

Sri Lankan 55+ Group Gathers for Food, Program

The Committee of Sri Lankan 55+ Group conducted a meeting recently to finalize indoor and outdoor full-day fellowship programs.

The group decided to select a venue closer to Sri Lankan community living in Winnipeg. For this the committee checked with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) and they informed the availability of few Access Centres, out of which on Pembina Highway, 135, Plaza Drive, Access Centre is the closest to us.

Getting Busy

Bookings were made until end of 2019 (with a room that can accommodate 40 persons, with screen and projector facility) and a kitchen (with necessary utensils). The kitchen is adjacent to this room. Out of these bookings our first episode was conducted on Nov. 15, 2018 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

It was a weekday and some members were unable to come as their children were at work. As a result, rides were arranged so they can come. Children committed to send their parents for the event, with 35 members participating.

A group (Sunimal, Sumana, Indra & Shrima) agreed to take over the kitchen to prepare tea/coffee, snacks and lunch (vegetable-fried rice, lentil & chicken curry with coconut sambol).

Community Outreach

As 55+ Group is affiliated with Sri Lankan Association of Manitoba (SLAM) we invited the President of SLAM. They nominated a Board Member, Tharanga, who helped us to handle all audio-visual activities during the event.

Patty Berube (Senior Resource Coordinator) conducted a presentation to provide information on referral and community outreach opportunities for older adults, such as social and recreation programs, transportation options, home maintenance referrals, housing options and meal/grocery programs.

One of the committee members, Hemasiri, helped organize a mini library that allowed members to borrow books and return at the next gathering of our group. He requested members to donate their books to increase the number of books in the library. He also selected old Sinhala movie songs, as well as the movie, with original scenery.

Another member, Nieva Embuldeniya, also shared her experiences as a national boxing judge from 1986-1997. Nieva reached international level in 1999, during the Pan-Am Games in Winnipeg. She also served as judge in the 2012 London Olympics.

Understanding Culture

Sahra Shire, a Neighborhood Immigrant Settlement worker from Family Dynamics was also invited to explain her services such as English classes, employment, health and care /recreation and help develop better understanding of Canadian culture and skills.

A movie (released in 2003) and produced by National Film Corporation, was shown to cap the event. One of the movie's main actors (Jayalath Manoratne) happens to be in the hospital after a surgery when the movie was shown. All wished him a speedy recovery. (SENAKA A. SAMARASINGHE)

