

# SEESA Shares

*Our Mission: To empower and enhance the quality of life of people in our community as they age.*

April 2021

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I love trying new things. Some "stick", some don't but it's always an adventure, from skiing and ballroom dancing to rock climbing and mountain biking. However, the one that stands out as the most exciting and rewarding has been aerials!

Just over 15 years ago I saw an article about Edmonton's Firefly Circus Academy. I signed up for their next session: an introduction to Trapeze and Silks. I fell in love immediately, even though I struggled to do the most basic things. It took many months before I was able to climb to the top and by the time I got there I was exhausted.

Fast forward many years and many lessons and I have accomplished so much more than I could have imagined. I've become an instructor with Firefly Circus Academy and I've had the pleasure of performing at a number of events in the city. I get very nervous when performing but have a sense of accomplishment once it's done.

I owe a great debt to my first instructor and Firefly's founder, Annie Dugan. Without her I would never have had these amazing experiences.



*Kaleido fundraiser  
Photographer: Bruce Patterson*

As a kid, I never dreamed of joining the circus and yet, here I am! I'm also immensely grateful to all the people I've trained with; they've lifted me up and kept me going and I'm so lucky to count them as my friends.

I'll close with a few frequently asked questions and fun facts:

- **What's your favourite apparatus?** *Silks! I find them very versatile and dramatic.*
- **Are silks really silk?** *No, they're typically Tricot or Polyester and are rated to withstand*

*the pressure we put on them.*

- **Do you use a net?** *No, but I do work with a safety mat.*
- **What other cool things have you done with Firefly?** *I've served sandwiches while suspended from the ceiling and poured wine while hanging upside down.*
- **Fun fact:** *One type of drop (a 'slack drop') can create enough friction to melt the silks and your clothes if you're not careful.*

*More photos on page 2*

More photos of Sheri Woo,  
from page 1



Multicorde  
Photographer: Bruce Patterson



City Hall performance  
Photographer: Bruce Patterson

## From the Editor

Submissions for *SEESA Shares* newsletter are increasing! I really appreciate hearing from everybody – comments, submissions and ideas are all welcome!

## Food and Garden Issue?

Are you interested in a couple of issues focusing on food and/or gardens?

We'd love to receive photos of your gardens, a favourite vegetable plant or perhaps a favourite recipe. It could be a favourite corner or pot? Or maybe a balcony garden?

Remember, we're publishing monthly, so keep things coming. We're all about sharing in *SEESA Shares*!

Contact me (Betty) directly at [marydean@telus.net](mailto:marydean@telus.net). I'd love to hear from you!

## SEESA publication dates

- *SEESA Shares* newsletter - the 15th of each month via e-mail blasts, the website, FB and Twitter;
- *SEESA's What's Happening* newsletter - the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month via email blast, the website, FB and Twitter;
- **Message from the Board** - the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month via email blast, the website, FB and Twitter.

## Can't Access SEESA's Library?

## Wanting Something to Read?

### ONCE LIBRARIES OPEN AGAIN:

The public library can set you up with a FREE library card and books will be delivered to you!

If a senior, or family member is looking for resources for a parent, or wants to take part in this program phone 780-496-7000 and you will be redirected to the Community Librarian in their area.

Check out the [Public Library](#).

**For help with  
your income  
tax call 211!**

## Drive Happiness

Drive Happiness serves many SEESA members.

Drive Happiness offers door-through-door transportation for seniors in Edmonton; it is ideal for lower income seniors with mobility challenges or limited access to transportation.

Contact Drive Happiness at 780-424-5438 or [info@drivehappiness.ca](mailto:info@drivehappiness.ca)

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## Want to Contribute to SEESA Shares?

We want SEESA Shares to be for you and about you.

You can help by sending your photos, art, stories or poetry. Share how you keep your creative juices flowing!

Send to Betty Dean at [marydean@telus.net](mailto:marydean@telus.net)

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## Want the latest info in print?

We realize not everyone gets to see or read our newsletters – *SEESA Shares* and *What's Happening*. If you would like to have a printed copy of either publication, please contact our office at 780-468-1985 and we will gladly print you out a copy. There is some really good information on members and the centre itself so let us know if you would like a hard copy.

# From JudyLynn Archer, Acting President

April 9, 2021

Hello SEESA members!

I wish I had good news for you today about re-opening but once again, to everyone's frustration, current Alberta Health measures are preventing us from setting a re-opening date.

Meanwhile, let's continue being careful. We do encourage saving vaccination documentation in case it is needed in the future.

## BUILDING TOMORROW TODAY

Over the next few months we will be hosting a number of ZOOM sessions to help us all feel inspired, engaged and confident about building our future - by first understanding our past.

These sessions will focus on understanding four key aspects of SEESA's brand:

- SEESA's history
- what sets SEESA apart from its competitors
- what is the personality of SEESA
- what does SEESA believe in

Participants will be drawn from the SEESA membership as well as a few members of our community who know SEESA but who have never joined. You will be kept informed as things progress and there will be a variety of ways for members to engage in this process.

## QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

The first quarter financial report will be posted at the end of April or early May.

## RENEWAL AND GIFT MEMBERSHIP DONATIONS

- 801 members have renewed their membership
- 216 gift memberships have been donated
- Total current membership: 1,017

***Hat's off to all the members who have donated Gift Memberships! These memberships will be awarded to 55+ members of the community who otherwise might not consider joining SEESA.***

# Gun Shots!

The summer of 2002 – Canadian summer that is – found me in Brazil. The job involved constructing a hydroelectric facility in the State of Matto Grosso, which, to many Brazilians, is regarded as the ‘Siberia’ of Brazil. To me, though, it was fine country, much like the prairies of Canada forty years ago - mostly dirt roads, dusty in dry weather, and almost impassible after a rainstorm. That, too, was reminiscent of the prairies when I was growing up.

Not too far away – one part actually visible from the jobsite – was the Pantonal, reputed to be the largest wetland area on earth. Even though visible from the jobsite, the Pantonal was too far away for some of its exotic animal residents such as crocodiles or pumas to venture as far as the jobsite, although some had seen pumas from time to time. Nevertheless, the exotic birds from that wetland area, such as Toucans, colorful Macaws and parrots could be seen in large numbers every day. Interestingly, great numbers of ostriches roamed about, too. Although not native to Brazil, they nevertheless thrived in the fields among the cattle and other animals. And we did have our share of various kinds of snakes, including Anacondas up to 28 feet long – and sometimes longer! For me, despite being prairie-like, it was a fascinating location.

The Matto Grosso region was largely agricultural. Farms and ranches of the area came Texas-size. Farms raised wheat,



*A 28-½ foot long anaconda caught in the basin of the dam area. Note a rather predominant lump in its middle; probably a capybara. The workers returned the big snake back to the river, unharmed.*

cotton, peas, and even pineapples, just to name a few of the products. Ranches, of course, ran cattle in huge numbers. A typical ranch or farm might own something like 600 square miles of land, and a typical ranch would run 60,000 or more head of cattle. Huge numbers of wild ostriches ranged everywhere. Part of our job ran through one of those huge cattle ranches, which at the time, was running something like 60,000 head of cattle. I was often able to observe the ranch activities as I went about the job each day.

One fine hot day in August, an incident occurred that rather gave me a scare, at first, anyway.

All expats on the job had been made well aware that we were in

a foreign country with a different culture, and there had been certain threats to our safety. Things were different here than expats had ever experienced in their respective home countries of Britain, Canada, and America. Already we had seen some evidence that gave credence to such concerns. First, there was the robbery, where the entire payroll of one of the subcontractors was stolen at gunpoint earlier in the summer just after the courier left the bank in Rhondonopolis. That was followed just a few weeks later by the hi-jack, again at gunpoint, of a cement truck just two miles up the road from the camp and office compound. The cement truck was one of many that delivered cement to the project from the nearest railhead at Goiania, more than 400

*Continued on page 5*

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*Continued from page 4*

miles to the east. The driver and passengers had been tied up by the hi-jackers, and dumped in a nearby swamp for the night.

Because of the long distances that truckers traveled in this part of Brazil, drivers often took their wives along on their trips. In this case, the driver's passengers included his wife and mother-in-law. They were little worse for their night in the swamp, but I expect it might have been an excruciating night for them with all the mosquitoes! One of our superintendents found them the next morning on his way to the job-site. He untied them and brought them to the camp.

We never saw the truck again. The company apparently had intercepted credible kidnapping threats against the expat staff, and considered the risk sufficiently serious to provide a security fence, complete with armed guards, around our camp that backed onto the jungle. All that was somewhat ominous, and perhaps we had become overly concerned, and maybe just a bit jittery.

On that day in August, I was sitting in my little clapboard office, working at the computer. As was my usual practice, taking advantage of the cooler temperatures of early morning, I had already been out, starting at six o'clock, walking the job to assess the progress of the night shift, and getting the day shift crews organized for the day. Now, as the day was heating up to an uncomfortable level, I was back in the office enjoying the air-conditioned space, doing job-related



*Seemingly endless herd of cattle being driven past our office.*

paperwork. I would go out later in the day and walk the job one more time before the day shift ended. Then, one more time again to get the night shift organized. So far, it was just another normal day on the job. I had been on the project for a few months, and, despite the many 'threats', real or imagined, I was quite enjoying the job.

Then, it seemed all that was about to change. Suddenly from somewhere outside, I heard what sounded like gunfire! Pop! Bang! Crack! Staccato bursts from close by that sounded like a gunfight. That got my attention! What was that?

A chill ran down my spine. Were we finally under attack by that group of kidnappers that the company was so concerned about? That was my first thought. What should I do? I decided that my

best bet was to step outside where I could at least see where the gunfire was coming from, and perhaps have a good chance of running in the opposite direction! At least that seemed better than hiding in my office, where they could sneak up and trap me in that small space, and where I would have no place to run. The thought of trying to hide under my desk just didn't appeal to me. I stepped out into the baking sunlight to face up to whatever it was, and to quickly decide which way I should be running!

Much to my relief, though, it wasn't gunfire after all. The bangs and pops continued, but instead of guns it was the crack of bullwhips. A crew of vaqueros (Brazilian cowboys), riding mules, was driving a huge herd of several thousand

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*Continued on page 6*

*Continued from page 5*

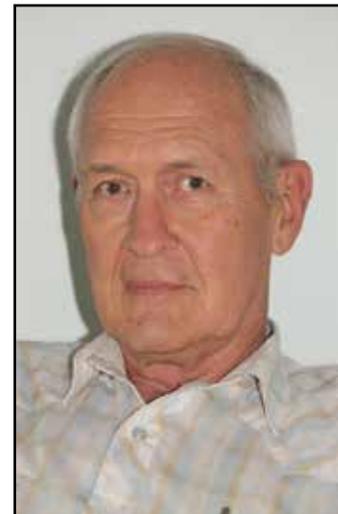
head of cattle along the dusty road that went by our office, apparently moving them to another pasture somewhere up the road. They were expertly cracking their long braided-rawhide bullwhips to keep the cattle moving along. I was relieved to learn that we weren't under a kidnapping threat after all, and it didn't look as though I would have to run anywhere. Still, as an old ranch hand myself from way back, I was fascinated by the huge herd of cattle, and cowboys riding mules. Despite the heat, and the dust that the herd was kicking up, I continued to watch them go by. It took over an hour for the entire herd and the cowboys to pass by. Then, I went back to my office to resume what I was doing before I heard those first 'gunshots'.

W.H.B.  
Matto Gosso, Brazil  
Feb., 2017

## **Tested Positive for COVID-19 and Need Support?**

If you or someone you know has tested positive for COVID-19 and you need information and support in your home language, please contact the multilingual emergency response centre at 1-833-738-7727 (toll free). COVID-19 support and information is now available in 31 languages. Support for food, space for isolating, counselling and other basic needs is available.

Walt Butler, author, grew up in rural Alberta, much of that time on ranches, including the family ranch owned by his father. He left ranching to become a pilot, and then attended university to become a civil engineer. As an engineer, he worked in the construction industry for 38 years on major construction projects all across Canada from the east coast to the west coast, and even the Arctic coast. He also worked in other countries such as the USA, South America, and China, where he lived for three years. Retiring in 2008, he continues to pursue his interests, including aviation, music, doing projects for his daughters and grandchildren, and, of course, writing. The author, along with his wife of 44 years, lives in Sherwood Park.



# Join the EPL Telephone Social!

Stories and fun events

You can listen live or to a replay afterwards

## Live Events:

Wed, March 17 at 10 am

Wed, April 21 at 10 am

Wed, May 19 at 10 am

## How?

Go to: [https://www.crowdcast.io/epl\\_presents](https://www.crowdcast.io/epl_presents)



## Questions?

Contact Meg at

[meg.deforest@epl.ca](mailto:meg.deforest@epl.ca)

or by phone at

587-983-2195



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epl.ca

# Time to Celebrate!

*We've missed celebrating together! I hope all of you take time to celebrate the connections in your lives!*

*Wishing you a year of health and happiness from your SEESA friends - Happy Birthday to the following members who are celebrating birthdays between April 15 and May 14:*

Dawn Aimoe  
Earl Anderson  
Ollie Antoniuk  
Susan Arsenault  
Hope Baalam  
George Bailey  
Joanne Ballance  
Helmut Baumert  
Robert Berube  
Dolores Bissonnette  
Dorothy Black  
Leona Block  
Len Bohuch  
Carol Borle  
Alison Boyd  
Frieda Buchholtz  
Joseph Budinski  
Kim Buehler  
Kay Bulmer  
Mary Bustin  
Cassie Ceilin  
Beatrice Ceretzke  
Bonnie Chinn  
Patricia Chobater  
Jenifer Christenson  
Alice Christian  
Cynthia Clarke  
Barry Clattenburg  
Elise Couture  
Suzanne Cuncannon  
Cheryl Danchuk  
Jim Doty  
Edna Downs  
Francoise Dreany  
James Drinkwater  
Marilyn Duguid  
Doreen Dunkley  
Phyllis Footz  
Elaine Ford  
Donna Fountain  
Charles Gachnang



Donna Gehmlich  
Rick Geisler  
Sophie Gieni  
Daryl Gray  
Heather Grimble  
Don Hansen  
Heather Harper  
Anne Harris  
Donna Harrison  
Allen Hasselgren  
Carol Holmberg  
Edith Howard  
Thanh Hua  
Wayne Jensen  
Elizabeth Jensen  
Soren Jensen  
Phadoung Kakulphimp  
Jocelyne Kakulphimp  
Cheryl Kaminski  
Nancy Kardash  
William Kidd  
Peter Koladich  
Alfred Kolenosky  
Muriel Kuchison  
Marlene Kurt  
Maryanne Kuzio  
Caren Lang

Ben Lauber  
Julie Law  
Lorna Lee  
Lillian Limberger  
Dee Litke  
Florence Lucas  
Edward Lyka  
Barbara Lyon  
Valerie MacDonald  
Faye MacDonald  
Duncan Macdonald  
Joan MacGregor  
William Manson  
Eunice McClure  
Evelyn McCracken

Martin Molzan  
Cornelia Moritz  
Paige Nelson  
Mary Lou Nicol  
Nancy Olson  
Arlene Ostrosser  
Leona Oxamitny  
Mossie Pappé  
Marian Piekema  
Victor Poulin  
Emilia Quibell  
Laurel Redfern  
Jill Redpath  
Rose Rosychuk  
Lonnie Ruecker  
Phyllis Schafer  
Ros Schell  
Barry Scheuerman  
Shawn Schmidt  
George Skaley  
Daniel Smith  
Bonnie Smith  
Noreen Soneff  
Betty Sparling  
Leslie Stephenson

*Continued on page 8*

Continued from page 7

William Tkachuk  
John Tyler  
Doreen Underschultz  
Carole Valens  
Larry Verbitsky  
Glen Walker  
Hazel Walker  
Trudy Watson  
Frances Webster  
Jennie Whiteman  
Anne Wightman  
Sherrie Wilson  
Werner Wolf  
Louis Yakimishyn

## Our Pets

This is what Jasper, our previous Westie (West Highland White Terrier), looked like helping in the garden. (*Painted by Betty Dean, 2012*)



This is what our our current Westie, Bonnie, looks like when she helps!



## WOW - Check this out!



*Bench 'Haying in the 30's' by Mike Trudeau.*

Mike has lived in Northern Alberta all his life. He started carving about 7 years ago with small hand carvings. In this bench, he used pieces of 2 1/2" spruce slabs for the back rest and seat. Both ends are 26" spruce. The bench was carved with the intent to donate it as a fund raising piece and cancer support graciously accepted the offer.

# Home For The Honeymoon

**D**ick and I met in Saskatoon in 1956 and now live in Winnipeg as of autumn '56 to winter 1957. Dick is apprenticing as a machinist with C.N.R. I live in nurse's residence, working at Victoria Hospital on River Ave. My parents live on a small dairy farm far from the severe winter of Manitoba.

We plan to marry when summer arrives. Dick doesn't get much time off for holidays and neither do I. Money is minimal. One is required to be in the province for a period of time before obtaining a wedding license; a pre-marital blood test is also to be done. Flying to Ontario or returning to Saskatoon is too much of a hassle. We choose a United Church in Winnipeg, a couple to be witnesses, obtain the license, and are married July 20, 1957. We have a wedding lunch at the Paddock restaurant with three couples. These are our new friends rather than old friends in Saskatoon or Ontario. This seems a fair way to start a new life together.

It is a wonderful, hot, summer, day. Off we go in our 1954 navy blue Ford with no fear of the future. We are on our way. Thief River Falls, in Minnesota, is our first over night stop. Since we haven't spent much time in the bedroom while dating this seems like a long drive on our first day of wedded bliss.

Dick loves to drive and since he is a machinist, does his own car maintenance. I feel good about this. I'm confident that the car is fit for the trip and if there are any problems

on the road he'll know what to do. My own brother and father are not so handy with machinery.

A few days down the road I'm surprised that I can't find my white high heel wedding shoes.

"Dick have you seen my white high heel shoes?"

"No, where do you think you had them last?"

"Well, the suitcases were already packed and in the car when I changed into my sandals so I stuck them in a white plastic bag and shoved them in a corner in the trunk."

"Gee, I don't know we'll check when we stop for gas."

On we go, passing many lakes, forests and quaint little villages. Then it's time to stop for gas.

*Dick grew up in Saskatoon and has never seen any of the Great Lakes. I have only seen Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. We are both very impressed with Lake Superior, this vast body of water that looks like an ocean.*

"Now let's have a look in the trunk" Dick announces as he lifts the lid.

"Where about do you think you put them?"

"Right over there in the left hand corner."

"Well that was a dumb place to put them. I grabbed that bag yesterday and it felt like old oil bottle nozzles so I threw it in the garbage."

"That was stupid. Why would you throw it away without looking inside?" Those were my dress shoes. They cost twenty bucks and I'll need them when we get home."

"Well, they're gone now and I can't do anything about it"

The picnic road stops by brooks and little waterfalls are a welcome break. The motels and small cabins are fresh, new, and smartly decorated.

We are now driving in a long stretch of forest in Northern Michigan.

"Show me on the map where we are." Dick demands.

"I don't know exactly where we are. We're on the same road we started on this morning in the middle of the woods in Michigan."

"Well, if you can't read a map any better than that you may as well throw it out the window."

This is annoying. What good is a map if there is just one highway and you are on it in the middle of the woods in Michigan? I think, "O.K." and I roll down the window and throw the map out.

"What did you do that for? I didn't

*Continued on page 9*

really mean you should throw the map a way. Now we have no map.”

“That’s too bad. That’s what you said and that’s what I did.”

Soon we are driving close to the shores of Lake Superior. Dick grew up in Saskatoon and has never seen any of the Great Lakes. I have only seen Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. We are both very impressed with this vast body of water that looks like an ocean.

The ferry ride across the Straits of Mackinaw is a new and exciting experience for both of us. I think of the old song “Cruising down the River” This is our honeymoon cruise.

As we get closer to home there are gently rolling green pastures, small herds of black and white Holstein cattle, and large elm trees. I can feel a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes. The small orchards, well kept lawns, red barns, and old trees remind me of my folks on the farm. I’m tired of prairies and forests.

“It really is pretty here and we’ll soon be there.” Dick says as he pats my knee and I move closer for a hug.

We find Highway 59, drive through the little town of Norwich, where I attended high school. Seven miles more and we pass by the Lombardy poplar and into the driveway.

Sam, the collie dog, was the first to greet us. Mom and dad then welcomed us with a mix of joy and apprehension. They must have been fretting over what sort of person I

was bringing home. During the welcoming we finally arrive at the little farm in southwestern Ontario.

Dad says, “So this is your boyfriend Dick”.

“No, dad, this is my husband, Dick” I reply.

“Oh that’s right it just seems so different since this is the first time I’ve seen him.”

“You’re a tall, strong looking, young fella.” he adds, looking at Dick. Dad is 5’3, has dark hair, blue eyes, and is wearing a work shirt and denim bib overalls. Mom is 5’2, has dark hair, blue eyes and is wearing a pretty, homemade cotton dress.

Dick is 5’11, has light brown wavy hair and is wearing a light shirt and casual pants.

It is early afternoon so dad has time to show Dick around the farmyard before supper. Mom and I discuss the trip Dick and I have made driving from Winnipeg. We then catch up on the status of friends and neighbours. After supper we go to the barn to see the cows being milked with the milking machine. Dick and I go for a ride on the old workhorses, Queen and Una. We ride down the cow path to see the mud turtles in the pond. I tell him old stories about growing up on the farm.

Later we settle in a cozy bedroom upstairs. The flannelette sheets have that great outdoor aroma but feel as though they have been taken off the clothesline before they are really dry. Then we realize it is the humidity

that is in this part of the country. The next day my brother Ralph, his wife, Marion, and their four children, ages five years to ten months, come for chicken supper, topped off with a beautiful three tier wedding cake.

Friday night there is a wedding shower for us at the Teeterville Hall. It’s open invitation to all friends and neighbours in the district. Many of my school friends are there. There are gifts, lunch, plus round and square dancing to the music of a local band.

“You must do lots of square dancing since you’re from the west.” exclaims my friend Myrna as she grabs Dick’s hand.

“Not really, you’ll have to teach me.” he replies as they join a group.

Dick is quickly doing the promenade and dosado for the very first time.

by *Thelma Lorentz*

*Dick and Thelma are still married and thankful to have each other during these lockdown times. Thelma has been a member of SEESA since 1985. She was active in Keep Fit when Marion Redge was teaching and used a live pianist for music. In fact, Thelma took a program through the City of Edmonton to train to teach Keep Fit to seniors as a volunteer. She did this for a while and until the city decided due to liability issues that instructors should be paid. It took a long time for Dick to become a member because he never felt he was old enough; this sounds so familiar.*

## Our Pets

Thanks to Marg Daly, SEESA's new choir director for The Melody Singers, for sharing these photos. Some of our members enjoyed following these puppies through virtual visits.



*Marj with Lizzy and her parents Joey and Caydee*



*The litter of five puppies that Marj's dog Lizzy birthed on November 26. Photo taken January 1 as they peacefully slept upside down to start the new year! Marj and her housemate Helen were very busy as doggie grandparents for about 10 weeks, but the puppies are now in their forever homes in Toronto, Kelowna, Saanichton, and Edmonton.*

## Welcome Home



- Accommodation for adults age 65+
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# Edmonton Transit Changes

On April 25, 2021, Edmonton Transit is launching its new bus network and On Demand Transit service, which means all bus routes across the city are changing. For many seniors, this may affect how they visit friends and family, as well as go to medical appointments, grocery stores and recreational activities.

The new bus network will provide a better experience for customers by offering different types of routes to meet various travel needs. The bus stops are all within five to seven minute walking distance for the majority of customers. There are nine new community bus routes that go to nearby shopping and amenities with closer bus stops.

Starting March 17, a trip planner will be available on [edmonton.ca/newbusroutes](http://edmonton.ca/newbusroutes) so residents can plan their new trips in the new bus network and see how their transit travels will change. Members with smartphones can also use third-party tools like Transit app or Google Maps. By mid-April, there will also be printable route brochures that your members can print and download.

On Demand Transit service will be available at 16 large seniors' residences that won't have their current community bus route starting April 25, as well as 37 neighbourhoods around the city. On Demand Transit will provide accessible shuttle bus service that will take customers to and from a nearby transit hub where they can connect to the regular transit network. Customers simply need to book a ride up to 60 minutes in advance to access this service, seven days a week. Trip booking tools for On Demand Transit will be ready for viewing in mid-April. More information is available at [edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit](http://edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit).

**Remember, existing bus routes and schedules do not change until April 25, 2021.**

**Join us May 5 @ 10 am for a ZOOM FYI – Register [here](#)**

**Info Session** - ETS New Bus Network and On Demand Transit - The new bus network is an important step in modernizing Edmonton's transit system for our growing city. This session will provide an overview of transit changes that launched on April 25 - the new bus network with new bus routes citywide and the On Demand Transit service that is available for 37 communities and 16 seniors residences. Find out more about these changes and the transit information and trip planning options and resources available to help you make the best use of the new routes and services.

# Thanks Judy Ashton!



*Judy Ashton with her handmade zipper pulls. While staying home Judy has been making these beaded beauties which she sells - donating the proceeds to SEESA. Much appreciated!*

## **1ST CHOICE YEAR ROUND HOME & YARD MAINTENANCE**

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# Determination

Erich headed for one of his favorite fishing spots, Hasse Lake, just west of the city. As he pulled his van into the parking area he saw several ‘regulars’ already lined up on the long wooden pier undergirded with vinyl pontoons.

The air was still warm, the sun high, tall trees showing off their dark green foliage of late summer.

The fish were biting that morning, a good sign. He saw that some of the fishermen had placed their catch on a chain hanging in the water to keep the fish cold and fresh. Once Erich settled into place with his gear at his feet and his rod in hand, the fellows greeted him with a concern.

“Look at that loon,” they pointed. While it was not uncommon to see the graceful black and white birds on the water, this bird appeared to be behaving in a strange manner. “She is coming to the pier to steal the fish on the chain.”

Erich watched the bird, all the while thinking about what he knew about loons. They were skilled swimmers that chose to nest very close to the water to avoid walking on legs that were placed far back on their bodies. Their webbed feet and wings worked together to make them skilled divers in search of fish, crustaceans, and other aquatic fauna.

‘So why would this loon steal fish from the fishermen?’ Erich contin-

ued to ponder the situation as he drove home.

For several consecutive days, he returned to the site. The loon came close to the pier. He threw a small fish to the loon who swallowed it readily. When he threw a larger fish, she struggled to get it down. Binoculars in hand, Erich noticed that the loon had something shiny around her head. On closer inspection, he concluded it was fishing line.

Not only was the line twisted around her head but it also entered her beak. The feeding ritual continued for several days as Erich considered how he could help

this loon who swam to the pier as soon as he saw Erich arrive. Initially, Erich simply threw the fish about five feet to the awaiting loon. Then he decided to try a new tactic.

When he cast his line with a fish attached to the hook, the loon snatched the fish, holding it firmly in his beak. Erich reeled the line in till the loon was close enough to capture.

Catching a bird whose wings are flapping the water in frantic repetitions is no simple feat. The loon released her lunch and retreated.

Undaunted, Erich repeated his cast-

ing using a fish for bait. Once the loon calmed herself, she returned, locked her beak around the fish, and allowed herself to be drawn to the pier where the futile ritual of grabbing for the frantic loon ended in frustration for both Erich and the loon.

Erich, determined to solve this problem, sought the assistance of a local fisherman equipped with a fishing net. After a few unsuccessful attempts, Erich asked his companion to hold the net as deep under the water as he could. The



net in place, Erich cast out his line with the fish attached. The loon responded and swam closer to the pier, all the while turning her head from side to side looking for

any danger.

Her eyes, focused for a moment on her meal, did not notice the net under the water’s surface. With both hands gripping the net’s handle, Erich’s helper scooped the loon into the net while Erich gripped the bird.

First the fishing line was cut and untangled from the bird’s head then with slow gentle movements pulled from the bird’s throat. Two lead weights were attached to the line down her throat. Strong but gentle hands stroked the lightweight loon

*Continued on page 15*

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Continued from page 14

as she was untangled from the fishing net and released into the water.

The loon swam away from the pier with haste and disappeared into the area where the fishermen thought her nest was located. Erich smiled, satisfied with the outcome of his long-time connection with the loon.

Two hours later, his eyes filled with tears when the loon swam into sight with her baby following. He watched as the mother gave diving lessons to her young one.

Climbing into his van at the end of the day, Erich heard the haunting call of the loon drifting across the lake. Shivers ran down his spine as he realized the determined loon, in addition to looking after her own feeding needs, had also been caring for her dependent baby.

A true story experienced by Erich Kleinke of Sherwood Park Alberta.

*Written by Marjorie Zelent*

From *The Past, the Present, and the Words Between*;  
Minerva Creative Writers, 2013.

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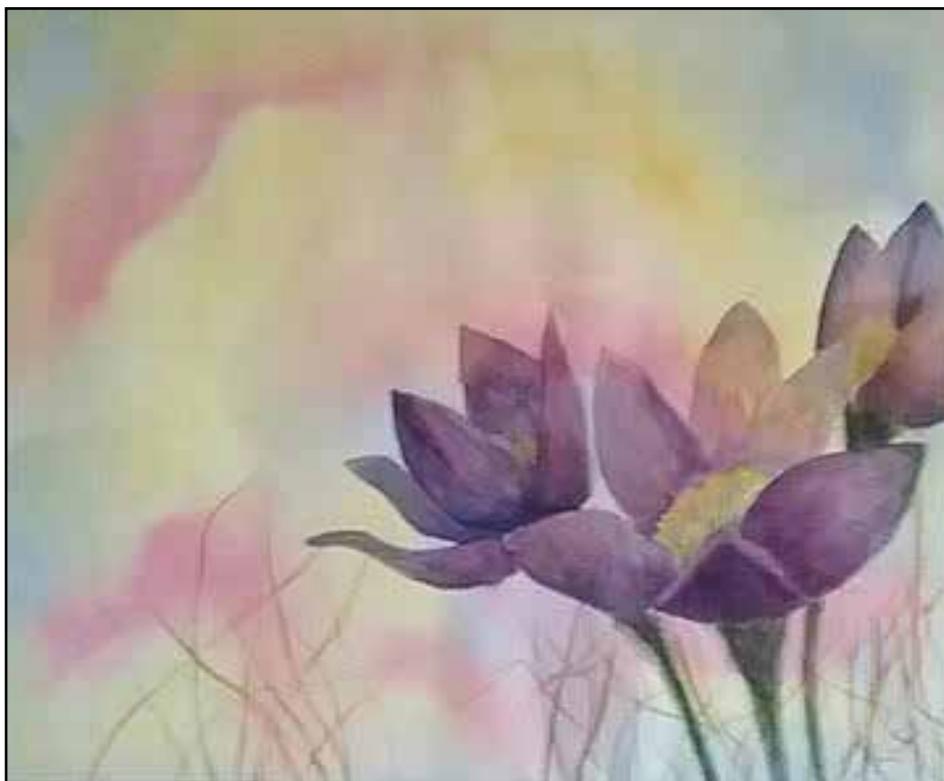
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## From Nancy Graves



*'Welcome Spring'*

Watercolour by Nancie Graves done during workshop at Strathcona Art Society, instruction by Margaret Klapstein, early in the winter.  
Completed just minutes before the last lockdown!

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## SENIORS HOME SUPPORTS PROGRAM

SENIORS HOME SUPPORTS PROGRAM (SHSP) is a referral service to help seniors remain in their homes a little longer.

We provide 3 to 4 names and numbers of vetted and screened service providers who want to work with seniors. ***This is NOT a free service.***

At this time of year, we have service providers looking for new clients for yard clean up and seasonal lawn mowing. Others can help with window washing and eaves trough cleaning. We also have tradesmen and handymen who can help with

all those exterior jobs that need to be done in the milder weather.

If you live in the T6A, T6B, T6C, T6E or T6P areas, please phone Deborah at 780-468-1985 ext 260 to be referred to service providers in this area.

If you live elsewhere in the city of Edmonton, please phone 211 to be redirected to the appropriate district.

*Deborah Miville*  
*Seniors Home Supports Program*  
*Coordinator*  
*SE District*

Finding Balance

# Seniors Week Webinar

Thursday, June 10, 2021  
10:00 am - 11:00 am

## Working Together:

Supporting older adults eye health and overall health. It's all connected!

The Injury Prevention Centre presents  
**Dr. Jason Pearce, Optometrist**

Learn how an optometrist uses an eye exam to look at the tissues and structures inside the eye to catch early signs of eye disease and to also look for early signs of serious medical conditions.

Whether it's a new or pre-existing condition an optometrist can help with patient management. You'll also learn the significant role vision plays in falls prevention, one of the leading causes of seniors' hospital visits, and what you can do to help reduce the incidences. There are many considerations that impact senior vision and eye health.

Optometrists are there to help.

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Prevent Falls.

[findingbalancealberta.ca](http://findingbalancealberta.ca)

Finding Balance is a seniors' falls prevention initiative developed by the Injury Prevention Centre at the University of Alberta.

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