

Toronto Seniors' Task Force

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS 1

August 1998

Message from the Chair



Hello,

I am delighted to let you know that the Seniors' Task Force is up and running in the new City of Toronto. As chair of the Task Force, I look forward to our upcoming public consultations to see you and hear the comments out in your communities.

We have a great team of citizen members, City Councillors and staff who will work with you so that issues and priorities for seniors in the new city are a priority for this City Council.

This is our first newsletter for the Seniors' Task Force and further ones will have details about dates, times and locations of our consultations, and the date of the official launch of our efforts.

We want to know from you, what citizen participation processes we should put in place so that seniors' voices are heard and play an important part in the formation of this new city. We need to hear what works now, and what you would like to see in place for seniors that make Toronto a healthy and workable city.

As some of you know, the United Nations has declared 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP). We have a wonderful opportunity, though little money, to make the celebrations and the legacy of this upcoming year one that Toronto will remember. Our task force has appointed a subcommittee to work on making sure IYOP is special for Toronto seniors. We will be asking seniors what they would like to have in the way of events, projects and lasting legacies.

I last chaired a similar task force in the early 70's. As time marches on, senior citizen status has caught up with me! So, it's with a great deal of fellow feeling that I look forward to working with you.

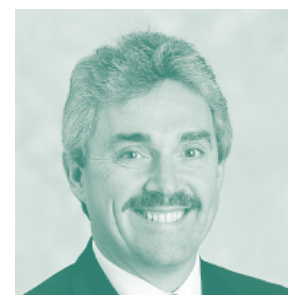


Anne Johnston

Meet the City Councillors appointed to the Seniors' Task Force



Lorenzo Berardinetti
Scarborough City Centre
397-9274



Michael Prue
East York
392-4035



Ron Moeser
Scarborough Highland Creek
392-1373



Joanne Flint
North York Centre South
392-0209



Elizabeth Brown
Rexdale-Thistletown
392-0205



Bill Saundercook
York-Humber
397-9255

Citizen members selected to the Seniors' Task Force are:

Edna Beange	Rosa Chan	Bill Nemerson
Hugh Betts	Stuart Hill	Joan Osler
Ruth Brown	Boyd Hipfner	Marlene Scorrano
Bill Campbell	George Johnson	Iria Vieira
Margaret Campbell	Dorothy MacKinnon	Bill Wilson
Toni Ciccarelli	Beverly McClelland	

Please feel free to photocopy this newsletter and share it.

International Year of Older Persons 1999

Towards a Society for All Ages

The United Nations General Assembly has designated 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP). Throughout the world, individuals, organizations, and governments at all levels are planning events and programs that increase awareness of the needs of older people and the contribution of seniors to society. In March of this year, Canada's federal, provincial and territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors established a Canada Coordinating Committee. Ms. Lois Neely, past chair of the former Toronto Mayor's Committee on Aging, is the Ontario representative.



and funding for seniors' programs. The Seniors' Task Force formed a subcommittee to plan how we will celebrate and contribute to the International Year of Older Persons.

IYOP celebrations will be launched on October 1, 1998, the International Day of Older Persons. The World Health Organization has put forward an interesting suggestion which emphasizes both "active aging" and the hope for international participation. The idea is to hold a "global walk" on

October 1, 1998 and again on October 1, 1999. "For twenty-four hours, a group of cities, hour after hour, time zone after time zone, will be celebrating aging around the world." It will take a lot of organizing, but wouldn't it be fun? Shall we get Toronto involved?

The Ministers approved the theme for the international year, "Canada, a Society for All Ages", and called upon Canadians to support five key objectives:

1. Enhance understanding, harmony and mutual support across generations.
2. Increase recognition of seniors' contributions to their families, their communities and the country.
3. Improve understanding by all Canadians of how individual and societal choices and decisions made today will affect individuals and our society in the future.
4. Encourage all sectors of society to be responsive to a diverse and aging population in a rapidly changing world.
5. Create the potential for aging-related products, technology and services.

There have been many workshops, committee meetings and think-tank sessions setting out suggestions for IYOP events. For example, a survey, conducted by the Seniors' Task Force during Seniors' Day events on Nathan Phillips Square, drew a number of suggestions. These suggestions included ideas for celebration such as parades, awards, a seniors' convention, ideas for a legacy such as seniors' committees to advise local governments, free education for seniors,

Scarborough has led the way in Toronto with an initial planning meeting in March. Five seniors' centres will collaborate on a week-long festival in September 1999 entitled, "Passport to a New Beginning: There is a Place to Go". Each of the five centres will host the whole district and invite community clubs or organizations in the area to join them. Recreation will be the basis of all activities and events focusing on wellness and recreation as preventative health care, and fun. The festival will be interactive, informative and multicultural. The aim is to strengthen the community centres and to launch innovative programs and services of an enduring nature.

And that - a legacy of "programs and services of an enduring nature" - is the criteria by which the success of International Year of Older Persons will be judged.

For information on Scarborough events, call Bill Campbell at **438-2308**. For Toronto information, call Edna Beange at **421-8232**.

Seniors' Task Force - What's in a Name?

In March 1998, City Council adopted the terms of reference for the "Task Force to Develop a Strategy for Issues of Concern to the Elderly". Although the name has shortened to Seniors' Task Force, its terms of reference and responsibilities remain the same.

The Seniors' Task Force is intended to be of limited duration with an interim report to Council by year end. The task force's mandate is to identify emerging needs of senior residents in the City of Toronto. And to develop a seniors' strategy to address priority issue areas, which are:

1. To develop structures to advise City Council on issues affecting seniors and to involve seniors in this process;
2. To ensure that policies, programs and services developed and delivered by the municipality meet the needs of seniors;
3. To value the involvement of seniors in the life of the city;
4. To identify a role for the City in the International Year of Older Persons in 1999; and,
5. To provide a process for rationalization of all previous municipal seniors' committees.

The Seniors' Task Force will provide a process in which seniors and seniors' groups can be involved in issues that affect them and the community.

Advising City Council on Seniors' Issues - Two Models

The former North York Council on Aging and the former Toronto Mayor's Committee on Aging (TMCA) have both expanded their membership to include representatives from other municipalities. Each group hopes to present a model on how the new Toronto City Council can meet seniors' needs and concerns.

The chief difference between the two models is that the Council on Aging will seek to be an independent body that speaks for seniors. The TMCA model prefers to be a formal part of the City's decision-making structure, with a part-time secretary, coordinator and a newsletter.

The first approach has the advantage of remaining free of politics that might limit it. The second has the advantage of direct access to the Council and all City departments. For example, at a presentation to the Seniors' Task Force on June 18, 1998, the Toronto Dental Services Office gave the TMCA credit for the increase of free dental care to low-income seniors living in the old City of Toronto.

The Council on Aging meets every month at the Community Social Planning Council at 2 Carlton Street. For information, call Neville Chenoy at **777-9682**. For information about the interim TMCA, call Reg Herman at **921-2728**.

Do you know of any other models? Are you interested in finding out more? Get involved with charting a new course for seniors in a new city. Send your ideas to the Seniors' Task Force, Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3C6.



Quality of Life for Seniors

The Centre for Health Promotion at the University of Toronto, in partnership with Councils on Aging Network of Ontario, is working on a Healthy Public Policy project. Sponsored by Health Canada, a specific focus of the project is the quality of life for seniors.

The Centre is inviting seniors to set up an Interest Group to advise researchers. The Interest Group is open to all seniors concerned about our quality of life here in the new City of Toronto.

The mandate of the Interest Group is in a very early stage, very broad and welcoming to all sorts of new ideas and self-help initiatives.

The Interest Group meets at the Centre for Health Promotion at 100 College Street. Call Dennis Raphael at **978-7567** for more information.

AGEplus-A Must-see Video

Reg Herman

This 23-minute video inspires and stimulates older people to become more active, and it works. Ordinary women and men in their sixties, seventies and eighties tell why they decided they had to keep active and how they did it. I found the video deeply involving and inspirational. When it ended, I was astonished that 23 minutes had gone by. At \$10 (including study guide, handling and shipping), it is one of the great bargains of this age.

To order by mail: Video.AGEplus, Healthy Elderly Program
55 Town Centre Court, Suite 500
Scarborough, Ontario
M1P 4X4
Fax: **(416) 396-5299**

Seniors Call to Action

Help the Seniors' Task Force by telling us about seniors' groups you know. Leave information at **392-0129**. Please provide the organization's name and focus, the name and telephone number of a contact person.

Other ways you can help are:

- tell a friend about the Seniors' Task Force and this newsletter
- watch for this newsletter in community centres, senior centres and in the local library
- recycle this newsletter - pass it on to someone else, and
- watch for information on upcoming public meetings and attend.

How to Beat the Heat

In the summer, the combination of high heat and high humidity can be very dangerous. Those especially at risk during these weather conditions include:

- the elderly;
- people with certain chronic illnesses or people unable to move or change position by themselves;
- infants and preschool children;
- people who exercise vigorously or are involved in strenuous work outdoors for prolonged periods.

To avoid heat-related illness:

- Drink lots of water and natural juices even if you don't feel very thirsty. Avoid alcoholic beverages, coffee and cola.
- Avoid going out in the blazing sun or heat when possible. If you must go outside, stay in the shade as much as possible and plan to go out early in the morning or evening when it is cooler and smog levels may not be as high as in the afternoon. Wear a hat.
- Take advantage of air conditioned or cool places such as shopping malls, libraries, community centres or a friend's place.
- If you don't have air conditioning, keep shades or drapes drawn and blinds closed on the sunny side of your home, but keep windows slightly open.
- Keep electric lights off or turned down low.
- Take a cool bath or shower periodically or cool down with cool, wet towels.
- Wear loose fitting, light cotton clothing.
- Avoid heavy meals and using your oven.
- Avoid intense or moderately intense physical activity.
- Do not leave a child in a parked car or sleeping outside in direct sunlight.
- Fans alone may not provide enough cooling when the temperature is high.

Get help from a friend, relative or a doctor if you have the following symptoms of heat illness:

- Rapid breathing
- Weakness or fainting
- More tired than usual
- Headache
- Confusion

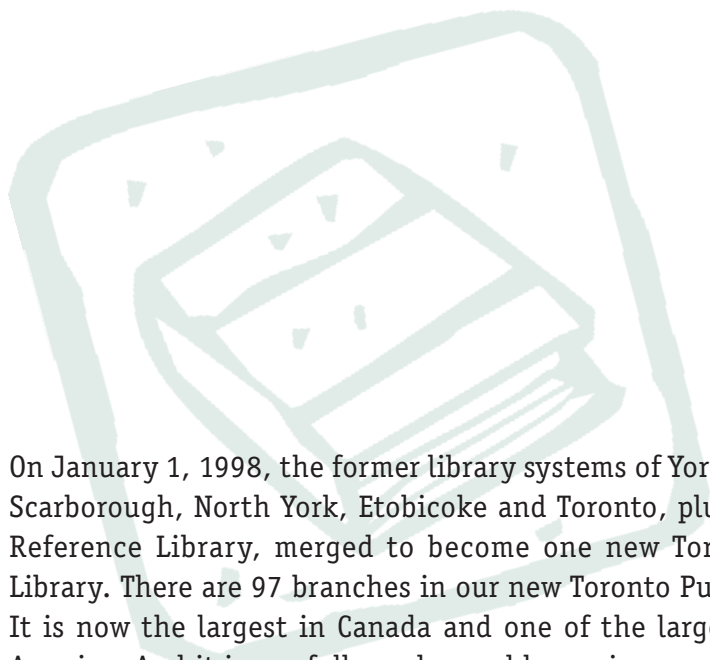
Friends and relatives can help someone with heat illness by doing the following:

- Remove excess clothing from the person.
- Cool the person with lukewarm water, by sponging or bathing.
- Move the person to a cooler location.
- Give the person sips of cool water, not ice cold water.

If you become ill, faint, have difficulty breathing, or feel confused and disoriented, call for emergency medical attention. Call 911.

For more information on heat-related illness, call the Toronto Public Health office nearest you.

East York **461-8136**
Etobicoke **394-8300**
North York **395-7700**
Scarborough **396-7454**
Toronto **392-7401**
York **394-2436**



Toronto Public Library

Arlene Chan

On January 1, 1998, the former library systems of York, East York, Scarborough, North York, Etobicoke and Toronto, plus the Metro Reference Library, merged to become one new Toronto Public Library. There are 97 branches in our new Toronto Public Library. It is now the largest in Canada and one of the largest in North America. And it is woefully underused by seniors.

Our public library is a wealth of resources for seniors. We can get free access to the Internet and training in many branches. If you have Internet at home, the Toronto Public Library's website <http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca> is worth looking at. It gives information on services, programs and events, catalogues, library branches and hours plus links to other interesting websites.

Toronto Public Library has special collections for seniors. You can find community information on government and health services, seniors' resources and agencies, transportation and housing. There are large print books, talking books, closed captioned videos, and

books on tape. The library offers a variety of programs including slide shows, speakers, and films. You can also take courses in partnership with Parks and Recreation, the School Board and others.

Are you homebound or know someone who is? The library's Outreach Services are described this way by one customer: "This is a godsend! I've read books you have brought which I've loved that I never would have chosen myself." The Home Library Services allow people who enjoy reading to continue receiving books from their library in the comfort of their own home. Deposit Collection and Institutional Services are available in nursing homes, hospitals, seniors' residences, homes for the aged, and retirement homes. This service reaches out so that large numbers of seniors can have access to library books.

One phone call gets you the answers to just about any questions and a search of the library catalogues - call **393-7610**.

Este boletín contiene información sobre asuntos de interés para las personas de edad avanzada. Para obtener información en español, sírvase llamar al **338-0338**.

Este Boletim Informativo, contém informação sobre assuntos de interesse para a Terceira Idade. Para informações, em português, contactar com o **338-0338**.

Questo bollettino informativo riguarda questioni di interesse per gli anziani. Per informazioni in italiano, siete pregati di chiamare il **338-0338**.

Warqeeyskaan waxaan ku qoran arrimo dan u ah dadka waayeelka ah. Aqbaaro ku qoran af Somaali, kala xariir **338-0338**.

Ta ulotka zawiera informacje o sprawach interesujących emerytów. Po informacji w języku polskim prosimy dzwonić pod numer **338-0338**.

Ce bulletin traite de questions qui intéressent les personnes âgées. Pour tout renseignement en français, composez le **338-0338**.

此通訊刊載與耆老有關的事項。閣下可用中文致電**338-0338**查詢。

Το φυλλάδιο αυτό περιέχει πληροφορίες για θέματα που ενδιαφέρουν τους ηλικιωμένους. Για πληροφορίες στα Ελληνικά, παρακαλούμε τηλεφωνήστε στο **338-0338**.

Цей бюлетень містить інформацію з приводу виплати процентів громадянам похилого віку. Щоб отримати інформацію на (українській мові) дзвоніть, будь ласка, на телефон: **338-0338**.

Bản tin này có những thông tin về những vấn đề người cao niên cần quan tâm. Muốn biết thêm chi tiết bằng tiếng Việt, xin gọi số **338-0338**

Toronto Seniors' Task Force News

Copies of this newsletter are available at your local public library, parks and recreation centres, seniors centres and local city halls, and on the internet at www.city.toronto.on.ca/healthycity.

Please feel free to photocopy this newsletter and share it.

Editorial Team: Reg Herman - Editor, Jean Houston - reporter

NEWS is produced by the Seniors' Task Force members with staff support.

The Seniors' Task Force is an initiative of Toronto City Council whose mandate is to identify issues, priorities and citizen input models so that seniors' voices are reflected in the new City.

The Healthy City Office provides the staff lead for this task force.

For information, please leave a message at: **392-0129**. Fax: **392-0089**

