

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Nancy Samuell

BY PAULA BOON

If you are a patron of Huntsville Public Library, Nancy Samuell's face is probably a familiar one.

"I love it at the library," says the part-time circulation clerk. "I've been there for over eight years now, and I enjoy the patrons so much," she says. "There's not a lot of time to chat, but I interact with lots of people and get to know them by name. I want everyone to feel welcome."

Samuell confesses to having a soft spot for seniors, young parents with their children, and teenagers.

Of the latter, she says, "There's so much potential there. They're at the part of their life where they're exploring different ideas and who they are as people."

That may be one of the reasons Samuell also leads the Huntsville High School Parent Council, although she has a different explanation: "I went to one too many meetings and ended up chair."

By the time kids are in high school, Samuell notes, they don't generally want their parents around too much.

"But research shows that when parents are engaged in their children's education, their children are more successful in school," she says. "Going to the school council was a good way to stay connected with the school and what was going on."

Samuell says she'd like to encourage more parents to join the group, which meets just five times a year.

"There's no fundraising involved. You can ask questions, find out what's happening, and put in agenda items you want to discuss with the principal," she explains. "Our next meeting is Thursday, Nov. 15 at 6:30 p.m. I hope some new people will come on out."

Volunteers would also be appreciated for the school's breakfast program. "It's just from 8:00 to 8:45 a.m. and you can choose how often you want to help," she says.

Samuell keeps busy in many other ways as well: one day a week she is the office administrator for an orthodontist's office; the book club she started with friends just celebrated its 10th anniversary; she team-taught a Nipissing University course until last year; and she volunteers at the Algonquin Theatre and for her lake association.

Born in North York, Samuell spent part of every summer at her family's cottage in Haliburton.

"I have always loved it there," she says.

After going to university in Guelph and working in Toronto and Ottawa, Samuell decided it was time to venture further afield. Then, while completing an MBA in Edmonton, she met her husband Brian and ended up staying 21 years.

She taught various management courses at a community col-

lege, but Samuell's main focus became her two sons, Neville and Lloyd.

"Once I had children I was determined to be there to enjoy them," she explains.

In spite of the distance, Samuell continued spending part of every summer in Haliburton. Finally, during one visit, she woke up in the middle of the night and thought, "That's what we need to do: move back."

Samuell realized she had missed the lakes and really wanted to be closer to her mother, two sisters and brother, who lived in Ontario.

She phoned her husband the next day. Luckily, he had begun training with the Canadian Securities Institute to be an investment broker, a career which could be pursued almost anywhere.

The couple explored the area around Haliburton and decided on Huntsville.

"We thought it was a vibrant, interesting community," Samuell says. They moved in May 1997, when the kids were 5 and 9.

It didn't take long for Samuell to get involved.

"I volunteered at my kids' school," she recalls, "and I joined the Newcomers' Club. It was a great way to meet people."

She says she is glad she and Brian chose Huntsville, adding, "I so enjoy the mix of people. There are so many talented people and such a variety. We are here to stay."

Samuell pauses, thinking of the journey that has led her to where she is. "You could say I came full circle," she says.



NANCY SAMUELL

It takes a village to fight Type 2 diabetes

BY DR. CHARLES GARDNER
SIMCOE MUSKOKA MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Preventing Type 2 diabetes takes more than the individual.

Rising rates of chronic diseases across Canada and more locally here in Simcoe Muskoka are not news. Recent headlines in national media like "Diabetes lurks in suburbs" and "Diabetes — the 21st Century Epidemic" are yet another reminder that chronic diseases like Type 2 diabetes are not only on the rise, but that there is a clear link between the disease, and diet and activity.

The concern is that Type 2 diabetes, and risk factors such as obesity, are being seen in younger adults, and for the first time, in youth and children. People with diabetes face an increased risk of many health problems such as heart disease, stroke, kidney problems and blindness, as well as a reduced

life expectancy. Diabetes and its complications are also an enormous drain on health-care dollars.

Type 2 diabetes is often referred to as "lifestyle" diabetes because of its close link to rising obesity rates and increasingly physically inactive behaviour. Unfortunately we know that our residents are not leading a lifestyle that will help them reduce their risk of Type 2 diabetes. In a 2005 national survey 41 per cent of Simcoe Muskoka residents 12 years of age and over reported being inactive.

We know that a lifestyle including daily physical activity combined with healthy eating helps to maintain a healthy weight and reduce risk of Type 2 diabetes, as well as other chronic diseases. But with our busy lives and an environment that has engineered activity out of our day-to-day routine, how easy is it to eat well and get moving?

Today's suburban neighbourhoods are not

designed with exercise in mind. Our neighbourhoods typically have streets with lots of crescents and circles that make it difficult for people to walk where they want to go. As well, they separate our homes from stores, offices, services and restaurants, making it difficult for people to shop or go to work without using their car. Our environments are not conducive to good health.

Action is needed to improve the environment we live in, and that includes policies at the local level and beyond that support healthy growth and development in children and the lifelong health of adults.

Government, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, community organizations and businesses, workplaces, health professionals and parents can take action to build healthy communities by supporting the creation of walkable communities and creating healthy

eating environments.

The health unit is currently working with local residents to increase their physical activity, improve their eating and reduce time spent in front of the screen through the Building Healthier Communities — to Prevent Diabetes Project, funded by the Canadian Diabetes Strategy — Community-Based Program (Ontario).

The health unit's Healthy Lifestyle Program is working with interested community partners to plan the various components of the project, which will be completed by March 31, 2008.

For more information about the project, how you can get involved in making a difference in your community, or on reducing your risk of Type 2 diabetes, contact Your Health Connection Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 721-7520 (1-877-721-7520) or check www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

Photographic Memory



PLAY TIME: These toys were recently gifted to Muskoka Heritage Place by a generous donor who has been playing with them for a very long time. A local woman has cherished and protected these items since she was a child 80 years ago. The toys are excellent examples of local social and cultural history.

Muskoka Heritage Place will add these items to the 30,000 others they protect and cherish. We are honoured to be entrusted with their care.

Anyone interested in donating items, photographs, charitable endowments or volunteer time to Muskoka Heritage Place is welcomed to apply. We have many varied areas of our operation; all require a passionate commitment to play.

A toy drive is taking place at The Cottage Bar and Grill on November 22, 2007 at a Business After Hours event of the Huntsville/Lake of Bays Chamber of Commerce. For more information, please call 705-789-4771, extension 21.



MUSEUM • VILLAGE • TRAIN
88 Brunel Road • Huntsville • 705-789-7576
www.muskokaheritageplace.org

Seeking junior citizen nominations

The Huntsville Forester is seeking nominations for the Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year Award.

Each year through the Ontario Community Newspaper Association, the Forester asks for nominations outlining the achievements of young leaders in our community. Any resident aged 6 to 17 is eligible for the award. Groups or individuals are may be nominated.

Nominations may come from anyone in the community who wants to recognize a young person's contributions. Parents/guardians must sign a release.

Nominations should document the activities of the nominee with letters, newspaper clippings, recommendations, etc. Each nomination must have at least two supporting nomination forms attached. Nomination paperwork is available at the

front desk of the Forester office.

Nominations will be accepted up to Dec. 28, 2007.

Up to 12 individuals and one group will be recipients of an award. Recipients and their families are invited to attend the awards ceremony in the spring.

All nominees receive a certificate recognizing their accomplishments from their local community newspaper.

Flu shot clinic on Nov. 28 is free for everyone

BY DEBBIE DELUCA
CENTENNIAL SENIORS

November is a very busy month for the Centennial Centre and members of the Huntsville Centennial Seniors.

This is the time that we ask our members to renew their membership.

The cost for membership for the year is \$10, plus an additional \$5.50 if you wish to have your newsletter mailed to you each month.

We are also looking for new members to join us. So, if you have just moved to the area and are 55 years of age or over, maybe the Huntsville Centennial Seniors have something to offer you. This is a great way

to make new friends and enjoy your leisure time.

We provide a variety of year-round recreational and leisure activities as well as offering trips from March to November each year. Some of our regular weekly activities include: shuffleboard, fitness classes, diners club, tennis, square dancing, bowling, painting and so much more.

Our special events take place throughout the year and we offer healthy lifestyle programs, such as our foot clinic and flu shot clinic each year. If you are interested or require more information please contact me at 789-6648 or e-mail at

debbie.deluca@huntsville.ca.

Our annual general meeting will be taking place on Wednesday, Nov. 28 following our monthly potluck luncheon. All members are encouraged to take part and set aside until 2:30 p.m. that day for the meeting. We will be discussing the business of the seniors' centre over the last year and need members' input for planning the future.

The Huntsville Centennial Seniors will be hosting a flu shot clinic on Wednesday, Nov. 28 from 1:30 to 5 p.m. There is no charge and everyone is invited to help prevent the spread of influenza in our community.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: E-mail: letters@huntsvilleforester.com

When sending letters to the editor be sure to include your name, address and phone number. Unsigned letters cannot be used.

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