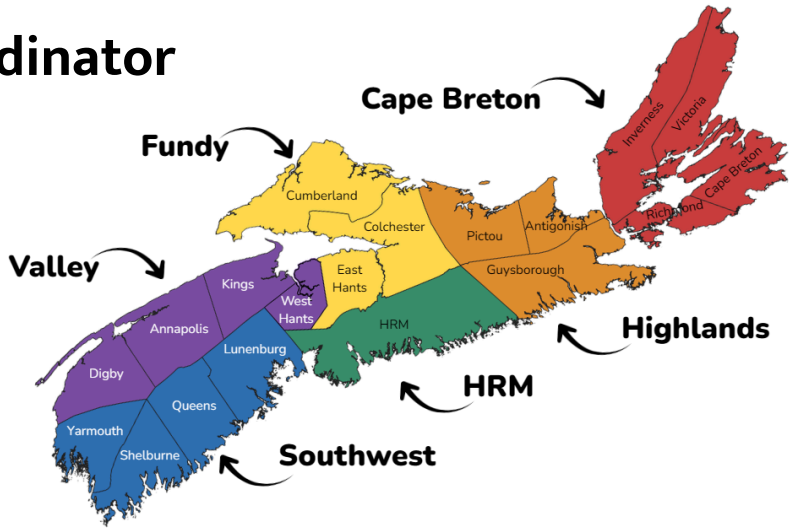
Letter from the Coordinator



Dear Seniors Connect NS Participants and Volunteers,

"When you become frustrated at an older person because of what they can't do, think of how frustrated they feel because they can no longer do it."
That is a quote that Eve in Halifax shared and is a good reminder to be kind to those who are struggling. It also makes me think of those caregivers out there who have a lot on their plate. It's easy to get frustrated when you're giving so much. I hope everyone can find empathy as well as patience for those around you, but for yourself, too.
We're all doing our best.

It's a hefty mailout this time. A few things to notice:

- **No programming the week between Christmas and the new year**
- **Personal BINGO card**: I called it a "personal" BINGO card and not a "Resolutions" BINGO card because not everyone loves making resolutions. You decide what goes on it. You decide how to reward yourself for getting a line. But, we will find times to check in with each other and see how they're going. If this is something that interests you, we'll have a check-in call in the first week of January. It will be on the calendar.
- **Monthly BINGO**: Our regular monthly BINGO game will be at **4:30pm**. Alaina and I will be out in the community earlier in the day.

If you don't have plans for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, join our calls! We'll sing, we'll chat, and we'll listen to "His Majesty's Most Gracious Speech" together.

Rebecca

902-410-7092 | info@seniorsconnectns.ca

Community Corner

Introducing:



Laura, our new Volunteer Regional Facilitator for Cape Breton!

We are happy to announce that we're restarting regional programming for Cape Breton. We're so happy Laura found us. She is a Cape Bretoner herself. Read on to learn more about Laura, and see what symbol she chose to represent herself. Welcome, Laura!

Laura's favourite things include people, animals, and questions. It's probably why she was drawn to a career as an academic librarian where she helped faculty and students find solutions to their questions. These questions and the related research led to many great conversations and projects which Laura also loves. Being the Business Librarian at CBU was a great job and Laura always maintained she had the best gig on the Island.

Since retirement, she's lucky in that she has more time for great conversations with friends and other volunteers she works with on various initiatives. As for the problem-solving piece involved with questions, Laura now loves doing word puzzles, math puzzles, as well as jigsaw puzzles.

Laura's also been fortunate to have always had animals in her life. At this point, Ben, a bossy black cat, does a good job of managing Laura and her partner. When she wants a "chiller" animal experience, Laura walks dogs for ElderDog CBRM. She also golfs, gardens, and swims at the local pool.



Laura's symbol. She likes to chat and ask questions!

Now... what do YOU have to share in **Community Corner?**
Share news (good and bad), tips, or anecdotes for us to get to know each other better.

Slow Cooker Pumpkin, Chickpea & Lentil Curry



Servings: 6

Ingredients

- 2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas (drained)
- 1 medium yellow onion (diced)
- 2 medium cloves garlic (minced)
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 cup split red lentils (rinsed)
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 tablespoon curry powder*
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt more to taste
- 1 (15-ounce) can coconut milk (I use full-fat for this recipe; light will probably still taste great but might result in a thinner curry)

For serving:

- White or brown rice (or quinoa)
- Fresh lime wedges
- Cilantro leaves

Steps

1. Add all ingredients except the coconut milk to a 3-quart or larger slow cooker. Cook on low 8-10 hours or on high 5-6 hours.
2. Stir in the coconut milk and cook on low for another 30 minutes. The curry will be a bit thin at first; it thickens up as it sits.
3. Scoop over rice and serve with cilantro and fresh lime wedges to squeeze over the top.

Notes

*If you don't have curry mix, use 1/2 tbsp cumin, 1/2 tbsp tumeric, 1/2 tsp paprika, and black pepper.

Can cook on high for 4 hours and 20 minutes, add coconut milk, and keep cooking on high for 15 minutes.

Also delicious with molasses brown bread!

Birthday Celebrations

This will be a special opportunity for us to get to know each other by celebrating those who have a birthday during the month.

If you are having a birthday, please join the call on **the first Wednesday of the month** so that we can celebrate with you, and get to know you a little better. *Sharing that it's your birthday will be voluntary.*

Book Talks -
December 16th



Come all past and present book worms! We're going to talk about books. What are you reading? What do you recommend, or what do you not recommend? Any books you want to revisit? It's like a book club - without the homework.

We finished "Letters from the Country" which means we're looking for a new book. If you have a recommendation, do share! In the meantime, we have two "Story" Tuesdays in which we'll listen to readings of Lucy Maud Montgomery short stories.

Listen Together

Age, Reconsidered: Rethinking what it means to grow older
Episode 3: The Stories We Carry
December 9th



What if the stories you've carried all your life are still being written? We all grow up surrounded by stories—those told by our families, communities and culture, and eventually, the stories we tell ourselves.
Together, we consider the inside of aging—the rich inner world of memory, identity and meaning, and how the stories we carry continue to shape who we are becoming. Along the way, two lifelong friends revisit stories from their own childhoods, from imaginary friends and neighbourhood myths to Nancy Drew and the unforgettable tale of The Monkey's Paw.

The Vinyl Cafe, with Stuart McLean
Morley's Christmas Concert
December 23rd



Guest Speaker:

Maritime Museum of the Atlantic
We are thrilled to have the historians from this respected Halifax museum back to present a series of talks over the winter months.

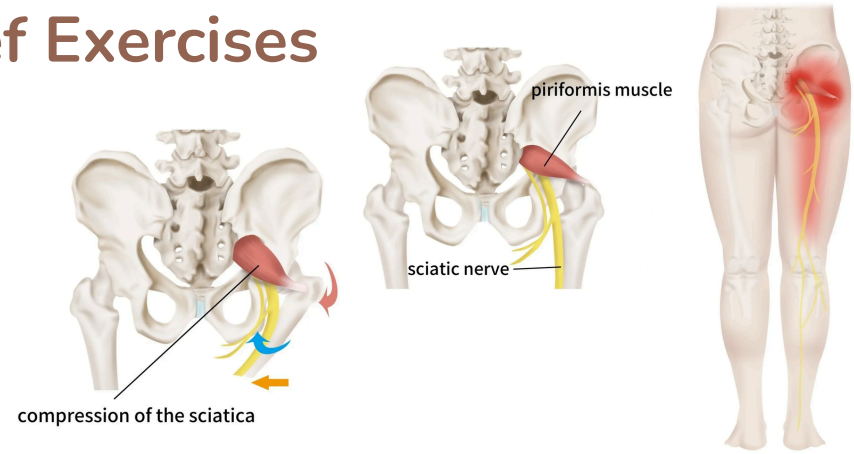


Starting this month, we'll have "Christmas at Sea" which will touch on how sailors - past and present - spend the season out at sea, and will cover navy components as well.

In January, we'll learn about Sable Island and Shipwrecks.

These are popular, engaging talks, and there will be time for questions!

3 Sciatica Pain Relief Exercises

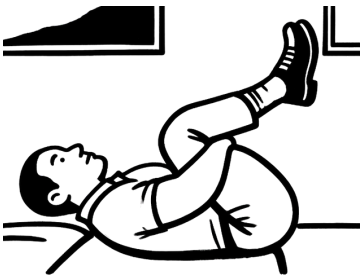


www.lsatherapy.co.uk/piriformis-syndrome

1 Lumbar Flexion Exercise



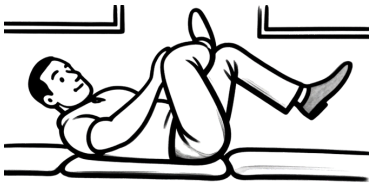
Start by lying down on your back.
Bring one knee toward your chest
to flatten your lower back.



If possible, bring both knees up for a stronger stretch.
Only go as far as you can without increasing pain. This helps open the spaces where the sciatic nerve roots exit the spine.

> Only do what your body is able to do, and follow the advice of your doctor.
> **DON'T PUSH THROUGH PAIN!**

2 Piriformis Stretch



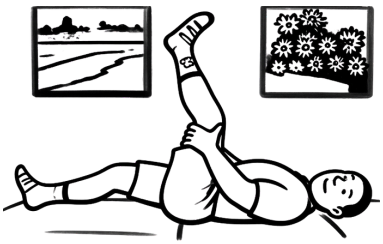


Cross one ankle over the opposite knee. Pull your ankle toward you and gently press your knee away.

This stretches the piriformis muscle in the buttock, which can irritate the sciatic nerve.
Hold the stretch for 30–60 seconds.

You can also try pulling the knee toward the opposite shoulder as an alternative stretch.

3 Sciatic Nerve Glide



Lie on your back. Straighten one leg and pull your toes toward you, then return.
This moves the sciatic nerve gently through its path.
Don't push through pain.
Do this slowly for 30–60 seconds, only going as far as is comfortable.

https://m4lpt.com/sciatica-pain-relief-exercises-for-seniors/

MEDITATION

Maitrī (Pali: mettā) is a Sanskrit term that refers to benevolence, loving-kindness, friendliness, amity, good will, and active interest in others. The term appears in various ancient and medieval Indian texts.

The practice gradually increases in difficulty. At first the practitioner is targeting oneself, then loved ones, neutral ones, difficult ones, and finally all beings, with variations across traditions.

Wikipedia: "Maitrī"

How to Practice

There are different approaches to this practice, but they are all similar. Below is how we have practiced on our calls:



Sit comfortably. Close the eyes. Notice the breath.

Begin with yourself, silently saying:

"May I be safe. May I be healthy. May I be at ease. May I be happy."

Then make the same wishes, one by one to:

- **Someone you love.**
- **A neutral person (someone you don't know).**
- **A difficult person.**
- **All beings.**

End by noticing your breath, then take a cleansing exhale. You may like to press your palms together and close with a "Namaste", "Amen", or a smile and self-hug.

Holiday Helper Tips

Cooking

- Soups, stews, casseroles, and baked goods freeze well. Make them early, and freeze them in meal-sized portions.
- Cookie dough can be frozen in balls or logs, then baked fresh when you want them.
- Cranberry sauce can be made a few days ahead, and it keeps well in the fridge. It can also be frozen.
- Peel and chop vegetables the day before. Keep them in the fridge in a covered container, and keep peeled potatoes in cold water so they don't brown.
- Write a simple menu with a rough timeline, so you know what needs the oven and when.
- Keep a few easy extras on hand, like crackers, cheese, and something from the freezer, in case someone drops by.

Enjoying the Season

- Keep a favourite holiday tradition, even if it's something small.
- Put on some favourite holiday music while enjoying your morning coffee or tea.
- Take a drive or walk to enjoy neighbourhood holiday lights and decorations.
- Enjoy a favourite seasonal treat. You don't need a special occasion!
- Watch a favourite holiday movie or revisit a book you love.
- Reach out to someone you haven't spoken to in a while. A quick phone call can brighten both your days.
- Bring a little holiday cheer indoors with a festive candle (battery-operated), seasonal flowers or a small decoration.
- Treat yourself to something special, whether it's a favourite dessert, a new book or a cozy pair of slippers.

Gift Wrapping

- Gift bags with tissue paper are quicker than wrapping, and easier on stiff hands.
- Brown paper tied with string, or newspaper with a bow, looks charming and costs almost nothing.
- A piece of fabric tied around a gift can be part of the present itself, like a tea towel or a scarf.
- Save good bows, ribbon, and gift bags to reuse next year.
- Put a name tag on each gift as you wrap it, so you don't have to remember which is which.
- Double-sided tape hides the tape and is easier to work with than regular tape.
- Wrap gifts while sitting at a table so you have plenty of room and don't have to bend or reach.
- Keep scissors, tape, tags and ribbon together in one small basket so everything is within reach.

Holiday Safety

- If you have a real tree, water it every day and keep it away from heaters and fireplaces. A dry tree can catch fire very quickly.
- Never leave candles burning when you leave the room. Battery-operated candles are a safe alternative.
- Check strings of lights for frayed wires or broken sockets before you use them, and don't overload outlets.
- Keep walkways clear of ice, and sprinkle salt or sand on steps. If you need help clearing snow, it's a good time to ask a neighbour or family member.
- Use a sturdy step stool, not a chair, when hanging decorations, and ask someone to hold it.
- Keep the paths in your home clear, especially at night. Move extension cords and throw rugs that could cause a trip.

Christmas Match Game

Match the actors and their movies.



1. **Christmas Vacation**
2. **Trading Places**
3. **Elf**
4. **The Polar Express**
5. **The Muppet Christmas Carol**
6. **Bad Santa**
7. **Home Alone**
8. **Jingle All The Way**
9. **The Holiday**
10. **It's A Wonderful Life**
11. **Meet Me In St. Louis**
12. **How The Grinch Stole Christmas**
13. **The Santa Clause**
14. **Scrooged**
15. **Miracle on 34th Street**
16. **Die Hard**
17. **The Nightmare Before Christmas**
18. **A Christmas Story**
19. **Love Actually**
20. **The Family Man**

A. **Keira Knightley**
B. **James Stewart**
C. **Mara Wilson**
D. **Tim Allen**
E. **Bruce Willis**
F. **Kate Winslet**
G. **Danny Elfman**
H. **Jim Carrey**
I. **Will Ferrell**
J. **Tom Hanks**
K. **Beverly D'Angelo**
L. **Eddie Murphy**
M. **Nicholas Cage**
N. **Michael Caine**
O. **Judy Garland**
P. **Peter Billingsley**
Q. **Billy Bob Thornton**
R. **Arnold Schwarzenegger**
S. **Macaulay Culkin**
T. **Bill Murray**



Guess The Carol

Challenging!



Guess the Christmas carols from the cues below.

1. **Sir Lancelot with laryngitis** -Answer: “Silent Night”
2. **Exuberance to this orb**
3. **The apartment of two psychiatrists**
4. **Assemble everyone who believes**
5. **Far back in a hay bin**
6. **Decorate the entryways**
7. **The lad is a diminutive percussionist**
8. **Frozen precipitation commence**
9. **The smog-less bewitching hour arrived**
10. **Boulder of the tinkling metal spheres**
11. **288 yuletide hours**
12. **Oh, member of the round table with missing areas**
13. **Leave and do an elevated broadcast**
14. **We are Kong, Lear, and Not Cole**
15. **Our fervent hope is that you thoroughly enjoy your yuletide season**
16. **May the deity bestow an absence of fatigue to mild-mannered males**





Y I A L M B D J O Q I B C C T W Q W Z
I N C L D U A Q K X V Z A C Q P W N E
C F K A S N E T T I M P P H B T A P U
E R X B S G R U T I I C B S K I I N G
H X Q W J H B N A M W O N S P G W C T
O T S O C H R I S T M A S W E N N Z W
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C R A S G W G O Q L D E R A A T B V P
H E D N U K N B L U C S N T L A M C Z
O A I E U A I O B E V T Z E P K Y V N
C D L L W K G G S D G F E R E S Q O G
O I O C N E K G Z N C N L B R E D A R
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A G X C I X V N H C Z W S W F I T N N
T E D I R H G I E L S S B H O N F F O
E J E B S B J N E V T L N O I N E E W
G F T L G H I T O S P E L W A D S W D
M W V K I P P C Q B E D E H F R G I A
S N O W F L A K E Q J L C B Z V D J Y

APPLE CIDER
CHRISTMAS
FIREPLACE
GINGERBREAD
HANUKKAH
HOLIDAYS
HOT CHOCOLATE
ICE SKATING
ICICLE
MITTENS
PINECONE
READING
SKIING
SLED
SLEIGH RIDE
SNOW ANGEL
SNOW DAY
SNOWBALL
SNOWBOARD
SNOWFLAKE
SNOWMAN
SWEATER
TOBOGGAN
WINTER

Chrisłmas word scramble



ogsntcik _____

ilesnt _____

adceln _____

hawtre _____

dneierer _____

esitnpaoti _____

ggbeeranrdi _____

eimlostteo _____

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eeglds _____

tomraenn _____

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pirafeelc _____

soclar _____



Song Circle



“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth, and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled
Joyful, all ye nations, rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With th' angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem
Hark, the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of peace
Hail! the Son of Righteousness
Light and life to all he brings
Risen with healing in his wings
Mild he lays his glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the some of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

Hark, the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth, and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled
Joyful, all ye nations, rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With th' angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem
Hark, the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King

“Let It Snow” - Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne
Oh, the weather outside is frightful,
But the fire is so delightful,
And since we've no place to go,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

It doesn't show signs of stopping,
And I brought some corn for popping;
The lights are turned way down low,
Let it snow, let it snow.

When we finally kiss good night,
How I'll hate going out in the storm;
But if you really hold me tight,
All the way home I'll be warm.

The fire is slowly dying,
And, my dear, we're still good-bye-ing,
But as long as you love me so,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

When we finally kiss good night,
How I'll hate going out in the storm;
But if you really hold me tight,
All the way home I'll be warm.

Oh, the fire is slowly dying,
And, my dear, we're still good-bye-ing,
But as long as you love me so,
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

“Jolly Old Saint Nicholas”

Jolly Old Saint Nicholas,
Lean your ear this way!
Don't you tell a single soul
What I'm going to say;
Christmas Eve is coming soon;
Now you dear old man,
Whisper what you'll bring to me,
Tell me if you can.

When the clock is striking twelve,
When I'm fast asleep,
Down the chimney broad and black,
With your pack you'll creep;
All the stockings you will find
Hanging in a row;
Mine will be the shortest one,
You'll be sure to know.

“White Christmas” - Irving Berlin

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know
Where those treetops glisten and children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow, the snow
And I-I-I am dreaming of a white Christmas
With every Christmas card I write
May your days, may your days, may your days be merry and bright
And may all your Christmases be white
I-I-I I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know
Where the treetops glisten and the children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow
I-I-I I'm dreaming of a white Christmas
With every Christmas card I write
May those days, may your days, may your days be merry and bright
And may all your Christmases be white
Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle bells all the way, ooh

“Silent Night”

Silent night, holy Night
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, holy night
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from Heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing ‘Alleluia’
Christ the saviour is born
Christ the saviour is born

Silent night, holy night
Son of God, love’s pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus lord at thy birth
Jesus lord at they birth

“Holly Jolly Christmas” - Johnny Marks

Have a holly, jolly Christmas
It's the best time of the year
I don't know if there'll be snow
But have a cup of cheer
Have a holly, jolly Christmas
And when you walk down the street
Say hello to friends you know
And everyone you meet
Oh, the mistletoe
Is hung where you can see
Somebody waits for you
Kiss her once for me
Have a holly, jolly Christmas
And in case you didn't hear
Oh by golly, have a holly, jolly Christmas this year
Oh, ho, the mistletoe
Is hung where you can see
Somebody waits for you
Kiss her once for me
Have a holly, jolly Christmas
And in case you didn't hear
Oh by golly, have a holly, jolly Christmas this year

“Up on the Housetop” - Benjamin Hanby

Up on the housetop reindeer paws
Out jumps Good Old Santa Claus.
Down through the chimney with lots of toys,
All for the little ones Christmas joys.

Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?
Ho, ho, ho! Who wouldn't go?
Up on the housetop, click, click, click,
Down through the chimney with good Saint Nick!

First comes the stocking of little Nell,
Oh, dear Santa fill it well.
Give her a dolly that laughs and cries,
One that will open and shut her eyes.

CHORUS

Next comes the stocking of little Will,
Oh, just see what a glorious fill.
Here is a hammer and lots of tacks,
Also a ball and a whip that cracks.

CHORUS