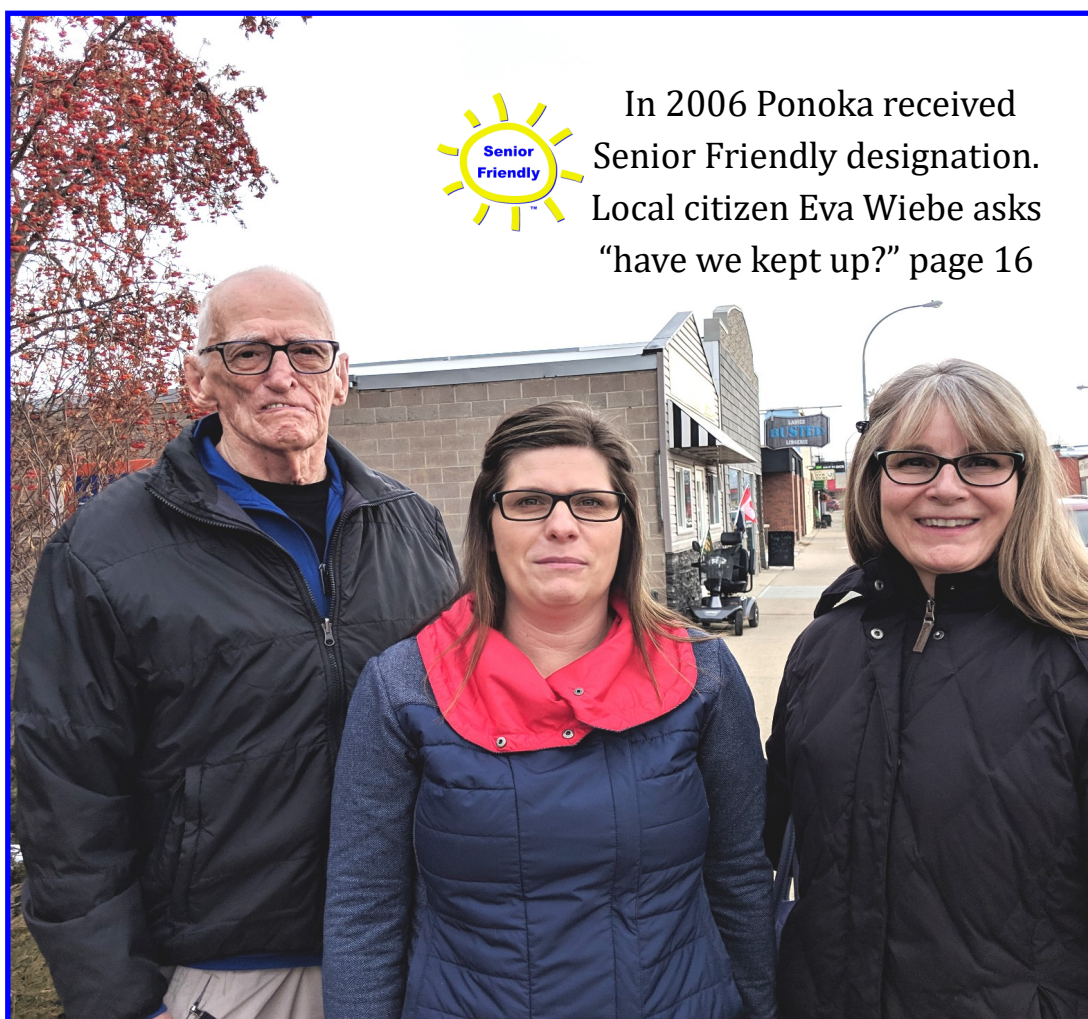


# ACA News

Winter 2019 | Vol. 51 No. 3

## Alberta Council on Aging

working to improve the quality of life for seniors



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## On the Cover

Keith Sterling, Eva Wiebe and  
Donna Durand in Ponoka



Wiebe pointed out that this  
parking lot would be a natural fit  
for accessible parking to be added



This business recently replaced  
the stairs with a ramp to make  
the building accessible

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

## Board of Directors 2019

### Executive

President: Ron Rose  
Treasurer: Gail Hiller  
Secretary: Jennifer Wrzosek

### Regional Directors

Region 1 (Northwest): Jennifer Wrzosek  
Region 4 (Edmonton area): Gail Hiller  
Region 5 (Central Alberta): Keith Sterling  
Region 8 (Southeast): Gordon Nott

### Staff

Executive Director: Donna Durand  
Community Outreach Coordinator: Laureen Guldbrandsen



Make things easy: to see, to hear, to use, and  
understand...

## We value your membership!

### Contact Us Today

Alberta Council on Aging  
PO Box 62099  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T5M 4B5

Phone: 780.423.7781  
Toll Free: 1.888.423.9666  
info@acaging.ca  
www.acaging.ca

## What ACA is About

Alberta Council on Aging's vision is that all seniors enjoy a high quality of life. Alberta Council on Aging works towards this vision through its mission to improve the quality of life for seniors and encourage their participation in all aspects of community through inclusion, education and advocacy.

Alberta Council on Aging, for 52 years, has advised local to federal governments and the general public about matters relating to opportunities for the full and equal participation of older persons living in Alberta and Canada. See key talking points, page 19.

Alberta Council on Aging engages the seniors' community; communicates their ideas, opinions and concerns to government and the broader community; and works toward solutions with governments, community organizations, and other seniors serving agencies.

The council develops and provides publications and programs (see page 30) aligned with age friendly initiatives with the aim to eliminate ageism and promote inclusiveness of older persons in all communities.

- Quarterly newsletter
- Publications
- Presentations
- Resourceful website
- Meetings and forums with members
- Referrals
- Volunteer opportunities



Yvonne Dickson with the Senior Friendly™ staff of the Fresen Bros IGA in Grande Prairie

## To Make This Happen We Need You!

For ACA to continue as a viable, responsive seniors' organization:

We need your membership, talents, contributions, submission etc.

We need and greatly appreciate your donation.

We need to hear **your** voice!

## President's Report



Alberta Council on Aging board has met on two occasions with a facilitator from Alberta Culture and Tourism, Community Development Unit, to develop a strategic plan

to guide us through the next five years. We have received the facilitator's report, reviewed the recommendations, and are now working to establish the steps needed to fulfill our goals.

Alberta Seniors and Housing has hosted a series of forums where representatives from senior-serving organizations, researchers, policy makers and advocates come together to discuss issues important to seniors and provide information and feedback to inform the ministry's decision-making and policy developments. Previous forums addressed age-friendly communities, ageism and seniors, caregiver support needs, healthy aging and health care, aging in community, older workers in the labour force, caregiver supports, financial supports and diverse senior populations.

The last forum, held recently in St. Albert, introduced a toolkit to address elder abuse using a coordinated community response model. The toolkit is available at the Alberta.ca website, under "Get help – elder abuse". (<https://www.alberta.ca/get-help-elder-abuse.aspx>). We also discussed an intergenerational initiative on ageism, promoting positive relationships among children, youth, adults and seniors.

Executive Director Donna Durand and I met recently with Gordon Voth and Linda Osborne from Seniors United Now (SUN), to share information about our organizations and discuss coordinating efforts to address senior's issues in the province. Some common priorities for our two organizations include pharmacare, affordable housing and home care.

I recently participated in a webinar hosted by the Canadian Deprescribing Network, dealing with over-prescribing of prescription medication (polypharmacy) in Canada's senior population. Take-aways from the presentation were the importance of each resident having an advocate, and the usefulness of regular medication reviews. Check out the Canadian Deprescribing Network's website at <https://www.deprescribingnetwork.ca/> for articles, resources and tools to become more informed and engaged in decisions about your prescription medications.

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



## Executive Director's Report

I am feeling pretty pleased. Having just come from an eye examination, I learned my sight is improving—both near and far sightedness is less and there is no trade-off such as impending cataracts. My eyes are healthy and I have “hit the sweet spot of my vision” says the optometrist. My luncheon guest doesn't miss a beat as I tell him why I am feeling celebratory. He offers up he is 90 years of age, has driven to the venue without the need for glasses to correct distance vision. He pulls out his pocket readers of which he said he only recently needed as the Edmonton Journal newspaper has further reduced its font size. Tit for tat! The downward spiral so often associated with aging has no grip here. And so the interview begins!

David Ruptash has been involved with Alberta Council on Aging since he was in his mid thirties. Find out why he became involved, why he stayed and what he hopes in terms of the future for ACA. Page 10

*Wishing you and yours  
a bright and happy  
new year!*



*Sincerely, Donna Durand*



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## Thought for the New Year...

“If you want to make a society work, then you don't keep underscoring the places where you're different—you underscore your shared humanity. I am appalled by how much people focus on differences. Why are you focusing on how different you are from one another and not on the things that unite us?”

Rachel Yehuda, Mount Sinai Hospital, New York City

## Cold Weather and Exercise

By Laureen Guldbrandsen

The World Health Organization (WHO) keeps tabs on every country's HALE rating, which stands for "healthy life expectancy at birth." HALE is a measure of how long the average citizen will live before disease or disability sets in. Worldwide, that average is about 63 years. But according to the WHO's 2016 data, the residents of Japan know something the rest of us don't; the average Japanese citizen will live without disability until age 75—nearly six years longer than the average American.



Kathy Owen and Fergus

A mixture of diet, DNA, and lifestyle factors likely combine to explain this. And cold-weather exercise in Japan and other parts of the world may be part of the equation.

There may be some mental health benefits associated with cold-weather exercise. A small 2004 study from Finland found that winter swimming combatted tension and fatigue and improved overall well-being among 36 middle-aged adults. Cold-water exposure seems to activate the central nervous system and stimulate the circulation of hormones that may promote improved mood and energy, write the authors.

There are, of course, risks involved with cold-weather training. Coughing, wheezing, trouble breathing, and mucus buildup in your throat are all signs of cold-induced lung trauma, says Michael Kennedy, an associate professor of kinesiology, sport, and recreation at the University of Alberta in Canada. While

you want to avoid these as much as possible, he says a sensation of burning in your lungs or a taste of blood in your mouth are your biggest concerns.

These are indications of damage "deep in the lung" and may have long-term effects on lung health and function, he says. Unhealthy lung inflammation, scarring of lung tissue, and a kind of cold-induced asthma are all possible from exercising in freezing temps without proper protection, he says.

If you're training in temps below 40 degrees, you should take extra precautions to protect your lungs. "Cover your mouth with a buff or some sort of quick-dry neck covering," Kennedy says. Also, don't go

back indoors until your breathing has slowed to normal. “There is something called the burden of rewarming where, if your breathing is still elevated, it causes more water to be sucked out of the airway,” he says. That can promote lung stress.

Cold-weather exposure may also be risky for people with heart disease. “When you’re exposed to cold, the body tries to prevent heat loss by shrinking the blood vessels,” Shingo Kajimura, an associate professor and lab director at the University of California, San Francisco, explains. This can elevate a person’s blood pressure and could be bad news for someone with hypertension or heart trouble.

All things considered, most of the research suggests that working out in cool or cold conditions is good for you. That doesn’t mean you should be running in shorts and a T-shirt when it’s below 0. If you’re properly geared up and taking care to shield your lungs from too much dry, icy air, there’s no reason to take your workouts indoors this winter.

Referring to The Surprising Benefits of Exercising in Cold Weather by Markham Heid

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## Tips to enjoying winter weather safely...

- ⇒ Stabilize— use a walking stick
- ⇒ Good grip on shoes or invest in shoe grips
  - ⇒ Dress warmly and in layers
  - ⇒ Cover your mouth and nose
  - ⇒ Hydrate
  - ⇒ Have a walking partner
- ⇒ Wait until your breathing has slowed before going inside



## [From Our Members]

The AESO is putting in a bid to allow AltaLink to build new transmission lines in southern Alberta. If that is allowed to continue, the cost to consumers will skyrocket and Alberta consumers will be paying a higher cost for power than any province or any state in the USA .This plan should be stopped before it gets started. New transmission lines are not needed nor wanted by the people in southern Alberta but the AESO and AltaLink are trying to force us to accept their plan to build them.

~Gordie B

I have been getting multiple housing referrals from government departments, but still not finding a place.

~Anonymous

Why is the Driveable test not available outside of Edmonton, Calgary, and Red Deer?

~Anonymous

What are Grandparents rights?

~Gail

Editor's note: We advised Gail to contact the Office of the Public Guardian and CPLEA for more information on what rights are available to grandparents,

## Remembering Don Hepburn

November 29/30 to December 15/18

Don was very active in the Central Alberta Council on Aging, serving on the executive and health committee from the start. Don was to our mind a Canadian role model; his intelligence and tactful leadership has fostered a group dynamic of confidence, civility and service. Don had the quiet patriotism of caring and social justice, based on "Peace, Order, and Good Government".

The people of Red Deer and Central Alberta have formally recognized Don's many qualities on several occasions. Don was a quiet, scholarly gentle man who accomplished much. We will miss him greatly. His Spirit remains with us.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bonnie & Sam Denhaan





## [From Our Members]

### A PRAYER

God of the wind in the trees,  
spirit of the air that surrounds me.  
Protect me as I sleep,  
empower me to face the morning.

You who created Beethoven's genius,  
blue hydrangeas, the oceans, the horse,  
the kitten and the butterfly-  
surround me in my loneliness and fear.  
Calm and relax me,  
keep me in your care.

Marina Newby  
October 1998

Photo by Roberta Baker

## Meet A Member!

By Donna Durand



***HOW TO HELP  
THE OLD? Involve  
the young!***

One immense pleasure of working with the council is meeting members and hearing their perspective on Alberta Council on Aging.

David Ruptash, approaching 90 years of age, has been a life member with Alberta Council on Aging for several decades. He has served on the board, acted as a casino volunteer, and has been a consistent donor. At the time of our meeting, David, a proud father of eight children, told me his family is anticipating the arrival of their 20<sup>th</sup> great grandchild.

### **“Family really is everything”**

In the early years, David says the family did everything together including mealtimes, lessons, sports, Cubs, Scouts, Girl Guides, as well as a 10 year stint marching with the drum and bugle corp. He and his wife Ann enjoyed their involvement with a Sweet Adeline Chorus as well as many other community organizations. David laughs, “if what we wanted to take part in wasn’t in the community, we started it”.

His grand children recently asked the question and David set out to answer it, “who was before you, in our family tree?”

As much as Alberta Council on Aging is creating a strategic plan following the half-century mark, this is a question to ask of our group as well. David Ruptash was a young hospital administrator when he was approached to join the council. Much later, David served on the board of directors. When David reflects on the state of seniors at that time, he noted the health system did not have a firm understanding of senior citizens needs. He believes Alberta Council on Aging has made a major contribution to seniors in our society.

Much knowledge has been gained over the past fifty years. Grassroots organizations and academia need to work together in order to better understand older people and to discover innovations that enhance life.

David posed questions relevant when he started out, and perhaps just as relevant today, for members and directors to consider regarding Alberta Council on Aging:

- What is the core business?
- What are the rules- the legislation and regulations that govern the business?
- How do you get the message across to the general public? Who will help carry the message?
- What is the long range plan?

Finally, there was a moment of quiet reflection as the conversation was winding down. David believes Alberta Council on Aging needs to change its focus to ensure longevity as an organization. This does not mean that we disregard the foundation upon which this organization was built- rather examine ways to focus on youth. They are the next generation(s) of older people. How can Alberta Council on Aging tap into their bright ideas and suggestions?

### **The school curriculum needs to engage students with the concept of aging by learning about “Your Future Self”.**

### **Older people can be the guides along the journey of aging.**

The motto “we are still learning and growing together” which David says is so important to his family, could serve Alberta Council on Aging as well as we seek to better hear, represent and communicate the voices of Albertan seniors.

Thank you David!

## Shining a Light on the Third Act

By Mitzi Murray

“I don’t want to belong to any club that will accept people like me as a member,” said Groucho Marx. He wasn’t talking about aging but isn’t it funny that most of us count on getting into this club but, like Groucho, don’t want to be identified as a member of it.

Western popular culture and our mass media has a predominantly doom and gloom perspective about life after 65 and feed us prestigious messaging about it.

THIRD ACTION Film Festival, located in Calgary, believes it’s time to change attitudes by showing the possibility and resiliency that is the third act of life.

The festival shines a light on older adults as Canada’s only film festival dedicated to celebrating aging and older adults. Through age-focused films, discussions, awards, and an art show, the festival works to create an age-positive culture shift.

“If all you are given is a narrow definition of what aging can be, and it is predominantly negative, how can we expect people’s dreams take flight?” stated Mitzi Murray, Executive Director. “Many younger adults envision a third act that includes a rocking chair or a lazy boy recliner – and that is great if that is what you want. However, when I let them know that being an award winning body builder, an entrepreneur or traveling to the Burning Man Festival are options as well, many of them are stunned. We want everyone to see that the third

act is a buffet of choices.”

At its inaugural festival in June 2018, the audience saw 31 films that ranged from pure entertainment with older adults in leading roles to several shorts series (documentaries, drama, comedies, and animation) that addressed the highs and lows of being in your third act. The festival also invited speakers to address the themes within a screening. In 2018, there were two ageism activists, a death doula and a dementia researcher.

Hollywood and others around the world have seen the light as well and are producing more films and TV series that focus on older characters. This is proving to be a boon for the festival as more films are being submitted for the 2019 festival that fit the mandate and the reviewers are very excited about the potential line up of films.

Several of the short films from the 2018 line up have become available on-line for free viewing.



**[NOATAK: Return to the Arctic](#)** – 35 years after their first visit to the Noatak River in Alaska’s wild and spectacular Brooks Range, two adventurers in the 70s , repeat the trip and reflect on a lifetime of outdoor experiences and what still awaits them.

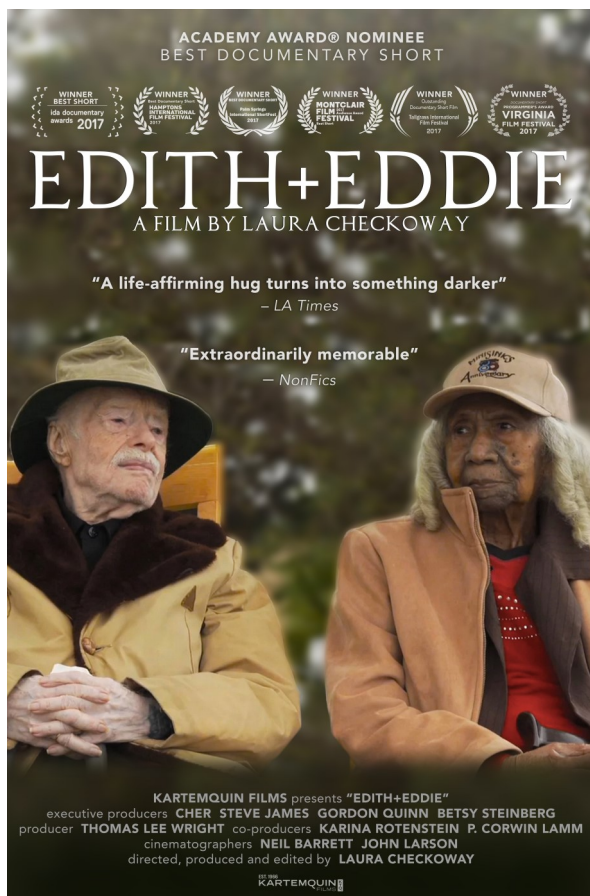




## Roberto & Sybela

**Edith & Eddie** – Nominated for an Oscar in 2017.

Edith and Eddie, ages 96 and 95, are America's oldest interracial newlyweds. Their love story is disrupted by a family feud that threatens to tear the couple apart.



**Roberto & Sybela** – Love knows no bounds.

Roberto shares his inspiring and thoughtful journey and why it's important to power each day with plenty of music, laughter and unconditional love.



**Coffin Club** – A group of rebellious, creative New Zealand seniors give death the finger, one crazy coffin at a time.

THIRD ACTION is now ramping up for its second festival on June 7-9, 2019 at the Glenbow Museum Theatre. Film reviewers are busy judging entries and the program, along with speakers, will be announced over 4 weeks in late April, early May.

As a new feature in 2019, THIRD ACTION has partnered with their art show producer, WP Puppet Theatre, to put on a seniors-based View from the Inside: Courage Journey intensive, puppetry-based workshop that encourages discussion about mental wellness. Through the creation, exhibition and performance of a self-reflective mask-body puppet, participants develop community, foster resiliency and gain a voice for their stories.

For further information, check out the festival website at [www.thirdactionfilmfest.ca](http://www.thirdactionfilmfest.ca) or to keep abreast of happenings with the 2019 festival, sign up for the festival newsletter on the website, or call 403.561.2765.

# Welcoming and Inclusive Communities

The Welcoming and Inclusive Communities (WIC) initiative is a partnership between the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and the Government of Alberta to support municipalities to implement policies and practices to help overcome issues of racism and discrimination.



## What is a Welcoming and Inclusive Community?

A Welcoming and Inclusive Community is one that is free from discrimination, where all residents are able to participate fully in all aspects of the social, political, cultural and economic life of the community.

The goal of the WIC initiative is to create communities where all residents and visitors enjoy a sense of belonging and where diversity adds to the social and economic vibrancy of the community, and improves the quality of life for all residents.

These webpages provide ideas, information and resources to support municipalities who want to take action to be a more inclusive community. Whether your municipality is just starting out, wants to evaluate its existing WIC initiatives or is considering whether or not to join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, these webpages are for you.

We need your help to keep these pages relevant. Email us at [wic@auma.ca](mailto:wic@auma.ca) if you have examples or resources that would add value or if you notice content that requires updating. Click the links below for more information.

[TOOLS AND RESOURCES](#)

[ABOUT WIC AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED](#)

**780-433-4431**

**Toll Free: 310-AUMA (2862)**

## Tips for Engaging With Government

Writing a letter to a government official is one of the best ways to be engaged with the political world around you. Your MLA or MP exists to take the concerns of his or her constituents into account, so by writing to them, you are helping the democratic process thrive. It does not have to be very long or very formal; just expressing your concerns and ideas gives your representative a better idea of what their constituents value and want improved.

You can find your MLA's (Member of the Legislative Assembly) mailing address at the Legislative Assembly website at [http://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=mla\\_home](http://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=mla_home)

You can find your MP's (Member of Parliament) mailing address on the House of Commons website at <http://www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members>

For a template and example letter visit <http://acaging.ca/writing-to-government>

As we have elections coming up this is a good time to reach out, attend a representatives forum, and let your voice be heard. Think about questions you might want answers to, such as:

1. What is your platform on seniors?
2. How is your party prepared to address the age wave?
3. If seniors want to stay in their own homes, how will government plan to support them in their homes?
4. What are the gaps in services that are being identified as problematic for seniors and their families?
5. What are your thoughts on treating seniors within a model of wellness versus sickness?
6. Is the Seniors Advocates Office going to continue to be funded and is it possible that this would be independent?
7. How are the needs for seniors in rural communities different from those in urban communities?
8. What are your plans in addressing these unique circumstances?

# [Age Friendly Updates]

## Ponoka and Senior Friendly™

The Senior Friendly™ program was initiated in Ponoka in the Fall of 2005, when Council passed the following resolution: "that Council endorse the Senior Friendly Communities program by initiating the steps that the Town of Ponoka requires to start the Senior Friendly™ Communities Process."

The goal was for the community of Ponoka to attain the "Senior Friendly™ Community" designation from Alberta Council On Aging and become Alberta's first designated Senior Friendly™ Community.

In 2007, Carla Amonson of Alberta Council on Aging went to Ponoka to train four community volunteers to become Ponoka's community Senior Friendly™ trainers. By the end of the training the volunteers and committee had listed 23 businesses and organizations as being designated Senior Friendly™.

In June of 2018 we had received a phone call from a local citizen, Eva Wiebe, who had concerns that the town was not completely accessible. She noted that many of the businesses, even those displaying the Senior Friendly™ logo, did not have accessible parking, or offer enough space for mobility aids to be used. Many businesses had steps at the doors that made the building inaccessible to some individuals.

We brought Wiebe's concern to the attention of Wes Amendt, Director of Community Services for Ponoka. On November 27, Donna Durand, Keith Sterling, and Laureen Guldbrandsen joined an interagency meeting in Ponoka where we were given the opportunity to speak to the Senior Friendly™ program, as well as hear Wiebe's concerns. The group thought a refresh in the terms of a one day workshop for businesses and service providers might be helpful. Following the meeting, Eva took us on a walking tour of the downtown core.

We were able to see and identify with Eva's concerns. Going forward, Senior Friendly™ Ponoka will do well to promote accessibility when building new or renovating structures. One of the simplest changes that Eva pointed out would be for parking lots and businesses to have dedicated accessible parking spaces for those who need them. This small change can make a large impact in someone who relies on mobility aids.



Accessible Parking sign at  
Ripn Ronnies Gym



# Senior Friendly™ Business Quick List



## Environment – Outside and In

- ☐ Accessible location
- ☐ Parking close to building with designated accessible parking wherever possible
- ☐ Safe sidewalks- level, proper grade
- ☐ Barrier free outside entrance and interior
- ☐ Available seating: sturdy chair/bench with arms- offer a rest stop
- ☐ Door opens easily
- ☐ Safe non-slip, no glare floor
- ☐ Accessible, easy to find washroom with convenient fixtures and reduced temperature of hot water
- ☐ Acoustically absorbent with minimal background noise or echo
- ☐ Proper lighting: reduce shadows
- ☐ Moderate room temperature- eliminate drafts
- ☐ Generous signage/large font/dark print on light background
- ☐ Easy to use telephones
- ☐ Offer services during the day
- ☐ Have product/objects within reach
- ☐ Familiarize yourself with assistive devices such as grip pens, walkers, hearing aids
- ☐ Functional sprinklers, smoke and gas detectors

## Communication is Key

- ☐ Be welcoming- have an ambassador on hand to help- direct, help reach, take articles to vehicle or bus, call a taxi
- ☐ Speak normally and clearly using a calm voice
- ☐ Attitude is everything: it is better to be kind than right!
- ☐ Give clear and accurate directions/descriptions
- ☐ Let low vision customers know when you leave
- ☐ Count change back on purchase

## Product

- ☐ Reduce packaging when possible
- ☐ Food is fresh and safe dated
- ☐ Clear instruction for storage and preparation
- ☐ Offer easy to use product
- ☐ Be consistent in placement of items
- ☐ Invite feedback from your customers

# Alberta Council on Aging Strategic Direction



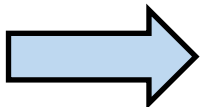
## VISION

All seniors enjoy a high quality of life

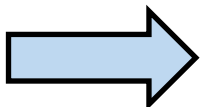
## MISSION

Encourage and enable seniors' full participation in all aspects of community through inclusion, education and advocacy

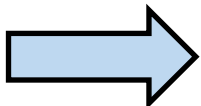
## GOALS



Align organizational structure to ensure viability and relevancy



Promote alliances with other senior serving organizations in Alberta



Provide and promote educational programs and services to seniors throughout the province

**DRAFT**

# Alberta Council on Aging Key Talking Points

## 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, however, these services need to be affordable for all seniors
- support efforts to make continuing care services clearly and consistently defined

## 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

## Ageism

Definition - Prejudice or discrimination against an age-group ...especially seniors.

To address this ACA will:

- align with age friendly initiatives with the aim to eliminate ageism
- promote inclusiveness of older persons in Albertan communities

# [Tips from Johnson Inc.]

## Top Tips for Booking Flights Online

By Johnson Inc.

Gone are the days of needing to visit a travel agent to book flights for your next trip. Now you can be your own travel agent. But, before you go online to book your next flight, read through our top tips to help you stay safe:

### **Use a secure Internet connection**

It is much easier for people to track your personal information when you're logged into a public computer (like at a library) or while you're using a public WIFI network (like at a coffee shop). For this reason, it is better to book your flights at home, on your personal computer (or phone) from your private WIFI network.

### **Look for the padlock**

Reputable travel websites use technologies like Secure Socket Layer (SSL), which uses encryption to help make the information you provide more secure. Keep an eye on your address bar for the little padlock icon along with a URL that begins with "https". The "s" stands for secure.

### **Whenever possible, book directly with the airline**

Discount sites may seem enticing, offering cheaper deals but, if an issue arises, it's easier to resolve issues when your flights are booked directly with the airline. Booking directly with the airline can also simplify other hassles like delays or schedule changes rather than the often non-refundable offers on third-party sites.



Dhigufaru - Maldives by Giuseppe Milo

### **Do your research**

If you do end up choosing a third party vendor, be sure to do a search to see the site's reputation and user comments before clicking "buy now". Remember, as a general rule of thumb when it comes to online flight booking, if it seems too good to be true, it probably is.

### **Read the fine print**

Discount airlines have become quite popular in recent years. One of the ways they keep prices so low is by offering everything else at an incremental cost. Want to choose your seat? Want to check luggage? All of these things will add up and could make a big difference on the final price.

### **Keep currency in mind**

Sometimes different sites and airlines don't charge in Canadian dollars. So although a flight may look like a great deal, once you add in the conversion and foreign transaction fee on your credit card, you may end up paying more than you planned.

Once you know how to properly and safely book flights online, you should find that the process of planning a trip can be done quickly and efficiently.

Safe travels!



## Did You Know?

Accessibility placards go with the individual they are assigned to. Even if you do not drive you are still eligible to apply for a parking placard for when you are a passenger in a vehicle.

Every day a person turns 65 in Alberta!

January is  
Alzheimer  
Awareness  
Month!

Alberta Seniors Benefits have increased, and starting in 2019 the Canada Pension Plan will be enhanced!

## There's an app for that!

At a business luncheon the discussion turned to how some language is no longer considered acceptable. Someone said he wished there was a dictionary on what language we should be using to be inclusive. We told him about the language decoded app, created by the Canadian Cultural Mosaic Foundation.

<http://languagedecoded.com>

**Do you have a story? A poem? A photo? A recipe? Concern? Comment? Opinion?**

*Please share!*

Send submissions to [ACA News office@acaging.ca](mailto:ACA News office@acaging.ca)

# [Pharmacare in Canada]

## National Pharmacare in Canada

By Greg Marchildon and Andrew Jackson  
for the Broadbent Institute

National Pharmacare has been a topic of discussion in Canada for over half a century, yet we remain unique among the world's high-income countries with universal health coverage in that we still do not include outpatient prescription drugs in our national benefit package. There is a growing sense that we will never be able to achieve the full potential of universal health coverage without national Pharmacare.

Consideration of a national Pharmacare plan now sits at the top of the Government of Canada's agenda, with the Advisory Council on the Implementation of National Pharmacare due to report its findings in the spring of 2019. While the country may be on the precipice of finally providing universal coverage for prescription drugs, conflicting signals from the federal government make the path forward uncertain. What remains clear is that there is broad agreement among experts that a single payer plan is needed to provide adequate coverage for all Canadians and to remedy the major gaps in coverage which now exist. It is also agreed that a single payer plan would lower administrative costs and, even more importantly the ability to control and reduce the cost of pharmaceutical drugs.

**A majority of Canadians, healthcare providers, labour organizations and employers also agree that a national single-payer system is an idea whose time has come.**

Growing income inequality, decreasing access to employer-sponsored plans, and the rising cost of private insurance are stark reminders that further delay will lead to poorer health outcomes for our population.

While there is widespread support for a national single payer plan, there has been little consensus about a specific detailed policy architecture and role for the federal government. There are two possible ways to achieve single-payer Pharmacare in Canada. One is through 13 provincial-territorial program in which the federal government provides funding to the provinces and sets national standards, perhaps through the Canada Health Act, or through separate legislation. In return for the cash transfer, which would likely only cover incremental costs, PT governments would agree to provide universal coverage to their residents for an agreed upon schedule of medically necessary pharmaceuticals.

The second major option is a federally financed, regulated and administered Pharmacare program. This is constitutionally feasible because of the federal government's current jurisdiction over drug safety, price regulation and patent protection. While it is generally assumed that federalism and provincial jurisdiction over health stand in the way of a federal government public single payer program, the provinces have supported this option in the past, with the caveat that special arrangements may have to be made for Quebec.

On balance, we see considerable advantages for the second option. Strong federal leadership is needed to make Pharmacare a reality, because it is far from clear that expanding public health insurance is a current priority for all provinces. Fiscal capacity

varies a great deal between the provinces but the federal government has the fiscal means to act if it finds the political will to do so. The federal tax system could be used to recoup some of the cost savings of employers, workers and individuals which would result from a more cost efficient single-payer plan. A federal program would make it easier to establish a national drug formulary and to achieve the savings of co-ordinated drug purchasing. Finally, a federal Pharmacare plan could be implemented more quickly. Canada has already waited too long.

To read the full report visit [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/broadbent/pages/7296/attachments/original/1547054742/National\\_Pharmacare\\_Report\\_-\\_Final.pdf](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/broadbent/pages/7296/attachments/original/1547054742/National_Pharmacare_Report_-_Final.pdf)

SURVEY SHOWS  
MOST CANADIANS  
AND HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS  
**WANT A SINGLE-  
PAYER NATIONAL  
PHARMACARE PLAN.**



SOURCE: HEALTHCARE IN CANADA SURVEY, 2016. AVAILABLE AT [HTTPS://MCGILL.CA/HCIC-SSSC/FILES/HCIC-SSSC/HCIC\\_2016\\_RESULTS\\_10-LOOKING\\_FORWARD.PDF](https://MCGILL.CA/HCIC-SSSC/FILES/HCIC-SSSC/HCIC_2016_RESULTS_10-LOOKING_FORWARD.PDF)

## **Save the Date!**

### **52nd Annual General Meeting**

Hosted by Region 5



Thursday, June 27

Full Day Event

Golden Circle Senior Centre  
4620 47A Ave, Red Deer

More information to come!

## Age-Friendly Edmonton Initiative Spokesperson

The Age Friendly Edmonton (AFE) Initiative organized an all day event at the Edmonton Inn on November 1st called "Ignite, a Conversation Cafe with AFE 2.0".

Approximately 100 people from various sectors attended. Speakers talked about four areas, Aging in Place, Intergenerational, Ageism and Diversity. AFE will be addressing these four areas which are under the frame work of the World Health Organization global network of age friendly communities which Edmonton was one of the first to join. We heard that the work of AFE in the first five years covered many actions and that one of the biggest was "Enhancing Collaboration." We can look forward to future collaborations and projects taking place that I will be covering.

It seems to me that ACA has been addressing these four areas quite well over the years throughout the province. I am looking forward to being able to report more on the information I get. AFE is certainly a group that will be standing out in the Community and it is good Alberta Council on Aging is represented.

Respectfully submitted, Nick Chrapko



Nick at the New Year's Day Levee at Government House with Lieutenant Governor Lois Mitchell and spouse Doug Mitchell



## Regional Reports

### Region 1

The darkness of fall reminds us to slow down and enjoy the quiet. Slowing down is especially important as snow and melting brought icy pathways. November's Fall Prevention month is very timely.

The focus for Region 1 this fall was networking. We are working with inter-agency groups, senior's outreach and studio 50+ to help seniors become more aware of what is available for them.

An information meeting was held on November 19 where members were reminded and encouraged to renew their memberships. We had a brief update from Cliff Mitchell who attended the Seniors Abuse Conference in May. A suggestion followed to pursue educational information in this area.

We are also planning to be involved in preparing a communication document that would list senior agencies, activity groups and senior community opportunities.

Our meeting was highlighted by our guest speaker, Josephine Sallis from South Peace Archives. In her presentation she shared the impact of World War 1 and the Spanish flu epidemic in the Peace Region. This anecdotal history "reminded us of how life does indeed go on even in the darkest of times."

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Wrzosek

### Region 4

I took part in the Edmonton Health and Wellness forum on November 3. I was joined by volunteers Nadia Willigar, Mary Campbell, Sheron Pickard and Janete Poloway. This event saw a great many people coming to our display booth to learn more about Alberta Council on Aging.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laureen Guldbrandsen, Outreach Coordinator

### Region 5

The Government of Canada legalized recreational Cannabis effective on October 17. Making it legal to smoke or eat cannabis in private homes and public areas raises a number of questions related to health and well being of all and in particular seniors. The guest speaker for the October General Meeting was Gail Foreman, Tobacco Reduction Specialist, Alberta Health Services who addressed those concerns.

More than 50 adults gathered at the Golden Circle Senior Resource Center to hear Gail's nonjudgmental presentation. She explored the two main components of Cannabis, THC and CBD, and the possible effects on humans. For more information on this matter, contact a Tobacco Reduction Specialist at Alberta Health Services

In November Donna Durand, Laureen Guldbrandsen and I were invited to attend a Family and Community Support Services Interagency meeting in Ponoka, which was chaired by Shelly Van Easton. The purpose was to share the meaning of Senior Friendly and address a concern by Eva Wiebe related to accessibility. We reviewed the Senior Friendly designation and the role of ACA. Following the meeting we were given a short tour of the downtown section of Ponoka to review firsthand how available accessible parking, entrances, etc. was for those with mobility issues.

We agreed the meeting was an excellent networking experience. Contacts were made with the intention of Ponoka FCSS and ACA Region 5 working together.

Wishing everyone a great and festive new year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Keith Sterling

## Region 6

It has certainly been an interesting Fall in Region 6, with much discussion in and around Calgary concerning hosting of the 2026 Olympics leading up to the vote on November 13th. Many of the seniors that I spoke to regarding this issue were concerned about the cost burden that an event of this magnitude would impose on our already economically strained city. The majority vote against moving forward with the Olympic bid certainly reflects this perspective.

On a positive note, the new library is now open in the East Village and it is truly a beautiful building. I recommend that you visit when you have the chance! The Stampeders victory in the 2018 Grey Cup in Edmonton was also a much-needed morale boost to Calgarians.

The ACA continues to explore potential partnerships and synergies in our Region, and I am sure Donna and the Board will share their progress along the way. A recent connection was made with Mitzi Murray, the Executive Director of the Third ACTion Film Festival. The film festival is held during Seniors Week in June, and showcases productions that feature older adults and aging. More information on page 12!

On a personal note, my husband and I have moved to Kelowna, and I have recently accepted a full time contract to work with a senior living company here in BC. It is with sadness that I step down from my position on the Board of Directors, as it has truly been a privilege to work with the ACA these last few years. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in Region 6, and all the best of success in working from a common vision – a high quality of life for all older adults!

Respectfully submitted,  
Brenda Josephs

## Region 8

Greetings from the Southeast Region.

How quickly time passes in the daily life of us senior folks. Fall has been a busy time and the Christmas festive season kept everyone busy.

The reconstructed Medicine Hat Seniors Centre is an increasing hive of activity since the official opening in July. A number of new activities have been added to the many programs already in place.

This summer, the Strathcona Centre, which was the hub for seniors activities during the past five years, was refurbished. The doors reopened on November 5th and it is now the home of a new fitness centre plus a large multipurpose room for seniors use.

With all the construction now complete, we look forward to increased membership and renewing friendships and social interaction lost since the 2013 flood.

October 1st was an exciting day as we celebrated the International Day of Older Persons. I met with our Medicine Hat Mayor Ted Clugston to have him sign and announce the proclamation for the day. It was a great opportunity to strengthen our relationship with municipal government and increase the awareness of Alberta Council on Aging in our community.

I am looking forward to implementing plans to address the challenges recognized in our recent strategic planning process as we strive for a successful future.

As always, I look forward to connecting with the seniors in our community and Southeast Region to hear about their activities, their thoughts and/or their needs and concerns.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gordon Nott

## **Fond farewells with much thanks to the following regional directors!**

Kim Winger (Region 2)

Gary Pool (Region 4)

Frank Hoebarth (Region 6)

Brenda Josephs (Region 6)

# [Member's Recipe]

## French Canadian Tourtière

From Kathy Owens

### Ingredients

- 1 pound lean ground pork
- 1/2 pound lean ground beef
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon ground sage
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
- pastry for a 9 inch double crust pie

### Directions

1. In a saucepan, combine pork, beef, onion, garlic, water, salt, thyme, sage, black pepper and cloves. Cook over medium heat until mixture boils; stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to low and simmer until meat is cooked, about 5 minutes. Allow to cool to room temperature.
2. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C)
3. Spoon the meat mixture into the pie crust. Place top crust on top of pie and pinch edges to seal. Cut slits in top crust so steam can escape. Cover edges of pie with strips of aluminum foil.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes; remove foil and return to oven. Bake for an additional 15 to 20 minutes, or until golden brown. Let cool 10 minutes before slicing.



To make a vegetarian version, substitute the meat with plant-based meats, lentils, beans, tofu crumbles, or textured vegetable protein.

The tourtière is a French-Canadian meat pie that originated in Quebec as early as 1600. Most recipes for tourtière include ground pork and other ground meats. The tourtière is a traditional part of Christmas and New Year's celebrations in Quebec, but the pie is also enjoyed at other times and throughout Canada and the upper Midwest and eastern United States. There is some debate about the origin of the name of the dish. Some believe that the dish is named after the now extinct passenger pigeons, called "tourtes," that were cooked into the original pies. Others argue that the pie is named after the deep ceramic baking dish that families used to create the pies. It is, however, agreed that by 1611, the word tourtière had come to refer to the pastry containing meat or fish that was cooked in this medium-deep, round or rectangular dish.



## What have we been up to?

### **Ending Ageism: Toward a world for all ages Webinar—World Health Organization and International Federation on Ageing**

The webinar focused on the impacts of ageism, and explored manifestations of ageism in various environments, it included good practice examples and engaged in a discussion of next steps.

### **Ageism Stakeholder Mapping for the Global Campaign to Combat Ageism**

We completed the questionnaire for the Global Campaign to Combat Ageism. The information provided will be kept on a database to map who is working on ageism and what activities are in place to tackle it.

### **Seniors' Health & Wellness Forum**

The Seniors' Health & Wellness Forum, presented by Age Friendly Edmonton, was a free, one-day event.

### **Submission to Age-Friendly Innovation Exchange Newsletter**

We submitted an article for inclusion in the

Age-Friendly Innovation Exchange newsletter regarding Senior Friendly™ Businesses

### **Seniors Advisory Forum**

Ron Rose and Gary Pool took part in the forum in St. Albert.

### **Senior Friendly™ Ponoka**

Donna Durand, Keith Sterling and Laureen Guldbrandsen took part in an interagency meeting in Ponoka to discuss Senior Friendly™

### **Meeting with ASCHA**

Irene Martin-Lindsay discussed their strategic direction and campaigns: #CuttheClutter, and #ItsTime.

### **Principles of Healthy Aging**

Project meeting with Alberta Recreation and Parks.

### **Federal Office of the Minister of Seniors**

Phone meeting to discuss programs, services, challenges and successes.

## Donations

Your donations help Alberta Council on Aging meet its mission of working to improve the quality of life for older persons.

- Ada and David Furber
- Alice Beamish
- Alice Gartner
- David and Ann Ruptash
- Doris A. Vallee
- Evelyn V. Fleming
- Heather Stickney
- Janete Poloway
- Jennifer O'Brien
- Mui-Yee Choo, Michael and Loretta Lau
- Niels and Marie Molbak
- Sarah Fox
- Sheron Pickard
- Solid State Computers Ltd.
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# [Upcoming Events and Opportunities]

## Seniors Learning Day in Redwater!



May 6

Redwater Pioneer Club

Join us for the following programs!

- Recognizing Fraud
- Living Stronger Longer
- Let's Talk Ageism
- Lunch and musical entertainment

Contact Jacquie Moren, Community Services Coordinator, Town of Redwater, for more information and to register.

Phone: 780-942-4101

E-mail: [cscoordinator@redwater.ca](mailto:cscoordinator@redwater.ca)



## Senior Friendly™ Programs

Alberta Council on Aging is committed to bringing presentations and resources to communities at little or no cost to participants.

Topics include:

- Senior Friendly™ Program Overview
- Recognizing Fraud
- Pre and Post Retirement Planning
- Recognizing Abuse
- Living Stronger Longer
- Let's Talk Dementia
- Let's Talk Ageism
- Pharmacy Tips
- Navigating for Services
- Seniors Forum - a facilitated participants' discussion

For more information:

1.888.423.9666

[office@acaging.ca](mailto:office@acaging.ca)

**Are you interested in volunteering or being on the  
board of directors?**

**Contact [exedir@acaging.ca](mailto:exedir@acaging.ca)**

# [Membership]

## Alberta Council on Aging Members Receive

Please note: If you are actively enrolled with MEDOC Travel Insurance your annual membership fee will automatically renew and will be collected through the MEDOC Travel Insurance plan administrator, Johnson Inc.

**If you have already renewed your membership for 2019, Many thanks!**

### Alberta Council on Aging Membership Form

#### Membership Type

<input type="checkbox"/> Household (\$25)	<input type="checkbox"/> Life (\$250/person)	_____ Membership Number
<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational (\$60)	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate (\$200)	\$ _____ Donation
<input type="checkbox"/> If you receive MEDOC Travel Insurance your membership fee will be collected as part of your premiums to MEDOC		Tax receipts will be given for donations over \$20.00

Payment is accepted by cheque or cash. If you would like to pay by credit card please contact the office

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☐ Check here if you wish to receive occasional electronic communications, including your membership receipt and communications about events in your region

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