

NEWS FROM

AGE FRIENDLY BRANDON

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX PROGRAM (CVITP)

Filing taxes can be confusing but the good news is that help is available! The Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) offers free tax preparation services for eligible individuals, including seniors, across Manitoba.

What is the CVITP?

CVITP is a collaboration between community organizations and the Canada Revenue Agency. In Brandon, Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) offers free tax clinics at 7th Street Health Access Centre. Brett Turner, Co-Lead CVITP Program, noted that, “our trained volunteers prepare and file your taxes, ensuring you get the benefits and credits you’re entitled to.”

Are you eligible for the CVITP?

There are two criteria to qualify for the program:

- an income threshold of \$35,000 for a single person and \$45,000 for a couple
- a simple tax situation (no self-employment income, capital gains, or rental properties)

“Income plays a big role in people’s health outcomes. Filing your taxes can help people put money in their pockets by accessing the right benefits.”
~ Brett Turner ~

Why should you file your taxes?

Even if you don’t owe taxes, filing a return ensures you receive benefits such as:

- Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS)
- Old Age Security (OAS) benefits
- GST/HST credits
- Manitoba Seniors’ School Tax Rebate
- Canada Dental benefit
- Other provincial and federal benefits



The CVITP makes tax season less stressful for eligible seniors by offering free, reliable tax-filing help. Don’t miss out on benefits you’re entitled to—visit a CVITP clinic and file your taxes with confidence! For more information, contact CVITP at (204) 578-4800 or email CVITP@pmh-mb.ca

EYES WIDE OPEN: WHY GLAUCOMA AWARENESS MATTERS

Your eyes have witnessed a lifetime of memories—family gatherings, vacations, birthdays, and maybe a few questionable fashion choices you’d rather forget! But what if your vision started fading without you even noticing? Glaucoma often starts with no symptoms at all and if it is left untreated, it can lead to permanent vision loss.

Continued on Page 2.

WHY GLAUCOMA AWARENESS MATTERS (Con't from page 1)

World Glaucoma Week, March 9th to the 15th, is your reminder to take charge of your eye health and keep seeing life's best moments.

What is Glaucoma?

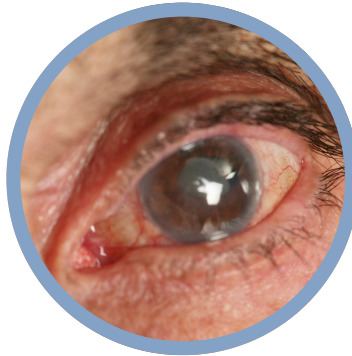
Glaucoma is like a slow-moving thief that steals your sight little by little. It damages the optic nerve, which connects your eyes to your brain. Since glaucoma often has no early warning signs, the best way to catch it is with regular eye exams. As it progresses, some people experience:

- Blurry vision
- Trouble seeing things from the side
- Seeing halos around lights
- Eye pain or pressure

Glaucoma is not curable, but early treatment can keep your vision from getting worse.

DID YOU KNOW?

More than
400,000
Canadians have
Glaucoma



What can you do?

Here's how you can keep your eyes in top shape:

Get Regular Eye Exams – An eye doctor can spot trouble before you notice symptoms

Stay Healthy – Manage conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure to reduce your risk

Wear Sunglasses – UV rays can contribute to eye damage, so protect those peepers!

Eat for Your Eyes – Leafy greens, fish, and nuts are great for eye health

Know Your Family History – If glaucoma runs in the family, tell your doctor.

Glaucoma awareness isn't just about you – it's about your friends and family, too! Encourage loved ones to schedule an eye exam and learn about the risks. This World Glaucoma Week, take action to protect your vision. After all, you don't want to miss a single moment!

FRAUD PREVENTION MONTH

March is Fraud Prevention Month in Canada, a time to raise awareness about scams and how to protect yourself. Fraud affects thousands of Canadians every year, and older adults are often targeted.

By staying alert and informed, you can help prevent fraud and protect yourself and loved ones from scams.

Common scams and how to avoid them:

Service Canada scams - Have you received a phone call or text message from Canada Revenue or Service Canada? Are you sure? Remember they will never ask for payments or financial information over the phone or text.



Emergency scams - Have you received a call from someone claiming to be a friend or relative needing money quickly? Take time to verify the story and never give

personal information over the phone or send money to someone you don't know.

Phishing and Smishing scams:

Have you received emails or text messages claiming to be from your bank or other business? Delete suspicious messages and do not reply to junk messages.

For more information or to report scams and frauds visit the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at <https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca>

UPCOMING EVENTS - MARCH

1	Discovering your Polish ancestry	Daly House Museum 204-727-1722 or dalymuseum@wcgwave.ca for further information
4, 11, 18, 25	Crochet - Granny Square Blanket	A.R. McDiarmid Civic Services Complex 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm https://brandon.perfectmind.com
7, 21	TALC Talks	BU, Education Bldg., Room 107 Starts at 9:30 am https://talcbrandon.weebly.com/
8	Story Trail Hike	Assiniboine Food Forest 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm https://brandon.perfectmind.com
13	Calem Watson Canoeing Alone presentation	Riverbank Discovery Centre Doors open at 6:30 pm https://www.calemwatson.com/product/canoeing-alone-across-the-northwest-territories-march-13th-brandon-mb/
13-15	BU Jazz Festival	Western MB Centennial Auditorium Shows start at 6:30 pm and 9:00 pm https://www.wmca.ca/events
16	St. Patrick's Cèili & Party	1133 Stickney Avenue Doors open at 2:00 pm https://www.mcconnelldancers.com/brandonceili
17	St. Patrick's Day Trivia Night	T-Birds 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm https://brandon.perfectmind.com
31	Carroll Baker and Bakerstreet	Western MB Centennial Auditorium 7:30 pm to 90:00 pm https://www.wmca.ca/events



VIRTUAL EVENTS

Living with Dementia-3
March 8
10 am to 11:45 am

Conversations About
Driving
March 18
2 pm to 3 pm

Register at
<https://alzheimer.mb.ca>

Have an event you would like to see in an upcoming edition? Email:

agefriendly@brandon.ca



PHONE EVENTS

Emergency Preparedness
March 26
1 pm to 2 pm

For more phone sessions and to register, contact Seniors Centre Without Walls at 1-888-333-3121

HAPPY

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

SAVE THE DATE

Ageism Workshop
May 13, 2025
1-4 pm

What does ageism in the workplace look like? Join us at Brandon Seniors for Seniors to find out! Watch for more details in next month's newsletter.

AGE FRIENDLY WELCOMES TWO NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

RANA WILKINSON - Brandon has always felt like home to me, and I believe a strong community is built on care, connection, and the willingness to help one another. As a mom to a wonderful 10-year-old daughter, I want to set an example of kindness and service, showing her the value of giving back.

In my work as a Realtor®, I have the privilege of guiding people through some of life's biggest transitions—whether it's a first home, a forever home, or the right home for their later years. My designation as a Senior Real Estate Specialist® has deepened my understanding of the unique housing needs of older adults, and I'm passionate about

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Joining the Age Friendly Committee is another way for me to contribute to making Brandon a place where people of all ages feel valued and supported.

~Rana Wilkinson ~

helping seniors and families alike navigate their next steps with confidence.

Beyond real estate, I am committed to serving my community. I currently volunteer as a delivery driver for Seniors for Seniors Inc.'s *Dinner is Served* meal program and serve as Vice President of the Parent Council at my daughters' school.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to work alongside others who share a heart for our community, and I look forward to helping make a difference—one connection at a time.

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DON KOSTESKY - Before retiring I was the CEO of Farmers Co-op Seed Plant and a farmer. Upon retiring I wanted to volunteer and stay involved in our community.

As President of the Brandon Seniors for Seniors Coop Inc., I see first hand how important it is to stay engaged, participate in social activities, and provide supports for older adults in Brandon.

There has long been an important partnership between Age Friendly Brandon and Brandon Seniors for Seniors. This partnership has produced useful information for our older



adults, including the very popular Seniors Resource Guide, see:

<https://brandon.ca/age-friendly/af-resources>

I look forward to working with the rest of the committee to continue to build awareness of and move forward age-friendly priorities.

Follow us on Facebook @ Age Friendly Brandon
Visit our website: www.bradon.ca/agefriendly

