



**St. Aidan's**  
Society

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**Empowering Seniors,  
Strengthening Community**



## MISSION

To ensure that older adults are valued, respected, and have opportunities to thrive in community.



## VISION

Older adults experience improved quality of life as they age.



## OUR VALUES

St. Aidan's Society staff share a core set values and beliefs. These values and beliefs guide staff as they deliver programs and services and are as follows:

- ▶ All people have an inherent right to be free from neglect and abuse.
- ▶ All people deserve compassion and support.
- ▶ All people, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, cultural background, religious affiliation, or socio-economic status must be treated with dignity and respect.
- ▶ All people have strengths and existing skills and these strengths and skills should be leveraged and used to help those in need achieve personal, meaningful change that can be sustained over time.
- ▶ Staff are always accountable to make decisions that are in the best interests of the people served.
- ▶ Staff must continuously strive to improve the quality of the programs and services delivered.
- ▶ Staff must measure and evaluate how successful programs and services are at making a positive impact on the people served and the community.

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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

December 1, 2023, marked 50 years of providing services that strengthen families and community! Although our services have changed over the decades, what hasn't changed is our commitment to improving the quality of lives of the those we are here to serve. What has also remained constant for 50 years, is the commitment to developing strong teams to deliver impactful services and programs.

In 2023, St. Aidan's Society introduced our new Age Well At Home Program and 3 new team members. With generous funding from the Federal Government, we were able to implement a program that allows seniors to age at home while receiving the wrap around supports needed. This innovative program complements our existing Outreach, Link and Volunteer Programs and enhances the range of front-line services we offer. Our Community Strategist is central to realizing our vision that older adults experience improved quality of life as they age. With the provision of education, awareness and advocacy initiatives, this focus on creating high level change ensures we are creating a community that is more inclusive, age friendly, and supportive of older adults.

Volunteers are integral to our success and impact. Since the introduction of the program in 2021, we have expanded our volunteer-based service delivery to include large groups of volunteers that help us achieve our goals. The Regional Emergency Services Team at the RMWB and the Suncares Teams through Suncor Energy have been instrumental in providing manpower hours that allow us to undertake several large initiatives. A new partnership with the team at Re/Max will be a cornerstone of the Age Well At Home Program. As always, our one-to-one matches remain the foundation of our Volunteer Program. We are privileged to have so many incredible community members who generously give their time to improve senior quality of life.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1

Enhance the level of knowledge and awareness of older adult needs and strengthen the commitment to building a community that is inclusive and supportive of older adults.

2

Foster relationships and build the knowledge, skills, and experience of individuals and agencies to strengthen the community's overall capacity to support older adults.

3

Develop, deliver and evaluate inclusive programs that help older adults age in the community with dignity, respect and a high quality of life.





We are always grateful to our sector partners who help us deliver unique programs and projects. We believe we are stronger together and we deeply value those agencies that help us achieve our outcomes and stand with us in championing the issues impacting older adult quality of life.

To the fierce team of ladies I serve with, you are the best in the sector! Your dedication to seniors and commitment to outcome achievement is something I am deeply proud of. I am blessed to be part of a team that lifts one another, celebrates success together and endlessly supports each other. Thank you.

The Board of Directors leading St. Aidan's Society are very simply, the best. They are engaged, visionary, responsible and responsive. They are advocates for those we serve and a model of strong governance and fiscal prudence. 2023 has been the most incredibly difficult year for me personally but I have been blessed with their unwavering support. The gratitude I feel for every Board Member is beyond measure.

What we do is not possible without the support of funders. The United Way Fort McMurray and Wood Buffalo and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo are consistent and significant financial supporters of St. Aidan's Society. We would cease to exist without them. We are also grateful for the financial contributions of the Wood Buffalo Community Foundation and Suncor Energy Foundation and Re/Max Fort McMurray for always believing in our vision. To individual donors and sponsors thank you so much for helping us serve.

I look forward to 2024 and continued service, collaboration and success.

*Luana Bussieres*

Luana Bussieres  
Executive Director

## 2023 St. Aidan's Society Staff

**Luana Bussieres**  
Executive Director

**Sandy Grandison**  
Community Projects Facilitator

**Pam Burns**  
Community Development  
Strategist

**Kimberley MacDougall**  
Seniors Outreach Worker

**Donya Salari**  
Seniors Outreach Worker

**Carla Cooper**  
Seniors Volunteer Coordinator

**Lisa Stewart**  
Link Worker

**Lisa Doornbos**  
Link Worker

**Chido Sandati**  
Age Well At Home Worker

**Wanda Gillingham**  
Age Well At Home Worker

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS MESSAGE

As Chair of the Board at St. Aidan's Society, I'm thrilled to share some reflections with you all. First, thank you so much for joining us on our journey to create a vibrant and supportive community! Luana really did sum it all up in her address at the beginning, so I'll just say that it's been amazing to witness the growth of this agency, especially as we celebrated our 50th anniversary in 2023.

I want to give a shout out to Luana and her incredible team! These amazing ladies put their heart and soul into their work every day. Their dedication is what makes St. Aidan's such a pivotal agency throughout Wood Buffalo.

On behalf of the Board, I also want to say that none of this would be possible without the support of our community and partners. To everyone who has contributed, whether through funding or collaboration, thank you. Your support means the world to us.

As we look to the future, I'm filled with hope and excitement for what's to come. Let's continue working together to create a community where seniors can thrive and feel at home.

With gratitude,

*Jay Bueckert*

Jay Bueckert  
Board Chair

## 2023 Board of Directors

**Jayson Bueckert**  
Board Chair

**Philip Kilpatrick**  
Treasurer

**Lindsey Thibeau**  
Secretary

**Tim Byron**  
Director

**Harvey Tulk**  
Director

**Tara Stephenson**  
Director

## Thank You

To our Core Funders in 2023



Canada

## Financials

Please refer to Appendix A

# OUR IMPACT IN 2023

## The Big Picture

**794** Unique Seniors Served (2099 total)

**167** Volunteers

**2392** Volunteer Hours



## OUTREACH & ADVOCATE PROGRAMS

### Outreach

Outreach is a core service of St. Aidan's Society. Professional assessments are completed and support plans developed to ensure seniors have the services and support they require to meet their unique needs. Seniors are continuously supported through a case management model so they experience improved quality of life.



### Outreach Program

**734** Case Management Meetings with Seniors

**1091** Case Management Phone Calls

**211** Consults

**475** Brokered Referrals

**777** Supported Referrals

**82%** Of seniors surveyed report improved resilience as a result of the Outreach Program

**79%** Of seniors surveyed report improved capacity to meet needs as a result of the Outreach Program



## Link Program

Our Link Workers use a 'wraparound' approach of service connection to ensure older adults are fully connected to the necessary community

resources. Connecting seniors to social programs, assisting with financial benefits and providing referrals for transportation and housing programs helps keep them engaged in community life. Our Link Workers also connect seniors to the in-home support services necessary to help them age at home. The Link Worker refers more complex concerns to the Outreach team as part of our internal social prescribing network.

## Link Program

**111** Unique Seniors Served

**94%** Of seniors surveyed report an improved capacity to meet their needs following Link Worker services

**100%** Of seniors surveyed report feeling an increase in social supports available as a result of the Link Program.

## Volunteer Program

**31** Volunteer Matches

**219** Home Visits

**123** Community Outings

**267** Phone Calls

**1479** Volunteer Hours

**92%** Of seniors report feeling less lonely as a result of the volunteer match

**84%** Of seniors surveyed report improved capacity to meet needs as a result of the Outreach Program

**100%** Of volunteers report a belief they are making a difference through volunteering with St. Aidan's

## Volunteer Program

Providing seniors in need with volunteer based support is the main function of this program. Ensuring seniors have the support required to meet their needs leads to improved quality of life for them but also strengthens community.



**Volunteer Program Participants  
Iman (volunteer) and Cheryl (senior)**

*Cheryl and Iman were matched in 2022 through the St. Aidan's Volunteer Program. Cheryl has shared that Iman makes a huge difference in her life, helping her when she is experiencing challenges and ensuring she feels connected to others and community.*



## Arts in Action Collaborative

St. Aidan's Society and Arts Council Wood Buffalo have shared a strong collaborative partnership over the years that has provided seniors with opportunities to explore various art forms.



in partnership with:



### Arts in Action Collaborative

**279** Seniors Served

**23** Workshops Held

**98%** Of seniors surveyed report improved social relationships as a result of the program

**81%** Of seniors surveyed report improved meaning and purpose as a result of the program

## Seniors Assisted Transportation Program

Assisting seniors in remaining independent is crucial. Not only do drivers provide transport, but also offer time, help and support for medical appointments, shopping trips or attendance at events.



### Drive Happiness

**21** New Riders

**47** Rides Booked

in partnership with:



## Seniors' Week

Seniors' Week, a provincially recognized initiative, is celebrated annually in June. Each year, St. Aidan's hosts an event to celebrate and honour the valuable contributions of seniors in our community and to promote their well-being.

in partnership with:



### Tailgate Tuesday

**138** Seniors Served



## Seniors' VIP Movie Event

Ensuring seniors are honoured and recognized is an important outcome for the team at St. Aidan's. Since 2016, St. Aidan's has hosted a VIP Movie Event where seniors are invited to be treated like royalty--escorted to their seats by a team of volunteer emergency service staff, seniors enjoy a free movie, popcorn, pop and chocolate bar. It is a favourite event for the seniors and our team loves it too!



### Seniors' VIP Movie Event

**81** Seniors Served

**15** Volunteers **45** Volunteer Hours



## Senior Health & Wellness

The **60+ Health & Wellness Series** is designed to provide education and awareness of available resources and supports for the older adult population. The sessions have an added benefit of creating and encouraging social connections. Some examples of workshops hosted in 2023 include: Importance of Stretching, Falls Prevention, Estate Planning, Grief and Loss and Heart Health.

The **Staying Active, Staying Well** program, hosted in partnership with the RRC, invited seniors of all abilities to a series of adaptive golf sessions followed by the “19th hole” social gathering. Carpet Bowling and the Ageless & Unstoppable Programs continue to keep seniors active and moving.

in partnership with:



## Health & Wellness Series

468

Seniors Served

29

Workshops Held



## Financial Security

Financial security is a key to healthy aging and contentment in older adult life. Ensuring older adults have access to the spectrum of support available to help meet their needs around health care, personal safety and security, housing, food, clothing and mental health care is critical. Our team provides presentations to older adults throughout the Region to arm them with this knowledge and connect them to the support required.

## Rural Financial Security Education

101

Elders Served

## Christmas Support Packages

Ensuring seniors have access to the resources and support they require during the holiday season is critical and Christmas Support Package deliveries have become an annual tradition for the team at St. Aidan's.

with volunteer support from:



### Christmas Support Packages

**417** Seniors Served

**42** Volunteers

**126** Volunteer Hours



## ADVOCACY THROUGH ACTION

Finding impactful and effective ways of creating systems change is a foundation of our advocacy efforts and the core of social justice work. As the needs of seniors transcend sector boundaries between health systems, housing systems, community services and all levels of government, it is important that our team is engaged on multiple levels and provides opportunities for increased education and awareness. The team at St. Aidan's Society represents seniors and our agency on multiple committees and boards and leverages this involvement to influence change for those we serve.





# AGE-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

## Senior Lawn Maintenance Project

Challenges maintaining a home has a direct correlation to loss of senior independence. Providing supports and services that allow seniors to maintain their ability to age at home improves mental and emotional wellbeing and improves quality of life.



### Senior Lawn Maintenance Project

**17** Homes  
25 Seniors Served

**60** Volunteers

**360** Volunteer Hours



with volunteer support from:



## Age-Friendly Gardening Boxes

St. Aidan's answered the call to seniors at Arabausca House who wanted to grow some of their own fruits and vegetables. Age friendly gardening boxes, designed by St. Aidan's and built by Creative Industries, were installed and the seniors enjoyed their home grown products. Age friendly gardening also helps harvest the benefits of regular exercise and cognitive engagement.



in partnership with:



## Education & Awareness Sessions Community Capacity Building Initiatives

Participants of our Age Sensitivity Training gain an understanding and empathy for older adults and their experiences with aging. This interactive training is tailored for individual organizations.



### Education & Awareness

**102** Participants Served

**5** Education & Awareness Sessions Hosted

**100%** Of respondents reported increased empathy towards the older adult population

**100%** Of respondents reported increased understanding of age related issues



St. Aidan's works to improve community efforts and responsiveness to senior inclusion. Through specialized trainings and workshops, and the facilitation of campaigns and events, the community gains an increased understanding of the unique needs of seniors. Community understanding and ability to respond to issues impacting senior safety and security are also enhanced. This results in an improved quality of life for our region's older adults.

## World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

WEAAD is marked each year on June 15. It is an internationally recognized day intended to raise awareness of elder abuse and neglect of older persons. Locally, we take the opportunity to share information and promote resources and services that can help increase seniors' safety and well-being. In 2023, we hosted an awareness BBQ and Mayor Bowman read a Proclamation.

### WEAAD

**85** Attendees

**70** Seniors





# COMMUNITY PROJECTS PORTFOLIO

## The MAC (McMurray All Connected Community Calendar)

The MAC Regional Calendar is developed, maintained and administered by the Community Projects Facilitator Sandy Grandison.

Building partnerships with community agencies, showcasing services and events, raising awareness of resources and supports available and strengthening engagement with rural and Indigenous communities are key functions of this portfolio. The activities undertaken within the scope of the Community Projects Portfolio are critical to sector connections that help support various organizational goals directed at citizen wellbeing.

With a new and improved ticketing system, the MAC Community Calendar offers residents an opportunity to purchase tickets to the many local events that are advertised.

**MAC CALENDAR** *everything you need to sell your*  
**TICKETS ONLINE**  
your trusted **LOCAL** event registration & ticketing platform

- Customize Ticket Sales**  
Set custom ticket prices, coupon codes, pre-sale prices and pass along savings to your guests with our low service fees (which stay in the community).
- Reach Larger Audiences**  
Benefit from additional marketing via our social media platforms, digital newsletter and widely-used online calendar.
- Increase Efficiency**  
Sell tickets faster and reduce check-in time with secure ticketing options (QR codes).
- Easy Management & Reporting**  
User-friendly, organizer dashboard provides full control of your event to monitor ticket sales and track attendance.
- Service You Can Trust**  
Local, one-on-one support with a real person working in partnership to help set up your event for success.

**Get Started Today!** Contact the MAC Calendar at [sandyg@staidansociety.ca](mailto:sandyg@staidansociety.ca) to start selling tickets today.

St. Aidan's Society | REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO | [maccalendar.ca](https://www.maccalendar.ca)

### The MAC Calendar

**106** Language Translations Offered

**1373** Events Captured in 2023

**59,211** Site Visitors

**132,585** Page Views

Local events can be viewed at [maccalendar.ca](https://www.maccalendar.ca)

Regional representation on the MAC with specific calendar pages for each rural hamlet.

- 96%** Of sector representatives identified being aware of the MAC
- 94%** Indicated regular use of the calendar for promotion of community events and activities
- 96%** Of regular users indicated they believe promotion through the MAC increases community awareness and participation
- 100%** Of users believe the availability of the MAC, and specifically the Coordinator, decrease administrative requirements around event promotion

# ABOUT ST. AIDAN'S

St. Aidan's Society is a local social profit organization that was established in 1973, with a vision of creating a positive community impact.

We are working to enhance the lives of older community members in the RMWB, through leadership in the areas of advocacy and in the delivery of services to meet the complex needs of older adults. We believe in partnerships and working in collaboration to provide quality services and support to anyone 60+ experiencing age related challenges.

## "Fear ageism, not aging"

- Margaret Morganroth Gullette



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🌐 [staidanssociety.ca](http://staidanssociety.ca)    📺 @staidanssociety

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