

BILL BROOKS' CALGARY

Saluting remarkable folks at Top 7 Over 70 Gala



BILL BROOKS

That our North American culture marginalizes seniors is shameful indeed. Asian cultures — and many European ones as well — revere their seniors. Ours seems to have an inverse relationship between age and value. The older one gets, the less 'value' one seems to have. And yet there are scores of those of a 'certain age' who are doing remarkable things. Look no further for examples than those amazing individuals recently honoured at the inaugural Top 7 Over 70 awards Oct. 2 at the Hyatt Regency. The awards were conceived by Jim Gray, the legendary oilpatch pioneer and philanthropist. One of the key goals of the initiative is to tap into the economic potential that seniors possess. To that end, the Top 7 Over 70 is creating a slate of inter-generational workshops and roundtables in collaboration with Calgary Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement, the Haskayne School of Business and the Hunter Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

The inaugural awards gala was sold out weeks prior, evidence of the traction this fantastic initiative. It's rare that a first-time event can be this successful. Kudos to the small army of volunteers who made it a hit: Top 7 Over 70 founder and patron chair Jim Gray; patron chair Linda McNally; executive committee co-chairs Bonnie DuPont, Brian Felesky and Steve Allan; gala committee co-chairs Elizabeth Carson and Kim McConnell; marketing and media chair, Calgary Herald deputy editor Monica Zurovski; steering committee members Bob Brawn, Mary Rozsa de Coquet, David Chalack and George Brookman, to name a few.

But the big take a bow sentiments are reserved for the honorees: Dr. Richard Guy, recipient of the Citation of Unique Merit who, at 101, is a sought-after mathematician who teaches, mentors, publishes and lectures; 80-year-old marathoner Gerry Miller, who is one of the fastest in his age category; Calgary's DataHive owner Marjorie Zingle, 81; Dr. Amin Ghali, 89, educational leader and author; legendary philanthropist, Don Seaman, 92; educator and author Vera Goodman who is 83; JUNO Award nominee, performer, clinician, adjudicator, composer, arranger and studio recording artist Al Muirhead who, at the age of 78 (he is now 81) became the oldest JUNO Award nominee; and Alan Fergusson, 83, a physicist and developer of the immune support supplement Immuno-Care. Others in attendance are pictured.

Let's all vow to try to do even half of what these inspirational folks have accomplished. The world will be a much better place as a result.



Pictured, from left, at the inaugural Top 7 Over 70 Gala held Oct. 2 at the Hyatt Regency, are honorees Dr. Amin Ghali, Al Muirhead, Gerry Miller, Don Seaman, Vera Goodman, Alan Fergusson, Dr. Richard Guy and Marjorie Zingle. The event saluted amazing seniors who make our city the best in which to live, work and play. PHOTOS: BILL BROOKS



Pictured, from left, at the inaugural Top 7 Over 70 Gala, are executive committee members Steve Allan (co-chair), Jim Gray (founder), Bonnie DuPont (co-chair) and Brian Felesky (co-chair).



Top 7 Over 70 honoree Marjorie Zingle, centre, with her husband Del Zingle and goddaughter Brenda Yackle.



Pictured with Top 7 Over 70 honoree Don Seaman are his proud daughters, Donna Kanovsky, left, of Kanovsky Foundation, and Marilou Seaman.



Pictured with Top 7 Over 70 honoree Alan Fergusson, left, are his wife Eleanor Fergusson and good friends June and Jack Davidson.



Top 7 Over 70 honoree Vera Goodman, second from left, with her grandson Bryce Blomfield, her granddaughter Rachel Blomfield and her daughter Susan Blomfield.



From left: marketing and media committee chair Monica Zurovski with gala committee co-chairs Kim McConnell and Elizabeth Carson.



Pictured, from left, are Bob and Julie Hamilton with SC Infrastructure CEO Paul Giannelia.



Top 7 Over 70 honoree Dr. Amin Ghali and his son Bill Ghali.



Top 7 Over 70 honoree Gerry Miller and his wife Gwen Berthelette. Miller is one of the top five marathoners in the world in his age category.



U of C's Sherry Dahl with Calgary Senior's Resource Society's Phil Levson.



Dean and Ellen Brawn.



Devon Energy's Allan Hargreaves and his wife Patti Grier, who is with Calgary Academy.