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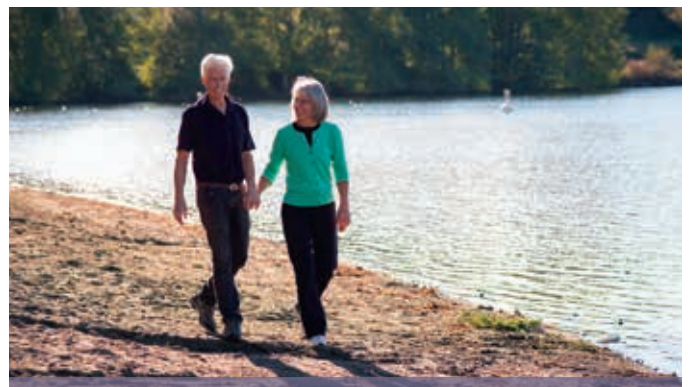


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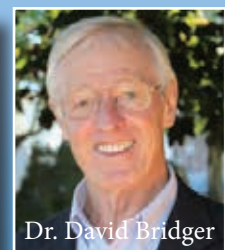
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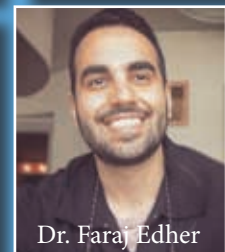
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Cover SASS JORDAN
Canadian rocker and celebrity
judge on Canadian Idol, Sass
Jordan is donning another new
hat these days – as vintner.

Photo: Artist Supplied



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Family, friends, good music
and wine – these are
the themes that resonate
with Sass Jordan.
Photos: Artist supplied

SASS JORDAN: NO LABELS

by JOHN KELLY

"Labels, they belong on pigeonholes. No one is just one thing. No one needs to remain what they have been."

– Jamaal Stints

Pull no punches. Timing is everything. Live each day as though it were your last. Tired clichés or rules to live by? For Canadian rocker Sass Jordan, it's the latter, so maybe they're not so tired – or cliché – after all.

You know her as Canada's Rock Queen with chart-topping hits and TV personality with numerous credits, including a half decade as a judge on *Canadian Idol*. Well, she's more than just the sum of her roles. And true to her conviction about sucking the marrow out of life, Sass understands it begins with an appreciation for one's self, deep inside.

"If you are solid and strong enough in yourself and enjoy your own company, that's when you attract the type of people you should be with. At the end of the day, you're the one you're going to be with for the rest of your life until death do you part."

While music will always be her passion, Sass has immersed herself in another gig these days – as vintner. How does a successful recording artist become a wine-maker? Easy. Like any astute, creative looking for a change, she simply switches labels.

Sass is aware of the attention her celebrity will bring to the wine, "but then it's up to the wine, the taste. It's got to be good enough, so people enjoy it. But that's the thing... my plan is not a huge worldwide domination thing. It's the same with my music, which is that I'm making it for my friends and fans and my extended family. That's really who it's for," she says.

Few things in life are ever really accomplished single-handedly. Or single-footedly, as Neil Armstrong would say. Brian Schmidt of Vineland Estates Winery and long-time friend to Sass is a huge part of the journey whose final dual destination is the signature series Kick Ass Sass White and Kick Ass Sass Red.

"He's my wonderful partner in all of this and the guy that made it possible. He's a brilliant winemaker."

While Brian is the expert, Sass involves herself in every aspect of the product, from grape selection to label design. The results speak for themselves and are available through the Vineland Estates Winery website.

Vineland Estates Winery is a one-stop shop located in Ontario's beautiful Niagara region, just a stone's throw (if you've got a really good arm) from the south-

ern shore of Lake Ontario. Buy a bottle, take a tour, or spend a weekend in accommodations adjacent to the estate vineyards. You could even tie the knot there. Nuptial toasting is not a problem.

It would be easy for a growingly skeptical public to look upon the venture with a sideways glance. There seems an ever-increasing glut of celebrities hawking this alcohol or that with their names on it, from Dan Aykroyd and George Clooney to Ryan Reynolds and Conor McGregor. But Sass felt an authenticity in the undertaking and viewed it as an opportunity for a woman to associate herself with something other than the stereotypically feminine – fashion, fragrance, and all the other Fs.

"Wine, to me, is not a huge stretch from music. They go hand in hand. Music goes fabulously with wine. It almost goes better than with food," she laughs.

In a marketplace that continues to be inundated with more and more products and services, Sass is philosophical about her place and the place of her wares, whether they're imbibed or listened to.

"There are billions of people. So, I see the product, be it music or wine or plumbing parts, attracting to itself the people meant to be attracted to it. Like attracts like."

The project was never conceived of as a huge money-making scheme, never a plan hatched to corner the market on Ontario wines. Sass sees it as an opportunity to give another part of herself and her experience to people, just as she has done and continues to do with music. She is also cognisant of the place alcohol has in our culture, and our perceptions of it, both good and bad.

"Wine lowers people's inhibitions. I want to be clear; I'm talking about when it's used responsibly with friends and family and food and music. All these things are attached to wine. That's why, for me, making wine is not a stretch."

Immersion in the world of all things wine was a new education for Sass and going to school was fun. There's no diploma. No mortarboard. But Sass has bestowed upon herself a new designation.

"I'm a booze maven," she jokes.

Sass credits timing and the introduction of Brian into her life as the catalysts to undertake the new venture. That would make him the yeast to her grape juice. And the rest, as they say, is fermentation.

"If I had woken up 10 years ago with this idea the way I did a year and a half ago, I would not have had the where-withal. I would not have had the opportunity, and it would not have happened," muses Sass.

She sees alcohol as medicinal. Who hasn't self-prescribed a hair of the dog on occasion? Whether antiseptic or anesthetic or simply to take the edge off after a long day of pyramid building, alcohol has a storied past and a special place in human history. What other food or drink do you know with an entire built-in cabinet or fridge dedicated to it?

"Wine is a medicine as are all alcohols when they are used responsibly. It's one of the most ancient elixirs. People used to drink the wine because the water was so poisonous," she says.

Sass's tenure with *Canadian Idol* reignited the musical fire in her, and more music is on the way. But first, back

to timing, to rhythm for a beat.

"...it is rhythm that makes a great singer, just like it is rhythm makes a great guitar player or a great bass player or a great drummer. It is astounding how underrecognized that is. It is all about rhythm, freezing rhythm and timing. Obviously pitch and the ability to turn a phrase, that matters too, but it is rhythm."

Sass sees the rhythm of life and the rhythms in life. There is coincidence and there is cause and effect. She's not above raising a glass to those mysterious intersections of time and place either. Probably a Kick Ass Sass, white or red.

Making anything never comes without its hurdles. Whether pressing grapes or vinyl, there are so many moving parts that getting the machine to start moving can be the greatest challenge.

"I have an album I'm working on right now called *Big Noise*," she explains. "I have so many people that I'm working with, getting everyone's schedule to line up and be on the same page can be very frustrating."

Musically, Sass has big boots to fill, even if they are her own. *Racine*, her breakthrough and landmark album of '92 left quite a footprint. Just as she likes to get her feet wet and her hands dirty making wine, Sass brings the same worker-like aesthetic to the studio. In an era when it seems to take at least a half dozen people to write a song, and when so many artists do nothing but sing someone else's words, someone else's melody, Sass's approach is refreshing, an aural palate cleanser. She has a writer credit on every track.

Sass spends most of her time away from the big cities that once ignited the fire that forges her records. She recharges away from the man-made and finds fuel in serenity; that way there's lots of yin when she needs to produce some yang.

"You need peace in order to make noise," she says.

Sass is philosophical about where her

music will land, into whose hands and ears it will fall, stoic (in a head-banging kind of way) that it will find the place intended for it.

"Music is a packed landscape. Even if we were making plumbing parts, we'd have the same problem, only it would be even less glamorous," she says.

There's that plumbing reference again. In case you were wondering, it isn't a slight against any particular occupation. In fact, despite exposure to some of the "finer" things in life, Sass lumps princes and paupers together and sees through the uniforms we all wear. She is, herself, unadorned when talking about the music she makes or the wine. She is the real deal. What you see is what you get. Ya, I know.

"They're exactly the same thing, promoting an album or this wine. You're talking about this or that, but you're always getting me."

This is the essence of a genuine artist. The art they make – for your ears or your eyes or your taste buds – is an authentic embodiment of their spirit. It is unique to the creator. The music Sass records, the wine she produces are extensions of herself and her creative drive.

And she is unapologetic about her outlook on and approach to life. It's a gumbo of friends, family and music next to a bottle of good wine. It's a carefree f-bomb in a casual conversation that speaks to her rock 'n' roll joie de vivre. It's an effortless dedication to passions worthy of her devotion.

"You just have to keep doing what you do. I'm doing this because it's fun. And that is my mandate in life – to have fun."

I'd say Sass Jordan is like a fine wine getting better with age, but that's just too cliché.

The process of making wine is a great metaphor for life. Harvesting, crushing, pressing, fermentation, clarification, aging and bottling. The secret to a successful life lies in helping others and making your mark. Don't go without giving off a bouquet, being dry and sweet. Have an aftertaste. Be full-bodied. And leave a mark. |

Snapshot

with Sass Jordan

What advice would you give to your 20-year-old self?

"The advice would be... I think it's hilarious... Don't let yourself get distracted by relationships, you know, dudes. Don't get distracted by guys."

Who has influenced you the most? Why?

"In life, it's parents. And, of course, it expands and expands from there. Musically, there's no one single artist. There's a list as long as both our arms stuck together."

What are you most grateful for?

"Life!"

What does success mean to you?

"It means feeling like I am inspiring and uplifting other people... being financially independent and being surrounded by people who enjoy life. People first, then money." |





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NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY PICTURE

by KATE ROBERTSON

I'm perched on a rock as my guide, Amanda Neiman, tends to my second blistered toe in as many days. These hiking shoes are well worn, and I've never had blisters wearing them before, but here at the Grand Canyon, I've come to expect the unexpected.

We've just finished an amazing deli-style lunch that Neiman and her co-guide, Jeff Zeldin, unflinchingly packed along the eight-kilometre Widforss Point Trail, a hike that traces a portion of the North Rim of the canyon. Well fed, everyone is struck silent, mesmerized by the natural lightshow of rusty reds, dusty pinks and purples, and golds and browns dancing on the surrounding cliffs, towers and gorges – leaving little wonder as to why this is one of the most photographed landscapes in the world.

Most of the other six in my hiking group with Arizona Outback Adventures (AOA) had already seen the Grand Canyon, but from the South Rim, where the majority of the park's six million plus yearly visitors go. Due to its greater difficulty to get to, the North Rim receives one-tenth of the visitors.

The North Rim is strikingly different from the South. Its tributary canyons are more deeply cut because it lies on the uplifted Kaibab Plateau, higher in elevation than the South by over 300 metres. The effects of this are heavy snowfall in the winter and cooler temperatures.

The South Rim also has significant commercial development, whereas on the North, the only accommodation other than a campground is the rustic North Rim Lodge.

On the group ride from Scottsdale, we had already

compared our reasons for signing up for this adventure. For one, it marks a 40th birthday celebration, for others it's a forever-bucket-list item – we each want to be part of the one per cent of park-goers who descend into the Grand Canyon's heart. For me, there's more: to prove to myself that I'm not too old for this type of epic adventure.

The Canyon lets us know who's boss as soon as we arrived at the campground to find an eight-centimetre blanket of fresh snow – despite the fact that it's May 24. But that's just the beginning. Due to a water pipeline break, the campground is on level 2 water rations, making warm showers inaccessible. By the end of Day Two, we watch the park's service truck haul in bright blue port-a-potties – no more flush toilets in bathrooms with electricity and running water.

The night-time temperature drops below zero and to help combat the cold, each of us is sent off to our frosty sleeping bags with a Nalgene water bottle filled with boiling water (which, incredibly, stays warm until almost dawn). Obviously, the Grand Canyon has heard my wish for "epic" and decided to comply with intensity.

ABOVE | Hiking through the Redwall Limestone layer in the Grand Canyon.

RIGHT | Hikers hike their feet up and soak in the view from the patio at North Rim Lodge.

TOC PAGE | The view from Widforss Viewpoint. Photos: Kate Robertson

The sun shines brightly the first morning, and our snowy site is turned into a soupy mess. You'd think trying to sleep with snow crunching beneath our air mattresses and sub-zero temperatures would have dampened our spirits, but there's a joyful camaraderie in the air.

A couple of my co-hikers have woken up with headaches and nausea, the first reminder that most of us aren't used to hanging out at an altitude of 2,500 metres above sea level. I feel okay and think perhaps, because I live in the mountains, I might come out unscathed.

Today is our big descent into the Canyon on the North Kaibab Trail, and I'm raring to start. Each step down through the rocky columns and precarious cliff faces takes us thousands of years back in geological time. Like cutting into a multi-layered marble cake, the distinctive polychromatic slabs are laid bare: greyish Kaibab limestone, yellow-ish Toroweap, creamy Coconino, rusty-red layers of Hermit shale and Redwall formations – all the way down to the Vishnu schist, a layer close to two billion years old and nearly half the age of the planet.

The vegetation varies, as well, and hairpin switchbacks wind us through pinyon pine trees, then past sagebrush, bright-yellow brittlebush and cliff roses and cacti nestled into rocky nooks and crannies. As we descend, we leave the snow and mud, and it gets



increasingly warmer. In the summer, the bottom can reach 45 degrees. I'm carrying three litres of water. I've got this, I think.

Despite our early-morning start, we're by no means the only ones on the trail, and we pass all sorts and ages of people, puffing and panting their way up. There are even ultra runners doing rim-to-rim runs or, incredibly, rim-to-rim-to-rim runs in the same day.

Conveniently, I've forgotten I'm used to going up mountains when fresh at the beginning of the day, then having the less challenging downhill at the end.

"The Grand Canyon lulls you into thinking 'piece of cake, I can go for miles,'" warns Neiman. "This is what gets people in trouble, as they underrate the uphill, which takes twice as long." Over 250 Canyon hikers are rescued each year.

Our turnaround spot is eight kilometres down at Red Wall Bridge, where we have lunch before starting back uphill. Once again, the Canyon reminds me that she's in charge – I'm quickly short of breath with the extra exertion – my lungs don't



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like the thinner air. Falling to the back of the group, my earlier optimism that BC mountain hiking has prepared me for this adventure fades.

Zeldin, as trail guide, is patient as I regularly stop to catch my breath. It seems to take an eternity to reach earlier landmarks, and from Coconino Overlook, two-and-a-half kilometres from the top, when the trail becomes much steeper, I stop even more. The “what if I can’t do this?” voice in my head turns from whispers to ominous shouts. But, eventually one timeless second turns into another, and I make it to the top, where amidst group high-fives, my breath quickly returns to normal, as if the suffering was just an illusion. Victory is sweet.

The final morning is a five-a.m. wake-up to catch the sunrise from Bright Angel Point. Even though this is the most popular lookout on the North Rim, only a handful of people from outside our group are there. As it lifts over the eastern edge, the sun reflects with a pastel-sheen off the ancient formations, another reminder of why so many people come to see the Canyon’s ever-changing view.

I feel, though, like I haven’t just admired the Canyon’s beauty from afar. I’ve been able to get to know her in a way you can’t unless you experience a descent into her – the smells, up-close colours, textures, layers, cracks and flaws. In return, she’s seen me sweat, shiver, be painfully uncomfortable, joyful and alive. |

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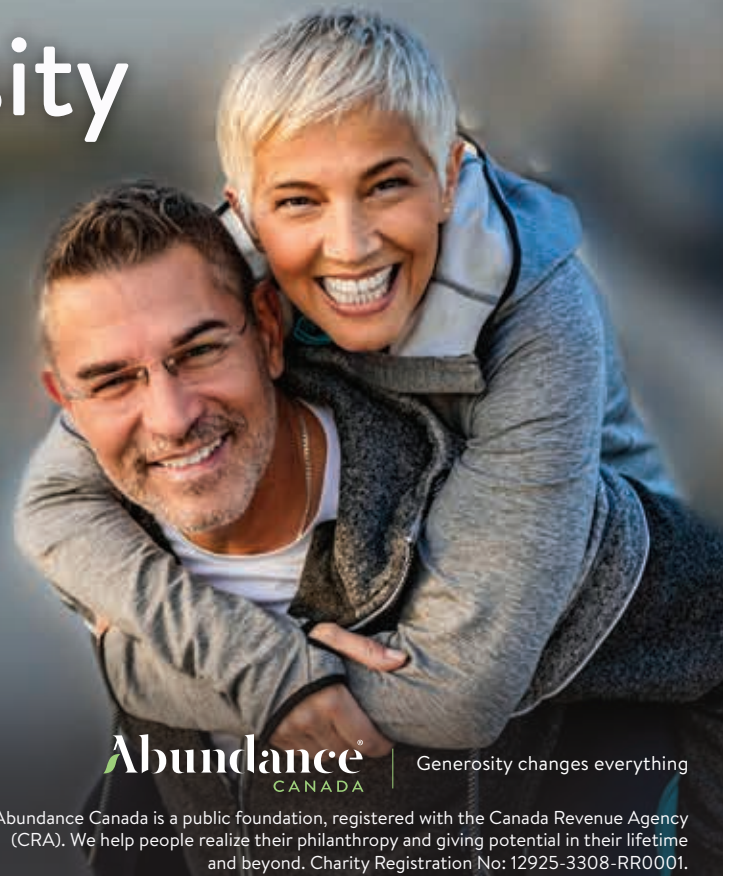
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Launch into the best days of your life with these tips on how to stay buoyant when the weather is dark and dreary.

LIGHTEN UP Vitamin D from the sun can elevate your mood. Make a point to open your curtains and soak up as much daylight as you can.

KEEP ACTIVE Take a daily walk, perhaps to a mall or a community centre with an indoor track. Join a senior-friendly fitness centre.

EAT WELL Sometimes comfort foods can slow you down; stick to lean proteins, vegetables, and complex carbohydrates like whole-wheat bread and brown rice.

STAY CONNECTED Engage in social activities and connect with others, this is the key to staying upbeat especially during the winter months.

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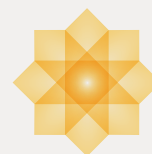
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FROSTY WOOLDRIDGE: LIVING HIS SPECTACULAR LIFE

by MARTIN DONNER

"Frosty," the nickname by which this 72-year-old has been known since age 12, has had a career path that reads like a disjointed list of career possibilities. At one time or another he has been a math and science teacher, an 18-wheeler truck driver, bartender, dance teacher, ski instructor for the handicapped, writer, author, speaker, personal trainer and cardiac catheterization technician.

But there is much more to Frosty Wooldridge than "job-hopping." The author of 14 books (with two more coming out shortly), Frosty is a man who never gives up. In fact, he submitted dozens of manuscripts to hundreds of publishers for 22 years before finally finding a willing publisher. Of that experience, Frosty says, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

Frosty has cycled over 240,000 kms on six of the world's continents with plans to cycle Africa soon. One of his books is titled *Living Your Spectacular Life* and he is certainly living his. From humble beginnings, this self-made man has enjoyed a "million-dollar life on minimum wage."

Lest anyone think Frosty did all his cycling when he was much younger, since turning 55, he has bicycled from Vancouver to St. John's, Newfoundland, as well as across the US from west to east four times and from Canada to Mexico four times.

Although he lives in Colorado, Frosty has bicycled throughout British Columbia on his way from Washington State to Alaska, after which he cycled across the Arctic Circle on the Dempster Highway to Inuvik. "British Columbia



reaches into a cyclist's soul to pull out wanderlust along with dollops of joy, delight and a deep appreciation of the stunning natural beauty of the province."

To say Frosty is "high energy" is an understatement. As he puts it, he lives life with "high vibrational frequency," living every day excited about the gift of life. "By choosing your highest and best, you will capture a meaningful life," he says. He also says he doesn't think about age. With a childlike exuberance, Frosty is thrilled to experience each day. To him life is one continuous adventure.

ABOVE | Frosty at Glacier National Park entrance. TOC PAGE | Skiing to the top of a 13,000 foot peak last winter. Photos: Frosty Wooldridge

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Canuck Place child, Roz
photo by Dani Photography

Frosty credits his parents “for their profound guidance, positive impact and the emotional balance” they bestowed on him. He talks about their “even-keeled parenting” that allowed him “to sail the tempests of life with confidence, tenacity and joy.” In addition to his parents, Frosty has drawn, and continues to draw, inspiration from Abigail Adams, Thoreau, Emerson, Jack London, Susan B. Anthony, Theodore Roosevelt, Edward Abbey and Jane Goodall.

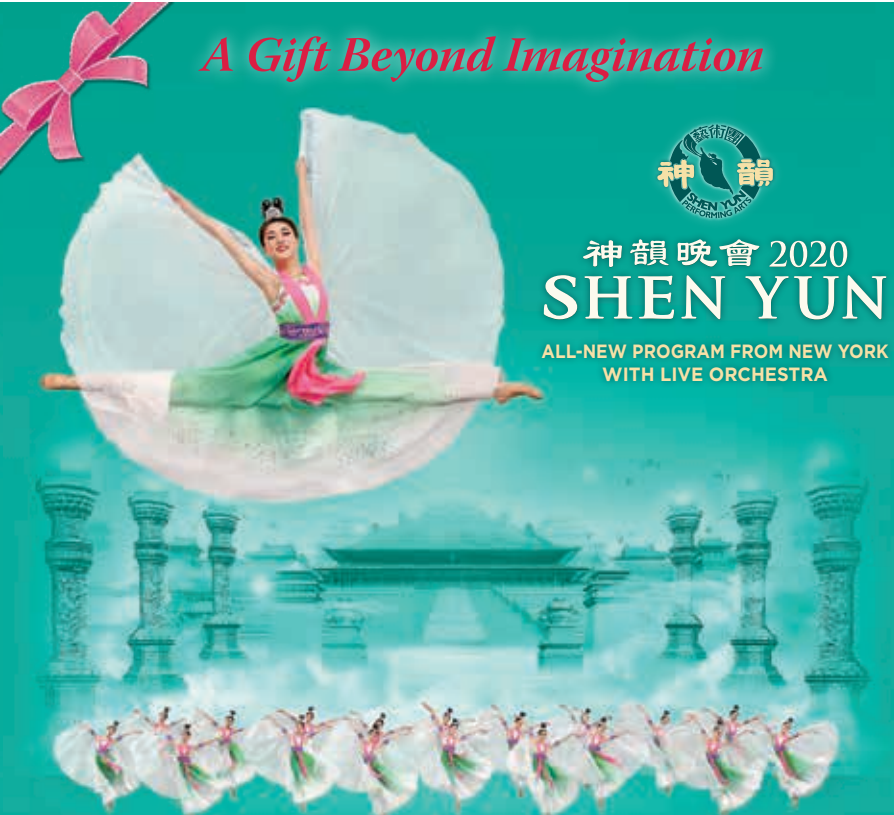
It only takes a few minutes of conversation with him to feel Frosty’s zest for life. His determination to live a joyful life to the fullest, no matter what, is palpable.

From a very early age, Frosty has loved dancing. He even met his wife, Sandi, on the dance floor. He has taught all forms of swing (jitterbug) dancing, plus he also enjoys salsa, ballroom and country & western. Frosty and Sandi still dance every week. To him, dancing is just another joyful expression of life.

Frosty has also known tough times, including battling cancer. But he says he “always chooses to have a positive, effervescent life”; he believes we can all make the same choice. He is living his “highest and best life, which means always maintaining a positive attitude, no matter how difficult the circumstances.” He knows people have negative thoughts from time to time, but he is always on guard to purge any negative thoughts and not be their victim.

Frosty treasures time, which he describes as one of our most valuable non-renewable resources. He says we all have a choice. Do we want a “lifetime of stupid, inane and meaningless TV and video games” that dull our minds “or a life in which we appreciate nature or one that expands our intelligence by reading or that exposes us to courses in painting or sculpting?”

Cycling for Frosty is “like being a kid again.” If he keeps pedalling, old age will never catch up to him. Paraphrasing the quotable Jean-Luc Picard, he says he does not believe “that time is a predator that stalks us all our lives,” but rather he believes “time is a companion who travels with him to remind him to cherish every moment... because they’ll never come again.”



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Regardless of age, we can each choose to have a spectacular life “as long as we retain our most powerful passport to having a spectacular life: self-confidence,” says Frosty. “When you put your heart, mind and spirit into the joy of living, you discover a passionate, purposeful and energy-filled life.”

Frosty keeps his mind active with creative thoughts. Above his desk is a small card that reads: “The Idea Fairy may strike at any time – so be alert and write down her ideas, so she will feel appreciated and come back often.”

To stay in peak condition (physically, mentally and spiritually), he follows a vegan diet and has for the last 48 years. He also swims, cycles, runs and lifts weights two hours a day, six days a week. He does not watch TV, smoke, do drugs, drink alcohol or coffee.

Frosty says he never gives into fear and doesn’t compare himself to others. He never thinks about dying; he just pursues living. Quoting author and teacher Rachel Naomi Remen, he says, “Life is known only by those who have found a way to be comfortable with change and the unknown. Given the nature of life, there is no security, only adventure.”

As Helen Keller said and Frosty believes, “Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all.” |

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ADVENTURE, TRAVEL & HEARTACHE

by MYLES SHANE



More than a decade ago, Donna Lynch wrote the book, *50ish: A Journey to 50 Countries in 50 Weeks Interviewing Women in their 50s*. The self-published title chronicled Donna's in-depth conversations with 39 women from distinctive nationalities, religions and socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. It received critical acclaim, attention and praise.

Now, at 62, Donna remains a vibrant go-getter, travelling the globe. But at 59, her world began crumbling apart. Donna's spirit was crushed when her 36-year-old stepson suffered a massive heart attack and died. The pain was gut-wrenching. Somehow, she had to lift herself out of the fog that surrounded every thought. She did what she knew best: she immersed herself in travel and writing and, at 61, she published her third book, *More Vancouver Island Versus The World*.

This book and its predecessor, *Vancouver Island Versus The World*, are brilliant photo essays contrasting Vancouver Island to over 75 countries while steadfastly maintaining Vancouver Island as the most beautiful place on the planet.

Donna's method for creating her last two books was time consuming and intricate.

"My process for the picture book was to go over 35,000 photos from my journeys and think of places on the island that were similar," she says. "For the first book, it was a slow process and probably took me about a year of random evenings. For the second book, I was intentionally taking pictures and it took me about two-and-a-half months to finish."

Donna's first monumental trip was to Europe at age 21. A four-month vacation turned into a year-long stay. Donna had caught the travel bug and needed to earn money to continue to see the world, which motivated her to spend five summers working as a poker, blackjack and roulette dealer in Dawson City, Yukon. Her pay cheques financed trips to Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and safaris in seven East African countries. For Donna, this was the opening act of a life that would be filled with adventure, travel – and heartache.

The curtain rose on the second act of Donna's life when she found love and decided to settle down. Instantly, Donna became a stepmom to two kids and eventually gave birth to a baby girl, Carly, who was born with a muscular disorder. Tragically, 10 months later, the joy of bringing a baby into the world turned into a nightmare. Carly died of pneumonia. Overwhelmed by paralyzing sadness, Donna and her stepdaughter, Brooke, could barely breathe. Carly was gone, but they had to continue living.

"After Carly died, the hospital offered counselling sessions, which Brooke and I attended. When they concluded, we both felt Brooke could benefit from further counselling,"

says Donna. "In doing research to find counsellors, I had a difficult time finding anyone for teens. Ultimately, I ended up writing an entire book of activities for teenagers, including counselling."

Writing *I'm Bored*, Donna's first book, clearly helped take her mind off her loss. Inevitably, she provided copies to local schools for free as her mission was to help as many teens as possible. Two years after Carly's death, Donna's marriage ended. Regardless, she remains in close contact with Brooke.

In 2007, Donna turned 50 – a time when many celebrate and reflect on a life well lived, but tears of happiness quickly turned to tears of sadness when her 88-year-old mother was diagnosed with lung cancer. That night, Donna had a dream that changed her life forever. In her vision, she travelled to 50 countries, but not as a sightseer. In fact, she saw herself interacting with women all over the world.

A few months later, Donna's mom passed away. Perhaps it was an aching to transform her dream into a reality when Donna decided to take a working vacation and write her second book. Writing had been therapeutic for her in the past and she hoped this time it would help ease her emotional pain of having lost her mother. Using her inheritance to pay for the five-continent voyage, Donna immediately quit her job as the manager of a dentist's office and headed to her first stop, Mexico.

Over 50 weeks, she visited 50 countries and interviewed 39 women over age 50. On her journey, she formed relationships that will last a lifetime and observed how different the rest of the world lives compared to her relatively secure, serene and predictable life in North America.

Donna recalls a few of her amazing experiences. "I jumped out of a plane, rode a camel in the Sahara, rafted the rapids of Costa Rica, ziplined in Nicaragua, went on safari in Namibia and was able to meet people and got invited into homes in many countries," she says. "It made me feel the world could be one big global family, if we really tried."

One of her most colourful encounters happened while visiting Kenya. "I stayed in a village in Kenya where we had to go down to the river to get water, bathed from a bucket and used an outhouse that was way out back beside the goats," she

recalls. "Meals were prepared on open fires and I was gifted a live chicken that I was meant to kill and pluck. Luckily, I was able to beg my way out of that. The family was lovely, and I have helped them out a few times in the years since."

Memories forever etched in Donna's mind are of the lives of woman surviving in war-torn countries. "I met women who lived through the Khmer Rough, the Vietnam War and the bombings in Laos, who were all willing to meet a complete stranger and share their lives with me. All seemed a bit haunted but expressed their joy when it came to their children."

Donna admits there are many countries in the world she wouldn't want to be a woman. "I wouldn't want to have to do the physical work women do in Laos, Cambodia, Kenya or Uganda," she says. "In Laos, all the little boys were playing, and the little girls were working, hauling water and selling vegetables. In Uganda, I stayed in a religious home where 32 girls ages five to 30 lived. Most of them were married off as child brides. One girl was sexually abused by her father."

After travelling to 91 countries, Donna has learned a lot about herself and the world. "Since the death of my daughter Carly in 1992, I learned you really have to live every day to the fullest because life is short. Most people say it, but they don't do it. I also learned that Canadians, and Victorians especially, are the most fortunate people in the world. We live in paradise." |

To learn more about Donna's books, visit her website online at www.donnamarielynn.com



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LIFTING FOR LIFE

by MARTIN DONNER

People join gyms with the best intentions to improve their health. I have (many times). But what I had hoped would be a lasting commitment to workout at least three or four times a week, usually became going to the gym whenever I could fit it in and, normally, that wasn't very often. For proof I'm not alone, visit a gym in the first week of January and the first week of May and do a cursory headcount. The inability to stay committed to one's gym membership is almost universal. Almost.

While most people can relate, "most people" does not include Andrew Campbell of Richmond, BC. Sixty-year-old Andrew is clearly one of the few exceptions. In fact, he is a shining example of commitment and discipline not only to people over 55, but to many people one or two generations younger.

A musician and photographer, Andrew begins every day – Saturdays and Sundays included – by spending two hours in the gym at South Arm Community Centre in Richmond. His habit of visiting the gym first thing in the morning (he's there when the doors open) comes to him as naturally as brushing his teeth.

Energized by his morning workout, Andrew, a much sought-after, award-winning photographer, uses his skills to showcase homes for sale in Metro Vancouver and to give newlyweds an album of memories they will always treasure.

As a youth, Andrew studied music, and won several national awards for his virtuosity with the Yamaha Electone Organ. In addition, at one national competition (that he won), he also won the heart of one of his competitors, Toshiko, whom he eventually married.

Always fascinated with Japan, it seemed natural to Andrew



that he would marry a Japanese woman and choose to live there. In 1990, he and Toshiko moved to a town near Nagoya, where he taught English for 22 years. It was also in Japan that his love of photography (which began in his teens) really blossomed, and he first experienced the benefits and joy of lifting weights as he visited the local gym three to four times a week, a routine he continued when the couple returned to Canada in 2011.

No one is promised a life free of challenges. Andrew, an avid hiker, was bitten by a tick in 2007 and, for two years, suffered the effects of Lyme disease, including chronic fatigue, joint pain, headaches, dizziness and memory loss. However, even with these symptoms and the many months of antibiotics (which had their own unwelcome side-effects), Andrew did not stop lifting weights.

ABOVE | Andrew Campbell working out at his local gym. Photo: Daniela Stockfleth-Menis. INSET | Andrew at Iona beach. Photo: Shizuka Ashley Campbell



The **Military Service Recognition Book** is published each year to honour Veterans from British Columbia and the Yukon who currently serve, and have served our country so well in times of world conflict and peacekeeping. Contact your local Legion Branch for details on how you can feature a Veteran in a future edition.

These commemorative books are available at Legion Branches throughout British Columbia and the Yukon, and also online at www.legionbcyukon.ca.

In 2013, four years after recovering from Lyme disease, Andrew received a diagnosis no one wants to hear: "You have cancer!" With Toshiko's support, he stoically faced major surgery and recovery. Rather than accept his cancer as a setback, Andrew became even more motivated than ever to stay healthy, and it wasn't long before he began his routine of lifting weights six to seven times a week.

Regularly lifting weights has many benefits, including burning fat, improving bone-density, strengthening muscles and tendons, improving one's balance and flexibility, helping fight osteoporosis, back pain and lowering the risk of diabetes. As a bonus, it also helps combat depression and instills confidence and a sense of well-being, all of which are valuable to everyone, especially those over 55.

In his soft-spoken manner Andrew explains that his gym time is a form of meditation. "It's a time to commune with myself," he says. He finds the practice empowering, nurturing and confidence-building. In short, it gives him a tremendous sense of well-being.

While lifting weights can improve the quality of one's life, regardless of the age at which one begins, a few words of caution before embarking on any program of exercise: Check with your doctor first, begin slowly and ensure you are using the proper technique. |

For videos and Andrew's suggestions on proper technique, visit his Instagram account ([weightsat60](#)) or his website at [www.acbcfoto.com](#).

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FINDING HIDDEN TREASURES IN GREECE

by MARILYN JONES

I'll admit it. When I thought about Greece, I imagined Santorini, Mykonos and Corfu; beautiful islands framed in turquoise waters. But when I researched vacations with Exodus Travels, I realized the mainland has a lot to offer and decided on "Highlights of Ancient Greece." I love history and exploring communities long abandoned. It was a perfect fit.

Let me introduce you to three fascinating lesser-known locations I visited where the crowds are thin, but the history is rich and fascinating: Epidavros, Messene and Pylos.

EPIDAVROS (OR EPIDAUROS)

Epidaurus was the most celebrated healing centre of the classical world dating to the 6th century BC. It was a place where the sick and infirmed went with the hope of being cured. In mythology, the site is said to be the birthplace of Apollo's son Asclepius, the healer.

To find the right cure for their ailments, visitors spent a night in a sleeping hall. In their dreams, Asclepius would advise them what they had to do to regain their health and vitality.

Our guide explains that within the sanctuary there was a guest house with 160 guestrooms. There are also mineral springs in the vicinity, which may have been used in healing.

Although the healing centre isn't well visited, the ancient theater is. Constructed in the late 4th century BC, it was used to host religious ceremonial events in honour of Asclepius. Famous for its symmetry and the incredible acoustics, it continues to be used during the summer months to host ancient Greek drama performances.

MESSENE

When we start our tour, the site seems small. The fact is it is one of the country's largest and best-preserved archaeological sites.

Built in the 4th century BC on the ruins of an older city, Messene came into prominence after the defeat of the Spartans by Athens and the Boeotian League. The city was created for the descendants of exiled Messenians as a city-state independent of Sparta. A short time later, the Romans arrived and took over after the Battle of Chaeronea.

To give you an idea of the site's size, the wall that surrounded the city was nine kilometres long. It was nine



metres high and fortified by 30 square or horseshoe-shaped guard towers.

We walk to the promenade. It is apparent by the row of columns how it once looked. When the Romans arrived, they put a bath in the middle using existing material. Just across the way is a theatre; an intimate setting for ancient plays and other performances. We continue our exploration to the council chamber and marketplace.

The view of the site is deceiving. As we walk, it becomes clear there is a lot more to see. The highlight came last as we neared the stadium. Its size and incredible condition are awe inspiring. In the spirit, several people run around its circumference and go down to the stadium floor. Here, gladiators fought, and wrestling competitions were held.

ABOVE | (Top) Once a mosque, the Pylos Castle church now serves as a Christian place of worship. (Bottom) The view of the Bay of Navarino from the Pylos Castle.

TOC PAGE | Messene is one of the largest and best preserved historic sites in Greece. Photos: Marilyn Jones

As we make our way back to the van, I marvel that this extraordinary site gets so little attention; it is a gem.

PYLOS

Pylos is a pleasant little seaside village in southern Greece. We arrive in the evening just in time to see the sun set. I drop my luggage at the hotel and immediately take a walk along the waterfront. Small, intimate restaurants and a handful of shops with friendly employees greet visitors with warm smiles and gracious service.

The following day, we visit "New Castle" high above the town.

The Ottomans ruled from 1498-1685 and 1715-1821, and built the New Castle beginning in 1571. It was completed the following year.

We first visit the church, which was originally a mosque. Except for its architectural design, there are no signs it was ever used for this purpose. From the front of the church, we are offered a spectacular view of the Bay of Pylos. New Castle is in the southern entrance of the bay and the 13th century Old Castle, built by the Crusaders, guards the northern entrance.

Next to the church is a small but impressive museum. The sign says Traveling in the Deep: Exploring Human Traces in the Peloponnese Seas.

The interior looks like a ship's hull. There is a huge map of the Peloponnese on the floor helping us locate the seven shipwrecks dating from prehistoric to modern times, where the

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displayed statues, vessels and personal items were found.

Our tour continues to the castle's fortified citadel where more recovered items, diving equipment, photographs and explanations are showcased in seven cells facing the centre of the grand structure.

Our last stop is another small and impressive museum with items dating from Middle Paleolithic Period (100,000 to 35,000 BC) to Modern Period (1830 to the present).

These sites are just the tip of the iceberg. We also visit Athens, Corinth, Nafplio, Mycenae, Palamidi, Mystras, Delphi and Meteora during our nine-day tour.

Greece is a labyrinth of remarkable and interesting history and unparalleled beauty. As much as the islands are inviting, there's so much more to discover in Greece. |

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TIPS FOR A SAFE WINTER WORKOUT

Cold or wet weather is no excuse to avoid outdoor exercise. Fresh air and/or sunshine can still be enjoyed in cooler months and there's an extra bonus: you burn more calories exercising in the cold. Here are some tips to help make your winter workout safe and satisfying:

- **Warm up.** Cold temperatures make muscles tight and therefore prone to injury. Make sure you do a thorough warm-up prior to your exercise. However, consider exercising indoors if the temperature is below -17.8°C (zero $^{\circ}\text{F}$).
- **Start out by heading into the wind.** After you've worked up a sweat, you won't get as chilled if you end your workout with the wind at your back.
- **Know the signs of frostbite and hypothermia.** Warning signs of frostbite include paleness, numbness or a stinging sensation on the face, fingers or toes. Go indoors immediately. Slowly warm the area without rubbing. Get emergency care if numbness continues. Hypothermia is characterized by intense shivering, slurred speech, loss of coordination and fatigue. Get immediate emergency help. To prevent problems, warm your hands and feet every 20 to 30 minutes, and know when to head indoors.
- **Drink up.** You can become just as dehydrated in the cold as in the heat from sweating, breathing and increased urine production.
- **Wear sunscreen.** You can suffer sunburn in winter as in summer. Use lip balm with sunscreen. Protect your eyes from snow glare with sunglasses.
- **Choose appropriate gear for your safety,** including proper footwear for the weather and the sport you're doing. If it's dark or dull from overcast, wear reflective materials to ensure you're seen. Wear a helmet for skiing, snowboarding and snowmobiling.
- **Cover all exposed areas of skin.** Mittens provide less surface area for heat to escape, because the fingers are in contact with each other. Wear a hat as well. Incidentally, it's a myth your head is prone to losing the most heat from your body. More correctly, you lose heat equally all over the body – it's just that the head is a larger surface area than, say, the hands, so your body loses more heat if the head is uncovered as compared to uncovered hands. Choose wool socks over cotton to keep sweat away from the skin. Wool also retains heat, if your feet become damp.
- **Insulate your body by wearing layers,** which trap warm air around the body and allows you to remove layers if you get too hot. Avoid cotton clothing, which holds moisture against the skin. One layer of clothing should be wool because it retains heat even when it's wet. If wool irritates, choose fleece

FOREVER FIT

by EVE LEES



or a synthetic pile. The top layer of your clothing should be a waterproof and wind-resistant jacket and pants. Clothing should be loose fitting; restricting circulation can lead to frostbite.

- **Don't immediately strip** when you return indoors – unless your clothing is wet. It's best to allow your body time to adjust before removing your clothing layers. Post-exercise hypothermia (severe chills) can occur if your body reduces its heat production too quickly.

Now, get out there and embrace the season – safely! |

Eve Lees has been active in the health & fitness industry since 1979. Currently, she is a Freelance Health Writer for several publications and speaks to business and private groups on various health topics. www.artnews-healthnews.com

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SPEAKING FOR ANIMALS

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by VERENA FOXX



DON and COLLEEN THOMSON relocated themselves and their business, DonCol Nature Products, to Salmon Arm from Abbotsford to be closer to their children and grandchildren. The couple wanted “to have more of a work/life balance,” which includes fishing, camping and cycling, as well as running the birdhouse-kit-building business Don started in 1995 while he was still teaching science, PE and tech in Langley schools.

When Don retired in 2011, Colleen, formerly an administrative assistant, joined in to take care of that end of the business.

“We live each day to its fullest,” says *The Bird House Guy*, as he is known to the many students and adults who partici-

pate in his workshops and professional development sessions that focus on building bird houses, feeders and now treasure chests. All the projects are made from off-cut red cedar, which is durable, weather-proof and easy for beginners to work with.

In 2017, Don received an offer to sell his kits online through a major US chain, but he turned it down. Today, the cottage industry is one his grandchildren enjoy participating in.

“I love my work, but I don’t want my business to interfere with my retirement,” he says. Colleen echoes the sentiment and adds that getting supplies from the coast gives them an opportunity to visit family there. |

For more information: doncolnature.ca

SEAN and CATHY NOBLE moved to Grand Forks after retiring from their professional lives in Red Deer, Alberta. Sean says their new hometown has “the most perfect four-season weather in North America.”

The dream was to build a home on the Granby River, with a generous ground-floor B&B open year-round (except at Christmas) and offer guests a movie room, pool table,



kitchen, access to the river, and much more, including purchasable Borscht, a nod to the area’s Doukhobors roots.

Upstairs, their Great/Breakfast Room can seat 36, when necessary, to include all their family and neighbours for their annual Thanksgiving dinner. “It was an important criterion to seat that many,” says Cathy.

A community-minded family, Sean and his three sons rode Suzuki V-Strom 65 motorcycles on a 27,000 km trip from Argentina to Alaska in 2007 to raise funds for Alberta’s Kids Care Cancer Foundation, and to make the *Guinness Book of World Records*, which they did, in 29 days and some hours and minutes.

Nowadays, Sean shares the job of Animal Control Officer with his brother, Brian, when he’s not welcoming guests. “The world comes to us,” says Cathy, who shares the business equally with Sean, including cooking fabulous breakfasts that keep their guests fuelled up for the day. |

For more information: www.noble-housesuites.com; noblequest.org

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Taming Holiday Stress

By Wendy Johnstone

While holidays bring opportunities for joy, cherished customs and new experiences, they can also bring feelings of overwhelm with caregiving tasks. Stressed-out or busy caregivers may view traditional holiday preparations as more of an energy drain than joyful. If the very notion of this season is sapping your holiday spirit, read on:

Doing it ALL can make it harder: Sometimes we do things simply because we always have. If you're holding the holiday gathering, give yourself permission to ask for help with your celebration to do list.

A friend, who is caring for her husband, announced to her family that she's not hosting Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Her family didn't hesitate to step in and split the entertaining and decorating.

To get started, ask yourself: "Would the holidays be the same without a certain tradition?" Is there something I want to do differently? Do I do it out of habit or joy? Do I have a choice or a sense of obligation? And can the job be shared?"

Plan ahead: If you have family travelling to see you and others, it can be helpful to have a conversation about the person you are caring for. Discuss the holiday schedule as it relates to your own schedule and the care recipient's needs. If the person you are caring for tires easily or is experiencing cognitive decline or other challenges, limit the number of activities and the length of time of events. Noise and confusion of a large family gathering, or community event can lead to irritability, undesired behaviour or exhaustion – for everyone.

A little R & R goes a long way: Ask family or friends to provide you with a break or the opportunity for a change of scenery for the person you are caring for. A caregiver shared her approach, "We go to Victoria every year to see our son. He comes up to get my husband and gives me an extra day. Then I drive down and enjoy Victoria for the day. It's a win for everyone." Another



caregiver shares her advice, "Making time for myself is sometimes as simple as enjoying holiday decorations with my family or taking a walking tour of the neighbourhood lights."

Be grateful: Without trying to sound like my Aunt Mimi (who likes to find the silver-lining in trying situations) or too cliché, aren't the holidays about sharing and spending time with the people we value the most? Research on well-being and gratitude tells us that finding small ways to be grateful or showing appreciation for someone in our life helps us cope with more stressful situations (like holiday stress).

The holidays can feel like a frenzied whirlwind and this holds equally true for caregivers. The balance scale is going to fluctuate between caregiving and caring for yourself. Give yourself the gift of kindness and permission to do less this holiday season. |

Wendy Johnstone is a Gerontologist and a consultant with Family Caregivers of British Columbia in Victoria, BC.



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NEW YEAR, NEW ADVENTURES

by PAT NICHOL



COURAGEOUS
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Do you remember what you were doing 20 years ago, on the last day of 1999? Some kept their families close at home because of the fear of what might happen at midnight as the calendar turned over to the new millennium. Others were out dancing up a storm. What were you doing?

For those who know me because of the purple flash in my hair, you may be surprised to know that that was the beginning of my strange and wonderful hair colours. That evening, my younger daughter came over to the house with her basket of colour, and we looked – not seriously – at all the possibilities. I chose Pillar Box Red. I can't remember how much of my hair we coloured, but I remember knowing I was going into the new millennium with a revamped look.

My point in stirring up memories from the past is simply this: two decades of this new century have already thundered by. In our imagination, we tend to think time putters by like little cat feet. In reality, it seems these two decades have roared by like a herd of Clydesdales galloping over and around me. No matter who I speak with, the sense is the same.

Life speeds past us, and sometimes we can feel like

bystanders watching it happen. I remember years ago listening to elders talk about how fast life was flashing by, but I quietly laughed to myself. "Maybe to you it is, but my life is just fine, thank you." Suddenly, I am one of those elders, watching life and being concerned about being run over by time.

I am grateful for the years I have been given. Too many close friends were not as lucky.

So, as we say goodbye to another year and begin travelling once more around the sun, perhaps this is a good time to shift from being an observer to becoming a rider on those Clydesdales galloping through the minutes, hours, days, months and years. Take advantage of the time you've been given and step into the powerful force that you are. Enjoy each moment, live each hour and be grateful for each day.

As we head into 2020, I look forward to new adventures. Happy New Year! |

Pat Nichol is a speaker and published author. Reach her by email at mpatnichol@gmail.com

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Single parents receive map to success

Samantha Magnus remembers the summer before she started her Master's program as one of the toughest times of her life. Recently single, she had moved to Victoria with her two young children to continue her education at the University of Victoria. When Samantha was notified she had been awarded a Doris and Harry Stastny bursary she said, "I felt so supported and validated in the choices I'd made. It was like these invisible hands were lifting me up. It was incredibly humbling."

Doris Stastny was one of the first women to graduate from Cambridge University. She emigrated to Canada in 1957 with a growing family and established a mapmaking business in Campbell River, B.C.

When Doris became a single mother, she was unable to support her family through her mapmaking and she decided to return to university. Through perseverance and hard work, Doris received her Library Science degree from UBC. She successfully applied for a job at the University of Victoria library where she met and later married Harry Stastny.

The challenge of attending school as a single mother never left Doris. She decided to leave a gift in her Will to help ease the burden for future generations of single mothers, like Samantha, committed to creating a better life for themselves and their children.

"It is a really special feeling thinking that Doris Stastny was doing a very similar kind of juggle to mine" says Samantha. ***"Doris' gift taught me a lesson about paying it forward and about thinking of the future beyond your own."***



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