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Message from Parliamentary Secretary Michelle Stilwell



As we welcome a new year, for many of us it is a time of reflection and resolution. After a busy holiday season, gift giving and celebrations, we often start the year off with a long list of resolutions that highlight what to avoid – eat less, spend less money and be less sedentary – along with elaborate strategies to make them stick. As a proponent of positive reinforcement, I've been thinking about new year's solutions instead and saying yes to things to add to my daily routine that contribute to my health and well-being. Sprouting tomatoes from seed or signing up for a regular e-newsletter are little reminders of a positive approach to personal health.



In addition to my List of Solutions, adding a social aspect to my daily routine has really increased the effectiveness of the steps I am taking towards my goals. Simple things, like making a standing exercise date with friends, cooking healthy family meals together or participating in community events are just a few things to try. Not only do we get the benefit of invaluable support and a chance to spend quality time with friends and family, it strengthens my motivation to be consistent with my own well-being.

Whatever your goals may be for 2015, I wish you good health and happiness throughout the year.

Yours truly,

Michelle Stilwell
*Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors
to the Minister of Health*

Healthy Aging Tip

People who are physically active for 30 minutes a day, control their weight, eat healthy foods, and refrain from smoking reduce their risk factors for most chronic diseases by up to 80 percent. (Healthy Families BC – Prescription for Health, www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/home/prescription-health)

For more information on government programs and services for B.C. seniors, visit www.SeniorsBC.ca

Age-friendly BC Updates

2015 Age-friendly Community Planning & Project Grants

On December 11, 2014, the Province of B.C. and the Union of BC Municipalities announced 2015 Age-friendly Community Planning & Project grant funding. The following 28 local governments in B.C. have received close to \$500,000 for initiatives to help meet the needs of older residents:

- City of Abbotsford
- Village of Burns Lake
- City of Chilliwack
- District of Clearwater
- Columbia-Shuswap Regional District (for the South Shuswap)
- City of Colwood
- District of Hope
- Islands Trust (for North Pender Island)
- Village of Keremeos
- Regional District of Kootenay Boundary (for Christina Lake)
- Town of Lake Cowichan
- Village of Lions Bay
- City of Maple Ridge
- City of Merritt
- City of New Westminster
- District of Oak Bay
- Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (for Okanagan Falls)
- Town of Oliver
- Village of Pemberton
- Village of Pouce Coupe
- District of Sicamous
- District of Sooke
- District of Sparwood
- District of Squamish
- Village of Telkwa
- District of Ucluelet
- Village of Valemount
- District of West Vancouver

Age-friendly grants support a variety of projects designed to help seniors stay healthy, independent, and active in their communities. Including the 2015 funding announcement, over 135 local governments in all areas of B.C. have now received at least one grant, and over 225 initiatives have been funded. For more information, visit www.newsroom.gov.bc.ca/2014/12/2015-age-friendly-grant-recipients-announced.html.

Age-friendly BC Recognition

A local government can be formally recognized as an Age-friendly BC community after completing four steps that focus on community engagement, commitment, assessment, and action. Email AgefriendlyBC@gov.bc.ca for an Age-friendly BC Recognition application form or visit www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly and search “Getting Recognized – Age-friendly.” Applications received by March 31, 2015, are eligible for 2015 Age-friendly BC Recognition awards.

Support for Seniors' Falls Prevention and Mobility

On November 5, 2014, Health Minister Terry Lake announced a \$4.5-million grant to the Centre for Hip Health and Mobility (CHHM) at UBC. The grant will support programs to help prevent falls and hip fractures in older adults and enhance mobility through early intervention. The funding will also enable the CHHM to better reach older adults at the community level, including new Canadians, First Nations, seniors in rural and remote communities, and frail older adults.



CHHM team and older adults from James Bay (Victoria) with Parliamentary Secretary Michelle Stilwell and Minister Terry Lake.

Visit the CHHM website at www.hiphealth.ca/blog/funding-from-bc-government-strengthens-supports-for-seniors for more information.

Seniors Advocate's First Report

B.C.'s Seniors Advocate, Isobel Mackenzie, released her first report, *The Journey Begins: Together We Can Do Better*, on October 22, 2014. The report reflects what the Advocate heard from thousands of seniors, family members, service providers, and other stakeholders during her visits to more than 26 B.C. communities in 2014. The report identifies concerns about seniors' housing, transportation, income supports, residential care, and home support, as well as a "pervasive culture of ageism" that limits seniors' independence and sense of dignity.

The Seniors Advocate also announced that her first major review will focus on housing, ranging from independently owned and rental housing to assisted living and residential care. For more information, and to view the report, visit www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/the-seniors-advocate-next-activities.

Ministers Responsible for Seniors Meeting in Charlottetown, October 2014

On October 16-17, 2014, Charlottetown, P.E.I., hosted the 16th Meeting of Federal, Provincial and Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers Responsible for Seniors. B.C.'s Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health for Seniors, Michelle Stilwell, joined ministers and other colleagues from across Canada at the meeting to review collaborative work and identify future priorities to support the well-being of seniors.

At the meeting, ministers approved a suite of new resources, including a video, a fact sheet, and a self-assessment checklist to help raise awareness of the need for older Canadians to plan ahead to enhance their ability to age in place in their own homes and communities. Ministers also discussed progress on work to promote caregiver-friendly workplaces for older adults, and identified two priorities for future work: caregiver readiness and social isolation among seniors.

B.C. is the new co-chair (with Canada) of the F/P/T Seniors Forum, and B.C. will host the 17th Meeting of F/P/T Ministers Responsible for Seniors in 2016. For more information on the work of the Forum, visit www.seniors.gc.ca/eng/working/fptf.

University of Victoria Retirees Association Elder Academy

In October 2014, the University of Victoria Retirees Association (UVRA) introduced an Elder Academy for Victoria to promote “better mental and physical health for seniors through stimulating educational experiences.” UVRA and community partner Elder Care (Victoria) are encouraging people over 55 to attend lectures focused on intellectual stimulation, increased knowledge of current research, and life-long learning. For more information, visit <http://web.uvic.ca/retirees/events-elder-academy.html>.



Volunteer Profile: Meet Fred Titcomb

At 102, Fred Titcomb is still giving his time to enrich the lives of others. Fred was presented with a BC Community Achievement Award in 2014 in recognition of the 75+ years he's spent enthusiastically volunteering his wide range of skills. Fred credits his mother with having inspired him to volunteer, and credits volunteering with giving him something to live for after his wife passed away in 1994.



His many volunteer activities have included working as a volunteer firefighter, and for the past 35 years he has volunteered with the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre. There, Fred has done everything from serving as chair of the board to fundraising, proofreading, and decorating parade floats—and while he was at it, he learned how to use a computer when he was in his 90s! For more on this outstanding British Columbian, visit the BC b-sides website at www.bcbsides.ca/still-giving-after-all-these-years.

2015 Order of British Columbia – Call for Nominations

The Order of British Columbia was established in 1989 to recognize people who have served with the greatest distinction and excelled in any field of endeavour benefiting the people of the province of B.C. or elsewhere. The Order represents the highest form of recognition the province can extend to its citizens.

Anyone is welcome to nominate a deserving individual as a candidate for appointment to the Order of British Columbia. Nominations and letters of support must be received by March 6, 2015 to be considered for this calendar year. The online nomination form is available on the Order of BC website at www.orderofbc.gov.bc.ca/nominations.

Stories by the Light of the Moon: An ICA Shadow Theatre Project

In 2014, The Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) of Greater Victoria—with support from community partners, the Government of Canada’s New Horizons for Seniors program, and the City of Victoria—organized a series of free workshops where seniors from diverse cultural backgrounds learned how to tell stories from their childhoods through shadow theatre.

Using a variety of techniques, including overhead projectors, simple props, and silhouettes, participants worked with two facilitators to create and perform short, narrated shadow theatre plays based on their stories. A translator was engaged to assist with communication among participants during the workshops and performances, which were held in three local community centres in September of 2014.

There was a great deal of interest from community members, with approximately forty to sixty people attending each performance. The participants expressed pleasure at being able to participate in the project and with working in teams to learn to use shadow theatre techniques to tell their stories.

For more information about the project, including video clips from the performances, visit www.icavictoria.org/arts/shadow-theatre and www.icavictoria.org/content/stories-light-moon-ica-shadow-theatre-project-seniors.

For more information on the New Horizons for Seniors funding program, visit www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/seniors/funding/index.shtml.





Easy Pumpkin Muffin Bars

Submitted by Lindsay Staniforth



BetterTogether

The Better Together website (www.bettertogetherbc.ca) is a great source for kid-friendly recipes that seniors and kids can have fun making—and eating—together. Better Together BC is a partnership between the BC Ministry of Health and BC Dairy Foundation. It is maintained by BC Dairy Foundation as a resource for, and a network of, people sharing their stories and tips around eating together.

These pumpkin muffin bars are a perfect low-sugar healthy snack and can be made with common pantry ingredients.

Yields: 16

Prep time: 15 min, cook time: 20 min

Ingredients

- 2 cups quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ginger
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1/3 cup water
- 1/3 cup ground flax
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 398g can pumpkin (plain, not pumpkin pie filling)

Equipment

- Measuring cups and measuring spoons
- Mixing bowl
- Mixing spoon
- Baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Spatula
- kitchen knife



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a mixing bowl stir together oats, flour, cinnamon, ginger, baking soda, and salt.
3. In a large liquid measuring cup mix together oil, water, flax, sugar, and vanilla.
4. Add oil mixture to dry ingredients and stir well.
5. Add the pumpkin and mix through.
6. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
7. Spread the mixture onto the baking sheet.
8. Using the spatula, spread into a rectangular shape, approximately an inch thick.
9. Bake for 20 minutes.
10. Allow to cool slightly.
11. Cut into squares.
12. Enjoy!