ARTA Retreat Summary 2018

This year the annual ARTA Retreat focused on Advocacy and was on May 27-29, 2018 in Canmore, Alberta. Over the two & one-half day retreat, we dined, socialized and were entertained. There were a number of health and service sessions. The retreat started with, Anticipating an Aging Alberta, a “dementia” presentation by Dr. Duncan Robertson, who spoke to its many related forms. Secondly, the “healthy CEO”, Dr. Larry Olhauser, outlined 9 factors that are crucial to making decisions about aging. The third health session was on the topic of “mindfulness and meditation” by Deanna Thompson, who gave suggestions on how to deal with pain, stress and building resilience. We also heard from TW Insurance, Collette Travel, and ATB Financial who gave us an interesting account of Alberta’s economy. The last two presentations were from ARTA on getting to know its organization and CARP (Canadian Association of Retired Persons) and what we can do to advocate for all seniors. The entertainment included two musicians and a comedian who had selected themes and material that appealed to us all. Time was also allotted for a choice of two wellness activities, yoga or a nature walk by the Bow River.

Some take-aways for me comprised a statement “aging is inevitable; the rate of aging is not.” Healthy brain aging consists of basics like diet, sleep, exercise, expressing gratitude and social connections along with dental care, body composition, stress level awareness, and capacity for leisure, all contributing to desirable health. It is important for us to advocate where we can to promote and serve all seniors as 1000 Canadians are turning 65 daily. I recommend joining CARP as it is our voice at the federal level.

Sherryl Skaalid