



DR. DONALD SHEDD

Be assured that Dr. Don Shedd has had an impressive lifetime of personal and professional achievements. but he said he is most



proud of his wife Charlotte's accomplishment. He described her as a woman from Wichita Falls, Texas who went to nursing school and surprised him with her amazing organizational ability and inspiration when she headed a committee that started Hospice Buffalo. When she needed a medical presence on board, he became a member of the founding committee of Hospice.

He spent seven years as a caregiver after his wife was diagnosed with dementia. He had the assistance of part-time caregivers so that someone was with her every day. He said he knew what to expect. He was aware that the average time period from diagnosis to death is 13 years and six of those years may be spent in an institution. He said dementia presents specific challenges. He recalled two descriptors of Alzheimer's dementia that are self-explanatory – "the long goodbye" and "death by a thousand subtractions." He learned how to care for her deficiencies. He found "The 36-Hour Day" by Mace & Rabins to be very helpful during this time. His children were very supportive and he appreciated the tremendous help and support from the ministerial leadership and congregation at the Unitarian Church, especially at the time of his wife's death. They married in 1946

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COPING WITH THE DEATH OF OLD FRIENDS AND SIBLINGS

In our family, my dad used to say we'd all be partners till the droppin' off place. Growing up as the only girl with six brothers in a one-bathroom house, I have to admit there might have been times when

I looked forward to a few of them dropping. But then a funny thing happened. We grew up and became friends.

Now we're approaching the other end of life and the view is so much different from here. We don't talk about

...time is marching on for all of us whether or not.

how someday we'll have to say goodbye. I suspect that's because we can't even bear to think about it. Yet, the inevitable sad truth is that time is marching on for all of us whether we like it or not. And we like it we're getting pushed the front of the line. we're getting pushed to

> But it's not just brothers and sisters, because

there are others in our lives who we also consider family. You can't grow old friends, an old friend likes to remind me, and she's right.

These are people you knew in third grade, who remember your first bad boyfriend or girlfriend or when you wore bangs. You don't have to explain your world view, because they were around to help you shape it. In her book, Lots of Candles, Plenty of Cake, author Anna Quindlen captures the significance of these relationships.

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SUMMER 2017

Newsletter of Buffalo's Canopy of Neighbors



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OUT & ABOUT WITH CANOPY

SUMMER * 2017







Current Events with Keith Elkins: Join retired SUNY professor and co-founder of "Brainstormers," Keith Elkins, as he leads a lively and informative bi-monthly discussion on local, national and international current events at Canopy, 805 Delaware Ave, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month starting on June 21st from 11-12 pm. **No discussion group on July 5**th.

Please RSVP to Larry, 235-8133





COFFEE CLUB:

Starts promptly at 10 am at Canopy Office, 805 Delaware Ave. Monthly speaker series goes on hiatus for the summer to make room for fresh and exciting summer programming and trips. Join us in September as we launch the Fall Season with our first speaker Sarah Slavin, Ph.D, retired UB Political Science professor, author of a dozen books, specialist in the Presidency and Women in American Politics. Join us for a compelling hour on Thursday, September 14th from 10 - 11 am.

Free Event to all. Bring a friend. Please RSVP your attendance.



YOGA CLASS @ BAPTIST MANOR:

Chair YOGA to cultivate balance, strength, flexibility and tranquility. **MEETS EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 10:00**. For more information call the instructor *Athalie Joy at 830-6900*. **Free Event**



LUNCH @ HAMLIN HOUSE:

Enjoy lunch, tip, tax for \$10. Tuesday June 13th, Sept. 12th, Oct.10th, Nov. 14th and Dec.12th at 1 pm. No Lunch on July11th or August 8th. Cost to member

Get ready for Summer! Tuesday, July 11th and August 8th join us as we celebrate at Lake Effect Ice Cream at 1pm. Enjoy Lockport's famous "Lake Effect" ice cream at its newest location on Hertel Avenue. Cost of Ice Cream to member.



BUFFALO HARBOR CRUISES

Serving the Buffalo / Niagara region for over 40 years Miss Buffalo Cruise Trip: Get your sea legs ready for an afternoon on the water on Friday, July 14th at 12:30. Cost to Member. Admission price is \$17 plus refreshments.



Buffalo Botanical Garden Guided Trip:

Join us as we explore on Tuesday, August 1st at 12 pm. Cost to member \$12 plus refreshments. Must sign up by July19th.



IRISH CLASSICAL THEATER:

Join us on for full dress rehearsal on: Free Event
Curtain up at 7:30 pm. Ride pickups to start around 6:30 pm.
Resumes next Fall



MONTHLY MOVIE:

Join us as we go to movies together. Movies are picked the week of the outing. Time and theater to be announced. Resumes next September. Cost to Member



To Larry, 716-235-8133. Rides are available by volunteers to all activities.

Please RSVP to all Events.



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

In this issue, we recognize all of you who, by your generosity, enable Canopy to continue our mission to create new pathways to aging well and aging independently in community. As we move through our 7th year in operation, we remember the *selfishness* (yes,

the word is "selfishness" not "selflessness") of Canopy's founders who conceived of the idea 1 ½ years earlier. Neither Toby Laping, Liz Schreier nor I believe that our aging process is inherently a medical "problem". In our search for innovative approaches to aging well, we found we were not unique in wanting to focus on living well and independently within our urban community for as long as possible. A few years before we met together, a group of like-minded persons, in Boston, MA, created a community based group for just this purpose and named it Beacon Hill Village. Before long, this model spread across the United States and there are now 200+ other "villages" like Canopy. We will all be joining Beacon Hill Village in celebrating its 15th anniversary. The Village to Village Network, is bringing Dr. Atul Gawande, the acclaimed author of *Being Mortal*, to us in a unique and inspiring teleconference this September. Dr. Gawande also believes that "a life with meaning, a life as rich and full as possible under the circumstances [of aging]" is what is important. Keep September 25, 2017 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. open for a party not only to celebrate with Beacon Hill but to celebrate our many VOLUNTEERS - more details to follows.

Speaking of being innovative, last month, Canopy was recognized by the University of Buffalo's School of Management and School of Social Work as one of eight Western New York organizations seen as "using innovative methods to identify and focus on bringing about meaningful and sustainable change in our community". Our Executive Director, Sasha Yerkovich, was invited to participate in a day-long event which featured best-selling author, Seth Godin, a social innovation Guru who has written such books as Tribes, Purple Cow, Linchpin, and Meatball Sundae, as the keynote speaker. During the workshop's first segment, Sasha communicated Canopy's mission and challenges to a pre-registered group whose interests were aligned with ours. Following Seth Godin's presentation, the participants were charged with utilizing his methods and ideas on the challenges facing Canopy as we move to the next level. Sasha not only did a superb job but she seized the opportunity to build relationships with other socially motivated leaders and entrepreneurs. Liz Schreier and I are just bursting with founder's pride at the great job Sasha did and the many positive comments we heard while handing out Canopy information to attendees.

Lastly, it is great to announce that Keith Elkins, PhD, has agreed to moderate a current events forum at Canopy twice each month. Like all of our Canopy programs, Keith's will be open to the community and will be held in community space at our offices. See the enclosed flyer of all of our upcoming events and join us. Many thanks to Keith for sharing his expertise with all of us.

Gayle L. Eagan President

Dr. Donald Shedd...continued from page 1

and she died after they had over 60 years of marriage.

Nearing his 95th birthday in August, Dr. Shedd is now a member of Canopy of Neighbors but he began as a volunteer. Don't be misled into thinking he is slowing down. He describes the amount of learning from the web on his desktop as "a marvelous gift." He enjoys crossword puzzles, lots of reading, lectures, a good level of socialization, research online, and the pleasure of a supportive son and three daughters, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

What would you expect from a man who had a lifetime of achievements? After he graduated cum laude from the Yale University School of Medicine in 1946, he had active army duty serving as assistant chief of the surgical service at Camp Kilmer in New Jersey. It was common to have the Army, Navy or Public Health Service finance medical school during World War II in order to provide needed health services. The recipient of the education had to repay with two years of active service that took place for Dr. Shedd from 1947 to 1949. He served a surgical research fellowship

and residency in general surgery at Yale New Haven Hospital. He was appointed to the faculty of the department of surgery of Yale University School of Medicine, then chief of the department of head and neck surgery at Roswell Park Cancer Institute where he continued until his first retirement in 1996 and then retired again as a consultant in 2000. He has published five books, three of them on the history of medicine. He said he is "proud to have been part of a team of doctors, nurses and other personnel who brought relief to many patients who suffered from tumors of the head and neck."

He is also proud to say that he was one of those fifty veterans who had the privilege of being taken by the Buffalo chapter of Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. to see the war memorials from WWII, the Vietnam War and the Korean War. Dr. Shedd has a remarkable memory of dates and events in his lifetime. He said he has "no serious absent-minded episodes" as he continues lifelong learning by exploring subjects, such as the differences between Sunni and Shia Muslims, on his desktop computer.

— Marian Deutschman



is joined by Keith Elkins and Jennifer Fitzery for a reading from her TV Movie "Johnny Bull."

Actress Kathleen Betsko









Lilliia Owcharenko inspired with her amazing stories and graceful dance performance.







Members joined us for our annual tea party celebrating May, visiting with each other and enjoying gourmet delicacies.

"Why I Dolunteer:"

Members joined us on a spring morning to force

Paperwhite bulbs for a beautiful home garden.

• By giving to others, I receive – get back – from them at least as much as I give them. It's always satisfying to do something for someone that they can't do for themselves, or without assistance. And the folks I help are almost invariably grateful and show it with anything from just a smile to a warm "Thank You" to tears of gratitude. And it's always fun chatting with them swapping stories, "comparing notes" about aging, or just bemoaning the ever-changing Buffalo weather. And when I help someone setup their new printer or get their old one running again, that provides an added bonus: We're both thrilled and shout "HOORAY!"

~ Jeff Fleischmann

- I started volunteering at Canopy as a way to deal with the loss of my mother. She became ill while living a great distance from me and the rest of her children, and there was no organization like Canopy to do the types of errands, etc., that she could no longer take care of. I stay with Canopy because of the people. From the staff to the other volunteers, and especially the members, each person is nicer than the last.
- Because I enjoy getting to know the members.

 Because I want to make a contribution to the community.

 Because it feels good to help people.

 ~ David Steffan

~ Ruth Keating

"Why I Belong to Canopy..."

• Canopy became part of my life because of a car accident. A distracted driver crossed into my lane and hit my car head-on. October 31, 2016 was a day my life almost stopped. However much I was broken, I was alive and recovery was very possible. And after 2-1/2 months at the Erie County Medical Center, I slowly gained strength and the ability to move. I was fearful about being discharged home; how was I going to take care of myself? Filling prescriptions, obtaining food, medical appointments, and doing what I use to do with ease, now, involved hours of planning which wore me out. Before I was discharged, a friend I talked to about Canopy of Neighbors took it upon herself to enroll me in their program. In January, 2017 I met with Executive Director, Sasha Yerkovich. Her enthusiasm for Canopy and what it could do to help me, pushed back my fears, provided me with reasons to face my world. I learned Canopy has volunteer drivers who could take others and me in the same situation to our different appointments. I found Canopy offered a social life. The positive advantage was meeting another human being. We could talk and share each other's good or bad luck stories. One volunteer driver taking me to the JCC for open swim, asked if I would mind meeting an hour earlier to go to the Central Library for their book club, and then on to the JCC for the open swim. I readily agreed. I renewed my library card, lost in the accident, and took

out a few books; first time in 5 months. Because of a Canopy program and a Canopy volunteer driver I saw the final dress rehearsal at the Irish Classical Theater of "The Winslow Boy." The above is only a small part of the activities Canopy of Neighbors offers to the community. Nevertheless, what Canopy has helped me with over 4 1/2 months has made my life during recovery a very positive adventure. I appreciate Larry, the voice on the telephone calling to ask, "how are you doing Tom? Do you need anything?" He lifted my spirits every time he called. Thank you, Larry. Thank you Sasha, Canopy of Neighbors, and all the volunteers I've met and those I've not met, but are volunteering to help other people with needs like I have. ~ *Thomas E. Hayduk*

- After being with Canopy of Neighbors as a volunteer since its beginning 5 years ago, I became a member in 2017 because I need its services now.
 I totally agree with and appreciate Canopy's mission and feel the organization, and what it does for all its members is terrific. ~Delight Dann
- Canopy has been a lifesaver. I have often used the service for doctors' appointments. The drivers arrive promptly, are good humored, don't mind waiting a little when a doctor is late. I enjoy conversing with them, finding them to be interesting and good companions. My thanks to the Canopy volunteers and to the dedicated staff who work so effectively to make it all happen.~ Murray Levine

Coping with the Death of Old Friends and Siblings...continued from page 1

"The thing about old friends is not that they love you but that they know you," she writes.

The Natural Order of Life

On an intellectual level, I know that part of life is death, yet I struggle to reconcile this unfair, if inherent, consequence. "In the second half of our lives, we experience more losses," says Alan Wolfelt, an author, grief counselor and founder of the Center for Loss and Life Transition. "With aging comes the inevitable deaths of those we love. It's hard, yes," he adds, "but it's also a time of opportunity to live, love and mourn as fully as we can."

It's important to understand that for some, the loss of a friend can be more impactful than if it was a family member. — Molly Ruggles, psychologist

These losses run deep, in part because the relationships are formed over a lifetime. Wolfelt says that even though we take on different roles as we move through life, we never lose our initial identity as the "child of" or the "brother/sister of." And I would include the "friend of." Wolfelt points out that one of the essential needs of mourning is to explore the change in our identity when these dynamics change.

Acknowledging Our Loss

I wonder if the world understands that these connections aren't secondary, especially when I hear someone say how alone he or she felt when suffering this type of loss. There doesn't seem to be much research on the subject, either. And where are the books or support groups for adults who have lost a sibling or lifelong friend? "We call it a disenfranchised loss, which is one not recognized as important by others or society," says Molly Ruggles, a psychologist at the Center for Grief, Loss & Transition in St. Paul, Minn., a program of Family-Means. "But it's important to understand that for some, the loss of a friend can be more impactful than if it was a family member."

"Certain kinds of loss are often minimized," says Wolfelt, "and the result is that we can end up as what I call forgotten mourners. We're grieving inside, but people don't seem to notice or appreciate the depth of our feelings." What can make it even harder for boomers, Ruggles says, is that this may happen at the same time we're experiencing additional losses, like retirement, kids leaving home or saying goodbye to a beloved pet. Being in the midst of other losses can intensify grief symptoms, she says.

Moving Forward

What's the hardest part of getting older? It's not aches and wrinkles. Not even close. When Quindlen asks that question at the end of her book, Meryl Streep gives the simple but profound answer: losing friends. But even though we can't stop any of this from happening, we're not powerless, either. For those of you who have already been dealt this blow, make sure to honor your loss, regardless of whether it's recognized by others. Wolfelt

suggests starting by sharing what you're feeling. "Tell someone. Write a letter to the people who died or to someone else who loved them. Cry openly. Find a grief buddy, one that's also grieving a significant loss, and agree to support each other," he says.

If you don't have a support system in place, work on getting one. Ruggles says that's what allows us to better adapt to adverse situations and is a primary factor in our psychological resilience. Also, take care of your relationships. "Don't leave unsaid how you feel about those in your life," she adds. We need to acknowledge, befriend and express our thoughts and feelings each day, recommends Wolfelt. "If we practice living authentically in this manner, not only will our lives take on greater depth and meaning, but we'll also be better equipped to encounter grief," he says.

Taking Care of Each Other

And when our turn comes to be supportive, Ruggles reminds us, reach out. "People need someone they can talk to," she says. "Grief can be such an isolating experience." She also advises to be available to a grieving person for however long you're needed. "Grief doesn't magically resolve or go away just because the loss was a year ago," she says. "It can mean a lot for people to know that others in their life are aware that they're hurting and that they are cared for."

It's true that, as we get older, the droppin' off place isn't as far off as it used to be. But there's still time for us to reexamine what's important if we need to. Maybe only from here can we start to see just how short life really is. It's also only from here that I can look back on a lifetime of laughter, regrets, growing pains and the wonder of how I ever survived with just one bathroom and all those brothers. I can't change the inevitable, so I won't spend this fleeting time on the sadness I know someday will be heartbreaking. But I will renew a promise to myself never to waste a chance to share a conversation or a campfire with my family and friends.

"Every day is indeed a gift, even when we're feeling normal and necessary grief," Wolfelt says. "If we remember to express ourselves and reach out to connect with others, we can find meaning and purpose through it all."

—Debbie Reslock

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NEW PROGRAM!

Join us at Canopy for a discussion of local, national and international current events with Keith Elkins – "Current Events with Keith." The discussion group, moderated by Keith, will meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday's of each month, from 11-12 pm at Canopy, 805 Delaware

Avenue. Call 235-8133 for information.

THANK YOU...Our sincere thanks and gratitude to the individuals, corporations and foundations who have supported Canopy of Neighbors and its mission through their financial support in 2016.

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**In Memoriam (By): For:

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805 Delaware Avenue Buffalo, NY 14209-2005

Email: Info@CanopyOfNeighbors.org

Phone: (716) 235-8133

Web://www.CanopyOfNeighbors.org

This newsletter is a publication of Canopy of Neighbors, Inc. in Buffalo, New York.

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Thank You.

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Canopy of Neighbors creates new pathways to aging well and aging independently in community.

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