



TGC'S 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY E-NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2025

Hello TGC Rainbow Community!

Welcome to the first edition of our brand-new 2SLGBTQIA+ Newsletter!

This quarterly newsletter is designed just for **YOU**, to keep you informed, engaged, and connected with everything happening in our vibrant 2SLGBTQIA+ community here at **TGC** (The Good Companions)

What You Can Expect:

Program Highlights – Stay updated on upcoming events, activities, and opportunities to connect.

Resources & Information – Find information, and stories tailored for **US**.

Special Features – Fun surprises, member contributions, and ways to get involved!

We're so excited to build this newsletter together and make it a true reflection of our incredible community. Have ideas or stories to share? Let us know by emailing our 2SLGBTQIA+ program coordinator Stephane; sgauthier@thegoodcompanions.ca

Thank you for being a part of this journey, we can't wait to bring you more every season. Stay proud, stay connected, and stay fabulous! 🏳️‍🌈

IN THIS ISSUE!

A message from our new Executive Director, Matthew

Breaking the cycle of social isolation

Out And About Saturdays Spring Schedule

Rainbow Coffee Club dates and speakers

Over The Rainbow: Pub Night

2SLGBTQIA+ Adult Day Program for folks living with dementia

Travel tips for 2SLGBTQIA+ travelers

Noodle Night: An Oz-some event!

AND MORE!



613-236-0428 ext: 2535



www.thegoodcompanions.ca



sgauthier@thegoodcompanions.ca

CODE OF CONDUCT USE OF THE CENTRE AND PROPERTY

The Good Companions in alignment with the Ontario Human Rights Code provide services in a non-judgmental, non-discriminatory manner, respecting each user's gender, gender identity, culture, religion, racial origins, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, general appearance, abilities/disabilities and sexual preference.

Anyone using the Centre and property has the responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect per the following activities are not allowed:

1. Physically or verbally threatening or harassing any person as defined in the Ontario Human Rights and Criminal Codes;
 2. Using loud and offensive language on the premises;
 3. Defacing, damaging or destroying property belonging to The Good Companions, its members or visitors;
 4. Possession or consumption of alcohol outside of special events or rentals for which liquor is permitted and being served. At no time shall alcohol be consumed outside the physical premises of the Centre and only inside for said events above;
 5. Illegal drugs are prohibited on the grounds at any time;
 6. Soliciting for any purpose, including asking for money, contributions or donations unless such activity has been approved by the Executive Director, his/her delegate, or the Board of Directors;
 7. Assembling for the purpose of disturbing the public peace or committing any unlawful act in the Centre;
 8. Bringing animals on to The Good Companions property, with the exception of service animals trained to assist specific individuals, and for special events authorized by the Centre. The owner is responsible for the behavior of the service animal. Aggressive behavior by an animal will not be tolerated. All service animals must be checked in with our front receptionist upon arrival, and proper documentation must be provided;
 9. Posting or distributing of non-Centre flyers or notices without prior approval from Administration of the Centre.
- Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in verbal and/or written warnings and the potential risk of individual(s) being denied access to The Good Companions Centre and property.

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In the spirit of Reconciliation, The Good Companions acknowledges that we are operating on the unceded traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg. The peoples of the Anishinaabeg Algonquin Nation have lived on this territory for millennia. Their culture and presence have nurtured and continue to nurture this land. The Good Companions honours all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and their valuable contributions to this land, both past and present.

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Allyship Matters

Having a safe space like TGC means you don't have to feel alone. After years of facing discrimination, it's easy to hesitate with mainstream services, but here, you can connect, share, and be yourself without fear. This kind of community and support makes all the difference as we age.

Did you know?

Approximately 17,500 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals over the age of 50 live in Ottawa!

(based on population estimates and national demographic trends)

Thank you City of Ottawa!

Your investment allows us to create inclusive spaces and meaningful opportunities for older adults in our community. Thanks to this support, we are able to collaborate with partners like the Ottawa Senior Pride Network (OSPN) and deliver programming such as "Out and About Saturdays", which provide social connections and reduce isolation for 2SLGBTQIA+ older adults. Your commitment to inclusivity and the well-being of older adults makes a significant impact, and we truly appreciate your continued support.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MATTHEW!



As the new Executive Director at The Good Companions Seniors' Centre (TGC), it is my complete joy to introduce myself to you. My name is Matthew Ottaviani and I'm excited to be leading this incredible organization. As a proud member of Ottawa's Rainbow Community, I understand the importance of creating a safe and welcoming space for all individuals, especially our 2SLGBTQIA+ older adults.



I want to take a moment to acknowledge the strength, resilience, and contributions that you bring to TGC. I am learning quite a bit from Stephane and seeing all the vibrant programs and events that this group brings to the life of TGC. You are a vital part of our organization and I am committed to ensuring that TGC continues to be a place where you feel seen, valued, and supported. Your experiences and histories and wisdom and presence empower all of us. Thank you for being with us.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MATTHEW (CONTINUED)



In the coming weeks and months, please stop me to say hello or come by my office for a chat. I would appreciate the opportunity to hear from you, learn more on how we are doing as an organization and how better we might be able to serve you, your needs and ideas. I look forward to getting to know each of you better.

With Pride,
Matthew



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ SENIORS



Social isolation is a significant challenge for many older adults, but it can be particularly pronounced for those in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Many in our community have lived through decades of discrimination, forcing them to hide their identities or live without the traditional family structures that provide support for many in later life. As a result, they are at a heightened risk of loneliness, depression, and other mental and physical health challenges. However, staying connected through inclusive, affirming communities can provide a lifeline, improving both emotional well-being and overall quality of life.



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ SENIORS (CONTINUED)

The Harmful Effects of Social Isolation

Isolation can have devastating effects on both mental and physical health. Studies show that loneliness is linked to increased risks of heart disease, stroke, dementia, and even premature death.

For 2SLGBTQIA+ older adults, the lack of social support can exacerbate stress, leading to higher rates of depression and anxiety. Without a strong community, individuals may struggle with feelings of invisibility, marginalization, or fear of discrimination in healthcare and housing settings. Over time, these compounded experiences can erode self-confidence and contribute to withdrawal from society.



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ SENIORS (CONTINUED)

Building Community Through The Good Companions' 2SLGBTQIA+ Programming

The Good Companions recognizes the unique challenges faced by 2SLGBTQIA+ seniors and offers programs designed to foster connection, support, and joy. By participating in these programs, individuals can break the cycle of isolation and build meaningful relationships with peers who share similar life experiences.



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ SENIORS (CONTINUED)

Benefits of Engaging in Our Programs:

- **A Safe and Affirming Space** – Many 2SLGBTQIA+ older adults have faced rejection or discrimination in their lives. The Good Companions provides a welcoming environment where everyone is celebrated for who they are.
- **Opportunities for Social Connection** – From the Rainbow Coffee Club to Over the Rainbow: Pub Night, there are many ways to engage with others in a fun and relaxed atmosphere.
- **Access to Resources and Support** – Our programs connect individuals with services tailored to their needs, whether it's advocacy for inclusive healthcare or guidance on housing options.
- **Mental and Emotional Well-Being** – Engaging in social activities has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety, improving overall mental health.
- **A Sense of Purpose and Joy** – Whether it's through volunteering, participating in discussions, or simply sharing stories, our programs offer fulfilling ways to stay engaged and active.



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF SOCIAL ISOLATION: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ SENIORS (CONTINUED)



The Good Companions' 2SLGBTQIA+ programming offers a community where individuals can find friendship, support, and a renewed sense of belonging. Whether you're looking to connect over a cup of coffee, celebrate your identity with like-minded peers, or simply find a safe space to be yourself, there is a place for you here. email sgauthier@thegoodcompanions.ca for more info.

Take the first step in breaking the cycle of isolation, join us today and experience the power of community.





Saturday April 12th

Coffee Club (10am to noon)

Older and Bolder women's meet up (10am)

Table Tennis (10am to noon)

Games room: Pool, Darts, Board Games (10am to 2:30pm)

The Gym (10am to noon)

Pickle Ball (12:30pm to 2:30pm)

Special Event: OSPN is recruiting new participants for their Dragon Boat team! There are many ways to get involved. No experience? No problem! Come learn what Dragon Boat is all about, meet the crew, and explore the opportunities available. Join us for fun, fitness, and community! (1:00pm to 2:30)

Saturday April 26th

Coffee Club (10am to noon)

Older and Bolder women's meet up (10am)

Table Tennis (10am to noon)

Games room: Pool, Darts, Board Games (10am to 2:30pm)

The Gym (10am to noon)

Pickle Ball (12:30pm to 2:30pm)

Special Event: Connie and Carla (2004) is a musical comedy about two lounge singers who go on the run after witnessing a crime and disguise themselves as drag performers, only to find unexpected success and friendship. Starring Nia Vardalos and Toni Collette, the film is a fun, campy mix of music, comedy, and self-discovery. (1:00pm to 3:00pm)



Saturday May 10th

Coffee Club (10am to noon)

Older and Bolder women's meet up (10am)

Table Tennis (10am to noon)

Games room: Pool, Darts, Board Games (10am to 2:30pm)

The Gym (10am to noon)

Pickle Ball (12:30pm to 2:30pm)

Special Event: Queer Shakespeare with Jeremiah Bartram

Exploring queer themes, identity, and same-sex desire in Shakespeare's works through historical and modern perspectives. (1:00pm to 2:30pm)

Saturday May 24th

Coffee Club (10am to noon)

Older and Bolder women's meet up (10am)

Table Tennis (10am to noon)

Games room: Pool, Darts, Board Games (10am to 2:30pm)

The Gym (10am to noon)

Pickle Ball (12:30pm to 2:30pm)

Special Event: Speed Friending for 2SLGBTQIA+ Older Adults!

A fun, fast-paced way to meet new friends and build connections in our community!

"Friendships start with a simple hello!"



Saturday June 14th

Coffee Club (10am to noon)

Older and Bolder women's meet up (10am)

Table Tennis (10am to noon)

Games room: Pool, Darts, Board Games (10am to 2:30pm)

The Gym (10am to noon)

No Pickle Ball this Saturday

Special Event: Tea Dance

Whether you're a dancing pro or just want to sway to the rhythm, this is the perfect chance to let loose and have some fun!

Saturday June 28th

Coffee Club (10am to noon)

Older and Bolder women's meet up (10am)

Table Tennis (10am to noon)

Games room: Pool, Darts, Board Games (10am to 2:30pm)

The Gym (10am to noon)

Pickle Ball (12:30pm to 2:30pm)

Special Event: **Fluid: Life Beyond the Binary** by Mae Martin (Film) is a witty, insightful exploration of gender, identity, and self-expression. Blending humor and personal stories, Martin challenges labels and embraces life beyond rigid binaries.



April 02nd 2025 (10am to 11:30am)

Meditation and Movement — Amy Wannamaker of Centre town Community Health Centre.

May 07th 2025 (10am to 11:30am)

5 Nutrients to Boost Your Energy - Huguette Samson Bouchard of Centre town Community Health Centre.

June 04th 2025 (10am to 11:30am)

Steps to boost your memory — Artina of Centre town Community Health Centre.



Join us monthly on the first Wednesday, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM, at The Good Companions (670 Albert Street) for coffee, tea, treats, and great company.

Most meetings feature guest speakers on engaging topics.

Contact Stephane at sgauthier@thegoodcompanions.ca for details!



April 18th 2025 Closed due to Good Friday

May 16th 2025 (7pm to 10:00pm)

June 20th 2025 (7pm to 10:00pm)

Join us every 3rd Friday of the month (unless noted) at The Good Companions (670 Albert St.) for a casual, relaxed night out. Enjoy drinks, good company, and a game of pool or darts. Alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks available for purchase.

Contact Stephane at sgauthier@thegoodcompanions.ca for details.



TRAVEL TIPS FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ TRAVELERS

1. Research Destination Laws & Culture

Check legal protections for LGBTQIA+ people (e.g., anti-discrimination laws, marriage equality).

Learn about social attitudes, some countries may be legally progressive but still socially conservative.

Use resources like ILGA World's Rainbow Map and Equaldex for up-to-date legal standings.

2. Prioritize 2SLGBTQIA+-Friendly Destinations

Choose countries with strong protections and welcoming cultures (e.g., Canada, Netherlands, Spain, New Zealand).

If traveling somewhere less LGBTQIA+-friendly, opt for inclusive resorts or cruises that cater to queer travelers.



TRAVEL TIPS FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ TRAVELERS (CONTINUED)

3. Join 2SLGBTQIA+ Older Adult-Friendly Travel Groups

Consider joining 2SLGBTQIA+ travel groups like Olivia Travel (for women), R Family Vacations, or LGBTQ+ senior tour groups.

Cruises like VACAYA or Atlantis Events offer 2SLGBTQIA+, friendly experiences with built-in safety.

4. Plan for Healthcare & Medications

Check medical access in your destination, some places have 2SLGBTQIA+-inclusive healthcare, others do not.

Carry medications in original packaging and bring extra in case of delays.

If applicable, bring letters from your doctor for hormone therapy, PrEP, or other prescriptions.



TRAVEL TIPS FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ TRAVELERS (CONTINUED)

5. Book LGBTQIA+-Friendly Accommodations

Look for hotels on platforms like Misterb&b (2SLGBTQIA+ equivalent of Airbnb) or GayCities.

Check reviews to ensure hotels/resorts are safe and welcoming for 2SLGBTQIA+ travelers.

6. Pack Smart & Be Discreet If Needed

In conservative areas, avoid public displays of affection and be mindful of clothing choices.

Carry a portable safe for important documents, cash, and emergency contact info.

Use a VPN on your devices for digital security, especially in countries that censor 2SLGBTQIA+ content.



TRAVEL TIPS FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ TRAVELERS (CONTINUED)

7. Stay Connected & Have a Safety Plan

Share your itinerary with a trusted person back home. Have emergency contacts saved both digitally and on paper, including the nearest 2SLGBTQIA+-friendly embassy. Know how to access local 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations in case you need support while traveling.

8. Be Mindful of Airport & Border Security

If your gender expression differs from your passport, prepare for possible questions (having a doctor's note may help).

TSA and customs agents in some countries may still discriminate ,be patient but know your rights.



TRAVEL TIPS FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ TRAVELERS (CONTINUED)

9. Consider Travel Insurance with 2SLGBTQIA+ Coverage

Get travel insurance that covers medical care, trip cancellations, and emergency evacuations.

Some companies, like Allianz or World Nomads, offer LGBTQIA+-inclusive policies.

10. Travel with Confidence & Have Fun!

Seek out 2SLGBTQIA+ cultural sites, pride festivals, and queer-friendly cafés.

Connect with locals or expats through safe platforms like Facebook groups or Meetup.

Be aware but don't let fear stop you from enjoying new experiences!





Rainbow Connections 50+ is a program designed to combat isolation and foster meaningful connections among 2SLGBTQIA+ seniors in the Ottawa region. Participants can schedule regular check-in calls with our dedicated volunteers, ensuring they feel supported and connected. We strive to accommodate everyone's needs to the best of our ability.

**If you're interested in receiving check-in calls or volunteering for the program, please reach out to Stephane (2SLGBTQIA+ Program Coordinator) at sgauthier@thegoodcompanions.ca
Together, let's build a stronger, more connected community!**



The Good Companions offers an inclusive day program designed for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals living with dementia. This program provides a safe, affirming space where participants can engage in meaningful activities, socialize, and receive compassionate support tailored to their needs.

Our goal is to create a sense of community, connection, and joy while honoring each person's unique experiences and identity.
For more information, please contact pbodnoff@thegoodcompanions.ca

"Together, we celebrate and support our diverse community with dignity and care."

OZ-SOME NOODLE NIGHT

A "WICKED" event

APRIL 23RD (WEDNESDAY)

LOCATION: THE GOOD COMPANIONS CENTRE
(670 ALBERT STREET)

★ EVENT SCHEDULE:

🍸 COCKTAILS: 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (SIP, MINGLE, AND CHANNEL
YOUR INNER GLINDA WITH "POPULAR" VIBES!)

🍝 PASTA BUFFET & DESSERT: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (TWIRL YOUR
NOODLES AND SAVOR A WICKED-INSPIRED CHOCOLATE CAKE
THAT'S DEFYING GRAVITY!)

🎬 SCREENING OF "WICKED": 7:15 PM - 10:00 PM (IMMERSE
YOURSELF IN THE SPELLBINDING MAGIC OF THIS ICONIC
STORY.)

🎫 TICKETS: \$20.00 PER PERSON

👉 HOW TO GET TICKETS:

PURCHASE IN PERSON AT THE GOOD COMPANIONS CENTRE
OR CALL 613-236-0428 TO PURCHASE YOUR TICKET

🌈 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY AND ALLY'S WELCOME

TICKETS ON SALE UNTIL APRIL 18TH 2025 🌱❤️



The Good
Companions

CALL *for* VOLUNTEERS

Are you looking to find a great way to spend your time and make a difference?

Apply to be a volunteer at The Good Companions! Our volunteers range from brand new to over 40 years of service.

Scroll below to submit your volunteer application, or download and complete the following form:

[Volunteer Application](#)

If you would like a Volunteer Application sent to you by e-mail, please contact Volunteer Services at volunteer@thegoodcompanions.ca

What are the benefits of volunteering with The Good Companions?

Volunteers are able to lend their time and talents to help us offer the quality programs and services that we have become known for since 1955. In recognition of these contributions, we are able to offer complimentary parking passes and beverage coupons. We are also able to offer training and social events, such as our annual Volunteer Recognition.



**The Good
Companions**





The Good Companions is a membership based Centre. Membership runs by fiscal year (April 1 to March 31 of the following year) and entitles members to enroll in programs listed in the Program Guide. Please note that membership is not required to access Community Support Services.

Membership Fee

Members are charged an annual fee of \$40.00*. Additional charges apply for parking, lockers and programs. Fees can be paid by credit card, Interac, cash or cheque (made payable to The Good Companions).

*The price of new membership is reduced on August 1 (\$30.00) and on December 1 (\$20.00). H.S.T included.

Eligibility

New members are expected to be self-sufficient and capable of looking after their own needs while at the Centre.

[CLICK HERE TO JOIN!](#)



JOIN NOW

