

Preventing injury, navigating transit on tap for Seniors? Active Living Fair

From navigating the sometimes-complicated world of transit to learning how to avoid injury, even on the pickleball court, the Aurora Seniors' Centre will host a morning of learning this weekend at the Town's annual Seniors' Active Living Fair.

Featuring more than 50 local vendors, the free Active Living Fair will take place at the Seniors' Centre, just off John West Way, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. this Saturday, September 6.

"This is our third post-COVID Fair and we're always excited to have things that invite the community into the Centre," says Karie Papillon of the Town of Aurora. "I think we have a really nice mix this year of services like the Alzheimer Society of York Region, the Ministry of Transportation, and the Region of York, and we'll also have the Seniors' Iranian Multicultural Association and the Probus Club, so it's a nice mixture of information and fun."

Helping organizers to plan this year's event, Papillon says the Centre has fielded many questions in the last year about injury prevention and balance "mentally and physically."

"A lot of retirees are busier than they were before they retired because they've picked up so much, but a lot are also looking for something to do to make sure they stay busy," she says. "The Fair addresses the 'how' we can stay busy by showing what's highlighted in Aurora and at the Centre."

"In regards to injury prevention, we're really excited to partner with Aurora Sports Medicine Professionals this year and at 10.15, they will be doing a racquet sport injury prevention seminar. We've all heard about the rise of pickleball, and then there's still badminton and table tennis, too, and we would love to teach people how to stay injury free or even enhance their performance with this seminar."

Seminars begin at 9.20 a.m. when the Ontario Securities Commission will speak about financial wellness and "steps to help you achieve financial balance in your life," says Papillon. From 10.30 to 11.30, Chartwell Retirement will offer a free blood pressure clinic where participants can get a reading from a registered nurse.

Beginning at 11.10, the Region of York and York Region Transit will offer a talk about their plan to support seniors, including an outline of all available transit options.

"The other thing we hear is there's a big fear around not driving anymore, losing independence, losing mobility freedom, and this will show them that there's options out there that will help you stay independent, access your services, [and] access your social connections," says Papillon. "That will wrap around what York Region is doing to support seniors and we hope that they'll see that it's not just Aurora that is working really hard to keep older adults active, but the Region as well."

Beginning at 11.30 a.m. the Optimist Club will serve a free barbecue featuring hamburgers. As quantities are limited, those interested in a bite can secure a free ticket upon arrival at the Fair. The first 200 attendees will also receive a free grab bag filled with swag and information from their 51 participating vendors.

"I think we'll have every nook and cranny of the Centre filled "we can't get any more in unless we try to put them on the roof!" says Papillon of the assembled vendors.

Beyond the Fair, the event is a chance for the Aurora Seniors' Centre to showcase the myriad programs they host under their roof year-round.

Among the initiatives are with Seniors' Centre without Walls program that offers free virtual and telephone programming for older adults; their free Seniors' Centre in the Mail program, a twice-monthly delivery of puzzles, games and activities to members to "keep

your brain smart in different ways than social connections do,? and more.

Following the Fair, there will be even more opportunities to get a flavour of the services provided by the Aurora Seniors' Centre.

The week of September 8 is their annual Try-Out Week where residents can sign up for a number of free activities, including snooker, billiards, fitness classes, and much more.

?It's a nice way to come into the Centre without any financial or time commitment and see if we're the place for you where you come in and feel comfortable, meet your friends and have a good time,? says Papillon. ?I think sometimes people think we're all sitting here playing cards and not being very active, but this is a really active place. When you come in, there's a positive hum of activity. More often than not, you walk around and you hear people laughing and you see people sitting together having fun, enjoying each other's company, having that conversation, and sometimes making plans not just to be here, but plans outside the building. We're really about bringing people together and building that social connection.?

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