

sage LINK

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Please note: we are currently working off-site but our hours remain the same.

Mon-Fri 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Closed for statutory holidays



Sage staff are meeting on Zoom every week - we miss you!

Staying Sage in Extraordinary Times

The world has radically changed since we last sent out our Link newsletter. Organizations have closed or dramatically altered their business models, masks have become commonplace, and phrases like 'physical distancing' and 'flattening the curve' seem to be on everyone's lips. Lives have been lost and disrupted, and many people are understandably anxious as we collectively fight to keep the virus at bay.

We have had to make some changes at Sage too, but we want you to know that we're still here, still doing what we've always done - it just looks a little different these days!

Our first priority is the health and wellbeing of our staff, volunteers, and the seniors we serve. We are following the advice of the

Chief Medical Officer to keep people safe, and that has meant changing the way we do things. But the essence of our work remains the same: we are still providing refuge for seniors in our Safe House; social workers continue to provide information and support to seniors who need it; nurse practitioners continue to care for patients; and we continue to provide a wide range of recreational and life enrichment activities. Most of this work is now done by phone or online, but we are still just a phone call away!

If you have any questions about our program and services, or want to learn more about how to connect with us from home, please call our main switchboard at 780-423-5510.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



During these strange and challenging times, it is wonderful to connect with all of you, even if it is by way of this note in our newsletter. For the Sage Team, the enjoyment and fulfillment that results from our work is deeply tied to the connection we have with all of

you, with our volunteers, and with one another. We miss you!

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on seniors in our community has been profound, and our team of staff and volunteers have been working hard to quickly modify program delivery to ensure that we can stay connected and deliver services, while also following public health guidelines.

Many Life Enrichment programs are now available by phone and online, the income tax program completes tax returns without face to face meetings, and social work and health services supports are being delivered primarily by phone.

In addition to changes to existing programs, Sage's team has also been applying for emergency funding to deliver new services to meet people's changing needs during the pandemic. A new Friendly Phone Call program helps to ensure that people stay connected to staff and volunteers while doing their best to stay home and stay safe.

So, while things look and feel different right now, Sage is still here and we want to stay connected with you! We hope you will find something in the newsletter that will capture your attention and that you'll reach out to connect with Sage in new and different ways during the pandemic.

The thing that makes Sage special is the sense of community that exists in our spaces and programs, but that community isn't only connected to the physical space at Sage. It is about the people and our connections with one another. We can continue to come together as a community during the pandemic to support one another, connect, and navigate these strange times together.

Sage's pandemic response plan will continue to change based on recommendations from public health officials. Please check in by phone by calling 780-423-5510 or visiting the Sage website at www.mysage.ca for the most up-to-date information.

Until we see you again in person, we hope to 'see' you or hear your voices in programs and services while we are physically apart in order to stay safe and healthy.

All the best,

Karen McDonald

DIRECTORY

Board of Directors

President	Joyce E. Tustian
President Elect	Kathleen Thurber
Past President	Reg Joseph
Secretary	Tammy Pidner
Treasurer	Tammy Pidner

Members at Large

Sharon Anderson	Kathy Classen
Cathy Giblin	Hubert Kammerer
Peg Quinn	Gregory Springate
Michael Solowan	

Main Switchboard	780-423-5510
Health Services	780-809-9402
Life Enrichment	780-423-5510
Safe House Intake	780-702-1520
Social Work Services	587-773-1764
Volunteer Services	780-701-9014
Guardianship/Trusteeship	780-423-5510 ext. 404

 **Sage Seniors Association**

 **@sageyeg**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, we will be holding our AGM virtually in the Fall. Proposed changes to the bylaws and the addition of new Directors will be voted on at this meeting. Proposed changes to the bylaws will be made available for review by members electronically by request 21 days before the meeting. An exact date will be determined in September and call in information will be shared with members.

MEMBERSHIP

Keep your Sage membership up-to-date! Mail a renewal cheque to Sage, attention Janet Askin, Memberships, or call the Sage's main line and leave a message. We'll call you back to process your membership with a credit card payment.

SAGE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Sage Seniors Association was established in 1970 with the formation of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired. Today, a couple of name changes (and buildings!) later, we are getting ready to celebrate our 50th anniversary. COVID-19 has significantly impacted how we wanted to celebrate, but we are working on a Plan B - stay tuned for more information on how we plan to mark this important milestone!

DIRECTORY OF SENIORS SERVICES

We are in the process of preparing the 2020-21 Directory of Seniors Services - the most comprehensive seniors resource guide in northern Alberta. 45,000 copies of the Directory will be printed and distributed in the Fall. For more information, or to request a copy, please call 780-423-5510.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Help us welcome the following new and returning staff:

NEW STAFF

- Charlene MacDonald - Temporary Office Coordinator
- Lisa Clauson - Guardianship/Trusteeship Coordinator
- Titus Chan - Temporary Dragonfly Community Connector
- Avash Purri - Temporary Assessment, Supports and Triage Coordinator
- Maureen Ferra - Grants Coordinator
- John Vandenberg - Communications Coordinator
- Paul Pucylo - Project Coordinator: Directory of Seniors Services
- Renata Cesar - Temporary Life Enrichment Coordinator
- Kim Punko - Assessment, Supports and Housing Coordinator
- Mara Stiener - Project Coordinator

RETURNING STAFF

- Roman Mariam - Temporary Assessment, Supports and Housing Coordinator
- Jean Repchuk - Temporary Nurse Practitioner
- Shay Brooks - Temporary Medical Office Assistant
- Iriny Khairalla - Temporary Medical Office Assistant
- Miriam Salazar - Temporary HR Coordinator

VOLUNTEER SERVICES



Barb Carroll
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The past three and half months have been like riding an emotional rollercoaster. Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic and practising the physical distancing and social isolation required to fight the virus and keep everyone safe can be hard. As much as we all crave human connection, we are all doing what is necessary to stay safe.

Since we closed the Sage building on March 16, most of our volunteers have been unable to

perform their volunteer roles or connect up in-person. Sage staff have been working remotely and we really miss the in-person connection with the rest our team, the Sage Volunteers. Hopefully it will not be to long before we are all together again at Sage!

National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week was held April 19 - 25 this year. We usually celebrate our amazing volunteers by hosting a Volunteer Appreciation luncheon during this week. We missed having this opportunity to thank the volunteers in person for their dedication and support. We did our best to stay connected and celebrate the volunteers through social media posts and email blasts sent out each day of National Volunteer Week.



Volunteer Service Milestones

Congratulations and **thank you for** everything you do!

Five years

Nissa Batawa
Pearl Edwards
Nancy Kwok
Dennis Meleshko
Dolores Niederhaus-Zurawell
Lorraine Savary
Shawne Smith
Shirley Stevenson
Janice St. Jean
Eric Storey
Jeff Weber

Ten years

Margaret Rutherford
Sharon Talbot



Thank you!

A big shout out and thank you to the volunteers who have been able to help us out during the pandemic. One thing never changes - we can't do it without you!

Admin Support

Carol, Elsie, Erik, and Lauren

Income tax

Colleen, Bones, Donna, Doug, Heather, Jeff, and Wendy

Life Enrichment

Margaret, Tanya, Catherine, and Brenda

Friendly Check-In

Brenda, Brittany, Carolyn, Connie,, Elsie, Emma, Erika, Gail, Janetta, Joan B., Kesia, Narrissa, Pauline, Seamus, Sonia, Tanya, and Wilma

FRIENDLY WELLNESS CHECK-IN PROGRAM

The Friendly Check-In Program connects isolated seniors to volunteers who foster a genuine human connection that can help combat loneliness. A Friendly phone call not only provides an informal chat and emotional support but also helps the senior maintain connection to their community. Friendly Callers can assist seniors with connection to Sage services and programs as well as community resources and information.

Currently, over 400 seniors receive a regular check-in call from a Sage volunteer. Call Sage at **780-423-5510 ext. 5** to be added to the list.

BECOME FRIENDLY CALLER!

A regular Friendly Check-In phone call can foster a genuine connection to help combat isolation and loneliness. Regular phone calls provide seniors with a friendly, informal chat, help them maintain connection with their community, and can assist with providing information and resources needed during this pandemic.

To find out more about this volunteer role, please contact Barb Carroll at bcarroll@mysage.ca or leave a message at **780-701-9014**.

INCOME TAX RETURN SUPPORT

Although the deadline for filing your taxes has passed, the Federal government has announced that the deadline to pay off any outstanding balances interest-free will be extended to August 31, 2020. This means that if you have to pay a balance, or you have a balance outstanding between now and August 31, 2020, you will not have to pay it until after September 1, 2020, and no interest will accumulate during this time.

If you haven't already submitted your taxes, now's the time! Call **780-809-9424** for more information and a volunteer will contact you.

Please note that the Government has extended its time frame for review of income as it pertains to Guaranteed Income Supplement and Alberta Seniors Benefits to October 1.

GUARDIANSHIP AND TRUSTEESHIP PROGRAM

Sage's Guardianship and Trusteeship program offers guidance to anyone applying for private Guardianship, Trusteeship and/or Co-Decision Making. We understand that the application process can be overwhelming for family members and caregivers. With over 35 years of experience, Sage can be trusted to provide the guidance and support that you need to complete the application forms. The program is run as a fee-for-service social enterprise and is delivered at cost-recovery price, ensuring that Sage can continue to provide this essential service.

Guardianship may be required when an adult no longer has the capacity to make their own personal decisions. A Guardian is appointed by the Court and has the legal responsibility to make personal decisions for another person.

Trusteeship may be required when an adult no longer has the capacity to make their own financial decisions any may be vulnerable. A Trustee is appointed by the court and has the legal authority to make financial decisions for them.

Co-Decision Making may be required when an adult lacks capacity to make their own personal decisions. A Co-Decision Maker is an option under the AGTA (Adult Guardian and Trustee Act) that is less intrusive than Guardianship. A Co-Decision Maker must make decisions *with* the adult rather than *for* the adult.

Each package includes:

- A checklist of documents and information that needs to be gathered
- A copy of a blank capacity assessment
- Up to one hour of one-on-one phone coaching per application
- Completed initial application paperwork
- Commission of documents
- One-time correction of errors if the order is not granted because of these errors

COSTS (PER APPLICATION)

Guardianship and Trusteeship Initial Application \$495

Guardianship OR Trusteeship Initial Application \$345

Guardianship and Trusteeship Review Application \$250

Guardianship OR Trusteeship Review Application \$125

Co-Decision Maker Initial Application \$345

Sage is also offering Guardianship and Trusteeship program workshops (via Zoom) at a cost of \$50, which includes a mailed out package of necessary documents for the full application, and access to a two-hour group workshop on guardianship, trusteeship, the forms, court process, and the role and responsibilities of a guardian and/or trustee. For information on registering for the workshop, or for general information about the program, please call **780-423-5510 ext. 404**.



SAFE HOUSE UPDATE

The Sage Seniors Safe House provides temporary (60 days) accommodation for men and women 60 years of age and older who are in need of refuge after leaving an abusive situation. Qualified social work staff provide the holistic case management, peer support, professional and practical assistance, and connections to community resources that help residents deal with all the areas of their lives that have been impacted by abuse. Safe House staff and residents are fully supported by Sage's broader programming, including our Life Enrichment activities, Housing program, and Volunteer Services

Today, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, outreach work is largely being done by phone. Other changes have also been initiated, including adding a weekly psycho-education support group (presented via Zoom) and a weekly informal chat group at the request of program participants. This chat group provides a venue to exercise social connections with peers safely.

Safe House staff is currently not allowing visitors to the shelter and is limiting the number of staff on site to no more than three. This allows us to minimize traffic while ensuring that if there is an outbreak, we have limited the

potential of exposure to the entire team. Finally, staff have been disinfecting high touch areas at least three times a day and have increased the cleaning of the suites.

If you or a senior you know is being abused, please call Safe House Intake at 780-702-1520. For non-urgent calls or further information (or to donate!) please call 780-426-3746 or visit the Sage website at www.mysage.ca/help/seniors-safe-house.

No Room in the Inn Campaign raises \$40,00!

Every Christmas since 1999, the Edmonton and District Council of Churches have sponsored the **No Room in the Inn** campaign, an ecumenical initiative to support housing providers for the homeless or those at risk of becoming homeless in the Capital Region. In 2019, the Sage Seniors House Renovation Project was honored to be selected. We are thrilled to report that the campaign raised over \$40,000, which will be used to create dedicated client areas and install accessible shower facilities at our Safe House. We would like to extend our most heartfelt thanks to the people who donated to this campaign. Your donations will make a world of difference.

STAYING HEALTHY AND SAFE DURING THE RE-LAUNCH

For the most up to date information on the province's response to the COVID-19 pandemic visit the Government of Alberta website at www.alberta.ca/COVID19 or call 211. We encourage everyone to continue to follow public health guidance through all stages of relaunch.

FREE MASKS

As of August 1, it is mandatory to wear a mask while in a public indoor space in Edmonton. Sage has a number of masks available for distribution - to learn more, please call us at 780-701-9007.

CITY OF EDMONTON COVID-19 TOOL KIT

While there are many things we can't do during a pandemic, there are a lot of things we can still do to make each day a little bit brighter. Visit the City of Edmonton website at www.edmonton.ca or call 311 to see a variety of ideas for activities you can continue to enjoy, while keeping yourself and your family safe.

LIFE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMING

Due to the ongoing pandemic and requirement to physically distance, we have moved our Life Enrichment program online. For a complete, updated list of programs please call **780-423-5510** or visit the Sage website at www.mysage.ca/events

No computer? No problem! The majority of our programs offer a call-in option. Here's how to join by phone:

1. Find the program you want to join
2. Call the toll-free number (1-855-703-8985)
3. Enter the meeting ID and press the # key
4. Press the # key again when asked for participant ID
5. Say your name and press the # key again

UPCOMING PROGRAMS: AUGUST TO OCTOBER

PLEASE NOTE: By registering and participating in any online programming provided by Sage, you are providing Sage with access to your name, contact information, and other personal information that you may share. You give Sage permission to use this information to contact you, and to keep track of your participation for internal purposes. You can stop participating at any time, and can withdraw your personal information from Sage's records at any time.

Please note that online programming may be less private and confidential than face-to-face

Everyday Fitness Drop-in with Brenda

In these weekly sessions group leader Brenda will focus on simple movements, exercises and stretches. Practice a series of simple home exercises, and get tips and tricks on staying fit.

When: Mondays, 10-11 am

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Sing-a-long with Elaine Drop-in

Join Elaine for all of your sing-a-long favorites.

When: Tuesdays, 1-2 pm

Meeting ID: 225 573 6467

Gentle Yoga with Sonia

Gentle and simple yoga movements, exercises and stretches.

When: Wednesdays, 1-2 pm

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

programming - you may not know everyone who is listening or watching. By using the Zoom link or toll-free number to call-in or join in the activity online, you acknowledge the risks involved.

This program uses video and audio technologies for our sessions rather than asking participants to come into our building. Sage has purchased the Zoom plan with the highest level of security settings. We do our best to make sure that any information you give to us during programs is private and secure, but want to acknowledge that no video or audio tools are ever completely secure.

Zumba Gold with Carina Drop-In

Zumba Gold takes the popular Latin dance inspired workout of Zumba and makes it accessible for seniors, beginners, or others needing modifications in their exercise routine.

When: Wednesdays, 2-3 pm

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Coffee Group Drop-in

A weekly get together to have discussions, chat, visit, and even see some friendly faces or hear familiar voices over the computer or over the phone.

When: Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 am

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

DATE-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

Ukulele Summer Strum with Elaine Drop-in

A great chance for ukulele enthusiasts to come together for this review of the songs taught in Elaine's ukulele classes since September.

When: Thursdays, 1-2 pm

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Busy Fingers & Craft Group with Tanya

Join Sage's Busy Finger and Craft Group volunteer Tanya as you work on your knitting, crocheting, crafts or doodling while enjoying a visit.

When: Fridays, 11 am– 12 pm

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Live Music with Margaret Drop-in

Join Sage's volunteer Margaret as she shares her love of music by singing and playing her ukulele. Enjoy listening or singing along from your own home.

When: Every 2nd and 4th Friday 1-1:45 pm

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Dinner and a Movie

Watch the suggested movie, buy the suggested ingredients, and ZOOM together! To get the movie suggestion, ingredient list, recipe and Zoom Link, just email Rachel at rtassone@mysage.ca at least one week before the program date.

When: 1st and 3rd Friday (starting Aug 21)
4pm (online only)

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Love to Learn Monthly Series Drop-in

August Things to Do Online - Virtual Museum Tours, Courses and More. Presented by the YCMA of Northern Alberta.

September Digital Citizenship

When: Last Monday of the month, 1-2 pm

Meeting ID: 657 878 2877

Virtual Climate Change Focus Group

How are pollution and changes in our climate affecting you and your community? How can we build an environmentally sustainable and resilient Edmonton? If you are 55 years of age or older, we want to hear from you! Join us for an interactive webinar discussion and provide what you need to stay healthy, happy, and active in your environment, how changes in climate are affecting your health.

Dates: Thurs, Aug 18 at 11am and Mon, Aug 24 at 1pm

Note: Online only. Must pre-register. Maximum of 15 people per session. A \$25 gift card will be mailed to all attendees. Pre-register today by contacting Renata Cesar at resesar@mysage.ca. Renata will record your address and email you the zoom link.

Healing Through Writing Workshop

Back by popular demand! Join author and instructor Adele Fontaine in this free, four week workshop as she shares how writing poems helped her grieve the loss of her husband. Learn how to write, share, and work through life experiences.

Dates: Thursdays in September, 2:30-3:30 pm

Note: Must pre-register. Maximum of 12 participants. Pre-register by emailing rtassone@mysage.ca and you will be sent the Zoom link or phone-in information.

Please note that by participating in any online or phone-in programming provided by Sage, you knowingly and voluntarily assume the risks of engaging in this activity. You acknowledge that it is your responsibility to be aware of the risks associated with the activity and to safely guard yourself by ensuring that you are physically capable of the activity. That you exercise safety measures appropriate to the activity, and that you do not participate beyond your capabilities. Please consult a medical professional before beginning any exercise regime.

The Society Comes of Age 1989-2005

Val Chymko

As we approach the 50th anniversary of our Society in October, we bring you the third episode in a series of glimpses at the history of our organization. The previous two dealt with *Formation & Beginnings* (1970-79) and *The Growth Years* (1980-89) In this chapter, we'll take a look at the development of the Society after we moved to our present location on Churchill Square.

At the end of its tenure at the Baker Centre in 1989, the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired (now Sage) was bursting at its seams,



due in part to such tremendous growth in membership during the previous ten years. We had also been operating with the bare minimum of staff and financial backing. The move to Churchill Square not only provided the chance for strategic growth in terms of space, but also an opportunity for the Society to re-examine its strategic purpose and financial resources. At its inception the Society was “to offer leadership and planning; to give direct service; to be a resource center; and to stimulate social action both with and for older persons” (*News for Seniors*, May 1975). So, along with its new location, the Society undertook a fresh look at its current activities to evaluate how it was fulfilling this original mandate, particularly in the areas of leadership and collaboration.

This did not come without growing pains however. The 1990s were a time of significant government cutbacks, and soon the Society found itself in a rather severe financial situation. Coincidentally, after a close brush with almost having to close its doors, a new Executive Director came on board and a professional Director of Fund Development was hired. By the early 2000s the Society had recovered by fostering corporate sponsorship and by exploring other innovative ways to gain financial security.

Another area where the society began to ‘come of age’ was in the development of new partnerships with other organizations, and the creation of new initiatives. Between 2000 and 2005 the Society:

- received funding for a 2-year pilot project leading to the establishment of a Seniors Safe House to assist those living in abusive situations
- Began participation in meetings with the Board of Capital Health re: long term care
- Developed a website using funds received from the Muttart Foundation
- Became a member of the Edmonton Social Planning Council; assisted in the formation of the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
- Partnered with the Multicultural Health Brokers to increase outreach initiatives for existing ethnic communities, as well as immigrant and refugee seniors
- Participated in the successful advocacy for appointment of a Minister Responsible for Seniors
- Began offering Social Work Services for older adults

Also in the early 2000s, we became involved in efforts to address the fragmented planning and delivery of seniors services city-wide. The Society was instrumental in putting forth a proposal to the City of Edmonton (on behalf of the Edmonton Seniors Community Network) to form a “Task Force on Community Services for Seniors”. The ensuing work by this Task Force resulted in the formation in 2004 of the

Edmonton Seniors' Coordinating Council, an umbrella organization intended to build collaborative approaches to services and supports for older adults. This is something the Society had long set out to achieve, and although circumstances limited us from actually meeting the parameters of such an organization ourselves, we helped to lay the foundation for one that could.

One last accomplishment during this period of the Society's development was our change of name in 2005. From being the Society for the

Retired and Semi-retired, we became SAGE – the Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton. The Oxford definition of 'sage' is: *wise, especially as a result of great experience*. This is quite fitting for our Society, for those who have contributed to our success in the past, and for the policy-makers and staff who are currently directing and implementing delivery of our programs and services. Finally, to those of you who have chosen to become affiliated with this great organization, what a 'sage' choice!

PANDEMIC RESOURCES

COORDINATED PANDEMIC RESPONSE PACKAGES AND PPE SUPPLIES

The Edmonton Coordinated Pandemic Response Group has secured resources to distribute essential personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies and other resources to seniors throughout Edmonton. This program provides low-income seniors access to PPE, activity packages, hygiene, incontinence supplies, denture cleaning supplies, M&M Meats packages, and food security gift cards. Seniors who wish to access the program can call 780-701-9007 and leave a message. You will be called back by a Sage Seniors Association employee to schedule a delivery.

HEALTH SERVICES

Are you struggling to access health care during the pandemic? Our Health Services program is currently able to offer short-term supports to seniors, including ongoing support for any of our previous clients who have been unable to access new providers. Nurse Practitioners (NPs) can be consulted about an urgent problem, or to address ongoing chronic health conditions which may be affected during this time physical distancing. NPs can telephone consults, virtual visits, and can also come out for a home visit should this be required. To make a virtual appointment, call 780-809-9402.



