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quick reference

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STAYING CONNECTED

THE CHERRYHILL COMMUNITY BUS

For Judy Riley, the Cherryhill community bus represents much more than transportation – it provides a lifeline to the stores and services she uses regularly.

Riley has taken the community bus once a week for the last four years. She checks out the weekly specials at the Real Canadian Superstore on Oxford Street West and she also buys food for her grey tabby cat, George, at a nearby veterinary clinic.

The bus gives her mobility and independence. “It means the world. I’d be lost without it,” Riley says. “I couldn’t get from here to there. I don’t use the city buses too often.”

Riley believes the service is ideal for people like herself who can’t drive. Many riders are regulars who take the bus to Cherryhill Village Mall, and to Westmount Shopping Centre, Masonville Place and the Superstore.

Larry Ducharme, general manager of the London Transit Commission, says the Cherryhill community bus service is the only one of its kind in the city. It was launched in 1996 to serve the needs of the 2,800 residents who live in Cherryhill Village. The bus makes

between 25,000 and 28,000 passenger trips annually.

Users of the service designed the route and the travel pattern. “We meet with them every two years to make sure that where the bus is going on the respective days is, in fact, what the majority of them need,” Ducharme says.

The buses collect passengers outside each Cherryhill apartment building and drop them off at set destinations, including at the rear entrance of the Cherryhill Village Mall. Six to 10 drivers regularly sign for the community bus route, Ducharme says.

Marlene Green has used the bus since April after giving up her car. She says the drivers are always kind and courteous to riders, many of whom need help getting on and off the bus.

“They treat everyone with kindness and respect and they’re so good and helpful with the seniors, with their walkers and their carts. If their carts are heavy, the drivers lift them down for them. The drivers are just super. They make it fun to take the community bus.”

For details of the routes and schedule, visit www.ltconline.ca or call (519) 451-1347. ■

Ageing Well in London...



Many seniors have recognized for years that London is a great place in which to age. It just so happens the World Health Organization (WHO) agrees.

In June, London became the first Canadian municipality to earn the Age-Friendly City designation from WHO, which aims to make communities better, healthier and safer places for older adults.

The designation was awarded after the city launched a volunteer working group, chaired by city controller Gina Barber, in 2008 to evaluate London's age-friendliness. WHO considers eight elements in judging a city's age-friendly merits, including public spaces, transportation, housing, and community support and health services. The working group's mandate was to determine how well the city was doing in each area and to create a plan for improving specific areas.

"An age-friendly city tends to be friendly to people of all ages," says Barber. "You're looking at things like, do you have enough time to get across the street before the light changes? Are the things that you need relatively close by so you can walk to get them and you don't have to get in a car to deal with your basic needs on a daily basis."

From its research, the group produced a report based on input from participants who came from all walks of life. The

report found seniors enjoy living in London, appreciate the excellent health care, seniors centres and green spaces, and the ability to travel easily within the city and to feel safe.

Although many believe that housing is affordable, seniors are concerned about property taxes, particularly as their income dwindles. Barber says houses need to be adaptable so they can accommodate tenants or family members whose rent will supplement the income of seniors, who want to remain in their homes for as long as possible.

Respondents indicated that retirement homes should be located within communities where people have spent their lives, instead of on the periphery away from familiar landmarks, as well as friends and family. There is also a need for affordable, and not just high-end, options.

Improving London's age-friendly attributes is increasingly important. The city's population has grown by less than one per cent per year in the last decade, but the number of people over age 60 has swelled by 22 per cent during that time. This trend is expected to continue as more of the baby boomers enter their 60s, Barber says.

Copies of the report are available on request by calling (519) 661-2500 or online at: www.london.ca/Seniors/pdf/afl-report.pdf. ■

... and in Cherryhill Village

Cherryhill Village is an excellent example of an age-friendly community, says Dr. Marita Kloseck, director of the School of Health Studies at the University of Western Ontario and a member of the age-friendly city working group.

The community responds to the changing needs of individuals as they age. Its strong social component includes dining programs, coffee hours and a 700-member seniors social club that hosts a range of events.

"What they have that you often don't see in other apartment complexes is a really strong sense of community and really strong social networks," Kloseck says. "Everyone is supportive of everyone else and there's a wonderful sense of community."

One of Cherryhill's attractions is its proximity to downtown London and to University Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital, as well as health and social services such as the Community Care Access Centre and Chelsey Park Retirement Community on Oxford Street. Cheshire, which operates from 120 Cherryhill Place, is a non-profit organization that helps residents with physical disabilities live independently.

Kloseck says the design of the community benefits residents since it integrates residential and commercial space within walking distance. Cherryhill Village Mall offers key services, including a grocery store, a pharmacy, a family doctor, a post office and a bank.

Public transit and a community bus service provide regular transportation. Walking paths, mature trees, large expanses of green space, and garden plots help residents stay fit and active. Even the outdoor swimming pool is equipped with a ramp for accessibility.

"You couldn't ask for a better design for older people," Kloseck says.

Jean Firth agrees. She and her husband, Don, have lived in Cherryhill Village since 1975.

"We have wonderful neighbours on our floor. They're all so good and so helpful, and everybody helps each other. Of course, we've been here so long, I think we know every-body," Firth adds. ■

tip STRIP

Add Zest to Your Meals!

Making meals interesting is challenging for most people, but with some advance planning and a few good shortcuts, anyone can transform a boring entree into one that's tasty and nutritious. Here are some quick and easy tips for adding zest to your meals:

1. Taste and presentation are key elements of an appetizing meal. If you're on a restricted diet, add fresh herbs, spices and lemon juice to improve the flavour. Fresh vegetables in a variety of colours will visually enhance any meal.

2. Eating with others adds a social component to meals and makes food taste better, particularly if you live alone. Collective kitchens are a great way to get together with others, try new recipes, cook, eat and socialize together. The Victorian Order of Nurses organizes a collective kitchen once a month in the activity centre at 190 Cherryhill Circle. For more information, call the Cherryhill Healthy Ageing Program at (519) 675-1355.

3. Make sure you have healthy snacks on hand, such as fruits and vegetables, as well as crackers and cheese. Snacking is a great way to maintain your energy levels.

4. For days when you don't feel like cooking an entire meal, pick up a prepared item – such as a roasted chicken – and prepare a simple soup or salad and a side dish of vegetables to accompany it. A well-balanced meal such as this can be prepared with little time or effort.

Source:
Mariam Assaf, BSc.
in nutrition
and food
sciences,
and a
volunteer in the
Cherryhill
collective
kitchen.

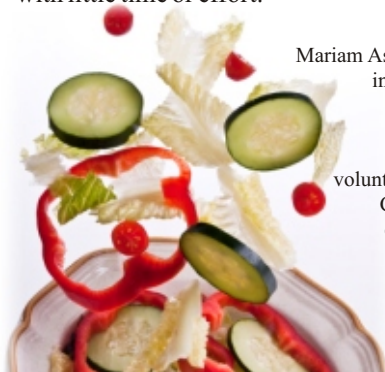


Photo
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James Beltraris

CHERRYHILL "PICS" Cherryhill *Fall* *Charity* *Bazaar* 2010



*Community
Spirit!*

Shoppers at Cherryhill Village Mall had an opportunity to learn more about London's registered charities at the Fall Charity Bazaar, held Sept. 24-25. The event gives 20-plus local charities exposure, as well as a venue to raise funds and sell hand-made goods. Esam Group hosts the event twice annually at no cost to the charities that participate.

Be sure to attend the Spring Charity Bazaar in April! ■



Above: Shoppers showing their support at the various charity group tables at the September Charity Bazaar.

SAM'S STORY

HOW ONE MAN'S LIFE CHANGED AN ENTIRE COMMUNITY



Sam Katz

Some people are embittered after undergoing traumatic, life-changing experiences. Others learn from them and use them to benefit the people around them.

Sam Katz did the latter.

Sam, co-founder of Cherryhill Village, was a Holocaust survivor. Originally from Bentina, Slovakia, located near the Hungarian border, he spent five years in work camps in Hungary and Austria, and at the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria.

In 1945, when Sam was 28, the camp was liberated by the Allies. Sam and one of his sisters were the only members of their family to survive the Second World War and the death camps at Mauthausen and Auschwitz.

Despite his experiences, he was never embittered, recalls Harvey Katz, Sam's son and a property manager with Esam Group.

"He has always felt if it wasn't for the Allies who liberated him, he would have been dead for sure. I remember my dad saying he did not blame the German people for the Holocaust, he blamed the Nazis. He said being German is just what you were born, but being a Nazi is a choice. He never looked to blame a nationality."

Sam returned to his home, but had to be hospitalized for several months because of his extreme weight loss. Once he recovered, he immigrated to Canada in 1949.

"He loved this country," Harvey says.

Sam worked on a farm in Saskatchewan for two years to satisfy immigration requirements and later moved to Winnipeg and then Hamilton. It was in Hamilton where he was introduced to his future wife and he moved to London to marry her.

"He was 37 when he got married because of all the disruptions in his life," Harvey recalls.

Sam started off as a home builder, then met Ewald Bierbaum and the two friends launched Esam Group.

Harvey says his father didn't want to become bitter after his experiences. Instead, he chose to be a loving person.

"After the war he said, 'I'm going to make sure that whatever I do to other people will be loving. I want to contribute to the well-being of others.' That became his drive in life, to not hurt people, to not take advantage of people."



The annual Remembrance Day ceremony will be held on Thurs., Nov. 4 at 10:45 a.m. in the food court at Cherryhill Village Mall. Reverend Frank Mantz will conduct the half-hour service, which will include readings and music provided by piper Ian McCrae and bugler Bob Clark.

The ceremony honours the veterans who live in Cherryhill Village, as well as the men and women who served in Korea, Cyprus, Afghanistan and other areas throughout the world.

Below are images from the 2009 Remembrance Day ceremony.

