



Seniors' Voice

Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA) Newsletter

Message from the President

Fall 2009

Volume 5

This edition of our newsletter will be handed out at our Second Annual General Meeting taking place on September 25, 2009 at St. Peter's Auditorium. We would like to take this opportunity to **thank St. Peter's for their generous sponsorship** of our program by giving us a home and all the supports that the administration of our program requires. Without their generous in kind support, we would not be flourishing as an organization.

It is hard to believe that a full year has gone by since our first AGM. However, when we look at our accomplishments it is not surprising. Our AGM Report highlights some of the great work we are doing to elevate the voice of seniors in our community. We are proud of the accomplishments of our second full year of programs to seniors. We also have some new plans for this fall season.

We will be offering a series of educational sessions this year called the **Healthy, Active Aging Series**. Each month beginning October 15th (the third Thursday of the month) from 10:00 am – 11:30 am, we hope to see you at the Jamesville Community Centre at 209 MacNab Street North (the former St. Mary's School) to help us kick off this project. We know from studies at McMaster University and our Age Friendly Cities focus groups that older adults are asking for more information about what is available to them and how they can access information when they need to. We will have some answers to your questions. This first year we have come up with topics we have identified but in the coming years we will be asking YOU what is important and what other information you need to ensure your healthy, active aging experience.

As always, don't hesitate to contact our staff to suggest topics of interest or to give your input about our programs. Memberships will be on sale now for the next year and with membership come privileges as they say...so please feel like this is YOUR organization and let us know what you think of our progress.

Our Board is beginning a new **3 year strategic planning phase** in November so there is an opportunity for you to have input. If you would like to tell us your vision for HCoA in the coming years please take some time to write a few things down and send it to us for

IN THIS ISSUE...

- **Message from the President**
- **Membership Drive**
- **Ethno-Cultural Outreach**
- *Home Health Care and Family Caregiver Expo*
- **NEW! Healthy, Active Aging Series**



The Hamilton Council on Aging is a United Way Agency



Funding provided for Tackling Poverty Together Project



Funding provided for Age Friendly Hamilton Project



Funding Provided for Seniors Engagement

consideration in our plan.

We are continuing our outreach to seniors in the Hub neighbourhoods of Hamilton and through our partnerships with service providers in the community. Our **Tackling Poverty Project**, funded by the *Hamilton Community Foundation*, has continued to get seniors connected with all the benefits to which they are entitled. We will be gearing up for the income tax season soon and we **always need volunteers** who like numbers to help us with this part of the project.

Our work with **Access for Diverse Communities**, funded by the *United Way*, to ensure seniors from various cultural and ethnic groups have all the information they require to gain access to resources in the community is also continuing. We are working with various groups to mobilize seniors to be active, engaged and have a voice in the development of activities in Hamilton that meets their needs.

And last, our **Age Friendly Hamilton Project**, funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, is progressing on target. We have conducted 15 Focus Groups with Seniors; 1 with Caregivers and 2 with Service Providers. We are in the process of compiling the data into a Report to the Community which we hope will be published by the end of the year with a grant from **Allegra Printing**.

- Dr. Carolyn J. Rosenthal
President of the Board



GET INVOLVED!

If you are interested in membership, participating in the activities or receiving information about the Hamilton Council on Aging, please call 905-777-3837, ext. 12238 or complete the form below, and return by mail or fax to:

Hamilton Council on Aging (HCoA)
88 Maplewood Avenue, Hamilton ON L8M 1W9
Fax: 905-575-5121

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

- I am interested in membership, add me to the mailing list
- I would be interested in volunteering with the Council
- I would be interested in participating on a project steering committee

ETHNO-CULTURAL OUTREACH

ACCESS FOR SENIORS IN ETHNO-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Submitted by: Gurcharan Singh Mander

Like many immigrants, I came to Canada with immense hope, joy and the anticipation of opportunities to come. I love India and will always have an emotional attachment to my native country, however I knew there would be many benefits in immigrating to Canada.

Canada is a democratic country where every citizen should get equal opportunity. There are so many laws and institutions in place to protect the citizen and his or her individual rights. And I love that Canada is so multicultural and there is respect and appreciation for all cultures, races, religions and walks of life.

On a personal note, moving to Canada also meant following the footsteps of my children. A home is where family is, and without my children with me in India, I increasingly felt a longing to move to Canada. I wished to keep my family unified, which in this case meant moving thousands of miles to another country. The difference between my children and me is that I was beginning this journey at an older age, when most people don't anticipate starting such a chapter.

The move to Canada was definitely an eye opener for my family and me. I will be honest: I faced, and continue to face, many barriers that stand in the way of my integration into Canadian society and my participation in civic affairs. As a

newcomer I felt very isolated when I first immigrated. I felt alone because there was no one who could help me or understand how I felt. This was also due in part to a language barrier. English, like any language, is difficult to learn. I am proficient in English now, but when I first immigrated it was a challenge trying to integrate myself all the while not having the means to communicate effectively. I had so many questions and concerns and not being able to communicate them to anyone who would understand was frustrating.

Every newcomer faces financial challenges but as a **senior I felt this challenge even more**. Seniors do not have the energy for aggressive job searches and career development. In fact, most senior newcomers immigrate to Canada for the opposite reason, having toiled and worked hard our whole lives, we are now looking for a better quality of life and a peaceful environment. The 10 year residency period to be eligible to receive support from the government including Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement is a challenge for all of us.

Things began to look up for me when I learned about some excellent Services in the Hamilton community, such as the **Hamilton Council on Aging and SISO**. Still though, I feel there is something more that needs to be done for **South Asian Seniors**. There should be a solution, a place where seniors feel comfortable and also a place where we can truly educate ourselves on our rights and responsibilities.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

HCoA has been working with a Committee in Hamilton to bring the Home Health Care Family Caregiver Expo to the Hamilton Convention Centre. We hope our Members will find this helpful.

Caregiver Omnimedia, and Shoppers Home Health Care, are pleased to announce that they are hosting the first **Hamilton Home Health Care and Family Caregiver Expo**.

This show, will take place at the **Hamilton Convention Centre** on **November 21st** from **10am – 5 pm**. This is our first Saturday show and our first in the Hamilton area.

The **Hamilton Home Health Care and Family Caregiver Expo** is free for Family Caregivers in the Hamilton area compliments of Shoppers Home Health Care stores.

1 in 4 adult Canadians is a caregiver looking after a family member or loved one living at home or in a long term care facility. The Hamilton Home Health Care and Family Caregiver Expo is an informational day for all caregivers, care recipients, seniors, home care workers, HR professionals, public service and business professionals.

More information on the show will soon be found on at the website:

www.homehealthcareexpo.com.



HAMILTON • NOVEMBER 21, 2009

NEW!

Healthy, Active Aging Series

Starting October 15th

10am – 12 noon

Every Third Thursday of the Month

Topics of interest to Older Adults:

- Healthy Retirement
- Navigating the Healthcare System
- Medications Alert
- Chronic Disease Prevention
- Healthy Body/Healthy Mind
- Protection from Frauds and Scams
- Power of Attorney
- Healthy Cooking and Eating
- Housing Choices for Older Persons

All sessions to be held at:

**Jamesville Community Centre
Auditorium**

209 MacNab Street North

The 2009 United Way Campaign is underway!

The Hamilton Council on Aging is proud to be an agency of the United Way. The United Way's network of programs and services provide a reliable and effective support system for individuals and families in need. You can **designate your giving to Seniors Issues**. United Way is working to make our communities stronger and healthier places to live and work.

To donate, please call 905-527-4543



get into it!