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**Centre on Aging**

The Centre on Aging, established on July 1, 1982, is a university-wide research Centre with a mandate to conduct, encourage, integrate, and disseminate research on all aspects of aging.

**Director: Verena Menec, PhD**

Canada Research Chair in Healthy Aging  
Professor, Community Health Sciences,  
Faculty of Medicine

The Centre on Aging News is published three times a year and is available on our web site or by request. Direct comments and inquiries to

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# CENTRE ON AGING

## Be our guest ... CLSA data collection site open house

On June 21, 2012, the Centre on Aging hosted an open house at Deer Lodge Centre for a ribbon cutting ceremony and to show off its newest office.

Centre Director, **Dr. Verena Menec**, is the Manitoba Site Principal Investigator for the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) at the University of Manitoba. The CLSA is a 20-year longitudinal study that will follow approximately 50,000 Canadian men and women aged 45 to 85.

The CLSA project is led by Principal Investigator, Dr. Parminder Raina from McMaster University. Dr. Raina came to Winnipeg to help open the Deer Lodge site. McMaster and the University of Manitoba are two of 11 universities involved in the study.



(left to right) Mr. Real Cloutier, Dr. Verena Menec, and Dr. Parminder Raina celebrate the official opening of the CLSA data collection site at the ribbon cutting ceremony.



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OF MANITOBA

*CLSA data collection site continued from page 1 ...*

The site opening attracted a large crowd and local media attention. Mr. Real Cloutier, Chief Operating Officer, Deer Lodge Centre served as emcee for the announcement. Delivering greetings on behalf of the Honourable Minister Dave Chomiak, was St. James MLA, Ms. Deanne Crothers. Dr. Raina delivered greetings and helped open the data collection site (DCS), and Dr. Menec welcomed everyone on behalf of the Vice President (Research and International).

Centre on Aging Research Coordinator, **Mrs. Audrey Blandford** is the CLSA site coordinator for the project and has spent many hours to help get the project up and running. Her hard work did not go unnoticed and she was acknowledged by Drs. Menec and Raina, and Mr. Cloutier for her contributions to the project.

Information on the project can be found on the Centre and CLSA's Web site: [www.clsa-elcv.ca](http://www.clsa-elcv.ca).



Audrey Blandford (walking), Manitoba CLSA site coordinator, demonstrates for Centre on Aging staff one of the tests CLSA participants will complete at the Deer Lodge data collection site.

## Spring research symposium

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On May 7, 2012, the Centre on Aging held its 29th annual spring research symposium at Bannatyne campus. This year's symposium proved to be another success with over 450 people attending throughout the day. On behalf of the Centre, we thank all the presenters, attendees, volunteers, and exhibitors who helped make this day a success.

Dr. Alexander Segall welcomed everyone and reflected on the Centre's 30th anniversary. Opening the symposium was the Centre's founding director: Dr. Neena Chappell, Canada Research Chair in Social Gerontology; Professor, Centre on Aging and Department of Sociology, University of Victoria, who spoke about caregiving.

Six concurrent presentations were held throughout the morning and afternoon. The afternoon plenary session involved Centre on Aging Research Affiliates Dr. Juliette Cooper (chair) and panelist Dr. Phil St. John, as well as Ms. Marlene Graceffo (panelist). At the afternoon break, the Centre officially celebrated its 30th anniversary with a cake for all to enjoy.

## Award recipients for 2012–2013

Each year, the Centre on Aging awards a number of scholarships and fellowships to deserving faculty and students (scholarship recipients are listed in the table). This year marked the first time the Barbara Jean Payne Memorial Award in Social Gerontology was awarded.

The first recipient of the **Barbara Jean Payne Memorial Award** is Ms. Jennifer McArthur, Master's student in the Department of Community Health Sciences.

Dr. Barbara Payne bequeathed \$10,000 to the Centre on Aging to offer a scholarship for graduate students pursuing studies in social gerontology. Dr. Payne was a strong supporter and friend of the Centre; she was a Research Affiliate with the Centre and was appointed as Acting Director in 2009–2010.

On the following page are some of the highlights from this year's symposium. Additional photos and presentations (when made available) can be found on the Centre's Web site: <http://umanitoba.ca/centres/aging/events/384.html>.

## Fellowship/scholarship awarded

### Betty Havens Memorial Graduate Fellowship

Kristin Reynolds, PhD student, Department of Psychology  
*Older adult's mental health information needs and preferences: Bridging the gap in knowledge translation to increase mental health service utilization*  
Advisory: Dr. Corey Mackenzie, Department of Psychology

### Jack MacDonnell Scholarship for Research in Aging

Catherine Marshall, Master's of Science student, Department of Human Nutritional Sciences  
*Body dissatisfaction, concerns about aging and food choices among baby boomer and older women in Manitoba*  
Advisor: Dr. Christina Lengyel, Department of Human Nutritional Sciences

### Barbara Jean Payne Memorial Award in Social Gerontology

Jennifer McArthur, Master's student, Department of Community Health Sciences  
*The association between social engagement and healthcare utilization in older Manitoban adults*  
Advisor: Dr. Verena Menec, Canada Research Chair in Healthy Aging, Department of Community Health Sciences

### Esther and Samuel Milmot Scholarship

Maia Kredentser, PhD student, Department of Psychology  
*Does enhancing dignity in dying patients make a difference for the health and grief outcomes of caregivers after death? A comparative analysis of bereaved older adults*  
Advisor: Dr. Corey Mackenzie, Department of Psychology

## Award recipient

## Symposium highlights



Dr. Neena Chappell presents during the morning plenary.



30 years and counting at the Centre on Aging.



Dr. Juliette Cooper (standing), Dr. Phil St. John (centre) and Ms. Marlene Graceffo take audience questions during the afternoon.



Ms. Mary Shariff presents during the afternoon concurrent session.

## Research forum highlights

On March 20, the Centre on Aging held its 19th annual research forum at Fort Garry campus. Presenting was Dr. Michael Sharratt, Professor, Department of Kinesiology, University of Waterloo (UW); Executive Director, Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging. Over 60 people attended to hear about this unique partnership between University-Private builders-Government.

Dr. Sharratt focused on the Schlegel Villages built at the University of Waterloo. Developed by the Schlegel family, the concept of the Villages is to provide affordable housing to seniors while simultaneously providing researchers with an opportunity to interact with the Village residents. As Dr. Sharratt identified, he's had unique experiences at the Schlegel Villages through his interactions with the residents.

Dr. Sharratt presented the residential and University community with an idea of how different parties can come together to not only improve the lives of seniors in the community, but work together.

### Panel discussion

Following Dr. Sharratt's presentation and a light

luncheon, attendees engaged in a panel that focused on housing issues. Joining Dr. Sharratt in discussions were Mr. Mike Balshaw, Community volunteer; Dr. Lois Brockman, Housing Committee Chair, University of Manitoba Retirees Association; and Ms. Laura Rempel, Master's student, Department of City Planning. Dr. Menec chaired the panel. Forum attendees and the panel engaged in discussion about housing ideas for seniors.



Invited speaker Dr. Michael Sharratt explains to the audience how the Schlegel Villages at the University of Waterloo developed through partnerships.

## Graduate Specialization in Aging

As part of its commitment and goal “to promote and support both undergraduate and graduate education in the area of aging,” the Centre on Aging awarded the Graduate Specialization in Aging (GSA) certificate to Phyllis Reid-Jarvis. Ms. Reid-Jarvis received her certificate on May 7, at the spring symposium award ceremony, after meeting the necessary requirements.

She graduated from the Department of Community Health Sciences (Advisor: **Dr. Bob Tate**, Department of Community Health Sciences). Her project was entitled *Pilot testing of the English as an additional language (EAL) nutrition toolkit with teachers of English as an additional language to immigrant senior and non-senior Canadians.*

We wish Ms. Reid-Jarvis the best of luck as she moves forward with her career!



Dr. Menec poses with the most recent GSA certificate graduate, Ms. Phyllis Reid-Jarvis.

## Thirty facts covering 30 years: Facts 20–11

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The Centre on Aging will officially mark its 30th anniversary on July 1, 2012. It was on this day 30 years ago that the Centre on Aging was the first institute established at the University through an experimental program of research centres within the strategic grant theme “Individual and Population Aging” through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Thus making the Centre one of the two oldest research centres in Canada.

**Trivia: What is the other oldest aging research centre in the Country? The answer will be revealed at the end of the list.**

In the winter issue, we highlighted the first 10 facts, now are facts 20–11:

20. Number of years Office Administrator Catherine Jacob has been with the Centre on Aging.
19. Total number of years the Centre on Aging has awarded faculty Research Fellowship awards (excluding 2012–2013 awards) to 30 faculty members.
18. Research fellowship recipients represent 18 faculties/ departments at the University of Manitoba.
17. Total number of Research Forums held to date (established in 1994). Past presenters include Dr. Anne Martin-Matthews, Dr. Ian Graham, Dr. John Creswell, and Dr. David-Butler Jones.

16. Total number of types of grants received by Research Affiliates from major funding bodies as reported in the 2010–2011 annual report.
15. Total number of student recipients of the Centre on Aging Betty Havens Memorial Graduate Fellowship, formerly known as the Centre on Aging Graduate Fellowship
14. Current number of Advisory Board members.
13. The total number of age-friendly community consultations facilitated by Centre on Aging staff during the most popular month of June (2009–2010) under Dr. Menec’s Age-Friendly Communities CURA research project.
12. Total number of faculties/departments represented by students currently or previously taking courses in the Graduate Specialization in Aging.
11. Total number of Universities involved in the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA), including Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba.

**What is the other oldest aging research centre in the Country? Answer: Simon Fraser University**

The final top 10 facts will be revealed in the next issue of the newsletter.

## Snow, cold, ice and wind...not very age-friendly?

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At the recent International Federation on Ageing’s 2012 Prague conference “Ageing Connections”, Mayor Motomu Hozumi (Akita City, Japan), **Mr. Jim Hamilton**, Associate Director, Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba, and Dr. Gulnara Minnigaleeva (Russia), Research fellow, Centre for Studies of Civil Society and Nonprofit Sector, National Research University Higher School of Economics, presented a symposium on *Age-friendly communities and winter*.

The elements associated with extreme winter weather impact each of the eight dimensions of an age-friendly community. How does extreme winter weather challenge

older people and service providers in creating and maintaining age-friendly environments?

Snow and ice on sidewalks and steps increase the risk of falls and hip fractures. Long periods of cold weather can substantially restrict seniors’ mobility and ability to engage in everyday activities such as shopping or walking for exercise. Access to leisure activities may be more limited, leading to social isolation. For those most vulnerable, blizzards and sudden winter storms challenge community planning and emergency management efforts.

*Snow, cold, ice and wind ... continued on page 6 ...*

## Connecting the Centre on Aging to community: Highlighting the Let no one be alone awareness week

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Submitted by: Dr. Nancy Newall, post-doctoral fellow

The next time you can't get to sleep, try thinking about what you are thankful for. You never know where that line of thought will take you. Just ask Brenda Tonn, Seniors Resource Coordinator, from Plumas, Manitoba.

On a restless night this past March, Brenda began thinking about what she was thankful for. Lying next to her husband, she thought to herself how thankful she was for not being alone.

Fast-forward two months later and the first annual *Let no one be alone* week was celebrated across Manitoba on May 6–12, 2012. Says Brenda, “I realized what I could do. Such a simple way to make a difference. I hate the thought of anyone being alone or lonely. Everybody's lives get so busy and so I thought the [Let no one be alone] week could stop us for a minute and bring awareness. To somehow stop all the “going, going, going.” I thought it would help make us think about what really matters—the people around you.”

As the seniors resource coordinator at Plumas Senior Support Services, Brenda was able to call on her large network of fellow coordinators. Noted Brenda, “As resource coordinators we know the negative impact of social isolation on seniors ... on everyone for that matter!” She also noted that resource coordinators are in a unique position to be able to identify older individuals or couples who may be alone or isolated.

Her fellow resource coordinators and other community organizations responded to Brenda's call for help. Over 50 Manitoban communities held events or promoted the

awareness week, encouraging people to make a friendly visit, give someone a call, take someone out for lunch, or bake a goodie basket for a neighbour. In Plumas, a barbeque kicked off the week. Says Brenda, “There was a great turnout. About 70 people came and the town only has a population of around 300! It went over really well. There was a relaxed atmosphere, hot dogs, and a huge cake donated from Gladstone with the “Forget Me Not” logo on it. Brenda took the time to personally invite community members and many helped drive people to the event.

Examples across Manitoba of other activities and awareness efforts include The City of Thompson holding a lunch and a bowling party; the mayor of Portage la Prairie formally proclaiming the week; and in Gladstone, hosting a barbeque gathering where people enjoyed hamburgers, cake, and the sounds of local musicians. Age & Opportunity's Senior Centre Without Walls social program held an over-the-phone session on the awareness week in which participants brainstormed ideas on how to brighten someone's day.

When asked about future plans for the awareness week, Brenda says, “There seems to be really no drawback to doing it every year. It's a charity that asks for no money and is easy to promote. I think it does a world of good.” There is no doubt about that. Perhaps now Brenda can get some sleep and rest easier ...

For more information or to join the network, go to <http://www.facebook.com/LetNoOneBeAlone> or contact Brenda Tonn at [ssplumas@mymts.net](mailto:ssplumas@mymts.net).

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*Snow, cold, ice and wind ... continued from page 5 ...*

Despite the pitfalls of cold weather, winter does provide unique opportunities for recreation, physical activity and social connection. Community parks, forests and nearby lakes offer beautiful landscapes for a host of winter activities such as walking, skiing, snowmobiling and ice fishing. Curling clubs and indoor skating rinks connect people and communities, as do winter festivals.

Given the challenges and opportunities associated with extreme winter weather, age-friendly strategies should aim to mitigate the barriers that older people face in cold temperatures while also striving to foster age-friendly winter activities. Presenters highlighted cold weather experiences from around the globe and offered participants the opportunity to discuss practical solutions to making winter an age-friendly season.

## Research Affiliate updates

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### Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Dr. Jeannette Montufar** (Department of Civil Engineering), who was a recipient of the YM-YWCA Woman of Distinction in the Leadership and management category. Dr. Montufar received the award at the Woman of Distinction ceremony on May 2, 2012.

Congratulations are also in order for **Dr. Judy Chipperfield** (Department of Psychology), who was nominated in the Science, technology and the environment category. Additional information on the event and pictures can be found at [www.ymcaywca.mb.ca](http://www.ymcaywca.mb.ca).

### Recent presentations

On May 2, 2012, The Affect Project hosted a symposium on Fort Garry campus. The Affect Project is a collaboration of researchers interested in the role of affect in culture and lived experiences. **Dr. Jason Leboe-McGowan** (Department of Psychology) and **Dr. Brenda Austin-Smith** (Department of English, Film, and Theatre) are two of the group's co-founders.

The symposium was organized into three themes. **Dr. Leboe-McGowan** presented *Feelings of truthiness in perception and remembering* during the Nostalgia/memory/action session; presenting during the Affect and empathetic expression session were **Dr. Austin-Smith**, *The face of innocence: Mothers, murder, and the 'text of muteness' in the Hollywood 'woman's film'* and **Dr. Verena Menec**, *Affect and aging*.

Centre on Aging Director, **Dr. Verena Menec**, co-presented the keynote session at the Long Term & Continuing Care Association of Manitoba conference. Dr. Menec and Ms. Norma Drosdowech presented *Mutual Respect: The Key to Excellence in Care* on May 15, 2012 in Winnipeg.

**Dr. Verena Menec** and **Mr. Jim Hamilton**, Centre's Associate Director, travelled to Prague, Czech Republic for the 11th annual International Federation on Ageing's global conference, May 28–June 1, 2012. Dr. Menec participated on a panel discussing *The nature of place: Can rural and remote places become age-friendly places?* Also participating were Dr. Jane Barratt (Moderator), Secretary General, International Federation on Ageing; Dr. Kathleen Brasher, COTA Victoria, Australia; and Dr. Bill Ashton, Director, Rural Development Institute, Brandon University. Dr. Menec also facilitated an age-friendly workshop following the panel discussion.

### Recent publications

**Dr. Ben Albensi** (Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics) has co-authored the following publications:

Kensuke Oikawa, Gary L Otero, Eric Platt, Melanie Neuendorff, Avril Hatherell, Michael J Bernstein and **Benedict C Albensi**. (2012). "NF-kB p50 subunit knockout impairs late LTP and 3 alters long term memory in the mouse 4 hippocampus." *BMC Neuroscience*. 13:45

D. Zhang, S. Chu, C. Sun, W. Xiong, **B.C. Albensi**, F. E. Parkinson. "Inhibition of synaptic activity in hippocampus by ATP, hypoxia or oxygen-glucose deprivation does not require CD73." *PLoS One*.

### Media updates

**Dr. Richard Milgrom** (Department of City Planning) and his students in the Faculty of Architecture, showcased their ideas on how to improve surface parking lots in Winnipeg using 3D models of their proposed plan. Their project entitled *Surface lots of possibility* was displayed at Portage Place Shopping Centre on May 10, 2012.

Article link: <http://updatednews.ca/2012/05/11/architecture-students-re-imagine-winnipegs-downtown/>

*Research affiliate updates continued on page 8 ...*

# Living with dementia: the experiences of older couples in managing their lives together

Submitted by Dr. Fran Racher, Brandon University; Research Affiliate, Centre on Aging

Brandon University, School of Health Studies faculty members—**Dr. Fran Racher**, Prof. Nancy McPherson and Dr. Dean Care have received funding from the Alzheimer Society of Canada to undertake a study entitled *Living with dementia: the experiences of older couples in managing their lives together*.

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of the experiences of older couples as they strive to manage their lives together, while one partner is experiencing dementia. Better understanding of the experiences, needs, resources and priorities of these couples will lead to change in the development and delivery of health services and programs to better meet their needs.

Program and policy changes may be proposed to help support older couples living with dementia. These could assist in sustaining their independence as a couple and extending their ability to continue to live together in the community by having a more satisfying quality of life for a longer period of time.

Older couples who reside in the Brandon or Assiniboine Health Regions are participating in interviews every six to eight weeks. Both partners participate in each interview together. There are three main goals of this project. The first is to gain more understanding of the experiences of older couples in managing their lives together while one partner is experiencing early or middle stage dementia. The second is to start developing a framework and tools specific for the assessment of older couples living with dementia. Thirdly, the researchers will adapt and create tools specifically for working with these couples, for use by health professionals and others. Finally, the researchers will share their findings to inform couples living with dementia and their families as well as organizations involved in related program and policy development.

“Older couples who are living with dementia have much to teach us about the challenges they experience and the resources they require,” said Dr. Racher. “They can help us to be more effective in working with them, in developing appropriate programs, and in creating effective policy.”

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*Research affiliate updates continued from page 7 ...*

## Centre advisory board updates

A note of thanks to **Dr. Corey Mackenzie** (Department of Psychology) who is leaving the University of Manitoba for a position at Mount Royal University in Calgary. Dr. Mackenzie has been a great supporter of the Centre and is currently appointed to the Centre’s advisory board. The Centre will be appointing a new member to the board later this summer.

**Dr. Phil St. John** (Department of Internal Medicine) has been appointed for another term on the Centre’s advisory board.

## Staff updates

Research Coordinator, **Mrs. Audrey Blandford**, has

moved full-time to the CLSA project at Deer Lodge Centre. She will now be based at the Centre’s offices on the 8th floor. If you have questions regarding the CLSA project, contact Audrey at [Audrey.Blandford@ad.umanitoba.ca](mailto:Audrey.Blandford@ad.umanitoba.ca) or 204.833.1820.

Any inquiries or information requests for Centre on Aging research should be directed to the Centre at [aging@umanitoba.ca](mailto:aging@umanitoba.ca) or 204.474.8754.

## Centre staff new email addresses!

In keeping with the University of Manitoba’s email migration, Centre on Aging staff have updated their email addresses. To ensure that Centre staff continue to receive your emails, visit the Web site: [http://umanitoba.ca/centres/aging/people/coa\\_people\\_index.html](http://umanitoba.ca/centres/aging/people/coa_people_index.html) to update your email contact lists.