**For Immediate Release**

**OCTOBER IS PROCLAIMED “SENIORS CELEBRATE!” MONTH;**

**MANY FREE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES WILL BE OFFERED**

***Events will kick-off on October 1, National Seniors Day***

**September 25, 2017 – Nanaimo, BC** – Nanaimo Seniors Connect, a collaborative project with five local partners focused on reducing social isolation in seniors, and funded in part by the Government of Canada’s New Horizons for Seniors Program, is pleased to announce that October has now been [officially proclaimed by the City of Nanaimo as “Seniors Celebrate!” month](https://www.nanaimo.ca/docs/default-document-library/2017oct_seniorscelebratedb8cb4391b316d6b9fc9ff00001037d2.pdf). Seniors Celebrate month was created by senior volunteers and will feature free, inclusive events and activities to highlight positive, healthy aging, and to celebrate the important roles that seniors play in our lives and community.

“This idea for this month was created by our Anti-Ageism Action Group volunteers with a goal to inspire us all to think about aging in a more positive way through fun, educational and thought-provoking activities,” says Dr. Penny MacCourt, Principal, HealthWell Educators and Consultants and Seniors Connect partner. “A key objective of the Seniors Connect project is to develop the leadership capacity of seniors, and we are very excited to support this senior-led initiative.”

On October 1, National Seniors Day, MLA Leonard Krog and Mayor Bill McKay will kick off Seniors Celebrate month at a special event which will also feature a screening of the acclaimed film, “The Age of Love” which documents seniors age 70+ as they experience speed dating for the first time.

Additional FREE events include: Films and discussion series, tea party and Nanaimo Museum tours, Seniors Celebrate Day at Country Club Mall, “How to Ride the Bus” session, drum circle, service dog training, music, art, fitness, dance, technology and financial education sessions, driving for seniors, and much more. The Nanaimo Seniors Services Network (NSSN) Health and Wellness Fair at Beban Park on November 1will wrap up the month of activities. Booths are still available, visit nssn.ca for details.

Additionally, the newly-created senior **“Community Champion” awards** are launched. The awards will recognize seniors in Nanaimo who go above and beyond by helping other seniors, as leaders, volunteers, advocates, and more. Deadline to nominate is Friday, October 13. Awards will be presented at the NSSN Health and Wellness Fair.

To inspire intergenerational participation, the **“Reframing Aging” 2017 Video Competition** will challenge participants and filmmakers in Nanaimo to creatively reframe aging in a positive light. Short films (documentary, narrative, animation) that showcase the value of seniors and inspire inter-generational connections and understanding can be entered in the competition which includes prizes for winners.

**RSVP today as seats are limited at some events.** Find information about the Seniors Celebrate events, Reframing Aging Video Competition information, and the Community Champion nomination forms online: [www.nanaimoseniorsconnect.ca](http://www.nanaimoseniorsconnect.ca), or drop by the Seniors Connect Centre at 150 Wallace Street, or call: 250-591-2924.

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