

ElderCollege Connector October 2020



Lifelong Learning for Adults (55+)

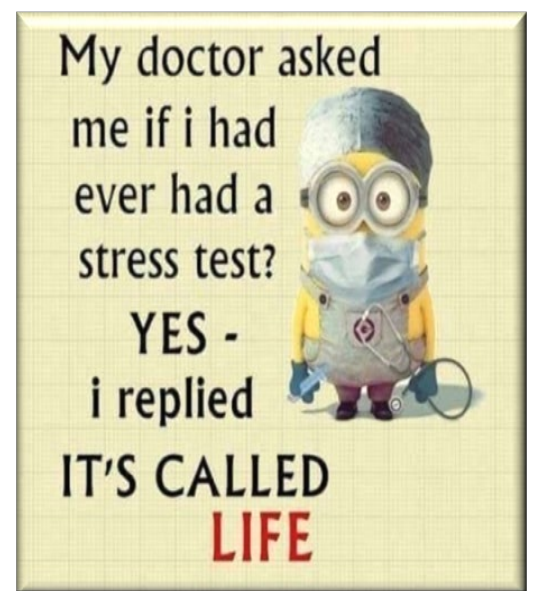
Greetings

We hope this finds you safe and healthy and not too stir crazy from the need to limit social interactions. It is now many months into this COVID-19 and everyone is looking forward to a change! We at ElderCollege are always looking for something new and exciting and now we are about to embark on a new format for offering courses and lectures -- online. We hope you have found something to interest you in our Fall lineup and that you have signed up. It is not too late to register and while some classes will have filled up, the lectures can accommodate many.

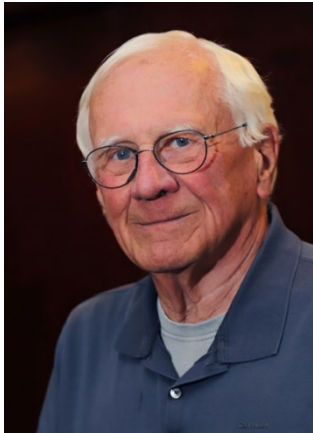
ElderCollege remains strong and relevant through the many people who volunteer their time to organize or teach and the ones who continue to be members. Please renew your membership to show your support and share this Connector with others who may be interested in lifelong learning.

We welcome [feedback](#) regarding the Connector.

In the words of Dr. Bonnie Henry, "be calm, be kind, be safe," and keep on learning!



Introducing Dennis McMahon, Executive Member-at-Large



Dennis hails originally from Quebec, but his 35-year military career took him and his family to locations around the world.

He has pursued a love of lifetime learning beginning with earning his BSc in physics at the University of Montreal and following that up with a diploma in business administration from the University of Ottawa. He then attended the Canadian Army Command and Staff College in Kingston, specializing in aerospace systems project management.

His career began as a navigator and tactical coordinator in maritime patrol and anti-submarine warfare. He notes that a career highlight was an exchange tour at the RAF College Cranwell in the UK where he managed the college's aero systems course. It was this opportunity that provided him, his wife Mary, and their four children enduring educational and travelling experiences.

Luckily for us, Dennis and Mary were smitten with the Comox Valley during a service tour in the 1970s and they chose to move here after Dennis retired in 1994. He takes full advantage of all our location has to offer including biking, kayaking, fishing, and swimming. He is also a passionate bridge player and enjoys a love of reading.

Volunteering is in Dennis's blood. He became involved with the Comox Military Family Resource Centre, where he directed the provision of programs and services to military families, including the development and operation of a day care centre. Since then, he has been associated with various not-for-profit volunteer organizations. He and Mary are active members of the Comox Valley Probus Club, where his interests include the co-hosting of a discussion group.

Dennis's involvement with ElderCollege began with the Curriculum Committee as the subject area coordinator for science. After that he took up the position of vice chair and is currently serving as member at large. He looks forward to working on the development of the 2020-2025 strategic plan that will guide us in the coming years.

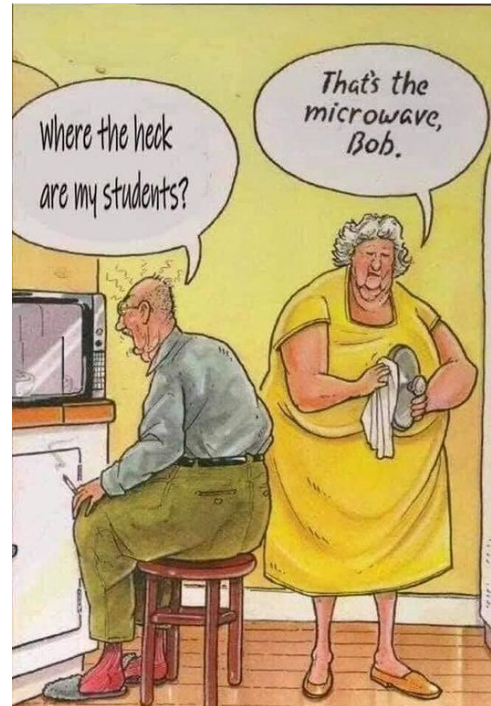
Update on Courses Still Available

Our members are hungry to learn! Many of our fall 2020 courses filled within hours of registration opening, showing that ElderCollege continues to play an important role in the lives of many of you. Thank you for your ongoing support as we enter this new age of courses delivered online.

While most of our classes are full, those with the largest capacity do still have space (although even these are filling fast so please act quickly). See below for descriptions. And, if you are new to Zoom, we provided some guidance in our September Connector. Click [here](#) and scroll to page 3 for a reminder.

Biofilia: Connection to Nature

Is Nature intelligent? How closely related are we to other living species? Molecular biology is allowing us a peek at molecules at work in living cells, revealing that all cells function with the same protein molecules and genetic code, and the same molecules that energize all organisms. Come and learn the importance of bacteria, plants, animals and humans, in the natural systems and cycles of the Biosphere. A non-technical course.



The Truth about Happiness – The Wellness Myth

What makes us happy? Is it money, marriage, religion? Why do we sometimes feel sad when we live better than anyone else at almost any time in human history? Is there anything we can do to be happier? This three-part course examines strategies to make life easier: Session 1: Understanding your brain; Session 2: Baseline happiness; Session 3: Strategies to cope and make the most of your baseline. Required textbook: *The Wellness Myth* by Dr. Richard Guthrie. (Available on Amazon - \$12.99 paperback, \$5.00 digital).

Environmental Law

Youth are in the streets, but politicians sometimes seem reluctant to make the tough political decisions needed to fight climate change. Increasingly climate change is ending up in the courts, but are judges better placed to form public policy? Andrew Gage, staff lawyer and the head of West Coast Environmental Law's climate program, will discuss the opportunities, and limits of using the law to fight climate change.

Disaster at the Crossroads

Our achievements come at a cost. By supplanting natural systems with those we've designed, we are increasingly exposed to the unintended impact of our success. Human modifications amplify the disastrous effects of natural processes and are becoming increasingly catastrophic. How are we to respond? Where do we put our effects, and for what should we plan? Dr. Richard Guthrie will consider practical limits to our abilities to respond.

The Way We See Our Future

A group of students, along with students around the globe, formed an alliance in the past two years for the purpose of raising awareness of key issues around climate change. Members of the Comox Valley Youth Environmental Action Group representing the three high schools in the Valley will present on the climate change topic.

Health Reminder for Seniors

Causes of Mental Confusion in The Third Age

By Dr. Arnaldo Liechtenstein

Whenever I teach clinical medicine to fourth year medical students, I ask the following question: "What are the causes of mental confusion in the elderly?"

Some offer, "Tumors in the head." I answer, "No!"

Others suggest, "Early symptoms of Alzheimer's." I answer again, "No!"

With each rejection of their answers, their responses dry up.

And they are even more open-mouthed when I list the three most common causes:

- Uncontrolled diabetes
- Urinary infection
- Dehydration

It may sound like a joke, but it isn't. Many people over 60 stop feeling thirsty and consequently stop drinking fluids.

When no one is around to remind them, they quickly dehydrate. Dehydration is severe and affects the entire body. It may cause abrupt mental confusion, a drop in blood pressure, increased heart palpitations, angina (chest pain), coma, and even death.

This habit of forgetting to drink fluids begins at age 60, when we have just over 50 per cent of the water we should have in our bodies. People over 60 have a lower water reserve. This is part of the natural aging process.

But there are more complications. Although people are dehydrated, they don't feel like drinking water, because their internal balance mechanisms don't work very well.

Conclusion: People over 60 years old dehydrate easily, not only because they have a smaller water supply, but also because they do not feel the lack of water in the body. Although people over 60 may look healthy, the performance of reactions and chemical functions can damage their entire body.

Here are two alerts:

1. Get into the habit of drinking liquids. Liquids include water, juices, teas, coconut water, milk, and soups. Water-rich fruits such as watermelon, melon, peaches, pineapple, oranges and tangerines also work, as well as cucumbers. The important thing is that you must drink some liquid every two hours.
2. Family members should constantly offer fluids to people over 60 and observe them. If you realize they are rejecting liquids and, from one day to the next, they are irritable, breathless or display a lack of attention, these are almost certainly recurrent symptoms of dehydration.

Arnaldo Liechtenstein is a general practitioner at Hospital das Clínicas in São Paulo, Brazil as well as a collaborating professor in the Department of Clinical Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of São Paulo.

For Your Enjoyment

Quote of the Century

Dear Lord: Can you please uninstall 2020 and download it again??? It has a virus.

Videos

[Guy Noble and West Australian Symphony entertain us with a virus rendition of H.M.S. Pinafore](#)

[2016 Rio de Janeiro Paralympians inspire us with "Yes, I can!"](#)

Smiles

I lived in a houseboat for a while and started seeing the girl next door. Eventually we drifted apart.

My boyfriend tried to make me have sex on the hood of his Honda Civic. I refused. If I'm going to have sex, it is going to be on my own Accord.

A man tried to sell me a coffin today. I told him, that's the last thing I need.

The neighborhood barber just got arrested for selling drugs. We had been his customers for eight years. We had no idea he was a barber.

100 years ago, everyone had a horse and only the rich had cars. Nowadays everyone has a car and only the rich have horses. Oh, how the stables have turned.

This is Buddy , I bought him as a surprise present for my husband but it turns out he's allergic to dogs . So unfortunately I'm going to have to find a new home for him , and I'm just wondering if anyone out there can help ? . His name is Alan, he's 61, great at DIY, drives a nice car and plans wonderful holidays.

