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55+ lifestyle magazine

JULY 2021

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ANGELA  
HEWITT

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### Cover ANGELA HEWITT

A successful classical music career requires a next-level dedication, but a balanced life in her formative years makes Angela Hewitt's experiences – and life – that much richer and more fulfilling. Photo: James Katz

## INSPIRED

55+ lifestyle magazine

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## THRIVE BEYOND 55

by BARBARA RISTO, PUBLISHER



I frequently think about our world and how we can make it a better place.

In my opinion, that process begins with our core values and beliefs.

When we are aligned with those values and beliefs, they manifest through our actions.

This month I was sent this picture of the delivery truck owned by the company that prints this magazine. It made me proud of my association.



I asked for the back-story and was told the owner of Web exPress wants the company to reflect his personal ideals, so he came up with this list. Not only are these values printed on the van, I'm told he also has these words printed on the stairs leading to his office.

When you are as bold as to put your values and ideals in writing for everyone to see, you set a pretty high bar for yourself and challenge those

around you to consider how they show up in the world.

I have always wanted *INSPIRED Magazine* to be part of the evolution toward a better world. To know that associates of mine hold this same aspiration is heart-warming.

I'm grateful each day for the many people around me, who serve in various capacities to bring this magazine into your homes every month. From our employees and freelance writers to the many service contractors; these are people who have good values and high ideals. I'm proud to stand with every one of them. And I'm proud to serve the 55+ community.

As we enter *INSPIRED Magazine's* 18th year, I feel it is like the child that has now found its place in the world as an adult. When I gave birth to it in 2004, it was with the same trepidation, uncertainty – and hope – that I'm sure parents feel when they bring a newborn into this world.

Thanks to the care and nurturing of the many people who are part of the village that has tended to the magazine during its growing up years, it has developed a personality and a reputation that will stand it in good stead as it takes its next steps of maturity.

Each month we do our best to live up to the ideals and values that earned the magazine a place in your sacred homes. I am honoured and humbled by the love so many of you have expressed for this creation. And I am eager to see what the next years bring. |

# RE START (WITH ATTITUDE)

by BARBARA RISTO

As governments talk about restarting the economy post-pandemic, many of us are wondering how to restart our lives.

Pandemic mode took many of us out of high circulation. It limited our social reach and forced us to reinvent new ways to function in our homes and workspaces.

As resilient beings, we rose to the challenge. At times, it was excruciatingly difficult, but here we are, ready to step into the next phase.

A few weeks ago, Jane Marczewski, aka “Nightbirde,” earned the Golden Buzzer on *America’s Got Talent*, a TV show that turns unknown amateur performers into household names. While possessing an extraordinary voice, Jane admitted she has a two per cent chance of beating the cancer she is currently experiencing. When the judges remarked on her glowing appearance and upbeat attitude, she said simply, “You can’t wait until life isn’t hard anymore before you decide to be happy.”

In her transformational book, *Loving What Is*, Byron Katie introduces us to the idea that we can question the meaning we give to situations in our lives, particularly those that cause emotional turmoil. The questioning process often uncovers a belief or attitude we’ve never questioned.

Choosing your attitude is a decision. In the same way we can choose attitudes that don’t serve us, we can choose ones that do.

What attitudes can you choose in this ReStart that will serve you better in your future?

## YOUR INTERNAL LANDSCAPE

The path to making successful life transitions begins with a journey inward to discover what beliefs you hold that are either helping or hindering your ability to move forward.

When we realize attitudes are choices not set in stone, we become equipped to change the meaning we give to what we perceive as negative situations in our life. Changing the meaning can allow us to choose a different direction for the future.

You may have heard the statement, “We become what we think about.” In other words, our attitudes can turn into extensions of ourselves.

Compassion, forgiveness and a positive outlook can free us to become kinder, more accepting and flexible. In the same way, grudges, judgments and criticisms, when left unexamined and unchanged, can make us ill-tempered, rigid and unyielding.

This ReStart is an opportunity to recalibrate. Rather than go back to where we were before, we can plot a new course forward, meeting challenges with anticipation instead of anxiety, and looking for progress, not a repeat of old worn-out patterns.

One of my favourite meditative practices is to select three words that reflect some aspect of my life I’d like to cultivate. I consider each word separately, and then in combination.

The words don’t need to be similar or connected to one another, but they should resonate positively with you. For example, I may choose “calm,” “ease” and “fun.” Or “capable,” “balanced” and “eager.”

Feel the uplifting emotion of each word. Then, feel how each word, in combination with another, produces a slightly different emotional flavour.

Finally, consider the triad of words together. Feel the power and comfort of “owning” those three words and the feelings they embody individually and collectively.

## TAKE ACTION

Choose a ReStart activity or action that is different than what you have done habitually. Select something that aligns with your new elevated attitude. It doesn’t need to be outrageous; feel around for something you haven’t done before that will provide a fresh perspective or a new experience.


## FEEL APPRECIATION

Congratulate yourself for the choices you have made to plot a new course, and for having the courage to uncover your unexamined attitudes. Feel the magnificent being you are becoming. Practice self-compassion and be as kind to yourself as you are to others.

This ReStart is an opportunity to awaken to your best life; to bring new attitudes and greater meaning into your human experience.

Challenge yourself to step boldly into your next adventure – with attitude. Because when we take responsibility for uplifting ourselves, we uplift those around us. Let your positivity be infectious. |





Classical Pianist  
Angela Hewitt  
Photo: Keith Saunders

# ANGELA HEWITT:

## HOMEGROWN TALENT ON A WORLD STAGE

by BRUCE SACH

Chatter fades as the lights dim. The energy of the concert hall is palpable. For a moment, stillness. But when Angela Hewitt enters the stage, the audience erupts in applause as a gentle smile tiptoes across her face.

She gracefully seats herself at her piano. When silence resumes once again, she begins. Angela's fingers dance across the keys with the flow and ease of a ballerina in motion. It's a beautiful thing to see; it's a beautiful thing to hear.

The classical music concert is taking place in Ottawa where a local girl of international renown has come home.

Concertgoers are rapt to the last note. Prolonged and exuberant applause wrap up a magical affair.

Afterwards, backstage, Angela graciously meets with concertgoers, who clamour about her for a photo, a signed CD, or both. Joy and reverence abound.

Angela Hewitt is arguably Canada's best known classical pianist. Her award-winning cycle of all the major keyboard works of Bach for Hyperion Records was described as being "one of the record glories of our age," by *The Sunday Times*.

She has recorded over 200 albums for Hyperion and has won four Juno Awards. Her discography is massive, including

Scarlatti, Schumann, Debussy and Messiaen.

And in 2016, she began a huge concert project, The Bach Odyssey, which would see her performing all the keyboard works of J.S. Bach in a series of 12 concerts. They would last between 2016 and 2020, presenting the entire cycle in London, New York City, Ottawa, Tokyo and Florence.

Born into a musical family in Ottawa, Angela's father was a cathedral organist, choir master and music teacher. However, she was encouraged to have a well-rounded upbringing and studied ballet, violin and recorder as well as being involved in many other childhood activities.

Angela was an exceptional talent. At age four, she gave her first performance; as a five-year-old, she won a music scholarship; and a year later, she enrolled at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto. Interestingly, her childhood dream was to perform in a musical, so she could combine singing and dancing.

Her performance at the 1985 Toronto International Bach Piano competition, held in memory of Glenn Gould, launched her into the international spotlight. It allowed her to record Bach solo keyboard music, leading critics to anoint her as one of the great Bach interpreters.

And although her repertoire ranges from French Baroque composers like Couperin to contemporary, her performances of Bach have led her to capture the acclaim of critics and audiences across the globe.

In 2004, Angela founded the annual Trasimeno Musical Festival in Umbria, Italy, in which she is featured in seven concerts over seven days, as a recitalist, chamber musician, song accompanist and conductor.

"Back in 2002, I rather rashly purchased a piece of land on a hill overlooking beautiful Lake Trasimeno in Umbria, Italy (between Florence and Rome), and then I built a house," says Angela. "In 2004, I discovered the Castle of the Knights of Malta in Magione and its stunning 15th-century courtyard, which is ideal for chamber music concerts. The following year, we had our first festival and people came from all over the world to be there. Many of them return year after year."

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the festival was cancelled in both 2020 and now 2021.

Angela often plays in her hometown of Ottawa and is an ambassador for Orkidstra, a program in Ottawa's inner city, where commitment, teamwork and tolerance are taught while learning music.

She has received an OBE [Order of the British Empire] from the Queen and, in 2015, was promoted to Companion of the Order of Canada status.

Yes, one could say Angela Hewitt has led a charmed life.

She is considered the premier interpreter of Bach piano music in the world, a title once held by another Canadian, Glenn Gould. Yet Hewitt is not too thrilled by comparisons to Gould.

"Gould and I are exact opposites," she says. "He kept

his distance from people; I love the contact I have with my audience. He hated the whole touring bit; I thrive on it. He hated the colour red and sunshine; I adore both! I think he had a problem with the fact that in performance, it's not always perfect. Things happen. One has to live with that. You can't control everything. It takes great courage and



Photo: Peter Hundert

discipline to get up night after night in a different city, on a different piano, playing different programs, and always trying to play perfectly. I think he simply didn't have the make up for being a concert pianist on the road. He preferred to work in seclusion."

So, recent events have affected Angela dearly.

The Bach Odyssey world concert tour that started in 2016 – wherein she would have performed every Bach sonata live in five capitals – was supposed to finish in 2020. It was sidelined by the pandemic.

Besides COVID, Fate played a second trick. In February 2020, her beloved Fazioli piano was destroyed by movers in Berlin – the Fazioli she had often described as her "best friend" was no more. The destruction of her piano made inter-

# Snapshot

## with Angela Hewitt

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

*"Always make your own decisions (which is what I've done anyway throughout my life). I wouldn't change anything that's happened in my life. It's good to feel that way."*



Who or what has influenced you the most? And why?

*"Besides my parents (who were both great musicians), I would have to say my former piano teacher (who taught me from the age of 15 to 22), French pianist Jean-Paul Sévilla. He shared with me his great knowledge of the piano repertoire, especially his love and mastery of French music, and was a wonderful pianist himself. He also taught his students about all the arts, and it was thanks to him that I went to live in Paris when I was 20 years old."*

What are you most grateful for?

*"Having been brought up by musician parents who understood what it was all about, who taught me the right habits from the beginning, but also who let me have a great childhood, full of many different activities (including classical ballet for 20 years from the age of three)."*

How do you measure success?

*"Playing a piece you have worked very hard on, and finally memorizing it and performing it well in public – that's success that gives great satisfaction. Material success, as we have seen with this pandemic, can vanish in an instant. I suppose success is when concert promoters think of you when they are putting together their season. You have to have something they want to sell. When you have that something and have totally kept your integrity, and got there because you're good and worked hard, then I think that's success. But I don't really like to think about 'success.' It's very fragile."*

national news in the arts world as people wondered how she would recover from the shock, and if a suitable replacement could be found.

She would need to test out three new Fazioli's and, if she found one she liked, she would have to have the unique 4th peddle added to it.

"A piano takes on the characteristics of the player using it – I was the only person to have played on that piano in its 17 years!" That piano even had the privilege of always being serviced by the same technician.

Since concert pianists plan their appearance schedule and preparation years in advance, the ongoing uncertainty caused by the pandemic is more than troublesome.

"I'm probably on the road for at least 10 months, if not more, of the year. I haven't counted the number of concerts in a year for a long time. A few years back, it was something like 133 days of concerts, masterclasses, recording sessions – and that didn't count travel and practising at home."

The need to isolate in one place saw Angela in quarantine in Ottawa, where she has an apartment. Stuck in quarantine, she naturally took advantage of the time to practise, although she had already planned a short sabbatical for late 2020. As she reported to *The Globe and Mail*, neighbours complained about the noise! "It's not noise; it's Beethoven!" she explained to them.

Angela's last live concert before a full audience in Ottawa was in the fall of 2019. After the masterful performance, there was an informal meet and greet with audience members. A young teenager brought her recently won piano trophy from the Ottawa Kiwanis Music Festival to show Angela and wanted to pose for a photograph with her. Angela had won the same honour when she was a teenager in Ottawa. The encounter made the young pianist's day.

Given her influence on up-and-coming pianists, Angela encourages parents of talented students to allow their children to be children.

"I get very upset these days when you see so-called child 'prodigies' on YouTube playing Chopin etudes at age seven or something ridiculous," she says. "Of course, a child may be very gifted, but it's also important to let a child be a child. You only get one crack at childhood, and these are such important years. I'm so happy I did many other things other than piano and school."

"How fortunate I was to have a father who was a cathedral organist and played all those great organ works with such passion, intelligence, and dramatic flair! I remember as a young child holding my breath during the G Minor Fantasia and Fugue, the C Minor Passacaglia – knowing it would all be resolved triumphantly at the end," says Angela. "My father also arranged the great Toccata and Fugue in D minor for the whole family – two pianos, eight hands, when I was maybe 10 years old. I danced to Bach, sang Bach, played him on the violin and recorder, tried him out on the harpsichord and, in the end, put all that experience into playing his



music on the piano.”

What, then, is the best approach for parents if their child has a prodigal talent in any field?

“Give them the love of learning, let them still be children, make sure they have lots of friends, give them a good all-rounded education and, of course, encourage them in a good way.”

When Angela was little, her mother kept her occupied, giving her pieces of string tied in knots. The toddler devoted hours to patiently undoing each knot.

“I’ve always liked unravelling complicated music,” she says. “It’s the terrific vitality in [Bach’s] music that is important to me, as well as its relationship to dance.”

Many have noted that Angela’s movements at the piano are characteristic of someone who has studied dance. Her arms waltz at the keyboard when playing.

“Most of Bach is dance music, regardless of its title. So, a lot of the spirit in it, that wonderful joy comes from the dance and that I feel inside. Also, it’s beautiful music, and you can keep playing it and never get tired of it in a way you would in some other pieces.”

Playing Bach is also great for the mind: “Playing Bach, it’s like repeating a tongue-twister a hundred times over, at top speed. Bach really is something for the brain!”

Regardless of her polished appearance and well-travelled and cultured vocation, Angela is also a self-reliant and down-to-earth Canadian.

“I don’t have a personal assistant,” she says. “I book all my own flights. I run my own online shop, which is a corner of my living room, taking the packages to the post office myself. I’m my own cleaning lady – it’s good exercise! In short, most of those things that people imagine I couldn’t possibly do since I’m a concert pianist, I do. And all that while constantly learning and memorizing new repertoire.”

NASA famously sent a recording of Glenn Gould playing Bach in its 1977 *Voyager 1* spacecraft. In 2021, if someone decided to send “messages” to outer space, would they include music? And if so, by which composer, and played by whom?

“It was the Goldberg Variations, which was an excellent choice! There is no greater music,” says Angela. “And music is the universal language. Bach is perhaps the composer with the most universal appeal because his music sounds as fresh today as when it was composed 300 years ago. The rhythm is infectious, and the glorious melodies. If you’re looking for another Canadian Bach interpreter who has also twice recorded the ‘Goldberg’ on the piano, I might be able to suggest one....,” she says with a twinkle in her eye.

Angela has worked with authors Ian McEwan and Julian Barnes in London, Vienna, and New York; and with actor Roger Allam in Venice and at Shakespeare’s Globe in London. Her recordings and live performances have featured in such films as *The Tree of Life* (2011), *The Life Aquatic* (2004), *The Impassioned Eye* (2003) – a documentary on

Henri Cartier-Bresson and, in 2018, *The Children Act* (based on the novel by Ian McEwan and starring Emma Thompson).

Although she has been asked to perform around the world for decades and mostly lives in London, she has never forgotten her Canadian roots.

She co-funded Piano Six, a group of Canadian pianists dedicated to bringing classical performance to rural areas across Canada.

In March 2020, when all concert activity and travelling abruptly stopped, Angela went online to share daily offerings of short pieces — many of which form the basis of teaching material. Her fans were thrilled, and she was happy to inspire many people to go back to the piano. She participated in some of the first streamed concerts to be initiated online during the pandemic and, in January 2021, she revealed that she had a new piano.

Angela shares a delicious anecdote: a taxi driver in Atlanta, Georgia, once asked her what she did for a living. When Angela told her, she replied “that sounds relaxin’.”

“An osteopath in London said to me some 30 years ago when I said I was a concert pianist, “Oh no! There’s no profession more stressful!”

“For me, music is about sharing and moving others. It’s a hard life but a great one.” |

For more information, visit <https://angelahewitt.com>



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# VIRTUAL WALKING GROUP TRAVERSES CANADA

by JANET McMASTER

Surprisingly, some good things have come out of our lockdown experience, and one of them has been my involvement with the C2C Walking Group. During the first six months of the pandemic, my husband, Tom, and I did lots of walking: in our local neighbourhood; in city parks; on golf courses; and on trails in the mountains. With winter fast approaching and no reprieve in sight, I became concerned that we might get too cozy indoors and not continue our regular exercise routine.

In mid-September 2020, we invited three couples from Canada and one from Arizona to join us in a virtual walking group. I had quick affirmative responses from everyone, and we began our trek at the beginning of October.

Our plan was to virtually walk across Canada, starting in Vancouver and ending in St. John's, Nfld. Each couple agreed that they would keep track of the distances they walked each week and send me their weekly total. I would then add up our group distance for the week and plot that on a map to see how far we had travelled. A weekly email update tracked our progress. This was not a competitive pursuit; I tracked only our total mileage as a group.

Doing a walk of this nature during a Canadian winter presented some challenges. While our Arizona friends walked or hiked similar distances most weeks, inclement weather impacted the rest of us. During the weeks when we were experiencing either frigid temperatures, lots of snow and/or cold winds, our total distances tended to be low. A few of us have memberships at gyms or fitness centres, so when those facilities were allowed to be open, we could get our steps indoors.

In addition to the intermittent closure of gyms and fitness centres, the pandemic affected us in other ways. While, thankfully, no one in our group contracted COVID-19, four of us had to self-isolate at different times because of exposure to positive cases.

We all enjoy each other's company, and in "normal"



The author clocking miles at Lake Louise.

times, we would have likely gotten together regularly to walk and have coffee or lunch together afterwards. When the rules allowed, we have occasionally been able to meet one or two other people in our group for outdoor walks, but for much of the time, each couple has been walking on their own.

After a couple of weeks, we hit our stride and then usually averaged 300–350 km per week... not bad for a group of folks who are mostly over the age of 75! The journey went surprisingly quickly, and we completed our trek in a little over five months. The total distance we clocked from Vancouver to St. John's was just over 7,200 km, following the TransCanada Highway.

I discovered several benefits from participating in this walking group. It definitely provided incentive for us to get exercise almost every day. Tom and I usually went for a brisk walk but also did some snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. We both lost weight during our journey, and while we did cut back somewhat on food, I attribute the weight loss primarily to our consistent exercise.

Another benefit of our C2C Club was that I learned a lot about Canada by tracking the trip. While I am quite familiar with Western Canada, once we got east of Regina, my knowledge was sketchy. Prior to this, I was not familiar with the TransCanada Highway route beyond Manitoba, and it was



interesting to see the route and do research about the various communities we virtually travelled through.

Certainly, the best – and probably most unexpected benefit of this club – was getting to know our friends better. Their weekly mileage report usually included news about how they were doing and what they'd been up to. Over and above that, though, as we travelled across Canada, our fellow walkers shared all kinds of interesting stories about their experiences – or their family's experiences – in the various places we travelled through. This was particularly interesting when we



The author and her husband, Tom, (pictured) improved their fitness and lost weight during their pandemic adventures.

got to the Maritimes, as a couple of our members have deep roots there, and they shared some fascinating stories about their family histories.

During our Zoom celebration call at the completion of our journey, the discussion turned to “What’s Next?” After exploring a couple different options, we decided to continue our trek by virtually flying to Chicago and then virtually walking across the United States via Route 66. Stay tuned for more about this second part of our adventure in an upcoming issue. |

**Janet McMaster** is a freelance writer based in Calgary, Alberta.

## June

### Age 5, Cerebral Palsy

*Loves kindergarten, art, and swimming*

As a happy five-year-old, June's complex health challenges don't hold her back from doing the things she loves. And when her family needs to travel from their home in Denman Island to Victoria for June's medical treatments, Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island's home away from home, **Jeneece Place**, is there.



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**Tracy Merkley**

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# NATURE: OUR GREATEST TEACHER

by ANITA SMITH

Being in nature generates feelings of coziness and protection. It can be a deeply spiritual experience to prepare, plant and nurture a garden space – one that balances our emotional-being in a unique way. With the growing of things – a small container of herbs on a windowsill or a field of flowers – we can find joy in transforming our environment.

After working in finance for many years, Leanne Johnson approached her then client (Gardenworks) with the idea of switching industries and thus began to follow her dream into a career in gardening. Today, she is the President of Gardenworks/Mandeville Gardens.

Leanne's connection with nature and gardening began at age eight when she often visited her grandparents to spend warm Okanagan summers with them. There, she helped plant and maintain a large vegetable garden, which was a fun and valuable learning experience.

Through her university years, Leanne missed the outdoors she enjoyed growing up. Her small apartment did not lend itself to having a garden. Still, Leanne always tried to bring nature into her space by placing small plants and freshly cut flowers around her home.

"That's the beauty [of gardening], whether you have a balcony, windowsill or backyard, it's possible to have a garden."

Leanne and her family have lived in a 90-year-old home they renovated in North Vancouver for 28 years. In that time, Leanne's inspiration and motivation for gardening has

grown. She has been able to express her creativity by working with landscapers and designers to create a garden oasis.

"The garden changes as your lifestyle changes," she says. "Early on, it was designed for the kids with strawberries and veggies for them to grow and enjoy, and with more grass for them to play on. Today, my sons are grown, and I now have the garden I've been dreaming of for 20 years."

Leanne and her husband have made a pact to eat something fresh from their garden every day as a way of staying connected to the plants they grow.

Her passion for nature has had an impact on her children as well. One son is following in her footsteps and works as a horticulturalist, and the other dabbles with his own container gardening. For Leanne, gardening is a generational gift – something to pass on to others that will benefit them spiritually and offer the means to positively connect with the community in a joyful way.

At work, Leanne sees the multi-generational interest in gardening increasing, and Gardenworks is shifting its focus to include more education and supportive elements to its services.

ABOVE | Gardener Leanne Johnson and her sidekick, Hana, in their garden.

RIGHT | Leanne's veggie garden abounds with delectables.

TOC | Leanne inside her greenhouse. Photos: Anita Smith

"I am very lucky to work with a staff of varying ages that are passionate about gardening with a keen desire to share their knowledge."

Leanne believes that connecting with nature makes us happy.

"There is so much research that links plants to well-being," she says. "Gardening gives us a sense of control and security. That we can provide for ourselves, and a belief that the world is not such a bad place after all... there is hope."

Sometimes it can be good to lose ourselves in an activity, to get so inspired with something that we become 100% present. Leanne shares her philosophy.

"I get lost out in the garden; for me it is connecting to nature and witnessing the marvel of growing things. Mother



Nature has her own timeline, and this teaches us to be patient and to understand that some things are not within our control. I make mistakes and sometimes I don't know why a planting didn't work. Gardening teaches us humility."

During stressful times, a garden can soothe and inspire. Gardening is a creative outlet, a means to find balance in the sights and smells of nature. Nature reminds us that there is a cycle and season for everything, and it motivates us to try new things. Life's lessons unfold when we can reap what we sow in a garden.

"Through gardening... you are making the world a better place." |



## CLOUD LOVERS

In 2006, when Patrizia was an educational consultant in Vancouver, designing curricula for second-language learners, she decided to focus one project on the universally accessible topic of clouds.

That's how she came across the UK-based Cloud Appreciation Society, founded by an Oxford-graduated "cloud-loving" British journalist. Its mandate, "to henceforth seek to persuade all who'll listen of the wonder and beauty of clouds," intrigued her to the point of joining the Society and becoming one of its original 5,000 members. For this she received a certificate and access to "somewhat occasional" electronic newsletters.

In 2017, a new cloud formation, the Asperitas, initially identified by a member in 2009, was formally accepted into the International Cloud Atlas of the Royal Meteorological Society as the first new cloud type identified in 66 years. This action prompted the founder of the Society to travel abroad to lecture about clouds.

When she heard that he was speaking at the Oregon Museum of Science in Portland, Oregon in 2018, Patrizia decided to fly down and learn a thing or two. The London office referred her to Jane, the Portland cloud community contact, for an accommodation recommendation for the one

night she'd be in the city.

Patrizia was taken by surprise when Jane instead generously suggested she stay at her home for the night. She wondered if a mutual appreciation of clouds was enough to overnight at a stranger's house in a neighbouring country.

Jane made it easy to see it as a kindness-of-stranger gesture. They exchanged a few emails and found that they had other commonalities that bridged the unknown between an American and a Canadian lover of clouds.

Since then, the two have become social media friends, exchanging photos of the many ongoing and ever-changing cloud formations in their Vancouver and Portland skies.

While the pandemic got in the way of a reciprocal visit to Vancouver, there's a possibility that this will happen in the future, when the Canada-USA border reopens.

Cloud lovers know that clouds are poetic and dynamic and ever-changing aspects of nature, and that "a moment each day with your head in the clouds keeps your feet on the ground," according to the Society's founder. |

*In 2021, the Cloud Appreciation Society boasts 55,000 plus members from 120 countries worldwide.*





# CRAWFORD BAY ARTISTANS: CREATIVE BY NATURE

by J. KATHLEEN THOMPSON

Stern line cast, the ferry begins its journey eastward across Kootenay Lake toward the towering Purcell Mountains. In 35 minutes – via the longest free ferry ride in the world – we will be climbing the densely forested hills that lie before us into the small artists’ community of Crawford Bay. In the meantime, all is awash in the blue and brilliance of beautiful BC on a perfect day in May.

Etched into the forest, the village of Crawford Bay slowly unfolds along Highway 3A. Taking centre stage is a string of working artisan studios, something that for over 30 years has been at the heart of this community.

“I remember growing up here,” one of the artisans tells me, “and everything was about making stuff and selling it. Being creative was the norm.”

Efforts to build and sustain that rural creative culture led to the forming of the collective: The Artisans of Crawford Bay. Now, on an average summer’s day, hundreds of touring motorists pass through the community to marvel at woodcarvers, weavers, potters, jewellers and blacksmiths at work, and to pick out their favourite made-in-BC handcrafted item. Luckily, I was able to catch a handful of the artisans before the start of the high season, allowing me to soak in each of their exquisitely imagined and created worlds.

## NORTH WOVEN BROOMS

Picture a parking stall at a witches’ sabbath or a wizards’ convention; a gaggle of slender hand-woven round brooms, their stalks yellowed with age, their handles a wild assortment of twisted branches, all snug and sunlit within the shelter of a well-weathered barn.

Imagine this stall in the real world and you’ve got the



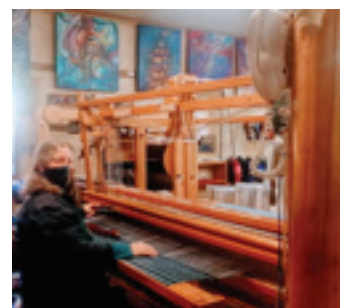
North Woven Broom. Today, owner Luke Lewis and assistant, Willow Johnston, are at their winders, building round trimmed and shaker flat brooms. Using broomcorn imported from Mexico, after winding the broom, they weave the ends to form their signature handle and flat-stitch them with a broom makers vise or flat-stitcher. The process speaks of long-ago practices.

“The woman who started this business had picked up these broom-making techniques from someone who had lived in a Shaker village in New England,” says Luke. “Our brooms have evolved in style since then and are unique to Canada.”

So unique that they have become a media favourite and have been featured in several promotions and productions. Publishers at Raincoast Books enlisted North Woven Brooms in the launching of the *Harry Potter* books in Canada, and the brooms are still an integral part of the Harry Potter Theme Park in Universal Studios Florida. (The Granville Island Broom Co. in Vancouver is operated by Luke’s cousins.)

## BAREFOOT HANDWEAVING

It’s about colour. Natural fibres drenched in vibrant blues and oranges and fuchsias, woven – barefoot – into pieces of extraordinary beauty. Shawls, scarves, shrugs, wraps, and table runners drape every inch of weaver Janet Wallace’s straw bale studio. A wall collage of her husband’s colourful, expressionist paintings complete the rich, polychromatic experience of walking into Barefoot Handweaving.



After exploring the possibilities of spinning and tapestry making, a chance inheriting of a Gertrude loom (named after its Swedish designer) led Janet into the world of weaving. Today, experimentation with different fibres – bamboo, hemp and chenille (in addition to traditional cotton, linen, wool and silk) – and



computer-assisted designs continue to fuel Janet's passion and development as a master weaver.

As she demonstrates the intricate processes of weaving on the treadle loom, her feet flying with planned precision to adjust the frames accordingly, she shares some of the gallery's storied history.

"I have had people from all around the world in my gallery, speaking Welsh, Gaelic, Swahili – you name it!" says Janet. "I remember a couple from Afghanistan telling me that their daughters would weave side by side in order to manage the width of the loom."

While international visitors may not be a feature of this summer's tourist traffic, there is no doubt Barefoot Handweaving will be on many motorists' radar this summer as they tour the artisan-rich Kootenays.

### DOG PATCH GALLERY

In characteristic Crawford Bay style, the door to Dog Patch Pottery is flung open, giving the shop a fresh, well-ventilated summer feel. Brimming with ceramic mugs, plates, bowls, and other artisan wares such as paintings and cards, my eyes are drawn to the glint of gold fused into dark, dusty green glazed bowls with intricate geometric patterns.

"I call those my 'Henna-design line,'" potter and owner Leia Belcourt calls from her studio desk at the back of her gallery. Today she is working on one of her pieces in her 'Geo line,' painting tagine bowls and dishes with art-deco-like patterns.



"My dad – a period-style woodworker – probably influenced my style and set me on this road. I attended night-school at the Kootenay School of the Arts while my daughter was young, and even though pottery was frustratingly difficult at first, I was determined to learn how to do it!"

Now, 21 years in the business, I think you'll agree Leia has found that sweet spot on the potter's wheel!

### FIREWORKS COPPER & GLASS

Glass enamel on copper makes a most alluring form of jewelry, something the Myceneans, one of the first groups to use this technique, knew back in 13th century BC. For Helene Carter, trading clothing fashion design to develop her copper enamel jewelry business over the past 15 years, the allure is in the creative aspect of her craft, and the joy she gets from producing something that someone loves.

Her studio work desk piled high with materials – sheets of copper, jars of

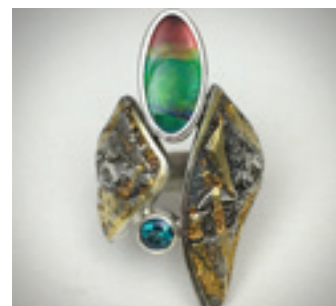
crushed glass (in no less than 140 colours!), cutting tools, glass rods, brushes – Helene graciously gives me a crash tutorial in copper enameling. She cuts and sands the copper and then decorates the pieces with crushed glass that, when fired in a kiln to 900 degrees, can be shaped in its molten form. Once cooled, another layer of enamel can be applied and fired to reach the desired effect.

"I particularly like images related to the natural world – leaves, trees, landscapes," says Helene. "I also just enjoy playing around with elements of abstract design – colour, line, blend – and how they can coalesce into shapes and sheens that surprise you."

With her thorough understanding of her art and fierce dedication to it, I'm sure you'll emerge from a visit to Helene's studio and gallery, Forge & Furnace, which she shares with iron makers Kootenay Forge, a quality memento of the BC Kootenays.

### GALA JEWELRY

Galadriel Rael's tiny, tastefully curated gallery is as bijoux as her jewellery. Silver jewellery and silk clothing peering from rustic, wooden display shelves. One exhibit features gems and stones native to the area.



"I started the business because of my passion for rocks!" Galadriel enthuses. "I was a true rock nerd as a kid, 'panning' for rocks along the shores of Kootenay Lake, looking for the most interesting pieces of mica and slate."

One gemstone she does import – from Alberta – is called ammolite.

"You can't find ammolite here. In fact, it is found in only one place in the world, along the St. Mary's River near Lethbridge, Alberta. It is essentially the shell of a prehistoric mullosk. When it fossilized it created these gorgeous iridescent colours."

Indeed, beautiful and unique. For travellers hoping to take a bit of BC or Alberta geology home with them, this is the place!



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## FLICKERING GODDESS

The Flickering Goddess is not a shop, it's an experience. Playful stepping stones and mushroom and ladybug garden decorations usher you into a fairy's grotto, sparkling with enchanting accessories; soaps, candles, beads, gems, trinkets, lamps and wands. The store's ebullience can be traced to its owner, bursting with life Lorrie Rhead. When not tending her chickens or serving at the local tea house, she is happily tending to the whimsies of her customers.

Central to Lorrie's collection are her homemade soaps and candles; beeswax, jojoba and coconut milk blends in a wide variety of molds and designs. Recently she has expanded her cosmetic line to include organic room fresheners, personal deodorants, lip balms, shampoos and hand sanitizers. As well, she caters to the kid – in all of us.

"Kids love to visit my shop when they come to Crawford Bay," Lorrie beams. "When the campground across the street is open, I can't keep enough juggling sticks and craft kits in stock!"

To add to the whimsy, just look for the pink Cadillac in her driveway as you pass through Crawford Bay!

## MERV THE WOODCARVER

Mervin Robertson proudly unveils the life-size bear he has carved that will soon be on its way to the world-class Kokanee Springs Golf Resort nearby.

"I think they're going to put it on the third tee, to keep golfers on their toes!" says Merv, smiling.

Bears are a signature piece of his – 'everyone wants one' he tells me – and they peer from every corner of his property. Inside his home, large, elegant figures, titled Mythconception and Human Rights, are testaments to Merv's artistry. Coming to the craft with a background in oil painting and log home building, Merv does as much woodcarving as he can with his chainsaw, finishing with hand tools.

Open to doing custom work, call ahead to book a visit. |

For IF YOU GO information, including other artisans and eateries, visit [www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/crawford-bay](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/crawford-bay)



## LET'S GO FOR A STROLL!

After being penned in (and pent-up) over these past months, most of us are itching to break loose and find some freedom. Luckily, we can always head out for a brisk walk. Here are some easy day-tripping strolls that will pick up your heart rate and help resolve that pandemic-created itch.

### Bridal Veil Falls, Chilliwack

It's hard to keep your eyes on Highway 1 when driving past this 120-metre-high waterfall – all the more reason to get out and explore. The 15-minute, well-groomed trail is flat enough for strollers. And even leashed-up Bowser can tag along. It weaves beneath towering cedars, bridges Bridal Creek and ascends briefly to view the impressive falls. Head back the same way or keep going on Woodland Trail. Both end up at the picnic area where you can enjoy a relaxing afternoon.

### Buntzen Lake, Anmore

While diehard hikers tackle the challenging Diez Vistas trail (10 peaks in total!), there's lots of leg work for walkers at this recreational playground. The BC Hydro-maintained 10-kilometre pathway loops around the lake, snakes under evergreens, crosses over creeks, teeters over a suspension bridge and ends up on the shores of North Beach. This is a quiet place for chilling out before making the return trek along the east side of the lake.

### Lighthouse Park, West Vancouver

The web of trails that weave over this family favourite are shaded by old-growth evergreens. Some head to the historical lighthouse, built in 1912, others lead to other rocky outcroppings that boast views of the Salish Sea, Stanley Park and Vancouver skyline. Here, you can spread out that beach blanket and drink in the beauty. You'll feel like you're one with nature, even though you are a stone's throw from the bustling city.

### Murrin Park Loop Trail, Squamish

If you want to top off your walk with a quick dip or rock climb, head to this adrenaline activator that snuggles next to the Sea To Sky. As well as being a popular swimming hole and boasting over 100 climbing routes, this highway haven is home to the Quercus Trail, a 2.4-kilometre route that leads to a panorama of Howe Sound. The view from this lookout has been compared to (although from a lower level) that of The Stawamus Chief, the iconic dome of granite that towers 700 metres above nearby Squamish. We'll just have to see about that. Check out next month's Day Trippin' feature to find out if there's any truth to it! |

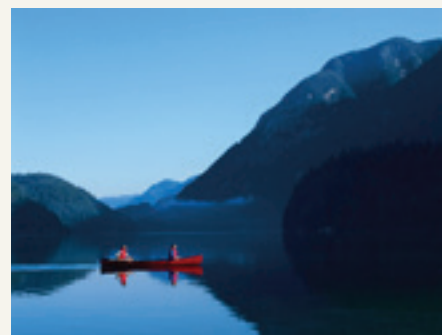


PHOTO | Buntzen Lake canoers.

Photo: Compliments of Tourism BC taken by Albert Normandin

# FOREVER FIT

by EVE LEES



## NUTRITION FOR ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates believed food is medicine. Many diseases and disorders can be avoided if we pay attention to what we put into our mouths.

Anxiety and depression are two of many conditions that can be affected by diet. While a change in diet alone won't always "cure" these conditions, medical and nutrition professionals agree diet can reduce their frequency and severity. In addition, poor food choices (particularly highly refined and processed foods) can increase anxiety and poor mood while foods less refined and more "whole" will have a calming effect.

Here are seven general recommendations:

1. Include a source of protein with most meals and snacks. Protein assists in stabilizing blood sugar levels, and this can have a significant impact on mood and depression. However, this does not mean eating a high-protein diet. Balance is essential to keep your body operating normally. Include plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grain, and root vegetables. For your protein choices, include fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon. Omega 3s have been found beneficial for proper brain functioning.

2. Eat complex carbohydrates (carbs) and cut back on simple carbs. All carbohydrates help increase the release of serotonin, a hormone that offers a calming effect. However, complex carbohydrates, such as root vegetables and whole grains, are assimilated much slower in the body which keeps blood sugar levels steady. Minimize or avoid the simple carbs, such as sugary foods and drinks. Simple carbs are easily broken down and therefore digested much quicker than complex carbs. This can create a fast rise and fall of blood sugar levels: not desirable for those highly anxious or chronically depressed.

3. Drink plenty of water. Even mild dehydration can affect mood. The recommendation of eight glasses of water daily has recently been challenged. But "eight glasses" is only meant

to be a guide, not a golden rule. Some of us may need

more than eight glasses daily, others may need less. You must determine your individual requirements. But eight glasses is a good starting point as that's approximately how much the average person loses each day in perspiration, respiration, and urination.

4. Limit or avoid alcohol. The immediate effect of alcohol is calming for some people. However, as alcohol is processed in the body, it can make some of us edgy and may even amplify depression. Alcohol can also interfere with sleep.

5. Avoid or limit caffeinated beverages and foods high in caffeine. They can make you feel jittery and nervous, and they also can interfere with sleep.

6. Pay attention to food sensitivities. For some of us, particular foods or food additives cause unpleasant physical reactions. This can lead to changes in mood, making us irritable, depressed, and anxious.

7. Eat regularly and avoid skipping meals. Your brain, as well as your body, needs regular fuel to function normally. Don't run on empty: keep your tanks full – without overfilling them!

Changes to your diet can help improve your general mood or sense of well-being, but it's not a substitute for treatment if your anxiety and depression is severe. If your condition constantly interferes with daily activities or enjoyment of life, you may need to consider therapy or (as a last resort) medication. |

**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. For more information, visit [www.artnews-healthnews.com](http://www.artnews-healthnews.com)





# FINDING YOUR FAVOURITE BREW ON THE SUNSHINE COAST ALE TRAIL

by KATE ROBERTSON

Start with amazing coastal views and old growth forests. Add multiple award-winning breweries and, voila, you have the Sunshine Coast Ale Trail. This 178-kilometre, ferry-access-only (or via air, of course) scenic route along BC's west coast is the perfect weekend getaway to find your new favourite brew.

Day 1 – Catch the Horseshoe Bay Ferry from West Van to Langdale and continue along the Sunshine Coast Highway towards Gibsons. First stop, Persephone Brewing Company, a brewery with two orchards (makes sense that they have also recently begun making cider) and a working farm where they grow their own barley. The old barn at Persephone has been converted into a tasting room with a roll-up door: the perfect place to try a flight or a pint of their popular, Persephone Pale Ale, a tasty citrus-forward pale ale.

In the summer, Persephone also has a full-scale market garden with a 60-person veggie-box program. “This is much more of a meeting place than just another brewery,” says Roo Miller, tasting room manager. “On any given day, we have beer lovers playing lawn games, bikers coming off the mountain-biking trails of nearby Sprockids Park, moms having a play date with their kids, or groups of elders enjoying the sunshine.”

Further down the highway is 101 Brewhouse & Distillery. Located in an old automotive shop, 101 honours its blue-collar roots with beer like Bob's Auto Lager. Aside from making great beer (and gin and vodka), 101 Brewhouse is focused on providing an excellent, locally-inspired dining experience and entertainment. From a window in the upstairs room, you can see below to the shiny tanks below and watch the busy

staff making your beer. 101 has a range of flavour profiles and styles, but they tend to focus on German-style lagers and pilsners.

“101 Brewhouse is the most fun place to be when there's an event going on (like karaoke or dance parties),” says co-founder, Chris Greenfield. “It can take on an energy of its own and people can forget about their troubles for a while. Kind of like Cheers without Woody, Cliff and Norm. I think the trend of brew pubs is moving towards supporting local and working together as a community.”

Right in Gibsons Landing is Tapworks Brewing Company, a brewery with a small, intimate taproom (think: a friend's living room) and a rooftop patio where you can ogle over the mountain and ocean views. (Hint: try a pint of the margarita sour – it's been such a huge hit that Tapworks is bringing it back every year).

“In the recent past, beer has been getting more adventurous with multiple different additions and more complex flavours,” says Geoff Gornall, co-founder. “Right now is an interesting time, because there seems to be a bit of a split and, at times, almost a diatribe! Some drinkers seem to be getting palate fatigue and are reaching for more “back to basics” brews, like a well-executed Pilsner, for example. Others are keen to see that next level adventurousness with more creative additions, more aggressive dry-hops, and so on.”

ABOVE | Tapworks Brewing Company. Photo: Dolf Vermeulen

TOC | Bricker Cider Company. Photo: With a Wild Heart Collective

Less than half an hour up the coast in Sechelt is the Sunshine Coast's newest brewery (opened in 2020), Batch 44 Brewery & Kitchen, owned by brothers, Emmanuel and George Kobas. "Each beer we make is shaped by things like our brewery system, the local water, the ingredients, and the brewing techniques of our brewer. We plan to retain some core beers and have a series of revolving taps according to the season," say the Kobas.

Batch 44's industrial-style setting provides a relaxed, fun atmosphere for the whole family. Try a pint of one of their most popular brews, the Wharf Ave. Wiessbier, paired with some top-notch pub grub, created in-house. Prefer to pick up beer-to-go? Batch 44 sells growlers, 473 ml glass bottles, and will soon add crowlers (similar to a growler, except in aluminum can form) to their product list.

Up the highway in West Sechelt is the Bricker Cider Company where they make dry, crisp ciders using locally-sourced ingredients, including fruit grown on their own five-acre farm.

"People love being out in nature at our cidery," says Morgan Farrer, founder. "The orchard is right there, we have a nice big grassy area for kids to play and it is a little bit out of the way, which I think makes it feel like you've found a hidden gem. We are a family business (named after Farrer's grandmother), and we want to personify that welcoming family-feel when people visit."

Bricker doesn't shy away from innovative flavours, like elderberry and lavender or apricot and ginger, just to name a couple. But their fan favourite is Frambo (raspberry) cider.

"It's tart and dry with the right amount of raspberry whilst still staying true to the apple," says Farrer. "We think that you're going to find more single varietal ciders and more traditional cider styles coming out. Now that craft cider has started to boom over the past few years, people's awareness of craft cider has grown, their palates are developing, and they want to try something more."

The north and south sections of the Sunshine Coast are connected by another ferry. The only brewery on the north land mass is Townsite Brewing, located in a gorgeous 1939 brick building in Powell River's historic district. Their tasting room has lots of bricks, noise and smiling faces. Townsite is also in the midst of opening a beer garden on a large lot directly behind the brewery.

"We use a lot of local references in naming our beers, so everyone has a different favourite, depending on what their favourite Powell River activity is," says Chloe Smith, general manager. "This year, we are releasing a hazy pale ale and named it 'Up the Lake,' which is the local term for the floating house boats on Powell Lake. Hazy IPAs and fruit additions to beer top the popularity lists these days, which is great, as both of those trends present endless experimentation opportunities for us."

By the way, in 2016, Powell River was named as the "least polluted city in the world" by Guinness World Records as having the cleanest air quality. Just one more reason to get planning your Sunshine Coast Ale Trail road trip. |

For IF YOU GO information, visit [www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/sunshine-coast-ale-trail](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/sunshine-coast-ale-trail)



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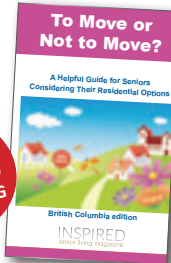
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# CAREGIVERS: ESSENTIAL PARTNERS IN CARE

By WENDY JOHNSTONE

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many changes to the world, including creating additional pressure on family caregivers. In a recent study by EMD Serono, it was found that caregivers are providing more care: more emotional support and homecare; managing technology; and advocating for the person for whom they are caring. In our FCBC BC-wide survey, we saw a shocking decline in caregivers' well-being since COVID hit. 50% of caregivers reported a decrease in their mental health and 40% reported a decrease in their physical health (Dec. 2019 FCBC Highlights Report Family and Friend Caregivers on the Front Lines of COVID-19).

Given that family and friend caregivers already provide over 80 per cent of care in the home for care recipients with complex health conditions, a key opportunity exists for our province: to ensure family and friend caregivers are recognized, valued and supported, and included as partners in care.

Family Caregivers of BC works in partnership with the Ministry of Health's Patients as Partners Initiative to help support family caregivers. Research shows that inclusion of family and friend caregivers in care planning and in the care team has a positive impact on outcomes. Our Caregiver RX is working hard to raise the collective voice and highlight the needs of family caregivers.

The Caregiver Rx initiative is bringing awareness to health care professionals to identify, support and refer family caregivers to local and provincial resources and programs. The Caregiver Rx initiative is also striving to shift our culture in how we value the role of family caregivers. We are developing strong partnerships with our health and community systems to embed family caregivers in their processes.

The evidence being gathered continues to show the positive value of including family and friend caregivers in the care team of the person needing care. Including family and friend caregivers in care planning is a win-win for everyone – the health care team, the care recipient and the family or friend caregivers.

## How can you help?

Whether you are supporting a friend, colleague, neighbour or other family member in their caring role, bringing awareness to their situation is one of the best ways to offer support. Ask them, "How are you doing?" and give them time to express how they are feeling. Validating how they are feeling is another invaluable way of showing support. If you think they are open to ideas, suggest they call Family Caregivers of BC's Caregiver Support Line at 1-877-520-3267.

If you are a health care professional, take the lead! Don't wait for a family caregiver to talk about themselves or their situation. They are often feeling overwhelmed and unsure of what to do. Here are a few suggestions:

Find ways to include them from the start!

- Be welcoming and supportive of family caregivers
- Get to know them
- As healthcare providers, it is essential to engage every caregiver every time. Ask them:

"How are you doing?" Understanding the caregiver as an individual can help create the right care plan for the patient or client and their support system - the family caregiver. "How are you doing?" versus "how are you coping?" sounds less clinical and more relatable. It extends an invitation to a caregiver to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences more freely.

By supporting and including family caregivers as partners in care results in better health and wellbeing for both the person receiving care and the caregiver.

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



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Hear Rachel—an employed caregiver and part of the 'sandwich generation'—share her experiences of caregiving.

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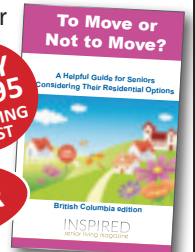
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*Living*  
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by LAURIE MUELLER

# PANDEMIC PROJECTS

You might laugh at this. You might shake your head in disbelief of such an idea. Or you may laugh with glee. I'm in Tony Robbins (the motivational guru from the US) "Inner Circle."

I'm 69 years old and I signed up for a year of motivational programs that, for many people, are to help them in their business. But that's not why I did it. I did it because when I thought about the audio recordings I have listened to and the books I have read from this guy over the years I get excited, I feel good, and I operate better.

In this ongoing pandemic, I want to find ways to feel better and help others in the process. And so, I signed up.

It's a great experience. I'm eating healthier, I'm doing exercises in the morning, I'm listening to music playlists that make me feel good, and I'm focusing on what makes sense to me, not letting other people's requests take precedence over my actions or feeling obliged to do something just because someone asked. I'm once again evaluating these requests. I'm reminded of the personal development I have done in the past and I'm enjoying the review.

At our age, many of us have the privilege of making decisions about how we spend our time and where we put our energy. One of my choices is writing more, which I have been doing. That means sitting at my desk instead of getting up and moving. My new motivational program is urging me to move more and so I am plugging both music and words into my ears

as I take off for a walk through one of our region's parks or even around the block.

I am inspired by a couple I know. Usually flitting between countries or cruise ships, Don and Elizabeth have taken this downtime to explore all the parks (big and little) in our region.

Elizabeth has posted them on her Facebook page and made a photo book for her library. Having spent most of my life in this area, I've been surprised at some of their finds. They set out to visit all the parks in our municipality (approximately 170) and they achieved their goal.

Elizabeth wanted to accomplish something during the shutdown, and so she looked for a project that would be fun and interesting to both her and Don. She didn't want to lose the time.

The other day in a Zoom meeting, a video medley of Irish music was played for us. In the credits, I saw my friend Angela's name. Retired about a year after me, she took her accordion music to heart and has been playing, composing, singing, coordinating Zoom productions. I nodded and silently said to myself, "there is another one who knows how to make the most out of life, even in quarantine."

Of course, some people have taken to renovating, including my husband, Helmuth. He's painted and updated, and added walls and ceilings to the once unfinished parts of our basement. Also, we have new renters and the retired husband in that couple has taken on chores with Helmuth. All the walls of his suite have been refreshed with new paint, as well as the outside steps. As I write this, both men are outside polishing their cars.

But I'm not that type of girl. I'm more into thoughts, behaviours, writing and learning, so that's my focus.

If you see someone dancing down the street with a smile on their face, it could be me... or maybe it's just your own crazy neighbour! Why not dance along with us? |

**Laurie Mueller, M.Ed** is retired and living in Victoria with her husband, Helmuth. She recently published *The Ultimate Guide on What to Do When Someone You Love Dies* on Amazon. More about Laurie can be found at [www.lauriemconsulting.com](http://www.lauriemconsulting.com) or on Facebook.

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