



ACA News

Summer 2018 | Vol. 51 No. 1

Living in the Moment

Alberta Council on Aging

Working to improve the quality of life for seniors

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[Mission Statement]

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

Jody and Dave McCoppen

Cover photo and article by
Donna Durand

Annual Report 2017

available online

<https://buff.ly/2N3HYd2>

President's and Executive
Director's reports in this issue
are excerpts from
Annual Report 2017



Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of ACA. The council reserves the right to condense, rewrite and reject material.

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Region 6 (Calgary area): Frank Hoebarth
Brenda Josephs
Region 8 (Southeast): Gordon Nott

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Executive Director: Donna Durand
Community Outreach Coordinator: Laureen Guldbrandsen

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President's Report

My term as ACA President began quite unexpectedly with the resignation of Fred Olsen in August 2017. To say there was a bit of a learning curve involved in filling the president's shoes would be an understatement! Since that day, the board has held three meetings. We have welcomed four new regional directors (Kim Winger, Keith Sterling, Brenda Josephs, and Gordon Nott), and accepted two resignations (Paul Boisvert and Dwayne Hlady). We're currently seeking directors for Regions 3, 7 and 9. In November, I attended a seniors' advisory forum, hosted by Alberta Seniors and Housing, in Calgary. The forum provided an opportunity to share information and perspectives for the development of strategies to deal with three key priorities set by the minister: ageism, aging in community (housing and supports) and labour force participation of older workers. In

February I attended the annual meeting of the Medicine Hat Senior Citizens Advisory Council. I presented information on the history and mission of Alberta Council on Aging. I was encouraged by the energy and enthusiasm shown by seniors in 'the Hat'. In March I attended Alberta Seniors Communities and Housing (ASCHA) Convention and Tradeshow in Red Deer. ASCHA is a provincial organization serving the senior's housing sector. Its members include non-profit, public and private housing providers. The convention provided insight into initiatives of Alberta Seniors and Housing and Alberta Health in dealing with our aging population. Our next major effort has been preparing for the development of a strategic plan for Alberta Council on Aging, mapping our direction for the next three years. Stay tuned! In closing, I wish to thank the board members, regional executives and office staff for their patience and guidance – it's very much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Ron Rose



2018 Board of Directors Back Row L to R : Kim Winger, Keith Sterling, Ron Rose, Brenda Josephs
Front Row: Gary Pool, Jennifer Wrzosek, Frank Hoebarth, Gail Hiller, Gordon Nott

Executive Director's Report

Coming in to the 51st year with Alberta Council on Aging also meant completion of the strategic plan the board of directors developed five years ago. As well as extending our reach to members and older persons, partnerships were identified as high priority. Meetings with government of all levels to discuss concerns affecting the quality of life for seniors and possible solutions, have been key.

A milestone arose both for Alberta Council on Aging and seniors of the province as International Day for Older Persons (October 1) was declared at the legislature. Imbedded in the speech Alberta Council on Aging delivered at the proclamation was the clarion call to identify and respond to the age wave with enthusiasm and practical solutions rather than dread.

A second and equally significant invitation Alberta Council on Aging responded to was to provide input to Alberta Education's curriculum framework development. Centering on the concept that aging is a natural progression of life, we hope to bring awareness to young learners of an age friendly world where people of all ages actively participate in community activities and where all citizens are treated with respect, regardless of their **age**.

What does a fresh new vision look like? **People age with the confidence they will stay connected**, in their communities- to the people and activities they care about and policies, services and programs will ensure this.

I am immensely honoured to work with the members, board of directors, numerous volunteers, partnering agencies and officemate, Laureen, as we aim to maintain and improve the quality of life for older persons.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Durand

Strategic Planning



The objective of the first planning day, June 19, was to review the value of a plan, to develop greater understanding about the environmental factors that may affect the success of Alberta Council on Aging, to reflect on the mission statement, and determine where the organization might be headed.

The next strategic planning session is set to happen mid-September.



Kim Ghostkeeper, Culture and Tourism, Community Development facilitator

Survey Says!

In the Winter 2018 issue readers were asked to fill out a survey and send it back to us, and the results are in!

While most people who responded to the survey were from Alberta, we did have a few of our out of province members participating as well. Thank you to everyone who took the time to answer the survey.

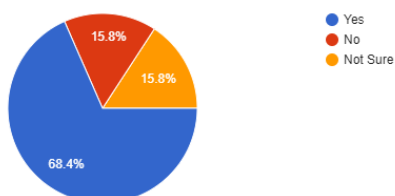
Our member survey feeds into the upcoming strategic plan, allowing us to take into consideration individual members comments and opinions.

“ACA is doing wonderful in this time of much uncertainty. My wife and I are very happy to live in Alberta and Canada. So many resources for us seniors.”

~Anonymous

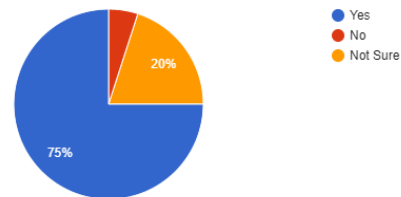
ACA uses the quarterly newsletter, website, email, Facebook, Twitter and local meetings to communicate with members. Are you being reached through these means?

19 responses



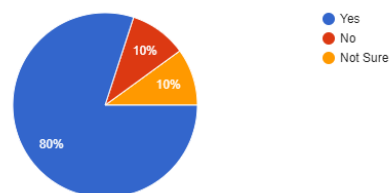
In your opinion, does ACA meet its goal of encouraging seniors to participate in the community

20 responses



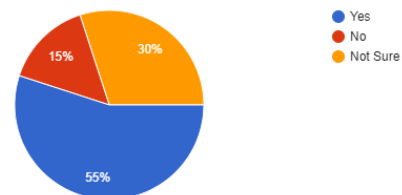
In your opinion, does ACA meet its goal of educating seniors and public

20 responses



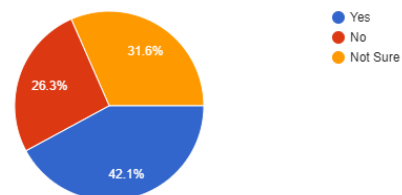
In your opinion, does ACA meet its goal of advising government

20 responses



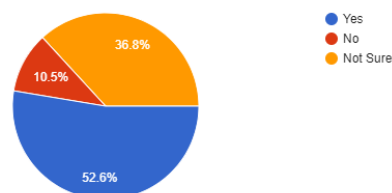
Has your life been improved by the efforts of ACA?

19 responses



Is ACA meeting its mission statement by focusing on these key points?

19 responses



Living in the Moment

Jody and Dave McCoppen and I tour a conference space in preparation for an upcoming event. We then sit down for a snack and chat. This is our first meeting. The conversation is soon that of old friends. We laugh, we share some of our worries... and our little life celebrations.

The next time we meet, more of Jody and Dave's story unravels. They are early retirees. They enjoy simple things like short walks, the pool, gym, time with friends and family. They are anticipating the engagement of their son and are thoroughly enjoying their daughter's little family, which includes their second grandchild. Dave likes the sharing of household chores, and Jody is a significant volunteer providing database building and creating newsletter and additional communications for a non-profit organization.

They share all this with a smile. They are relishing being on the other side of huge unanticipated life changes.

On our third meeting, I hear more about these changes. Jody, a lab technician, was worried about Dave, an air conditioner technician, who has both Alzheimer's disease in his family as well as bipolar disorder. And while she was concerned about Dave, she was also experiencing changes to her cognition. She coded poorly in a mini-mental (short version of the Folstein Test). Dave also tested poorly on the mini-mental and an additional test. Jody described feeling as though she was pushing

to get past medical people who were brushing off their respective cognitive changes. Dave was initially told his memory loss was random, "he's ok". Eventually, Jody was diagnosed with adrenal fatigue and Dave with early onset dementia. Jody was 57, Dave 61.

Jody reflects on how life has changed and speaks of a new norm...

We have learned to be *in the moment*.

"I was a planner!" Jody laughs. We have routines established, however, we know things can change and that's okay. Once we had a diagnosis and I started to learn about my disorder and dementia, I changed. I had to stop being fixed on what's right, what's wrong. I learned not to correct or argue with Dave because we had been grinding like sandpaper. We had family secrets, as families do, however, dementia lifted the lid. And there is relief when that happens. It is a blessing to share one's thoughts and feelings honestly and openly.

And what are Dave's reflections each time we meet?

I am looking forward to getting back to work. I don't worry about Alzheimer's disease. One day there will be a cure. I really like going to the gym. I am happy for my son (in his healthy lifestyle changes and relationship).

Dave says he disliked being in a support group where he felt he was guided to think about losses (loss of employment, loss of driver's license, etc.) as normally he doesn't dwell on these things. He has a powerful message—I **have abilities**.

Jody and Dave are experiencing the elusive silver lining that life changes can bring.

Before all of this we just did our own thing. Now we do lots of things together, and we do not take these things for granted.

Volunteering for Early Onset Dementia Alberta Foundation, spending time with children and grandchildren, taking care of the yard, enjoying a meal out, exercising, all bring pleasure. Dave is more social now and Jody is happy with that.



In closing, Jody and Dave feel they are in a good place, *in the moment* and are happy to share:

"Celebrate today, even when tomorrow brings us to a foreign land. Develop trust. Have hope," says Jody.

"Keep on doing what you like. Don't worry," says Dave with conviction.



72 Hour Emergency Kit

Store items in a waterproof container or duffle bag. Check your kit twice a year to ensure freshness.

Water

- At least a three-day supply for each person. Children, nursing mothers and people who are ill require more water.
 - Two litres per person for drinking
 - Two litres per person for washing, hygiene and food preparation
- Water treatment supplies (water purification tablets, filters or bleach)

Non-perishable Food

- At least a three-day supply: select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water
- Manual can opener

First Aid Supplies

- First aid kit & first aid manual
- Prescription and non-prescription medication
- Toilet paper and personal hygiene products

Tools and Supplies

- Battery-operated radio, flashlight and extra batteries
- Lantern and fuel, candles
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Pocket knife or multi-tool
- Alternate cooking source
- Plastic garbage bags
- Duct tape
- Whistle to attract attention

Clothing & Bedding

- Warm clothing
- Blankets or sleeping bags

Keep important records and documents in a waterproof container or a safety deposit box.

City of St. Albert

What have we been up to?

Face It: Elder Abuse Happens Conference— Alberta Elder Abuse Awareness Council and Alberta Seniors and Housing

Directors Gary Pool, Gordon Nott, Brenda Josephs and staff member Laureen Guldbrandsen attended the conference to learn more about the complexities of elder abuse.

Broadbent Progress Summit 2018

The progress summit brought together movement-builders and thought leaders to take on the issues that shape a progressive Canada. Executive Director Donna Durand volunteered at the conference.

Edmonton's Assisted Transportation Network for Seniors Launch—Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council

Staff attended the launch.

Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan

Donna Durand met with Suzanne Maisey, Alberta Health, to discuss ACA's participation with the Alberta Dementia Strategy and Action Plan.

Meeting with Alberta Recreation & Parks Association

Donna Durand met with Alberta Recreation & Parks Association staff to discuss the HIGH FIVE program and how we might work together.

Health & Wellness Fair—St. Andrews Centre

Region 4 had a table giving us the opportunity to connect with residents and the general public.

Alberta Curriculum

By invitation, Donna Durand and Director Kim Winger attended a focus group and shared thoughts on how to strengthen and improve Alberta's K-12 curriculum utilizing the Senior Friendly™ Program and principles.

Primary Health Care Coalition for Integration

The group continued to meet with the goal to improve transitions of care for all Albertans.

Bus Route Redesign Info Session for Seniors

Donna Durand and Gary Pool attended the City of Edmonton session to learn about the proposed changes to the Edmonton Transit services.

Leduc Lifestyle Options Retirement Community Tour

Bernie Travis and Dorothy Flauer provided the staff with a tour of the new Butterfly Project for dementia care.

Seniors Advisory Forum in Camrose

Director Gary Pool participated in the Seniors Advisory Forum.

What Does It Take to Become an Age-Friendly Community Webinar—Alberta Age-Friendly Community of Practice

Staff took part in this webinar about the pillars of age-friendly communities, and what the impact of being an age-friendly community is.

Will the Bus Network Redesign Affect You?

By Mark Tetterington

Edmonton Transit is planning a total redesign of the current bus routes within the city of Edmonton. Currently there are approximately 200 bus routes.

Under the proposed Transit Network Redesign these routes will be reduced to approximately 100 routes. So, what is the reason for this drastic reduction of routes and how will it affect transit riders throughout the city of Edmonton?

This means that transit riders may be forced to walk up to 800 meters to catch a bus. This will affect Edmonton's most vulnerable population, that being seniors and those who are mobility challenged. Could you imagine how difficult it would be for a person with a walker or a scooter to travel over snow covered sidewalks 800 meters after a major snowfall in the middle of January to catch a bus? It is hard enough now for seniors and mobility challenged riders to travel up to 2 blocks to catch a bus after a snowfall.

Under the proposed Transit Network Redesign Edmonton's most vulnerable population could become isolated. Many of these riders rely on a safe public transit system on a daily basis, whether it be to get out of the house to visit friends and/or family or go to the doctors.

As a solution to provide this service the Union Local 569 is proposing a bus on demand. This is how it works:

- This bus on demand is stationed at a nearby transit center
- The bus is equipped with both a phone and computer monitor screen
- A patron requests a bus to pick them up either by phoning directly to the bus or go on an app, which sends a text directly to the monitor of the bus
- The Operator can then give the patron an estimated pick up time
- The Operator will pick up the patron
- The patron is taken to the transit center where they will transfer to a mainline route, which will take them to their destination
- Once that person wishes to return home, they catch a mainline route back to the transit center where they can once again transfer to the bus on demand which will take them back to their house

As a taxpayer, transit is an essential service which every citizen of Edmonton should be entitled to.

Let's keep transit public, available and accessible!



Mark Tetterington,
President Business
Agent, ATU Local 569

[51st Annual General Meeting]

The 51st Annual General Meeting took place June 18th at the Chateau Louis Hotel and Conference Centre in Edmonton. Guest speaker Winston Gereluk presented on the History of Medicare. After the presentation the floor was opened up for a member's forum.



Ron Rose and Jennifer Wrzosek

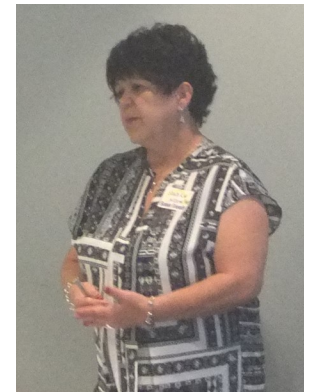


Norm, Ron and Winston Gereluk



Norm Bezanson, Gary Pool, Irl Miller

"Everyone has good ideas. I look around the table and I wonder, "how many of the people sitting here, when they get an opportunity, speak to everyone they know 50 or over about Alberta Council on Aging?" Start by singing the praises of the group. There are so many ways to interest people. It has to start with you," challenged Norm, long time member and former director, during the member's forum.



Sandra Azocar,
Executive Director
of Friends of
Medicare provided
an update on the
Pharmacare
Campaign



Member's forum



Brenda Josephs, Winston, Judy
Lederer, Margaret Day

Health Link 811

Dementia Advice Line

What is dementia?

Dementia is when people lose mental skills that affect their life. It is caused by damage or changes in the brain (e.g., Alzheimer's disease, stroke, brain tumour). The chance of having dementia increases as people age, but not everyone gets it. Dementia often gets worse over time, but it is different for every person. Some people stay the same for many years, while others lose mental skills quickly.

What is Dementia Advice?

Dementia Advice is a 24/7 telephone service offered through Health Link at 811. Dementia Advice offers support to people who are living with dementia and the people who provide support for them.

What happens when I call 811?

When you call Health Link at 811, you will talk to a registered nurse who will ask you questions about how you are doing and feeling. If appropriate, they will refer you to Dementia Advice. Once a referral is made, you will hear back from a specially-trained dementia nurse within 72 hours.

When a Dementia Advice nurse calls you, they will ask you more questions to get information about what you are going through and how you are managing. Dementia Advice nurses have specialized knowledge about dementia, so the questions will be different and more in depth than what the Health Link nurse asked.

If you need help or just to talk to someone, call Health Link at 811.

How can Dementia Advice help?

Dementia Advice offers supportive listening, advice, information about resources, and referrals to services so people can receive help while living in their home.

Dementia Advice helps support caregivers of people who have dementia. It can be very hard to watch someone you care about go through many changes. It can be challenging to live with dementia or to support someone who has dementia. Besides providing support for people living with dementia, Dementia Advice has decreased emergency room visits and admissions to the hospital.

Feedback about Dementia Advice

The Dementia Advice program has recently expanded. The service has been well-received by Albertans and the need for this service increases. Here are some comments from people who have used the service:

"The nurse answered all of my questions. It was one of the best conversations I have ever had!"

"It made me feel like I was just not as alone."

If you or someone you know has dementia (or cares for someone with dementia), call 811 for support, information and resources.



Tips to Keep Your Home Cool

By Johnson Inc.

We might have cold winters in Canada, but we've had our fair share of scorcher summers too.

The good news is that there are super simple "do"s and "don't"s to help make sure your house remains a cool oasis without sending those energy bills skyrocketing.

Take a quick stroll through your house with this guide to make sure you're all set!

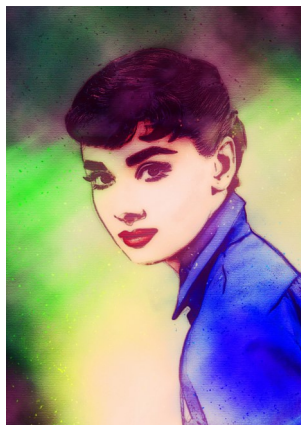
- **Do** weatherproof your doors and windows. Use adhesive weatherproofing strips to seal air in and light, sheer drapes to help cool your home. If you have an air conditioner, it will thank you for not having to work overtime.
- **Do** use the right lightbulbs. Still have incandescent bulbs in the house? They waste about 90% of their energy in heat. To help cut down on energy use and make things a little cooler, switch them out for CFL bulbs.
- **Do** invest in a high-efficiency air conditioner. Newer units generally work more efficiently, meaning you'll save money on energy costs. Consider things like size, maintenance options, and programmable thermostats.
- **Do** clean your air filters. To make sure your air conditioning unit keeps working properly and lasts the years, regularly change your filters to prevent dirt build-up that will block air.
- **Don't** forget to set your fans for the summer. The direction your ceiling fan rotates should be changed each season. For the summer, set it to go faster and counter-clockwise. It helps to create a wind-chill breeze effect throughout the house.
- **Don't** cover up vents with furniture. Avoid any unnecessary stress on your air conditioner by moving furniture away from vents to keep the air flowing freely.
- **Don't** keep the doors closed. Shutting doors throughout your house can trap the hot summer air in smaller spaces like bedrooms. The air will be better able to circulate if doors to bedrooms and bathrooms are left open (just keep your front and back doors shut!).
- **Don't** cover outside air conditioners. Make sure to keep your outdoor unit clear of any branches or leaves that could block the air circulation and make your unit work harder than it has to.

The best thing about all these tips? Most can be checked and fixed immediately. No sweating required.

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...: Thank You ...:

“As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.” — Audrey Hepburn



Donations

Thank you for your donations. Your contributions matter!

- Alberta Senior Communities Housing Association
- Anton and Carol Prybysh
- Gary Pool
- Joan Doonanco-Gray
- Kathleen Dier
- Laurence Younker
- Mary Rushworth
- Rondo E. Wood
- Town of Devon
- And our anonymous donors


2018 Casino

The June 16 and 17 Casino at the Yellowhead Casino in Edmonton was a resounding success thanks to the efforts of many volunteers! Thank you to several of the board members and the long-standing and new volunteers who made this happen.

Some of the volunteers have been coming out to work the casino for years. Some have had to stop because, as they say, they're "just too old for this now".

Alberta Council on Aging's casino coordinator is already starting to plan for the next casino. If you are interested in taking a shift and having a lot of fun, please contact the office.

[Upcoming Events and Opportunities]



Alberta Seniors and Housing and the
Alberta Association of Seniors Centres
presents:

Grey Matters Conference


September 25-26

Coast Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre,
Calgary

The theme for this years Grey Matters is
Our Community Gathers: Listening,
Learning and Leading

Donna Durand is presenting **Let's Talk
Ageism! A Collaborative, Community
Approach to Change** with Iman Bukhari,
CEO, Canadian Cultural Mosaic
Foundation

Contact Bev Amos 403.510.4464
bev@trueeyyc.com



Early Onset Dementia Alberta
Foundation

EODAF

5th Building Dementia Awareness Conference

October 4th—6th

Double Tree Hilton Edmonton


Keynote Speakers:

**Dr. David Sheard & Teepa Snow
Janet Yeats & Dr. Robert Sutherland**

For More Information Contact:

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Volunteer Opportunities

- Introduce guest speakers at EODAF's
Building Dementia Awareness Conference
October 4th—6th, Edmonton
- Greet people at the ACA display and
information table at the following events:
 - * Grey Matters Trade Show, Calgary
 - * Seniors' Housing Forum September 22,
Edmonton
 - * Seniors' Health & Wellness Forum
November 3, Edmonton

[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

Please Note: Membership expires annually on December 31. Members may request either an electronic or a hard copy version of the newsletter by contacting the office.

Alberta Council on Aging Membership Form

Membership Type

Membership Number

☐

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☐

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\$

Donation

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☐

Corporate (\$200)

☐

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a flexible health benefits plan for retirees.**

Alberta Council on Aging
An Independent Non-Profit Charitable Organization Since 1967

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³Home insurance discount applicable to principal residence only and only on policies underwritten by Unifund. Eligibility requirements, limitations and exclusions apply.

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