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Calgary HEALTH LINK 24/7	811
Calgary Police – Non Emergency	403-266-1234
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter	403-234-7233
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-387-5437
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Distress/Crisis Line	403-266-4357
ENMAX – Power Trouble	403-514-6100
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City of Calgary	311
Social Service Info & Referral	211
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RNR Lockworks Ltd.	403-479-6161
Road Conditions – Calgary	
Weather Information	511
Gamblers Anonymous	403-237-0654

Elbow Valley mybabysitterlist

Name	Age	Contact	Course
Abby	15	403-455-2556	Yes
Anna	16	587-284-1954	Yes
Mackenzie	15	403-208-2122	Yes
Megan	17	403-968-8187	Yes
Michaela	16	403-630-7348	Yes

Calling All BABYSITTERS Enroll free at mybabysitter.ca and choose the Calgary communities you would like to babysit in.

Calling All PARENTS Visit mybabysitter.ca and find available babysitters in and around your community.

Disclaimer: We recommend for your own peace of mind that references be checked when choosing your babysitter. This babysitter list is provided as a service to the community and is governed by the terms & conditions outlined at mybabysitter.ca.

Calling All Neighbours!



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Calgary Humane Society
Connecting Lives

Happy March, everyone!

We hope you are having a great early spring. At Calgary Humane Society our dogs are enjoying the first few sprigs of green in our dog park (though our volunteers are less enthused about the early spring mud!). Spring also means that Easter is just around the corner and our school field trips have been asking some great questions about rabbits! Today, we wanted to share 5 of the best questions we've heard!

- 1. How much work is a rabbit?** Like all pets, rabbits take a lot of time and attention. Rabbits need regular feeding, cleaning, grooming, playtime, vet care and attention to be happy and healthy. Some people think that rabbits are OK to be left alone at home for a weekend, but this is not true, they need care every day.
- 2. How long can rabbits live?** Rabbits come in many breeds and different breeds have different lifespans (just like dogs!). An average rabbit lifespan is 8-12 years, but at the shelter we have met people with rabbits who are more than 16 years old!
- 3. What should rabbits eat?** Rabbits have a food pyramid just like people! Rabbits should have access to fresh hay all of the time. In addition to hay, rabbits at the shelter eat rabbit pellets every day and get vegetables as a treat from our awesome bunny huggers. Your rabbit's vet is the best person to tell you how much a rabbit should eat.
- 4. Do rabbits need to go to the vet?** Absolutely! Rabbits should have regular check-ups. To get your rabbit a check-up you will need to find an "exotics" veterinarian – they have special training about how to look after rabbits!
- 5. Are rabbits a good pet?** For some people rabbits are a great pet, but just like any animal they are not the best choice for everyone. If your family is looking for a pet our adoption counselors would love to help you find the perfect new friend!

A big thanks to all of the classrooms that have visited the shelter and asked us such good questions! If you or your family is interested in learning more about rabbits and other pets, we would love to meet you! We have just finished renovating our rabbit room at the shelter and our adorable bunnies cannot wait to show off their new home. You can visit any time during our opening hours which are available at www.calgaryhumane.ca.

Happy spring everyone!



The Indoor Gardener

by Cindy DeJager

Fancy Ferns

I love, love, love ferns!

Ferns thrive in medium filtered light to low light and require humidity, but with a little bit of effort you can successfully nurture these beautiful plants. A few important tips to get you started: pot your fern in a plastic container rather than clay because the plastic will retain moisture. Choose a peat moss laden soil mixture with lots of organic matter in it. Choose north facing light for your fern.

Here are some ferns that can be found in most garden centres:

Crocodile Fern

Microsorium musifolium 'Crocodyllus'

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 4 feet tall and wide.

Lemon Button Fern

Nephrolepis cordifolia 'Lemon Button'

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 3 feet tall and 4 feet wide.

Maidenhair Fern

Adiantum raddianum 'Fritz Luth'

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 2 feet tall and wide.

Rabbit's Foot

Humata tyermanii

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 2 feet tall and wide.

Staghorn Fern

FYI: Staghorns don't need to be grown in soil so you often see them mounted and grown on walls or posts.

Platycerium bifurcatum

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 6 feet tall and wide.

Bird's Nest Fern

Asplenium nidus

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 5 feet tall and wide (but usually 1-2 feet indoors).

Silver Brake Fern

Pteris cretica 'Mayi'

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 2 feet tall and wide.

Kangaroo Paw Fern

Microsorium diversifolium

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 2 feet tall and wide.

Boston Fern

Most common indoor fern.

Nephrolepis exaltata 'Fluffy Ruffles'

Medium to bright light and high humidity
May grow 7 feet tall and wide (but usually 2-3 feet tall and wide indoors).

BRAIN GAMES SUDOKU

		5	6			7		9
			1	4			8	2
2							1	
						5		3
5		4		3		9		8
3		9						
	4							1
1	9			8	7			
8		3			4	2		

FIND SOLUTION ON PAGE 11

"If one cannot enjoy reading a book over and over again, there is no use in reading it at all."

- Oscar Wilde





The Gray Partridge

Article by J.G. Turner
 Photo by Daniel Arndt
 (no changes made from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ubermoogle/18050433104/>)

The Gray Partridge, also known as the Hungarian Partridge, was introduced into Alberta when 70 pairs were imported from Hungary and released in 1908 near Midnapore. The smallest of Alberta's game birds, the Hungarian Partridge has an average length of 12 in./32 cm, a wingspan of 21 in./54.5 cm wingspan, and a weight of 15.6 oz./435 grams. Its neck and tail are short, its body is stout and its wings are short and rounded. This bird lives up to its name with grey legs and a grey bill as well a dark u-shaped patch on its belly, a rusty face and chestnut bands on its flanks. This game bird is the only partridge whose breast is decorated with fine wavy lines (vermiculated) of black, white and brown. A reddish brown tail and unmarked, chestnut outer wing feathers can be seen in flight.

Fun Facts:

- Originally found in Europe and Asia, this game bird was brought to live on flat agricultural land in southern British Columbia, south central Saskatchewan and Alberta.
- The Gray Partridge lives in grassland and parkland regions of Alberta but there is also a separated population in the Peace River area.

- Its habitat is open grassland, farmland and grain fields, which have an adjacent area of woody cover for hiding in. It prefers to live on the border between scrubland and areas of cultivation.
- Although this bird can fly, it prefers to spend most of its time on the ground foraging for seeds.
- The Hungarian Partridge is a ground nesting bird, creating a grass lined nest hollow in long grass or under a bush.
- The hen produces some of the largest clutches of any bird species, averaging 16-18 and can lay up to 22 eggs at one time!
- Prior to courting, males engage in prolonged battles to establish breeding territories.
- When it is flushed, it explodes from cover with a clatter of wings and rapid cackle, taking a low and fast flight path to new cover.

If you find an injured or orphaned Gray Partridge or other wild bird or animal, please contact the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society at 403-239-2488 for tips, instructions and advice, or look at the website at www.calgarywildlife.org for more information.



A shamrock is a young sprig of clover, used as a symbol of Ireland. Saint Patrick, Ireland's patron saint, is said to have used it as a metaphor for the Christian Holy Trinity.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamrock>

Helping Your Child, but Letting Them Lead

It can take some time for many young children to get into the routine of using a toilet.

By Doug N Horner, Alberta Health Services



Making the switcheroo from diapers to the toilet is a big, albeit sometimes messy, milestone for children and parents alike. For toddlers, learning to use a toilet is about being ready, controlling muscles and getting acquainted with an enormous porcelain artifact that makes loud and unpredictable gurgling noises. The toilet can appear to children as a powerful, portal-like device—many fear getting flushed into oblivion.

As toddlers are learning to exercise control, parents wrestle with a lack of control. Petra Debow, a parent educator with the Family Centre in Lethbridge, suggests that patience sets the foundation for a potty-positive experience.

"Most children learn to use the toilet between the ages of two and three," says Debow, adding that every child learns at their own pace. Wait for your child to be curious about the toilet and to be aware they're peeing or pooping.

Catherine Young—a nurse and mother expecting her third child in February—says her first two children's education in toileting began only "when they had an interest in it and they seemed ready." Toddlers will also express discomfort at having a soiled diaper. In many respects, the bathroom becomes a realm where the child takes the lead.

Attentiveness is crucial for parents. Watch for clues that your child needs to go, such as stopping what they are doing, fidgeting or saying: "Oh, oh." But parents also need to feel prepared. Debow recommends setting aside time. If you have relatives visiting, a big deadline at work or are in the middle of a kitchen renovation, you may want to wait. There's no need to rush.

"Prepare yourself mentally and put all the other things aside for a couple of weeks until it's dealt with," Debow says.

Plan to help your child with this developmental leap when you can be enthusiastic and supportive about the trek from diaper to toilet.

Young says she also borrowed several books from her local library—she recommends *Once Upon a Potty* by Alona Frankel in particular—after her kids showed interest in the toilet. She and her husband also made the bathroom more familiar and less intimidating.

It can take some time for many young children to get into the routine of using a toilet, explains Debow. And staying dry at night often takes longer.

If you and your child try toileting for two weeks and make little progress or your child is resisting, Debow suggests a break. "You don't want to push it so it turns into a negative thing."

BRAIN GAMES SUDOKU

4	1	5	6	2	8	7	3	9
9	3	7	1	4	5	6	8	2
2	6	8	3	7	9	4	1	5
6	7	1	8	9	2	5	4	3
5	2	4	7	3	1	9	6	8
3	8	9	4	5	6	1	2	7
7	4	2	5	6	3	8	9	1
1	9	6	2	8	7	3	5	4
8	5	3	9	1	4	2	7	6



The Bad and Noxious Guys

Barbara Shorrock

There are weeds and then there are noxious and invasive species. The latter are seriously bad for the environment, taking over and crowding out native plants that belong here and provide benefit to other flora and fauna.

Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) is native to Europe and Asia. It found its way to North America in the early 1800's and was first reported in Alberta in 1933. It is an aggressive invader and, once present, can completely overtake large areas of open land. It displaces native vegetation in prairie habitats by usurping available water and nutrients and through plant toxins that prevent the growth of other plants near it. The stems contain a white sap that is toxic to most livestock and is a serious irritant to human skin. Goats are unaffected by the sap and graze on the young plants without ill effect, but will only eat them in the spring when they are fresh and succulent. Sheep have also been used along with herbicides and flea beetles, to fight it. The small light green flowers produce massive amounts of seed, which explode from the seed pod and travel as far as 6 meters. In addition, the root system is deep and very efficient in producing new plants as it creeps extensively underground.

Scentsless Chamomile (*Matricaria maritima*) is a member of the Aster family, having single, white, daisy-like flowers with yellow centers at the ends of each branched stem. It produces rapidly by seed, with a single plant producing up to 1 million seeds that are mature as soon as the flower forms. Seeds remain viable for up to 15 years in the soil and are readily dispersed by wind or water, on equipment and vehicles, or as a contaminant in soil, fill material, crop seed, and animal

feed. Seeds can float on water for up to 12 hours and new infestations are often found around watercourses. Not eaten by livestock, dense stands of scentless chamomile can reduce crop yields in hay fields, pastures, and other cultivated crops. Like many of our invasive species, it originated in Europe, and has no natural enemies here, except for man, who has found chemicals to control it. We are not terribly fond of herbicides in our parks, however, and mechanical and manual removal is our best line of defense.

Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) has had a lot of press in recent years, as Alberta works hard to keep this species with no natural enemies under control. Native to Europe and Asia, Purple Loosestrife was likely introduced when its seeds were included in soil used as ballast in European sailing ships. The plant was also spread by early settlers and is still used in flower gardens and occasionally sold in nurseries today. The plant forms dense stands with thick mats of roots that invade and destroy wetlands, spreading over large areas, degrading habitat for native birds, insects, and other species. By crowding out native plants it reduces biodiversity. If you have *Lythrum* in your garden, you should consider replacing it with something less noxious. To dispose of Purple Loosestrife, put the plants in plastic bags, seal them, and put the bags in the garbage. Do not put them in the compost or discard them in natural areas. Discarded flowers can still produce seeds.

Barbara Shorrock is a writer, reader, traveler, retired realtor, ESL teacher, Spanish student and brand new great-grandmother! She can be found most first Wednesdays at the Queensland Garden Club, which welcomes all gardeners, experienced and new. We don't care where you live.

Ask Charles

I heard that if someone calls themselves a "contractor," they don't need to have a licence to provide property management services. Is that true?

No, that's not true. The truth is it doesn't matter what a person calls themselves. If they are providing property management services and they are not the owner of the property or an employee of the owner, they require a licence from the Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA).

The *Real Estate Act*, which RECA administers, defines property management as:

1. leasing, negotiating, approving or offering to lease, negotiate or approve a lease or rental of real estate;
2. collecting or offering or attempting to collect money payable for the use of real estate;
3. holding money received in connection with a lease or rental of real estate; and
4. advertising, negotiating or any other act, directly or indirectly for the purpose of furthering the activities described in items 1-3.

Licensed property managers can find suitable tenants, deal with nuisance tenants, draft lease agreements, and regularly inspect and maintain property on behalf of a property owner. It is up to property managers and the property owners to negotiate the specific tasks the property manager will provide, but ultimately, before providing property management services, the property manager needs a licence.

Property manager licensing provides vital protection for property owners. Individuals must complete comprehensive education before becoming licensed as a property manager, they must also provide a Certified Criminal Record Check to RECA prior to receiving a licence, and there are ongoing education requirements.

If a property owner is working with a licensed property manager, they have the added protection of the Consumer Compensation Fund. The Fund compensates

consumers who suffer a financial loss as a result of fraud, breach of trust, or a failure to disburse or account for money held in trust by an industry member in connection with a real estate trade, mortgage deal, or property management services.

If you work with an unlicensed property manager, and the property manager disappears and takes rental payments or damage deposits with them, your only recourse is through the courts.

As a property owner, you're not required to hire someone to manage your rental or investment property, but if you do, take steps to protect yourself. Ensure that the company and individual you hire are licensed to provide property management services in Alberta. You can check if someone is licensed through RECA's website at www.reca.ca.

"Ask Charles" is a monthly question and answer column by Charles Stevenson, Director of Professional Standards with the Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA), www.reca.ca. RECA is the independent, non-government agency responsible for the regulation of Alberta's real estate industry. We license, govern, and set the standards of practice for all real estate, mortgage brokerage, and real estate appraisal professionals in Alberta. To submit a question, email askcharles@reca.ca.





Hamsters, Gerbils, and (the best) Guinea Pigs!

Small rodent-sized pets, otherwise affectionately known as pocket pets, include mice, rats, gerbils, hamsters and Guinea pigs. These little animals are not expensive to maintain and can be an entertaining pet, especially if space is limited. The basic requirements of most pocket pet species are similar and the life expectancy for most species is in the two to four year range; except for the Guinea pig which has a life expectancy of eight years.

Pocket pets should be kept in cages specially designed for their needs or aquariums with a good wire top. Openings in the wire should be small enough to prevent escape and not too large to allow a foot to be caught or twisted. Surfaces should be metal, smooth plastic or glass to allow proper cleaning. Cleaning should be done weekly with tunnels and small corners scrubbed with a bottlebrush. Chlorhexidine based cleaners are best. Many products make good bedding but avoid cedar shavings which can cause respiratory and skin problems, and never use straw.

Feed a commercial diet appropriate for your pet. Buy in small quantities and store food in sealed dark containers to ensure freshness, and that vitamin content is not diminished by exposure to light and air. Small amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables should be provided daily. Avoid abrupt changes in diet. Avoid iceberg lettuce, fruits with pits; and outdoor grasses or dandelions possibly exposed to chemicals. Clean food dishes daily and use dishes that cannot be tipped. Use an inverted water bottle and change the water daily. Monitor your pet's stools and urine for amount or change in appearance. This could be your first clue if a problem is developing.

Exercise is important, especially to Guinea pigs. Buy the largest cage you can and add the appropriate sized

wheel for hamsters and gerbils. Exercise balls are fun but can be dangerous; I once saw a Guinea pig left in a ball in direct sunlight dead of hyperthermia. Gentle handling allows you to monitor your pet for illness and reduces stress as your pet becomes comfortable with you.

A nest box is nice so long as condensation doesn't form inside and appropriate bedding allows air circulation. Toys make a more stimulating environment. Paper towel rolls, wooden spools, and most commercial products are great.

A hamster is probably the favorite pocket pet of the pet industry but it is a solitary territorial creature. Only get one! Guinea pigs, my personal favorite, need a much larger cage but it can be uncovered. Pigs can't climb, and they are social animals, so get two and you can have them spayed or neutered. Guinea pigs are prone to scurvy, a vitamin C deficiency, and they must be given a daily source of fresh fruit and vegetables. Guinea pigs need fresh hay, preferably Timothy hay, to aid digestion. I really like rats and they make wonderful smart pets. I had pet white rats at university, but unfortunately, it is illegal to own a pet rat in Alberta.

Obviously there is a bit to learn if you get one of these "pets in your pocket" so buy a book or get on the internet and learn about your prospective choices before purchasing. Our local Calgary Humane Society has pocket pets for adoption. Many veterinarians now treat these small exotic pets routinely as our knowledge of their care has increased exponentially in recent years.

Jennifer L. Scott B.Sc., D.V.M.

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MARCH MOON CALENDAR

First Quarter March 5	Full Moon March 12
Last Quarter March 20	New Moon March 27



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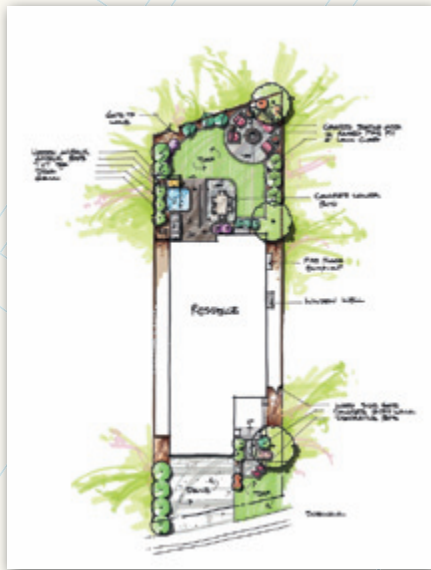


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Elbow Valley

Real Estate Stats

Last 12 Months Elbow Valley
MLS Real Estate Sale Price Stats

	Average Asking Price	Average Sold Price
February 2017	\$907,450.00	\$873,750.00
January 2017	\$1,369,500.00	\$1,285,000.00
December 2016	\$1,289,000.00	\$1,190,000.00
November 2016	\$0.00	\$0.00
October 2016	\$909,850.00	\$870,000.00
September 2016	\$797,500.00	\$762,500.00
August 2016	\$752,650.50	\$689,000.00
July 2016	\$1,188,000.00	\$1,079,000.00
June 2016	\$1,085,000.00	\$1,050,000.00
May 2016	\$1,149,900.00	\$1,100,000.00
April 2016	\$1,295,000.00	\$1,225,000.00
March 2016	\$944,450.00	\$877,500.00

Last 12 Months Elbow Valley
MLS Real Estate Number of Listings Stats

	No. New Properties	No. Properties Sold
February 2017	10	4
January 2017	14	4
December 2016	3	1
November 2016	4	0
October 2016	8	2
September 2016	6	2
August 2016	2	2
July 2016	8	5
June 2016	7	5
May 2016	14	9
April 2016	4	5
March 2016	7	2

To view more detailed information that comprise the above
MLS averages please visit elbow_valley.great-news.ca

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BEST BOOKS OF 2016

(compiled by Goodreads)

Fiction

- Truly Madly Guilty*, Liane Moriarty
- End of Watch*, Steven King
- The Underground Railroad*, Colson Whitehead
- Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, J.K. Rowling
- It Ends with Us*, Colleen Hoover
- Morning Star*, Pierce Brown
- The Fireman*, Joe Hill

Nonfiction

- Hamilton: The Revolution*, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Jeremy McCarter
- When Breath Becomes Air*, Paul Kalanithi
- Leonard: My Fifty-Year Friendship with a Remarkable Man*, William Shatner, David Fisher
- Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are*, Frans De Waal
- Cravings*, Chrissy Teigen
- Adulthood is a Myth*, Sarah Andersen
- The Princess Saves Herself in this One*, Amanda Lovelace
- The Girl with the Lower Back Tattoo*, Amy Schumer

Young Adult Fiction

- Salt to the Sea*, Ruta Sepetys
- Court of Mist and Fury*, Sarah J. Maas

Middle Grade and Children's

- The Trials of Apolla*, Rick Riordan
- The Thank You Book*, Mo Willems



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