

Revelstoke Senior Life

A monthly newsletter for Revelstoke seniors

May 2023



Staying healthy, living with passion - Editor's note by Laura Stovel

With the coming of May, we can pack away our cold-weather clothes and get out into the garden. The outdoor farmers' markets, restaurant patios and festivals herald a season of renewed energy, socializing and physical activity. This month we are pleased to feature one of my personal inspirations: Donna Hannah. At the age of 90, Donna keeps up an enormous garden and when she's not out there she is playing music with friends of all generations.

Registered massage therapist David Walker has decades of experience in his field. In this issue, he shares his insights into staying physically healthy as we age.

Plus, as always, we share the many events and activities happening around Revelstoke. We hope you enjoy this issue.



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What is the Community Response Network (CRN)?

The Revelstoke CRN is a committee of service providers, including the City, Interior Health, and several non-profits that work together to prevent adult abuse and support vulnerable adults.



Donna Hannah with her starter plants waiting to go in her expansive and productive garden.

We are grateful for the support of our sponsors and contributors:



Sue Dulley,
volunteer copy
editor

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Inspiring Seniors

Donna Hannah – Living life with passion

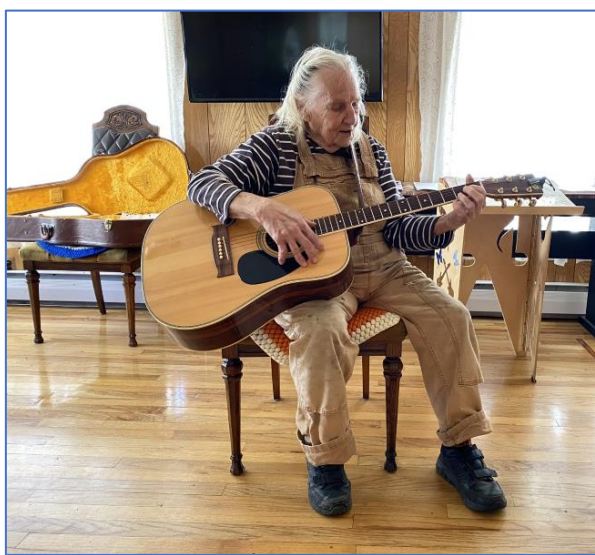
If the snow is off the ground and you're looking for Donna Hannah, chances are you'll find her in her back-yard garden or out playing music with friends. At 90 years young, Donna is always on the go.

In late April, Donna's outdoor greenhouse and two indoor growing rooms are still filled with plant starts: tomatoes, broccoli, cauliflowers and nasturtiums all ready to go when the time is right. Her garden, newly bare of snow, reveals the tops of over-wintered carrots and parsnips and neatly-tied raspberries – three thick stalks to a bunch. If you cover the carrots to prevent them from freezing, she explains, you will have delicious, fresh vegetables in spring. She generously shares her plants and harvest with friends.

Donna was born in Alberta. When she was nine, her family moved to a small dairy farm at Albert Canyon. There she developed her interest in playing piano. "There was a piano in the schoolhouse and I would go over and play on it and teach myself – the school was never locked," she said. "I was 10 or 11 years old. We used to have dances there and I'd stand behind whoever was playing the piano and watch."

The family moved to Revelstoke when Donna was 12, the year her dad bought her her first guitar. Two years later, when she was 14, she began taking lessons "from a guy who taught above the Old Spice Pool Hall. I was playing slide guitar with a bar." The instructor recognized her ability but didn't like her guitar and insisted that she buy his Martin guitar for \$100. That was a lot of money and Donna was only earning 25¢ an hour babysitting. Donna paid off the guitar over time. It is still her favorite.

Donna quit school when she was 14 and went to work. "We didn't have very much money," she said. "I was ambitious and I always had a job. I was always making money. And I was thrifty." Donna married and had two girls, Valerie (Brinda) and Lonnie, but the marriage didn't last and she became a single mom, trying to support the family. She needed work where she could have the girls with her so she built a laundromat. Around ten years later, Donna met her second husband, George, a military man who was in the area shooting down avalanches. They moved to Nova Scotia for six years but eventually returned to Revelstoke and Donna's family who had continued running the family laundromat while they were away.



Donna still plays the guitar that she bought at age 14.

Today, Donna lives on her old family property in Southside. George passed away nine years ago. His memory is present in the beautiful wood-inlay floor and the archways he created in their home.

Music, shared with good friends, continues to be Donna's passion. "I used to play a lot by myself but it's more fun to play with people. The more you play with people who are better than you are, the better you get yourself because you try harder to catch up."

Donna's has friends of all ages and from many countries. They can often be found in her living room jamming. Asked about her amazing energy, Donna said, "I never smoked, never drank, and don't take any medication. I work hard, I play hard, I love music and dancing. And I love people."

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Living well, staying fit

Registered massage therapist David Walker has been helping people maintain a healthy body for decades. “We are living in amazing times,” the co-owner of Revelstoke Massage Therapy said. People in their 80s can have cataract surgery and see better than they have in 30 years. Heart stents or knee and hip replacements can give people renewed strength and agility. And there are many tools to support a healthy lifestyle. “When I moved to Revelstoke several years ago there wasn’t one yoga class available. Now there are lots,” he said. Electric bikes can help seniors go out for a ride and know they can climb hills or return home easily. “You have to find the tools for self-care that resonate with you.”

Stretching, strengthening and cardio are all important for maintaining good health as we age. Stretching keeps you limber and keeps the blood, oxygen and nutrients flowing through the body. “It is preventative,” he said. “People need to start stretching early, in their 20s, to have good hips and good shoulders when they’re older.

People come in (for a massage) and they have pain due to a lack of blood flow “or they may have tingling or numbing and their shoulders are falling asleep when they’re sleeping. It’s a sign that things are too tight. If you have a shoulder or arm or leg that’s tight, instead of getting normal blood flow, oxygen and nutrients, it’s operating at, say 45% of its capacity. That part will deteriorate faster because it’s not functioning properly,” David said.

Sitting for long periods can contribute to poor health. “We are not meant to sit. We are meant to be upright but people sit all day. If you think about the posture of sitting, you collapse your lungs, you collapse your digestive organs and your pelvis,” he said. People also tend not to breathe well. “When we’re working at the computer we are not really focusing on our breath,” he said. “When you have short, shallow breaths it signals the sympathetic nervous system of the body to release adrenalin that keeps your heart rate up a bit. But if you take deeper, slower breaths and exhale slower, your body goes into an autonomic state where it releases choline that aids in digestion, healing and the immune system. You think that breathing helps you to relax, but by breathing correctly you actually change the chemical process in your system.”



Keeping strength up is also important. “I always talk about people maintaining things,” David said. “You don’t need to increase your strength but you don’t want to lose it. As you get older, if you have an injury and you’re inactive for six weeks, you can lose up to 40% of your strength fast. So having a discipline, whether it’s walking or going to a yoga class, something to maintain flexibility and the strength that you have, is important because once you lose it as you get older, it’s way harder to get it back.”

Getting your heart rate up through cardiovascular exercise is also extremely important, he said. In addition to mental health benefits, studies have shown that increasing the heart rate for half an hour three times a week can have significant health benefits.

“I find that embracing the time that we’re in” is important for a positive outlook and good health, David said. He found wisdom in the words of an older man who said to him, “The one ability that you need to cultivate is the ability to adjust to change, because it’s the one big constant.”

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Getting to know dementia

Learn basic information about dementia and support services available



Enhance your knowledge about dementia and learn about the different types of resources that are available at any stage of the disease. Free to attend; donations appreciated.

Where

Revelstoke Seniors Citizens Association
603 Connaught Avenue

Registration

To register, please call the Dementia Helpline®
at 1-800-936-6033

When

Wednesday, May 3
10 am to noon

COVID-19 safety protocol

Masks are optional. Learn more about
safety protocols at
alzbc.org/COVID-safety

Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Ministry of Health



Upcoming events and activities

Tuesday, May 2

- Chair yoga (with some standing yoga) – Revelstoke Seniors' Centre, 1-2 pm. Free.
- Drop-in Art night, Revelstoke Visual Arts Centre, Kitchen Studio 7-9 pm. Free. [Info here.](#)

Wednesday, May 3

- Getting to know dementia, Seniors' Centre, 10 am to noon. To register please call the dementia hotline at 1-800-936-6033.

Thursday, May 4

- Exhibition opening. Jacqueline Palmer, Robbie McClaran, Isaac Becker, and Sarah Hicks. Revelstoke Visual Arts Centre, 5-8 pm, \$5.

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Friday, May 5

- Tea and Tech – Okanagan Regional Library, drop-in tech support, 1:30-2:30, free.
- Artist Talk – documentary and fine art photographer Robbie McClaran, Revelstoke Visual Arts Centre, 6-8 pm, free.

Saturday and Sunday, May 6 and 7

- Creative Circle Sewing and Craft Group. Revelstoke Seniors' Centre, 9 am to 4 pm, bring your own sewing machine and supplies needed. All crafts welcome.

Sunday, May 7

- Fable Book Parlour book club, 7-9 pm. (May book 'Some Hellish'; book for June 'The Sleeping Car Porter' by Suzette Mayr.

Tuesday, May 9

- Responsible Recreation: Pathways, Practices and Possibilities, Columbia Mountain Institute conference opening with keynote speaker Shelly Boyd, viewing of film 'Beyond Begbie,' and panelists Natalie Knowles, Nat Segal and Dale Tomma, 7-9 pm, free.

Saturday, May 13

- Comedy for a Cause, Revelstoke Community Centre. Proceeds to Community Connections. 7:30 pm. Tickets \$40, available at comedyforacause.ca

Tuesday, May 16

- Chair yoga (with some standing yoga) – Revelstoke Seniors' Centre, 1-2 pm. Free.
- Drop-in Art night, Revelstoke Visual Arts Centre, Kitchen Studio 7-9 pm. Free. [Info here.](#)

Thursday, May 18

- International Museum Day, Revelstoke Museum and Archives, Free admission.

Friday, May 19

- Plant sale, Revelstoke Museum and Archives, 11-2 pm.
- Tea and Tech – Okanagan Regional Library, drop-in tech support, 1:30-2:30, free.

Saturday, May 20

- Live music by Adonis, Fable Book Parlour, 7 pm.

Sunday, May 21

- Jazz Club, Fable Book Parlour, 7:30 pm.

Thursday, May 25

- DIY Comedy Tour, Craft Bierhaus, 7-8:30 pm, \$20-\$30.

Saturday, May 27 and Sunday May 28

- Re-fest Community Upcycling Festival. Saturday 8:30-3 pm, First Street.
- Trunk Sale: Community 'garage sale,' Centennial Park. Sell gently used items from trunk of your car. Free for vendors. Must register with Graham Casselman 250-833-5936 or e-mail gcasselman@csrd.bc.ca. Saturday 10 am to 1 pm. [Info here.](#)
- Bike, clothing and book swap, Community Centre, Sunday. Proceeds to Food Bank.

Monday, May 29 to Sunday, June 4

- Go by Bike Week

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Regular activities

Mondays

- Soup and a Smile lunch (by donation) – United Church, 11:30-1:00 pm.
- Bingo – Seniors' Centre, 1 pm.
- Bridge – Seniors' Centre, 7 pm.
- Darts – Seniors' Centre, 7 pm.

Tuesdays

- Carpet Bowl – Seniors' Centre, 9 am.
- Aquafit – Community Centre pool, 10-11 am.
- Cribbage – Seniors' Centre, 1 pm.

Wednesdays

- Billiards – Seniors' Centre, 9 am.
- Exercise – Seniors' Centre, 10 am.
- PAN – Seniors' Centre, 6:30 pm.
- Whist – Seniors' Centre, 7:30 pm.
- Drop-in Tech Learning – Community Connections Outreach Building, 3-6 pm.

Thursdays

- Carpet Bowl – Seniors' Centre, 9 am.
- Aquafit – Community Centre pool, 10-11 am.
- Coffee Drop-In – Seniors' Centre, 9:30-11 am. Proceeds go to medical transportation.
- Coffee Social – Community Connections, 416 2nd Street, 10-11 am.
- Hot lunch – Food Bank – nutritious and delicious hot lunch, 11:30-1 pm, \$10.

Fridays

- Exercise – Seniors' Centre, 10 am.
- Darts – Seniors' Centre, 7 pm.

Saturdays

- Farmer's markets on First Street E. 100 block and Mackenzie Avenue 100 block.

Sundays

- Genealogy group, Seniors' Centre, 1 pm.

Service providers

Community Connections Outreach, 416 Second Street West, 250-837-2920;

- Better at Home (Support for seniors)
- Food bank
- Social Justice support, counselling and more.

Revelstoke Community Centre, 600 Campbell Avenue, 250-837-9351

Revelstoke Hospice Society, 250-837-5523

Revelstoke Seniors' Centre, 603 Connaught Avenue, 250-837-9456

Revelstoke Women's Shelter, Business: 250-837-4382; Emergency: 250-837-1111

- Moving Forward Program (Outreach support and workshops) 250-814-8387
- Community Response Network, revycrn@gmail.com

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