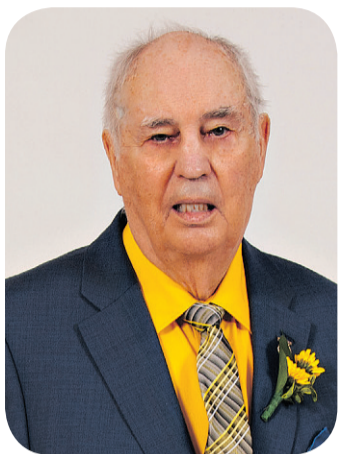


LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT



Meals on Wheels, and other activities. Her life is spent in giving.

Sylvia Appel brings her smiling face and positive attitude to her devotion to service as a volunteer. She volunteers at the Last Mountain Pioneer Home. She also serves her church in an amazing range of ways, such as chairing the Ministry and Personnel Committee, serving on other committees, helping with the church newsletter, coordinating



many capacities. His lifetime of service continues.

Leslie (Les) Lye has had a deep sense of service to others all his life. During his working years, as well as being a committed single father, he served as president of the IBEW and on multiple committees, became a Mason, and joined a fife and drum band. After retirement he found his passion in advocating on behalf of other older adults, and he serves in



Even at 89, he still uses his snow blower to clean community sidewalks and keeps the cemetery grass mowed.

Cornelius Martens has devoted his life to making life better for his community. His commitment to culture and history ranges from using his musical talents to repairing, restoring and renovating historic buildings and artifacts. Within many organizations, he not only attends meetings, he does the hard work necessary to make things happen.



death of a loved one. Her selfless attitude resonates with everyone she encounters.

Lois Morrison has spent her lifetime serving others. Her involvement with the Girl Guides of Canada has been a constant. Not many people have been involved in the same organization for 75 years! She has also served the fitness community in many capacities, as well as other organizations. She gives talks about keeping active after the



many committees supporting Catholic education, and has played a key role in many other projects and organizations.

Albert Provost has been involved in many causes and programs over the course of his life. As a teacher, he worked hard to enhance students' opportunities, and was heavily involved in the teachers' association. He has held many leadership roles within the Knights of Columbus, is active politically, has served on the Catholic School Board, and



tenant-run social committee, and is a role model for living a vibrant and active life.

Gwendolyn Seed has been volunteering for decades. She has volunteered for the RCMP as a scenario actor in cadet training sessions. She has served with the Regina Alternative Measures Program for over 20 years, acting as an advocate/surrogate for victims of crime. In the supported-living community where she now lives, she is active on the



GETTY IMAGES

BETTER FOR ALL: AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

CAROL TODD
POSTMEDIA CONTENT WORKS

Saskatchewan has joined numerous other jurisdictions in launching an Age-Friendly Community Recognition Program.

The program, a joint initiative by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM), an umbrella group for seniors' organizations, began its search for age-friendly communities earlier this year as part of the international program started by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2010. The WHO website states that "age-friendly environments foster healthy and active aging. They enable older people to age safely in a place that is right for them, be free from poverty, continue to develop personally, and to contribute to their communities while retaining autonomy, health and dignity."

The WHO program, launched in 2010 as a response to the world's aging population and increased urbanisation, aims to connect cities, communities and organizations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in. As part of the program, communities become part of a network that currently includes 705 cities and communities in 39 countries, covering over 210 million people worldwide.

While such communities enact programs to offer a better quality of life for older individuals, those efforts result in environments that benefit everyone, says Holly Schick, the executive director of the Saskatchewan

Seniors Mechanism. "The ideal age-friendly community, while it starts from the perspective of older adults, it really makes a community better and more inclusive of all people," she says.

She says that all communities should work towards becoming age-friendly. "Age-friendly communities hope to address all that [senior specific issues like isolation] while at the same time creating communities that are healthy and better places for everybody," Schick says.

In July of this year, Statistics Canada reported that more than 23 per cent of the national population is aged 60 and older. Here in Saskatchewan, the 2016 census showed an increase of almost 11 per cent in the number of residents age 65 and older.

Age-Friendly Communities is a particular program which communities participate in. To be able to apply for recognition as age-friendly, interested communities must join the program through the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism. They then need to complete certain goals – establish an Age-Friendly Committee, obtain the support of their municipal government, assess the community to determine where age-friendly initiatives are needed and develop, publicize and implement an action plan. Information on the program is available on line at www.agefriendlysk.ca.

Schick says the Saskatchewan communities that will be recognized as age-friendly under the program will be announced later this fall, likely during the Legislative Sitting in November. She says SSM is thankful for

the provincial support of the program. "We very much appreciate the Government of Saskatchewan agreeing to do the recognition of communities. That's an important step for Saskatchewan," she says.

There are eight areas in which communities can ensure they are age-friendly: buildings environment, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication, and community support and health services. Schick gives the examples of communities that have implemented a seniors' walking group, constructed a community garden, plans for visiting older people in their nursing home and an intergenerational pen pal project. "They can be cultural activities. They can be intergenerational. These are all different areas they can be working in," says Schick.

Schick says that the recognition of age-friendly communities in Saskatchewan does not mean that there is no more work to be done. She anticipates the recognition program will be continued into the future. "Recognition means that they have done things to move along in the age-friendly journey. It's not an end – it's an ongoing process, they continue to do things. And, it's our intention to continue to work with them once they've received that recognition and to be able to renew that recognition every two to three years," she says.

As the WHO says: "An age-friendly world is possible and will be built by all of us – community by community, city by city, and region by region." And, here in Saskatchewan, too.

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