

FEBRUARY 2023

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**NUBIAN PYRAMIDS**

Egypt is famous for its ancient pyramids. But did you know that Sudan actually has the most pyramids in the world? Northern Sudan, which was once a region called 'Nubia,' holds 220 Nubian pyramids made of sandstone and granite. These structures were built by the ancient Kushite kingdoms and were ruled by Egyptian pharaohs who had fled Egypt.

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Dear Neighbours,

February maybe the shortest month of the year, but it is the month where the days start to get longer with the promise of spring.

The early days in February mark the mid-point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox and, after a long cold winter, people of the Northern Hemisphere have traditionally celebrated with festivals of light known as Imbolc, St. Brigid's Day, February 1, and Candlemas, February 2. The weather on these days would be used to predict an early spring or a lingering winter.

We continue this tradition with Groundhog Day, February 2, in North America.

Groundhog Day comes from a Pennsylvanian Dutch superstition. If a groundhog emerges from its burrow on February 2 and can see its shadow due to clear skies, then it will retreat to its den, thus forecasting another six weeks of winter. The tradition comes from German-speaking areas of Europe where the forecasting animal was in fact a badger. A belief also existed in Roman Catholic Britain that hedgehogs were the animal that predicted the length of winter.

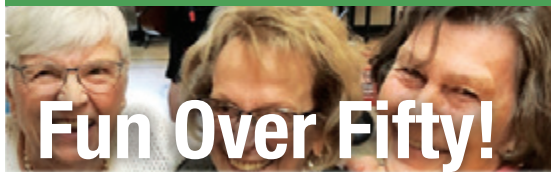
Here in Alberta, we have our very own groundhog, Balzac Billy, to predict whether or not Alberta will get an early spring! Here's hoping that Balzac Billy will forecast an early spring!

As always, if you have anything that you would like to see in the newsletter, please email me at the below email address.

Until next time!

*Jane Phillips*

Editor, editor@kgca.ca



Join us at Good Companions 50 Plus! We offer in-person and online programming, so check us out. Join us for lunch, Social Suppers, or Pub Night, or join us on our eight-night FUNdraiser Cruise to the Eastern Caribbean this December! We have dozens of in-person programs, including Cards and Coffee, Bridge, Bingo, Rhythm Kats, Square Dancing, Floor Curling, BYO Crafts, Pool, and Shuffleboard. Online programs include Monday Melodies, Active Aging Yoga, StrongerU Senior Fitness, Mindfulness and Meditation, and Tai Chi with Qi Gong. Visit our website at [www.gc50plus.org](http://www.gc50plus.org) for our monthly newsletter for details on all events and programs or call us at 403-249-6991 to set up a tour. We are located at 2609 19 Ave SW, and we hope to see you soon!

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## Safety Corner

Seems that time does go faster during the winter season, as we are now in February. Over the past year, I have written about how we can be safe during a possible holiday or during our basic lives. Each one of them are definitely important in their unique way. As we are heading into a month of love (Valentine's Day being in the middle of the month, for those men who wish to shop for their better halves early), please allow me to share a thought or two for the men who read this article.

While doing my research on this article, knowing that Valentine's Day is something men are so worried about, there's one piece of advice that is always forgotten: don't worry about it

So, why bring up Valentine's Day and men? Well, I know that there will be a lot of ladies reading this article as well, so I thought I would share some safety tips on how to make sure everyone has a safe Valentine's Day.

### **Some Simple Tips:**

1. Don't stress over what to get your partner
2. Do plan ahead
3. If heading out for the evening, make sure that everything valuable within the house is safe
4. Always leave for an outing on time and arrive safely
5. This one is for the guys: Always make sure you open the door for your date, if plan is to head out for dinner. Being a gentleman is a quality that has never died. Should there be kids involved, make sure that your son is taught to do the same, even if it's for his sister
6. Do enjoy the time with your date – if drinking while on the date, please take a cab home instead of driving

Well, I figure that's all the wisdom I have for this month. Should anyone want to comment on this article or have a topic suggestion for the next safety corner, please feel free to email me.

Until next month,

*Richard Bankert*

Director – Safe Streets/Traffic



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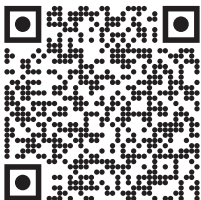
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### WHY?

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# February Celebrations: Valentine's Day and Family Day

by Joey Stewart

February is a grand month that reminds us to take time to appreciate the people in our lives that we love and tell them how important they are to us.

It doesn't seem like an accident that both Valentine's Day and Family Day are celebrated in February. Family Day was designed to recognize the importance of home and family, which was decreed in Alberta by then Lieutenant Governor Helen Hunley in 1990. Valentine's Day was designed to celebrate our romantic connections but has also become a time to celebrate our very good friends.

When one looks at the history of Valentine's Day, it seems that it started as a rather violent exercise to establish power and control, and assert the authority of the Christians. It was deemed "unChristian" at the end of the fifth century when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 Valentine's Day. It was not until much later, however, that the day became definitely associated with love.

During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of the bird's mating season, which added to the idea of Valentine's Day should be a day for romance. Therefore, the expression "the birds and bees" became a euphemism for lovers and, therefore, reproduction.

The English poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, was the first to record, in 1375, Valentine's Day as a romantic celebration with his poem called "Parliament of Foules" writing, "For this was seynt on Valetyne's day / whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate". If I were to try and translate that it might sound like: "For this was sent on Saint Valentine's Day / When every fool comes here to choose a mate." I could be wrong, and historians should correct me. It doesn't sound very romantic compared to 2023 when we do send romantic greetings to those we love.

Written valentines didn't appear until 1440. The oldest known valentine is still in existence today in the manuscript collection of the British Library in London England. So, when you're writing your valentines this year think back to how a lover hundreds of years ago would express his/her love and be inspired by this ancient ritual.

## 9 PM ROUTINE



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### ☒ CHECKLIST

- Remove valuables & garage door openers from vehicles
- Lock vehicles
- Close overhead garage door
- Lock door between garage & house
- Close & lock all external doors
- Ensure windows are shut
- Turn on exterior light

## Polar Bear Capital of the World

In Churchill, Manitoba, locals leave their cars and houses unlocked. Dubbed the 'polar bear capital of the world,' unlocked doors in this town are meant to give pedestrians safe refuge from polar bears in the streets. Churchill even has a Polar Bear Holding Facility, AKA 'polar bear jail,' for troublesome bears who spend too much time in the town!



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### Calling All PARENTS

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# Understand These Three Rules of the Mind to Change Any Habit in 2023

by Lynn C. Cox



How many of us want to make some changes in 2023? Perhaps you want to stop that habit of procrastinating, shed excess weight, start a new wellness program, get better sleep, or kick an unhealthy habit to the curb? How often have you tried to make one of these changes in the past and stopped short of your goals because something in you turns you in the other direction?

Sometimes it feels like we're in a battle of the wills with our own minds.

Conventional wisdom would have us believe that our minds are extraordinarily complicated and the process of understanding it, changing it, and managing it is close to impossible.

In the recent decade, there has been more research into, curiosity around, and mainstream adoption of neuroscience, Rapid Transformational Therapy (RTT), hypnotherapy, positive psychology, and mind body connection. What this means is people are hungry to move out of the dark ages of psychology and embrace an understanding of the mind, and practical practises to help achieve better mental, emotional, and physical health!

When it comes to long-standing habits of action, such as overeating, procrastinating, feeling stress and anxiety and being prone to negative thought loops, the first place to begin is understanding a few rules of the mind. We cannot change anything we do not understand, and these 3 Rules of the Mind will help anyone on their journey of transformation.

### 1. The Mind Does What It *Thinks* You Want It to Do:

Our number one drive as a species is survival, and how do we survive? By staying safe! Safe typically means not taking risks (even measured ones), colouring within the lines that we've always known, and avoiding rejection at all costs. The mind thinks you want it to keep you safe.

For example, if you really want to up your game in business and become a phenomenal presenter, but you're not used to this, your mind will 'keep you safe' by convincing you taking this step amounts to danger. Don't worry, there's a way around this so you can explore, try new things, and develop yourself!

### 2. The Mind Loves the Familiar and is Repelled by the Unfamiliar

Along with point one, the mind is quite comfortable having the same old, same old. How many times have you heard stories about couples who are unhappy together because they're habits have become boring. Or think about a two-year-old who always wants to wear the same outfit, have the same toy, and eat the same thing for breakfast.

Way, way back when we were hunters and gatherers, the familiar kept us safe and alive. We knew what was poisonous and what wasn't, so we would stick to the safe and familiar. This love of the familiar is deeply wired into our primitive brains. But it can hold us back when we want to make changes in our life. Don't worry, you can retrain your mind to love the unfamiliar!

### 3. The Mind Responds to Two Things: Words and Pictures

The way our mind processes information is with words and pictures. The good news is the words create the pictures! Just try this exercise; sit in a room with a pen and paper and for five minutes, just write down all that chatter going on in your mind. You'll notice that thoughts, words, and pictures are repetitive.

You can actively choose what words you want to put in there and create compelling pictures to excite your mind and start to change. Do you want to take on healthier habits and shed weight for example? You can repeat words to yourself in many ways. Make a recording with the change you want to see and listen to it. Stop your habitual thoughts and plant the new words in there. Put them on your screensaver or write on your mirror.

Our minds are quite simple, and once you understand the mechanics, you are empowered to become the master of your mind and your life!

## What is Bronchiolitis?

by Alberta Health Services

Bronchiolitis is an infection caused by a virus. It affects the lower part of the lungs. Bronchiolitis is common in babies, but it can happen in children up to age two. Bronchiolitis makes the small airways that carry air to the lungs (bronchioles) swell and make more mucous. The bronchioles become narrow, which causes wheezing, lots of coughing, and trouble breathing.

### What Causes It?

The most common virus that causes bronchiolitis is RSV (respiratory syncytial virus). Your child can get an RSV infection more than once. In older children and adults, RSV causes a common cold rather than bronchiolitis.

### What are the Symptoms?

At first, your child may have common cold symptoms such as:

- A runny nose
- A mild cough
- A fever
- Low energy
- Eating less than normal

About one to three days after cold symptoms start, the infection can cause bronchiolitis symptoms such as:

- A cough that's getting worse
- Lots of coughing
- Wheezing
- Fast breathing
- Indrawing (when the skin gets sucked in at the neck, collarbones, or between the ribs with each breath)
- Throwing up after coughing
- Trouble feeding (breast or bottle), especially for babies younger than six months
- Fewer wet diapers

Bronchiolitis can be more serious in some children, especially if they:

- Were born early (premature, before 34 weeks)
- Are younger than 3 months
- Have a history of asthma or lung problems
- Have a history of heart problems

Take your child to a doctor if they have any symptoms of bronchiolitis.

### How is it Diagnosed?

A doctor may diagnose bronchiolitis by asking for your child's medical history and checking their symptoms. Your child probably won't need tests if they have typical bronchiolitis symptoms.

### How is Bronchiolitis Treated?

Bronchiolitis happens the same way in most children. Symptoms tend to get worse until day four or five, and then they slowly get better. Most children feel better in one to two weeks. Some children have a cough that lasts a few weeks. If your child has bronchiolitis, you can usually take care of them at home. There is no medicine for bronchiolitis. Antibiotics do not work because bronchiolitis is caused by a virus.

### Care at Home

#### Coughing

- Keep your child sitting or propped up instead of lying down, because it's easier to breathe in this position. A cool-mist humidifier in your child's room can help with their cough. Follow the directions for using the humidifier and keep it out of reach of children.
- Cough medicine isn't good for young children. Do not give cough medicine to children younger than six years.

#### Stuffy Nose

- Clean out your child's nose to make breathing and feeding easier.
- Try saltwater nose sprays to help loosen mucous in the nose. Spray or drop salt water into each nostril then suck out the mucous with a nasal aspirator. Talk to your pharmacist to find the right products for your child. Don't make your own saltwater solution at home.
- Clean your child's nose before feeds and bedtime, and as often as they need during the day.

#### Eating and Drinking

- Encourage your child to drink fluids. Your child may not want to drink like they usually do but keep offering small amounts of fluids throughout the day so that they stay hydrated.
- Babies younger than six months should continue to feed (breast or bottle) as usual. Keep track of how many wet diapers they make.
- Your child may not want to eat food when they're sick, and that's okay.



### **Fever and Discomfort**

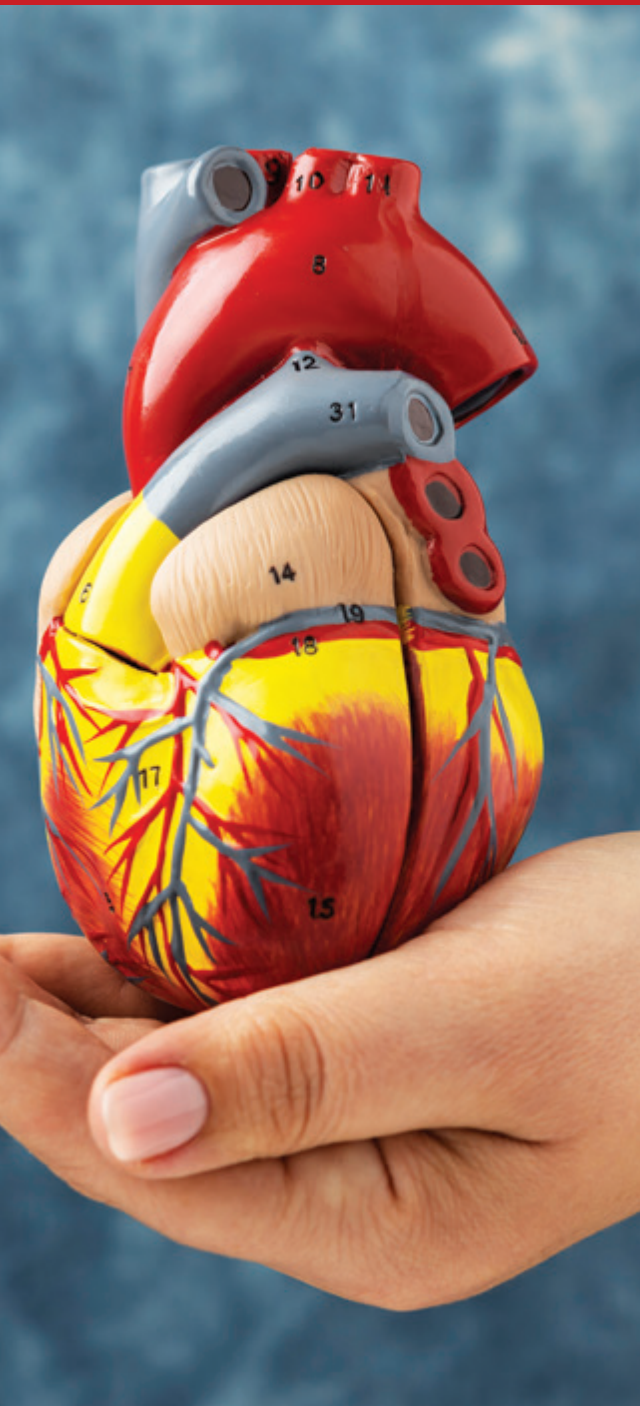
- You may give acetaminophen (Tylenol or Tempra) or ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) to keep your child comfortable. Follow the directions on the package or the directions from your healthcare provider.
- Do not give aspirin to anyone younger than 18 years because of the risk of Reye syndrome, a serious illness.

### **How Can You Prevent It?**

Bronchiolitis spreads easily through close contact with someone who's sick and is coughing or sneezing around you. Touching toys or sharing food with someone who's sick can spread the virus. Children with bronchiolitis are contagious for almost a week after they first get sick.

Keep your child at home if they're coughing a lot. To prevent bronchiolitis:

- If your child has bronchiolitis, keep them at home until they feel better.
- Keep a child with bronchiolitis away from young babies (under three months).
- Wash your hands often to stop the virus from spreading. Teach your child to wash their hands before and after eating, coughing, or sneezing.
- Don't smoke, use other tobacco products, or vape around your child. Second-hand smoke can put children at high risk of infections.



## February Is Heart Month

Do you know the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and what to do if someone experiences these? Knowing may make the difference between life and death. Recognizing and responding immediately to the warning signs of a potential heart attack may significantly improve survival and recovery. February is Heart Month: take the time to be heart safe and learn how you can reduce your risk.

### Common Signs of a Heart Attack

(Any, or all, of these signs and symptoms may occur)

- Chest discomfort described as simply a mild pressure up to a 'crushing' pain; may also be 'squeezing' or a 'heavy' sensation.
- Discomfort may move to the shoulders, arm, neck, or jaw.
- May include shortness of breath, sweating, or nausea/vomiting.
- Signs may vary person to person and can differ between men, women, and the elderly.

### Heart Attack Risk Factors

- Obesity\*
- Sedentary lifestyle\*
- Smoking\*
- High cholesterol\*
- Age/Gender
- Family history

Speak with your doctor about how to treat your modifiable (\*) risk factors and learn to be heart safe.

### What To Do When Seconds Count

- Call 911, immediately. Early treatment can greatly reduce heart damage and be the difference between life and death.
- Treatment starts the moment EMS arrives. Paramedics can provide oxygen, start an intravenous, and perform an electrocardiogram (ECG).
- Paramedics can also administer important medication(s) in the early minutes of a heart attack to lessen heart damage.
- During transport, EMS will share information with the hospital so that definitive treatment can begin immediately upon arrival.
- Take a CPR/AED course. Training is widely available from many reputable organizations. It's easy and could make a significant difference in the outcome of someone experiencing a heart attack.



## Decluttering? Tips for Selling Your Used Items Online

*From the Better Business Bureau*

The start of a new year is a great time to clean out your home and organize your living spaces. But what should you do with the gently used clothing, furniture, home items, or electronics that you aren't using anymore? Fortunately, online marketplaces, such as Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, Ebay, and Poshmark, make it easy to sell without even leaving your home.

That said, there are a few perils to selling used items online. To avoid the dangers and to successfully make sales, BBB recommends the following tips.

### How to Stay Safe When Making Online Sales

#### Choose an appropriate platform

Nerdwallet recommends that "before you sell stuff online to make extra money, determine the ideal venue for your goods." There are dozens of online marketplaces to choose from, but many of them focus on a specific kind of used goods, such as electronics or designer clothing. Before you create an account with a marketplace, make sure it is a good fit for the kind of goods you want to sell.

#### Know the worth of your items and price appropriately

To determine the value of an item you want to sell, Consumer Reports suggests searching for similar items on the site where you plan to list. If you are selling an item that was never used and is still in its original packaging, remember that technically it is still coming to the buyer second-hand, so you'll need to charge a little less than the original retail value if you want to make a sale.

#### Watch out for shady buyers

Con artists often pose as buyers in scams. Sometimes they offer to overpay for an item, but that's not their only tactic. Beware of buyers who ask you to make transactions outside of the selling platform or those who ask for personal information, such as your banking information.

#### Be extra cautious when making local sales

Some platforms allow you to meet up with people in your local area to exchange your item for cash in person. While this can be an effective way to sell big items and



avoid marketplace fees, use caution when meeting up with strangers. Don't be quick to give them your home address, instead ask buyers to meet you in a safe place, such as outside your local police department. Never meet up with a buyer you don't know alone. Always bring your partner or a friend to make the transaction.

#### Always protect your personal information

As you sell items online, keep your sensitive personal information under lock and key. Avoid communicating with buyers outside of the online platform you are using to make the sale and don't give out your home address, phone number, or email address.

## RESIDENT PERSPECTIVES

# Stargazing with Pat J: Celestial Bumper Cars

by Patricia Jeffery © 2022, Calgary Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

While the Moon and planets may appear to peacefully traverse the night sky, in reality, all have been victims of catastrophic fender-benders with their solar system siblings.

**Venus:** Every planet spins anti-clockwise; except for Venus. Sometime in the distant past, something knocked Venus completely upside down, causing it to appear to rotate backwards; where the sun rises in the west and sets in the east. Equally weird, its axis rotation is so slow that a Venus day is longer than its year.

**Earth:** A Mars-sized object named Theia collided with Earth about 4.5 billion years ago. The gigantic impact blasted material into orbit which eventually consolidated into our Moon. The collision is also thought to be the reason Earth is tilted 23.5 degrees which is a good thing for us as otherwise there would be no seasons.

**Saturn's Moon Mimas:** The object that nearly destroyed Mimas left an impact crater 130 kms across; a comparable crater on Earth would be wider than Australia.

**Uranus:** All planets in the Solar system are tilted to some degree, but Uranus takes it to a whole new level. Early in life, a collision with an Earth-sized object left it with a tilt of almost 98 degrees; meaning Uranus is literally lying on its side.

As a result of the extreme tilt, summer on Uranus is 21 years of continuous sunshine while winter is 21 years of complete darkness. Despite being closer to the Sun than Neptune, Uranus is the coldest planet in the solar system at -224 degrees Celsius. And you thought our Canadian winters were bad.

**\*Asteroid Belt:** Located between Mars and Jupiter, these rocky fragments are not from a smashed planet, but merely material left over from when the solar system formed.



MLA Calgary-Currie  
**Nicholas Milliken**

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Dear Neighbours,

I am pleased to report that help is on the way for Albertans needing emergency health care.

As part of the Healthcare Action Plan, Alberta's government is working with Alberta Health Services to improve EMS response times and open acute care beds in emergency departments faster.

Your government values and recognizes Alberta's paramedics. Government aims to ensure their skills are being used in the best way possible, while also ensuring Albertans are not left waiting after a call to 911. The plan proposes only using ambulances for patients who require medical support during transport. For patients who do not require medical support during transport, AHS will arrange for alternative transportation options like community shuttles and wheelchair accessible taxis. This means more ambulances on the road and available for emergency calls instead of being needlessly tied-up when medical care is not needed.

This new program is one of several actions underway designed to better serve Albertans. AHS has an aggressive plan to reduce pressures and improve system performance. This also includes reducing wait times for surgeries and improving overall patient flow and capacity.

Government is also working with AHS for additional action. This includes adding a triage physician to emergency department waiting rooms to support patient offloads and allowing paramedics to assess and treat patients without having to transport them to hospital.

I would also like to provide some good economic news. A new TD Economic report projects Alberta's economic growth will lead the country in 2023 with Alberta outperforming all other provinces. In 2023, oil production is still expected to grow, as well as oil patch spending, driving optimism among banks and businesses. Further, the \$21.4 billion Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project is expected to be completed later in the year.

Job numbers reveal that 88,800 new jobs were created in December alone! Since 2021, Alberta has created 221,000 jobs. Policies matter, and we are putting the right policies in place to grow and diversify the economy.

Your government is taking action on healthcare and the economy, and I am working to make sure my constituents of Calgary-Currie are supported.

Sincerely,

MLA Nicholas Milliken

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## Mardi Gras



On February 24, 1857, New Orleans held its first Mardi Gras parade. Interestingly, attendees wore masks to conceal their identities and in so doing, they were able to escape society's rigid class constraints. Masks gave them the freedom to act however they wanted, with whomever. To this day, masks and parades remain sacred Mardi Gras traditions!



## LIVING DINOSAURS



Crocodiles have been roaming the earth for over 150 million years, which basically makes them living dinosaurs. One thing that has helped them to survive is their incredible bite force – the strongest in the entire animal kingdom! Amazingly, saltwater crocodiles have a bite force of 3,700 pounds per square inch, which is the strongest bite ever recorded!



Please allow us to introduce ourselves! We are  
**RAINBOW ELDERS CALGARY**

*A support group for 2SLGBTQ+ seniors*



Rainbow Elders Calgary is a volunteer-run organization determined to make a significant difference in the lives of 2SLGBTQ+ seniors. We work to provide support and address issues such as social isolation, housing, and loneliness.

As seniors, we also believe that we have a responsibility to connect with and be role models for our vulnerable 2SLGBTQ+ youth.

We invite you to get to know us as we make major differences in the lives of both young and older members of our queer community.

*To discover more, please contact us!*

email: [rainbowelderscalgary@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowelderscalgary@gmail.com)

[www.rainbowelderscalgary.ca](http://www.rainbowelderscalgary.ca)

*Friendships  
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