

Bubbies & Zaidas Blogging

Internet Lifestyle for Seniors

9 bloggers

6 guest bloggers

6 peer tutors

5 youth volunteers

1 Blog: <http://bubbiesandzaidasblogging.blogspot.ca/>

4710 blog views

91 Facebook Subscribers



The Bubbies & Zaidas Blogging has been a tremendous success meeting our goals of increased social participation & senior leadership. As well as intergenerational leadership

Key to this success is the relationships with our **partners** which include:

- The Calgary Jewish Community Centre
- New Horizons for Seniors
- The Calgary Jewish Academy,
- The University of Calgary
- Jewish Family Services,
- The Jewish Historical Society
- The Foundation Lab.

Funding was received in May, planning started immediately and the class began meeting weekly in mid September of 2013 and scheduled to end in May of 2014.

The Participants:

9 dedicated Bloggers. 6 guest bloggers 6 self identified tutors including 2 bloggers who also tutor folks in using the computers. Our volunteers are learning about blogging while sharing their knowledge of computers

Total participants over 65 years of age: 21

In February we had an exchange with students at The Calgary Jewish Academy with 5 youth. The seniors mentored the youth with their experiences and the youth taught the seniors about online and computer tools. With their help we created 6 videos that will be resources for the school and the blog. In late May the Bloggers will share the stories with the entire schools.



Youth Exchange

5 youth from The Calgary Jewish Academy spent time listening to our stories and teaching us to make movies!



Volunteers Tutors

This would not be possible without our volunteers who tutor and support one on one, in class and in some cases out of class time.

6 volunteers total
108 volunteer hours



The Blog

Digital Eldering

The Foundation Lab had been looking for a way to launch into digital eldering and this project with the Calgary Jewish Community Centre was just the opportunity. By offering skill development for interested older adults, access to the internet and patient leaders and tutors students have developed the capacities and desire to build their own blog and tell their stories. Through the remarkable technology available to us today, seniors are able to see that they are being seen and heard via the internet.

The Bubbies & Zaida's Blogging site has had over 4710 views in the 7 months we have been posting. We can track our most popular posts and in doing that we are getting a sense of what our audience wants and likes.

Our Most Popular Blogs:

<http://bubbiesandzaidasblogging.blogspot.ca/2013/12/not-married-no-children-oh-my.html>

<http://bubbiesandzaidasblogging.blogspot.ca/2013/11/remembering-more-than-sacrifice.html>

We also have a facebook page that allows us to promote the blog site. <https://www.facebook.com/bubbiesandzaidasblogging>

We have 91 dedicated followers to our Facebook group and the stats tell us that although we do have an audience of seniors the majority of our readership are women between the ages of 35 -44

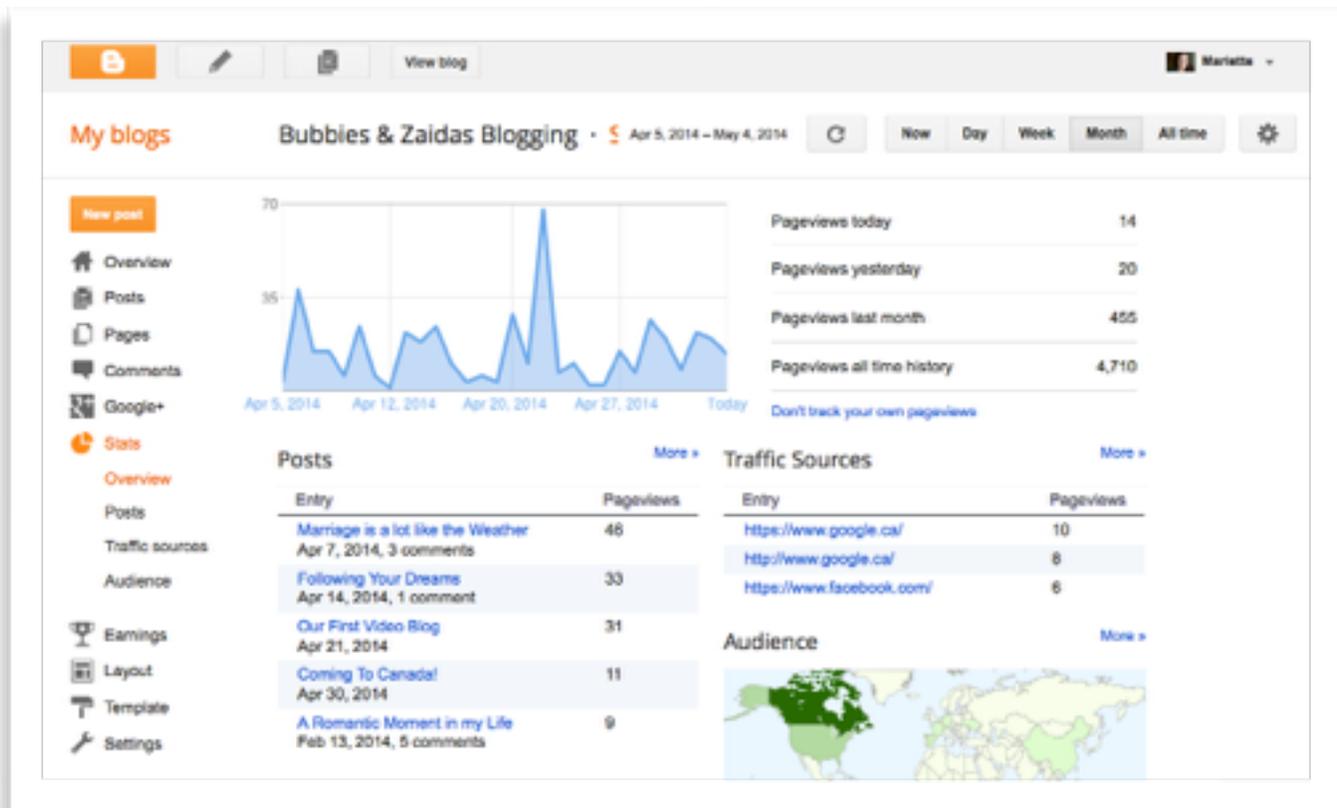
The Audience response has been quite remarkable:

"You have a smile and grace that makes people around you want to be better human beings as well. Thank you Amalia, your story was exactly what I needed to read this morning." B'shalom, Katie B

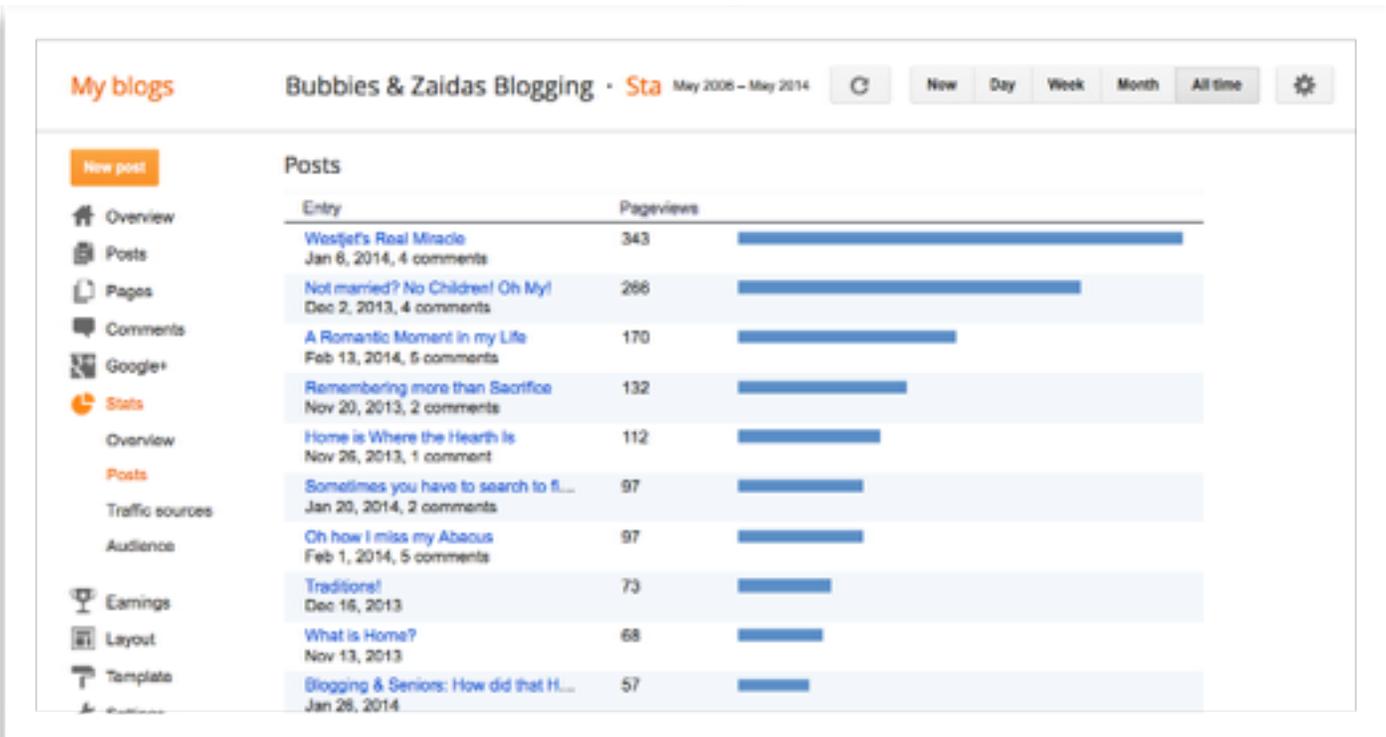
"Thank you so much for sharing this story. It's important to hear about experiences like yours. So many of us have struggled with these questions!" Sugarlove

"I found this to be a very moving blog. What to remember, and how to, so we prevent war and evil is one of the most worthwhile explorations we can do, and your lived experience lends a lot to this. I still have a frog in my throat. I think it is extremely important for us to have a day to remember wars, soldiers, and sacrifice. However, I wish the day before we do that, there was an equal effort to remember the failures of conscience, politics, diplomacy, and humanity that aggregate to make wars and evil happen. This requires us to remember richer histories, to see ourselves, and each other as potential players in these tragedies, and recognize what is required of us to be responsible humans, so we and future generations live with less evil in the world. You sharing your experiences with us is an important part of that." Scott

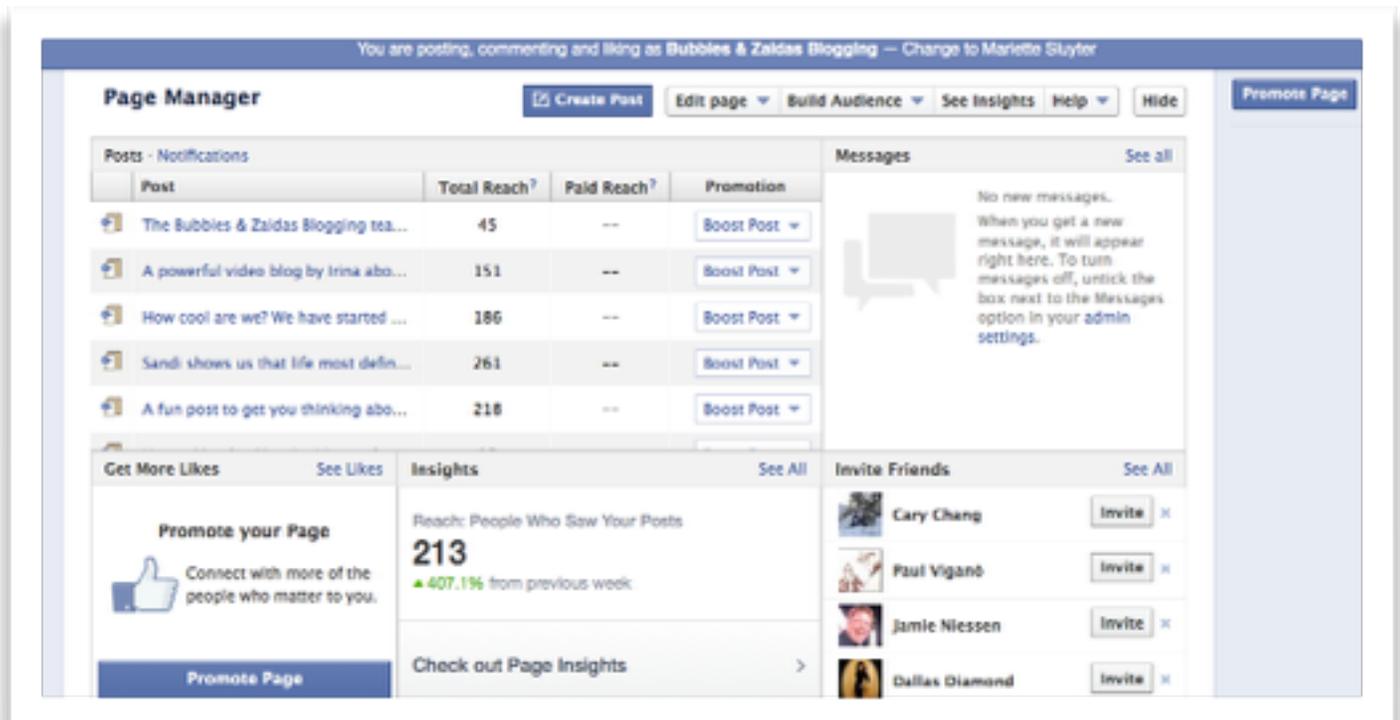
Guest to our blog as of May 5th 2014 - total views 4710



Our most popular stories



Our Facebook Page with 91 subscribers



Participant Testimonials

Leadership Capacity from Within

"I have learned so much about myself in writing the blog"
Bruce Eekma, tutor & blogger



"I have been part of the Blogging initiative as both a participant and iPad mentor. This project has been both educational and transformative! I have witnessed 70 and 80 year olds enthusiastically learning to use a computer for the first time! I have also witnessed the pride and sense of mastery when participants have been able to see their blogs on the screen and see how they have been received. The class atmosphere has been relaxed and non-judgemental and this has allowed for willingness and courage to try new things. A worthwhile endeavor." Norma Karlinsky

"I have been retired for five years and have become a "lost soul". I miss the work force very much.

Through taking this course, I avoid isolation as I am committed to attending every Wednesday. I have also met wonderful people who share a mutual interest.

I have had an interest in writing for many years...Writing in a positive and constructive manner as compared to writing in a "routine negative" manner is great for the aging brain...it makes a person think "outside the box"...this is what I need to do at this time in my life."
Sandi Starling



I really enjoyed working with Bob. It was neat to see that people had such interesting lives. These people did so much. It was cool. Micah, student & video maker

Participant Response

Reflections & Outcomes

The personal growth has been tremendous. Participants have been met where they are at. Some had no computer experience, some were struggling with medical limitations, some with social limitation. In taking a supportive and inclusive approach participants are able to engage in any way they identify as helpful.

There have been relationships built, which support the reduction of isolation in older adults.

I want to draw attention to two participants, Irina & Sandi. Irina has been struggling at home because her husband is very sick. She struggles to leave him but it is very important for her to go out and engage with the world so she can come home and be there for him. Sandi struggles with relationships and is very isolated. I sat them together knowing their sensitivities and thinking they were a good match. Irina was clearly moved by the video and the conversation but felt that she couldn't write things down as English is a second language. Sandi promised to listen and to type for her. The class flew by and I checked in on how they were doing. Sandi informed me that they were planning to meet on Friday, outside of class, to continue the conversation at the centre. This is important for both women. In terms of reducing social isolation this is the perfect outcome. Both feel a responsibility to something greater (the blog) and are moving out of their comfort zones in order to support the greater good, but will develop personal health in the process" Mariette Sluyter, facilitator

Through this process Irina has been willing to speak more in public and even tell her amazing story on camera. View her story here: <http://youtu.be/a9F6cNf3nRc>

"When I first joined the Senior Blogging group there was some scepticism. We started writing our own stories and it is unbelievable how many good stories were produced. We now talk amongst each other and helped one another and I learned, and hope others do to, a lot about myself. Now when we meet once a week I'm surprised at how these Seniors embrace this new way of communicating. I believe that after when we graduate we will have a Senior Blog completely run own produced for and by seniors. Personally I hope to get some Seniors out of the bedrooms or basements operating giant dinosaurs into the world of Wi-Fi where one can go into the backyard or playgrounds like younger people do. So here is my salute to Senior Power and Happy Blogging" Bruce Eekma.

77.7% of evaluation respondents report an increased capacity for using computers

Outcomes

measuring personal growth

Bob Petersen, one of the students took it upon himself to write a testimonial as a blog post that was very powerful and spoke to the power of having an audience. We know that many older adults feel more isolated and start to doubt the value of their contribution. Bob clearly articulates the power of reaching an audience ranging from 300 - 4000 people.

How Blogging Has Affected People in the Class By Bob Peterson

- 1) It has allowed seniors an opportunity to reflect on topics presented by our instructor and encouraged seniors to share how their own lives were lived or shaped dealing with that particular situation.
- 2) Recently Blogging web site contacts have chosen to make comments about the seniors stories, and we have instantly become part of a much greater community.
- 3) It is interesting to read about the paths that others have walked before us and it broadens our knowledge of history that was often overlooked in earlier times.
- 4) Blogging has encouraged us to learn computer skills which have opened up so many opportunities for us to access information instantly
- 5) it has made us realize how mind boggling technology has been progressing from year to year, and we wonder what the possibilities are waiting for us in the future.

You can read the whole post here: <http://bubbiesandzaidasblogging.blogspot.ca/2014/01/blogging-seniors-how-did-that-happen.html>

It is hard to measure these intangibles. Participants stepping out of isolation to engage, or students reading the blog and getting a different perspective on seniors but one outcome is very real. 88.8% of evaluation respondents report an increased confidence in leadership

Most telling is the response to the request we had from some seniors who hadn't taken the course to do it next year. When it became clear that The Foundation Lab could not participate next year the class stepped up and said they would gladly start a computer club, since the community centre had the computers & access to the internet.

They would happily teach people what they knew and were very confident that they had the skills to learn what they didn't know. This means the computer tutors will continue, with minimal support needed from the Jewish Community Centre except a room and access to the computers. In terms of a community development project you can't hope for better outcomes as this clearly indicates that the seniors found the confidence they needed to be leaders and the broader community sees them as leaders.

88.8 percent of evaluation respondents agreed they would continue as a peer mentor

Outputs

See What We Have Done

Here are all the many places you can see our work

Our Blog

<http://bubbiesandzaidasblogging.blogspot.ca/>

Our Youtube videos

<http://youtu.be/YAJXuybo3PA>

http://youtu.be/47DCHG5f_1U

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abVsMIO5wMM>

http://youtu.be/wgKMIELFG_Q

<http://youtu.be/a9F6cNf3nRc>

<http://youtu.be/9dl3xo7nOII>

You can visit our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/bubbiesandzaidasblogging?fref=ts>