

Celebrating Healthy Active Lives



ALCOA Members – Making a Difference for Older Adults



Active Living Coalition for Older Adults **UPDATE**

A Note from the Executive Director



Fall is upon us and winter seems to be fast approaching. In this issue of **Celebrating Healthy Active Lives**, we have wonderful success stories from ALCOA members from literally across the country, from the

North West Territories to New Brunswick and in between. Plus we have articles of interest and resources for you and your members. As the warm fall weather turns into cold snowy days, and we find that we have to spend more time in doors - that doesn't mean we still can't be active.

It is wonderful to read about the programs and activities that are going on across the country, from urban to rural settings and from the east to west coasts. As you read through these articles, and find yourself wanting to learn more about the programs, please feel free to contact the author of the article. Our newsletter is your newsletter, and it is designed to share success stories, programs and resources, so that others will learn and benefit from them.

CHAL is published three times a year, and we do want to hear from all of you. So if you have news you'd like to share, we'd like to hear about it. Tell us about an outstanding member, a successful program, or a wonderful resource. Just contact the ALCOA office for publication dates.

We'll be back in touch once the snow is on the ground (for some of us Canadians), but hopefully Spring will be in the air. So for now, let's enjoy those last few days of fall outside and keep on being active!

Enjoy.

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Celebrating Healthy Active Lives

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TEAM NWT at the 2008 CANADA 55+ GAMES



Team NWT attended the Canada 55+ Games in Dieppe, New Brunswick from August 26–31, 2008. This is the third time the NWT has participated in the Canada 55+ Games – they attended the 2004 Games in Whitehorse and the 2006 Games in Portage la Prairie. Our attendance at the Games has increased from 28 in 2004 to 75 in 2008.

Events that Team NWT participated in were:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Cribbage | Horseshoes |
| Contract Bridge | Candlepin bowling |
| Golf | Darts |
| Scrabble | Ice curling |
| Swimming | Ice hockey |
| Tennis | Washer toss |

“The Canada 55+ Games is a nation-wide program to sponsor wellness – that is, the spiritual, mental and physical well being – among Canadians 55 years of age and older. Provincial programs are staged annually in different provinces and territories. The first national Games were held in Regina in 1996. The Games should not be categorized

as sporting events, as they span a wide range of physical and mental challenges, from Slow-pitch Softball to Contract Bridge, from Darts to Lawn Bowling, and from Snooker to Track and Field. These events bring together amateur competitors who participate for the sheer joy of competition, for the opportunity to visit other parts of Canada, and for the camaraderie and social interaction that are an integral and essential part of the Games.

The Games bring together relatively small groups, representing their respective provinces or territories. These groups earn the right as a result of competition against thousands of other seniors in their home province or territory. The 700 or so who compete in the Games represent over 100,000 Canadian seniors who actively participate in local events leading up to the national games.”

Wayne Simpson
Program Coordinator
Email: waylin1@xplornet.com

Seniors' Resource Centre, Saint John, NB

Our Seniors' Resource Centre provides a variety of pamphlets and brochures on such diverse topics as housing, home care, health (MS, diabetes, heart, stroke, arthritis, etc.), government programs, nutrition, finances, recreation - day trips, tours, etc. We also produce a monthly newsletter. Information and referral services are provided to those who call on the phone or come into the office

Space and volunteers are provided in our office for the Canada Revenue Volunteer Tax Program to assist seniors with low incomes to complete their income tax returns at no cost. We partner with Leisure Services to take registrations and maintain a database for the Loyalist Zone 50+ Friendship Games. This year we made a PowerPoint presentation with the photos taken during the 24 activities from the games. This will be used as a tool in promoting the games and in encouraging seniors to remain active and healthy. We plan to partner with service providers to make videos to assist seniors in such areas as daily living skills.

This year we completed a program, Connecting Seniors, in which seniors living independently completed questionnaires covering such areas as social, health, housing, finance, daily living skills, and nutrition. This information was put into a computer database. We then organized a very successful symposium with presenters which included a mental health professional, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dieticians, pharmacists, optometrists, etc.

Our facilities include a large activity room. This provides an opportunity for seniors to play board



games such as Auction 45s and Scrabble, have a cup of tea and enjoy socializing. In conjunction with health and service providers, it also provides space for foot clinics, blood testing, interviewing seniors, etc. Several seniors have recently been interviewed about their memories of Saint John before the urban renewal of the late 1960's for a book being written on that topic - these recollections are so fascinating as the people recount daily events of a bygone age. It makes us realize how quickly our lives have changed in just a few short decades. At the Centre we are also interviewing seniors for snapshots of events in their lives for a book to be called **Wealth of Experience**.

We offer free computer classes for seniors, using senior volunteers who practice our motto, *Seniors Helping Seniors*. The computer skill that most seniors want to learn is to send and receive e-mails, a wonderful way to keep connected with children and grandchildren who live far away.

Our Centre is located in a mall which is connected via a pedway system to another shopping mall, City Hall, the main library, the City Market, the Aquatic Centre, an arena, and through an underground parking area, to a seniors complex. We are now in the process of developing a walking club for seniors to assist with exercise, especially during the winter months.

In order to provide information to the increasing number of seniors and their families who use the internet, we plan to develop a web site in the near future.

Linda Nickerson
seniorsresourcecenter@nb.aibn.com

WATER EXERCISE: A PERFECT FIT FOR SENIORS

Centres for Seniors Windsor's Aquafit program began as a simple pilot project with a group of 15 members going to a local hotel pool where they were guided through an aquafit workout.

Benefits of the program were seen immediately. Seniors that were walking with walkers, or awaiting hip replacements would amble slowly and awkwardly to the pool. Once in the pool the changes were dramatic. In the water, these participants didn't have to worry about falling as the water helped them with their balance. The water provided a

feeling of weightlessness; natural massage and muscular tension release while the buoyancy of water protected their joints and provided natural resistance for improved balance, muscle strength and tone. Physically-

limited participants who might not otherwise exercise were able to participate.

Feedback from our members indicated that similar programs in the area were not geared specifically to seniors and often the instructors were not familiar with senior needs. Many seniors are on limited incomes and therefore were not able to afford these programs. Centres for Seniors Windsor was able to secure a Communities In Action Fund Grant and a donation from LaSalle Community Recreation Cor-

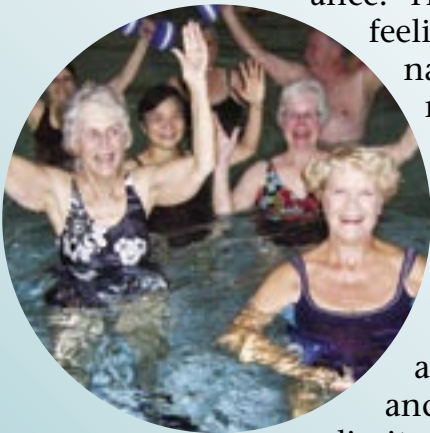
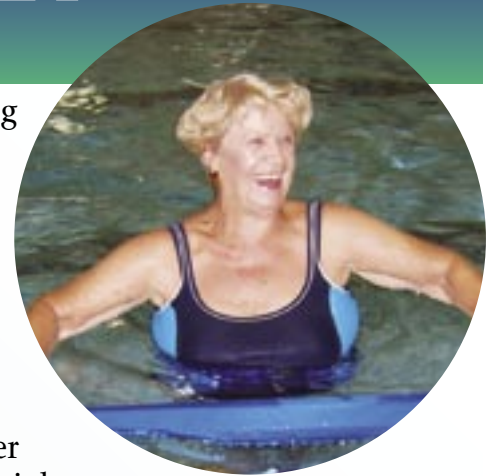
poration allowing us to offer two senior aquatic fitness classes, twice a week for three 10-week sessions. This would allow seniors taking the classes to discover how truly beneficial the water can be to their health and well being. These classes were taught by a staff member who is a certified water arthritis exercise instructor.

Pre and post physical assessments were done on the participants. Post assessments revealed our members made improvements in their upper and lower body strength, in agility, in cardiovascular endurance, plus improved their upper and lower body flexibility.

The program was so successful we now offer two classes twice a week at a local pool at maximum capacity.

One of our members, 80 year old, Sarah Clarke was misdiagnosed with sciatica and was in such tremendous pain she could hardly walk and often needed a wheelchair to get around. Sarah looked forward to aquafit classes because this was the only time she felt good and free of pain. When in the water she was able to walk and move with ease. Eventually Sarah was reassessed and underwent hip replacement surgery and returned to the pool as soon as she was able. She credits aquafit with her speedy recovery, as she is back one hundred percent with no pain and no limp. Sarah highly recommends water exercise to all seniors and wouldn't consider missing a class unless something very, very serious happened.

Janelle Way, Recreation Programmer
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Fitness and Health, not only a lifestyle but my passion



Twenty-four years ago, after my second child, I received a membership from my parents to a women's gym for a Christmas gift. That gift was a turning point in my life. From that gift, I began the process of my career as a Fitness and Health Expert.

I had gained 56 lbs. from my consecutive pregnancies and now, as my Doctor said I had to work at losing weight. This was something that I never had to do before, as I was always a "skinny" kid.

It was also reassuring that my Doctor was a fitness enthusiast so it was comforting to know that he had knowledge and I would receive support from him.

I became dedicated to fitness, working out consistently.

Gradually the weight I had gained during pregnancy began to come off at a sensible pace. I was feeling good and became interested in proper eating habits and quality of food. This was wonderful as my family would learn about nutritional foods at a very young age which would hopefully turn into healthy lifestyle habits.

The next step for me was to take a Fitness Instructors course. The YMCA Strength Training was the first course that I took, and then the Fitness Instructors course. Over the span of 23 years in my career, I have taken countless certifications, workshops and post secondary education in the fitness and health field. This has enabled me to excel in my profession. I now teach in a community college in the Fitness and Health Promotion Program (of which I am an alumnus) and at a private college in the Physiotherapist Assistant Program. I am also the Fitness and Health Specialist at the Horton Street Seniors Centre/Boys and Girls Club of London, the proprietor of T-3 Personal Training and Post Rehab business, deliver presentations on fitness and health topics, and write articles for various periodicals.

My philosophy regarding success and wisdom in the daily practice of wellness is summed up by 7 words: Patience, Tolerance and Understanding—which will build the following characteristics—Empathy, Compassion, Honesty and Integrity. We all have an impact on each other everyday; therefore we must try to make a positive impact. Just a smile can brighten another person's day.

Fitness and Health is not only my career...it is my PASSION! One of my goals is for everyone to realize how an active lifestyle can benefit them by an increase in the quality of life, at any age and fitness level. You don't have to run a marathon to be fit. All you have to do is "get up, get out and get moving". Tracy Ralph



Tracy Ralph leads an exercise group

Returning to Indoor Activity

It's that time of year again when we start preparing for fall and winter weather. Within that preparation, we must consider taking our "outdoor physical activities" and become re-acquainted with our "indoor activities".

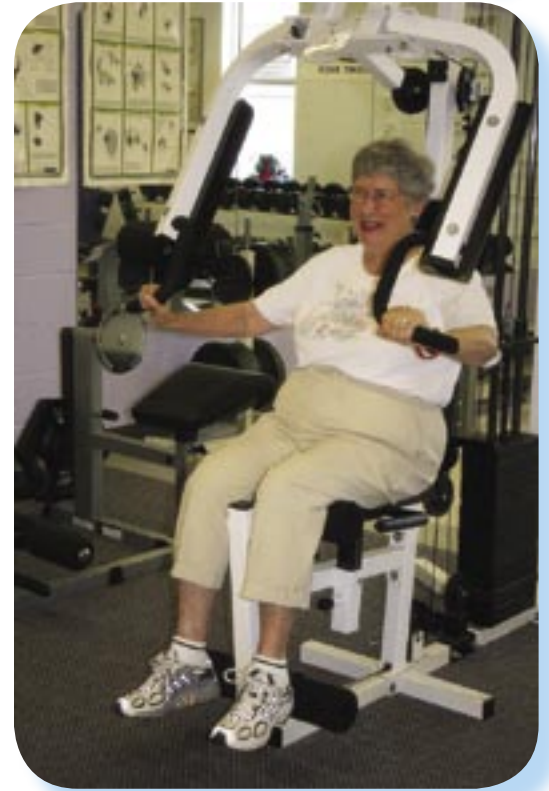
We all love being outside in the warm weather and it is sometimes a challenge to become motivated to return to a different routine.

The following are some tips that may assist in re-establishing your regime.

1. If you have an indoor exercise program, you may return to it but remember to start at a gradual and progressive pace. For example, if you are strength training reduce the number of "sets". If you were doing 3 sets, then try 1 or 2 and work up to 3 within a couple of weeks. Depending on the intensity of your summer exercise routine, you may also want to initially reduce the weights.
2. If you belong to an "Older Adult Centre" then you may wish to challenge yourself to different activities. For example, if you participated in land group exercises, you may wish to try "aqua-fit" and eventually complement your routine with another style of class/exercise program. It is a good idea to "change it up" periodically to enhance your body and mind by learning new techniques.
3. Remember to incorporate "FUN" and enjoy the activity. If you are not having fun, chances are that you will not stay with the program. Make some friends with similar interests and you will be able to motivate each other.

It's a long and usually cold winter for us Canadians. What better way to stave off "cabin fever" than to keep fit and have fun doing it. The quality of life and fellowship you gain will enable you to "plough" through fall and winter with ease.

Tracy Ralph, F.H.P.
Fitness & Health Specialist
Lifestyle Consultant
CSEP C.P.T.
S.F.I.C.



Motivate older adults using a customizable balance program

Human Kinetics Publishers has recently released a new resource, which provides information on an activity-based program designed to improve balance and mobility for both fit and frail older adults.

This practical instructor's guide provides more than 130 balance and mobility exercises that consider flexibility, strength, and cardio-respiratory endurance. These exercises enhance older adults' abilities to maintain balance in completing their everyday tasks.

ABLE Bodies Balance Training uses current research and a component-based approach to training. Instructors are encouraged to use activities covering all five components of the program, and the exercises and activities are easily implemented with the use of existing facilities and inexpensive equipment. The program may be used in group or individual settings and can be customized according to level of experience:

- Beginning instructors can follow the 16-week session plan as a well-balanced training program that safely progress older adults through the exercises. The material is complete and may extend to a year-long program.
- More experienced instructors may select exercises and activities from each of the five component categories to meet the individual needs of their older adult clients. The component-based organization of the text allows instructors to easily incorporate both exercises and conceptual ideas in fun, engaging, and creative ways into their existing programs.

As a bonus, access to a dedicated ABLE Bodies Balance Training Web site is included with the book. It offers 15 downloadable activity handouts that instructors can print out and distribute to patients or clients for use at home. It also offers downloadable printouts of all the balance training activities in the book-- over 130 conceptual ideas and activities for instructors to choose from either for planning their own sessions or for aiding their delivery of the 16-week session plan. Instructors can access the supplemental materials at:

www.HumanKinetics.com/ABLEBodiesBalanceTraining.

For more information on ABLE Bodies Balance Training, or a variety of other physical activity resources, visit www.HumanKinetics.com or call 1-800-465-7301.

ABOUT THE BOOK

ABLE Bodies Balance Training

Sue M. Scott

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sue Scott, MS, is an exercise consultant, balance specialist, and active living consultant. In her work with older adults and through her fitness company, Renewable Fitness, Scott focuses on bettering the health and well-being of seniors, particularly frail older adults.

Scott has over 10 years of experience working exclusively with seniors and fitness. She has worked in fitness as an educator, researcher, consultant, and personal trainer since 1986. She is certified as an American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) health and fitness instructor and an International Dance Exercise Association (IDEA) master trainer.

