

# ElderCollege Connector September 2020



Lifelong Learning for Adults (55+)

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## *Greetings*

Just think, it is September already, a time to enjoy the last of summer and to make plans for returning to our annual routines. But this year will require new routines whether we like it or not. Fortunately, we have had enough lead-up time to wrap our heads around the changes required and we feel confident that ElderCollege can be kept alive and relevant, although in a much smaller way until things return to normal.



There will be no printed “Newsletters” as in the past, with interesting articles, relevant information, and details of course and lecture offerings. We hope you have enjoyed the Connector which has been sent out monthly since June 1 as an extension of the Newsletter. On our ElderCollege website you will find 10 separate click-on buttons for most information you will need or are curious about, from course offerings and registration procedures to past Newsletters and Connectors and a myriad of background information. We encourage you to explore this digital treasure trove.

We hope you will try some of our digital offerings and we really hope you will show your support by taking advantage of the deeply discounted registration fee of \$5.00 for the entire year.

## Message from the Chair, Don Axtell

Early this year I watched with concern the arrival of COVID 19 on the West Coast. It brought back memories of previous communicable diseases like SARS, and HIV /Aids. A memory of mine as a child in San Francisco in the late 40s was of Infantile Paralysis (Polio), which was raging through the population. I recall heartbreaking newspaper photos of children in iron lungs. As school kids we were encouraged to do our part by collecting enough ten cent pieces to fill in a March of Dimes card to support hospital care for Polio patients and research. I knew The March of Dimes had been founded by President Franklin Roosevelt, himself a Polio survivor. Some years later in the late 1950s, my school mates and I received the benefit of scientific research when we were given the newly developed Sabin vaccine orally on a sugar cube!

Compared to the earlier pandemics our generation encountered, COVID 19 has affected us in so many ways. The Comox Valley shut down: restaurants, public schools, libraries, community centres, and most businesses closed, there was little traffic on our streets. Thanks to a number of factors including our geographic location, timing of school holidays and steady provincial leadership, particularly that of Dr. Bonnie Henry, we, as residents of the Comox Valley, have so far been spared the worst ravages of the COVID 19 pandemic that have affected so many areas of North America.

Comox Valley ElderCollege (CVEC) has done its part in the community effort to combat COVID 19 by acting immediately to cancel classes halfway through the Winter session. Using Zoom, the Executive has continued to meet and discuss ways ElderCollege could continue to provide meaningful learning opportunities to our members within the structure of Provincial guidelines and keeping in mind the vulnerable age category of our membership.

Although face to face classes will not be possible this fall, the CVEC Executive decided to ask our volunteer course conductors if they would consider offering classes as a pilot project using the internet. Because of the newness of the program and the need to try out new educational methods, we decided to offer the classes at no cost to members. We are pleased that many of our course conductors have agreed to participate. I encourage our members to join in this phase of the Comox Valley ElderCollege's ongoing experiment in life long learning!

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

## How to use Zoom

Are you new to Zoom? Don't be intimidated! Zoom is easy to use and, while you do need a computer, it does not need to have either a camera or a microphone (although these features will allow you to interact more). You can Zoom from your desktop, your laptop, a tablet, or even your smart phone. It's free and it allows you to stay connected, including through our Fall offerings of ElderCollege courses.

Step 1: Google [Zoom](#). If you would like, you can review Zoom's [collection of resources](#), which are designed to make you feel more comfortable using the application. There is even a [training section](#).

Step 2: You will need the Zoom app. You can either download it [here](#) ahead of time on the device you intend to use or it will download automatically when you join your first meeting.

Step 3: Join your meeting. Each Zoom session has its own "meeting space." You will be sent an invitation to join that meeting (or, in our case, course sessions) ahead of time. The invitation includes a meeting ID number as well as a password.

- a. **Open Zoom** on your device.
- b. When prompted, **enter the meeting number**.
- c. **Enter the password**.
- d. Choose whether to join with/without audio or video (choosing yes will allow the instructor to see and/or hear you).

Zoom meeting,  
audio only

Zoom meeting  
with video



Step 4: Sit back, relax, and enjoy the opportunity to continue to learn. **Still not sure you're comfortable trying Zoom? Internet lockdown stars Olive and Mabel demonstrate their Zoom "petiquette" [in this video!](#)**

## *Introducing:* Craig Bassett, Executive Member-at-Large



Craig was born in Vancouver and is married to Rosemary. They have two daughters and a son, and their first grandchild just celebrated her first birthday.

He earned a BA in English and Psychology at UBC and a graduate degree from SFU in Counselling Psychology. With these credentials he worked as teacher, counsellor and mediator at Burnaby School District for 32 years. Upon his retirement he worked at UBC as a Faculty Associate in Education for 16 years.

Two of Craig and Rosemary's main interests for many years have been water sports and skiing, which were part of the reason for their move to Comox. While no longer racing sailboats together, they are avid kayakers and cyclists.

Craig has involved himself in the music scene in the Comox Valley and plays guitar in two bands.

He has been an active member of Probus Strathcona Club, and was its president for two years. Craig has been a member of Elder College for a good many years, and now, after being on the Curriculum Committee, he will be serving on the Executive.

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## Yet More On-line Offerings for the Fall Semester

### *Circadian Cycles Through Life*

Natural cycles have a tremendous influence on our wellbeing. Phyllis Chubb leads this four-week course on how circadian circles affect us and how to stay in sync with them.

### *Founders of Religions*

Jack Duckworth is back with this popular six-week course. The character, persona, and charisma of the founders of religions set the DNA of each movement. Some founders are deemed perfect, while others are less virtuous. Some followers vehemently defend their founder and others allow seekers to discover the truth for themselves. In all cases, understanding a religion is aided by knowing the founder, their culture and times, and the core of the religion.

### *Introduction to Meditation*

Lucas Stiefvater is our guide on this four-week journey. Meditation is a mindful practice. It is calming, relaxing, grounding, and helps you to focus. Regular meditation is an exercise for the brain. It increases brain activities in the happy, calm zone of the brain. Meditation is simple, light, healthy, and everyone can do it. Try it now.

### *Your Microbiome – Both Good & Bad*

In recent years there has been a scientific revolution in our understanding of the human microbiome—the trillions of bacteria, archaea, yeasts, and other microbes that live in/on us and are now known to be essential for normal development and function of our brain, immune systems, and metabolism. John North leads this eight-week course where you will learn how medical science is taking the first small steps toward powerful new approaches to obesity, diabetes, asthma, allergies and—perhaps—Alzheimer's.

### *Invigorate Your Book Club*

Want to liven up your book club meetings? Learn how to apply the language of literary analysis to the work you read, and sound informed as you comment on what you liked or disliked about the book selection. Marlet Ashley leads this single session.

### *How to Argue About Ethics*

In the August Connector, this course was mistakenly described as two parts. It is actually only a single session, but the instructor, Dr. Colin Boyd, has generously offered to run it twice in order to keep numbers small enough to encourage discussion. If you are interested in this course, please be aware that it is only a single session.

### *Special Lecture Workshop Event*

The Truth About Happiness

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 with Richard Guthrie, Ph.D examines strategies to make life easier. Required textbook: *The Wellness Myth* by Dr. Richard Guthrie. (Available on Amazon - \$12.99 paperback, \$5.00 digital).

## A MESSAGE FROM THE VOLUNTEER SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Even during COVID times, volunteers are a necessary part of ElderCollege life. We continue to have many people working behind the scenes, not the least of which are the Executive Committee and the Curriculum Committee Co-Chairs as they transition to distance learning. We are also looking forward to build capacity for when we can return to classroom learning.

Thank you to all who have responded to our pleas over the last couple of months. Four people have offered to teach courses, and four are interested in joining a committee. Among their reasons for volunteering are: feeling connected; passing on knowledge and learning new things; giving back; social interaction and keeping the brain ticking over.

Now we are interested in what might be keeping you from volunteering?  
Could it be that ...

- you think you don't have the time? We could well have positions that meet your needs.
- you feel you don't have anything to give? You might be surprised at what you have to offer.
- you feel you don't have as much confidence as you used to? ElderCollege provides a safe and supportive volunteer environment. Mentoring is readily available.
- you don't want to commit due to family responsibilities or travel plans? With so much being done remotely these days, we can find a way to work around that.
- you think it might be all work and no play?



**You don't see a good fit?**

**There is a match somewhere for you at ElderCollege. Let us help you find it!**

*To learn more, email [cvec.volunteers@nic.bc.ca](mailto:cvec.volunteers@nic.bc.ca) OR Go to our website [www.nic.bc.ca/eldercollege-cv](http://www.nic.bc.ca/eldercollege-cv) and click on the VOLUNTEER tab to complete and submit our new volunteer form. We'll be in touch!*

## ***For Your Enjoyment***

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### **Smiles:**

“Do you stop believing in the moon just because the sun comes up?”

“If money doesn’t grow on trees, why do banks have branches?”

“Two old people sitting on a bench. One turns to the other and says, “My butt fell asleep.” The other says, “Yep, I heard it snore a couple of times.””

"OMG. I have finally discovered what’s wrong with my brain: on the left side, there is nothing right, and on the right side, there is nothing left."

### **"Masks"100 Years Ago"**

