




# Connection

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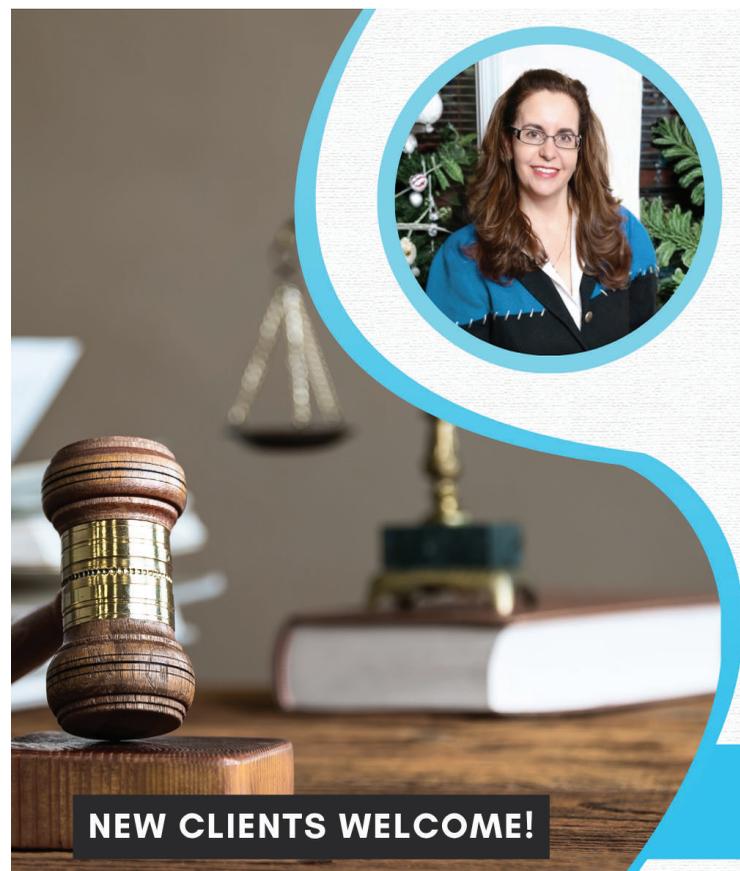
# Editor's corner: Remembering connection

Mel Lefebvre, Editor-in-Chief

I have been fortunate enough to move a lot in my life. The fortune lies in learning about new places, gaining a richness of experience, and meeting new friends. I have lived in Buffalo, Wyoming; Tucson, Arizona; Salaga, Ghana; and Ottawa, Ontario. I moved from Montreal to Lethbridge, Alberta, and from there to Calgary, where I will stay. I once spent a summer travelling between Montreal (where I was born and raised) and Abitibi, in Northern Quebec. I also lived intermittently in the Quebec Laurentians, in a town called Lachute, for a field study program. We would go home on the weekend. I can also add Saint-Adolphe-d'Howard to that back-and-forth lifestyle, thanks to a summer camp job (any Pripstein alum among my readers?).

One thing always stood out in my moves: I had to buy a new bottle of ketchup. I think back to all those condiments. What did I do with the unfinished bottles? Why was I even buying ketchup? I don't even like it that much. My most memorable take-along, however, was a blank notebook. I would have my housemates write, draw, and share in them, and they contain such richness from a time before cellphones.

Each move was a deeply immersive experience, with everyone fully present - sharing living spaces, fridges, meals, chore-wheels, and, of course,



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parties. Maybe the ketchup was my icebreaker. I remember chatting with my new roommates in Buffalo. They were heading out on a shopping trip when I blurted out, "I have ketchup, and you're all welcome to use it!"

Connection is vital to our shared experiences, and the more diverse the group, I feel, the better. I have memories of disagreements that ended with drinks shared over a fire. I remember passing the talking stick (yes, an actual stick) so that everyone had a chance to express their side. I remember going for walks to maintain that connection when the group moved on.

I have kept in touch with some friends I made along the way. We share the experience of living

together, working ourselves to the bone, and relaxing together. We grew up alongside one another during the awkwardness of our early 20s. We supported each other through breakups and celebrated triumphs at work (once, we found a moose skull while collecting beetle specimens in the thick regrowth forests of Northern Quebec - an exciting and rare find!).

Those days are far be-

hind me, but they are a good reminder that shared experiences add so much to our lives. My most recent (and hopefully final) move to Calgary has been challenging. The unfortunate part of moving is how much work it is. Sorting, packing, giving things away, letting things go, leaving friends, and leaving your community can put a serious strain on your wellbeing.

Where I would normal-

ly thrive in a new home, making quick friends with neighbours, parents at my kids' schools, or striking up conversations with fellow dog owners on walks, It was just too much.

In the days when I would buy a new bottle of ketchup, now even the simple act of getting to know my very lovely neighbours was not something I worked on. Maybe it's due to having young children, going through perimenopause, and missing my Lethbridge crew. A blank notebook and fresh condiments don't seem to be cutting it. That's when I remembered: all of the connections I've made are still there.

A move can be a jarring experience. I have a lot of gratitude for my healthy, loving, and thriving family. I know that I am lucky. But wow, am I tired.

I may not have had a cellphone in my earlier days of globetrotting and moving around, but I have one now. It's a good tool to get back in touch with some of the people I lived with over the years. It turns out many of them are also perimenopausal, with small children. They're exhausted too. I may not be carrying a blank notebook anymore, or offering ketchup to new roommates, but the connection is still there. It always has been. And in the end, it's connection—not the place, or the move—that saves us.



It's a condiment party, everywhere you go. Photo: Debby Hudson

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# President's Message: Meaningful connections

Happy New Year! In 2026, I have high hopes for connection at Unison. Maybe you are a regular at our Wednesday live band dances, or maybe you've been curious about one of our in-person or online courses. We have something for everyone, and what we aim for is to reduce lone-

liness and isolation for older adults. There's a lot of important and interesting health information to back that idea up. Dr. Vivek Murthy is a prominent American physician and public health leader who served as the 19th and 21st Surgeon General of the United States. Recently Dr. Murthy

wrote the book- Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes-Lonely World. Dr. Murthy argues that loneliness is as harmful to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It contributes to increased risks of heart disease, depression, anxiety, dementia, and premature death. Loneliness is widespread and affects people across all demographics.

At Unison, we know a little about loneliness. In fact, at Unison at Veiner Centre and Unison at Kerby centre, most of our programs and events are designed to combat isolation and loneliness.

As we move into a New Year, some of you may be facing a new reality, coping with loss of a friend or a relative. If you lost your spouse a year ago, I imagine the last thing you want to do is jump in the car and head out for a road trip to Jasper, but maybe it is exactly what you need most. Our staff and volunteers are continuously planning and organizing

all sorts of daytrips. Unison Veiner Centre takes regular trips to Rosebud and different markets. Unison at Kerby Centre hosted a flash mob last summer, and we take trips to Banff. You can invite a friend to join you on one of our bus trips. You can sit back, relax, and let us do the driving. Or, if you're feeling bold, sign up for an adventure and see who you meet along the way. You know what will happen if you don't go. Dr. Murthy would remind us that a social outing is good for your health. Did I mention that we are hosting a Mediterranean Cruise this year? This event is open to members in Calgary and Medicine Hat. Some of the registered adventurers are coming alone, and some are coming with a friend. Staff will be there as well to guide your experience, and it's going to be a memorable event. A cruise ship offers plenty of opportunity for fresh air, sightseeing, and the feeling that you're being looked af-



Larry Mathieson, CEO and President

ter. All of that is sure to be a boost to your mental and physical health.

Speaking of health, if you sign up for one of our classes like Steady Moves or Feet to the Beat, make sure you invite one of your classmates to hang around for a coffee with you at the Veiner Bistro or the Kerby Café. The fitness classes are great for your health and the community and friendship you are building afterwards will double your health outcomes.

## JANUARY 2026

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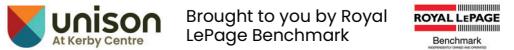
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Staff from **Service Canada** will be at Unison Kerby Centre on the following dates to help you sign up for the Canadian Dental Care plan, and to answer questions about Federal benefits.

- January 14 & 21 | 9 am - 12 pm
- February 11 & 17 | 9 am - 12 pm
- March 11 & 24 | 9 am - 3 pm

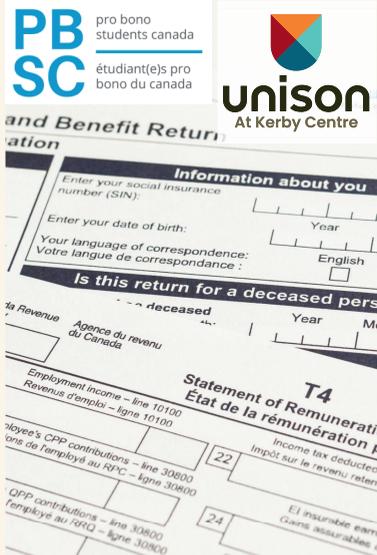
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## Volunteer opportunities

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**Tax Receptionist** (February 23–April 30): Welcome clients, assist with surveys, accept donations, and use the point-of-sale machine.

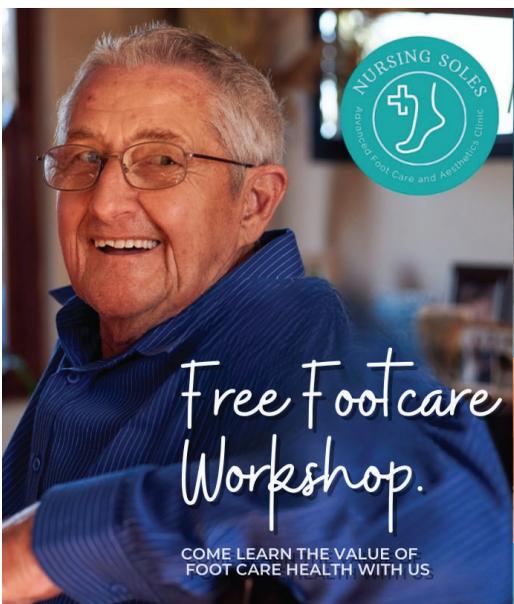
**Benefits and Housing**: Help older adults complete benefits and housing applications (paper or online) and share information to support them. Training is provided.

**Seniors Supports Reception** (Fridays, 12-4 pm) Be part of a welcoming team in a busy office! Greet clients, help with intake forms, answer phones, and assist with admin tasks.

**Food Prep** (Wednesdays, 9 am - 12 pm): Support our Thrive Food Security Program by helping prepare food for our market. Available shift: Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**Unison News Support** (last Friday of every month, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm). Put address labels on Unison News, bring newspaper bundles to Canada Post. Snacks provided!

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- FairEntry Applications

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# Ergonomics: Prevent pain before it starts

Pallavi Goyal, Calgary  
Neuropathy Association

Have you ever wondered why a simple movement you've done a thousand times suddenly starts causing pain or discomfort? Maybe that familiar, repetitive motion leads to tingling or numbness in your nerves. You might be surprised to learn that this isn't something that just happens out of nowhere. We usually pay attention to discomfort or dysfunction only once it's already causing us problems. But like many other bodily issues, it likely started long before we even noticed, and by the time we feel it, we're just addressing the symptoms. Let's take a look at some of the factors that could be playing a role in these issues.

**Awkward Posture:** We've all caught ourselves sitting or standing in some strange, uncomfortable way while working. That awkward position can put extra strain on our bodies. Our muscles and joints work best when they're in certain positions—usually when they're at a natural, neutral point in their range of motion. When we stretch them too much or put too much stress on them at the same time, they can get injured, even affecting our nerves.

**Prolonged Positions:** Ever had to sit or stand in one position for what feels like forever? Whether it's at a desk or doing a task that requires staying still, holding that position can take a toll. For example, sitting with a bent back while driving or in a chair puts pressure on the discs in your lower back, which can lead to muscle

and nerve issues over time.

**Repetitive Movements:** Many of us perform repetitive movements at work or at home. This can stress muscles and tendons, leading to small injuries like microtears. If these movements are done in awkward positions, the risk of injury goes up even more. Over time, those muscles and tendons can start rubbing against bones, which wears down the soft tissue.

**Contact Stress:** This happens when pressure is applied to a joint. For example, kneeling on hard floors for a long period can put pressure on your knees. If you're holding an awkward position at the same time, it can cause irritation and inflammation, leading to pain and discomfort.

**Vibration:** Jobs that involve constant vibration—like operating heavy machinery or using power tools—can mess with blood flow in the affected areas. This makes muscles tire faster and can lead to fatigue. The answer lies in ergonomics—understanding how to set up our workspace and movements in a way that keeps our body safe and comfortable.

Ergonomics is all about understanding how we interact with the world around us—whether it's the tools we use, the furniture we sit on, or the way we move. It's a science that combines anatomy, physiology, psychology, and engineering to create designs that work better for us, not against us.

Ergonomics is about making things fit our bodies and abilities, not the other way around. Many tools, and our furniture, are based on standard



Poor posture places pressure on nerve roots as they leave the spine. Photo: CNA

measurements, but not everyone is the same size or shape. It's crucial to design workspaces and tools that fit us better. By studying how we reach, grab, carry, push, pull, or lift things, we can figure out how to tweak our environments to reduce unnecessary stress on our bodies.

When adjustments are made to match you—your body, your movements, including compensations for neuropathy or weakness—it not only feels safer but also makes you more efficient. Experts take many factors into account: how your body moves during a task, how well you can see, and the amount of work you're expected to do. If the setup isn't ergonomic, you'll be more prone to injury, and your productivity could drop. Poor posture places pressure on nerve roots as they leave the spine. Did you know poor ergonomics can affect your nervous system, too? Ignoring the way your body is positioned or how you're using your tools might make your existing nerve problems worse—and can even cause new issues, like peripheral neuropathy.

Let's dive into how bad ergonomics can lead to some serious problems:

**Musculoskeletal Disorders:** MSDs are a broad group of injuries affecting muscles, tendons, nerves, joints, ligaments, and more. These injuries can develop suddenly or slowly over time. They're common in workplaces, but they can also happen anywhere, especially if you're doing repetitive movements in awkward positions. Repeated movements, even small ones, can lead to major issues like tendonitis, sciatica, and other MSDs. Common causes of MSDs include: extreme force, awkward or fixed postures, repetition of any motion and overexertion. MSDs don't always show up right away. They can take weeks, months, or even years to develop.

**Repetitive Strain Injuries:** RSIs happen when you repeat the same motion over and over until it causes pain. This could be anything from typing on a keyboard to playing an instrument. If you do the same movement too often, the strain builds up and can lead to pain, discomfort, stress fractures, ganglion cysts, nerve compression, or herniated discs.

**Nerve Compression Syndromes:** Nerve compression happens when pressure is put on nerves, especially in areas like your hands or feet, which are farther from the spine. It can cause nerve pain (that can lead to peripheral neuropathy), numbness, or even a "pinched" nerve. Certain jobs or activities that involve repetitive movements, like typing or working on an assembly line, can put you at risk for this. Common nerve compression conditions include: Carpal Tunnel Syn-

drome, Sciatica and Tarsal Tunnel Syndrome. These conditions often happen when tissues like muscles or ligaments swell, putting pressure on nerves that run through small "tunnels" or passages in your joints.

**Occupational Overuse Syndrome:** OOS refers to conditions that cause pain or discomfort due to repetitive or sustained movements, awkward postures, or overexertion. It's not just about how often you're moving, but also how you're moving. Poorly designed furniture, workstations, or tools can make it worse. OOS can also happen while doing chores, practicing a musical instrument, or during intense workouts. The most common affected areas include fingers, hands, and wrists, elbows and shoulders, back and neck. Over time, these symptoms can worsen, even when you're resting.

Fall hazards and visibility also pose safety risks, especially for those already affected by neuropathy. If your visibility is low, you're more prone to accidents, which can cause nerve damage. Preventive measures like getting your vision assessed, using proper lighting, and wearing shoes that fit well, can be preventive measures that protect your nerves from sudden injury.

The journey through ergonomics reveals a profound truth: prevention is not just better than cure, it's a strategic investment in your overall well-being. You're unlocking greater productivity, enhanced mobility, and a more comfortable, sustainable way of living.

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# The gift of collaboration

Deborah Maier, Calgary Horticultural Society

The Calgary Horticultural Society has been the recipient of many wonderful gifts. We rely on a network of volunteers and partners to deliver our programs, events, and stories. We often don't know who we are reaching, but sometimes interesting opportunities circle back to us in a request to collaborate.

It's been over two years since the initial request to help with a Youth Corp project came in. Virginia, one of the co-initiators of the project, wanted to share the message that invasive species in Calgary's green spaces is a problem. She and a friend were building Little Libraries to hold information about invasive species and books about the environment. The libraries would be located near Calgary greenspaces. She reached out to the Society to ask if we had resources that she could include in her libraries. The conversation evolved and now we are a host for one of the Little Libraries.

As anyone who manages a Little Library knows, more books are borrowed than are returned, so we have regularly asked our e-news reader for books for the Little Library. This in turn has also helped our in-office lending library grow, as gardeners downsizing their personal libraries of gardening books think of us. (Note: For now, having just moved, we can't accept any books.)

Green Calgary has been a regular collaborator with the Society. Working with them to be a rain barrel pick up site has evolved into a water-wise community event held mid-June called Be YardSmart. Not only is Green Calgary at the event with their rain barrels, but the Society invites about a dozen exhibitors to share their wares and water conservation knowledge.

Talking with the Botanical Gardens of Silver Springs about their plans and possible collaborations resulted in the Society gaining a co-host for our 2025 Open Gardens Launch event and...the location for our new home!

Last fall, artist Andrea Lau asked us to join her on an application for a public art grant. We now have a lovely book, *Flora*, that we are distributing to Little Libraries throughout the city. The book is a collection of 20 stories submitted by gardeners with an accompanying illustration created by the artist. What an exciting collaboration!

Like myself, I'm sure many of you would not think that the Calgary In-

ternational Film Festival (CIFF) would have a tie to gardening. Well, this year it did. We were asked to be the communi-



Free little library. Photo: Deborah Maier.

ty partner for the screening of the film *GROW*. The film captured the delightful story of a young girl who enters a giant pumpkin growing contest. Our most recent collab-

oration is with the Stampede City Mixed Chorus. Similar to CIFF, we are a community partner for one of their three Christmas concerts. They are looking for members and an audience and so is the Society. The concert is also a fundraiser for the Society. You can learn more about the Chorus and their concerts by visiting their website [stampedecitychorus.com](http://stampedecitychorus.com).

It is interesting to see the different roads that a keen passion for gardening can lead to. Who knew it could be libraries, events, film, or song? It all starts with someone asking a question or making a suggestion.

When you are working in your garden, even if it is a patio pot, remember to greet your neigh-



Collaborative gardening. Photo: Deborah Maier.

bour, share your stories, and, if you need it, ask for help. Engage your neighbours and plant a seed for collaboration—you, too, could grow a beautiful gift.

Thank you to Unison News for letting me share these stories. I'm

sure that some of the seeds for collaboration have been planted here.

To learn more about gardening in the Calgary area visit [www.calhort.org](http://www.calhort.org).



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# Distant relatives get closer with Facebook

Ron Gilmore

It's hard to admit at times, but yes, at 83 years of age, I consider myself a senior. Years ago, I heard the younger generation talking about Facebook and noticed them using it on their cellphones. At first, I did not pay much attention but eventually, I, too, acquired a cellphone.

My daughter introduced me to Facebook, and I decided to try it. I was working on a family history project. As a member of the Alberta Family Histories Society, genealogy is one of my hobbies. Like most of us, when my parents passed, I inherited some of their treasures. In a cardboard box full of old photos, newspaper clippings, and letters, I came across a black and white photo that caught my attention. There was nothing written on the back, but the scene showed a group of suited men clustered around a man on a motorcycle. The man on the motorcycle looked vaguely familiar, remotely resembling my grand-



Family history truths revealed by the simple act of sharing a photo. Photo: Ron Gilmore

father. The attire of the crowd suggests the 1920s.

I canvassed all my living relatives for clues and learned nothing. On a whim, I decided to post the photo to a Facebook historical group in Banbridge, Northern Ireland, where my family originated, not far from Belfast. One of my ancestors owned a cycle shop there and I thought that the motorcycle racer in the photo might just be my great uncle Samuel. My Facebook post yielded a few comments. One was from a gentleman named William Keough who said that the man on the motorcycle was indeed a Gilmore, but not

my great uncle. Further, he said that the man had been shot dead trying to run a roadblock. Wow! I wrote to William, and we determined that we were cousins! Another Wow! However, William could not elaborate any further on the family legend. Nevertheless, I learned a bit, and I acquired a new cousin.

A year later (genealogists must be patient), I posted the same photo to the same group and a gentleman named Matt Bankhead suggested that I post the old photo to another Facebook group called "Banbridge Back in the Day." I quickly received two newspaper

articles detailing the fatal shooting. The man on the motorcycle was named Samuel Gilmore (but not my great uncle) and was a distant cousin who raced motorcycles across Ireland. With the help of a colleague in Belfast, I was able to retrieve the inquest records of his death to garner the gory details. He had been visiting his fiancée that night and left around midnight to drive home and encountered a roadblock nearby. The paramilitary group apparently called on him

to halt, but he proceeded and was shot dead.

William Keough and I continued to communicate, and I soon found that he had a sister living in Calgary only a few kilometers away. Wow! Another new cousin!

I am grateful for Facebook's connections to distant families who supplied me with my family history, and my newly found cousins. I am sure glad that I tried out this powerful social media tool and thank goodness for kids and grandkids who helped.

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# Newcomers find acceptance

Ada Muser

According to the International Organization for Migration (2024), a migrant is a broad term for anyone who moves from one place to another, often temporarily for work, better living conditions, or education. In contrast, the term immigrant specifically refers to someone who moves to a new country to settle permanently.

\* \* \* \* \*

Everything was fine in the animal kingdom until apes descended from the trees six to seven million years ago. They were the early hominins evolving in stages from “Lucy” to Homo habilis, to Homo erectus, to Neanderthals, and culminating in Homo sapiens, modern humans. They were distinguished by hairlessness, bipedalism, and high intelligence.

Scientists identified five stages in human evolution: hunters-gatherers, nomads, herders, farmers, and industrial workers. Each subsequent society was more advanced.

Hunters, gatherers, nomads, and herders were nomadic tribes led by their best tracker. They were constantly on the move; it was their way of life. Back then, they had plenty of space.

Around 10,000 BCE, humans started establishing agricultural villages and became farmers and artisans, which led to the formation of social classes. Their populations increased. Over time, countries, states, or city-states appeared and created rules to protect themselves from undesirables.

Trouble arose during mass migrations when great empires disintegrated, such as the Roman Empire in 395 CE. The European Migration Period followed. It lasted 300 years, and the political map was completely redrawn.

Presently, migrations are caused either by inter-religious intolerance or by the unequal distribution of wealth between countries, continents, and even enclaves within the same country. People from poor countries are overwhelming rich countries. These migrations are on an unprecedented scale, aided by improved transportation.

Not all immigration is bad. If done right, it is desirable. To be successful, there must be “acceptance” and “assimilation” of the immigrants into the new societies. What stands in the way are traditions, fear of change and competition from the hungry arrivals, and whether the immigrants are willing to blend in.

\* \* \* \* \*

North of Riva del Garda is a region bordering Switzerland to the west and Austria to the north. It is South Tyrol, an autonomous Italian province with a population of about half a million. It had been part of the Austrian Habsburg Empire from 1363 until 1919, when the Allies gave it to Italy as the spoils of World War I.

It was done without consulting with the people, who are still resentful, stubborn, generations-old German speakers refusing to assimilate with the rest of the Italians.

South Tyrol is mountainous, beautiful and a tourist Mecca. Small villages were inaccessible and isolated until very recently, when modern roads were built, winding up from the deep valleys. Their medieval character has remained the same.

In 2008, Bruno and Elsa were vacationing on Lake Garda, in northern Italy. The 50 km lake be-



Arco, South Tyrol Photo: Ada Muser

gins in the broad Po River Valley. To its north end lies the exquisite town of Riva del Garda. There, the South Tyrol begins; it is an entry point to the Alps.

One day, they decided to drive north to Trento through the narrow valley of the Sarca River framed by mountains on both sides. It does not usually rain much in Italy, but that day was miserable. They drove slowly through the steady rain, - “sightseeing by car.” About halfway between Riva and Trento, they turned off the main road.

The road was steep and narrow, and zigzagged up the hill. That day, it was engulfed in fog. There were no guardrails to prevent cars from plunging steeply down. It is conjectured

that mountain goats have poor vision, so they do not see the precipices under them; a gentle fog has the same effect on car drivers.

A chill seeped into the car, freezing their bones all the way to the marrow. At last, they arrived at a tiny mountain village. An establishment on the corner was a combination of a restaurant, pizzeria or bar, depending on the time of the day.

It was the middle of the afternoon, so it was a bar. A pretty waitress served drinks, and aside from Bruno and Elsa, two lonely figures at separate tables hunched over their beers, perhaps fortified with schnapps. Customers were the taciturn types, the air was stale, and

boredom was spreading.

Bruno and Elsa ordered grog (a hot black tea spiced with rum, sugar and lemon juice), but with double rum each. It was the right choice, and they slowly defrosted.

A new customer came in and sat down in a high chair by the bar. He mumbled something and handed the waitress an orange. She gave him a drink just as silently. He must have been a regular.

When Bruno and Elsa finished their grog, the waitress came to clear the table. She lingered standing above them and addressed them in Slovak: “I noticed you were talking Czech”.

So they were. The ice broken, the waitress told them her life story. She had come to Italy from



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# Acceptance - continued

Slovakia to work. Beginning was not easy, as she had to learn Italian and also the Tyrolean German. The villagers ostracised her, but in time she met a nice local boy, and they started dating. She hoped she would be accepted. It did not help much, and she was considering returning home.

“But I noticed,” Bruno said, “that the last customer brought you a gift.”

“Yes,” she smiled, and pointed to her extended belly. “Everything has changed now that I have a little Tyrolian coming. We are married, and I am staying.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Bohemian-Moravian Highlands are characterized by rounded, rolling hills and dense forests. The villages’ houses are like beads on a string along the rivers and creeks. Narrow roads run parallel alongside them.

The hills and ridges are not high but rugged. Roads rarely cross them from one valley to another. Before modern transportation, the villages were isolated, just like in South Tyrol. Inhabitants are self-absorbed in their uniqueness. For a person, “wandering in” from villages nearby, even to marry or open a small business was rare.

One such village is called Vír. The houses follow each other like goslings follow mother goose. The valley is wider only in a few places where the small creeks cascade from the hills. Lanes, about 4 to 5 houses long, branch out from the main road in those places. Bruno’s forebearers discovered Vír four generations ago. They built a villa, then renovated another house, and Bruno’s father built a cabin in the 1930s. The families would spend summer vacations there for close to 100 years.

Much had happened since Bruno and Elsa moved overseas, but 23 years later, they went back for a nostalgic vacation to where Bruno spent his childhood holidays.

On the first morning after arrival, he got up early and went for a walk. He ventured into a short, dead-end lane. Two older women were working in their yards with hoes. He initially passed by unnoticed, but the second straightened her back, shield-

ed her eyes from the sun and yelled out: “If it’s not Bruno, the Mayers’ boy? Came back to visit us?”

That opened the floodgates. Bruno was brought up to date on all his boyhood playmates’ whereabouts, who married whom, how many children they had had and who had died since. No one was left unmentioned.

The first woman moved closer. She was swiftly shooed away: “Why are you joining in? What do you know? This is Bruno of the Mayer family; he grew up with us as a child.”

Then she turned to Bruno and explained, “Mary here is a foreigner, wouldn’t know you.”

Mary smiled and explained, grinning: “I married her neighbour 35 years ago, have two kids, and I’ve been living here ever since.”

“As I said, Bruno, she’s a foreigner”, the second woman ended the discussion.

\* \* \* \* \*

In August 1968, Czechoslovakia was attacked by the armies of the Warsaw Pact. Within hours, the country capitulated, the government was changed, but for a few months, the new regime opened its borders to let the dissidents leave.

Bruno and Elsa were two of them. They did not have a plan; the invasion was unexpected, but they were glad to escape and determined to find a new home country.

A few weeks later, Bruno, Elsa and their three and half year old daughter

landed in Calgary, Canada. Bruno found a drafting job for a start-up company three months later.

The company was small, just six employees. It was one of several construction-related, privately owned businesses. The owner’s name was Bill. Altogether, there were dozens of employees.

The company soon needed another draftsman. They hired Elsa as well. With two paychecks, they were doing well.

In the middle of December, Bruno ran into Bill by the coffee machine. He asked Bruno if they had plans for the Holidays and invited him and Elsa to a turkey dinner.

They thought it was customary to hold company Christmas dinners for all employees. To their surprise, it was held in the owner’s private home, and the only other guests were a young couple from Quebec, also first-year employees.

It was a fun afternoon; they shot pool, had dinner, and then they played Monopoly. Bruno was fascinated by the informal atmosphere. Bill won against stiff competition; he was the best businessman in the room after all.

Bruno and Elsa, who were clearly the most junior employees in the firm, were puzzled by the invitation. They found out later that Bill, or his wife, thought they and the Quebecers would be lonely without their families living nearby.

Bruno and Elsa knew they had chosen well. They found the new home!

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# Canadians are changing how they invest

Alberta Securities Commission

The way Canadians invest and how they think about building long-term wealth is changing faster than ever. Younger investors are entering the market earlier and relying on digital tools to guide their decisions, while older Canadians are adjusting how they manage retirement income as life expectancies and living and care costs continue to grow.

To understand why investor behaviour is shifting across age groups, it's important to look at the broader pressures shaping Canadians' financial decisions. Canadians are living longer, working later in life, and facing higher costs in areas like healthcare, housing, and caregiving, all of which are stretching financial plans further than previous generations expected.

Traditional assumptions about retirement, owning a paid-off home, living debt-free, and relying primarily on pensions no longer hold true for many people. And these pressures aren't limited to just older Canadians. Economic uncertainty and competing financial priorities are affecting younger investors, too. Many are turning to DIY investing much sooner to reach their financial goals. At the same time, many younger Canadians— with limited investing experience—are about to receive the largest transfer of wealth in Canadian history. Over the next two decades, an estimated \$1 to \$2 trillion will move from baby boomers to younger generations. For many recipients, this will be their first major exposure to managing significant assets or investment portfolios.

Handled well, this wealth has the potential to strengthen financial security for individuals, families and communities. But if unknowing investors allow these assets to flow into speculative trends, online hype, or fraudulent opportunities, the consequences could be costly. Canadians of all ages need the knowledge and skills to evaluate opportunities, manage risk, and recognize the warning signs of fraud. Protecting your money in today's environment means understanding not just how to invest, but how to invest wisely.

Technology is changing how people start and stay invested. Technology has become the primary tool helping Canadians adapt and make investing more accessible. The rise of fintech platforms and mobile tools has lowered barriers, and investors can now

open accounts in minutes, buy fractional shares, or access automated portfolios, all from their phones.

These technological shifts lets younger investors to enter the market more easily, while also supporting older investors who increasingly rely on digital tools to manage and extend their retirement income.

Investors are stepping away from traditional channels that provide more advice, and are embracing digital platforms that promise accessibility, control and cost savings. Many prefer to pay less fees, and to learn by doing, opening accounts, making trades and gaining confidence through experience enabled by easy-to-use apps and online brokerages.

This trend isn't inherently negative; in fact, it demonstrates curiosity and initiative. But it

also underscores the importance of education. Without proper guidance, investors who rely solely on online sources or "influencers" may be exposed to unnecessary risk, misinformation, or even fraud. The growth of DIY investing highlights a broader challenge: helping Canadians distinguish between trustworthy financial information and persuasive marketing disguised as advice.

As more people invest, the responsibility to understand the risks, market volatility, and fees becomes essential. Technology accelerates investor engagement, making it even more crucial that we all have access to the knowledge needed to invest wisely. Whether you are just starting or updating your retirement plan, a strong foundation of financial education can help you

make informed choices, protect your savings, and stay confident in today's fast-moving environment.

Establishing lasting, effective investing habits requires a mix of early education, timely learning, and ongoing awareness. Whether you choose to manage your own portfolio, work with an advisor, or do both, starting with a solid investing foundation and access to unbi-

ased, trustworthy information is key to keeping your investments safe.

In today's fast-moving market, protecting and growing your financial nest egg requires informed decision-making. Knowing how to research investments, check registration, and recognize scams is good practice - it's essential. CheckFirst.ca provides Albertans with the tools to do exactly that.



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# January Crossword and Sudoku. Solutions: p.22

## Across

- 1. "Black Widow" singer Rita
- 4. Godless
- 10. Harvest
- 14. Loochie currency, briefly
- 15. Prestige
- 18. Lentil pancake
- 17. "Pencils down!" for one?
- 19. Scattered
- 20. More than half of the world's population
- 21. Courtroom fig.
- 23. Brief read?
- 24. Curriculum \_\_\_
- 25. "What I did last summer" essay penned by a lifeguard?
- 28. USN rank
- 29. Hotel bar
- 31. Burrito option
- 32. Alien-seeking org.
- 34. Rind
- 35. Class with posters

- 36. Soliloquy dilemma, and a phonetic hint to 17, 25, 51, and 61 Across
- 41. Sculpture medium
- 42. Dygona IFK carrier
- 43. Silver state city
- 45. Fountain soup, perhaps
- 48. Staffer
- 50. Kebab asker
- 51. Ice cream truck jingle, e.g.?
- 54. "Groundhog Day" writer/director Harold
- 56. Slip
- 57. \_\_\_ Quixote
- 58. From the beginning
- 59. Lute strings
- 61. Fee for a reunion dinner?
- 64. Ramai, for one
- 65. Afternoon treyful
- 66. QB mistake
- 67. Ish
- 68. Knight names

## Down

- 1. So-so ranges?
- 2. Chocolate-covered bite
- 3. Comes clean about
- 4. Tentative
- 5. Works on the road
- 6. Knee pt.
- 7. Home of the Cubbies and the Bees
- 8. Martial art that began as sword exercises practiced by samurai
- 9. Take the wrong way?
- 10. Common TC inserts, once
- 11. Floor model?
- 12. The Penguin's first name
- 13. Superintendent of the late Palomares Fra
- 18. Shopish remark
- 22. Tee off
- 25. Two of a kind

- 26. Bill with round numbers?
- 27. Many of "The Maltese Falcon"
- 30. Oklahoma Natives
- 33. Island near Maljuca
- 35. Little bit
- 37. Digital greeting
- 38. Tel's bruiser
- 39. Animated film in which Renée Zellweger voices a forest named Vanessa Bloome
- 40. Spices up
- 44. In a way
- 45. Ersatz
- 46. Forum visitor who never posts
- 47. Sees eye to eye
- 49. Raises
- 52. Checked garments
- 53. Still in need of tonics
- 55. "That's \_\_\_-brained?"
- 58. Contacted privately, briefly
- 60. Away sign
- 62. Honeybunny
- 63. Capitalize on

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# Transit tension, but, we ride on

John Stephens

I deposited my bus ticket in the fare box and took a seat. Before the bus pulled away, the driver opened the door, presumably, to admit another passenger. But there was a car parked in front of the bus.

From the bus door, a man accosted the driver. “I don’t want to tell you how to do your job, but why were you driving so slow? You’re not in a school zone. I was stuck driving behind you.”

From my seat, I tensed while I witnessed a case of road rage.

The bus driver calmly but firmly defended himself. He explained that the bus’s route is in a residential zone with two parks, each with a playground. Furthermore, buses usually drive slower than most vehicles due to their size, frequency of stops, and the fact that they are not equipped with seatbelts/airbags.

But the confrontation escalated when the mouthy motorist shouted, “Don’t argue with me!” I was growing alarmed. I don’t recall seeing any other riders on the bus. I wondered if I was going to have to intervene and tell the mouthy motorist to mosey along. But he sounded like the confrontational type who would not have backed down from

a show of assertiveness.

But if I had to say one thing to him, it would be this: If you were in such a damn hurry, why did you stop and detain the bus to give hell to the driver? You were detaining yourself.

The driver finally got back in his car and drove off.

I wonder what makes these people tick – or what makes them tick so loudly. I suspect that he had anger issues long before that incident.

Kudos to the bus driver for standing his ground while maintaining his composure.

Sometimes, however, it’s the driver themselves who cause delay. One time, I boarded a bus and deposited a transit ticket. Through my Covid mask, I politely asked for a transfer while pointing to the dispenser.

He obliged but along with my transfer, I got a lecture that went something like this:

“If you want a transfer, you have to ask for one, so I don’t have to guess.”

Calm but indignant, I replied; “I did ask for a transfer.”

“I didn’t hear you.”

I took my seat.

I realize that ever since the pandemic, oral communication is often compromised due to masks, plexiglass barriers, and social

distancing. But that was one reason why I pointed to the transfer dispenser. I would bet that many bus riders do the same; the way people point to their wrists when asking for the time. It’s a way of clarifying what we want in case our words are not heard or misunderstood.

I imagine non-verbal people face annoyance from folks who assume that everyone is capable of coherent speech.

To his credit, however, the driver waited for a woman who was across the street using a walker. When she boarded, he gave her some suggestions so that she could be seated comfortably.

But somehow, I just knew that he and I were going to have another exchange. A bit later, when I pulled the “stop request” cord and approached the rear exit, I gently pushed the door on the yellow strip, as per its direction. Other passengers were getting off at the front, but the rear door remained closed. I pushed a bit harder, but to no avail.

“Would you open the door?” I called out, not entirely concealing my exasperation.

Again, the driver obliged but replied, “You have to push.”

“I did push.”

What was I supposed to do, use a battering ram?

All complaints aside, I am generally satisfied with Calgary Transit and do not wish to discourage seniors

– and non-seniors – from riding buses and C-trains.

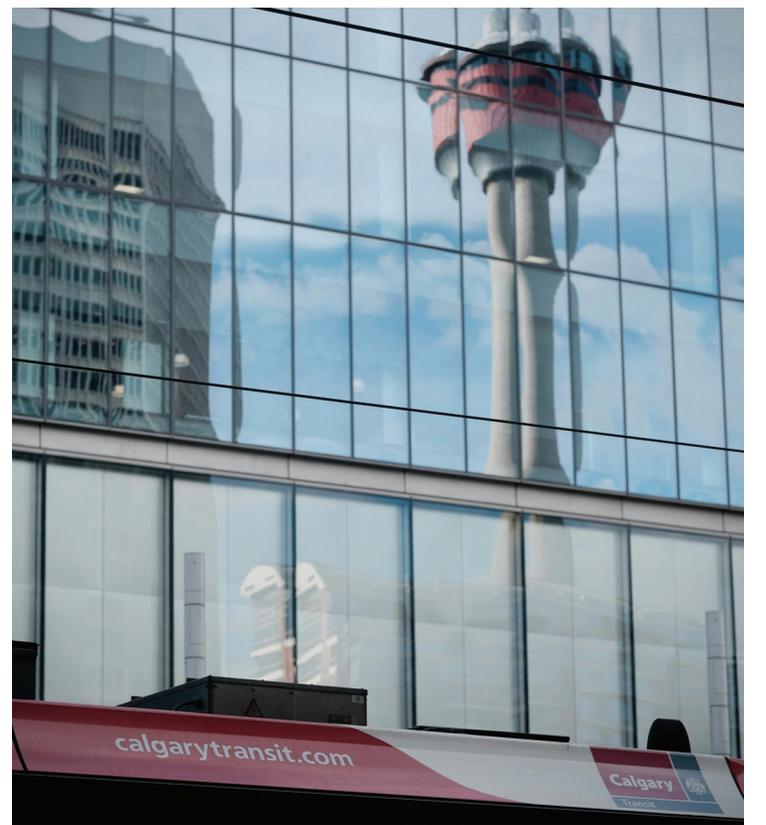
Safe riding.



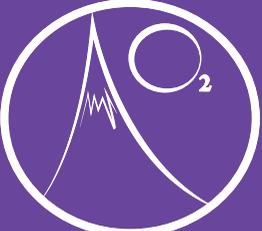
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Public transit has its shares of ups and downs. Photo: Kris Tian



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## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to raise the standard of home oxygen care in Alberta. From free supplies and rapid hospital discharge support to round-the-clock local assistance, we make every step simple, so patients can focus on living life. Care they can trust from people in their own community.



# Unison

## At Veiner Centre

# Caring for the caregiver

Cori Fischer

Caregivers work every day of the year. They provide care for a loved one—an aging parent, a partner with chronic illness, a child with disabilities, or a friend facing mobility or cognitive challenges. Caregivers are the quiet backbone of our communities, offering time, compassion, and emotional strength.

Caregiving is meaningful and deeply rewarding, but it is often without recognition or rest. Caregiving can also bring significant physical, emotional, and financial strain, as well as anxiety, grief, guilt and loneliness. The emotional stress of witnessing a loved one's declining health or increasing dependence can be heartbreaking. The physical demands of tasks like bathing, lifting, or mobility assistance may lead to injury or burnout. There is also financial pressure from expenses related to medical needs, transportation, or home modifications. A caregiver then faces loneliness, because they have little time for social activities or personal interests.

Understanding caregiver needs and ensuring they have support is essential for the wellbeing of both caregivers and those they care for. Supporting caregivers strengthens families and communities. When caregivers receive help, they are better able to provide quality care for longer, safeguard their own mental and physical health, balance daily responsibilities, build resil-

ience and avoid burnout. Investing in caregiver wellbeing ultimately benefits the person receiving care, the healthcare system, and society.

Unison Veiner Centre provides meaningful resources and support for caregivers who are caring for older adults. These supports help address emotional, educational, and practical challenges that come with caregiving, and aim to reduce isolation and prevent burnout. We offer support in-house, and through community partnerships.

At the Veiner Centre, we are proud to offer Unison Connect, a Seniors Supports department, and an Active Aging program that all aim to foster connection. Unison Connect is a social prescribing initiative where caregivers, or the older adults they care for, can be connected to a "Link Worker" to identify non-medical needs affecting health like social supports, transportation, home maintenance, or accessing community resources.

Our Senior Supports Department helps caregivers navigate systems and supports for their loved ones including guidance on government benefits (CPP, OAS, GIS, etc.), community referrals and assistance with tax filing for low-income seniors. Our Active Aging programs also helps caregivers connect with community, reduce isolation, and carve out time for themselves.

Unison offers Caregiver Support Groups through three community resource partnerships:



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Optima Living is Canadian owned and operated. 

The Alzheimer's Society, Bridges Family Programs, and the Parkinson's Association of Alberta. These groups provide emotional support and educational resources, workshops, community support, and help navigate finances and the system.

With the Alzheimer's Society, we host three support groups: 1: Care Partner Support Groups run on the second Tuesday of each month, from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM.

2: First link Connections are scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday of the month. And, 3: Dementia Support on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

The Bridges Family Program comes to the Veiner Centre on the third Tuesday of each month to offer the Grandparents who Parent Group for peer support and education specifically designed for grandparents who are parenting their grandchildren.

The Parkinson's caregiver support group, organized by the Parkinson's Association of Alberta, occurs every two months on the third Wednesday of the month.

Caregivers give so much of themselves, through time, energy, love, and emotional labour. Supporting them is not only compassionate, but necessary. Caregiving is a journey, and no one should have to walk it alone.

# The landscape of community

*Marco Jansen, Chair,  
Senior Citizens Advisory  
Committee Foundation*

The Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Foundation (SCACF) has been part of Medicine Hat’s community landscape for many years. We see ourselves as partners in a shared effort to enhance the lives of older adults, whether through cultural programming, social activities, wellness initiatives, or technology that improves accessibility. While the original municipal Advisory Committee has since been dissolved, the Foundation continues forward as an independent, volunteer-led nonprofit dedicated to supporting older adults. Although our name reflects our historical roots, today, the Foundation operates independently with a modernized mission: providing grants to organizations that deliver programs

and services benefiting seniors in Medicine Hat and the surrounding area.

As an independent foundation, SCACF exists to support the work of community groups already serving seniors locally, helping them grow, improve, or enhance the programs they offer. Rather than delivering programs directly, the Foundation focuses on where it can make the greatest impact — by funding initiatives that create meaningful, practical benefits for older adults in our community.

Over the past three years, the Foundation has invested more than \$38,000 in local initiatives that benefit older adults in Medicine Hat and the surrounding area. Much of this support goes toward capital costs — items or equipment that enable organizations to expand their programs, introduce new

activities, or improve accessibility and comfort for participants. These may include furniture, technology, tools, or materials that enhance the quality and reach of seniors’ programs.

Capital funding plays an important role in strengthening community services. A new piece of equipment, updated technology, or improved physical resources can remove barriers to participation and make programs safer, more inclusive, or easier to deliver. For many seniors’ organizations operating on limited budgets, a one-time investment can have a long-lasting impact and allow staff and volunteers to focus on what matters most — serving their participants well.

Even modest grants can make a meaningful difference. In many cases, a targeted contribution is the final piece

that allows a program to move ahead, expand its reach, or better meet the needs of older adults.

In recent months, the SCACF’s Board of Directors has been working to strengthen the Foundation’s governance and clarify its role in the community. Updated policies on attendance, conflict of interest, and code of conduct have been introduced, and grant processes are being reviewed to ensure they are clear, fair, and transparent. Another key priority is raising awareness among local organizations. Groups delivering services to seniors may not always realize their capital needs qualify for funding, or that the Foundation exists to support projects within Medicine Hat and area. Through improved outreach and communication, the Foundation aims to connect with more community partners and

support a broader range of senior-focused initiatives.

As the Foundation continues to evolve, building stronger connections with community groups, volunteers, and seniors themselves remains a priority. Medicine Hat has a vibrant and growing senior population, and ensuring that older adults feel engaged, supported, and valued benefits the entire community. Its ability to support seniors depends on the strength of the organizations delivering programs in our region.

If your organization offers programs benefiting seniors in Medicine Hat and area and may be interested in applying for a grant, we encourage you to reach out at [chair.scacf@gmail.com](mailto:chair.scacf@gmail.com). Together, we can continue to build a community where seniors thrive.

# Volunteer spotlight

**Unison Veiner Centre  
Betty Anne Larson**



Welcoming our first Volunteer spotlight of 2026 is Betty Anne Larson. Betty Anne has volunteered at the Unison Veiner Centre for almost 13 years. You’ll see her smiling face at the reception desk, as a cashier in the Bistro and at reception on Saturdays at the Strathcona centre, and she always jumps in when we are short-handed. Betty Anne loves working with people, visiting with all the members and making sure our new members get oriented. Betty enjoys Unison’s Tuesday Ukelele group, gardening, diamond art, and sewing. If she could take a trip her place would

be NFLD Canada. Her motto is “Life’s too short to stuff a mushroom.”

We are so very grateful for you and all you do. Thank you for being part of the Unison family!

**Unison Kerby Centre  
Amanda Bonella**



Amanda Bonella discovered Unison at Kerby Centre through our social media pages. She had always wanted to volunteer in some way that helped seniors, and to be part of a community. After seeing we needed help at the Kerby Café, she felt this was where she belonged. Amanda is a positive and helpful addition to the Unison family. She helps with food prep, serving customers, and keeping things running smooth-

ly. Amanda enjoys the people, the atmosphere, and knowing that she can move around and help where its needed most.

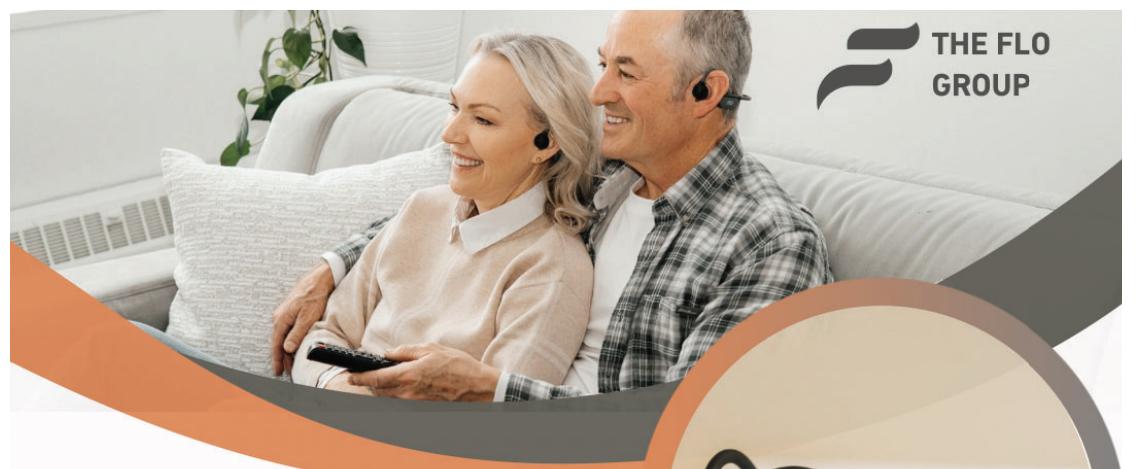
Amanda has received as much as she’s giving back. Volun-

teering is meaningful to her, and she says it brings her happiness and a sense of purpose.

Amanda says volunteering has added structure to her days. It gets her up in the morning,

and gives her something to look forward to.

Amanda has quickly become a familiar and appreciated face in the Café, and we’re grateful for her time and energy.



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# Medicine Hat Veiner Activities

## What's Happening in January

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9am - 4pm | Tuesday & Thursday 9am - 9pm

<b>Mondays</b>	<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>Fridays</b>
<b>Quilting</b> Craft Room   9am	<b>Strathcona Arts Studio</b> Craft Room   9am	<b>Mahjong</b> South MP   9am	<b>Strathcona Arts Studio</b> Craft Room   9am	<b>Quilting</b> Craft Room   9am
<b>Board Games</b> South MP   9:30am	<b>Chess</b> Dining Room   10am	<b>Bocce Ball</b> North MP   9:30am	<b>Jam Session</b> South MP   9:30am	<b>Mahjong</b> South MP   9am
<b>Canasta</b> South MP   12:30pm	<b>Ukulele Group</b> North MP   10am	<b>Canasta Lessons</b> Dining Room   10am	<b>Canasta</b> South MP   12:30pm	<b>Kaiser Club</b> Dining Room   1pm
<b>Euchre</b> North MP   1pm	<b>Duplicate Bridge</b> North MP   12:45pm	<b>Drop in Coffee</b> Dining Room   10am	<b>Euchre</b> North MP   1pm	<b>Duplicate Bridge</b> North MP   12:45pm
<b>Shuffleboard</b> Games Room   1pm	<b>Crib</b> South MP   1pm & 6:30pm	<b>Veiner Centre Choir</b> 10am	<b>Shuffleboard</b> Games Room   1pm	<b>Mexican Train</b>
	<b>Bridge</b> North MP   6pm	<b>Duplicate Bridge</b> South MP   12:30pm	<b>BINGO</b> Boardroom   2pm	<b>Dominoes</b> South MP   1pm
	<b>Board Games</b> Dining Room   6:30pm	<b>Hearts</b> Dining Room   1pm	<b>Duplicate Bridge</b> North MP   6pm	<b>Stitch &amp; Laugh</b> Boardroom   1pm
		<b>Scrabble</b> North MP   1pm	<b>Trump Whist</b> South MP   6pm	
		<b>Pinochle</b> North MP   1pm	<b>Board Games</b> Dining Room   6:30pm	
		<b>Bridge Lessons</b> South MP   3:30pm		

## Active Aging Spotlight

To Register for Events, Classes & Programs, please call (403) 529-8307 or visit us at Veiner Center

### Card Makers

January 6

1pm - 4pm | Registration Required | bring your own supplies

### Counselling Services with Ben Feere

January 8

9am-12pm | Registration Required

### Scrapbooking Fanatics

January 9 - 11

Starting at 4:30pm on the 9th | Registration Required

### The Art Rescuers - Upcycle Painting Group **\*NEW\***

January 10

2pm - 4pm | Registration Required | Bring Your Own Supplies

### Alzheimer Society Care Partner Support Group

January 13

1:30pm - 3pm | Craft Room

Register with Kristel (403) 528-2700

### Dementia Support Group

January 15

9:30am-12pm | Boardroom | To Register: 403-528-2700

### Movie Night: "The Irishman"

January 15

5:30pm - 7:30pm | Craft Room

Frank Sheeran, a World War II veteran turned hitman, looks back on his life working for the mob and his close relationship with union leader Jimmy Hoffa. As he becomes more entangled in organized crime, Frank faces the consequences of loyalty, betrayal, and the choices that shaped his life.

### First Link Connections

January 20

1pm - 3pm | Boardroom | Register by calling 403-528-2700

### Bridges Grandparents Group

January 20

10:30am - 12pm | Boardroom

Register by calling Kayla 403-526-7473

### Parkinson Association Support Group

January 21

12:00pm - 2:00pm | Boardroom

Register with Brienne at 1-800-561-1911

### Diamond Art Group

January 27

1pm - 4pm | Craft Room | Registration Required

# Medicine Hat Veiner Activities

## What's Happening in January

To register online, please visit: [veinercentre.wildapricot.org](http://veinercentre.wildapricot.org)

### Wellness Wednesdays

Open to members and non-members

#### Pet Therapy with Tajma

January 6  
12pm - 2pm

#### Movie Matinee with popcorn "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"

January 7  
Boardroom | 2:00pm - 4:00pm

Toula, a shy Greek woman stuck working in her family's restaurant, transforms her life after taking classes and gaining confidence. She falls in love with Ian, a non-Greek man, which sends her big, loud, loving Greek family into chaos. As Toula and Ian plan their wedding, they navigate cultural clashes, family expectations, and plenty of humor—ultimately proving that love can bring even the most mismatched families together.

#### Tech Support

January 7  
11am - 1pm | Boardroom | Registration Required

#### Tech Support

January 14  
12pm - 2pm | Boardroom | Registration Required

#### FREE Hearing Health check with Ear Wax Removal with Hear Canada

January 21  
Boardroom | 9am - 11:30am | Registration Required

#### Optima Rocks with Jodi

January 21  
Craft Room | 2:15pm - 4pm | Registration Required

#### Life Long Learning Presents: "Healing After the Holidays"

January 28  
Boardroom | 1:00pm - 2:30pm | Registration Required

Feeling stressed, lonely, or overwhelmed after the holidays? Join us to learn practical strategies for emotional healing, self-care, and starting the new year with peace and hope.

### Upcoming Event Spotlight

#### CRA & Canada Service - In Person Support

Wednesday, January 14  
9:00am - 11:30am | Drop in Only | Everyone welcomed

#### Senior Safety Series: Caring for the Caregiver

Thursday, January 15  
9:30am - 12pm | Registration Required | Everyone welcomed

#### Trivia Night

Wednesday, January 21  
6:30-8:30 pm | Bistro | Registration Required

#### Friendship Meet & Mingle - Games Night

Saturday, February 7  
7:00 - 10:00 pm | Registration starting Jan 5

#### Community Kitchen with Unison & Root Cellar

February 6 - 27  
1pm - 3pm | Root Cellar  
Intake with Hope Required 587-770-1420

### Closure Notice

The Veiner & Strathcona Centre will be closed from December 24 to January 4. We will resume operations on January 5th at 9 AM.

We eagerly anticipate welcoming everyone back in the New Year!

### January Theme Night Supper

#### A Wee Scottish Supper

January 21

Shephard's Pie/ Bun, Fresh Garden Salad, Dill Carrots, & Warm Bread Pudding with Caramel Sauce

4pm - 8pm | \$15 per meal | Take away available  
Open to Everyone!

### Evening & Weekend Activities at Strathcona

#### All Level Fitness

Jan 6 - Feb 26 | Tuesdays & Thursdays | 4:15pm - 5:00pm  
Members: \$112 | Non-Member: \$160

Join Marla Howard on Tuesdays and Thursdays for a mix of strength, cardio, mobility, and fun! Each class focuses on different muscle groups with options for all fitness levels, using equipment like free weights, bands, and kettlebells.

#### Tai Chi Classes

\*PLEASE COMPLETE YANG SHORT FORM BEFORE REGISTERING FOR OTHER TAI CHI CLASSES

#### Yang Short Form

7:00pm - 8:00pm & 7:00 - 7:30pm | Mondays & Tuesdays  
Jan 12 - Mar 31 | Members: Free | Non-Members: \$80

#### Yang Long Form

8:00pm - 9:00pm | Mondays  
Jan 12 - Mar 30 | Members: Free | Non-Members: \$80

#### Chen Style Short Form

7:30pm - 8:15pm | Tuesdays  
Jan 13 - Mar 31 | Members: Free | Non-Members: \$80

#### Fan Form

8:15pm - 9:00pm | Tuesdays  
Jan 13 - Mar 31 | Members: Free | Non-Members: \$80

#### Weapons Form

7:00pm - 9:00pm | Wednesdays  
Jan 14 - Apr 1 | Members: Free | Non-Members: \$80

#### Fitness Orientation

2nd & Last Saturday of Every Month  
9am - 11am | Fitness Room at Strathcona | Drop in Only

New to our fitness room? Twice a month, our knowledgeable volunteers are here to guide you! They'll introduce you to the equipment, demonstrate proper use, and answer questions so you can work out safely and confidently.

#### Table Tennis - Single Play Only

Thursdays | 6:30pm - 8:30pm  
Saturdays | 11am - 1pm

#### Pickleball - Open Session

Fridays | 6pm - 8pm  
Saturdays & Sundays | 1pm - 4pm

# Medicine Hat Strathcona Activities

## What's Happening in January

Hours of Operation: Mon to Wed 9am – 7pm | Thurs & Fri 9am – 4pm | Sat 9am – 1pm

<b>Mondays</b>	<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>Wednesdays</b>	<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>Fridays</b>
High Beginner Line Dancing   9am – 9:50am	Fun & Fitness   9am – 9:55am	Absolute Beginner Line Dancing   8:30am	Fun & Fitness 9am – 9:55am	Pickleball Beginner 9am – 9:55am
Table Tennis   10am – 12pm	Pickleball at Your Pace   10am – 11am	Beginner Line Dancing 9am – 9:50am	Pickleball at Your Pace   10am–11am	Table Tennis   10am –12pm
Chair Yoga & More   12pm – 12:55pm	Pickleball –Skills & Drills 11:05am – 11:40am	Table Tennis   10am – 12pm	Pickleball – Beginners   11am – 12:55pm	Pickleball – All Skills   1:05pm – 2:30pm
Pickleball – All Skill Level 1pm – 2:30pm	Chair Dance   11:45am – 12:30pm	Qigong & Chair Yoga 12pm – 12:45pm	Chair Yoga & More 1pm – 1:45pm	Pickleball – All Skills 2:35pm – 4pm
Pickleball – All Skill Level 2:30pm – 3:55pm	Pickleball –Beginner 12:35pm – 1:55pm	Pickleball – All Skills   3pm – 6:55pm	Floor Curling 2pm – 4pm	Pickleball – All Skills   6pm – 8pm
Yang Short Form   7pm	Floor Curling   2pm – 4pm	Weapons Form   7pm	Table Tennis   6:30pm –8:30pm	
Yang Long Form   8pm	Yang Short Form   7pm			
	Chen Style Short Form 7:30pm			
	Fan Form   8:15pm			

## Fitness Class Spotlight

All fitness classes require registration

### High Beginner/Improver Line Dancing

Jan 5 – Mar 30 | Mondays | 9am–9:45am | FREE

Ready to step it up? This class adds a bit more challenge with new moves and slightly faster routines—perfect for dancers comfortable with the basics and eager to grow their skills.

### Chair Yoga & More

Jan 5 – Feb 23 | Mondays

12pm – 12:45pm | No class Feb 16

Members: \$49 | Non-Member: \$70

This chair-based class includes seated and standing exercises and poses designed to enhance strength and mobility.

### Fun & Fitness

Jan 6 – Feb 12 | Tuesdays & Thursdays

9am – 9:55am

Members: \$60 | Non-Member: \$84

This class is for all fitness levels. Get moving in an energetic class that incorporates aerobics, weights, and plenty of fun.

### Chair Dance Class

Jan 6 – Feb 24 | Tuesdays

11:45am – 12:30pm

Members: \$56 | Non-Member: \$80

Chair dancing offers aerobic exercise, improving coordination, muscle tone, and flexibility while enjoying uplifting music from the comfort of your chair. It's a fun way to get fit!

### Absolute Beginner Line Dancing

Jan 7 – Apr 1 | Wednesdays | 8:30am – 9am | FREE

New to line dancing? This class is the perfect place to start! Learn basic steps and simple routines at a relaxed pace—no experience (or partner) needed. Come for the moves, stay for the fun!

### Beginner Line Dancing

Jan 7 – Apr 1 | Wednesdays | 9am – 9:45am | FREE

Keep the fun going! Practice the steps you've just learned or join in if you already know the basics. A great way to build confidence and enjoy dancing with others.

### Qigong & Chair Yoga

Jan 7 – Feb 25 | Wednesdays | 12pm – 12:45pm

Members: \$56 | Non-Member: \$80

This class will have elements of Qigong (pronounced chee gong), Chair Yoga, and Meditation all rolled into one.

### Chair Yoga & More

Jan 8 – Feb 26 | Thursdays

1pm – 1:45pm

Members: \$56 | Non-Member: \$80

This chair-based class includes seated and standing exercises and poses designed to enhance strength and mobility.

### Yin Yoga

Jan 9 – Feb 27 | Fridays | 12pm – 1pm

Members: \$24 | Non-Members: \$40

Yin Yoga targets deep connective tissues to improve flexibility, support joints, and maintain mobility through gentle movements and postures held for up to 4 minutes. Suitable for all levels.

Kindly remember to bring a yoga mat for all yoga classes.

**To Register for Events, Classes & Programs, please call (403) 529-8307 or visit us at Veiner Center**

To register online, please visit: [veinercentre.wildapricot.org](http://veinercentre.wildapricot.org)

# Unison for Generations 50+ Calgary In-Person Activities

Register in person at **Unison at Kerby Centre in Room 306** or by phone at **403-705-3233**  
Online registration and full details at [unisonalberta.com/active-aging-calgary](https://unisonalberta.com/active-aging-calgary)

Weekly in-person activities at Unison at Kerby Centre				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Mahjong (\$3)</b> Room 312   10:30am – 12:30pm</p> <p><b>Pickleball Drop-In (\$4)</b> <b>Open to all levels</b> Gym   10am – 11:30am</p> <p><b>Meditation Monday (\$3)</b> Room 317   10am – 10:45am</p> <p><b>Pickleball (\$4)</b> <b>Open to all levels</b> Gym   2:30pm – 4pm</p>	<p><b>Riverwalk (\$2)</b> Room 317   10am – 11am</p> <p><b>Recorder Group (\$3)</b> Room 108   10am – 12pm</p> <p><b>Pickleball Advance (\$8)</b> Gym   11am – 1pm</p> <p><b>Ukrainian Group - English as a Second Language (\$4)</b> Room 313   1:30pm – 3:30pm</p> <p><b>Pickleball Drop-In (\$4)</b> <b>Open to all levels</b> Gym   2:30pm – 4pm</p>	<p><b>General Craft Group &amp; Knitting (FREE)</b> Room 311   9am – 12pm</p> <p><b>Beyond Basics English Club (\$4)</b> Room 313   9:30am – 11:45am <i>Registration required</i></p> <p><b>Cribbage (\$3)</b> Room 312   1pm – 3:30pm</p> <p><b>Beginner Pickleball Level Drop-in (\$8)</b> Limit 16 people First come, first served Gym   2pm – 4pm</p>	<p><b>Artists Group (\$2)</b> Room 108   9am – 12pm</p> <p><b>Pickleball (\$4)</b> <b>Open to all levels</b> Gym   2:30pm – 4pm</p>	<p><b>Spanish Conversation (\$3)</b> Room 313   10am – 12pm</p> <p><b>Krazy Karvers Woodcarving (\$2)</b> Room 102   10am – 3pm</p> <p><b>Pickleball (\$8) Inter. / Adv.</b> Gym   10:30am – 12:30pm</p> <p><b>Tech Help (\$5)</b> 11am – 1pm</p> <p><b>NEW! Walking Soccer (\$4)</b> Gym   1pm – 2pm</p> <p><b>Badminton &amp; Ping-Pong (\$4)</b> Gym   2:30pm – 4pm</p>

Unison Travel Spotlight

**Come join us on a special Mediterranean/Adriatic Cruise come May 2026**

**Inclusions:**

- 7-night accommodation at selected cabin
- All meals onboard
- Entertainment and a full activities program
- Taxes (subject to change)

**Rates per person based on a double occupancy:**  
FROM Inside Cabin – \$1610  
Oceanview Cabin – \$1755  
Balcony Cabin – \$3105  
*\*SOLO – please call Travel Desk at 403-705-3237*

For more information, please contact **Unison Travel** at **403-705-3237** or [travel@unisonalberta.com](mailto:travel@unisonalberta.com)



Active Aging Spotlight

**Restorative Yoga**

**Wednesdays, Jan 7 – Mar 25**  
**2:45 pm – 3:45 pm**  
Member: \$69 | Non-Member: \$99  
Location: **Room 205 – Kerby Centre**  
Instructor: Navin Jetha

Using a yoga strap in this gentle restorative yoga practice helps the body find deeper relaxation by providing support and stability. This class is an excellent practice to relieve tight muscles after exercising.

**Register NOW!** 403-705-3233 or [Program@UnisonAlberta.com](mailto:Program@UnisonAlberta.com)



Active Aging Spotlight

**Valentine-Themed Painting Workshop**

**Tuesday, Feb 17 | 1 pm – 3 pm**  
Member: \$50 | Non-Member: \$80  
Location: **Room 313 – Kerby Centre**  
Instructor: Carol Marasco

Participants will paint a silhouette of a couple under a starry sky with heart-shaped constellations. The cute and easy-to-follow design makes it accessible for beginners and allows room for creative expression with background details and color choices.

**Register NOW!** 403-705-3233 or [Program@UnisonAlberta.com](mailto:Program@UnisonAlberta.com)



Active Aging Spotlight

**Sketching**

**Tuesdays, Feb 24 – Mar 31 | 10 am – 12 pm**  
Member: \$99 | Non-Member: \$129  
Location: **Room 313 – Kerby Centre**  
Instructor: Hamideh Khadem Sohi

Our Sketching class is designed not only to teach the technical aspects of sketching but also to foster a sense of artistic confidence and individual expression. Join us for an unforgettable experience where you'll discover the joy of bringing your imagination to life on paper.

**Register NOW!** 403-705-3233 or [Program@UnisonAlberta.com](mailto:Program@UnisonAlberta.com)



Active Aging Spotlight

**Art of Jewelry Making**

**Wednesdays, Feb 4 – Feb 25**  
**10 am – 12 pm**  
Member: \$80 | Non-Member: \$110  
Location: **Room 108 – Kerby Centre**  
Instructor: Valerie Wu

In this course, you will further explore various DIY jewelry techniques and crafting skill; and create your own beautiful jewelry following the techniques demonstrated by Valerie. All supplies are included.

**Register NOW!** 403-705-3233 or [Program@UnisonAlberta.com](mailto:Program@UnisonAlberta.com)



# Unison for Generations 50+ Calgary In-Person Activities

Register in person at **Unison at Kerby Centre in Room 306** or by phone at **403-705-3233**  
Online registration and full details at [unisonalberta.com](http://unisonalberta.com)

## Wise Owl Boutique

**Half Price Sale on RED tag items!**  
**January 26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Hours: 10:00 am – 3:00 pm



Wellness Spotlight

### Riverwalk Tuesdays –Indoor Walks!

Every Tuesday from 10:00 am to 11:00 am  
Cost \$2 | drop-in fee  
Meeting Point: Wellness Centre, Room 317

Join us for guided walks:  
*December– March:* Indoor walks through the Plus 15 downtown network (weather permitting).  
*April:* Enjoy outdoor nature walks when conditions allow—take in the fresh air and the beauty of the season. Stay active, connect with others, and embrace wellness one step at a time!

**No Registration required**



Wellness Spotlight

### Free Caregiver Wellness Series: COMPASS for the Caregiver In-Person

Thursdays, March 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2026  
10:00 am – 12:30 pm  
Location: Wellness Center, Room 317  
Manuals provided

Unison at Kerby Centre is hosting Caregivers Alberta's award-winning COMPASS for the Caregiver, a free, four-week program designed to help caregivers care for themselves while supporting others.

**Register Now!**  
403-234-6566/ [Lolaf@unisonalberta.com](mailto:Lolaf@unisonalberta.com)



Wellness Spotlight

### Sound Therapy

Wednesdays, Feb 11, 18, and 25, 2026  
10:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Member: \$60 | Non-member: \$120  
Location: Wellness Center, Room 317

Helps to empower individuals on their journey to holistic well-being through the transformative power of sound. It provides a sanctuary of tranquility where individuals can experience profound deep relaxation, inner harmony, and self-discovery.

**Register Now!**  
403-705-3233/ [program@unisonalberta.com](mailto:program@unisonalberta.com)



Wellness Spotlight

### Indigenous Drumming Circle and Storytelling

Tuesdays, Feb 17, 24, and March 3, 2026  
Member: \$60 | Non-member: \$120  
Location: Wellness Centre, Room 317  
Instructor: Dorvina Pearline White Quills

Learn about the teachings behind Traditional Hand Drum songs from a new perspective. Passed from her mentors. Respect for the Hand drum is to be in a clean and sober state of mind. All are welcome to participate.

**Register Now!**  
403-705-3233/ [program@unisonalberta.com](mailto:program@unisonalberta.com)



Wellness Spotlight

### Men's Coffee & Conversation Group

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month at 10:30 am  
Cost \$4 | drop-in fee  
Location: Wellness Centre, Room 317

Join us for lively discussions and great company! Led by Dennis, a retired business executive and seasoned facilitator of men's groups, and Chris, a long-time Kerby Centre member and financial consultant, this group offers engaging conversation on a wide range of topics.

**No Registration required**



Wellness Spotlight

### Grief 101: An Introduction to Grief and Loss with a Special Q & A Session – free online session

Wednesday, March 4  
11:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Free Online Session  
Sponsored by Nadia's Hope Foundation

Join us for an insightful and compassionate session on understanding grief and loss. This event will feature: Myths and Facts about Grief, the Difference between Grief and Mourning, and Effective Coping Strategies.

**Register Now!**  
403-705-3233/ [program@unisonalberta.com](mailto:program@unisonalberta.com)



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- Copy of our newspaper mailed to you
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- Discounts on programs, trips, classes and more!



# Unison for Generations 50+ Online Activities

Register in person at **Unison at Kerby Centre in Room 306** or by email at [program@unisonalberta.com](mailto:program@unisonalberta.com) or call **403-462-5080**. Online registration and full details at [unisonalberta.com/online-resources](http://unisonalberta.com/online-resources)

**Explore. Engage. Enjoy. Subscribe! [YouTube.com/@Unison50Plus](https://www.youtube.com/@Unison50Plus)**

**Online Class Spotlight**

### Gentle Soulful Yoga Online - Winter - Z04

Jan 7 – Mar 25 (12 weeks)  
Wednesdays | 9:00 am – 10:00 am  
Members: \$69 | Non-Members: \$99

Join Navin for a more traditional, slow, grounding, and meditative yoga class. Navin will help you find your center, stretch our limbs, and provide alternative movements to accommodate those who need them.

Instructor: Navin Jetha  
Location: Online – Zoom



**Online Class Spotlight**

### Basic Seated Yoga - Online - Winter Z06

Jan 5 – Mar 30 (12 weeks - No class Feb 16)  
Mondays | 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm  
Members: \$69 | Non-Members: \$99

Combining breath and movement, basic chair yoga provides a gentle and accessible option for all activity levels. Using controlled movements and the support of a chair, this class aims to strengthen and stretch the body.

Instructor: Hannah Flahr  
Location: Online – Zoom



**Online Class Spotlight**

### Color Pencil Painting Online - Winter - Z07

Wednesday, April 1  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Members: \$50 | Non-Members: \$80

With a deep understanding of color theory and technique, our instructor can guide students in creating stunning artwork using color pencils.

*Supplies not included!*

Instructor: Hamideh Khadem Sohi  
Location: Online – Zoom



**Online Class Spotlight**

### Chen Tai Chi Online - Winter - Z05

Jan 6 – Mar 24 (12 weeks)  
Tuesdays | 11:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Members: \$69 | Non-Members: \$99

Chen Tai Chi is a series of movements and poses that make up a meditative form of exercise with both physical and spiritual health benefits. It helps to reduce stress, increase coordination, balance and range of motion.

Instructor: Adrian Buczek  
Location: Online – Zoom



**Online Presentations Spotlight**

## Online Presentations:

### Unison & NHF Presentation: Be Positive-Find the Silver Lining

**Presented by:** Vineeta Kapoor  
Join us for the third and final session in our Nadia's Hope Foundation series. In this session, Vineeta will share practical strategies to cultivate a positive mindset, recognize opportunities for growth in everyday challenges, and find joy even in difficult moments.

**Thursday, January 8th | 10:00 am**



### Living Well Through Palliative Care: A Community Learning Series

**Presented by:** Lisa Shirt  
Join us for the third session of our live, interactive four-part online series where we'll explore important aspects of palliative care together—not as a webinar, but as a collaborative session where everyone can participate. These sessions are designed to be interactive and engaging.

**Tuesday, January 13th | 1:00 pm**



### Purpose Never Retires: Finding Joy, Connection, and Meaning in Later Life

**Presented by:** Ian Montenegro & Lenie Zuniga  
Join us for an engaging online session that reframes aging as a season of wisdom, humor, and resilience.

**Tuesday, January 20th | 1:00 pm**



## Online Programs Website



[Unison50plus.unisonalberta.com/Online](http://Unison50plus.unisonalberta.com/Online)

### Don't Miss Out!

Waiting to the last minute to register means missing out on great opportunities. We will cancel under subscribed courses one week prior to first day of class. Please be sure to register early!

### Refund Policy

All courses and workshops are non-refundable. If needed, course credit must be requested in writing one week prior to the course start date. Please contact the Active Aging Department to sign up. [program@unisonalberta.com](mailto:program@unisonalberta.com) or 403-462-5080

### Bringing Memory to Life: Echobox Memory Vault

**Presented by:** Tim & Tannis  
Join us for an inspiring online session with Tim and Tannis Roberts, the husband-and-wife team behind Echobox Memory Vault — a compassionate innovation designed to enhance the lives of seniors and those who care for them. Depending on time and interest, a live demonstration of the technology may also be included.

**Thursday, January 29th | 10:00 am**



# Time to move?

Lisa Falkowsky, NEXT STAGE Services

Home Sweet Home. This really sums up how we feel when we think about where we live. After all, homes are more than the physical space we live in. Home represents a complex mix of who we are and how we spend our time. Our homes hold memories and represent the fullness of our daily lives and the future we are creating.

Deciding when to move is complex and is about much more than simply packing boxes. There are many reasons we decide it's time to move. The three most common are:

**Lifestyle:** Your home doesn't meet your lifestyle needs. You may want to rightsize, a more convenient location, or find somewhere that offers more amenities like accessible transporta-

tion, meals and activities.

**Finances:** Your home has become a financial strain, and your money would be best spent elsewhere. Houses require constant upkeep that can be harder to afford as time passes. You may find yourself hiring additional services to help you stay in your home than you can budget for. Perhaps you are retiring and need to reduce costs.

**Health and abilities:** You might find it difficult to physically navigate your home. Whether due to an illness or injury, you may be finding your current home has become unmanageable.

If some of these apply to you, it is never too early to start investigating and planning a move. Here are eight things to consider when you arrive at this stage:

1. Start to think about when you'd like to move before you must move.

2. Engage with seniors' transition/moving services, realtors, and other professionals early in the process. This will provide information that will help you make the best decision.

3. Make a list about the features you want to have in your new home. Do you want your living space on a single floor? Do you need accommodation for a walker or wheelchair? Will you need to easily access transit or a sheltered garage? Do you want meals included? Make notes or collect pictures of what the features you need to be comfortable.

4. Talk with people who have recently moved. Ask about why they decided to move. How did they decide on a location? What do they like about their new home? What lifestyle choices did they make? What costs did they need to consider? Ask people you'd like to spend time with about their buildings – it's always nice to move where you already know someone.

5. Explore neighbourhoods you may be considering. Tour independent or assisted seniors living facilities, view apartments or condominiums with the amenities you'd like, or look in areas where your friends and family are located. Find out if there is a waiting list, and learn about the costs of moving. After collecting these details, you can begin to narrow down your options so when you decide it's time, you can move with better awareness, and the comfort of having done your research.

6. Take stock of items you no longer need or cannot fit into your new residence. Consider selling,

# Puzzle solutions

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20	A	S	I	A	N	S				21	D	A	S		23	M	A	G	
24	V	I	T	A	E			25	P	O	O	L	T		27	A	B	L	E
28	E	N	S		29	S	O	A	P				31	A	S	A	D	A	
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4	1	3	8	7	6	5	9	2
6	5	7	1	2	9	3	4	8
9	2	8	4	5	3	6	7	1
3	4	5	6	9	2	1	8	7
7	6	9	3	8	1	2	5	4
1	8	2	5	4	7	9	3	6

sharing, or donating what you won't be bringing with you. You can begin sorting through damaged and recyclable items and disposing what's no longer useable. 7. When you decide where you'd like to move, talk with a Certified Relocation and Transition Specialist (CRTS) like NEXT STAGE Services in Calgary to help you plan, prepare, and get settled in your new home. They will help you under-

stand what to expect as you plan, and can help you have a stress-free move. 8. If you own your current home, chat with one or more realtors. Ask friends for recommendations, and consider finding a realtor with a "Seniors Real Estate Specialist (CRES)" designation who may better understand your needs. They will help you decide when and how to sell your property, including work your home may need to have completed before putting it on the market.

Moving to a new home can be exciting. Planning early and being clear on what you want can make the process easier and less stressful. You may have family and friends that can help you through this transition, and there are professionals who can help you get ready. NEXT STAGE Services are your seniors' move management experts and Certified Relocation and Transition Specialists. Contact us for your free initial consultation: NEXTSTAGE-Services.ca 403.589.4044

**Free Estate Planning Workshop**

Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>

1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

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Space is limited.  
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# Fulfilling a legacy of truth

Bev Betkowski,  
Univeristy of Alberta  
Folio

In 2019, Shannon Cornelsen discovered 27 journals written by her grandfather, an agent for the federal government department then called Indian Affairs. He'd lived and worked on Stony Plain Indian Reservation, now Enoch Cree Nation, from the mid-1950s until 1980.

As Cornelsen read through the pages, she

was surprised to discover the names and dates of when Indigenous patients from Edmonton's former Charles Camsell Hospital were buried at Enoch. The hospital operated from 1946 to 1980 as part of a segregated health-care system that isolated and institutionalized Indigenous people in "Indian hospitals."

Inuit and First Nations people from across Western Canada and the North were flown to the Camsell

and placed in a tuberculosis sanatorium, often without their consent.

Her grandfather's meticulous records, she realized, "were the only surviving documents that detail where these people are buried."

It set Cornelsen, a member of Saddle Lake Cree Nation, on a personal quest to reunite families with their loved ones buried far from home.

"Many people from my family were treated at the Camsell, born

there or died there, and my mom had worked there as a nursing assistant for many years, so I knew there were patients who would just go missing. Families deserve closure."

To take on that heavy work, Cornelsen knew she'd need research skills and academic support to turn the project into a reality, so she enrolled at the University of Alberta.

Graduating this week with a bachelor of arts from the Fac-

ulty of Native Studies, Cornelsen now feels confident in her skills and ability to ultimately help close that circle.

"I'm in a position where I can speak for these people, and I'll be able to connect families and communities with where their loved ones are."

Exploring topics such as the history of residential schools in Canada and Indigenous human rights, Cornelsen's degree was vital in "learning about the history of the colonization that has happened to Indigenous people in Canada," she says.

"That's really crucial to understanding how deep-rooted segregation and systemic racism in health-care systems came into effect, and it's helped me understand why so many Indigenous patients ended up at the Camsell." "Whether it was through the inequitable care Indigenous people received, such as forced sterilizations or the actual disappearance of Indigenous patients who passed at the Camsell, it is all part of the larger story of settler colonization in Canada and the disparities Indigenous people continue to face today."

Through her work identifying patients who were at the Camsell between 1946 and 1963, she now has a list of more than 100 individuals who were not claimed by their families.

She hopes to eventually let their communities know where each of them is buried.

"I would like to identify each person and just be able to tell the story of what they meant to their own communities," she says.

"This is not just about Indigenous rights. It's about human rights and human dignity."



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