

SENIOR SCAPE: It's time to build bridges

By Christina Doyle

To those of you who are NOT seniors, I sincerely hope you enjoy this read.

As the temperatures soar and children are off from school, there are holidays planned for some, camps for others. Exams are but a memory so let's take a moment and think of those whose life is not so hurried.

Our seniors are here ? spring, summer and fall and winter ? in retirement homes, condos, hospitals, nursing homes, and apartments. For many, they live alone.

There were days in my younger years when I wished I was alone, alone from the kids, the job, the ridiculous schedule I kept, constantly searching for the ?me time.? How much I tried to find some kind of quiet. In desperation I would go to my bathroom and just take a bath, for just a few minutes, not too far from the children but enough to savour a little peace and some sanity.

Now, as a senior, I wait for my daughter to call, at any time of the day, just to hear her voice. Whether it's about her sometimes frustrating job, her responsibilities or just life in general, it's so good to hear her voice and for her to say, ?Hi Mom, how are you?? I miss her every day and pray that all is well with her. It's her turn to be busy, to say ?gosh mom, I have to go, I have a meeting that I am already late for.?

In our community of Aurora, it's time to build a bridge, between you and a senior. These precious souls are just waiting for you to enter their doors and spend but a few moments of your time, to be with them.

Students, please, if you can, go beyond the community hours, make a new friend.

You cannot imagine the good you will do by giving of your time to our seniors. If you need some good advice, need a history lesson, a lesson on quilting, chess, bridge or even poker, our seniors demonstrate an incredible amount of talent and knowledge.

I can see how much time my mom spends watching TV.

If it wasn't for my frequent calls during the day, I wonder who else she would talk to during her long day. And when those days sometimes come when I cannot come and see her, I call and together on the phone we will watch the Price is Right, sharing some laughs, and making our own bids on the prizes.

We will make predictions as to who is going to win the showcase, all the while I know that she knows she isn't alone, that there is someone who cares about her. It is the best hour of my day spending it with my mother either on the phone or visiting her at her condo or having lunch together.

All of you who are not seniors, if you want to do a good thing I encourage you to visit a senior. I know already many of you volunteer. I have to seen the great multitude of volunteers for the numerous causes in which many of you take the time to run, bike and raise funds for needed research in a medical field.

I am a product of research. I survived cancer thanks to you and your good works and Terry Fox.

However, our society has a huge number of seniors in every town and village. They need just a little of our time, to say ?Hey, just thought I would like to sit and chat or have a game of cards with you.?

Look within yourself and see the talents you possess and try and think of how others may truly enjoy and appreciate your gifts.

For that moment, you'll bring such joy and a great healing, a precious moment where they aren't thinking about what ails them, rather the laughter and joy you can give. It just starts with one heart at a time.

As a professional country music singer who no longer plays at bars or festivals, I have been singing for the palliative care at the hospital as part of a Sunday service. You sing a hymn that is familiar to them, and you can see their eyebrows rise or a grin appear on their faces.

I feel so privileged to be able to sing to them and that isn't always easy at 9 in the morning!

Our communities need bridge builders. So many seniors are widows, who feel so lost without their lifelong partner and friend. They just need a reason to smile again. This July build a bridge with someone, and remember one day you will be a senior. How do you want to live your life?

Seniors Centre News

Activities are ongoing during August. Why not play badminton or ladies' pool on Monday mornings? Alternatively, you could play Bid Euchre on Tuesdays or Bridge on Wednesdays. Come out and get involved.

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, e-mail asa@auroraseniors.ca, or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.