

SENIORS SAFETY COMMUNICATION NETWORK NEWSLETTER

| "The Police are the Community, and the Community are the Police." Sir Robert Peel |

What's New at South Cowichan Community Policing and Advisory Society?

- Meet the future of policing with our new **Vancouver Island University** fourth year criminology practicum students. Each student brings knowledge, enthusiasm, and an interest in community safety for seniors.
- Volunteers continue to step up for community safety and awareness about the dangers of excessive speeding. Welcome aboard to our new **Speed Watchers!**
- Visit the **Seniors Safety Communication Network** of our Facebook page, where you will find current information on issues such as fraud prevention, opportunities for social connection, community news for seniors, and safety awareness.

Seniors Helping Seniors Volunteer Profile: Dot Garbet

I volunteered for **Friendly Phones** at the start of the program with Shirley Walker, thinking that a morning chat with a lonely person in the community would be fun and enlightening. I was just newly widowed. I am now nearing 82, and may be requiring this service soon. The store-front location was handy for folks to drop in, which they did. The office



managers had good ideas, and I liked working with them all. My Monday morning job, after making the calls and reports, was to chart the week's calls so progress could be seen at a glance. I did other charts and manned the office until noon when other office staff replaced me.

Now, I make the calls from home, and report to the office and staff by email. This works very well, and I have been doing this on Mondays since COVID lock-

downs began in 2020. My clients have become personal friends who ask me "how I am" before I can ask them. **It's**

a good start to my day.

Cowichan Valley Newcomers Club

Are you new to the area? The Cowichan Valley Newcomers Club meets monthly in a welcoming and friendly environment. Visit cowichanvalleynewcomers.com for more information.

Funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program



Community Connection: Just a Phone Call Away with Friendly Phones

Do you live alone? Could you use a friendly phone call? Join our RCMP-sanctioned, free Friendly Phones program to connect with local volunteers who care about your well-being.

Flexible, confidential, and free, our caring volunteers are trained using the BC Community Response Network's It's Not Right and See Something, Say Something programs, which provide tools to identify signs of elder abuse and neglect.

We offer a **friendly voice, community connection, and peace of mind**. Give us a call at [250-929-7222](tel:250-929-7222) to find out more.

Watch this space for news about online workshops and webinars on topics such as fraud prevention and elder abuse awareness with our partners at **Seniors First BC, BC Community Response Network**, and the **RCMP**.

With more services going online, do you want to learn how to keep your private information secure? The GLUU Society can help! Contact gluusociety.org for information geared toward new users.

Community Tips to Prevent Elder Abuse

Elder abuse can take many forms: physical, psychological, financial, among others. It is a growing problem that often goes under-reported due to isolation, shame, and fear. Neglect from caregivers, as well as self-neglect, are also forms of abuse that can go unnoticed, especially during Covid-19 health measures where vulnerable populations are more isolated and dependent on others. While these health measures are designed to reduced the spread of Covid-19, there are fewer opportunities for social interaction where signs of abuse may be noticed by others in the community.

Perhaps the best protection a community can offer against elder abuse is **awareness**:

- Know the signs of abuse. A noticeable change in demeanour, personality, or pattern of behaviour can indicate an abusive or neglectful situation. A change in housing or finances are signs of potential abuse or neglect.
- Pay attention to significant life events that can trigger depression and self-neglect. Illness, the death of a spouse, or losing one's driver's license can lead to depression.
- Keep up to date on available resources for help. Confidential and knowledgeable help is available seven days a week at the Seniors Abuse and Information Line (S.A.I.L.) at 1866-437-1940. Visit seniorsadvocatebc.ca for more information.

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