Happy New Year to all. May 2020 bring you good health and joy. It almost feels like a new beginning with the turning to a new era. As I write this in December, I have just heard that we are to have a milder winter. Let’s hope it happens, we are all a little weary of the ups and downs of the last few months.

Speaking of ups, our Council has had a few lately. We had a new food tasting event in December, very interesting! Our Café Christmas Dinner special was very successful. Our travel team has had some wonderful trips. Our latest computer seminar was very well attended and the questions from the floor have set plans in place for a further learning opportunity. The Fit Minds program was a hit and it may also lend itself to another set of workshops. All and all a lot of good stuff happening.

We have a dedicated, hard working set of Directors on our Board and many, many thanks for all the hours spent planning and executing the activities and events we present. I am very proud to be a part of this group of seniors who do so much for the senior community of West Ottawa. Any time you have a suggestion or idea for us, just leave a note at the front desk. We are always open to investigate new ideas or activities.

Keep safe and warm

I'm probably like many of you in that I have a houseful of old photographs, negatives, slides (8 Kodak carousels – over 1,000 slides) plus several DVDs. They are stuck in various places around the house, in the closet, in the basement, in the dining room and they are in no particular order. For sometime my children have been nagging me to sort them out and convert them into something more current. In other words to come out of the dark ages.

I recently visited the Beaverbrook Library and took part in an orientation session on using their Digitization Lab. I discovered that I could re-record sections of my videos onto DVDs, convert Super 8 tapes to digital files (I don’t think I have any of those but you never know what I might find) and transfer my photographs, slides and negatives to various formats. I could also adjust the colour, light density etc. of the slides, photos and negatives.

Since this Lab is the only one in Ottawa, use of the machines is limited. I intend to make full use of my allotted time allowance and finally, after many years, get some order out of chaos. Now, if I can only remember who the people are and where the pictures were taken!!!

PS FAR WEST FUN FEST

Work is already underway on setting up the program for next year’s Fun Fest. This will be our 10th anniversary so keep your eyes posted for more information in the New Year.
**TRAVEL**

**Council Special Events**

**Thursday, January 9th:** Mystery Trip - an adventure you won’t want to miss. A few clues as to where you will be visiting: You might wear it, drink it or even eat it. The cost is $30.00

**Thursday, January 16th:** Travel presentation with SELLOFFVACATIONS in Hall C commencing at 9:30 am. Presentation will feature Italy, Spain and Portugal. Light refreshments and goodies will be served. All are welcome to attend and there is no charge.

**Thursday, January 23rd:** A step back in time with a visit to the Museum of History. A number of interesting exhibits are currently on display and the visit will include a film in the IMAX Theatre. The cost is $35.00. Amica Seniors Residences is providing a comfortable bus. Lunch at your expense at the Boreal restaurant at the museum. Space is limited so book now.

**CAFÉ CLOSED ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH**

**FOR**

**THE KANATA SENIOR COUNCIL’S FIRST EVER**

**TEA DANCE**

*Live entertainment! Tea, sandwiches, luscious desserts*

*Music from the EMtees - Rock’n’Roll : Rhythm and Blues*

*SO*

*Kick off those winter boots ..... grab your dancing shoes !*

*Get ready to boogie the afternoon away*

*AT*

*HALLS C & D MLACAK CENTRE; STARTING 1.00 P.M.*

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT THE COUNCIL CAFÉ FOR $20.00 EACH**

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**WHAT’S COOKING**

**Thursday, January 30th** the next Café Tasting Session will run from 11.00 a.m. to noon in Hall D when the emphasis will be on winter comfort foods. Why not drop in and try out some tasty winter drinks, healing miso soup, and other dishes designed to help you through the chills of the season?

*Please note: Everyone knows that the cost of food is taking a bigger bite than ever out of our pockets! The Café is no exception. Starting on January 2nd, the cost of the Café’s main Entrées will be going up a Loonie from $5.00 to $6.00 – by the way, did you know that the Council Café has Gift Vouchers for an Entrée in the Café? It makes a nice little gift for a friend or family member and*

**THE FESTIVE SEASON KEPT CAFÉ CHEFS BUSY**

First of all there were two very successful and well attended Food Tasting sessions. One took place on November 28th and concentrated on new dairy alternatives such as cheese made from cashew nuts, yogurt from coconut milk, rice made from soya and other intriguing (and tasty) alternatives. The second on Thursday, December 19th, featured a different take on a traditional Christmas dinner with a savoury pecan loaf taking pride of place accompanied by cranberry sauce and vegetarian gravy. Vegan recipes were also made available. Both tasting sessions were sponsored by Rainbow Foods.

The Café chefs were busy again on December 16th when over 50 people enjoyed a traditional Christmas lunch with “all the fixings” with holiday music and a surprise visit from Santa thrown in for good measure.

And then there was the Cookie Bake. Chef Marjorie reports that eight ladies signed up and eleven ladies attended. The first half hour was spent getting organized and then it was “on with the show”.

“We made 7 types of cookies with some double batches of favourites and next came decorating. Some of those ladies are really good decorators. We put all the beautiful cookies on the cafe tables to admire and then box up. Not a cookie was left — not even a crumb!”
WEBMASTER’S CHOICE

This month’s suggestions focus on managing the Winter Blahs.


People with seasonal affective disorder (SAD), or the clinical version of the winter blues, aren’t the only ones who struggle with the shorter days, colder weather, and the general blah of the winter season. Less sunlight can affect the circadian rhythm, the body’s biological clock that governs certain brain wave activity and hormone production. If you’re human, chances are you’ve woken up on a gray, wintry day and wanted to stay in bed.

For older people, and for folks who are sensitive to the cold, it’s even tougher and lots of people, both young and old have to work extra hard on their mental health during the colder months.

https://psychcentral.com/blog/5-ways-to-beat-the-winter-blahs/

Call it the winter blues or blahs or simply seasonal sadness. Whatever term you use, around this time, many of us start to feel our mood sinking. We feel especially tired and sluggish. We might even feel like the walking dead, moping from one task to the next.

But that doesn’t mean you’re doomed to a dull and fatigued fall and winter. Here are five ways to lift your energy and mood.

https://www.aplaceformom.com/blog/top-activities-for-seniors-to-enjoy-during-winter/

Winter is the time of year when most of us want to stay indoors, but it is important to keep the body and mind sharp by staying active. Learn more about five activities that you and your senior loved one can safely enjoy together throughout the winter season.

HERE’S HOPING FOR GREAT THINGS IN 2020

BRIAN JEFFREY; YOUR FRIENDLY WEBMASTER

Tax Season Is Upon Us

The 2019 calendar has ended and with it comes the beginning of new tax season. However, the tax return is called an Income Tax and Benefits Return. Therefore, in preparation for your 2019 tax return a good place to start is with a review of a copy of your 2018 tax return to check whether you are taking advantage of the benefits and credits you may be eligible for.

These benefits and credits include Pension Income Splitting with a spouse or common law partner; Age Amount for persons 65 years of age or older; Eligible Medical Expenses including private health insurance premiums; Disability Tax Credit if you or your spouse or common law partner have a severe and prolonged impairment in physical or mental functions; Canada Caregiver Credit if you have a spouse or common law partner or a dependent with an impairment in physical or mental functions; Pension Income Amount if you have reported eligible pension income; Climate Action Incentive (CAI) which (if you are a resident of Ontario) is a refundable tax credit to offset the Federal carbon tax; Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit (OEPTC) if you are a resident of Ontario and pay rent or property taxes, and Ontario Seniors Homeowners’ Property Tax Grant (OSHPTG) if you are 64 years of age or over and you own a principle residence in Ontario on which you paid property tax.

NOTE: that even if you do not have to pay income tax, you have to file a 2019 Income Tax Benefits Return to access such benefits as The Guaranteed Income Supplement, The Goods and Services Tax / Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST) Credit and The Ontario Sales Tax Credit. When you file do not forget to claim the CAI or to apply for the OEPTC and the OSHPTG.

Ottawa is lucky to have a great number of world-class museums and art galleries in the city and Janet Kaplan of the Travel Team is interested in organizing more trips to visit a few next year. We start off on January 23rd with a trip to the Museum of History over in Gatineau. You can explore as much or as little as you are comfortable with and we get a ride door to door. We always meet up for a group lunch and make time to shop in the interesting museum stores.

On the agenda for 2020 are trips to The Canadian Museum of Nature, The Aviation and Space Museum and Planetarium and a return visit to the National Art Gallery.

If you would like to be the first to know about these trips, please drop Janet Kaplan a line at jankaplan@rogers.com or phone 613 592 5117.

Look forward to hearing from you
MEMORIES OF NEW YEAR’S: 1948

When I was a very young “army brat”, sent home to England from India by my parents, I spent my first New Year’s with my grandmother and assorted aunts in a little village in Yorkshire called Hornsea. Hornsea, situated on the North Sea, was very small in those days and the centre of the village – the shops and a small tea-room – were clustered around the parish church.

One of my aunts was determined to start in on my education in no small fashion. New Year’s Day was approaching and she had me learn two verses of Tennyson’ poem that starts ….

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

I didn’t understand why she wanted me to do this but that particular aunt was my godmother and I adored her … she told me wonderful stories when she heard me crying for my home at night and stayed with me until I fell asleep. So I learned those verses!

Then on New Year’s Eve I was sent to bed early so I could get up late (a very special treat) and go to church with my grandmother, my great aunt, two aunts and random cousins. Midnight struck while we were in church and we walked home. It was bitterly cold – particularly for a little girl from India – and the wind was blowing gale force. But it was then that the poem suddenly became reality as the bells of the parish church rang out, peal after peal, and were answered by the bells of the next village.

That was a different time in a different place. Today no bell ringers “ring out the old, ring in the new” – if anything it’s digitized. But I remember that first New Year … and I still remember those first two verses and I wish, as the old year fades, that in all our minds, from coast to coast to coast, we all try to “ring out the false … ring in the true”.

So I wish you all, ‘gentle readers’, a very happy, healthy and peaceful 2020.

Your humble Editor