

## Seniors Connection News for those 55+

News from SouthWest Edmonton Seniors Association (SWESA)

by Carol Vaage

*"Keep calm and carry on."* British Government poster in WWII.

*"Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else."* Fred Rogers

We, as Canadians, are so lucky that our collective responsibility has kept us reasonably safe from Covid-19 as compared to other countries. We trust our health experts, and we carry on. We hear about possible solutions with vaccines in the future, but that timeline is uncertain. So we are creating something new with our lives.

When thunderstorms disappear, and the sun shines, we go out to enjoy a walk. Not rushing, or counting steps, but strolling, and being outside. It's easy to step aside when meeting others, but smiles and greetings can still be exchanged. Seeing people, valuing our time with people, has become something we appreciate more than ever. There is a growing gratitude for what others do for us. When we are able to connect with our family, the hugs are more precious than ever. This is the beginning of our new era.

SWESA Program staff have worked diligently to provide us with resources to help navigate this past six months. They remain committed to engaging members in multiple ways, e.g. in person, Zoom chats and meetings, and friendly phone calls. Using Zoom enabled three coffee/chats each week, a daily art group meeting, and a Monday meetup group at Yellowbird. Thursday meetups were held at the YMCA parking lot where people brought their own travel mugs and lawn chairs. Members continue to be phoned as part of the 'Friendly Phone Call' program. The majority of members are doing very well, and most have support from family and friends, churches and community leagues. In some cases, members have become even more connected to their community. Feedback showed that people began to feel a little less shut in when the weather warmed but continued to miss routine and exercise but most of all, socializing.

SWESA has been restarting slowly at Blue Quill Community Centre with two of the most popular programs - Essentrics and Yoga. To reopen safely, preregistration is by email to allow diligence in contact tracing and safe physical distancing. After registering, members are sent a self-assessment link and information about the proper use of hand sanitizer and non-medical masks. Health and safety rules are posted on location, our website and social media. Questions can be directed to Melissa McCuaig at [admin@swesa.ca](mailto:admin@swesa.ca).

New programs are starting up now, in addition to Yoga and Essentrics, as SWESA moves forward by systematically ensuring that requirements from our limited staff will keep members

safe. It is vital that physical distancing rules are followed and masks are mandatory while entering and moving throughout the building. Masks are not required during the fitness classes once checked in and settled in the designated space.

Zumba Gold is a low-impact workout with simple, fun steps. Move your body to the Latin rhythms of reggaeton, cumbia, and salsa. This fun and supportive class is being led by experienced instructor Tammy Clark.

Latin Grooves with instructor Michelle Mitchell will get you working on mini-step combinations in a variety of Latin dance styles (such as salsa, samba, cha cha, rumba, mambo, meringue, and tango), and you'll then progress to full dance routines that exercise the body and mind.

As we move forward, SWESA is transitioning to a new writer for the SWESA columns. This will be my last edition and must say that I have enjoyed my time to serve our community, and wish you all well.

Don't forget that we have a dynamic *Home Supports Program* operated by Barbara Newell who is coordinating the services for our community, including snow removal, yard work, housekeeping and minor repairs. Contact her at [homesupport@swesa.ca](mailto:homesupport@swesa.ca) or 780-860-2931.

SWESA Seniors' Centre - Yellowbird East Community Centre (YECC), 10710-19 Avenue  
SWESA Seniors' Lounge - Terwillegar Community Recreation Centre (TCRC), 2051 Leger Road  
Telephone: 587-987-3200  
[programs@swesa.ca](mailto:programs@swesa.ca)  
[www.swesa.ca](http://www.swesa.ca)