

# ACA News

Spring 2018 | Vol. 50 No. 5

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Louise Swift and family— How We Live  
Celebrate Volunteers!

Universal Pharmacare is Coming  
Save the Date: AGM June 18

## Alberta Council on Aging

Working to improve the quality of life for seniors

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# [Mission Statement]

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for seniors and encourage their participation in all aspects of community by educating seniors and the public and by advising government.

## On the Cover

Louise Swift and grandsons  
Ziggy Swift-Bessai and  
Justin Swift-Bessai. Photo by  
Lorraine Swift at Vancouver  
Harbor

## How are we doing?

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Views expressed in this  
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Region 9 (East Central): Dwayne Hlady

### Staff

Executive Director: Donna Durand  
Community Outreach Coordinator: Laureen Guldbrandsen

## Contact Us

**Directors and staff may be reached through  
Alberta Council on Aging office.**

Alberta Council on Aging	Phone: 780.423.7781
PO Box 62099	Toll Free: 1.888.423.9666
Edmonton, Alberta	info@acaging.ca
T5M 4B5	www.acaging.ca



## President's Report

As I write this report, the ground is buried under a deep layer of snow, and the temperature is well below freezing. Hopefully spring will have arrived by the time this edition of ACA News is delivered to you, and we can all get on with cleaning up after a winter that was far too long!

As part of increasing the visibility and awareness of Alberta Council on Aging, and to support and welcome Gordon Nott, our new director for Region 8, I attended the annual meeting of the Medicine Hat Senior Citizens Advisory Council in February.

I presented a brief overview of the history, mission and membership of Alberta Council on Aging, followed by a question and answer session, to a



Ron Rose, Laureen Guldbrandsen, Community Outreach Coordinator, and Gordon Nott, Director

group of over 100 seniors. I was encouraged by the energy and enthusiasm shown by seniors in 'the Hat'. Many thanks to the Senior Citizens Advisory Council for the invitation to attend their meeting.

On June 18 we will be holding our Annual General Meeting in Edmonton. Register by contacting the office. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Now, let's get on with welcoming spring!

Respectfully submitted,  
Ron Rose



April 3, 2018

### Letter of Support: TJ Harvey's [motion on VisitABILITY \(M-157\)](#)

Alberta Council on Aging works to improve the quality of life for seniors. One of the ways it does this is by aligning its programs and publications with Age Friendly initiatives as announced by World Health Organization. We view VisitABILITY as being a useful tool to ensure when planning, designing and implementing for communities, spaces and homes, **all people of all ability are given consideration.**

"Planning and modifications to universal design standards are needed if we are to ensure that Canada has communities, spaces, and homes where Canadians can be as independent as possible, active in our communities and age in place."

TJ Harvey, MP, Tobique-Mactaquac

We strongly support TJ Harvey's motion on VisitABILITY M-157 as we share the same vision for barrier free environments and aging in place.

Sincerely,

Ron Rose, President

## Executive Director's Report

This issue is about choices that will enhance and support wellbeing as we age. Do you ever think about how and where you will live in the future? Will you adapt your home or living situation in order to be independent? Will you move to a more supportive environment if needed? (See Brenda Josephs tips on choosing a retirement residence, page 11.) These questions lead to more questions... why do we design and live in spaces that impose barriers? Alberta Council on Aging is keen on promoting age friendly environments and takes the opportunity to support TJ Harvey's motion on VisitAbility, see letter of support on page 3.

Louise Swift's story, page 6 inspires. She and her family members pooled their resources many years ago to a positive result. The choice may have been deliberate to share a house however the outcomes are far reaching as you will see. As much as many of us may live our lives with a *come what may attitude*, change will most certainly come.

Recently, this was brought home to me through a friend's mishap. 56-years-old, healthy and in a non-traditional trade, she twisted and broke her tibia and fibula bones in the ankle and lay on the cold ground, on a -20 degree night in February, for a few hours waiting for an ambulance. Once in emergency, and after being medicated, her ankle was re-positioned and she was told she could go home by cab and await surgery. Surgery would take place in any number of days, in a different

hospital—this was Thursday night of a long weekend. Somehow, in spite of the brain fog and disorientation, she knew she did not live in an environment where she could even enter due to steps both at each entrance including from garage into the house. One nurse, who picked up on her anxiety about being discharged, told her she could stay in emergency if she felt safer. Four days later she had surgery. As it would be several weeks before she could weight bear, she could no longer work, use her sporty little car, get into her house, access her washroom or shower, or prepare meals. In a case such as this, what if she is unable to return to work? How will she pay for medications? There has been a lot of attention and talk on universal pharmacare. Dr. Steve Morgan, out of UBC, is leading the way in pressing for a national pharmacare plan, page 10.

ACA staff and volunteers were pleased to deliver the Recognizing Fraud program in and around March Fraud Prevention month. This program, as well as all the Senior Friendly™ programs we publish and deliver, is to bring awareness and potential change to language, environments, programs, services and ultimately quality of life. We have the means to age well. Let's share our ideas, plans and outcomes rather than taking a passive *come what may* attitude.

Stay well,  
Donna



# [Resources]

## Housing Information and Resources

Living in the home and community of choice is possible as you age. Here are some resources that can help you do that.

### Seniors Programs and Services Guide

Alberta Seniors and Housing has created a document listing many of the programs and services available to older people in Alberta. This document can be found online, or a print copy may be requested.

Call: 1.877.644.9992

<http://www.seniors.alberta.ca/seniors/seniors-forms.html>

### Seniors Housing Registry

The Alberta Seniors Communities and Housing Association has a free online provincial housing directory that allows users to sort by location, organization, project, support services and application criteria.

Call: 780.439.6473

<http://www.ascha.com>

### Maintaining Seniors' Independence Through Home Adaptations

This Guide identifies the types of difficulties that seniors can experience and describes types of adaptations that can help overcome these difficulties.

<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/61087.pdf?fr=144231848914>

### Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Canada's national housing agency offers programs and publications to modify your home to continue living in it comfortably for longer. There is also a program in place to help pay for some home adaptations.

Call: 1.800.668.2642

<http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca>

### Landlord and Tenants

The Residential Tenancies Act explains how a landlord or tenant may end a tenancy, how and when rent can be increased, security deposit requirements and remedies available to landlords and tenants. Service Alberta provides a handbook designed to explain these rights and responsibilities.

<http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/RTA-handbook-and-quick-reference-guide.cfm>

### Alberta Seniors' Advocate

The Alberta Seniors' Advocate is a part of the Alberta Health Advocates. They can assist seniors and their families understand and access seniors' services.

Phone: 780.422.1812 or toll free by dialing 310.0000 and then the number above

<http://www.albertahealthadvocates.ca>

### Family and Community Support Services

FCSS uses a "people helping people to help themselves" approach and offers a wide range of programs and services at the community level. Through FCSS, communities offer programs, home support services, information, and referrals.

<http://fcssaa.org/offices>

## Three Generations Family Home

By Donna Durand

Louise Swift thought the idea of sharing a household with her adult daughter and her partner was a practical thing to do. A natural next step in the evolution of their lives... Her daughter Lorraine and partner Frank had been in Nicaragua for four years working for the Change for Children organization. They returned to Canada with the goal to start a family. Louise had been living with a friend whose family situation had changed, leaving Louise in a position of seeking accommodation. So the three set out to find a home that would suit their needs as well as that of forthcoming children.

Louise's mother passed away when she was young, leaving several siblings of which Louise helped to raise. Once married, Louise managed their home and primarily looked after the children. Years later, she was quite happy to offer this service to her daughter's little family. She would look after the children as an alternative to day home or day care as both Lorraine and Frank worked outside the home. As Louise has many outside interests from being an active member of Edmonton Raging Grannies to political activism, evenings often found Louise off shift and away from the home.

Louise would like to see a significant tax credit for raising children. She expressed much more recognition needs to be given to the parent who stays home in the early years. There is still a loss of value for the one who takes on this role.

The way this home is organized creates togetherness yet with privacy for the generations. Main floor is predominantly Louise's with shared kitchen and living room. Downstairs is a rumpus room, where mainly the younger cohabitants like to hang out with their friends. The upper floor is for Louise's daughter and two grandchildren's bedrooms and washroom.

When we are visiting with Louise to talk about this multi-generational family, her grandson and a few friends were home on a school break. He had just turned eleven. Later, when their mothers come to pick up the friends we notice the respect and regard they paid Louise. One boy was about to head out the front door and turned back to quietly say "thanks for having me." Once the friends had left, Justin seemed quite happy to join us. We coaxed him to play us a tune on the piano as he has just started taking lessons. We also asked him what he will do for a career. He mentions he may be a doctor. We have a little discussion about specializing in aging.



Louise Swift with the Edmonton Raging Grannies at the Legislature at the declaration ceremony on International Day of Older Persons. Swift is a shining example of volunteerism!

We ask him what he likes best about this living arrangement. Because he has lived this way all his life, he looks a little puzzled. "When everyone is away, I feel good. I feel safe because Grandma is here." We learn what Justin's favourite supper meal is and you too have the opportunity to make this fabulous dish of which Louise's family enjoys so much!

We asked Justin about the learning exchange and he says he doesn't teach his Grandma anything as she knows everything! He is quick with technology and shares his skills with Louise. Justin says his Grandma in turn helps teach him not to quarrel with his sibling.

One does wonder how a three generation household manages conflict. Louise is clear about not interfering with the parents as they parent. She also said that when the three adults set out to find a home they believed this could be done. They did not set out to fail.

We ask if there has ever been a discussion about what the living situation will be in the future should Louise require additional support.

Louise indicated this had never come up.

This is a discussion that is as important as the one about caring for the children in the early years. Although it was not an expectation at the front end, we do know in terms of advocacy it's important to know who has our back and how this will play out in the future.

We leave all the richer for this experience. I am seeing Louise through the eyes of her grandson. She is a super hero! A loving, kind super hero disguised as an ordinary woman living an extraordinary life.

## Corn Flake Chicken

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken breasts  
(cut each breast into 3 or 4 pieces)
- 4 cups crushed Corn Flakes  
(I prefer crushing them in a plastic bag with a rolling pin)
- 1 cup sour cream diluted with several tablespoons of milk or coffee creamer or you can use buttermilk
- Melted butter
- Salt and Pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350\*
- Dip each chicken breast in sour cream or buttermilk to coat and then in the corn flake crumbs
- Put in a greased baking dish
- Pour about 1 tablespoon of melted butter on each chicken breast and season with salt and pepper to taste
- Bake for 40 to 45 minutes



# [Internet Safety Tips]

## Keep Your Identity Safe Online

By Johnson Inc.

The Internet has become a tool that most Canadians use on a daily basis. However, with more and more people logging on to the World Wide Web, there has been an increased risk of identity theft.

Identity theft is when someone knowingly gains access to and utilizes personal information such as credit card numbers, social insurance numbers, or your name for their own use, it's estimated that identity theft costs \$2.5 billion per year.

Once you're aware of the risks, it's easier to avoid becoming a victim of identity theft. Here are some tips to keep your information safe:

### Practice caution on public WiFi networks

You can access the Internet just about anywhere these days and it's common for people to access the Internet from coffee shops, restaurants, the airport, etc. But if you're not using a secure, trusted connection—such as the one that should be in your home—be careful of your online behaviour. In most cases, public WiFi networks are not secure, allowing hackers\* the opportunity to gain access to your personal information if you make an online order, log into your bank account, document files, or even just log into your email.

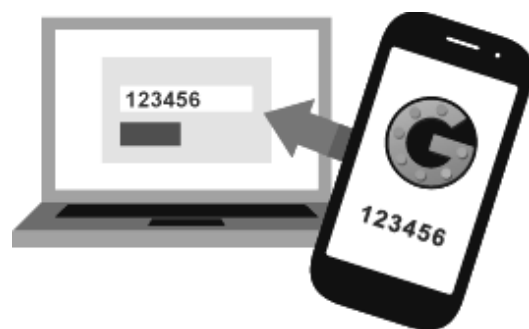


### Keep an eye out for spam emails

Phishing\* campaigns are attempts to steal your personal information. They are usually sent via email, asking the user to click on an attachment or submit their social security number by clicking on a link. Many will disguise themselves as your bank or the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) to get this information. The bottom line – while most email platforms are good at weeding out spam, if an email looks fishy, it probably is. Delete these emails and never give your personal information out to a suspicious source.

Your bank and the CRA will never send you an email asking for your personal information or your username and password.

### Use double verification



Using double verification to access your Google account, bank account, or your PayPal account can enhance its security. Double verification will permit you to log in from the computer and submit a code that's sent to your phone. It can help guard against phishing.



## Switch up your passwords

For convenience's sake, you may have the same password to log into your bank account, for your email, for Facebook, for your credit card, etc. Be sure that these passwords are all different and not easy to guess. If a hacker were to crack your password to one account, they'd then have access to all your accounts if the passwords are consistent across the board. When choosing a password, make sure it's a combination of characters, numerals, and special characters.

## Shop only on secure websites



Always look for the little padlock at the top left of your screen, next to the URL when shopping online. If it's there, that's the sign of a secure website. If it's not, exercise caution. Any website that's not reputable could put you at risk.

## Don't share personal info on social networks

You don't want to give potential thieves any help when it comes to your identity. You should stay away from posting personal information on your social networks like Facebook and Twitter. Turn off GPS tracking technology on these networks, make sure your profiles are set to private, and only accept friends and followers that you know and trust.

Identity theft may be on the rise, but by taking the proper precautions, you can enjoy the World Wide Web worry free.

## Definitions

**A hacker** is an individual who uses computer, networking or other skills to overcome a technical problem. The term hacker may refer to anyone with technical skills, but it often refers to a person who uses his or her abilities to gain unauthorized access to systems or networks in order to commit crimes. A hacker may, for example, steal information to hurt people via identity theft, damage or bring down systems and, often, hold those systems hostage to collect ransom.

**Phishing** is a form of fraud in which an attacker masquerades as a reputable entity or person in email or other communication channels. The attacker uses phishing emails to distribute malicious links or attachments that can perform a variety of functions, including the extraction of login credentials or account information from victims.

**Personal Information** is information that can be used on its own or with other information to identify, contact, or locate a single person, or to identify an individual in context. This includes, but is not limited to, full name, address, social insurance number, birthdate, contact information, medical information, gender, ethnicity, age, place of business, etc.

## On Pharmacare

By Dr. Steve Morgan



Steve Morgan is a Professor in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Campus.

Universal pharmacare—a universal drug plan integrated into Canada’s universal Medicare system—is long overdue. It has been recommended by every national commission on Canadian health care dating back to the 1940s. And for good reason.

Every other developed country with a universal healthcare system provides universal coverage of prescription drugs. They do so because, when prescribed and used appropriately, prescription drugs can be the most cost-effective way to provide healthcare. They also do so because universal drug coverage can be a powerful way to control the cost of medicines.

In Canada, public drug plans only cover limited populations, such as seniors, social assistance recipients, or people whose drug costs are

“catastrophic” relative to their incomes. Private drug insurance is available to about two-thirds of Canadian workers, but is not easily obtained by Canadians who are retired, self-employed, part-time workers, or employees of small companies.

Canada’s patchwork in drug coverage creates access barriers and fragments our purchasing power on the world market for pharmaceuticals.

As a result of gaps in Canada’s patchwork of public and private drug plans, about one in ten Canadians can’t afford to fill their prescriptions as directed. Working age Canadians—who do not qualify for age-based public drug coverage offered in many provinces—are three times more likely to skip prescriptions because of costs than similarly-aged people in countries with universal drug coverage. Research suggests this could be resulting in thousands of hospitalizations and hundreds of premature deaths every year.

Universal access to medicines is sufficient motivation to implement universal drug coverage. But universal, public pharmacare promises to save money as well. A lot of money.

Numerous studies, including a 2017 report by the Parliamentary Budget Officer, indicate that universal, public pharmacare would save Canadians \$4 billion or more every year. It would do so by using the power of bulk purchasing medicines on behalf of the entire population, which drives prices down considerably, and by giving healthcare managers, prescribers, and patients the incentive and capacity to only use medicines when appropriate and only when appropriately priced.

The proof is found in countries like Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, and the United

Kingdom. All of these countries have universal, public drug coverage as part of their universal, public health care systems. They achieve better access to medicines than Canada does and spend an average of \$330 less per capita on pharmaceuticals than Canadians do today.

If Canada was to build a pharmacare system that performed like the ones in comparable healthcare systems, more than a million Canadians would be able to fill prescriptions they are unable to afford today, while patients, employers, unions, and taxpayers would save about \$11 billion per year.

The only problem with universal, public pharmacare is that it threatens the profits of the

pharmaceutical and insurance industries that benefit from the waste in Canada's patchwork of private and public drug plans today. Those industries are lobbying governments to do anything but implement a truly universal pharmacare system.

So, despite 70 years of recommendations for universal pharmacare, governments won't implement it unless voters insist they do. This means that Canadians who want our country to achieve better access to medicines at lower costs will need to fight for pharmacare. They will need to read credible evidence, talk to friends and family, sign petitions, and write to MPs and MLAs.

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## Tips for Touring a Retirement Residence

By Brenda Josephs

Retirement residences vary whether they are public and/or privately funded and operated. There are also differences in the programs and services offered. When considering a retirement residence, visit several, and go prepared with a list of questions. Keep notes and record your impressions as this will help you choose the residence best suited to your personal needs, budget and interests.

- While touring a retirement residence, talk to the residents about their perceptions
- Plan to stay or return another day for a complimentary lunch or dinner

- Don't limit your tour to a suite and common areas. Ask to see the kitchen, stairwells and other less traveled areas to see how well they are cleaned and maintained
- Enquire about a trial visit or an overnight stay
- Ask for copies of any paperwork required for admission (lease documents, standards and other forms) along with samples of menus, activity calendars and newsletters
- Ask what provisions and services are available when someone requires additional care

Aim to be proactive about changes that may enhance the quality of your life. Many people find living in congregate housing brings improved social life, mobility and nutrition.



# [Quality of Life]

## Recognizing Fraud

Fraud Prevention Month is an annual public awareness campaign held in March that aims to prevent Canadians from becoming victims of fraud by helping them recognize, reject and report it.

Alberta Council on Aging partnered with Johnson Inc., Medicine Hat FCSS, Camrose Wise Owls and Camrose Police Services, City of Hinton, St. Andrews Centre in Edmonton, and Rural Outreach Services in Fairview to bring Recognizing Fraud presentations to communities across the province. We were fortunate to have many media outlets join us at our events.

The Recognizing Fraud program is designed to raise awareness about fraudulent activities. It is a guideline to help seniors, their families and the general public know what types of scams are occurring and what strategies they can use to make good decisions regarding scams and fraud. The goal is to reduce senior's vulnerability to fraud and financial abuse.

We reached over 200 seniors directly through these presentations.

Just because March is over doesn't mean we stop learning! Alberta Council on Aging's Senior Friendly™ Programs are available year-round, many of which are also on our website. You can learn more about the programs we offer by contacting our office directly at 1.888.423.9666 or on our website at [acaging.ca/community-outreach](http://acaging.ca/community-outreach).

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

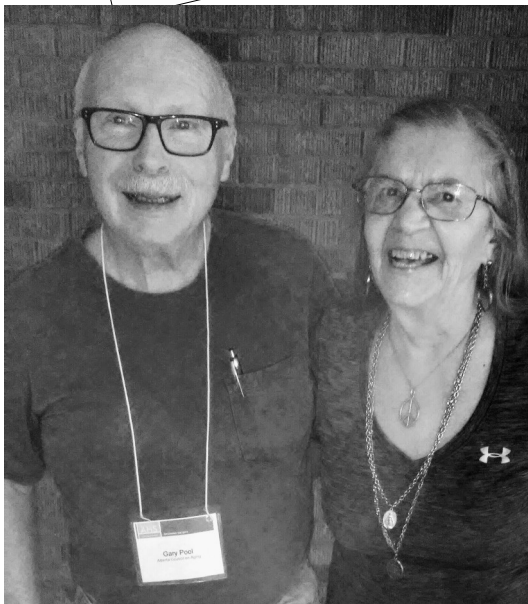


Participants at Recognizing Fraud in Medicine Hat on February 21

Date: March 27/18 Location: ...  
 Presentation: Recognizing Fraud  
 Your feedback is important to us. Please take a moment to fill in the following: poor, fair, good, excellent are fine as descriptors, or you may use your own.  
 Usefulness of presentation was: Very Helpful!!!  
 Space was: Excellent + thanks 4 coffee/cookies!!!  
 Handouts were: NA  
 What was the most important part of the presentation to you?  
Recognizing we were not victims!!  
 I will use this information when I... answer a phone call  
& hear one of these scams!!!  
 I would also like to learn about... Great Start!!!  
 You may include your name and contact information if you like. Thank You  
 Name: NA Phone: NA  
 E-Mail: NA  
 Thank you!  
Great energy & presentation I knew lots more about fraud!!!  
Thanks!!!



Wise Owl volunteers Jeff Strandquist and Bernie Williams meet and greet guests at Camrose Recognizing Fraud March 1



Gary Pool with participant Lee Kitlarchuk at Edmonton Recognizing Fraud March 27



Camrose county reeve Don Gregorwich (front left) and Camrose Mayor Norm Mayer (front middle) sign a proclamation for fraud prevention week March 1 at the Camrose Recreation Centre with Mary Durand of the Camrose Wise Owls (front right) and (back from left) Camrose Police Service Crime Prevention and Community Relations officer Cst. Kelly Bauer, CPS Deputy Chief Lee Foreman, and Donna Durand  
 Photo: Josh Aldrich

# Key Talking Points

In order to strengthen the voice of Alberta Council on Aging, the Board of Directors use the following as guidelines for discussion.

## **Housing**

- seniors desire to reside in a place appropriate to their circumstances
- living environments such as outdoor spaces and buildings must support seniors to maintain themselves in the community

## **Finances**

- seniors need to have adequate financial resources to meet their needs
- current supports for seniors are often based on a means tests which looks at income but fails to consider other expenses that may be incurred
- recommendation that needs testing be used to compliment current means tests and be related to individual needs

## **Continuing Care**

- continuing care services for Albertans often impose significant costs for seniors
- support efforts to make continuing care services clearly and consistently defined
- affordable for all seniors

## **Transportation**

- recommendation the provincial government undertake a review as to how transportation for seniors can be improved
- seniors require equal access to services wherever they live

## **Health**

- equal access to emergency care, surgeries, hospitalization and treatment such as rehabilitation and medications
- seamless delivery of publicly funded and delivered programs and services
- clear standards and eligibility for programs and services
- expanded legislation for Protection for Persons in Care

## **Elder Abuse**

- envision a world free of abuse
- work toward this aim through developing community partnerships
- make appropriate referrals for reporting and receiving help
- influence legislations which protect older persons



## How Are We Doing?

ACA is reviewing the strategic plan to give direction over the next three years. We value your input on the following questions. **Please return completed survey through mail or email by May 15.** Thank you!

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for seniors and encourage their participation in all aspects of community by educating seniors and the public and by advising government.

1. In your opinion, does ACA meet its goal of:
  - a. Encouraging seniors to participate in the community ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
  - b. Educating seniors and public ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
  - c. Advising government ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
2. Has your life been improved by the efforts of ACA? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
3. Are there other goals / issues the board should consider? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

4. The board has established the following key points. Please rank your **TOP 2** priorities (1 or 2):

- |                                          |                                         |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing         | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finances        | <input type="checkbox"/> Health         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Elder Abuse    |

5. Is ACA meeting its mission statement by focusing on these key points? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
6. ACA offers presentations and publications. Please check those you are aware of, or in which you have been a participant.

- |                                                                                |                                                 |                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Friendly™ Program Overview                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing Fraud      | <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizing Abuse       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre and Post Retirement Planning                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Living Stronger Longer | <input type="checkbox"/> Let's Talk Dementia     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Let's Talk Ageism                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy Tips          | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigating for Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seniors Forum - a facilitated participants discussion |                                                 |                                                  |

7. ACA uses the quarterly newsletter, website, email, Facebook, Twitter and local meetings to communicate with members. Are you being reached through these means?  
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

# [Seasonal Story]

## Spring — April/98

By Moneca Wilson



This year, Spring has had a few false starts. We had a couple of balmy weeks in January and again in February, but experience and common sense restrained me from putting away my winter boots. However, yesterday, I heard the raucous call of crows, the honking of an unseen flock of geese, and I saw two robins in the fir tree. I was thrilled to see the birds—it was like meeting old friends I hadn't seen for awhile. The season has turned; spring is back.

There is a small park across the street from my home and I walk through it and over its foot bridge on my way to the grocery store. The park is dreary, the grass brown and brittle, the trees dark and leafless. Only the pale green of the willow bushes at the creek's edge hint of things to come. By chance, while walking home one late afternoon last week, I met a young man at the far end of the bridge, a college student, who was taking photographs of the little white bridge and the creek flowing through snow-lined banks. I stopped to talk. "It is much prettier in the summertime," I felt obliged to say.

"It is lovely now," he said, "See the glint of the sun's rays on the branches and the shimmering light on the creek and in the tree tops. This is the loveliest bridge in the city," he added with enthusiasm. Well! I had forgotten how the eyes of youth perceive beauty spontaneously, how nature beckons to those who are aware.

I, too, saw things that way once upon a time—although that may have been a challenge for us who grew up on the treeless prairies. I remember, though, the landscape had its own beauty. Even the winter with its snow-wrapped fields and crimped and sculptured drifts had a unique splendour.

But it was the joyous coming of Spring that spread a cornucopia of loveliness across our land. The days warmed and little brown hilltops crept out from under their snow blankets and, almost instantly, the shy purple crocus appeared on the southern slopes. We tramped through the slushy snow to see those blossoms and to feel their furry leaves. We were forbidden to pick them.

In a farming community, the approach of Spring meant making preparations to seed the land and the garden. By mid-March, the seed catalogues were dog-eared and spindly little tomato and cabbage plants grew in soup tins lined up on window sills.

About then Granddad moved his harness "horse" into a corner of the big kitchen where he spent hours astride the bench with its upright vice-like head, sewing and repairing harness. Often the wonderful smell of leather and leather oil drifted through the house on drafts of warm air from the kitchen stove. When he wasn't using the bench, the young children climbed on and galloped across imaginary meadows.

We loved the sound of water dripping in big shiny droplets from sun-warmed roofs, to trickle down the hill. Finally, in small streams the melted snow filled the sloughs across the fields. Sometimes the small slough in the barnyard froze over during a cold snap and we were in skaters' paradise. We skated everyday after school, and at night by moonlight, flying back and forth through silvery space.

Today my feelings evoked by Spring's arrival are not as keen, tempered by my different responsibilities such as the dandelion invasion, fences in need of repair, and gutter cleaning. But now another generation — the young man on the bridge, and my grandchildren—are in my former space. That is a comforting thought.

# Volunteer Appreciation ★

For 51 years, Alberta Council on Aging has relied on the actions of volunteers. Today, we have many volunteers across the province—as board members, program delivery volunteers, Senior Friendly™ Train the Trainers, casino volunteers, newsletter and program editors, etc.

Thank you to all volunteers for the hard work you do. You are appreciated!



Here's to the everyday heroes,  
The volunteers who do what they can,  
To ease the suffering of others,  
And be of service to their fellow man.  
May they know the true satisfaction  
That comes from helping others  
Less fortunate than themselves,  
But no less their sisters and brothers.  
May they feel the gratitude in our hearts  
For all of the good that they've done.  
The appreciation that we all feel for them  
Is truly second to none.  
~Anonymous



## Region 4 (Edmonton Area)

Region 4 held a Recognizing Fraud meeting March 27 at St. Andrews Centre. In spite of the unseasonable snow we had a good turnout of about 35 people and the discussion was quite lively.

In addition, I attended two Senior Task Force meetings. The hot topics were prescription coverage and long term care issues. In spite of the recent Federal budget which suggests the government will study prescription coverage further, this remains a major issue. Results of previous studies have not resulted in significant actions.

I represented ACA in a meeting with the Health Coalition of Alberta and several United Conservative Party MLA's. The main issues discussed were access to health care and access to medication. There was a good two way discussion at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Pool

### Looking for Casino Volunteers!

Yellowhead Casino, Edmonton  
June 16 and June 17

We need between 20 and 25 people to work the casino effectively. Volunteers from out of Edmonton will be reimbursed for mileage and out of pocket expenses using the Alberta Liquor and Gaming Commission guideline.

Contact 780.423.7781 for more information

## Region 5 (Central Alberta)

Region 5 continues to present bimonthly information sessions for seniors. The program team, led by Shirley Thomas and Jane Grenier-Frank, have done a great job of selecting and arranging for speakers on timely topics. These programs are designed to help improve the quality of life of seniors by increasing their awareness to social pressures as well as resources available in this region.



The topic for our February meeting was Fraud Protection and Home Safety. A very informative session was lead by Constable Grace Jeanveau of the RCMP. The presentation, followed by a question and answer session, emphasized the reality of today that there are more people trying to deceive you for money or personal information by telephone, internet and face to face. The basic message was to double check before responding to any request for money or personal information that you may receive. Also, be careful of who you let enter your home.

The status of the Red Deer Regional Hospital continues to be a concern of the Region 5 Board and constituents of this area. Some progress has been made as the latest Provincial Budget has a small amount of money designated to start planning to correct the identified shortcomings of the hospital.

Respectfully submitted,  
Keith Sterling

## Region 6 (Calgary Area)

### Welcome Brenda Josephs!

Originally from Manitoba, I grew up in Calgary and lived for a few years in the Fraser Valley, B.C. My career began with the golf industry, and when we moved back to Calgary in 2002 I was fortunate enough to begin my second career in the senior living industry. Married to Ron, we have five amazing children and two Yorkies that keep us entertained and busy!



Completing my degree in Gerontology, April 2018, complements my consulting company, working with developers and operators of Senior Living communities. I am also taking a life coaching course to enable me to promote positive mental health with seniors. I am passionate about person-centered care for seniors, challenging ageism, and lifelong learning.

I am a volunteer with Calgary Seniors Resource Society and am delighted to join the Board of Directors for the Alberta Council on Aging.

Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Josephs

### Greetings from Region 6

Region Six is planning a free presentation for April 26. The topic is the insurance products made available to ACA members through Johnson Inc. Several members have expressed an interest in learning more about these products.

Please join me in welcoming Brenda Josephs as regional director. Brenda was part of the past planning committee and has delivered Senior Friendly™ Programs across our region.

Please take time to connect with either of us. We are always looking for ideas and, of course, welcome any volunteers to help plan future direction for Region 6.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank Hoebarth

### Calgary & Area Meeting

Thursday, April 26th  
10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Huntington Hills Pioneers Association  
520—78th Avenue NW



#### Guest speaker

Jessica Simpson on Johnson Inc products:  
MEDOC Travel Insurance and  
THRIVE Health and Dental Coverage

To register contact  
office@acaging.ca or 1.888.423.9666

# [Regional Reports]

## Region 8 (South East)

### Welcome Gordon Nott!

My thirty-three year career in telecommunications began in Medicine Hat, took me to Fort McMurray and ended in Edmonton. The following ten years working at the Robin Association for the Handicapped in Sherwood Park were the most gratifying of my working career.



Community volunteering, including membership on church and community boards and assisting at Summer, Winter and Special Olympics, has been a major part of my post-career life. Coming back to my parents in Medicine Hat triggered the desire to give back to the community. Observing a lack of social and family support for many seniors inspired me to get involved with opportunities to help ensure the best possible life style for seniors in Medicine Hat. This resulted in me becoming a member of the City of Medicine Hat Senior Citizens Advisory Committee for the past six years.

In January, I accepted the role of Region 8 Director for Alberta Council on Aging. The numbers of our aging population is increasing dramatically in coming years and our challenge will be to help ensure the very best possible quality of life.

### Greetings from the Southeast Region

The first quarter of 2018 has been a get acquainted time for me, having assumed the position as Director of the Southeast Region in January.

On February 21, ACA Community Outreach Coordinator, Laureen Guldbrandsen, came to Medicine Hat and delivered a very worthwhile presentation on Recognizing Fraud. This session, attended by 37 seniors at the Strathcona Centre, provided good opportunity for questions and concerns to be addressed.

A great afternoon was had by all at the Teddies and Tea event held at the Strathcona Centre on March 28. A grade one class and a number of seniors gathered together for a fun time of story telling, teddy bear sharing and a good cup of tea and goodies served in the finest china.

There is growing excitement amongst the seniors in Medicine Hat as the construction of a replacement for our Seniors Centre, inoperable due to the June 2013 flood, is progressing on schedule with an anticipated grand opening this summer. It will be a wonderful centre where the many seniors in our community can reconnect and enjoy their new "home away from home".

I would encourage any seniors groups in the Southeast Region to contact me with information about any seniors activities planned for your community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gordon Nott

## What Have We Been Up To?

### **January 9—Seniors Health Priority Setting Partnership Teleconference**

Alberta Council on Aging supported the Seniors Health Strategic Clinical Network™ research priority setting partnership. The project gathers input from older adults, their caregivers, and clinicians on the issues that they feel are most important for future research in seniors' health. We took part in the survey and encouraged others to do so.

### **February 15—Primary Health Care Integration Coalition Committee Meeting**

The Primary Health Care Integration Network is focused on improving transitions of care between primary healthcare providers and acute care, emergency departments, specialized services and other community services.

We have a role to play in representing the older people who have a story to tell regarding their experiences with these systems. Integrated health services is a priority of Alberta Council on Aging.

### **February 28—Alberta Curriculum Roundtable Discussion**

We participated in the curriculum roundtable with Minister of Education David Eggen and Seniors and Housing Minister Lori Sigurdson. We shared our thoughts on how to strengthen and improve Alberta's K-12 curriculum. There was a call for organizational submissions, of which we responded to, giving emphasis on the utilization of the Senior Friendly™ Program.

### **March 5—Life My Way with Lifestyle Options**

The advisory council met via teleconference to review and discuss the draft Final Report of the Life My Way Butterfly Home Project funded under the Alberta Dementia Strategy.

### **March 14—Health Coalition of Alberta Meeting**

We attended this meeting with the Health Coalition of Alberta and Edmonton MLAs. This meeting focused on the two core priorities of the Coalition: access to care and access to medications.

### **March 14—Private Versus Public Health Care Forum**

We were invited to a public forum on the topic of private versus public health care. Political parties as well as health care researchers presented their positions on this topic. On the panel were Dr. Bob Turner (NDP), Dr. David Swann (Liberal), Steven Mandel (Alberta Party) Sheryl McCumsey (Green Party), Dr. Raine (prof), Dr. Church (prof), and Dr. Donna Wilson (prof). Absent was UCP rep.

Dr. Church was adamant that research shows private health care does not offer better services and that the evidence and research exists that shows health care needs to be publicly delivered.

The entire panel seemed to favour public health promotion and prevention vs sick care.



## [Donations]

Thank you for your donations. Your contributions matter!

- Bertha Johnson
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- Laurence Younker
- Louis and Pamela Honore
- Margaret Mary Standen
- Marion Field
- Venise Corkery
- Anonymous

## [To and From Our Members]

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoyed the feature article by Millie Glick. It was well written and as I am going through similar hearing problems I can relate to all the information of hearing loss. Now, I'm in the process of reviewing all the different hearing aids on the market. There are so many companies selling many different kinds of aids that it is confusing.

Has ACA ever done a session on choosing and the use of hearing aids for seniors? Or do you know of any group other than a company that has vested interest in selling same?

Regards,  
Joyce Melnyk

**Editor's Note:** We referred Joyce to Deaf and Hear Alberta ([deafandhearalberta.ca/](http://deafandhearalberta.ca/)) and Canadian Hard of Hearing Association ([www.chha-ed.com/](http://www.chha-ed.com/)).

### 51st Annual General Meeting

Monday, June 18

1:30 PM—4:00 PM

Chateau Louis Hotel & Conference Centre  
11727 Kingsway NW



#### Guest Speaker

Winston Gereluk on  
the History of Medicare

To register contact  
[office@acaging.ca](mailto:office@acaging.ca) or 1.888.423.9666



# [Membership]

## Alberta Council on Aging Members Receive

- Access to a unique provincial network
- A voice representative of thousands of members and older persons that speaks with government on issues and concerns relevant to seniors
- Voting privileges at the Annual General Meeting
- Access to helpful resources
- Subscription to ACA News—published quarterly
- Meaningful volunteer opportunities
- Eligibility to apply for Johnson Inc. MEDOC travel insurance

**If you have not renewed your 2018 membership, please do so at your earliest convenience.**

**Please Note:** Members may request either an electronic or a hard copy version of the newsletter by contacting the office.

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