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EMBRACING CHANGE

Serving Boomers, Seniors & Caregivers in Wilmot, Wellesley & Woolwich Township

VOL 3 ISSUE 10 JUNE 2021

www.embracingchange.ca



Feature Business of the Month

**COMMUNITY
CARE
CONCEPTS**

Community resource guide to help you and your loved ones age in place!



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In June we recognize Seniors Month in Ontario. This year's theme is Stay safe, active and connected. Seniors play such an important role in our Communities. They truly make our Townships a greater place to live! We have so much to learn from our elders and we can gain so much wisdom and knowledge if we slow down and give them our time and undivided attention. I want

to thank each and every one of my readers for the contributions you all make to our Community. May you all feel appreciated and loved for all you do.

On June 20th we will celebrate our Fathers, Grandfathers and Father figures in our lives. Father's Day can be a tough day for those who have lost their father's, and for those who may not have a strong relationship with their father. I have been very blessed with an amazing Dad who I love and respect with all of my heart. I remember as a young girl always thinking to myself how lucky we were to have such a kind, caring and humble Dad. And as I get older I am even more grateful for that. May you all find time to celebrate those special men in your life this Father's Day.

Self-Care Tip ~ Clean up just one small corner of a room in your house.

Tidying up can help calm our minds. According to a study conducted by Clorox measuring the impact cleaning has on emotions, "in a clean space, the majority of people are more relaxed, less stressed, and more productive." Decluttering might not be the most exciting form of self-care that springs to mind! Yet, it's one of the most effective ways of making you feel better in the long term.

May you all stay safe, active and connected ...

Tara

On The Cover

Embracing Change takes the passenger seat and shoots the breeze with writer Fred Parry in his 1973 Avanti II. As a regular contributing columnist for Embracing Change, Fred's inclusion of song lyrics in everything he writes is unique. See page 8 for the full cover story.

Cover story written by
Elaine Ballantyne

Cover photo credit:
Elaine Ballantyne



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Embracing Change is proud to be a Community Voice. We hope to foster connections within the community in a positive way. The expressed or implied opinions of authors and advertisers are not necessarily those held by the publication, it's editor or publisher.



My New Hamburg Majorette Memories

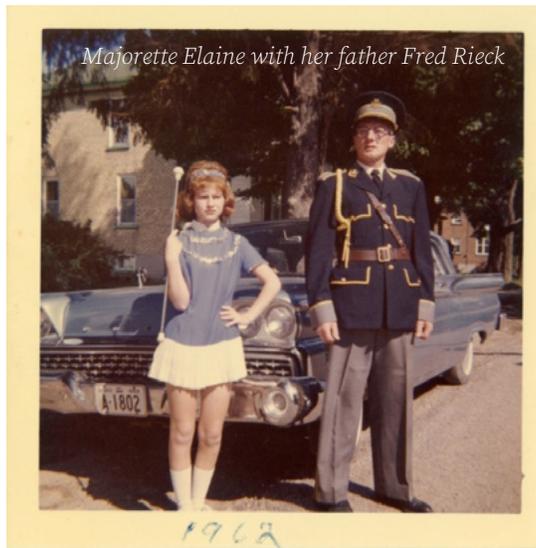
By Elaine (Rieck) Bender on behalf of Castle Kilbride

My earliest memories are of the time I joined the junior majorettes probably around the age of 10. We practiced every Saturday morning from 9 – 11 am in the basement of the New Hamburg Library. There was a big room and a stage at the front, which was perfect for our needs as we were required a wide-open space to practice our field drills and to perfect our marching skills. We spent a good bit of our practice marching to all four corners of that vast area and around the room over and over again. This was done to enhance the presentation as we learned the art of co-ordination of hands and feet simultaneously as we twirled our batons and marched in synchronization as a group. We also had to keep up a pretty good pace to avoid being overtaken by the band marching directly behind us.

I marched with the juniors for about two or three years before advancing to the Senior group. I was the youngest that I remember of that entire group. I can't fully recollect the numbers of us that there were but it was a significantly smaller group than the Juniors.

By this time, we were using the top of the Old New Hamburg Firehall for practices. Again, this old building served us well as it was big, and wide, and very accommodating for our purposes.

I loved the practices and I rarely ever missed them.



I often spent my time at home outside in our big back yard practicing my maneuvers and especially mastering the art of throwing my baton and catching it while marching along. Co-ordination was of the essence and a very integral part of being a majorette. Eventually, I was front and centre and leading the group in parades.

The opportunities for us to participate were many and our endeavours took us to many localities throughout the summer as in those days the highlight of most communities around was the annual "Band Tattoo," where all local bands and majorette groups took part in the parades and then had the option to perform later on in the evening on the inner field under the lighting of the ball diamonds.

Many friendships were formed during those years and we all enjoyed the camaraderie and the excitement that came along with the commitments of these events which kept us all busy throughout the summer months.

The winter months were not without opportunities either, with the Santa Claus Parades which we travelled to also. Marching and twirling was a whole different scene with the weather being cold and we had to bundle up in different uniforms and still master the art of keeping time and hanging onto our batons with cold fingers. As I recall, our enthusiasm usually kept us warm and we barely noticed the frigid temperatures. Some of these parade routes in the cities were much longer than what we were used to but again, no problem fulfilling our obligations right to the end. My dad Fred Rieck was a long-standing member of the New Hamburg Band so getting to these parades was never a problem as when he went, so did I. And he never missed an opportunity to blow his horn.

I have nothing but very fond memories of my years growing up in New Hamburg and my involvement with the Majorettes. I still like to pick up a baton once in a while and surprise myself that I can still remember how to twirl it and make something beautiful out of it.

Majorettes are not something you see very much these days, but I count it a privilege to have been one for many years. It was a very positive experience."

Saluting Seniors Across our Townships

The month of June provides an opportunity to recognize and celebrate seniors in communities across Ontario. As a local non-profit with a mission focused on supporting seniors across our Townships to live independently, Community Care Concepts, is incredibly thankful to the many seniors which interact with our organization and enrich our lives daily. We are forever indebted to the many seniors who volunteer with our organization, opening their hearts and hands to support their friends and neighbours in need. **Each year, more than 120 individuals, many whom are seniors, contribute over 8,000 hours to our work.**

While the pandemic has altered the roles that many volunteers are able to currently participate in, many seniors continue to support our work through driving seniors to medical appointments, delivering Meals on Wheels, or in preparing hot meals to be delivered to others. Volunteering not only has a direct impact on supporting seniors in our communities but many volunteers would say, also provides an opportunity for volunteers to gain a sense of purpose and satisfaction through contributing to service to others. We could not do the work that we do and have the impact that we do without the support of our many senior volunteers in our communities.

We are also incredibly thankful to the many seniors who are providing caregiving responsibilities to friends and family. Across Canada it is estimated that one out of every four, many whom are seniors, are providing care for friends and family members. **These individuals are often the unsung heroes of our health care system, providing unpaid help with things like personal care and transportation, reducing demands on other parts of our health care system.** While there is no doubt that caring for

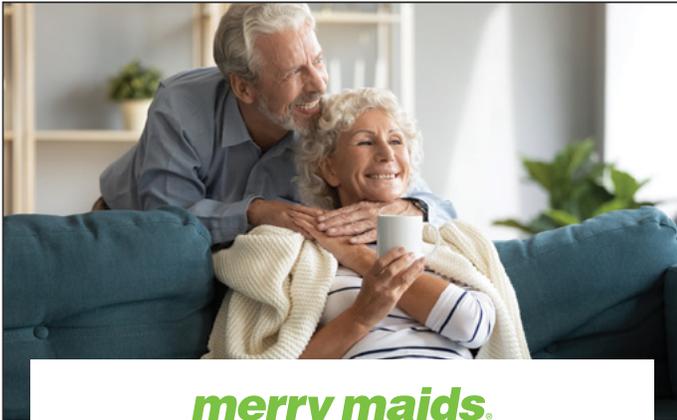
a friend or family member can be personally rewarding by giving a sense of purpose, pride, self-worth and joy, we also know that caregiving is not without its challenges, causing physical and emotional challenges and sometimes financial and social burden. We salute our senior caregivers across our communities while also encouraging them to reach out to ensure that they are taken care of. Staff at Community Care Concepts are committed to supporting caregivers through respite options such as our Adult Day Programs, our Senior Support Workers, who can step in to help with caregiving responsibilities, or our many services and supports.

Finally, we would like to salute the many seniors in our communities who place their trust in our staff and our organization through inviting us into their homes to allow us to understand their needs and offer support through programs such as Meals on Wheels, transportation to medical and other appointments, homemaking, home help services, visiting, Adult Day Programs, practical in-home support or support in transitioning from hospital to home. Many others are active participants in our social and recreational programs, both virtual and in person, as emergency measures allow.

We value our relationship with you and are grateful for the faith that you have placed in us!

On behalf of the staff, board and volunteers of Community Care Concepts, we salute seniors across our Townships, not only in June but throughout the year! For information or access to services or volunteer opportunities please do not hesitate to contact us at 519-664-1900, 519-662-9526 or 1-855-664-1900.

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Stay active and socially connected!
The Woolwich Seniors Association offers
social, recreational and educational
opportunities for older adults 55+ in
Woolwich Township and surrounding area.

All sessions are hosted
virtually on Zoom.
Registration is required.

Celebrating Seniors Month!

Join us in June, for our
Coffee Social Speaker Series,
highlighting achievements and
contributions that seniors have made in
their community and challenge
your beliefs about ageing!

Tuesdays 10:30am. To register, email:
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COMMUNITY MEMBER MESSAGE FROM MPP FOR KITCHENER-CONESTOGA,

Mike Harris

It is a pleasure to connect with you as we welcome the start of summer. June is Seniors Month in Ontario, a time to celebrate and honour older adults and the contributions they continue to make in our community. This year's theme is staying safe, active and connected, something I hope you are continuing to do through these challenging times.

As the MPP for Kitchener-Conestoga, I have the honour of attending the Aging Well events that occur annually in Woolwich and Wilmot. It is always a pleasure to reconnect with our outstanding local seniors. While this year we were not able to get together in person, I look forward to having future opportunities to connect with you directly and appreciate all those who've reached out to stay in touch.

Seniors are the ones who've built this province and it is the government's job now to ensure you receive the care and support you deserve. This year we introduced the Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit to help you make your home safer and more accessible. This tax credit is worth 25% of up to \$10,000 in eligible expenses, which may include the costs of installing grab bars, ramps, and other aids to help you be more functional and confident at home.

I know how important the services offered at our Seniors Active Living Centres are to keeping you active and connected. This year, programs in Waterloo Region received an additional \$154,000 so they could offer virtual services. This money has been used by Community Care Concepts to offer remote programs and wellness check-ins. The province has also extended the Ontario Community Support Program, which provides delivery of meals and medications to low-income seniors so those who are self isolating can get the essential items they need.

Starting August 1, 2021, the government is expanding eligibility for the Seniors Dental Care Program and Seniors Co-payment Program for prescription medications. Anyone 65 or older making less than \$22,200 or \$37,100 for a couple

will be able to access both supports. If you or your loved ones are applying for the first time, my staff would more than happy to guide you through the process. You are encouraged to apply before July 1, 2021 so that your coverage begins August 1, minimizing your out of pocket expenses.

It is an honour and privilege to be your representative at Queen's Park. As always, my office is available to assist you. Whether you are requesting milestone greetings, need more information on the services I mentioned above, require assistance from the provincial government, or just want to share your thoughts, I am here to help and my team can be reached at 519-669-2090.

Until next time, stay safe, active and connected.

Mike Harris MPP for Kitchener-Conestoga

THREE YEARS CELEBRATING & SUPPORTING SENIORS

Stay safe, active, & connected.

- Expanding eligibility for the Seniors Co-Payment Program
- \$154,000 for local Seniors Active Living Centres
- New Seniors Home Safety Tax Credit
- Free Dental Care for Low Income Seniors

To find out more, visit mikeharrismpp.ca




Mike HARRIS
 MPP KITCHENER-CONESTOGA
 519-669-2090
mike.harrisco@pc.ola.org



Cover Story

Embracing Change takes the passenger seat and shoots the breeze with writer Fred Parry with his 1973 Avanti II.

WRITTEN BY ELAINE BALLANTYNE

Fred Parry is a man with a gift. Fred has the ability to connect with his readers in a very profound way. Simply put, Fred writes straight from his heart. “It helps if you’ve lived through the story you’re talking about,” explains Fred. “It’s my two cents. It’s cathartic to help someone else. I make the extension to the public, that relatability. I tell my story, how I’m feeling and people can relate to it. It’s that hey! I’m not the only one moment.”

As a regular contributing columnist for Embracing Change, Fred’s inclusion of song lyrics in everything he writes is unique.

“Lyrics are the pictures,” tells Fred.

Life’s like a road that you travel on When there’s one day here, and the next day gone

In 1990, Canadian musician, Tom Cochrane, wrote and recorded his hit song, Life is a Highway. Inspired by Cochrane’s charity trip to West Africa, the song was written as a personal pep talk after he witnessed the dire poverty and famine in the African region. “It was mind-bending, soul-sapping. I was mentally, physically and spiritually exhausted,” Cochrane

said of the time. For Fred, he says this song is his life’s anthem. This seize-the-day mantra has guided his life.

We won’t hesitate To break down the garden gate There’s not much time left today, yeah

When Fred was 12-years-old his mother came to him and asked him a question that would forever impact his life. “Who do you want to live with?,” she asked. Certainly Fred had become accustomed to his parents constant bickering, drinking and fighting, but the impending change proved to be very rocky. “It was music that pulled me through,” tells Fred. Growing up against the background of divorce drastically affected Fred’s whole being. Sadly it proved to be a very negative experience. Still, to this day, it greatly influences his writing and is what generates his continued will to write.

“I want to help someone,” Fred says simply. “I had been raised to believe that accepting my mother’s love meant I was denying my father’s and that I had to choose.” Fred recalls an incident when some 78s and 45s got thrown into the back of his mother’s Oldsmobile’s back window and became warped. “She cried because music really meant something to her and then it meant something to me,” Fred recalls.

There was a distance between you and I A misunderstanding once But now we look it in the eye, ooh, yeah

We all have that one favourite aunt. For Fred, that one aunt was his Aunt Mamie. “Mamie had always been the most positive influence on my life,” tells Fred.

Fred remembers a particular day when his mother’s siblings were “circling the wagon” so to speak and derogatorily discussing his father. “Like a hot knife through butter, my Aunt Mamie stood up for me and said that I didn’t want to hear all that stuff. She said this is where it ends,” Fred reminisces.

Another relationship that drastically affected his life and his writings, is Fred’s wife Judy. The couple are highschool sweethearts and today Fred calls Judy his Silver Fox. Her continuous

love and support, along with their three children, has meant the world to Fred.

***If you're going my way
I wanna drive it all night long***

Born in 1945 in Chatham, but raised in London, Ontario, Fred worked as a business consultant for Bell Canada for many years. Fred also taught part-time at Conestoga College in their Continuing Education Program. He lived in the village of Bright, 9 miles southeast of New Hamburg for 34 years. But as for any formal education in writing specifically, Fred doesn't have any. His writing is really a labour of love. As his father wrote poetry and his grandfather won an award of merit from Life magazine, Fred likes to say that it's something in his genes.

***There's a world outside every darkened door
Where blues won't haunt you anymore
Where the brave are free and lovers soar
Come ride with me to the distant shore***

Hope. It's a small word but holds so much significance. Fred tells Embracing Change that as a teenager coping with his parents divorce, "I learned to trust the spiritual power emanating through us all."

Fred considers himself fifty percent Christian and fifty percent spiritual. He says that love and peace are eternal. Fred's holistic viewpoint has significantly affected how and what he writes, and how he has tried to live. "I'll never be a saint or a shaker-and-mover in the world at large, yet the crazy thought I still might, betrays me," Fred writes. "But, I can be kind and forgiving--to family, friends and strangers--not expecting anything in return."

As a Sunday School teacher, Fred recalls writing his lessons and being highly influenced by two people. The first person, Anna Kaljas, worked tirelessly for unhoused people and received an Order of Canada. Anna inspired Fred to never jam Christianity "down people's throats." "She was a positive influence," tells Fred. "She became known as the Mother Teresa of Kitchener."

The second person, the Reverend Bob Rumball, was a retired pro-football player who did

extraordinary work with the deaf. Fred says Bob was a very humble person who could speak very fundamentally but didn't.

"He didn't do the heavy stuff. He was a great example for the kids and that was the approach I took," shares Fred. At the cusp of his whole belief symptom was the thought, "I'm going to love you anyway."

***Life is a highway
I wanna ride it all night long***

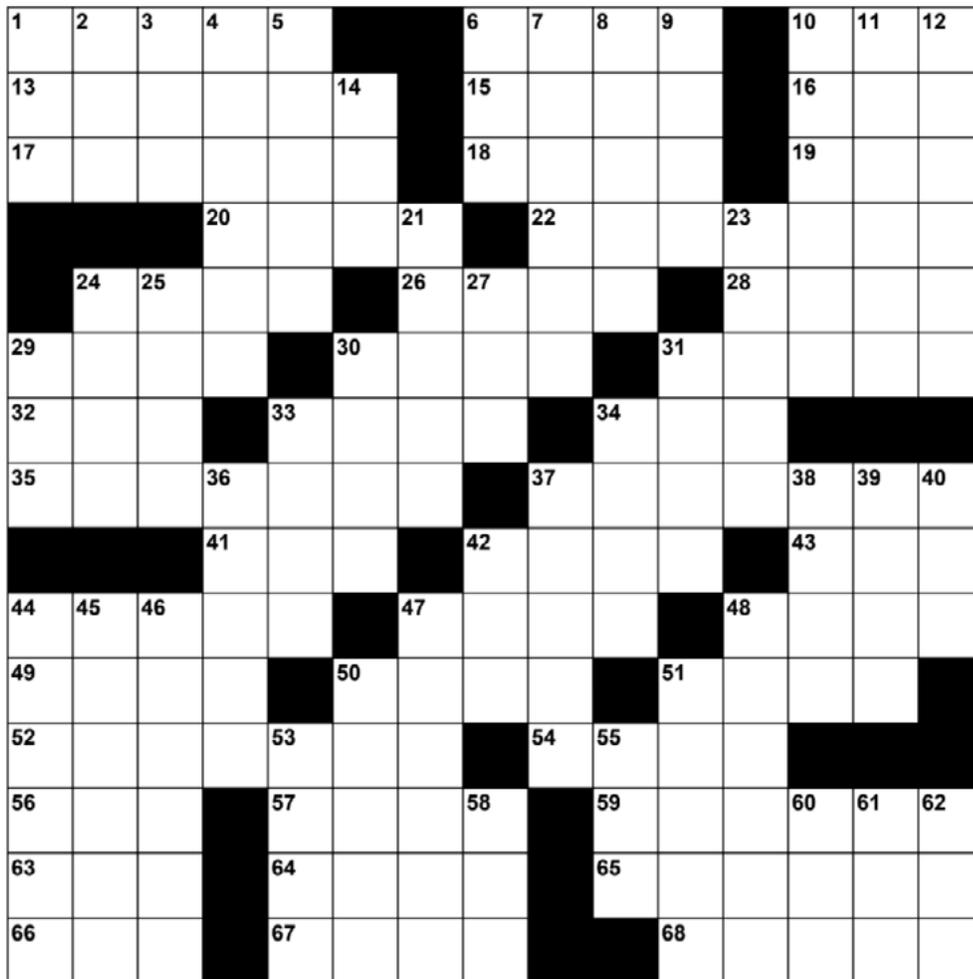
Fred loves riding his bike. Fred loves riding his bike even more when he does it with his wife Judy. "I've always done physical exercise," says Fred. "The older you get, it's so important to do something." Now living back in London, Fred says Judy and him have biked everywhere in London, especially now in the time of COVID. Fred also walks daily, and stretches daily. Research shows that exercise for some people, can work just as well as taking an antidepressant.

For his mental health, Fred has always listened to music. "It soothes the savage beast within me," he explains. Fred also gives himself "down time" where he is by himself. Certainly as a writer, Fred needs this time, but the act of writing, of putting your thoughts and emotions down on paper, has been such an amazing therapeutic act for Fred. Luckily, as Embracing Change readers, you too have benefitted from this.

***From Mozambique to those Memphis nights
The Khyber Pass to Vancouver's lights
Knock me down and back up again
You're in my blood
I'm not a lonely man
There's no load I can't hold
The road so rough, this I know
I'll be there when the light comes in
Just tell 'em we're survivors!***

Many thanks Fred for such an enjoyable and inspiring interview. May you continue to write with sincerity and creativity. Readers can listen to many of Fred's articles by checking out his blog at www.fredparry.ca

JUNE CROSSWORD Wildlife



Solutions on Page 14

DOWN

- 1 Game official
- 2 Ailing
- 3 Two
- 4 British King's name
- 5 Put a rope through a hole
- 6 Epoch
- 7 Area of land used for cultivating plants and flowers
- 8 White vegetable
- 9 Buck
- 10 Flower
- 11 Bread makers
- 12 Card suits
- 14 __ Lanka
- 21 Calm
- 23 Bush
- 24 Hold it there
- 25 Father's sister
- 27 Self
- 29 Twitch
- 30 Earth
- 31 Emit light
- 33 Precipitation
- 34 Pond dweller
- 36 Upper body
- 37 Chatter
- 38 Not arms
- 39 Dueling sword
- 40 Angry
- 42 African antelope
- 44 Infrequent
- 45 Furrow
- 46 Artificial
- 47 Long-handled scoop used for digging
- 48 Dawn
- 50 Shoulder covering
- 51 Rate
- 53 Perennial woody plant consisting of roots, trunk, and branches
- 55 Animal doctor
- 58 Before, poetically
- 60 Levee
- 61 East northeast
- 62 Unhappy

ACROSS

- 1 Person on horse
- 6 Freudian selves
- 10 Abdominal muscles (abbr.)
- 13 Evades
- 15 Jabber
- 16 Bomb
- 17 Blossom
- 18 Opera solo
- 19 Also known as (abbr.)
- 20 Car rental agency
- 22 Snow transportation
- 24 Article for sale
- 26 Adolescent
- 28 Not there
- 29 Thump
- 30 Signal
- 31 Green plant with narrow flat leaves and jointed stems
- 32 Charged particle
- 33 Rolled chocolate candy brand
- 34 Contagious disease
- 35 Brown, fuzzy marsh plant
- 37 Difficulty
- 41 Cooking fat
- 42 Cultivate
- 43 Environmental protection agency (abbr)
- 44 Strict
- 47 Obstacle
- 48 Ripe
- 49 Goofs
- 50 Close
- 51 Contemplate
- 52 Country in South Eastern Africa
- 54 Always
- 56 Genetic code
- 57 Praise enthusiastically
- 59 Wears away
- 63 Fall mo.
- 64 Water pitcher
- 65 Albanian capital
- 66 Megahertz
- 67 Women's magazine
- 68 No longer wild

Laughing Matters!

June Fun Facts

June 3 1889:

The Canadian Pacific Railway is completed from coast to coast

June 5 1984:

The safety cap for medicine bottles (child-proof caps) is patented by Ronald Kay

June 22 1954:

The antacid Roloids is trademark registered, ("That's how you spell relief!")

June 24 2018:

Saudi Arabia allows women to drive; no longer the only country to ban female drivers

June 25 2001:

New York 1st U.S. state to pass legislation banning use of cell phones while driving

A couple went to breakfast at a restaurant where the "seniors' special" was 2 Eggs, Bacon, Hash Browns and Toast for \$2.99...

"Sounds good" the wife said..."but I don't want the eggs.."

"Then, I'll have to charge you \$3.49 because you're ordering a la carte"...the waiter warned her.

"You mean I'd have to pay for not taking the eggs?"...the wife asked incredulously.

"YES!"... stated the waiter.

"I'll take the special then"...the wife said..

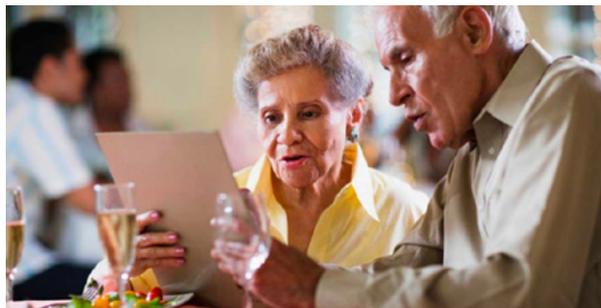
"Great...how do you want your eggs?"...the waiter asked.

"Raw and in the shell"...the wife replied.

She took the two eggs home and baked a cake.

DON'T MESS WITH SENIORS!!!

WE'VE been around the block more than once!...



Can you spot the 10 differences?





Happy Senior's Month

Thank you for the contributions you have made in our community

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Summer Reads at Your Library and Beyond

By: **Beth Potter, Assistant Library Supervisor
at the Wellesley RW Library Branch**

Have you read this year's One Book, One Community (OBOC) selection yet? Celebrating its 20th year, OBOC has chosen *Extraordinary Canadians: Stories from the Heart of our Nation* by Peter Mansbridge and Mark Bulgutch. A virtual event with both authors is happening September 23, so consider *Extraordinary Canadians* as an ideal summer read! The book is available to place on hold at your local library or as an eBook through the library's digital service, DownloadLibrary.

DownloadLibrary is available for free with your library card. The collection includes a wide assortment of eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, and videos. The service can be accessed from a computer, or with the Libby app on any smart device. Any item you've currently borrowed can be downloaded for use later, when your device isn't connected to Wi-Fi. For example, audiobooks make a great soundtrack for a long car trip. DownloadLibrary allows 20 checkouts at a time and up to 15 holds. eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines, can be checked out for seven, 14, or 21 days, depending on which

setting you choose. This resource also allows for customization – in eBooks you can change font size to suit your needs, and adjust the speed at which an audiobook is played.

Magazines are the newest addition to DownloadLibrary and the collection includes a variety of popular titles as well as magazines in a number of languages. One of the best features of the magazine collection is that there is no wait time to access them; they provide a great alternative while waiting for a hold on an ebook or audiobook. Check out the OBOC title and everything else DownloadLibrary has to offer. Visit rwlibrary.ca for information or contact our Ask a Librarian service at askrwl@regionofwaterloo.ca for more information.

In other news, the Region of Waterloo Library is pleased to offer Click & Collect, a new service to pick up holds at the library. Rather than booking an appointment for a specific date and time, Click & Collect works as an on-demand reservation system; it allows you to notify the library 15 minutes to one hour before your visit so your holds will be ready for pickup. Click & Collect is available during your branch's regular operating hours. For more information or assistance with this new feature, contact your branch or our Ask a Librarian line at 226-748-8030. For more information, please visit rwlibrary.ca.



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Ask the Doctor

with Dr. Nicole Didyk

My husband is starting to lose his memory for names of things and people. Tasks that were easy now seem so complicated to him. His number skills have also diminished. We see this as early dementia. His mother developed dementia, so we are naturally concerned. Is there any need for a formal diagnosis? How would that help?

I understand your concern about your husband's brain health and what you describe sounds like it could be an early-stage dementia. There are a few reasons to see a health professional about a formal diagnosis:

1. The cognitive changes could be related to another issue like depression, medication side effects, thyroid over- or under-activity, or another disturbance in blood chemistry. A primary care provider can make sure there isn't something else you need to worry about.
2. Confirming a diagnosis can open the door to valuable support from the Alzheimer Society (although they see individuals with Mild Cognitive Impairment as well), peer support groups and home care services. "Labels" aren't always important but having a diagnosis can really help in tailoring services and education to specific challenges that may be more likely to arise.
3. Planning ahead can be easier when the person has a known diagnosis of a condition that's progressive (one that is likely to cause more symptoms the longer someone lives with it). Knowing that things might be quite different in a few years can provide guidance in decision-making.
4. For some people living with Alzheimer's,

medication can be offered. Cholinesterase inhibitors like donepezil are usually of modest benefit, but they need to be prescribed, and are only for use in dementia, so a diagnosis is the first step in the process.

It may seem like an unnecessary hassle to seek a diagnosis, but it might be helpful, and many people feel relieved to have an answer to the nagging questions they've had for a long time, even if it's hard to hear.

For more information about aging and health, go to www.TheWrinkle.ca

If you have questions for Dr. Didyk, please email them to embracingchangeinfo@gmail.com. You don't need to give any identifying information.

Disclaimer:

Any comments Dr. Didyk may make regarding an individual's story should not be construed as establishing a physician-patient relationship between Dr. Didyk and a caregiver, or care recipient, and should not be considered a substitute for individualized medical assessment, diagnosis, or treatment.



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Maureen is a former CBC Radio producer and the Founder of Healthier + Happier For Life where she helps people level up their health and wellness so they can live a long, healthy and vibrant life. To find out more about how it works send a note to maureen.argon@gmail.com

I think we can all use more happiness in our life. Especially these days of isolation, lockdown and uncertainty. When we are happy we feel like everything's going to be okay. We go about our tasks with a pep in our step, and are much more likely to enjoy life and each other.

Many of us might feel though that happiness is elusive and out of our control. Or maybe even that we should just accept the cards we have been dealt.

But science shows us something else. And it's good news. Studies show that there is a lot we can do to be happier. Even in difficult times like we have been experiencing in the past year.

Becoming happier is actually quite simple. It requires no special tools, training or equipment. And you can start right now.

Emma Seppälä, is a Lecturer at the Yale School of Management and Faculty Director of the Yale School of Management's Women's Leadership Program. She is also the Science Director of Stanford University's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education, and the author of a book called *The Happiness Track: How to Apply the Science of Happiness to Accelerate Your Success*.

Her research and that of other scientists who



3 Big Takeaways from Happiness Research

BY MAUREEN ARGON

study happiness has shown that there are three simple things we can do that have a profound impact on our wellbeing. They are breathing exercises, being in nature and social connection.

Let's look at the basics of breathing. When we breathe in, our heart rate increases as does our blood pressure. When we breathe out, our heart rate and our blood pressure decreases. In times of stress or fear our breathing becomes rapid and shallow, increasing heart rate and blood pressure. Being in a state of anxiety and fear can become chronic and have a negative impact on our health including depression, memory impairment, weakened immune system and emotional regulation and more.

But we can change our physical response by changing our breathing.

It's as simple as exhaling twice as long as inhaling. This causes our heart rate and blood pressure to decrease and activates the parasympathetic nervous system helping us to feel calmer.

Try it now: inhale for four counts and exhale for 8 counts. Do this for a few moments every day or any time you start to feel worried or anxious.

Seppälä says changing how we breathe is one of the most efficient ways of changing our physiology and thereby changing our state of mind, making us more resilient. And that's something we all can use right now.

Being in nature is another simple way to boost our feelings of wellbeing. Science shows that any exposure to nature benefits us psychologically,

increases our cognitive abilities of attention and focus, we become more compassionate and empathetic toward others and we become much more creative.

All it takes is a walk in a park or a street with lots of greenery. And if there's no park or woods near you, a plant on your windowsill or even a picture of nature on your wall or on your computer or phone screensaver can make you feel better. So get outside every day for a stroll. And make sure you're unplugged so your mind can wander and relax.

Social connection has long been recognized as our greatest need after food and shelter. It is also as important for physical and mental health as well as for longevity. Loneliness is now recognized as another epidemic we have been grappling with well before COVID and has become worse this past year. Unfortunately social connection has been severely limited recently and the impact on mental health is well documented.

What is it about social connection that is so important? It is not about how many people you are around on a daily basis, rather it is how connected you feel on the inside. It is your subjective feeling of your connection that matters.

When we're feeling down, we tend to focus on ourselves and are less likely to connect with others in a meaningful way.

One of the best ways to turn that feeling around is to do something for someone else. Even a small gesture like sending a card, picking up the phone and calling someone to ask how they are can transform our feelings of loneliness into something more positive.

These three simple things - slowing down our breathing, going for a walk in nature and doing something kind for someone else can improve your mental and physical wellbeing and feel happier.

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TOUGH DUDES

Role Models for Today

BY FRED PARRY

Looking at the dealership invoice, I knew I had a hard decision to make: should I ignore the fact that I hadn't been charged \$300 for parts on work just done on my car? At first, I said nothing... the equivalent of "take the money and run". Like the TV commercial, where a woman runs out of the store – her arms full of purchases – thinking she was the lucky recipient of a clerical error. The TV announcer, however, saying that the store's prices are so low, it only seems like, well... a steal.

For some reason, as I slowly agonized over my decision, my mind transported me back to the famous 'Lunch-atop-a-skyscraper-1932' photo: a New York skyscraper under construction with several iron-workers casually sitting, enjoying lunch, while balanced on a steel crossbeam, suspended 69 stories above the ground, Manhattan spread out beneath their dangling boots.

All, except for one Mohawk from Kahnawake, Quebec, were immigrants... like my Irish grandfather, 'Pip'. His no "bull" attitude was typical of these men: saying to a local newspaper interviewer, at age 86, just after passing his engineering exams, "The only thing that would kill me is a 40-hour work-week."

And, retirement? Forget it! Not for this tough, straight-shooting dude.

No longer with us, Pip's testament to honesty and hard work lives on. I can easily surmise what he'd have thought of my hesitation to do what had to be done... not much!

So, after explaining to the service rep the billing discrepancy, she checked the work order and thanked me for being so "trustworthy". The problem was, after dithering for what seemed like hours, I didn't feel that way. Why did it take me so long to do the right thing? What if my car had been ready a bit sooner and so had missed my chance to set things right?

The determining factor for me was that I didn't want to see anyone get in trouble. How would I've felt if any of these (not-so-highly-paid) workers had been let go by some unforgiving owner/manager? No amount of dollars so gained would have ever eased my conscience. And, as a father, what kind of role model would I be?

About to drive away, a staff member presented me with a gift: a smart-looking corporate key chain made of stainless steel and leather. I'll always value it... not for something I did right; but, as a reminder to react, sooner than later, next time.

"They can change their minds but they can't change me. I've got a dream... And I'm gonna go there free"

– I've Got a Name by Jim Croce
<https://youtu.be/cadvn16N188>

Tough times made for tough men... and women. Living with honesty and integrity is, and has always been, our real job. I can't tell you how to do it. But somehow that old photo of those men high in the New York city air makes me remember... some bonds are stronger than steel.

That's the way I figure it. – FP



'Music in Me' writer Fred Parry is a lover of people and a collector of stories, music, wisdom and grandchildren.

Find him at www.fredparry.ca

Everyday Exercises: Ways to Get Active this Month

Regular physical activity can help you:

- Maintain independence and quality of life
- Improve your mood, manage stress and reduce the risk of depression
- Improve your heart, lung and bone health
- Reduce your risk of falling
- May improve general cognition among people living with dementia

Balance Exercise

Challenge Your Balance Safely

Activities that challenge your balance, and make you do a little work to maintain your stability.



Heel Raise



Toe Raise

Activity Level: Easy to Moderate



Everyday Movement

Get moving to get the blood flowing

Gentle movements with a regular heartbeat and minimal additional effort. You can carry on a conversation without strain.



Brisk Walk

Activity Level: Easy



How Often Should I Be Active?

Exercising regularly improves your mood, helps to manage stress and reduces your risk of depression.

Aerobic Exercises - 2.5 hours / week

Strength Training - 2 days / week

Balance Exercises - Daily

Everyday Movement - Every 2 hours

Living an active lifestyle can be as easy as joining an exercise class or group!

How to Make it Stick?

Do it often and with others!

Being active with others provides a great outlet for socialization, support and friendship. It also helps to keep you on track. Start small, join an online class and with time you will see the benefits of physical activity!

Strength Training

Feel your arms, legs, back, and abdomen working. Can be done sitting or standing.

Exercises where you are contracting muscles against resistance until they are fatigued.



Sit to Stand



Handstring Curl

Activity Level: Moderate to High



Aerobic Exercises

Breathe harder and sweat a little!

Getting up and using your whole body. Your heart is beating fast and you can still talk, but not sing



Punches



Knee to Hands

Activity Level: Moderate



What Can I Join?

Our Minds in Motion® exercise program is designed for people living with dementia and their care partner!

With 45 minutes of gentle physical exercise and 45 minutes of social programming, Minds in Motion™ might be right for you! This 8-week class is offered everyday, and you can sign up for multiple classes a week. This program is offered completely on line, over Zoom. Meet others who are on the same journey as you, follow along with certified instructors with exercises designed for seniors, and classes adapted to participants activity level. Next session starts in July!

Call our office at 519 - 742 - 1422 to find the best services available for you and your loved ones!

Source: *It's Time to Get Active*, Ontario Brain Institute, 2020.

A Message from TCMH for Seniors Month 2021

“The longer I live the more beautiful life becomes.”

~ Frank Lloyd Wright



As we reflect on the past year it is far too easy to focus on the negative. Loss, uncertainty, illness, and change were present each and every day – in the news, on the radio, online, and on TV – infiltrating our lives. It is true, 2020 was a difficult year. We were isolated, struggled with constant change, and at times we even felt scared. Despite the negatives, there were also positives. As a community and as individuals, we came together to support each other, we learned a lot about ourselves, and we focused on becoming stewards of our own care. We were resourceful and we persevered.

For Seniors Month this year we do not want to dwell on the unchangeable past, but instead take the lessons we learned over the last year and look forward. New opportunities present themselves every day. Hardworking Seniors are dedicated to pushing forward with determination and strength of character. Last year will not get them down. So, while we celebrate Seniors in our homes, in our community, and country wide, I would like to reflect on some of the things I have learned from the people in our care.

Resilience. I was told by one of our residents when things were at their most trying over the last year: “you can get us through this, and

we are here to do it together”. The strength and resolve of Seniors are often forgotten, but Seniors represent our collective social wisdom and strength as a nation. They model how to work collectively through struggles for the benefit of the group.

Fortitude. No matter the challenge, Seniors never seem to give up. Be it long gaps between haircuts, new technology to learn to stay connected, or carrying on through the day-to-day challenges of aging, our residents and Seniors everywhere demonstrate how to be thankful for the little things.

Compassion. Despite difficult times, distance from families, and change-fatigue from constant change, the residents at TCMH remained supportive of our staff. We are here to provide care and support to them, but they too support the staff. No matter their trials, Seniors continue to exemplify kind, caring, and compassionate behaviour for the people in their lives.

As the CEO at TCMH there is not a single day that goes by without some new situation to address – each as important as the next and each needing guidance. When I encounter these situations, I try to remember what I learned from Seniors. It is not always easy, nor is it perfect, but being resilient, brave, and compassionate are goals I strive for. At TCMH, we are thankful to have supportive Seniors surrounding us. We learn from them and respect them – they share their wisdom gained through years of laughter, love, and life.

From myself, my family, all TCMH staff, our Board of Directors, and the community at Tri-County, we thank the Seniors in our lives and wish them a Happy Seniors Month 2021. We salute you for all that you have done and continue to do for all of us.



Pat's Ponderings

Written by
Patricia A. Olson

The window is open. There is a soft soothing breeze coming through it wrapping me in reassurance and calming my mind. The lonely repeating call of a mourning dove is the only voice heard from the birds. All the rest are honouring the quiet of the morning, as a fog wraps and dances in the forest and just a hint of sun yawns as she tries to sleepily rise amongst the coaxing clouds. My world is subtly encouraging me to move placidly and peacefully – but to move!

I have been lonely. My mind is slightly off-kilter. For so long my world, and my understanding of my world, has been turned inside out. Soul-searching, praying, reflecting, and pondering. I've called on all these tools and other methods to confront my wandering thoughts to find peace. But still I feel isolated and often lost. Aren't I usually the friend others call on to cheer them up? I am the positive voice in the room – the reassurer, the comforter and a usual source of strength. My resources feel drained and my normally strong personality has been withering as well. Dealing with the stress and isolation of Covid is no easy matter.

Possibly, the reflective, healing, gentler me is busy at work identifying my longings and my needs? I scold myself to remember that each separate feeling I encounter deserves my time, attention and respect. If you too are rising out of this isolated confusing time, consider looking in the mirror now and then. Really LOOK. Are you smiling enough? Are you able to look at yourself and say "You Got This". Or do tears come quickly and the blanket on your bed is calling you to come hide under her? Consider this, then allow your healing to happen on whatever path is best for you at the moment. Joy will re-enter your life maybe

because you had the strength and knowledge to allow your emotions each their turn. Just beware of those preying unhealthy emotions like pity, laziness, resentment, and any other such pointless depleting thoughts.

There is a well known strengthening technique called the "Super Woman/Man Pose". Could we benefit from trying it? Arms on your hips. Legs apart shoulder width. Shoulders back. Hips thrust forward. Chin up. Suck in your tummy. Feet firmly planted. Now find some attitude! Hold this pose. I taught this technique to many learners who could assume this position before an important meeting or just to get them through a challenging day. Many shared that these simple steps gave them the adjustment they needed – mentally and physically. Perhaps when you are feeling less than confident or struggling to find yourself during our re-entry to our new every day life, consider giving this posturing a try.

I hope that as the days get longer and the weather warmer – that my heart lightens and I am able to breathe deeper. I want to embrace my feelings as they arrive and recognize them for what they are. Then remember not to worry about my restlessness and uneasiness. If I think about the love and understanding of family and friends surrounding me, the day will automatically unfold as it should. In the event there are sad or lonely days, I will remind myself to recognize that I need these days in order to embrace the coming good days. Accept them. Recognize them. But don't worry about them nor dwell on them. It's just the roller coaster of life. We need the downs to embrace the ups. Toss in a few exciting life thrills and the stubborn personal mountains to climb, and ta da – you've got yourself an amazing and full life. What a ride this roller coaster is! Imagine a life of a straight path. No ups. No downs. No sharp turns. What a boring mundane life that would be. This pep talk reminds me that I am blessed. So, chin up everyone. Shoulders back. See the wonderful soul you carry around within you each day. Oh...the things you will see and do my friend. You are just finding your stride to step out of isolation and into a world of new beginnings and new opportunities.

As always, nature and especially my friends the

birds nurture and replenish me. I saw my first robin on March 12th. So exciting. I always am grateful when I see them stop by. It reminds me that I made it through yet another year and they offer me the promise of adventures to come. One beautiful long-legged heron swooped by announcing his home-coming and of course the loud brazen killdeers, ravens and red-winged black birds are all competing to be heard. Such a show they are all putting on. Do you notice them too? As you do, are you breathing slowly and deeply and embracing nature and the world all around you? Did you happen to see the peppermint coloured trees all decked out in their fresh finery? Take note as they put on their spectacular show as that beautiful colour of their spring coats only lasts for a short window of time. The unique green they wave in the spring breeze is like no other you will see all year. I like how the warming winds tempt them into conversations. I can hear the encouraging breeze saying "Wake up! I've been longing to have conversations with you. Wait until you see what this year has to offer us!"

The trees have the breeze to keep them company and shake them up. I too rediscovered my inner fortitude and gave thanks for my family and friends to get me moving. Somehow now I don't feel quite so lonely and my world is no longer feeling as off-kilter. I believe I am recharged and resurging to "Begin Again".

Begin Again

Author Susan Coolidge

Every day is a fresh beginning;
Listen my soul to the glad refrain,
And, in spite of old sorrow and older sinning,
And puzzles forecasted and possible pain,
Take heart with the day and begin again.

Welcome to Summer Everyone! May we all have renewed hope and receive the gift of embracing our family and friends soon.

As Always, Pat

Pat welcomes feedback and suggestions at patponderingsfeedback@gmail.com

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Men's Health

by Chris Spottswood



June is National Men's Health month, and by chance, several months ago, I was having an interesting chat with a male client in his early 50's about exactly this. He was telling me how differently he is taking care of himself compared to his Father and Uncles. Instead of following "family tradition" when it comes to his health, he started making changes in his 40's to have a more robust and energetic later in life experience.

What was so intriguing about this conversation is hearing the male point of view regarding eating, exercise, and healthy living. According to Mike the older males in his family felt diets and exercise were for women only. The women ate salads and fed the men heartier meals, the men were not active participants in taking care of their health needs at all. This was just one generation ago. I want to be clear this is a discussion about his personal experience, I am not suggesting that all families or men are the same. Although the statistics may indicate his experience was not out of the ordinary.

While we have come a long way in a generation there is still a way to go according to the Canadian Men's Health Foundation.

Did you know that 70% of men's health issues are preventable with small lifestyle changes? That means only 30% are hereditary, that is the good news! Yet, 42% of men are in the unhealthy category and 31% are borderline. I was also shocked to learn that 69% of men are not aware they may be at more risk for certain chronic diseases due to their family history.

These lifestyle changes don't have to be huge to see results. In fact, an all or nothing approach has proven to be overwhelming and can lead to quitting so called good behaviours before health benefits are realized.

Focus on incorporating one new healthy habit at a time, instead of cutting out behaviours or foods.

Adding a new habit is psychologically easier than giving something up, no-one wants to deprive themselves! Working on progression not perfection, tweaking diet, add exercise, modifying stress levels, quitting smoking, and even sleeping better will help increase overall health. One small step at a time. Consistency will eventually add up to big results.

Exercise is a key component in avoiding many ailments, heart disease, diabetes, depression, and some types of cancer. The Mayo Clinic states that exercise lowers the risk of death from all causes. Pretty impressive!

From that perspective start walking, more, faster, and longer. A recent study is showing the speed of walking may be an important new vital sign, like blood pressure and heart rate, so lace up those shoes!

Walking is the most accessible activity for cardiovascular health, and after the past year has proven to also be a valid social outlet. Reach for your toes, flexibility is so important. Stand on one foot (use a chair or wall for light support if needed) balance is also essential. Practice sitting and standing without using your arms to strengthen your legs and core. Do a push up against the wall – keep your upper body strong – these are all basic levels of movement. The key is that we want to stay as strong, balanced, and flexible as we can for as long as we can.

I have coached many men, some into their 80's and while some movements may need to be modified, a good balanced exercise program will continuously

challenge the participant. You are never "too old" to start. Kettlebells into your 60's, 70's or even 80's – yes you can, with the right build up. Staying engaged and trying something new helps with consistency as well as exercising your brain, a two for one benefit.

There are many resources now dedicated to optimal aging, men's health and even motivation! Ah yes motivation, that little thing. Typically, motivation is the biggest challenger. If 70% of chronic disease can be



Paul Holst, 66 of New Hamburg, staying young with his favourite Kettlebell after an outdoor workout.

changed with some lifestyle modifications, why are men still 79% more likely to die of heart disease?

Some men make massive shifts after a medical event, some do not. Your motivation could be keeping up with kids or grandkids, playing a better round of golf, or losing a few pounds. Even just being able to get out of a chair without groaning. Motivation is personal and requires a deep commitment to the outcome you desire. Want to make getting up stairs easier? Walk up

more stairs, regularly. It sounds so simple, yet it can be daunting. Even more so when you are looking at changing something that may not be affecting you yet.

For your future self, just start. Take one small step, add one thing to your day that will help increase your level of health: walk, workout, drink more water, less pop, eat your veggies. Get proactive with your health and enjoy your vitality!

Go to menshealthfoundation.ca for more information.

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***Please note these amounts are changing as of August 1, 2021 to \$22,200 or less for single and \$37,100 or less for a couple

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1. Apply online at ontario.ca/SeniorsDental or
2. Print, fill out and mail a paper application to: OSDCP, Station P, PO Box 159, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2S7
3. Phone us at the Woolwich Community Health Centre at 10 Parkside Dr in St Jacobs and arrange to pick up an application form and/or get support with completing your form.

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| 1180 Queens Bush Rd
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Ontario Poison Centre

1-800-268-9017

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline

1-888-230-3505

TeleHealth

1-866-797-0000

TTY: 1-866-797-0007

Waterloo Wellington LHIN

519-310-2222

Community Care Concepts

519-664-1900

Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority

1-855-275-7472

Elder Abuse Response Team

519-579-4607

Interfaith Community Counselling

519-662-3092

Hospice of Waterloo Region

519-743-4114

Alzheimer Society of Waterloo Wellington

519-742-1422

Township of Wilmot

519-634-8444

Township of Wellesley

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