

## UVRA AGM 2021 Elder Academy Report

The UVRA EA Programming Committee began the new fiscal year by meeting on June 5th, 2020 under the Chairmanship of John Gunton. All members of the committee act in a volunteer capacity and meet monthly throughout the academic year. During the year, Jane Birkbeck resigned in September 2020 and Peggy Tully handed in her resignation effective at the end of May 2021. On behalf of the committee, I extend our thanks to Jane and Peggy for all past contributions. Dwight Owens joined the committee in January 2021. At June 1, 2021, the members of the committee will be David Docherty, John Gunton, Richard Chappell, Lou Schmidt, Barry Ming and Dwight Owens. Many thanks to all committee members for their hard work throughout the year contributing to the success of the EA program.

The planning period, which is the subject of this report, is the academic year September 2020 to June 2021. The year was exceptionally challenging because of restrictions brought about by COVID-19 protocols. The result was an announcement in March 2020 that programming for the foreseeable future would be using the Zoom virtual platform and that the balance of the 2019-2020 program would be re-scheduled as follows:

- a. Living Without Oil: 3 remaining sessions, originally scheduled for March 2020: an October re-start and the 3<sup>rd</sup> remaining session, a virtual panel discussion, would not be possible.
- b. Climate Change Anxiety: 5 sessions scheduled originally scheduled for May 2020 were postponed to November.
- c. Nutrition: Postponed the 4 sessions originally scheduled for June 2020.

It was further decided that to help mitigate an anticipated COVID-19 malaise in the community, 2 additional programs would be offered in August and September and therefore starting the 2020-2021 program earlier than in prior years.

The 2020-2021 program therefore began in August 2020 as described below:

August 2020: "Staying Active While Staying Home" (Registrants 77) – summer addition

September 2020: Biomedical Advances (Registrants 39) – summer addition

October: "Living Without Oil: Part 2" (Registrations 89) – postponed from March 2020

November: "Climate Change Anxiety" (Registrations 50) – postponed from May 2020

February: "End of Life Matters" (Registrations 89)

March: "Polar Opposites" (Registrations 54)

May: "Modern Day Democracy: Current Perspectives" (Registrants 58)

June: "Nutrition 2: Are We What We Eat" (Registrants ongoing) - postponed from June 2020

In total, there were 33 separate lectures offered during the year.

In January 2021 the committee started planning for the 2021-2022 academic year and a list of potential themes and topics are under discussion. Clearly there is significant uncertainty in how we will implement this plan and if and when in-person lectures can be held. The committee is prepared to react once guidance details become known.

I wish to extend heartfelt thanks to all committee members for their hard work and dedication for making Elder Academy such a success and to UVRA for their ongoing support. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of David Docherty who has become the face and voice of all our Zoom meetings and who so capably coordinates most of our Zoom programs enabling them to run smoothly. David also contributes substantially to many other aspects of the EA program. I particularly wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of Lou Schmidt who contributes significantly to the success of the program with energy and ideas. Fortunately, all the administrative work managed by Lou in prior years is now managed by Sanjit Roy who has joined the team as Administrator. Sanjit is a welcome addition to the EA team. One of Sanjit's many responsibilities is to maintain and keep up to date the Elder Academy website page which has turned out to be a most useful resource and can be found using the following link:

<https://www.uvic.ca/retirees/events/elder-academy/index.php>

John Arduini is mentioned and thanked as a volunteer contributor; John assists in the technical record keeping of all our Zoom presentations. We have been advised that making available the videos and slides to registrants of our presentations, serves as a useful teaching aid.

Finally, on behalf of the committee I wish to thank all the speakers who have voluntarily given of their time and talents. One of the hidden benefits of COVID-19 and our required use of Zoom is that we are able to call on speakers who are remote from the Capital Region which enhances our program enormously.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead and our hope that we will eventually return to offering our lectures in-person although there are certain benefits of presenting using Zoom technology and it may well be that the optimum presentation will be a hybrid arrangement.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Gunton', written in a cursive style.

John Gunton,  
Chairman, EA Programming Committee