

- 48 -

## Seven Oaks

### Seniors Stepping Out to Hawaii and Beyond

Senior citizens in Seven Oaks are stepping their way to better health and having a lot of fun along the way. Janelle Curtis, the Seniors Resource Coordinator for Seven Oaks, says that two CDPI exercise programs have brought together seniors living in homes and apartment blocks and given many something to look forward to each week. “For them it’s the one thing they can count on,” Curtis said. “I think it’s got a lot of the tenants connected – now they know each other’s names, and that’s been a major, major thing.”

One of the CDPI programs that has been implemented is called “Stepping Up,” a physical exercise class that focuses on cardiovascular and resistance training. Equipment and training is provided in part by CDPI, and peer seniors are given one-day training classes and resource materials that teach them how to lead the weekly

*“It’s got a lot of the tenants connected – now they know each other’s names, and that’s been a major, major thing.”*

classes. Group sizes range from 10 to 25 participants, who start off with stretching and marching before moving on to a variety of activities using dynabands for resistance exercises.

“Stepping Out” is another program offered to Seven Oaks seniors. CDPI funds provide this walking program with pedometers, log sheets, and celebrations when the groups reach their goal. Four teams from different seniors’ apartments set individual distance goals, starting with a cross-Canada trek. One group from Luther Home decided to walk from Winnipeg to Hawaii within a year. When they made it, each member received a commemorative Seven Oaks Healthy Living t-shirt with “Luther Home Walkers” on the back. As soon as the Luther team reached Hawaii, they immediately set out straight for Malta!

CDPI also supports a Canada Day walk, where seniors meet in Kildonan Park to enjoy the holiday while getting exercise too. Free transportation to the celebration is provided in partnership with Fehrway Tours and Beaver Bus Lines, while CanadInn has generously catered the entire event. Everyone enjoys getting outside and getting to know people from other blocks.

The programs are open to all, and are advertised by newsletters and posters at malls, apartment blocks, politician’s offices, Shopper’s Drug Mart, and senior drop-in centers. The idea is to reach out to isolated seniors and bring people together through recreation. “We stress having fun

**Contact Information:**

Janelle Curtis

612-3888 (cell)

204-334-3779

sosl@mts.net

www.seniors.cimnet.ca



## *Take Note*

In addition to the long-term benefit of prolonging life, seniors can experience many short-term benefits from walking:

- Generates a sense of well-being, and can relieve depression, anxiety and stress by naturally producing endorphins, the body's natural tranquilizer.
- In people age 65 and older, simply walking regularly or engaging in other moderate exercise can reduce the risk of dementia.

<http://www.ec-online.net/Knowledge/Articles/feet.html>

[http://www.healthyontario.com/NewsItemDetails.aspx?newsitem\\_id=226534058](http://www.healthyontario.com/NewsItemDetails.aspx?newsitem_id=226534058)