

# INSPIRED

55+ lifestyle magazine

FEBRUARY 2021

A man with glasses and a mustache, wearing a brown leather jacket over a blue and white checkered shirt and blue jeans, stands outdoors in a wooded area. He is leaning against a large tree trunk. The background shows bare trees and a path.

JOURNALIST &  
AUTHOR  
REG SHERREN

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### Cover REG SHERREN

This long-time CBC journalist has penned his first book and is authoring the next chapter of his life.

Photo: Pam Tennant

## INSPIRED

55+ lifestyle magazine

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## THRIVE BEYOND 55

by BARBARA RISTO, PUBLISHER



Stepping into a new year with all its uncertainty and potential has a way of focusing one's attention on what really counts in life.

2020 was a year like none I've ever experienced and what 2021 will bring is still an unknown.

Yet I know a few things with greater certainty and clarity.

I know that pleasure is fleeting, but sweet. It often comes in small packages – like the squinting of a pair of eyes over the top of a mask, letting you know that someone is smiling at you. That little bit of humanity peaking over a fabric face covering is a treasure.

I have realized the value of a hug – the first one I got from a friend after months of abstinence was one of the sweetest encounters of the year. A year ago, we would have clasped each other quickly and been on our way. Now we didn't want to let each other go. Who would have thought that in a world where hugs are free, they'd become a scarce commodity in a matter of a few short months?

I have begun to learn the pleasure of quietness and aloneness. Curled up in a comfy armchair in front of a flickering fire with a book in hand and a cat in my lap, I've let the soothing warmth from the fire and the cat comfort my soul and ease the stresses of the day. Not needing anything in that moment, just being and letting everything around me be... perfect.

I've discovered treasures within – each self-discovery sending a thrill of joy coursing through my body.

Amid the struggles of 2020, I learned to release numerous emotions: fear, sadness, loneliness, worry, rejection, lack, doubt. Emotion by emotion, I've sat with them and let them arise and be seen, accepted, and then released.

I've confronted the feelings of not being enough, and the reality that I can't resolve everything. I've discov-

ered peace as a welcome and ready replacement. I learned that I AM enough for any moment that arises and trying to fix everything is insane.

I've learned to observe from behind a short wall – witnessing all the worldly shenanigans while holding my energy apart; not throwing myself into the pot with all the other scalding debris and chaos.

I've nurtured the art of compassion – wishing my fellow earth-dwellers well, regardless the path they are on. I have let my hasty judgments fall away. I have embraced, instead, a belief in the appropriateness of all humanity. We are all on the same path, discovering who we are, each doing our best with what we have to work with.

I've recognized the bliss of family and friends – the steadfastness of relationships taken for granted when everything is going well, rising up in solidarity and fierce determination when a need presents itself.

I've discovered that love is not felt in the receiving, it is felt in the giving. The greatest act of kindness was learning to love myself. When no one else is around, you soon learn what a friend you are to yourself, or not. When activities are not bountiful enough to distract you. When all the trappings of a busy life fail to impress – there's just you.

I've discovered the pleasure that arises within when I take a few minutes to be present, to breathe deeply and consciously recognize the divine presence I hold within. I am discovering the treasure that is me.

2020 came bearing gifts. They are invisible to the eye, but what richness they bestowed! Intrinsic, beautiful, powerful, grace-laden gifts that hold the power to nurture us through any difficulty, any changes, any sorrow, any fear.

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Journalist cum author  
Reg Sherren  
*Photo: Pam Tennant*



# REG SHERREN: STILL TELLING STORIES

by KATE ROBERTSON

As someone who has been part of the Canadian journalism scene for over four decades, Reg Sherren knows how to tell a story. Most of his career has been focused on reporting on the social issues and people of Canada as a TV correspondent on the CBC for its flagship news program *The National*.

He also worked around the world, from the Persian Gulf, Europe, Japan and across the US, as a TV commentator and guest hosted on CBC radio on programs like *Cross Country Check-up* and *The Current*. As host of the network program *Country Canada* for close to 10 years, Reg travelled to almost every region of the nation to cover stories important to Canadians.

“There were so many exciting moments as I look back on my career,” says Reg. “Being chosen as a national correspondent was certainly one. Being named as the host of *Country Canada* was probably the career highlight. Covering the first Persian Gulf War just three months after our son was born. Covering Washington from the Capitol or working out of the CBC bureau in London. These were all opportunities I will never forget.”

Despite having won several awards for his work, the ultimate highlight was all the “downhome” folks Reg had the great pleasure to meet and tell their stories. People in the logging and fishing communities, the ones that grow our

food, the amazing, hardy people who call our north home.

“I loved meeting people like Larry Audlaluk, Canada’s greatest ambassador living in the town ‘at the top of the world.’ Grise Fiord, on the coast of Ellesmere Island, is only 1,600 kilometres from the North Pole!” says Reg. “Larry and his family had survived a lot at the hands of his own government, and yet remained one of its biggest supporters. That story led to Larry being awarded the Order of Canada, and I am proud and honoured to say I played a role in that.”

Another fond memory Reg recalls was flying in a helicopter around the south coast of Newfoundland with Jean Chretien. Reg says this experience was a great lesson for a young journalist: Chretien had not yet become Prime Minister, but his political skills were already well honed.

“It stayed with me the rest of my career,” says Reg, “the lesson being ‘be careful what you say, and to whom you say it.’ As we were flying into the tiny community of Bay Despair (as it is known in Newfoundland), I mentioned to him, ‘you know Mr. Chretien, in French this is “Baie d’Espoir,” the Bay of Hope. But the reality is that unemployment here among young people is close to 50 percent. There is more despair than hope.”

When Chretien got out of the helicopter, he strode into the community hall and addressed the audience waiting there with this, “You know, in my language ‘dis is la Baie d’Espoir, da

# Snapshot

## with Reg Sherren

If you were to meet your 20-year-old self, what advice would you give him?

*"Slow down! Take the time to absorb the things you are experiencing. Don't prejudge. Remember there is so much more you don't know. Watch, and listen."*

What or who has influenced you the most and why?

*"My father and my grandmother were huge influences in my life. My father because even though he was a captain of industry, a large, imposing man, his manner was one of inclusiveness and kind consideration. My dad was just nine when my grandfather, a United Church minister, succumbed to cancer. Dad was the oldest of three boys, which my grandmother raised while achieving her teaching certificate and eventually becoming a school principal. Her steady and calm advice steered me through difficult waters many times. We wrote to each other weekly until the day she died. I still pull out those letters sometimes. I always find another nugget of wisdom in them."*

What are you most grateful for?

*"I am most grateful for my family, my wife and our children and our good health. As the years go by you truly realize, without your health, you don't have much."*

What does success mean to you?

*"Success can best be measured in happiness. I never set out to make a million dollars; it just wasn't that important to me. But being able to care for my family, financially and otherwise, is a proud measure of my success, especially for a guy who never really had a plan! Feeling comfortable in my own skin, being able to care for friends and others, being able to laugh at myself, these too are measures of my success."* |



bay of hope. But since the Conservatives have come to power, this truly is Bay Despair!" Reg had inadvertently fed a very skilled politician his opening line! Lesson learned.

Fast forward to 2017. Reg decided it was time to make a change. The CBC's flagship news program, the place where his journalism pieces had lived for many years, was undergoing significant changes.

"Anchor Peter Mansbridge had decided to head his own way as well," says Reg. "I thought, with a new format, new hosts, new management, this was the perfect time for me to get to work on some other projects that had been percolating for a while. I decided to say goodbye."

One of those projects turned out to be his first book. Reg admits he never really had a burning desire to write one, but after contributing to a colleague's book, had found the exercise rewarding. He contacted the publishers, Douglas & McIntyre, with his idea, and they jumped on it. *That Wasn't the Plan* was born.

In the book, Reg shares stories about interesting Canadians he met along the way during his career. "The stack of papers generated from the CBC archives contained over 5,000 stories that I have told," he says. "The first draft of the book was twice as long. I decided the logical approach was to be loosely chronological and to stick with stories that would, for one reason or another, resonate with readers. But who knows? Maybe there will be a volume two!"

Reg also covers the current state of the news industry in *That Wasn't the Plan*. Of course, having entered the journalism field over 40 years ago, he's seen many changes, including the massive transformation to the digital universe. With each technological change, a different editorial approach to telling stories,

or even where stories come from, has evolved.

"We live in the age of 'citizen journalism' where the average person is walking around with a device in their hand capable of recording, editing and disseminating information to millions of people around the world, simply by pushing 'send,'" says Reg. "Newsrooms wait to see what is trending on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, before deciding what issues deserve coverage. Things are moving so fast now that I have joked, 'we don't make mistakes anymore, we just have updates.'"

Reg believes the drive for journalists to restore credibility and reliability should now be paramount. Without that, the news is in real danger of becoming something else people don't know if they can trust on their Facebook newsfeed, as the past four years has shown us.

"Never has the struggle for credibility and integrity been greater for journalists. It makes taking the time to get it 'right' as opposed to being 'first' even more critical."

So, can we still find reliable sources of information and news? Fortunately, Reg thinks it's possible. Support local information sources, whether it's your community newspaper or magazines. Support them or lose them. Fewer voices is not a good thing. Question the source of everything you watch and read, especially online. If you don't know or understand the source, be very leery about what it is telling you. Be aware that every move you make, especially on social media, is being monitored and recorded.

When we get our news and other information from more than one source, over time we can identify credible news outlets and seek out their coverage.

"The problem is that most of us are also increasingly being spoon-fed a steady diet of information washing over us from the internet or social media," says Reg. "There is a distinction. On the internet, you tend to seek out



the information yourself. Social media decides for you what you want to see. Sophisticated algorithms interpret everything you click on or look at, every comment you make or photo you post. It then slowly moves the information you receive in that direction. Pretty soon, all you see in your newsfeed is like-minded ideas or opinions. It has contributed to the narrowing of viewpoints and polarization we are seeing in society today.”

*That Wasn't the Plan* launched in fall 2020 and has garnered positive reviews. Reg has been deeply touched by feedback from across the country.

“This tells me a few things,” he says. “Mostly I think it tells me that never has the hunger for our own stories, our own history, been greater. Maybe it’s because we all find ourselves a little lost in the digital universe. Maybe it’s because we have tended to draw a little closer together as a country during these difficult times. Whatever it is, people seem to have really connected with what I have to say, and the people I introduce them to. For that, I am humbled and eternally grateful.”

Calling himself “semi-retired,” Reg remains in Winnipeg, where his family moved to “for a couple of years” over 25 years ago, and a place he considers one of the country’s best kept secrets. No longer on a tight daily schedule, his day starts with reading the paper, and a walk with his dog.

“Exercise is a big part of my routine, whether it’s swimming in the summer or badminton in the winter. I try to write a little something every day and play guitar. I have a group of dear

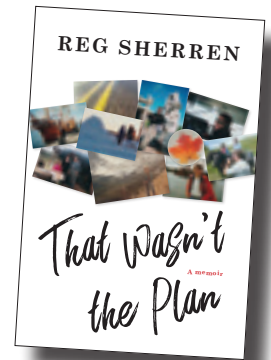
friends I have been writing and recording music with for over 40 years. That continuum of friendship means the world to me,” he says. Reg also continues to write feature articles, and he’s working on a screenplay that he had set aside 30 years ago. He also does some mentoring and teaching. He stays busy.

Reg’s future to-do list remains long. He wants to build a small boat. He wishes his eyesight was good enough to be a pilot.

“I want to get back to painting, and I will,” he says. “I volunteer but I want to do more. My wife, Pamela, and I are determined to do much more travelling, and we’ve already done quite a bit. We will again when it’s safe. The list goes on and on. I hope when it’s all said and done, there will still be a list of several dozen things I am working my way through when I drop.”

Final thoughts? “Work harder at being kinder,” he says. “It’s something I try to improve on every day, especially now.” |

*That Wasn't the Plan* is available at Chapters Indigo and on Amazon.



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# MY FOREVER CHILDHOOD

by ANN BUSH

A colossal windswept dune field appears out of nowhere as we cruise down the highway and make a left into the White Sands National Monument in southern New Mexico. The brilliant white mounds of sand appear to be sparkling ocean waves splashing against purple-gray mountains called the Tularosa Basin. The far away mountains wiggle in the hot sun and I wonder if it is perhaps a hazy mirage.

The ever-changing dunes imitating snow are not sand, but calcium sulfate dehydrate crystals, called gypsum that is often used as fertilizer. I find this fact a little intimidating since I will soon connect with these dunes in a very intimate way. My friends and I are on a quest to go sand sledding. At age 65, I wonder if we are sane.

“All you need is faith, trust and  
a little bit of pixie dust.”

—Peter Pan

Our first stop is the visitor centre to learn more about how this unique place on the planet was created. During the Permian Period, which spanned 47 million years, flowing

rivers from the basin drained into the valley forming shallow seas where the gypsum settled to the bottom. Eventually, over time, the seas dried out leaving the gypsum forever trapped.

Considered one of the world’s greatest natural wonders, these dunes spread over more than 440 km of desert. Claimed by the first indigenous people called the Paleo-Indians, ancient artifacts and sites over 10,000 years old are scattered throughout the area. Archaeologists have found bones of many large mammals such as mammoths, camels and bison. By the time the Spanish arrived in the early 15th century, the Apache Natives were living and farming at the foothills of the dunes.

Unlike sand dunes made of quartz-based crystals, the gypsum does not readily convert the sun’s energy into heat and can be walked upon safely with bare feet, even in the hottest summer months. This is where we come in.

ABOVE | White Sands National Monument, New Mexico.

PAGE 10 | The author contemplates her sanity. Photos: Ann Bush



I had much experience snow sledding during my younger years and assumed the main difference was that shorts could be worn instead of ski pants. However, my friends tell me that sliding on gypsum is not like sliding on snow.

A special sled designed to slide on the unique crystals was available at the gift store for a small daily fee. My bright orange sled was carefully chosen as a safety feature in case I wander into the white abyss of dunes to be hopelessly lost. Why did I wear sand-coloured pants?

The place is amazing! The wind forever blows crystals across the road, which is cleared by a snowplow. We soon park at the Roadrunner Picnic area with futuristic tables and benches scattered in a daily plowed area surrounded by dunes. Scanning the endless desert, I spot pretty, yellow flowers and prairie grass sprouting out of shallow dents in the continuous flow of white.

“The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it.”

—Peter Pan

Choosing just the right spot, my sand sledding trainer, who is roughly my age, duly educates me on the aspects and skills necessary for this sport. All I can think of as I look almost straight up into the sun to the top of a very large dune is how difficult it is to walk in sand. That itself will give me a heart attack. My last year’s bone density test results come blaring into focus and I begin to calculate how long it will take to get to the nearest hospital.

Then I sadly realize – I am acting my age. I am proud to say I rarely act my age. In fact, I’m not sure I ever grew up. I work hard every day at staying in shape, mainly so I can do crazy things when the opportunity arises. So here I



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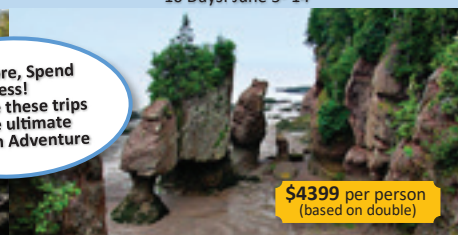


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am, getting ready to test my heart rate climbing straight up in moving sand to slide down on a small round sled with no handles all the way down to a hard road without the means to control the sled or stop it.

I'm wondering if I could use a kayak instead of this child-size sled – which is not much bigger than a hubcap – when John yells at me to get in gear. He is already half-way up and smirking. His wife, Judy, who suspiciously has a cold and is NOT sledding, rolls her eyes.

Off I go, stopping halfway to catch a bunch of breaths. We are at about 4,000 feet and I live at 100 feet above sea level, so I don't panic or rush. Eventually, I am sitting on my orange hubcap and watching my trainer's sledding skills intently. At the bottom, he smiles and says, "nothing to it."

The extra 10 pounds I put on at Christmas ensure I need to push off more than once, but soon I'm sliding down the beautiful white crystals. Twisting slowly sideways halfway down and landing almost on my head; I never lose my death grip on the sled. I simply laugh all the way. Okay, maybe I screamed once. What a trip!

Before giving it a second thought, I'm struggling back up the hill with gypsum dust in my hair, my nose and a few other places. Soon, we are exhausted and content for the rest of the afternoon to watch the children nearby run up the hill and slide down squealing all the way.

As a retiree and travel enthusiast, I take a lot of trips. But sometimes it is the modest, brief trips with dear friends that fill our lives with such childlike joy. |

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**Amenities/Services:** shopping; shuttle; housekeeping; breakfast bistro; lunch and dinner; recreation; entertainment; fitness classes; theatre; salon; billiards room; pet friendly suites.

### Comox Valley Seniors Village ■●▶

250-331-1183; 1-844-603-4663; 4640 Headquarters Rd.  
www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** (I/A) 97; (C) 136 apartments **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** shopping shuttle; housekeeping; bistro breakfast; lunch & dinner; recreation; entertainment; fitness classes; theatre; library; salon; patio; pets in designated suites.

## COQUITLAM

### Belvedere Care Centre ▶

604-939-5991; 739 Alderson Ave.; www.belvederebc.com  
**Capacity:** (C) 148 units - Funded 61 units, (PP) 87 units  
**Starting Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** 24 hr professional assistance; 3 meals, tea/coffee, snacks, recreation/leisure program; lounges; outdoor space; resident/family centered living; access to physicians.

### Dufferin Care Centre ▶

604-552-1166; 1131 Dufferin St.  
www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** 153 units **Starting Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** site prepared meals; housekeeping & linens; nurse on-site 24/7; recreation programs; secure building; garden & patio; on site dietitian; beauty salon; music therapy.

### Residences at Belvedere ■●

604-939-1930; 750 Delestre Avenue; www.belvederebc.com  
**Capacity:** (I) 53, (A) 60, & 1 guest suite **Starting Price:** \$3400  
**Amenities/Services:** 24 hr professional assistance; 2 chef prepared meals; recreation/leisure program; in-suite emergency call system; weekly housekeeping & linen/towel service; respice care.

## DELTA

### Columbus Lodge Delta ■

604-833-8552; 8850 118A St, North Delta  
www.colchar.org  
**Capacity:** 31 units; private **Starting Price:** \$1600  
**Amenities/Services:** chef prepared Continental breakfast, lunch, dinner; laundry; hydro included; activities; bus trips once a week.

### Waterford, The ■▶

604-943-5954; 1345 56 St.; www.waterfordforseniors.com  
**Capacity:** (I) 106 units; (C) 36 units **Starting Price:** \$4150  
**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef-prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; close to amenities. Independent living or licensed 24-hour care centre; pets allowed.

### Wexford, The ■

604-948-4477; 1737 56 St.; www.wexfordforseniors.com  
**Capacity:** 65 suites **Starting Price:** \$4200  
**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef-prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; fitness centre; rooftop garden; private dining room; pets allowed.

## housing directory legend

We use three housing categories to define the residences:

### Independent/Supportive Living (I) ■

Includes a combination of housing and hospitality services for retired adults who are capable of directing their own care.

### Assisted Living (A) ●

Offers housing, hospitality services and personal assistance to adults who can live independently but require regular help with daily activities. By law, all Assisted Living residences must be registered with the Assisted Living Registrar of BC.

### Residential Care (C) ▶

Sometimes called Complex Care, these units also provide care and supervision for retired adults who are no longer capable of directing their own day-to-day activities. Complex Care settings typically provide a combination of housing and hospitality services, as well as extensive support services.

The **Housing Directory** on INSPIRED Magazine's website also has senior housing options.

You can find it at [www.seniorlivingmag.com/housing](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com/housing)

## KAMLOOPS

### Berwick on the Park ■●▶

250-377-7275; 1-866-377-7275; 60 Whiteshield Cres. S.  
www.berwickretirement.com  
**Capacity:** (I) 147 units; (A) 25 units; private **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** valley view; chef prepared meals; housekeeping; linens; 24hr emergency response; wellness program; transport; games room; fitness centre; library; theatre; gardens.

### Kamloops Seniors Village ■●▶

250-571-1800; 1-844-603-4663; 1220 Hugh Allan Dr.  
www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** (I/A) 101 units; (C) 114 units **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** beautiful mountain/valley views; chef prepared meals 2x day for (I/A) and 3 meals for (C); shuttle; recreation/entertainment; fitness classes; theatre; library; salon; (I/A) small pets okay.

## LANGLEY

### Harrison Landing ■●

604-530-7075; 20899 Douglas Cres.; www.harrisonlanding.com  
**Starting Price:** \$2800-\$3600  
**Amenities/Services:** toast/juice/coffee breakfast bar; 2 meals; light housekeeping; pub nights; socials; bingo; dining & fireside lounges; outdoor patios; recreation & wellness areas; fitness; bus.

### Harrison Pointe ■●

604-530-1101; 21616 52 Ave.; www.harrisonpointe.ca  
**Starting Price:** \$2420-\$3600  
**Amenities/Services:** toast/juice/coffee breakfast bar; 2 meals; light housekeeping; pub nights; socials; bingo; dining & fireside lounges; outdoor patios; large rec hall; wellness areas; fitness; bus.

### Langley Seniors Village ■●

604-539-9934; 20363 65th Ave.; www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** 121 apartments **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** Langley Seniors Village is centrally located in beautiful Willoughby, walking distance to numerous shops & services. Offering a wide range of activities on-site & bus for outings; chef prepared meals; library; hairdresser.

### Magnolia Gardens ■▶

604-514-1210; 5840 Glover Rd.; www.magnoliagardens.net  
**Capacity:** (I) 115 units; (C) 40 units **Starting Price:** \$2700  
**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef-prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; close to amenities. Licensed 24hr residential care centre.

### Sunridge Gardens ■

604-510-5091; 22301 Fraser Hwy.; www.sunridgegardens.net  
**Capacity:** 145 suites **Starting Price:** \$2400  
**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef-prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; close to amenities; theatre; courtyard gardens; pets allowed.

## MAPLE RIDGE

### Maple Ridge Seniors Village ■●▶

604-466-3053; 1-844-603-4663; 22141 119th Ave.  
www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** (I) 49; (A) 30; (C) 108 **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** (I) 2 meals a day; (A) 2 meals a day; (C) 3 meals/day; (A) home support avail; (I/A/C) 24hr emergency response; recreation; hairdresser; small pets allowed in (I/A).

## NANAIMO

### Berwick on the Lake ■●▶

250-729-7995; 1-877-525-3111; 3201 Ross Rd.  
www.berwickretirement.com  
**Capacity:** (I) 120 units; (A) 28 units; (C) 36 units; private  
**Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** lake view; chef prepared meals; housekeeping; linens; 24hr emergency response; wellness program; transport; fitness centre; library; theatre; games room; gardens.

### Nanaimo Seniors Village ■●▶

250-729-9524; 1-844-603-4663; 6089 Uplands Dr.  
www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** 357 apartments **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** (I) 1 meal a day; (A) 2 meals a day; (C) 3 meals a day; (A) home support avail; (I/A/C) 24hr emergency response; recreation; hairdresser; small pets allowed in (I/A).

## NEW WESTMINSTER

### Dunwood Place ■

604-521-8636; 901 Colborne St.  
**Capacity:** 191 bachelors & 1 bedrooms  
**Starting Price:** 30% of monthly income  
**Amenities/Services:** café & large patio for barbeques etc.; large lounge with view of Mt. Baker; workshop; tenant gardens; bingo; karaoke; cards; church services & bible studies; dinners; movie nights; 2 libraries.

## PARKSVILLE

### Stanford Seniors Village ■●▶

250-951-0811; 250 Craig St.; www.retirementconcepts.com  
**Capacity:** (I) 29; (A) 23; (C) 182 **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** ocean view suites; chef prepared meals; housekeeping & laundry; 24 hour emergency response; therapy services; recreation programs; hair salon; beautiful courtyard gardens.

## QUALICUM BEACH

### Berwick Qualicum Beach ■●

250-738-6200; 120 First Ave. W; berwickretirement.com  
**Capacity:** 94 units **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** ocean view; chef prepared meals; housekeeping; linens; 24hr emergency response; wellness program; theatre; fitness centre; games room; rooftop lounge; transport.

### The Gardens at Qualicum Beach ■●▶

250-738-2253; 650 Berwick Rd.; www.thegardensatqualicum.com  
**Capacity:** 70 units **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** nutritious lunch & dinner; snacks; weekly housekeeping & flat linen laundry service; full membership in social, recreational & wellness programs; scheduled bus outings; small pets.

## SIDNEY

### Amica Beechwood Village ■●

250-655-0849; 2315 Mills Rd.; http://amica.ca/beechwood  
**Capacity:** 106 units **Starting Price:** \$3200  
**Amenities/Services:** studios, 1 & 2 bedroom suites, premium patio suites; 24 hour staff & emergency pendant; assisted living services; all meals; basic cable; weekly housekeeping & linen service; activities & fitness programs; bus outings; respite stays.

## housing directory legend

■ Independent/Supportive Living (I)

● Assisted Living (A)

▶ Residential Care (C)



### Peninsula, The ■●

250-656-8827; 2290 Henry Avenue;

[www.welcometopeninsula.ca](http://www.welcometopeninsula.ca)

**Capacity:** 67

**Starting Price:** \$3900

**Amenities/Services:** individualized lifestyle; underground secure parking; salon/spa; activities; bus; spacious suites; refrigerators; near amenities; guest suites; pets welcome.

## STEVESTON

### Wisteria Place ■

604-338-5280; 4388 Garry St.; [www.wisteriaplace.ca](http://www.wisteriaplace.ca)

**Capacity:** 107 Studios, 1&2 Bdrm Suites **Starting Price:** \$2675

**Amenities/Services:** welcoming helpful staff; meals included; 24 hr emergency response; weekly housekeeping; daily diverse activities & events for vibrant living; in-suite laundry; heat included; wellness programs; trial stays; aging in place; & more.

## SURREY

### Guildford Seniors Village ►

604-582-0808; 1-844-603-4663; 14568 104A Ave.

[www.retirementconcepts.com](http://www.retirementconcepts.com)

**Capacity:** 98 studios

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** personalized 24hr nursing care; memory care; secured; furnished studios w/ en-suite; 3 meals; snacks; therapeutic spa; recreation; laundry/housekeeping; courtyard gardens.

### Peace Portal Seniors Village ►

604-535-2273; 1-844-603-4663; 15441 16th Ave.

[www.retirementconcepts.com](http://www.retirementconcepts.com)

**Capacity:** 84 apartments

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** 24hr full nursing care; controlled access community; furnished studio suites w/ en-suite; housekeeping/laundry; 3 nutritious meals & snacks; therapeutic recreation.

### Rosemary Heights Seniors Village ■●►

778-545-5000; 15240 34th Ave. [www.retirementconcepts.com](http://www.retirementconcepts.com)

**Capacity:** (I/A) 63; (C) 90 apartments

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** Independent/Assisted living - 1 bdrm suites with dining; housekeeping & recreation allows you to enjoy the convenience of support services in a social atmosphere; personalized 24hr nursing care.

### Suncrest Retirement Community ■●►

604-542-6200; 2567 King George Blvd.; [www.belvederebc.com](http://www.belvederebc.com)

**Capacity:** (I) 38, (A) 35, (Respite) 5, (C) 55 **Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** 24 hr. professional assistance; (C) 3 meals, (I/A) 2 meals; recreation; lounges; outdoor space; tea/coffee; resident/family centered living; spacious areas to relax & socialize.

## SUMMERLAND

### Summerland Seniors Village ■●►

250-404-4400; 1-844-603-4663; 12803 Atkinson Rd.

[ssv.info@retirementconcepts.com](mailto:ssv.info@retirementconcepts.com)

**Capacity:** (I/A) 120; (C) 112

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** chef prepared meals; shuttle; recreation/entertainment; fitness classes; theatre; library; salon; guest/respite suites; (I/A) small pets okay.

## VANCOUVER

### Amica Arbutus Manor ■●

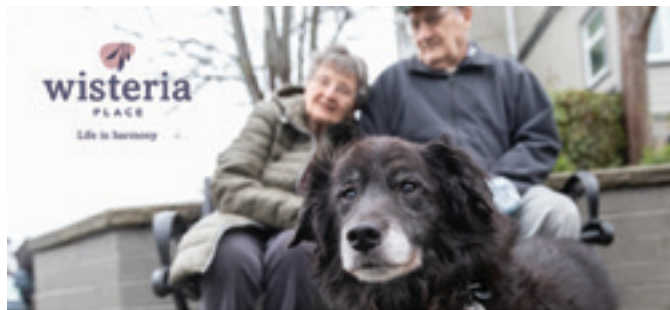
604-736-8936; 2125 Eddington Dr.

[www.amica.ca/arbutus-manor](http://www.amica.ca/arbutus-manor)

**Capacity:** 114 units

**Starting Price:** \$4700

**Amenities/Services:** 24/7 licensed practical nurse on-site; 3 meals; daily activities & entertainment; weekly housekeeping; flat linen laundry; cable; personal emergency response system. Located on 4-acres; courtyards; near shopping, parks, bus.



### Wisteria Place is Pet-Friendly

Wisteria Place loves furry friends. Pets are always welcome at Steveston's new seniors' community.

Curious? Call us for information and to sign up for a suite today.

### Keep active with Wisteria Place

We are hosting several events over the coming weeks, each one intended to keep our community active, healthy, and engaging. Join us!

Visit us at [Facebook.com/wisteriaplacebc](https://Facebook.com/wisteriaplacebc) to learn more.

People | Place | Community  
4388 Garry Street • 604-338-5280 • [wisteriaplace.ca](http://wisteriaplace.ca)  
An OPTIMA LIVING Community



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Nestled in the heart of Victoria, our beautiful community offers personalized long-term and memory care services. We focus on your well-being and unique preferences so you can spend your days doing what you love.



To learn more, contact us at **250-383-1366** or visit [SunriseVictoria.ca/Inspired](https://SunriseVictoria.ca/Inspired).

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### Amica Edgemont Village ■●▶

604-929-6361; 3225 Highland Blvd. North Vancouver

www.amica.ca/edgemont-village

**Capacity:** 131 suites

**Starting Price:** \$4350

**Amenities/Services:** 3 meals; 24/7 on-site nursing; personal emergency response system; weekly housekeeping & flat linen service; daily activities; bus excursions; entertainment; beautiful inner courtyard; theatre; craft kitchen; near shops and amenities.

### Amica Lions Gate ■●▶

778-280-8540; 701 Keith Rd.; www.amica.ca/lions-gate

**Capacity:** 90 units

**Starting Price:** \$6411

**Amenities/Services:** all meals; bistro; theatre; 24 hour on-site nursing staff & emergency call system; utilities include heat, hot water, cable, internet; daily suite tidy; weekly housekeeping, flat laundry service; daily activities & events; short term/respite stays

### Amica West Vancouver ■●▶

604-921-9181; 659 Clyde Ave., West Vancouver

www.amica.ca/west-vancouver

**Capacity:** 121 suites

**Starting Price:** \$4399

**Amenities/Services:** 24/7 licensed practical nurse on-site; 3 meals; daily activities & entertainment; weekly housekeeping with flat linen service; cable; personal emergency response system; swimming pool; courtyards; near shopping, parks & bus.

### Chelsea Park ■

604-789-7132; 1968 E. 19th Ave.; kdupont@newchelsea.ca

**Capacity:** 74 units

**Starting Price:** \$2700

**Amenities/Services:** well-designed, comfortable, affordable living for seniors; near John Hendry Park, Trout Lake; "Seal of Approval" recipient; belonging & community; many amenities included. Limited offer - 1 mo free rent w/ 12/mo lease.

### Columbus Millennium Tower ■

604-408-3547; 1175 Broughton St.

www.colchar.org

**Capacity:** 56 units; private

**Starting Price:** \$1780

**Amenities/Services:** dining room service at additional fee; pay laundry; pay secure underground parking; West end of Vancouver.

### Columbus Tower Vancouver ■

604-992-1344; 5233 Joyce St.

www.colchar.org

**Capacity:** 81 units; private

**Starting Price:** \$725

**Amenities/Services:** next to Sky Train; laundry; pay parking option.

### Renfrew Care Centre ▶

604-255-7723; 1880 Renfrew St.; www.retirementconcepts.com

**Capacity:** 106 units

**Price:** Fully funded

**Amenities/Services:** 24 hr care; wellness services; recreation; therapy programs; Independent living property nearby for campus of care options.

### Southview Terrace ■

604-438-3367; 3131 58 Ave E; www.southviewterracesa.ca

**Capacity:** 57 units

**Price:** Call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** Southview Terrace offers 1 & 2 bdrm apts. Rent incl lunch & dinner; utilities; cable; phone; housekeeping; flat laundry; 24hr emergency response; activities; & more; located beside Champlain mall.

### Terraces on Seventh ■

604-738-8380; 1570 West 7th Ave;

info@terracesonseventh.com

**Capacity:** 103 units

**Price:** Call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** 2 meals per day; bistro; general store; hair salon; housekeeping services; on call nurse; 24hr security; entertainment & social group outings.

## VICTORIA

### Amica Douglas House ■●▶

250-383-6258; 50 Douglas St.; www.amica.ca

**Capacity:** 102 units

**Starting Price:** \$3750

**Amenities/Services:** full kitchens in independent living, spacious suites & assisted living services; licensed residential care with nurses on duty 24/7; located in James Bay.

### Amica on the Gorge ■●▶

250-220-8000; 994 Gorge Rd. W; www.amica.ca

**Capacity:** 166 units

**Starting Price:** \$3300

**Amenities/Services:** Gorge waterway Continuum of Care - Independent Living, Assisted Living, Long Term Care, & Memory Care; 3 meals a day; bistro; weekly housekeeping; linen service; activities included.

### Amica Somerset House ■●

250-380-9121; 540 Dallas Rd.; www.amica.ca

**Capacity:** 135 suites

**Starting Price:** \$3700

**Amenities/Services:** Independent and Assisted Living; ocean-front studio, 1 and 2 bedroom suites with balconies; includes meals; bistro; weekly housekeeping; activities and fitness programs; theatre; pool; bus shuttle.

### Berwick House ■●▶

250-853-5492; 1-866-721-4062; 4062 Shelbourne St.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Price:** call for rates

**Capacity:** (I) 99 units; (A) 35 units; (C) 37 units; private

**Amenities/Services:** chef prepared meals; housekeeping; linens; 24hr emergency response; wellness program; transport; fitness centre; library; theatre; games room; gardens.

### Berwick Royal Oak ■●▶

250-386-4680; 1-866-721-4680; 4680 Elk Lake Dr.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Price:** call for rates

**Capacity:** (I) 201 units; (A) 25 units; (C) 27 units

**Amenities/Services:** chef prepared meals; housekeeping; linens; 24hr emergency response; wellness program; transport; fitness centre; library; theatre; games room; gardens.

### Carlton House of Oak Bay ■

250-595-1914; 2080 Oak Bay Ave; www.carltonhouse.ca

**Capacity:** 88 units

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** boutique independent living located in Oak Bay Village; meals by in-house chefs; social activities; secure u/g parking; 24hr staff; emergency call system; private car to Dr. apt; complimentary personal shopping; pets w/restrictions.

### Cherish at Central Park ■

250-478-4431; 100-917 Avriil Road; www.cherishvictoria.ca

**Capacity:** 130 units

**Starting Price:** \$2695

**Amenities/Services:** home made whole foods; warm and friendly place to call home.; all amenities like workshop, putting green, greenhouse, theatre, bistro, gym, salon, etc.; family owned and operated. Please call Micky.

### Cridge Village Seniors' Centre, The ■●

250-384-8058; 1307 Hillside Ave.; www.cridge.org

**Capacity:** 38 units (I); 38 units (AL)

**Starting Price:** \$2590 (I); subsidized (AL)

**Amenities/Services:** beautiful heritage building; walking paths; excellent food; modern addition; grand lounge; extensive recreation programming; common areas; visiting pets only.

### Rose Manor ■

250-383-0414; 857 Rupert Terrace;

www.rosemanor.ca

**Capacity:** 70 units

**Starting Price:** \$1334

**Amenities/Services:** 3 meals & tea times daily; weekly laundry & housekeeping; entertainment & activities; no pets allowed.

## housing directory legend

■ Independent/Supportive Living (I)

● Assisted Living (A)

▶ Residential Care (C)



### Saint Francis Manor by the Sea ■

250-382-7999; 1128 Dallas Road;  
www.saintfrancismanor.com

**Capacity:** 12 units

**Starting Price:** \$1975

**Amenities/Services:** at this Supportive Living home, you receive 3 home-cooked meals daily, while enjoying spectacular mountain and oceanfront views.

### Selkirk Seniors Village ●▶

250-940-1028; 385 Waterfront Cres.  
selkirk.info@retirementconcepts.com

**Capacity:** (A)41; (C)217

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** heart of Victoria; beautiful secure garden courtyard; chef inspired meals; entertainment & recreation; gardens; 24/7 emergency assistance; no live-in pets.

### Sunrise Senior Living of Victoria ■●▶

250-383-1366; 920 Humboldt St.; www.sunrisevictoria.com

**Capacity:** 93 units; private

**Starting Price:** \$5300

**Amenities/Services:** 24/7 nurse & care; emergency call system; memory, complex & palliative care; secure environment; walking club; activities; bistro; salon; lounge; pet friendly.

### The Glenshiel Housing Society ■

250-383-4164; 606 Douglas St.; www.theglenshiel.bc.ca

**Capacity:** 68 units

**Starting Price:** \$1350

**Amenities/Services:** three home cooked meals a day; light housekeeping; socially distanced activities; bedsitting room for independent seniors; no pets; COVID protocols in place; Follow us on Facebook.

### Trillium Highgate Lodge ■●

250-472-0077; 1538 Cedar Hill X-Rd.

www.trilliumcommunities.com/location/highgate-lodge

**Capacity:** 54 units

**Price:** \$2500-\$4200

**Amenities/Services:** lovely outdoor garden & walking paths; 3 meals/day; utilities included; housekeeping /linens; activities & exercise programs; bus outings; shuttle to appts; library; lounge; craft room; hobby kitchen; tuck shop; laundry rooms; guest suite.

### Trillium West Shore Village ■●

250-478-7527; 333 Wale Rd; www.liveatwestshorevillage.com

**Capacity:** 122 units

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** lovely outdoor garden & walking paths; 3 meals/day & utilities included; housekeeping; linen service; activities & exercise programs; bus outings; home theatre; pub; tuck shop; cafe; library lounge; craft room; pets allowed.

### Victorian at McKenzie, The ■

250-381-9496; 4000 Douglas St; www.victorianatmckenzie.ca

**Capacity:** 117 units

**Starting Price:** \$2500

**Amenities/Services:** 3 chef-prepared meals/day; housekeeping; shuttle bus; all day cafe; life line; 24/7 on duty personnel; calendar of activities; exercise classes; games room; library; residents' computer; pets welcome. COVID Safety Protocol in place.

### Wellesley of Victoria ■●▶

250-383-9099; 1-844-603-4663; 2800 Blanshard St.

www.retirementconcepts.com

**Capacity:** 204 apartments

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** salon; store; bistro; housekeeping; room for private functions; library; recreation; shopping shuttle; rooftop gardens; patio; theatre; AC; secure parking; pets w/ restrictions.

## WHITE ROCK

### Amica White Rock ■●▶

778-545-8800; 15333 16 Ave. South Surrey;

www.amica.ca/white-rock

**Capacity:** 157 units

**Starting Price:** \$5500

**Amenities/Services:** 3 meals; bistro; housekeeping; linen service; recreation programs; 8,000 sq ft roof top terrace; ocean & mountain views; pool; theatre; library; craft kitchen; fitness centre; bus; in-suite laundry; balconies; near medical centre; downtown.

### Concord Retirement Residence ■

604-531-6198; 15869 Pacific Ave;

www.concordretirementresidence.com

**Capacity:** 43 units

**Starting Price:** Cottages \$1785; Main \$2680

**Amenities/Services:** 3 home cooked meals; snacks; weekly housekeeping & laundry; 24hr emergency response; recreation; transportation; concierge service; pets allowed.

### White Rock Seniors Village ■▶

604-541-4663; 1183 Maple St. www.retirementconcepts.com

**Capacity:** 143 apartments

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** We provide both Independent Living & Complex Care accommodations; newly renovated, this community offers a welcoming atmosphere & a variety of amenities to help residents feel at home.

## WILLIAMS LAKE

### Williams Lake Seniors Village ■●▶

250-305-1131; 1455 Western Ave.;

wlsv.info@retirementconcepts.com

**Capacity:** (I)/(AL) 118 units; (R)

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** 24/7 staff; salon; store; bistro; housekeeping; room for private functions; library; recreation; private shuttle; A/C; reserved parking; pets welcome.

### housing directory legend

- Independent/Supportive Living (I)
- Assisted Living (A)
- ▶ Residential Care (C)

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# NEW RESIDENCES OPENING IN 2021

by CHRISTINE BLANCHETTE

Choosing a retirement residence can be an overwhelming experience with so many lifestyle options to choose from to maintain (or improve) one's quality of life. Here are three residences opening in 2021 from retirement resort living to affordable housing in your community.

## SUMMERWOOD RETIREMENT RESORT/ REGENCY RETIREMENT, Okanagan

Set to open May 1, 2021.

[www.regencyresorts.ca/summerwood-retirement-resort/](http://www.regencyresorts.ca/summerwood-retirement-resort/)  
Independent Living, contact Ed Hall [Edh@regencyresorts.ca](mailto:Edh@regencyresorts.ca)

Ed Hall, chairman of Regency Retirement Resorts Limited, is excited about the new Summerwood Retirement Resort opening in May. "I don't know that any other group in our industry refers to themselves as a retirement resort. We're kind of unique in that way. And we coined this expression about 15 years ago when we introduced our first retirement resort in the Okanagan Valley. Basically, what differentiates Regency Retirement Resort is a serious commitment to life enrichment."

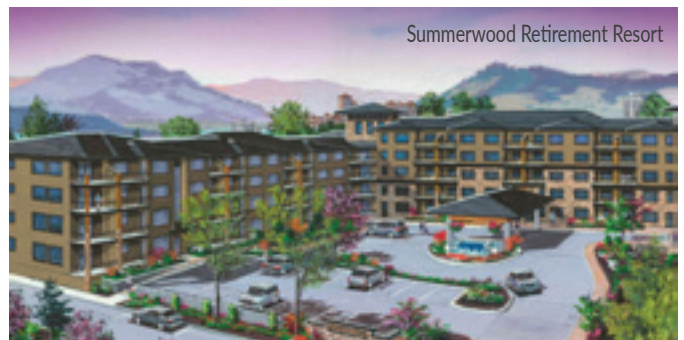
Hall and his team stress the importance of having pride in where you live. "Your mom is going to blossom," he says. "We're going to offer and deliver a suite of services that is going to make her life more enriching, more enjoyable and more engaging than she's currently enjoying."

Architecturally, Summerwood has a strong feeling of resort luxury. "It feels like a place where you want to spend time, where you want to live, where you want your loved ones to live," says Hall. "Summerwood also offers amenity-enriched services. For example, when you go to a Four Seasons Hotel or a Fairmont Hotel, it has a beautiful lounge, a beautiful spa, fitness equipment, swimming pools, theatres, reception rooms, and wine-tasting rooms. We have all that. One of our favourite cute expressions is 'Cruise Ship Living Everyday... without getting seasick!'"

"And the really neat thing about this new residence is we were able to negotiate a deal with the city, where we were able to develop half the property, but the other half of the property is a two-acre nature parkland that is going to be left in its natural state forever. And it's for the exclusive use of Summerwood residents."

The residence will be welcoming their first residents in

April with generous early bird incentives to their first residents.



## WISTERIA PLACE BY OPTIMA LIVING, Steveston

Opening Spring 2021

604-338-5280

[maureen.fakaro@optimaliving.ca](mailto:maureen.fakaro@optimaliving.ca)

Wisteria Place's Community Relations Manager Maureen Fakaro has been busy reaching out to people and businesses in the Richmond suburb of Steveston, the latest location for the Optima Living group of retirement residences.

"One of the pieces that's really important to Optima Living is education and resourcing," says Fakaro. "We aim to be leaders for our residents and their family members, but also for seniors in BC and Alberta seeking information and guidance for their vibrant living options. We're very connected to the universities in Western Canada, including the University of Manitoba. We're working with leading experts in brain health, supporting people in aging vibrantly, and understanding individual needs."

"We are an independent living community," she says. "I've done a lot of connecting with partners in Richmond, which are organizations that offer resources for seniors. This year, with the limitations and restrictions [of COVID-19], it's been so awesome to see our virtual community grow and make new, meaningful connections."

Wisteria Place by Optima Living backs onto a beautiful green park with pathways that go straight to Steveston village. The residence is pet friendly and an off-leash park is within a short walking distance. Residents can get anything they need



for support, services, a library, and great village shops with a riverside walkway.

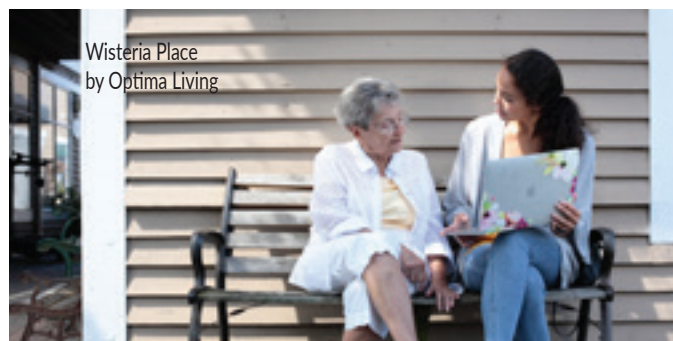
One-hundred-and-seven deluxe one-bedroom suites will enjoy great views, and one guest suite allows residents to invite their families or visitors to come and stay.

“Everybody’s excited about our in-suite laundry as this can be hard to come by,” says Fakaro. Each suite is also equipped with kitchenettes and good-sized bathrooms.

But Wisteria’s priorities delve deeper than unit features. Afterall, it is the people living and working in a community that make it special!

“The foundational focus on quality care and values where each individual is respected and honoured, and manifesting Life in Harmony in the diverse community is priority,” says Fakaro. “Beyond that, the building will have a top-notch emergency response and security system along with a Japanese flair in the architecture and design, and even the food will have unique ethnic options, too. We can’t forget that it’s in a residential area and we have our own Koi pond, Zen garden, and private courtyard. The attention to first-class resources and the commitment to help our residents live vibrantly as long as possible is paramount.”

“Our staff team will be there to provide people with whatever they need to create and maintain their exciting, vibrant life with our in-house resources and services, as well as other connections they may need.”



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Chief Executive Officer at Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society (NAHS), Andrea Blakeman, shared how this housing project began its evolution six years ago when NAHS inherited a site from the George R. Pearkes Housing Society. Located on Buttertubs Marsh, the concept grew over time, allowing NAHS to build a large two-phase project.

“We put together a response to a request for proposals from BC Housing for both phases with two different funding programs, zoned for senior housing,” says Blakeman. “A number of things are different about this building. It is designed for

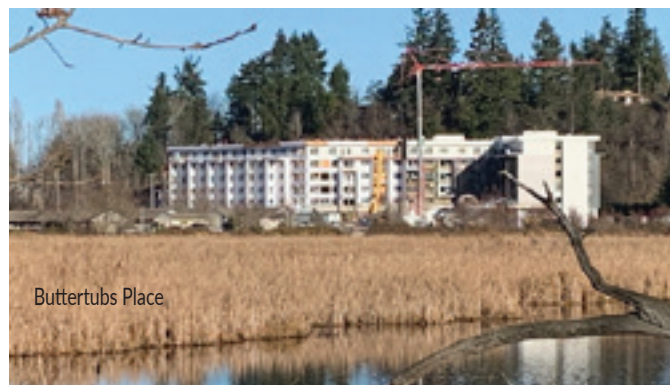
independent seniors. What came to NAHS when the property was transferred is one of the few Seniors Supportive Housing Programs left in the province, which currently includes a daily three-course dinner, weekly light housekeeping and Lifeline®. We will have a large commercial kitchen and there will be a variety of meal programmes available for residents. There is a large dining area, activity space and outside patio on the ground floor near the marsh, as well as a large second-floor patio on the north side of the building for residents.”

Other unique aspects to this residence are units with spectacular views for every budget from modest to low-end. NAHS recently partnered with the local chapter of the BC Old Age Pensioner’s Organization, which will have office space and provide activity programming to participating tenants in the building as well as support services – all onsite!

“We get to work with a huge variety of people from all sorts of backgrounds and really assist a lot of people,” says Blakeman. “I am blessed in that I am doing something I really love, creating community. I am a community builder and have been doing that one way or another my entire adult life. This is right up my alley from every perspective.”

She continues, “Most of our buildings are for seniors, and this building will likely be 65-plus, as well. The two new sites we’ve been awarded by BC Housing – one in Hammond Bay and one in Parksville – are both independent seniors and families community housing projects. What that means is that independent people from varied backgrounds and economic situations can all find a home that suits them. For example, a multi-generational family: grandparents could be residing in one unit; and their kids and grandkids in one of the townhomes, all on one site in Parksville. Pretty exciting stuff!”

What about furry friends at Buttertubs? “We have five bachelor units on the ground floor where residents in those units can have a small dog,” says Blakeman. “From level two and up, there are bachelor suites, one-bedroom, one-bedroom with den and two-bedroom units where residents can have an indoor cat or small pet. Buttertubs is a five-minute drive or short transit ride to the downtown core of Nanaimo, yet it feels like you are in the country. You see deer, hawks, herons, and turtles. It’s wildlife central!” |



# SOUL SEARCHING

by MYLES SHANE

All the signs pointed to breast cancer. The doctor was adamant that a biopsy was imperative, but Lois Ross wouldn't have any of it.

"I was 31 when the doctor wanted to investigate me for a possible malignancy," she says. "I never had any invasive diagnostic procedures, as I wanted to keep my body intact. My symptoms were a lump in my breast and lymph nodes in my armpit that were causing pressure on the nerves often making my fingers tingle, and sometimes go numb."

Lois was stubborn. She insisted on no biopsy, no surgeries and absolutely no chemotherapy. Instead of allowing traditional, Western-trained doctors help fight off her possible cancer, Lois turned to a variety of knowledgeable holistic practitioners.

## RHAPSODY OF THE SOUL

Today, Lois, 77, has a new book called *Rhapsody of The Soul*. In it, she invites readers on an enticing inner journey to experience the power of the soul and the profound wisdom it offers for day-to-day living.

"Our soul is intimately connected to the vast, powerful wisdom of the Divine and chooses a lifetime on earth to increase its spiritual growth and learning," she says. "Throughout this book, you will encounter a variety of resources which will empower you to awaken to your soul and, in the process, remember your divine nature."

The book took Lois many years to write, but she has "been very focused for the last three years." One of her favourite passages from the book is "Wise and magical, the soul nudges us, wanting us to wise up to the truth of our lives." It's a message for all of us.

## DAWSON CREEK

Lois's journey started in the small farming community of Dawson Creek, BC. "It was a small farming town that had a population of 14,000 people when I left in 1962. We had a large rural community where kids were bussed to school. My father was the supervisor of the bus garage." Her older brother was well read and during adolescence developed many spiritual beliefs based on his arcane readings. "My brother had the wisdom within him from an early age. He was a great reader and if he found sources of information for himself that held the esoteric teachings, he shared them with me." One of his main interests was the human soul. He believed the soul was in the core of a human being and after our physical



Author Lois Ross

Photo: Vasgen Degirmentas

body died, the soul continued its journey through future reincarnations.

## ROYAL INLAND HOSPITAL

When she was 19, Lois chose to become a nurse. The choices for girls in those days commonly were secretary, teacher or nurse. She trained at Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, BC. Even with her spiritual belief system intact, it was still hard to watch patients pass away.

"It was difficult when a patient died, but there were jobs that needed to be done when someone died, so we learned to dismiss what we couldn't deal with."

Turning to the guidance of holistic practitioners in her journey to heal her tumours became a catalyst in her leaving traditional nursing.

"I left nursing as I was clear that I needed to share my understanding of health and healing from a holistic perspective. To have the most complete healing, we need to include the traditional approach along with the holistic, which embraces all aspects of us as human beings, not just the broken part."

For many years Lois worked as a Holistic Health and Lifestyle Consultant, which included energy healing, shamanic energy medicine and spirituality.

## DEATH & DYING

At 36, Lois was devastated when her oldest brother disappeared on a hiking trip. "He had been missing for several hours before we were notified, and then the weather deteriorated and they could not do an aerial search or a ground search, which would have been difficult and perhaps impossible."

His body was found a few days later. Afterwards, Lois fell into a deep depression. "It was extremely emotional, and the waves of grief went on for some time. He was my oldest brother who died a shocking death, very unlike the type of person he was. I was in a state of grief, which has many emotions."



One of the ways Lois was lifted from the darkness was by reading the works of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, who wrote about the five stages of grief in her famous book, *On Death and Dying*. Kübler-Ross was one of the first psychiatrists to share her view on life after death with the media and public.

"I did not connect with my brother for several years after his death and when I have, our interactions have been brief but impactful."

### THE SPIDERWEB OF LIGHT

Lois's quest to study the soul has taken her across the globe and introduced her to countless fascinating people.

"I studied with many different energy healing teachers, learning to approach my understanding of holistic healing from a physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual perspective."

Over the years, she has studied in Peru, Utah and California.

"I had a profound experience in Patagonia, Chile on the night of a full moon, where I had a visual experience of a spiderweb of light that filled the entire sky. I wanted to know what I saw and why I saw it. There are many levels of 'seeing,' which, in the spiritual world, is called clairvoyance and there is a level of maturity that is necessary to manage it. This experience happened before I began my shamanic studies. I believe I had the vision to expand my horizons and lead me into the earth teachings of shamanism."

### BEATING DISEASE

Whether Lois had cancer or not is still unknown. However, after a year of following her own guidance and her holistic practitioners' plan, her lesions disappeared, and she was starting to feel like her old self again.

"I believe I was successful in eliminating the tumours by diligently following a plan for health that included cleansing/fasting, herbal medicines, nutritious foods, fresh air, and managing my mind." |

To purchase Lois's new book *Rhapsody of the Soul* visit [loisross.com](http://loisross.com)

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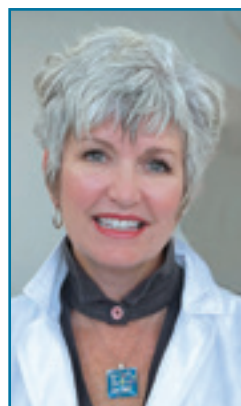
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# BREATHE EASIER AT HOME

by NANCY J. SCHAAF

I lifted the kitchen chair by its back, and it tore away from its base. I guess I don't know my own strength! As I examined the chair's back, I discovered that this chair was pressed wood held together by glue. While researching how to repair it, I learned that pressed wood products emit toxins. Not only did I have a broken chair, but it was polluting my indoor air quality!

Mention air pollution, and most people, including me, think only of outdoor air quality. We rarely question the quality of air in our homes, but we should. The Canadian government's website offers detailed information about indoor air quality and warns that our indoor air is two to five times more polluted than outdoor air.

You might wonder why. If there is printing ink, paper towels, furniture made from pressed wood, like plywood and particleboard, waxed papers, plastics, glues, detergents, or window cleaners in your home, your indoor air quality is polluted by the gases emitted by these products.

Certainly, most of us regard these things as harmless. Who would knowingly bring toxins into their homes? Research shows that we spend over 90 per cent of our lives indoors, whether at home, work, or in the car. Because of COVID-19 and colder weather, we are probably spending even more time indoors. I decided further research on improving indoor air quality was necessary.

Indoor air pollutants are Volatile Organic Chemicals (VOCs), mold, pollen, pet dander, and dust. VOCs are organic compounds released as gases from numerous sources, including cigarette smoke, building materials, such as paint, glues, and varnish. Common household products such as air fresheners (ironic, isn't it?), cleaning products, paint, and carpeting emit harmful gases.

Most homes contain these toxic chemicals such as xylene, ammonia, benzene (a known human carcinogen), formaldehyde, and trichloroethylene. These dangerous particles float through the air, most of which are entirely invisible to the human eye. Short-term exposure to these toxic chemicals contributes to adverse health effects like headaches, eye, nose, throat irritation, breathing difficulties, and dizziness. Long-term contact often leads to lifelong respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, liver damage, and cancer.

But we can help mitigate this growing health concern. The most effective way to reduce indoor air pollution is to remove or reduce the source of contamination, such as instituting a no-smoking rule indoors and using green cleaning products.

Another key strategy concerns ventilation, as insufficient ventilation and the lack of fresh air entering the home accounts for most VOCs. Health Canada's Residential Indoor Air Quality strongly suggests maintaining good air circulation and heat flow. We can open windows and doors depending on outdoor conditions, use kitchen and bathroom fans, replace filters as per the manufacturer's instructions, and use an air filter system.

Portable air cleaners, particularly HEPA filters, can reduce air contaminants as they collect particle pollutants with a fine filter. For those with asthma or other respiratory diseases, the filter can be lifesaving.

Another solution is to bring nature into our homes with air purifying plants. In 1989, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) conducted the Clean Air Study, and the published results provided a definitive list of the most significant plants at purifying indoor air.

Although this research is over 30 years old, the information is accurate and comprehensive. The study further reveals that plants grown indoors can significantly improve health, reduce fatigue, strengthen the immune system, and enhance concentration. Surrounding ourselves with plants improves how our bodies feel and prevents disease, makes us happier and calmer, and increases our efficiency and productivity.

When added to our homes, plants provide air that is purer and free from harmful agents.

The Peace Lily plant removes benzene, formaldehyde, ammonia, and trichloroethylene from the air. This is a low maintenance plant that likes shady, indirect sunlight and moist soil.

The Aloe Vera plant is also low maintenance. I appreciate this plant as a remedy for minor skin ailments such as cuts and bruises. Also, the gel inside the leaves soothes sunburn. An aloe plant is a practical addition to any kitchen windowsill, as it loves a sunny spot and requires infrequent watering. This succulent plant purifies the air of formaldehyde and benzene in varnishes, floor finishes, and detergents.

Snake plants are a fantastic addition to our homes. The plant can filter harmful toxins, remove carbon dioxide, and release oxygen. For those with allergies and breathing issues, select a snake plant. Research suggests that these plants effectively remove harmful toxins like benzene and formaldehyde from indoor areas. The snake plant is a hardy houseplant that tolerates low light and prefers infrequent watering.

The robust Spider plants are beneficial for indoor use because they purify and detoxify the air we breathe, filtering



out airborne pollutants. The NASA study showed that spider plants could eliminate 90 per cent of the potentially carcinogenic chemical formaldehyde, just like snake plants. The plant absorbs unpleasant odors and fumes and is known to promote good sleep. The hardy spider plant is a long-standing staple among houseplant-lovers. Spider plants are resilient and low maintenance, needing only occasional watering. They thrive in bright, indirect light.

Spider plants produce a chain of white flowers and “pups,” which are baby plants that hang down from the mother plant. This rapidly growing plant looks beautiful as it cascades from a hanging basket. The spider plant is one of the few houseplants that are non-toxic to animals.

We feel happier when surrounded by plants that are decorative and beautiful. A healthy home environment is essential to a person’s well-being, and houseplants contribute their air-purifying properties to rid the home of toxic elements. We spend much of our lives indoors, so bringing nature into our homes is an excellent idea. In my home, I added a snake and a hanging spider plant. Not only will life be more joyful, but indoor air quality will improve.

As for that toxic, flimsy chair, it’s gone! |

*Find more information at [www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca) and search Indoor Air Quality.*

Nancy J. Schaaf is a retired Registered Nurse and health writer.



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## DOUG & KEN

Vancouverite Doug says he would probably never have met Ken, a US resident, and now his husband of more than 10 years, if he’d made different choices during his Christmas holidays in Puerto Vallarta in 2004.

“If I hadn’t booked a last-minute flight to PV,” he muses, “gone to the Gay Beach, run into a friend who invited me to Gay Bingo at the Los Amigos pub, I might never have met Ken. I think about all the little decisions we make every day that can affect everything else that happens as a result.”

When the two initially met over that first game, it was a “bingo” moment for Doug, who was single at the time. But it was still a few years before the couple could be together. Ken, married with grown children and living in Seattle, at the time, was devoted to his ailing wife, and faithfully stayed by her side until her last breath.

“We maintained minimal contact during that time,” says Ken, of his meeting with Doug. “But when I got through the grieving process, I called him. It developed quickly after that.”

The two, both now retired, have spent their last nine winters in Puerto Vallarta and they hope to resume that tradition as soon as travel restrictions lift. They also share homes in both Vancouver, where they have been living through the pandemic, and on Whidbey Island in Washington State.

“We are looking forward to getting down to our US home and garden again when the borders ultimately re-open,” they say. But they also agree that Puerto Vallarta is their “special” place, not only because they first met there, but also because they enjoy the Mexican culture, connect with its people and, of course, bask in its climate. |





# THE SPIRIT LIVES ON

by ALAN G. LUKE & JACQUIE D. DURAND

One would think that numerous military sieges on a city would, at least, be detrimental to the disposition of its inhabitants. However, in its more than 2,000-year history, Maastricht, Netherlands has not only endured, but its indelible spirit has been assimilated into every aspect of society.

The spirit lives throughout the city and stands in the Stokstraat Quarter, the city centre of Roman Maastricht. A bronze statue of the “Mestreechter Geis,” the tangible Spirit of Maastricht, is a jester with an impish grin. He is the symbol of Carnival and his essence is perpetuated year-round. The fundamental foundation of the spirit within Maastricht lies embedded in the centuries of influence. In this land essentially without borders, cultural and traditional exchange from the south solidified a concrete international imprint.

In medieval times borders, and especially bastions, were paramount. For six centuries the city was totally enclosed by a system of fortifications. Several sieges, including that of the Sun King Louis XIV, are a part of the city’s turbulent history.

The French Duke D’Artagnan (1611-1673) was Lieutenant-Captain of the legendary White Musketeers. A statue and plaque are located where he was mortally wounded, just outside the city walls in Waldeck Park. Three decades

later, Napoleon preferred to inspect the fortifications rather than attend a celebration given in his honour.

A more commanding statue of a Maastrichtenaar physicist stands at the Boschstraat entrance to Market Square. In 1784, Jan Pieter Minckelers (1748-1824) discovered that the gas produced from coal could be used to make gas lamps. This is the reason for the eternal flame he holds in his left hand.

Helpoort (hell gate), the oldest of its kind in the Netherlands, was formed in 1229 as a part of the first medieval city wall. Walking through the stoned gateway, one can almost hear the soldiers’ footsteps on the cobblestones as they marched under the ancient archway. Directly across the street is the “Plague House” (1775), a former paper mill. Its undeserved name was due to the proximity of the barracks to the plague sufferers in town.

ABOVE | View from Basilica tower in Town Square.

RIGHT | Mestreechter Geis statue.

PAGE 24 | Maastricht’s medieval structures. *Photos: Alan G. Luke*



Another prominent 13th century structure straddles the Maas River to the city quarter of Wyck. The St. Servatius Bridge (1289) is named after the first bishop of the Netherlands. One can find his namesake church in the heart of the city. The medieval Basilica of St. Servatius has an ornate, awe-inspiring archway entrance from the north courtyard.

Adjacent to the church is the 14th century Gothic St. Janskerk (St. John the Baptist's church) in Henric van Valdeke Square. At 70-metres high, the red tower punctuates the cityscape. I decided to ascend the head-spinning 218 spiral stairs to the 43-metre level for a magnificent view. This stairway is narrow, and you get to become familiar with fellow tourists, whether you care to or not.

The tower was constructed from relatively porous marble, which was painted red to signify ownership by the builders and for preservation from the elements. The church itself possesses 115 liturgical artefacts, murals, and myriad grave monuments from the early 15th century to the late 18th century. For those so inclined or blessed, the number of churches in the city enables one to visit a different church each week of the year.



At the other end of the spectrum, there are more than enough pubs and cafés in Maastricht that you could visit every day of the year in this city of 120,000 residents. Food and drink are an integral part of the joie de vivre of the city, reflecting the inherent spirit and lifestyle of the people.

In this province of Limburg, the cheese is not the only prominent product. Amber brew like Brand, Gulpener and the local Ridder beer are among the sudsy selections of residents and tourists alike. Beer remained the most important table drink until the last century.

We ambled over to the provincial capital's oldest pub, Den Ouden Vogelstruys (The Old Ostrich), for some sustenance of local suds. This quaint establishment opened its doors in 1730 and sits beside a row of cafés across from Vrijthof Square.

Wine is popular as is the traditional, juniper-flavoured Dutch liquor, Jenever. This potent potable is invariably served

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in a small liqueur glass. Not being used to consuming raw herring, a notorious Dutch specialty, Jenever made my fish dish somewhat more palatable. Evidently, another acquired taste is the smoked eel, considered a delicacy. I recalled that during a countryside bicycle ride, the guide informed me that besides other fish, eels frequented the canals. My feelings abated on deciding whether my feet should become bait while I cooled them in the nearby canal.

For a tasty quasi-continental breakfast, we enjoyed some wafer-thin slices of cooked ham and gouda cheese. Then subsequently we tried a popular lunch-time treat, pannenkoek (pancakes). There were various ingredients and toppings in which to indulge oneself; including bacon, apple slices and naturally, cheese. Residents of Holland are fondly regarded as kaaskoppen (cheese heads) by the rest of Europe. Their version of maple syrup is a kind of viscous sugar beet syrup (stroop).

One may be satiated by a simple local lunch consisting of a broodje (sandwich) and some frites (french fries). The latter

is to be embellished – not with ketchup – but with the popular European condiment, mayonnaise.

If you overindulge in one way or another, then a 10 km drive east of Maastricht may rectify that. At Thermae 2000, the beneficial minerals in the thermal waters soothe both body and mind. The spa in the town of Valkenburg was established by a pair of physiotherapists in 1989. This water was discovered 381 metres below the surface where the dormant springs had been lying for centuries. Today, a spacious pyramidal structure overlooks the Geul Valley in Limburg's Highland. The impressive view is just a bonus to what the attractive facility has to offer.

Medieval Maastricht exudes an allure all its own. Personal sensibilities derived from experiencing cultural tastes and historic sites only enhance the ever-present endemic spirit existing here in the Netherlands' southernmost and sunniest city. |

*For IF YOU GO information, visit [www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/maastricht-the-netherlands](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/maastricht-the-netherlands)*



# FOREVER FIT

by EVE LEES

## IS THERE A “HEALTHIEST” OR “BEST” DIET?

What’s the healthiest diet to follow? Is there a perfect diet for everyone? Many sources claim to know the “best” diet for humans, so the answer depends on who you ask. Typically, these sources often disagree with each other, which adds to the confusion.

In truth, there is no single, perfect diet for everyone – or no particular way to eat to assure good health. We are all individual and have unique physiological needs. Some can function well on a vegan diet and do poorly on a diet higher in meat. Others may find the opposite is true.

What science can agree on is that we all need macronutrients: protein, fats, carbohydrates, and water. Each of these provide a wide array of the necessary micronutrients (vitamins, mineral, etc.). The ratio of the macronutrients (protein: carbs: fat), however, will differ for each of us. There is no one-size-fits-all recommendation, although it is not advised to go to extremes or completely avoid any of them.

We also know many people function best on a diet that includes plenty of vegetables and few highly processed foods. This seems to be the recurring “health-improvement” factor in every study on the human diet. Research also suggests focusing on quality and variety.

When planned well, a “healthy” diet includes high-quality foods that are whole or minimally processed because the more a food is refined, the fewer nutrients it will offer. Therefore, we need to minimize packaged and convenience foods. Focus mostly on whole vegetables, fresh fruit, high-quality fats (like nuts and seeds, avocados, and fatty fish), complex carbohydrates (cooked whole grains and starchy root vegetables), and your choice of animal or plant-based protein sources (legumes, fish, and sustainably raised meat, eggs, and dairy).

Food variety is equally important because each food has its own unique combination of nutrients. Therefore, variety assures you are getting all the different vitamins, minerals, fibre, and phytochemicals – many yet undiscovered – that you need for optimal health.

Incidentally, don’t be impressed by “superfoods.” These are simply foods that have had certain health-boosting properties identified. Science hasn’t closely examined every food yet, therefore all whole, unrefined foods are really “superfoods.”

Using the above general guidelines, you can plan your diet to suit your own unique nutrient needs. Experiment with the ratios of macronutrients (protein, fat, carb) that improve or maintain your good health. But avoid extreme amounts or complete avoidance of any, as this will limit variety of your foods, and therefore limit the amount of nutrients you get.

Consult a Registered Dietitian (RD) if you need assistance.

Emphasize whole foods over highly refined foods and enjoy plenty of variety in your food choices. Studies continually show this is far more important than focusing on extreme low-fat, low-calorie, low-carb or high-protein diets. |



**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](http://www.artnews-healthnews.com)

# MIND-BODY CONNECTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS

By WENDY JOHNSTONE

Caregivers providing care and support encounter a multitude of physical and psychological stressors. While caregiving is considered rewarding by most caregivers, it often creates significant stress. And, research shows that too much stress negatively impacts one's physical and psychological health, including depression, anxiety, and a decrease in overall well-being.

Caregivers often tell us that they know what they need to do for themselves, but it can be difficult to pause the caregiving video playing in their head. Also, they can't always find respite so they can leave their home (even more so now!). This can lead to caregivers who stop caring for themselves; not because they want to but because they can't find the energy to focus on themselves.

Mind-body connections are gaining traction as being an effective way of improving overall well-being for caregivers. Activities such as yoga, walking meditation and mindfulness are a few ways caregivers can change their relationship to stressors, especially when those stressors can't be changed. This is often the case with caregiving.

The beauty of such activities is that once they are learned, caregivers can use them on an ongoing basis. The impact of mind-body activities often stretches beyond the caregiving role. Caregivers report feeling more empowered to use them in their everyday lives or as a daily practice. Equally important, mind-body activities can be done in small spaces or outdoors in the yard or neighbourhood and can be tailored in length and intensity.

Mindfulness is awareness we gain through paying attention to thoughts and emotions in the present moment and with no

judgment. The focus of mindfulness is to be aware of one's immediate surroundings and sensations and allow thoughts and feelings to come and go without ruminating or getting lost in them.

Family Caregivers of BC (FCBC) has some webinars and handouts on mindfulness. You can find them by searching our website with the keyword "mindfulness." Dan Harris' book called *Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics* is also a great resource for those who don't know where to begin with a mindfulness practice.

Yoga brings together physical and mental components to help achieve movement of the body and a more peaceful mind. The "Do Yoga With Me" website has many Canadian yoga teachers and a wide variety of practices from beginners to advanced.

Walking meditation is for those who love being outdoors and active. It is designed to bring body and mind in sync while walking. One of the basics of this method involves staying aware of the physical experience of walking, paying attention to the specific components of each step. When the mind wanders, simply bring it back to each step; when a thought pops up, experts suggest going back to focusing on the breath. There are various walking meditation apps or guidelines on the web.

The above activities are a starting point; there are many others that reduce stress and offer an opportunity to improve wellness. Consider trying a few in 2021!

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



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# AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY I DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR

## COURAGEOUS & OUTRAGEOUS

by PAT NICHOL

I told them I didn't want to be 80. Nonsense, they said. It will be fun, they said. New adventures, different things to do, they said. Hah!

So, in November I turned 80. Not bad, not much is changing; I still feel much younger. People still say I don't *look* 80. People on the phone say I don't *sound* 80. Folks, this is what 80 looks and sounds like.

Being 80 was simply fine until the middle of December. I went for some tests, still feeling great. My last test was a CT scan. Dressed, I was ready to get in my car and head for home. Christmas things to do, don't you know?

No, you are coming to emergency. What? No, I have places to go, baking to do. Thus, began a roller coaster ride that looks like it is going to last a while.

Life sometimes leads us on journeys we would never go on if it were up to us. From emergency to being a full-time patient for three or four days. I'm still feeling sort of fine, no reason to be there as far as I can tell, plus no visitors, nothing to distract. That is okay, I have books to read, a room of my own, and a TV to play with.

Then came the reason I didn't get to go home: a smudge on my liver. Needs a biopsy. Still not worried. Doc is pleased, just lots of juice, doesn't seem serious. Looks like a bad infection, so antibiotics pumped into my system. I am

discharged with a pocketful of pills. So, I am home for Christmas dinner – an untraditional Paella. Yum!

Post-holidays, the journey takes a hard turn. It is not just an infection; it is cancer. Told you I didn't want to be 80.

While I don't have many answers yet, I am now on this path that many of you have already taken. I have determined that I will talk about it, share ideas and adventures, as they come along. How courageous and outrageous I will be is yet to be seen.

I am surrounded by love, compassion, and great friends. Not sure I am going to like every step of this voyage, so if you have some suggestions, I would love to hear them.

Found this quote recently: "Don't be afraid, have faith, find the lessons. Trust the journey." So, I will. |

Pat Nichol is a speaker and published author. You can reach her by email at [mpatnichol@gmail.com](mailto:mpatnichol@gmail.com)

### Editor's Note:

Pat Nichol and I have been colleagues at *INSPIRED Magazine* for a long time. In fact, I can't remember a time in our 17-year history when she *wasn't* writing the Courageous & Outrageous column! She has never missed a deadline (by much) and she consistently comes up with new ways to reach out to and connect with readers. I learned of her recent diagnosis while editing this month's column.

Courageous? Yes! Pat has always graciously shared the stories of her life and learning, and for that we are so grateful. Outrageous? You bet! Knowing what we know about Pat, we are confident she will tackle this challenge with grace, grit and good humour.

Please join me in wishing her a smooth journey and a swift recovery. God speed, Pat! We love you.

—Bobbie Jo Reid

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