

ANNUAL REPORT

For Fiscal Year

2007 - 2008

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NWT Seniors' Society

MANDATE

“Dedicated to promoting the independence and well-being of older citizens through the provision of programs and services in partnership with responsible government departments and other organizations.”

Description of NWT Seniors' Society

The NWT Seniors' Society is a non-profit group incorporated since 1983. We provide information and act as a resource for seniors and elders across the NWT. We encourage independence and the enhancement of quality of life. We promote awareness of the needs and rights of all seniors and elders. The NWT Seniors' Society is the only voluntary agency representing the interest of all seniors and elders in the NWT.

There is an opportunity for seniors/elders from across the NWT to become a member of the Board of Directors. Depending on the funding available, the Board of Directors meet at least twice per year, usually in Yellowknife. The office for the Society is located in Yellowknife.

The NWT Seniors' Society received project funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories, Health & Social Services, Sport North, and NWT Housing Corporation, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. In 2007/08 fiscal year, there was one full time staff, the Executive Director, and a part-time Director, Policy & Program Development as well as a part-time Program Coordinator for the Arctic Ambassador Program.

The Society's longest running program is the 1-800 Seniors' Information Line. This is one-stop Information Line for all seniors and elders in the NWT. The Line helps to access information about pensions, housing, health benefits, seniors' benefits, health concerns, safety, homecare and personal care concerns. The line is available from 8:30 to 4:30 from Monday to Friday.

A very important function of the work conducted by the NWT Seniors' Society is to serve in an advisory capacity to governments at all levels. This was established jointly in April 1995 by the NWT Seniors' Society and the Department of Health and Social Services. It enables seniors and government representatives to review programs and policies that affect the well-being of NWT seniors and elders.

The Board of Directors acts as a resource to other organizations and groups in the NWT. This resource is enhanced by the connections made by the community representatives who volunteer their time on the Board of Directors. The Board members are a conduit for information and sharing for individuals and groups who have specific community concerns.

In 2007/08, a new program, the Arctic Ambassador Program, began to provide services to tourism and business travelers at the Yellowknife Airport. A group of 20 volunteers greet those travelers who arrive at the airport during the morning flights. The program is sponsored by the City of Yellowknife and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Over the next few years, the Society plans to implement this program through various locations across the NWT with support and sponsorship from the Government of the NWT and local tourism and community organizations.

We have a resource library on many topics of interest to seniors/elders and a website, which is sponsored by Genesis Group and Tamarack Computers, in Yellowknife.

There are many local community seniors/elders groups across the Northwest Territories. There are seniors groups in Fort Resolution, Hay River, Fort Smith, Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, and elders groups in Tulita, Fort Good Hope, Inuvik, Deline, Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik, Sachs Harbour and Paulatuk. This is not a complete list but some of these groups are represented on the Board of Directors to help keep the lines of communication open between the seniors and government departments who provide programs and services.

If you are 50 years of age or older, you can become a member of the NWT Seniors' Society when you purchase a regular membership which is currently \$10.00. This gives you voting privileges. If you are between the ages of 16 and 49, you can become an Associate Member for \$10.00 but you do not have voting privileges.

Group memberships for organizations and groups whose objectives are compatible to the objectives of the NWT Seniors' Society and whose major activities are with and for seniors citizens are also available for \$25.00 per year.

President's Message

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all the Board Members who participated in the work of the NWT Seniors' Society. The expertise, experience and talents which the Board Members bring to the Society have moved the Society forward this past fiscal year. I want to thank all the Board Members for their active participation. The Board Members this year were:

Blake Lyons, Treasurer, Yellowknife,
Beatrice Campbell, Past-President, Fort Smith
NWT Representative, Canadian Network
on the Prevention of Elder Abuse
Co-Chair, Volunteer NWT
Eileen Collins, Vice-President, Hay River
25th Anniversary Celebration Committee
Terry Villeneuve, Secretary, Fort Resolution,
Review Committee, New Horizons for Seniors Funding
Residential School Committee
Volunteer NWT (Alternate)
Florence Barnaby, Director, Aklavik
Lillian Elias, Director, Inuvik
Suicide Prevention Training Curriculum Committee
Jean Gruben, Director, Tuktoyaktuk
Issues & Concerns Committee – Home Care Program

The Board of Directors met several times and had teleconference meetings throughout the fiscal year. We had a strategic planning session, facilitated by Lois Little in January, 2008. This was a very worthwhile exercise in reviewing our present priorities and setting the course for the next couple of years.

Each year an enormous amount of time and effort is spent in securing the financial resources to permit the Society to fulfill the mandate and operate in an efficient manner. This year was no exception due to budget restraints and the capacity of government departments who work for seniors to transfer the funding in a timely manner. This reflects on our ability to be responsive to the demands placed on our programs and services.

The Society was successful in launching a new program this fiscal year. The service is provided by volunteers and is called "the Arctic Ambassador Program" The purpose of the program is to represent Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories in a positive manner and to promote a commitment to provide the best of services possible to the public.

The program started on March 15, 2008 with 8 volunteers working a three-hour two person morning shift. The number of volunteers has risen to 20 and the plan is to start a late evening shift in the near future.

The response from travelers has exceeded expectations, particularly in the demand for information materials. Travelers have spoken positively about the contact with the Arctic Ambassadors.

Due to the success in Yellowknife, we are planning to expand the program to the Hay River Museum where seniors already interact with the travelers who stop in Hay River.

This year we continued the planning and coordination of the Canada 55+ Games program. This program has grown substantially since it was started in 2003. There were over 100+ seniors, 55+, interested in being involved in the program. The Games this year will be held in August in Dieppe, NB. We are looking forward to a good number of medals coming back to the NWT following these Games.

It has been a great year. I am pleased to be part of the NWT Seniors' Society and happy that we have an organization here in the NWT that has served seniors for 25 years. I want to extend my thanks to the staff for their continued efforts and hard work on behalf of seniors.

I look forward to helping the seniors of the NWT as we continue for another 25 years because the Society has a great and wonderful future here in the NWT.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Wilson, Fort Simpson

Executive Director's Report

I want to thank the Board of Directors for their continued support for me as your Executive Director. It is wonderful to be here again in Yellowknife for these meetings. This is a most exciting time as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Society.

This past fiscal year the work at NWT Seniors' Society was enhanced with the addition of Dale Thomson, working part time as Director, Policy and Program Development. For the first time since the Society opened the offices in 1995, we have an Orientation and Policy Manual thanks to Dale's skill and devotion to the task.

In addition to Dale's skills, I was fortunate to have Val Braden, Touchstone Studios, join the Society on contract to keep our accounting and auditing processes in order. Val has been a professional and competent addition to our Society.

During the first meeting of the Board of Directors in January, 2008, we reviewed our strategic plan with the help of Lois Little, Lutra Consultants. Lois helped us establish our goals for the next two to three years.

As in years past, it is wonderful to work with such a committed group of volunteers who are interested in making the lives of older adults in the NWT better by being there at the community level.

This year we are celebrating our 25th Anniversary as a Society. We hope you will join with us in this special recognition. There are many events planned for this evening and tomorrow. I want to thank the Board of Directors and look forward to working with those who are staying with us into next year as well as the new members coming in this year.

As we move forward, I look forward to a busy year with many new challenges.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Hood, Executive Director

Activities and Accomplishments

April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008

The members of the Board of Directors along with the Executive Director and Director, Policy & Program Development staff were very active in the following areas over the past year:

Administration:

Ongoing development of Board and Staff Policies for Operations Manual & Administrators Operations Manual;

Development of review of NWT Seniors' Society By-Laws with By-Law Review Committee;

Development of review on NWT Seniors' Society Web Site re-construction;

Development of NWT Seniors' Society Data Base construction;

Submission for registered charitable status to Canada Revenue Agency;

Review and reconstruction of office computer systems and backup programs;

Preparations and followup for Annual General Meeting and Public Information Sessions in Fort Smith, October, 2007;

Preparations for 25th Anniversary Celebrations and AGM in Yellowknife in 2008.

Ongoing Committees and Project Work:

Terry Villeneuve attended founding meetings of the NWT Residential Schools Committee;

Advancement of the NWT Seniors' Society Visual Identity Program

Participation in 2007 Intergovernmental Committee of Seniors by Tom Wilson

Construction of 2007 NWTSC/NWTSS contract discussions;

Construction of 2007 Audit report with accountant and auditor;

Attendance on behalf of NWTSS at 2007 Prospects North Conference;

Legislative liaison meetings with MLA's on NWT seniors issues;

Attendance and participation board representation on "Connect NWT" Board of Directors on getting seniors connected throughout the NWT;

Review and comment on GNWT budget and capital forecasts on seniors issues;

Attendance at Service Canada CPP/Pension/OAS/GIS amendment briefing seminars;

Participation in development of 2007 MACA "Get Active" Program;

Coordination of Team NWT at Canada 55+ Seniors' Games fund raising activities;

Development and coordination of 2007 Senior Citizens Week and Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2007;

Attendance and booth construction for 2007 Department of Education, Culture & Employment Client Service Officers training program launch;

Coordination of Service Canada materials and library for NWTSS client use;

New Projects and Special Committees/Conferences:

Development of NWT Seniors' Society Arctic Ambassadors Program with INAC and community partnership consultations;

Development and investigation of construction of 2007 Seniors' Forum;

Participation in ongoing Income Support Review and input to seniors and disabled persons program research with the Department of Education, Culture & Employment;

Terry Villeneuve and Dale Thomson attended the 2007 Graying Nations Conference in Edmonton;

Development of NWT Seniors' Society/Tele-Care Partnership Program to encourage seniors to use the Telecare Program;

Development of the NWT Seniors' Workforce Training Program discussions with the Department of Education, Culture & Employment;

Attendance at National Seniors' Council consultations to speak about raising awareness and programming specific to elder abuse in the NWT;

Presentation on NWT Seniors' Society work on elder abuse in the NWT at New Horizons Elder Abuse Awareness Committee meeting in Whitehorse;

Development of program partnership with NWT Smart Communities on Computers for Schools Program (Computers for Seniors);

Development of partnership on programs for seniors with NWT Salvation Army;

Attendance at GNWT Regional Learning Fair to represent seniors' activities after retirement;

Input on "Social Economy Research Network of Northern Canada" survey.

SENIORS' RESOURCE CENTRE

Suite 102, 4916 46th Street
Yellowknife, NT X1A 1L2
www.nwt seniors society.ca

We Open Doors For You!

Have a question?
Need a service?
Want an answer?

WE ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP!!!

Call the

SENIORS' INFORMATION LINE

920-7444

or toll free

1-800-661-0878

Service is provided by NWT Seniors' Society
with ongoing funding from
Department of Health & Social Services,
NWT Housing Corporation,
Sport North Federation, Government of the Northwest Territories;
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada,
Government of Canada