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We are currently working off-site but our hours are the same. The Seniors Safe House is operating as normal.

**Please note that Sage will be closed on the following days:**

January 1 New Years Day  
February 15 Family Day

# sage LINK



Sage Volunteer Harold Blacklock, circa 1980, with a creatively playful demonstration of "teamwork".

## Sage Vignettes: Historical Glimpses

Meeting the Need *part two* - 2006-2020 Val Chymko

This is the last vignette in a series which has looked at the 50 year history of our organization. During the past 15 years, our accomplishments have been so numerous that they're being covered in two installments. In this final segment, we'll examine those endeavors in which Sage has collaborated with other groups and agencies, and look at the various roles that the Society has played to benefit seniors both now and into the future.

## Seniors Housing Forum

Since 2006, Sage had been involved with organizing this annual affair, and in 2009 took on the leadership role. The Housing Forum offers a wide variety of presentations on housing related subjects and an exhibit hall full of groups and businesses with displays of interest to seniors. As the Forum has become more popular over the years, there have been upwards of 900 participants in attendance.

*continued on page 10...*

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Winters in Alberta are long and dark at the best of times. During a pandemic, when we are staying home and doing our best to stay safe, the winter feels even longer and darker. It's been a challenging year for so many in our community, including those we care about.

Many people are mourning the loss of someone they love, the loss of connection, the loss of a sense of purpose. I believe it's important to acknowledge the reality of the impact of the pandemic on individuals and community.

I also believe it's equally important to see the moments of hope, to cherish new ways of connecting, and to see the beauty in people coming together in new ways to support one another. There are so many examples of these moments of hope in the Sage community in 2020. For example, the efforts of staff and volunteers to build and deploy a Friendly Phone Call program that now provides connection and comradery - and sometimes supports - to over 400 seniors. The sound of beautiful voices and instruments celebrating the end of the first ever Virtual Seniors Forum gave me goose bumps

and made me tear up. I so missed seeing everyone in person at the Forums this year, but the faces on my screen and the sound of music in my home lifted my spirits. The willingness of people to adapt and learn new technologies was on display at our first ever virtual AGM, and I was overcome with gratitude for people's patience, sense of goodwill, and commitment to engaging in Sage's well-being as an organization and community.

As we move through the winter season, I hope you will all continue to look out for one another. I hope you will remember that Sage's staff and volunteers continue to be a phone call away when you need us. I hope you will know that we miss you more than you know. And I hope that spring will bring renewal, healing, and hope back to each of you and our Sage community.

With gratitude,

**Karen McDonald**

## DIRECTORY

### Board of Directors

President	Joyce E. Tustian
President Elect	Kathleen Thurber
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
Fax	780-426-5175
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 x.404

**email:** [info@mysage.ca](mailto:info@mysage.ca) **website:** [www.mysage.ca](http://www.mysage.ca)

### Social Media

Facebook: Sage Seniors Association  
Twitter: @sageyeg

15 Sir Winston Churchill Square  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 2E5



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DIRECTORY OF SENIORS SERVICES

The 2020-21 Directory of Seniors Services, which features more than 300 pages of resources for seniors, is being delivered throughout the capital region in late December. The Directory is also available online on the Sage website. For information on how you can get your copy, please call 780-423-5510 or email [info@mysage.ca](mailto:info@mysage.ca).

### 2020 DONORS

Dozens of organizations and individuals have donated to Sage over the past year, helping us provide programs and services to seniors in our community. Thank you! Your contributions will be celebrated in the next edition of the LINK newsletter.

We are currently raising money to support renovations to the Sage Seniors Safe House. To learn more, please visit [www.mysage.ca](http://www.mysage.ca) or call us at 780-423-5510.

### STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Help us welcome the following new staff:

**Catherine Molyneux**  
Guardianship / Trusteeship Coordinator

**Fran Williams**  
Safe House Coordinator

**Jade Allen**  
Payroll Coordinator

**Janna Deng**  
Outreach, Assessment, Supports and Housing Coordinator

**Marianne Stover**  
Office Coordinator

**Sitandekile (Tandy) Ndlovu**  
Safe House Follow Up Coordinator

**Shelaine Sparrow**  
Grants Coordinator



**Seniors Safe House renovations  
are now 90% funded.  
Help finish the job - [donate today.](#)**

**Your gift will help make Edmonton's  
only senior-focused safe house more  
accessible, comfortable and dignified  
for seniors seeking refuge from abuse.**

**Make your charitable gift at [www.mysage.ca](http://www.mysage.ca)**

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES



**Barb Carroll**  
VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

To all of the Sage Volunteers... we miss you!

The power of community unites us all in the fight against this pandemic. It has been a stressful year, no doubt about that. If you have felt powerless and afraid, you are certainly not alone. But know that human beings are resilient: we might feel fear and anxiety, but we also feel creativity and compassion. Every day is a new day, and in today's world, we cannot predict what will happen in an hour, let alone tomorrow. Allow your resilience and creativity to spread.

May health and happiness follow you and yours throughout the year to come!



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Nicole Kulba Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist  
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## *In Memoriam*



It is with a very sad heart that we share with you that one of our long time Sage volunteers, Jeff Bovee, passed away on November 10.

Jeff started volunteering at Sage in 2012 when he founded and led the "Over the Rainbow"

Drop-in support group for LGBTQ+ seniors. Jeff also initiated the Strawberry Tea during Pride Week - an annual event that was eagerly anticipated by all.

Jeff was such a kind soul. You would find him most days in the Sage Café, playing games or reaching out to people who had never been to Sage before, or just sitting by themselves. He enjoyed playing Scrabble, Dominos and other games, and brought light hearted humor to whatever situation he participated in.

Sage would like to send our condolences to Jeff's family - particularly Evert, his partner of more than fifty years - and express our gratitude for the work that Jeff pioneered to make Sage a more welcoming, inclusive community.

### **BECOME A FRIENDLY CALLER!**

The Friendly Check-In Program connects isolated seniors to volunteers who foster a genuine human connection that can help combat loneliness. Friendly Callers chat with seniors, provide emotional support, and connect them to Sage services and programs, as well as community resources.

If you would like to learn more about this volunteer role, please email [bcaroll@mysage.ca](mailto:bcaroll@mysage.ca) or leave a message at 780-701-9014.

## HEALTH SERVICES AT SAGE: UPDATE

Sage has not been able to secure ongoing funding for the Health Services program. Because of this, the Nurse Practitioner led clinic at Sage will close as of Christmas. We continue to pursue new ways of funding a health program, since it is clear that it met the needs of many older adults in Edmonton.

Sage does have continued involvement in a program assessing the strengths and needs of older adults in community, called DRAGONFLY. Individuals who call in to Sage may be asked questions to determine how well they are doing with managing their daily activities, and could be

referred to the program which offers navigation supports for health and social needs. If you feel you would like to be assessed, please contact us to complete a screening with a member of our staff.

The nurse practitioners and the Health Services at Sage team want to thank all of our clients and stakeholders, who made the past three years a time of growth and achievement. Please continue to advocate for health programs that are integrated with social services and meet the needs of our older adults with complex needs.

## THANK YOU!

Since the start of the pandemic, Sage has worked collaboratively with other social-service organizations to send out Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) packages, including masks, sanitary supplies, gift cards, and other resources to vulnerable seniors in Edmonton. On Dec 11, the [staff at the United Way](#) surprised us by dropping off gift bags that were sent out to seniors as part of the PPE packages over the holidays.

Thanks to Home Instead Senior Care's *Be a Santa to a Senior* program, we also received donations of brand new blankets, coffee makers, chocolate baskets, and other gifts for over 30 seniors at our Safe House and in our Outreach programs.



Barkley is a 4 month old service dog in training for Dogs with Wings being puppy raised by one of our staff members. We hope that when we're back in the building you'll see this cute face around Sage!

We are so thankful for the generosity of our community, over the holiday season and throughout the year. Thank you to everyone who has helped to make the holidays a little brighter for seniors!

## St. Andrew's Centre

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## LIFE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMMING

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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](http://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

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### LIMITED EDITION SERIES

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#### **Legal Documents You Should Have**

Join a lawyer for this discussion on important documents for you to have. Participants will also learn more about more about Personal Directives, Power of Attorney, and Wills. Drop in.

**When:** Monday, January 25, 1:00 - 2:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

#### **"Most Wanted" Discussion plus Criminal Justice System Q & A**

Join Doug Heckbert, author and former probation officer, and two of his former parolees as they share their stories and experiences in the justice system, and the life changes brought about from those experiences.

**When:** Monday, February 22, 1:00 -3:00

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

#### **Staying Well & Thriving during Uncertain Times: Meaning, Making and Connection Workshop Series**

Back by popular demand! Join Libby Kostromin, Grief and Loss Facilitator at Jewish Family Services Edmonton, at this workshop that combines activities, tools and tips with opportunities to connect, share and be inspired by each other. Please join for all four sessions. Space is limited to 15 participants. Pre-registration is required: please e-mail [rtassone@mysage.ca](mailto:rtassone@mysage.ca) or call 780-701-9016.

**When:** Wednesdays, Jan 4 - Feb 10,  
1:00 - 3:00 pm

#### **Connecting Through Writing Workshop**

Join author and instructor Adele Fontaine for this 4-week workshop as she shares how writing is a great tool for expressing yourself, connecting, and healing. Space is limited to 12 participants. Pre-register by emailing [rtassone@mysage.ca](mailto:rtassone@mysage.ca) or calling 780-701-9016.

#### **When:**

Series 1: Thursdays, Jan 14 - Feb 4, 3:15-4:15 pm (register before January 11)

Series 2: Thursdays, Feb 25 - March 18,  
3:15 - 4:15 pm (register before February 22)

#### **Managing Mental Health & Wellness Series**

Join Sage's mental health therapist to discuss topics related to mental health and wellbeing for five weeks in January and February. Each week will feature a different topic, and opportunities for sharing and group discussion. Drop-in.

#### **When:**

Series 1: Tuesdays, Jan 12 - Feb 9, 4:00-5:30pm

Series 2: Tuesdays, Mar 2 - 30, 4:00-5:30 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

#### **Confront the Discomfort Course**

In this multi-week interactive online course, we will delve deeper into how to identify and manage anxiety. Each week, we will explore a new skill, approach or tool to help us better understand and cope with anxiety. This class is being offered through the Canadian Mental Health Association Recovery College. For information on how to access this course, please e-mail [rtassone@mysage.ca](mailto:rtassone@mysage.ca) or call 780-701-9016.

**When:** Tuesdays, Mar 3 - Apr 20, 1:30-2:30pm

## ONGOING PROGRAMMING

### **Tai Chi with Master Ken**

New! Good for the mind and body, these classes are great for all skill levels.

**When:** Mondays, 11:15 am -12:15 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Line Dance Monday Drop-in**

Not your typical line dancing! Join instructor Nancy in this unique class that mixes Tai Chi movements and easy dance moves set to a mix of popular songs.

**When:** Mondays, 11:15 am -12:15 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **TED Talks**

Watch interesting talks about a wide variety of topics and discuss afterwards. Online participation recommended.

**When:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month, 2:45 -3:30 pm (except in February due to Family Day holiday)

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Busy Fingers & Craft Group with Tanya**

Work on your knitting, crocheting, crafts or doodling while visiting.

**When:** Tuesdays, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Sing-a-long with Elaine Drop-in**

Join Elaine and friends for all of your sing-a-long favourites.

**When:** Tuesdays, 1:00 - 2:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** 225 573 6467

### **Gentle Yoga with Sydney**

Gentle and simple yoga movements, exercises and stretches. Seated or standing.

**When:** Tuesdays, 2:30 - 3:30 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Gentle Yoga with Sonia**

Gentle and simple yoga movements, exercises and stretches. Seated or standing.

**When:** Wednesdays, 1:00 - 2:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **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, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Line Dance Thursday Drop-in**

Not your typical line dancing! Join instructor Nancy in this unique class that mixes tai chi movements and easy dance moves set to a mix of popular songs.

**When:** Thursdays, 11:15 am -12:15 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Ukulele classes with Elaine**

A great way for ukulele enthusiasts to come together and learn. Series One runs from January 7 to February 25. Series Two runs from March 4 to April 29. Pre-registration is required; please e-mail [rtassone@mysage.ca](mailto:rtassone@mysage.ca) or call 780-701-9016 two weeks in advance to register. Not suited to absolute beginners.

Group 1 - Novice

**When:** Thursdays, 12:30 - 1:30 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

Group 2 - Intermediate

**When:** Thursdays, 2:00 - 3:00 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

### **Coffee Group Drop-in**

A weekly get together to have discussions, chat, and visit.

**When:** Fridays, 10:00 - 11:00am

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday, 1:00 - 1:45 pm

**Meeting ID:** 657 878 2877

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## UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

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### SHAPES Program

Start the New Year with a New You! This was a successful pilot project from the University of Alberta where seniors were taught modules on healthy living, eating, engagement and more. Sage is working to bring this amazing program online to our seniors in the New Year. If you are interested in learning more please email [rtassone@mysage.ca](mailto:rtassone@mysage.ca) or call 780-701-9016.

### Virtual Support Group for Anxiety And Depression

Offered by the Family Center. If you are interested in being part of this group, it will be approximately a 5-week course starting in January. For information or to register please contact Kristen Oliveros, registered therapist by e-mailing [kristen.oliveros@familycentre.org](mailto:kristen.oliveros@familycentre.org) or by calling 780 423-2831.

### Strategies for Patient-Oriented Research

Strategies for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) is an initiative of the Government of Canada through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research that links researchers with patient partners. These roles provide an opportunity for individuals with lived experience, or caregivers for someone with lived experience in specific health issues, to collaborate with researchers and provide personal input into guiding and shaping not only the research project, but future health policies and practices.

To learn more, please contact Ingrid Nielszen, Patient Engagement Coordinator, AbSPORU by e-mail at [ingrid.nielszen@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ingrid.nielszen@ucalgary.ca) or by calling 780-492-1481 .

### EMCN Conversation Circle

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) is pleased to introduce a Conversation Circle starting in the new year! Seniors 55+ are invited to join this online gathering each Wednesday starting January 11 going until March 25. Learners benefit from:

- Improved vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and conversational skills
- The chance to practice English in a caring, non-judgmental environment
- A new social network

Classes are open to residents of Edmonton who are permanent residents, Canadian citizens or temporary foreign workers. Visitors to Canada can also sign up for a fee. Learners must be immigrant Albertans who have beginner or low intermediate level of English.

If you (or someone you know!) would benefit from these classes, please contact An at 780-423-9524 or [Anto@emcn.ab.ca](mailto:Anto@emcn.ab.ca)

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## DISCLAIMER

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Please note that by registering and participating in Sage online programming, you are providing Sage with access to any personal information that you may share. You give Sage permission to use this info to contact you, and to keep track of your participation for internal purposes. You can stop participating, and withdraw your personal information at any time.

Remember that any online programming may be less private and confidential than face-to-face programming, as you may not know everyone

who is listening or watching. By using the Zoom link or toll-free number to call-in or join activities online, you acknowledge the risks involved.

Please also note 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 safely, and that you do not participate beyond your capabilities. Please consult a medical professional before beginning any exercise regime.



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## SAGE VIGNETTES: HISTORICAL GLIMPSES

### Meeting the Need 2006-2020

... continued from page 1

#### Health & Wellness Forum

In 2016, Sage partnered with six stakeholder organizations to host the first annual Seniors Health and Wellness Forum, presented by Age Friendly Edmonton. The Forum is a free community initiative that features presentations and panel discussions on health, wellness, and social supports vital to healthy aging.

#### Sage Awards

This annual event, held since 2006, recognizes the accomplishments of people during their senior years - a celebratory counterbalance to the phenomenon of ageism.

#### Drop-in counselling

In 2015, Sage became part of a network providing drop-in counselling in the city of Edmonton. Through a partnership with The Family Centre of Northern Alberta, Boys and Girls Clubs / Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area, Canadian Mental Health Association - Edmonton Region, The Pride Centre, and the Edmonton John Howard Society, Sage is able to offer free Drop-In Single Session Counselling to individuals, couples, and families when they need it the most.

#### Ageing to Sageing (A2S)

This initiative, which started in 2015, leverages the strengths of seniors by nurturing relationships with schools, agencies, families, and children in Edmonton. The program employs Community Animators who make connections to larger systems, and find resources to support self-organization.

#### Pan-Edmonton Group Addressing Social Isolation of Seniors (PEGASIS)

As part of Sage's continued efforts to reduce social isolation among seniors, we formed a partnership with the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council, Edmonton Southside PCN, GEF Seniors Housing, Drive Happiness, and Westend Seniors Activity Centre in 2016. During the term of the PEGASIS project, our Community

Navigators actively worked with socially isolated seniors, many of whom were experiencing simultaneous (financial, physical, mental health) challenges and required significant assistance with the issues that kept them isolated. PEGASIS wound up in 2019 and is now called Connecting Edmonton Seniors.

Here are a couple of examples of how Sage has shown leadership and collaborated with other organizations to affect positive change for seniors since the start of the new millennium:

**2006** Our Advocacy Committee participated in the Alberta government "Long Term Care Task Force" & submitted a response which focused on improved staffing levels, accommodations standards, medication review, nutrition and hydration, and family-centred care.

**2008** We became involved with Age-Friendly Edmonton, a collaborative initiative co-led by the City and the Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council. Its purpose is to foster a society that values, respects, and actively supports the well-being of seniors. Sage worked with other agencies in the development of the document *Helping Seniors Age in Place*, a strategic framework to improve outreach to Edmonton's isolated and/or at-risk seniors. A key strategic focus for Sage has been to develop programs and tools that will help seniors who want to age in place in their communities do so in proactive, safe, and healthy ways.

**2016** Along with the Alberta Association of Seniors Centres and the University of Alberta, we conducted a study of Alberta's seniors centres to determine the role they play in seniors' lives, their challenges and future potential.

The past has laid the foundation for where we are today and the present lays the foundation for where we will be tomorrow. Judging by our track record and our ability to persevere during challenging times, Sage Seniors Association should have a very promising future.

## 2020 VIRTUAL SENIORS FORUM

From November 18-21, Sage held our first ever Virtual Seniors Forum, sponsored by Age Friendly Edmonton. Attendees were treated to 29 different presentations on a wide variety of topics relevant to seniors, from innovative housing options to how to (literally) spice things up in the kitchen. In total, 293 people attended one or more sessions, with many attending the entire four days.

Sage would like to thank everyone who helped make the event a success, especially the presenters (who gave so generously of their time), the event committee, and our volunteers.

This was a new adventure for all of us, and we learned so much about how to engage with seniors in a new and innovative way.

After the forum we sent out a survey asking attendees what they thought of the event. Response was very positive, with most people saying that they found it easy to join by phone or online, and that they would attend another virtual forum or online programming.

We recorded all of the presentations, and plan to create a new page on the Sage website to post these sessions and associated resources. Watch them again, or for the first time! Stay tuned for more details.

## CITY OF EDMONTON WASTE CART ROLL OUT

The way Edmontonians sort and manage waste at home is changing. The City of Edmonton will deliver carts to all single-unit and some multi-unit homes, free of charge.

- Residents will receive one cart for food scraps and another one for garbage.
- Recycling remains the same and will be collected in blue bags.
- There will be seasonal yard waste collection in the fall and in the spring.

The City will deliver carts between March and August, 2021 and residents will be able to start using them shortly after. The carts will arrive with a comprehensive information package that will have all the details you will need to start using them and sorting your waste correctly. The City is also offering customers with restricted mobility an assisted waste collection service at no additional charge. More details will be available in early January 2021.

## Lasting continuity.

Our family has been fortunate to benefit from all that Edmonton has to offer. Through Edmonton Community Foundation, the Berger Family Fund contributes to new community needs as they arise.

*This helps maintain and strengthen Edmonton now and into the future.*

Joanne Berger



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