm your mind.

You've earned it!



Stay tuned throughout 2025 as we feature different areas of Health Literacy.

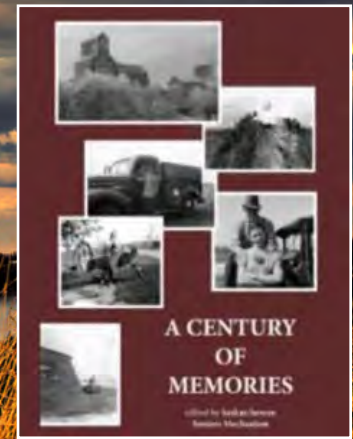
We hope to come along with you as you build your personal Health Literacy toolkit this year.

You can also visit us at www.sk.bluecross.ca/healthysk to learn more.



Century Club Corner

Memories of another time



Remember the joy of school being out for the year? The summer stretched ahead, and although there would be plenty of work for every member of the family, especially if on the farm, there were still many times when it was possible to take a well-deserved break. Perhaps there would be a sports day in town, with ball games and sandwiches and pie. Perhaps everyone would go into town for the Dominion Day parade and picnic. Perhaps the family would take an afternoon drive to the lake, and children would shiver their way into the water, ready to show what great swimmers they were. Perhaps there was fishing down at the creek, or berry picking along the creek's banks. These times of respite were – and are – so restorative. Here are some memories of such times, gleaned from the SSM publication, *A Century of Memories*. Imagine you're back in your childhood, school is out, and it's time for a break.

Jeanne Miller recalled, "Every summer we left the city and the classes at the Saskatoon Technical School, to spend the summer at our shack tent at Waskesiu.

One Canada Day a magical, never-to-be-forgotten happening took place at the boat landing at the lake. We had walked down to the dock and saw a big canoe sliding to shore out of the dusky shadows near the water's edge. We were thrilled to recognize 'Grey Owl' and Anaharo coming in from Lake Ajawaan to celebrate the holiday with us. At that time he was a man of mystery. They lived with the beavers in their cabin at Lake Ajawaan and many notable people portaged across the lake to visit them.

They disembarked and mingled with the people on the dock and then we all walked to the nearby hotel to party under the stars.

Truly a very special experience – a never-to-be-forgotten Dominion Day of years gone by."

Agnes Cyr remembered, "Oh, and we picked saskatoons. Buckets of them. Our coulee was loaded with saskatoons. Usually we dried them in the milk house and stored them for winter. You could put them through the chopper and boil them to make juice. And chokecherries – they were good to mash and strain, then put into sealers for syrup."

Nellie Groff recalled a time when the berry-picking didn't turn out quite as expected: "John and I went picking cranberries at the river by Springside, Saskatchewan. It was full of scrub and trees. We got our pails full and went to go home. I got my leg hung up in a fallen tree and fell down. I yelled to John, "I think I broke my leg!" He yelled back, "Did you spill the berries?"

Whatever YOU do this summer, I hope it provides you with some good times that will become good memories, perhaps a taste of fresh berries, and some humour to go along with it all.

You may join the Century Club by calling:

Toll free 1-888-823-2211 or 306-359-9956 (Regina) or send a note to: SSM (112-2001 Cornwall St. Regina, SK S4P 3X9). If you live in Saskatoon, please call Saskatoon Council on Aging (306-652-2255) to register.



Program Relaunch Announcement: Expanding Seniors' Community Connections



Connected Canadians

Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. (SSAI) is excited to announce that, **due to the success of last year's program**, we have once again received funding from the Government of Canada's **New Horizons for Seniors Program** to continue our impactful initiative: **Expanding Seniors' Community Connections**. This program supports initiatives that are led or inspired by seniors who are making a difference in the lives of others in their communities.

The renewed grant will enable SSAI to provide **free virtual technology support sessions, volunteer training, and 12 Digital Literacy Workshops via Zoom**. This program is especially important for supporting seniors living in rural or remote areas in Saskatchewan by promoting digital literacy skills using technology to connect to a broader community.

SSAI has partnered once again with **Connected Canadians**, a National Digital Inclusion Charity that provides free technology support and training to older adults across Canada. Whether it's learning how to use a new device, understanding online safety, or simply staying connected with loved ones, Connected Canadians' technology mentors provide patient and personalized support free of charge.

We thank the **Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program** for their continued support in helping SSAI expand meaningful digital inclusion for older adults across Saskatchewan.

Workshop Registration Link to Form:

https://bit.ly/SSAI_CC_Workshops

Connected Canadians Technology Support:

Toll-free: 1(877) 304-5813

Email: info@connectedcanadians.ca



Funded by the
Government of Canada's
New Horizons for Seniors Program

Canada 

Digital Literacy Workshops will be Thursdays in October, November, and February at 1pm
Register by phoning Toll-free 1-877-304-5813 or by emailing: info@connectedcanadians.ca or by completing the online registration form: https://bit.ly/SSAI_CC_Workshops

- **October 9 at 1pm: Introduction to Zoom**
- **October 16 at 1pm: Digital Documents**
- **October 23 at 1pm: Safe Digital Communications**
- **October 30 at 1pm: Phishing Scams & Internet Safety**

SSAI Walkathon Information for 2025

Our provincial walkathon has ended for 2025. The provincial totals were 47,485.90 kms walked, 23 clubs participated, and 304 members walked in 2025. The first-place finishers are as follows: Highest Average Kms per Walker was Asquith with 283.42 kms, Highest Average Kms per Club Member was Shellbrook with 143.47 Kms, and Highest Percentage of Club Members walked was Shellbrook with 100% participation from their club members. Well done, Shellbrook. You should be proud of your group! Congratulations to Lynn Elder of Asquith who walked 801.6 kms. And Carole Augureau of Ogema who walked 797 kms. Well done!! We had several walkers that logged over 500 kms. Special mention to Wendy Broadfoot of Allan New Horizons who walked 586.42 kms; Meada Wilson, Big River Seniors who walked 550 kms; William Vanderbuhs, Englefeld Good Neighbors who walked 525 kms., Linda Lundy, Shellbrook Seniors who walked 546 kms. Well done, Wendy, Meada, William and Linda! Also, a special honorable mention to John Leonard of Ogema. This gentleman is 91 years old and walked 216 kms. An inspiration to us all. Congratulations John!! Congratulations to all the clubs that participated this year and all of the walkers for doing such a great job. You should all be very proud of your accomplishments. Thank you for allowing me to be part of the walkathon over the past 8 years. I'm sure your new coordinator will do a wonderful job. Have a fabulous summer and be sure to keep tripping the light fantastic or dance to the beat of your own drum!!

– Joan Boyer, SSAI Walkathon Coordinator

email - j.boyer@sasktel.net phone - 306-980-8151

mail - St. Joseph Seniors Club, PO Box 248, St. Louis, SK.S0J 2C0

Vanscoy Senior Citizen Club – Active for 50 Years!

We celebrated with a complimentary supper of beef stew, chili, buns, and biscuits followed by a 50th Anniversary cake, ice cream, and strawberries. There were 24 members in attendance. The AGM followed the meal. Special thanks came from the Country Quilters and the Wednesday afternoon ladies card group for having the centre available for them to use and to encourage other members to use the facility. The group will host a quarterly potluck supper on the last Thursday of Feb, May, August, and November for members to celebrate birthdays.

Rosthern Senior Citizens Club celebrates members aged 90+

Darryl Callfas presented to Linda Bartel and Evelyn Knippel honorary life memberships after reaching 90 years of age. Darlene Berman also received an honorary life membership.



Watrous Seniors Recreation Club

“Make it, Bake it, Grow it” was a popular destination on Saturday, May 17th as the Watrous Seniors Recreation Club hosted their first craft and bake sale. The Seniors bake tables were sold out mid afternoon, and vendors were happy with the sales they were able to generate. Thrift on Main was a popular draw next door, as the thrift store drew large numbers of bargain hunters to its location, and many of those shoppers dropped in to check out the action next door. The winner of the door prize, a collection of items donated by the vendors, was won by Sherwin Petersen of Manitou Beach, a Seniors Club member. The other draw was won by Coralee Pankratz. The Watrous Seniors Club would like to thank the customers, the vendors and Club members for a very successful day. Our next event will be the Dessert and Beverage event in conjunction with the Watrous Fun Run car show on July 26th. Our next “Make it, Bake it, Grow it” event is scheduled for September 27th. For more information contact Earle at 306-946-7711 or Betty at 306-946-2400.

SUMMER LITERARY CHALLENGE

A short story is a work of prose fiction that can be read in one sitting—usually between 20 minutes to an hour. While the average short story is 1,000 to 7,500 words, a piece of fiction shorter than 1,000 words is considered a “SHORT SHORT STORY” or “FLASH FICTION.” Anything less than 300 words is called “MICROFICTION.”

Our summer literary challenge is to write a “short, short story” or a “microfiction.” The deadline for SSAI to receive these stories is August 29, 2025. Email them to Shannon at info@saskseniors.com.

Short stories come in all kinds of categories: action, adventure, biography, comedy, crime, detective, drama, dystopia, fable, fantasy, history, horror, mystery, philosophy, politics, romance, satire, science fiction, supernatural, thriller, tragedy, and Western. Here are some popular types of short stories, literary styles, and authors associated with them:

- **Fable:** A tale that provides a moral lesson, often using animals, mythical creatures, forces of nature, or inanimate objects to come to life (Brothers Grimm, Aesop)
- **Flash fiction:** A story between less than 1,000 words that lacks traditional plot structure or character development and is often characterized by a surprise or twist of fate (Lydia Davis)
- **Mini saga:** A type of micro-fiction using exactly 50 words (!) to tell a story
- **Vignette:** A descriptive scene or defining moment that does not contain a complete plot or narrative but reveals an important detail about a character or idea (Sandra Cisneros)
- **Modernism:** Experimenting with narrative form, style, and chronology (inner monologues, stream of consciousness) to capture the experience of an individual (James Joyce, Virginia Woolf)
- **Postmodernism:** Using fragmentation, paradox, or unreliable narrators to explore the relationship between the author, reader, and text (Donald Barthelme, Jorge Luis Borges)
- **Magical realism:** Combining realistic narrative or setting with elements of surrealism, dreams, or fantasy (Gabriel García Márquez)
- **Minimalism:** Writing characterized by brevity, straightforward language, and a lack of plot resolutions (Raymond Carver, Amy Hempel)

SSAI AGM/Convention – View Presentations Online

Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. hosted its annual convention on June 11-12, 2025, at the Travelodge, Saskatoon. Aspen Films recorded the presentations, and these are available to watch online linked from our website: saskseniors.com. We had a full schedule of sessions including:

- About SSAI; Reports, Resolutions, Elections
- Announcements from National Pensioners Federation and Connected Canadians
- Interactive Session: Club Programming Ideas and Techniques – facilitated by Erin Crisfield
- Downsizing – Home Free organizing solutions – Natasha Solvason
- Forever...in *motion* – Kimberly Willison
- Mental Health Association – Brenda Beaudry
- All Ways of Caring Homecare services – Jesse Albanez
- Interactive Session: Club Management Tips and Strategies – facilitated by Erin Crisfield
- Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan – Erica Zarazun
- Saskatchewan Seniors Fitness Association (SSFA) – Al Gabert

Thanks to our convention sponsors:



Thanks to everyone who donated to the silent auction including:



SSAI RAFFLE TICKETS

SSAI raffle fundraiser (Licence #SR24-1239) – winners were drawn at convention in Saskatoon on June 12th, 2025. Winners have been contacted. Visit our website to view the list of winners! Thanks to everyone who purchased tickets for supporting Sask Seniors and rural seniors clubs!



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE - \$5/person

SSAI Membership fees can be mailed to:
Shannon Wright, Secretary/Treasurer, Box 455 Vanscoy, SK S0L 3J0
Phone: 306-493-3023 email: info@saskseniors.com
Website: saskseniors.com

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