

GRAY MATTERS

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Fall 2025



Living Well

IN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

One of my favourite authors and visionaries is Margaret Wheatley. She is well known for her leadership and advocacy for community development around the world. As I was looking for ideas to share on our theme of Age-Friendly Communities in this issue of Gray Matters, I remembered a quote from her 2005 book *Finding Our Way* that I had highlighted: **“There is no power for change greater than the community discovering what it cares about.”**

As I look at the communities that have championed Age-Friendly developments, I realize that Margaret Wheatley was right! As people begin to look at their home communities through the lens of older adults, they are filled with the conviction that they can and should make change to support the quality of life for seniors (often themselves included!). They can become more creative and inspired about this ‘cause’ and while promoting positive aging opportunities they may find new connections and friendships that are key to their own happiness and self-worth. They channel their caring into change.

Although it isn’t an example of Age-Friendly per se, let me tell you about a woman I know through mutual friends. Jen is a master gardener. She has honed her interest and knowledge creating beautiful gardens as a hobby aside from her full-time profession in health care. She farmed, lived in several small rural towns and now has designed and cultivated a showpiece garden in her backyard in the city. She knows so much about plants and soil conditions and landscaping techniques and designing the perfect mix of blossoms that bloom at just the right time throughout the season. Although she has lots of other volunteer commitments and hobbies, Jen’s gardening passion has been an important activity in her retirement.

A few years ago, at the suggestion of a community organizer, Jen was asked to serve as a judge for the Communities in Bloom contest. Each summer the Sask. Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA) sponsor a gardening competition to foster community pride, participation and recognition around the province. Jen agreed to volunteer and takes assignments to travel and review the ways towns and villages have worked to make their community brighter and beautiful and BLOOM. According to an

approved checklist of gardening excellence, Jen and another judge make observations and critique the gardening projects that a community team has designed and achieved.

Jen has seen some amazing plantings and creativity. She marvels at the ideas and energy people have, to grow new plants and design their displays all over their communities. But what Jen also mentions every time, is the spirit and enthusiasm she sees in the people who are so proud of their work and their efforts together. Along with some interesting award-winning horticulture, positivity is generated as a community works together.

In another of her books Margaret Wheatley describes **“...an energy and excitement that happens when a group of people share a common cause and a vision of what’s possible”**. *Who Do We Choose to Be?* 2017 Margaret Wheatley

Age-Friendly Communities are those where people value positive aging and organize their efforts to be a community that supports older adults; they work to build a network of programs and services that will enrich quality of life for all ages. They meet and form relationships with other like-minded citizens at the same time as they work towards positive change. The Communities in Bloom teams say, “We’re proud of where we live and we want others to see how beautiful this town is, and we can enter this competition to show others our pride.” And in the case of Age-Friendly Communities, people say “our town is a good place to live, we want to make it even more appealing to older adults, so our community thrives. Transportation, socialization, physical activity, access to support services – the pillars of an Age-Friendly community can be achieved if we work together.”

I know that Age-Friendly work isn’t an overnight change, but it can be worth it to make a community stronger and ‘blossom’ when citizens find a shared passion for quality of life for all ages. This is what Margaret Wheatley is telling us about successfully making change as people unite about a common purpose.

Shan Landry



Published by

SSM

Older Adults Moving Forward

SSM is an umbrella organization that brings together groups of older adults who offer their wealth of experience, knowledge and time to work together in the interest of seniors in Saskatchewan. From a wide range of backgrounds, these groups work selflessly to better the life of older adults, whether advocating about issues of interest to seniors, providing specific types of programming, or sharing information to benefit seniors in our province.

SSM Member Organizations:

Canada Post Heritage Club - Golden Sheaf Chapter
C.A.R.P. Saskatchewan
Moose Jaw & District Seniors Association
National Association of Federal Retirees
Power Pioneers Association of Saskatchewan Inc.
Regina 55+ Community Centre
Saskatchewan Union Retirees Federation
Saskatchewan Retirees Association
Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc.
Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association
Saskatoon Council on Aging
Saskatoon Services for Seniors
SaskTel Pioneers Chapter 59
Senior Power
Seniors' University Group
Superannuated Teachers of Saskatchewan
Vitalité 55+ Saskatchewan
Women of the Dawn

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Seniors Working Together



SO, YOU WANT TO BE AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY...

We want that, too!

Like any journey, the Age-Friendly journey begins with one simple step. Resources are available for anyone who is interested in exploring the idea of Age-Friendly for their community. It only takes one person to bring the idea forward! A Quick-Start Guide along with other resource sheets will guide you through the early process of researching and building support for an Age-Friendly Community.

Age-Friendly Melfort is one of the newest additions to the provincial network of Age-Friendly Communities. They have thoughtfully and enthusiastically approached the necessary steps to begin their Age-Friendly journey, and they have taken it one step at a time.

Melfort's journey began late in 2023 with a simple Zoom conversation between interested citizens and the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Committee Chair and Staff. Communities continue to have support from Age-Friendly Saskatchewan throughout their journey. Age-Friendly Communities Staff also presented to Melfort City Council prior to Council approving a formal resolution supporting Age-Friendly and have met regularly with the committee leads for regular communication and updates. Assistance from Age-Friendly Saskatchewan is tailored to the needs of each community.

Obtaining municipal support is a key Milestone in the Age-Friendly model. Many communities have also involved the local Rural Municipalities and received endorsement and, in some cases, funds to help with operating or project costs. Prior to receiving a formal

Municipal resolution from the City Council in July of this year, the Melfort group had formed a Task Force to examine the needs of Melfort and to build support for their work and recruit volunteers for their committee. Once a solid foundation of understanding and commitment from individuals in the community was established, they were welcomed aboard as an official Age-Friendly community and provided with a personalized logo to use and a webpage on the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan website.

Age-Friendly Melfort held meetings throughout 2024 to determine the next steps and to design a community survey. In the Spring of 2025, the survey was conducted, and results were recently compiled. The group is now sharing those results using an infographic and by soliciting additional feedback and input through a series of community meetings hosted at senior housing complexes and with the Rotary Club, the North Central Health Foundation, and other organizations. The survey results and this feedback will guide their next step in creating an Action Plan to address one or more of the needs identified.

We want to emphasize that it's OK for local committees to initially focus on small, easily achieved actions. Celebrating and building on early successes can create further interest and credibility for the important work of these committees. Some of the projects that Age-Friendly Communities have led or collaborated on are also BIG! Examples include out-of-town transportation models, working with municipalities on infrastructure changes and considerations for new builds, committing to ongoing

programs or hiring part-time staff with funds obtained through grants and other fundraising efforts. Age-Friendly work can be big and small, and all actions are important.

Alison Amundrud, Chair of the Age-Friendly Melfort Committee, says, “It was important to us that we didn’t rush the process. We’re taking it slow as we want to be sure we get it right. We have also learned that we can keep it simple and still be successful.”

Regular meetings and communication among committee members are important. Melfort has created a group e-mail list to ensure everyone receives timely communication. Developing Terms of Reference is an important process to ensure purpose and roles are clear for current and future members.

A wide variety of community members may be interested in Age-Friendly work and should be included. Committee members in Melfort include representatives from the Library, Museum, Saskatchewan Health Authority, the City’s Recreation Department, the Chamber of Commerce, and the local Seniors Club. Most committee members are older adults. Age-Friendly views community through the lens of older adults so their involvement from the very beginning, and throughout, is paramount to the initiative.

The survey results in Melfort identified key priority areas: Transportation, Communication and Housing. Priority areas tend to be similar among communities. This is where sharing of resources, experiences and best practices comes in. Local committees are invited to exchange information with each other at regular Coffee Hour network events and to connect one-on-one where suitable. There is also a provincial e-newsletter, The Connector, published by Age-Friendly Saskatchewan which highlights various aspects of Age-Friendly work around the province, across Canada and throughout the world. (Yes, Age-Friendly is a global initiative!) Anyone is welcome to subscribe to The Connector; contact our office to be added to the list!

Age-Friendly actions or solutions are not one-size-fits-all. The Age-Friendly model provides guidance and support but does not prescribe how a need must be met. Solutions are tailor-made for each local community.

There are currently twelve active communities in the province, and the list is growing! Interested villages, towns and cities are reaching out at an increasing rate and we are ready to welcome them into the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan network. Reading our

GETTING STARTED



Resource Info Sheets and a quick call to Wendy at the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan office is all it takes to get started!

Visit our Resources page on the website at: <https://agefriendlysk.ca/getting-started/> to access the documents that can guide you in your initial stages and click the ‘Communities’ tab to see the amazing work going on around the province.

Please join us!

Wendy Thienes, Age-Friendly Communities Staff
Tel: 306-294-7383 or
Email: agefriendly@skseniorsmechanism.ca

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Vitalité 55+



In the Fall of 2022, Vitalité 55+ started a pilot project in Saskatoon, to provide assistance at home for French speaking seniors with mobility issues. This volunteer based project was quite successful and was expanded in the following years to other communities in Saskatchewan. Our Program, named Service 55+, is now delivered in Zenon Park, Saint Isidore de Bellevue, Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw and Gravelbourg. Service 55+ is a shining example of how small, community-driven actions can lead to meaningful change not just for seniors, but for people of all ages.

Service 55+ connects older adults with volunteers, including younger retirees, newcomers or community members. They provide assistance with everyday tasks such as grocery shopping, light housekeeping, transportation to medical appointments, or friendly visits. What makes Service 55+ unique is not only the practical support it offers, but the intergenerational relationships it fosters within the cultural context of the French speaking minority. This creates a beautiful cycle of mutual aid, where everyone involved feels valued and connected. This initiative reflects the core principles of Age-Friendly Communities: recognizing the diversity of older adults, promoting inclusion, and encouraging active participation in community life. It also highlights how looking at the world through the eyes of seniors can lead to improvements that benefit everyone.

One touching success story comes from a newcomer who regularly gave rides to an elderly man in a wheelchair so he could visit his wife in a long-term care home. The man had no other way to get there, and these visits meant everything to him. This ongoing support helped maintain a vital emotional connection and reinforced the importance of dignity,

compassion, and continuity in aging. It also created a strong bond that became a friendship between the newcomer and his wife, and the elderly couple.

Another example comes from the community of Zenon Park where Service 55+ offers a range of services to local seniors. Our senior clients identified an interest in having regular social gatherings. In response, the local Service 55+ coordinator took the initiative to reach out and bring seniors together for these informal cafés. These gatherings became a cherished space for socializing, reducing isolation, and strengthening community bonds. It's a reminder that age-friendly actions don't always require large infrastructure. Sometimes, all it takes is a warm drink and a welcoming space.

These stories show that when we prioritize programs based on evaluation of needs, we often uncover solutions that make life better for everyone. As we continue to build age-friendly communities across Saskatchewan, Vitalité 55+ remains committed to listening, adapting, and acting.

Through Community based Services for Seniors initiatives, we are not only supporting seniors, but we are also strengthening the social fabric that connects us all.



The Honourable Lori Carr

*Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health*



In my travels across the province, seniors tell me that they believe living at home and remaining in their community is important to them. The Government of Saskatchewan shares this belief and will continue to support the programs that are in place to help seniors age with dignity in their own homes. In previous columns, I've discussed these programs and services that are available to Saskatchewan seniors. Today, I would like to highlight a few more:

Affordable housing is important to all Saskatchewan residents, including seniors. Saskatchewan Housing Corporation provides affordable housing for seniors, families and people with disabilities. There are more than 11,500 government-supported housing units for senior householders (age 55+) in more than 260 Saskatchewan communities.

Most recently, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan announced a \$990,000 joint investment in June 2025. The official opening of the Columbian Manor Expansion Phase V marks a significant step in providing safe, supportive homes for low-income seniors. This project is adding 134 housing units for seniors in Saskatoon, including the development of 30 one-bedroom units, 20 fully accessible units and 10 barrier-free units for low-income seniors with limited mobility.

To help Yorkton area residents living with dementia remain in their homes, our government is providing SaskAbilities with \$200,000 annually to deliver its **Dementia Friendly Life Enrichment Program**. The program helps residents diagnosed with dementia remain in their communities and supports their caregivers.

The new funding will support staffing, training, travel and supplies so that in-person programming can be delivered to people within their home.

I would also like to draw your attention to **Seniors' Week**, which was celebrated September 28 to October 4. This special week encourages us to recognize how important seniors are in every community and provides us with the opportunity to celebrate the many positive contributions older adults make in our province.

As Minister of Seniors, I am dedicated to addressing your needs, concerns and suggestions.

Please feel free to contact me:
email ministerrhe@gov.sk.ca,
phone 306-798-9014

or send me a letter at:

Room 208,
Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina, SK S4S 0B3



The concept of “age-friendly” is more than a label — it’s a mindset. It’s about designing communities that work for everyone, especially older adults, by recognizing and responding to real-life needs. When we look at our towns and cities through seniors’ eyes, we notice what’s working and missing.

WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY AGE-FRIENDLY?

Age-friendly communities are inclusive, safe and supportive.

They feature things like:

- Curb cuts that help not only those using walkers or scooters, but also parents with strollers.
- Accessible buildings with automatic doors and elevators.
- Clear signage and communication about events and services — in print, online and in person.
- Public spaces that are well-lit, well-maintained and welcoming to all ages.

These features aren’t just conveniences — they’re signs of a community that cares.



SASKATCHEWAN BLUE CROSS’S COMMITMENT TO AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Across the province, Saskatchewan Blue Cross supports building age-friendly communities by empowering older adults with resources to understand and manage their health.

These efforts include:

- **Partnering with Seniors’ Centre Without Walls:** providing funding to support Health Literacy programming for rural seniors across Saskatchewan, including free telephone-based interactive sessions and companion support for medical appointments.
- **Ongoing support for Aging Well:** working with organizations like the Saskatoon Council on Aging to support older adults living with chronic illness, providing navigation support for health services and tailored resources for individuals with complex health needs.
- **Creating community connections** through the Health Connect Program at the Regina YMCA. This program offers seasonal wellness activities and preventative care resources, fosters social engagement and promotes physical health and emotional resilience.



A COMMUNITY THAT SHARES AND CARES

One of the biggest gaps in age-friendliness is communication. Not everyone uses a smartphone or is on social media.

You can help foster age-friendly connections by sharing resources, information and programs through both traditional and digital means:

- Share information through community bulletin boards, local radio and printed newsletters.
- Recruit volunteers with diverse skills — from tech-savvy teens to retired teachers — to help spread the word.
- Offer workshops or drop-in sessions to help older adults learn new tools at their own pace.

At the heart of age-friendly communities is empathy. When we notice what others need — and act on it — we build stronger, more connected places to live. Whether it’s a bench in the right spot, a friendly face at the library or a town hall that listens, these small things add up. Let’s keep looking through the eyes of older adults and building communities that work for everyone.

Stay tuned throughout 2025 as we feature different areas of Health Literacy.

We hope to come along with you, as you build your personal Health Literacy toolkit this year.

You can also visit us at www.sk.bluecross.ca/healthysk to learn more.



Supporting Candle Lake Residents During the Spring 2025 Wildfires



In the spring of 2025, I was six months into my new role as the Community Connector for Social Prescribing in Candle Lake. This position was not only new to me – it was new to the province. My work focused on helping residents, particularly

those aged 55 and older, thrive at home with dignity for as long as possible. I did this by listening deeply and co-creating personalized plans based on a simple but powerful question: “What matters to you?”

This approach worked well with my clients – until the wildfires began in northern Saskatchewan in May 2025. Suddenly, the calm and supportive environment for my clients was replaced by uncertainty, concern and anxiety. The focus for my clients changed from everyday challenges they were facing to imminent fire danger.

Each day brought new challenges. My clients had questions about fire reports, wind shifts, home insurance, health concerns, packing essentials, and fireproofing their homes. Evacuation felt increasingly likely. As the Community Connector, I became a central point of contact, guiding and educating residents and their concerned family members on how to prepare for a possible evacuation.

The most pressing concerns involved where clients would relocate and how to prepare their homes. The Resort Village of Candle Lake and the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA) provided essential packing lists and updates. While Candle Lake was never under a mandatory evacuation order, those

with physical or health vulnerabilities were strongly encouraged to leave. With fires approaching 10 km away, many of my clients began to evacuate.

Most managed the process of voluntary self-evacuation independently, with support from myself, community volunteers, neighbors and loved ones. At this point, I had one client that wanted to remain in their home until mandatory evacuation. This person had unique needs that needed to be addressed delicately. Extended family was out of province and my client wanted to remain independent. Carefully taking into consideration the risks of staying, we once again planned to stay, as they were going to evacuate with me when I left. We agreed upon what we could take, how many items there was room to pack, and where pick up would be when/if this forced evacuation happened. Collectively, we navigated daily news updates and assessed the risks. With this strategy of evacuation, we were able to take a breath knowing we had executed every avenue to leave. When rain finally arrived, we felt a sense of relief and safety again in the community we love and enjoy.

The wildfires of Spring 2025 tested the limits of what Social Prescribing could look like in a crisis. They also revealed its true strength. In the face of fear and uncertainty, asking “What matters to you?” became more than a question – it became a lifeline. It allowed us to co-create not just care plans, but pathways to safety, dignity, and resilience. This experience reminded me that even in emergencies, human connection remains our most powerful tool.

– Amy Wingate, Community Connector for Social Prescribing Initiative, Candle Lake, SK



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GUEST COLUMN

Collaboration Central to a Healthy Community

A Manitoba perspective



Communities are healthier places when local, regional and provincial service providers are connected and collaborate to address the social determinants of health. People are healthier when they are connected to resources and supports in their communities. It is for these two reasons MASC will continue to build the Age-Friendly community platform as its foundation for supporting community wellness. This recognizes that collaboration and support from community-based senior serving organizations is essential to optimizing the strength and capacity of an Age-Friendly community.

The Manitoba Association of Senior Communities (MASC) is dedicated to supporting and enhancing the aging process for older Manitobans, through three core initiatives:

Age-Friendly Communities: encourage healthy, active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security. The Age-Friendly Initiative integrates the social environment – the person part, with the built environment – the place part, and strives to change the culture of all organizations in a community, to improve inclusivity, and support people to do the things they need and want to do.

Member Organizations: are health-promoting, capacity-building hubs where older adults come together to access services and participate in activities that enhance their dignity, support independence, and encourage community involvement.

Social Prescribing: brings community capacity and healthcare services more closely together, to connect people to community-based programs or services that can improve their social connections, health and well-being.

And MASC recognizes that a fourth core initiative underpins its success: continuing its role as the

voice for older Manitobans with their needs and interests; amplifying their collective voices, in building communities that measure up to the goals of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WHO defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and offers a new way to think of healthy aging... as “the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age”. The Social Determinants of Health recognize that a broad range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors determine individual and population health.

Ultimately, we are all in this together. Collaboration is a cornerstone. In the past two years there has been a growing recognition of the importance of collaboration amongst community-based senior serving organizations. In Manitoba, and as a member of a national council, MASC is providing leadership to the emerging Community-Based Seniors’ Services (CBSS) sector. This encompasses municipal, volunteer and not-for-profit organizations who deliver programs, supports and services that enable older adults to age in the right place, stay connected and continue to contribute to their community.

MASC’s four core initiatives can play a transformative role in addressing the social determinants of health, reducing healthcare costs, and improving quality of life. The ability for a community to achieve desired outcomes in each of the core initiatives is dependent upon three factors: local leadership; regional and provincial resources and support; and the ongoing consultation and support provided by MASC and its Resource Team.

For more information connect with MASC at <https://manitobaseniorcommunities.ca/> AND <https://agefriendlymanitoba.com>

— Connie Newman, Executive Director (MASC)

CANADIAN 24-HOUR MOVEMENT GUIDELINES

FOR ADULTS 65 YEARS OR OLDER:

An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep

PREAMBLE

This document is intended for use by policy makers, health professionals, and researchers, and it may be useful to interested members of the public.

These 24-Hour Movement Guidelines are relevant to adults aged 65 years or older, irrespective of gender, cultural background, or socio-economic status. These Guidelines may not be appropriate for adults aged 65 years or older living with a disability or a medical condition; these individuals should consider consulting the *Get Active Questionnaire*, disability/condition-specific recommendations, or a health professional for guidance.

Adults aged 65 years or older should participate in a range of physical activities (e.g., weight bearing/non-weight bearing, sport and recreation) in a variety of environments (e.g., home/work/community; indoors/outdoors; land/water) and contexts (e.g., leisure, transportation, occupation, household) across all seasons. Adults aged 65 years or older should limit long periods of sedentary behaviours and should practice healthy sleep hygiene (routines, behaviours, and environments conducive to sleeping well).

Following the 24-Hour Movement Guidelines is associated with these health benefits:

- a lower risk of mortality, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, several cancers, anxiety, depression, dementia, weight gain, adverse blood lipid profile, falls and fall-related injuries; and
- improved bone health, cognition, quality of life and physical function.

The benefits of following these Guidelines far exceed potential harms. Following these Guidelines may be challenging at times; progressing towards any of the Guideline targets will result in some health benefits.

These 24-Hour Movement Guidelines were informed by the best available evidence, expert consensus, stakeholder consultation, and consideration of values and preferences, applicability, feasibility, and equity. A glossary and more details on the Guidelines, the background research, their interpretation, guidance on how to achieve them, and recommendations for further research and surveillance are available at <https://csep.ca/guidelines>.



Angels

creating warmth
with love...

...one stitch at a time.

Angel volunteers create much needed knitted, crocheted and quilted gifts of warmth for those in need in the Regina area.

...one appreciated gift at a time.

Angel volunteers receive warmth from their creations from the heart.

Angels 4 Warmth Inc. is a registered not-for-profit charitable and non-denominational organization which began in 1998 with a small group of seniors in Regina North Central. Today the group has grown to 200 plus multi generational volunteers, dads included. These dedicated Angels spread the warmth with gifts of hats, mitts, scarves, cowls, slippers, shrugs, sweaters, lap robes, afghans and quilts, baby items, dish cloths and specialty items, averaging 12,000 gifted items annually to over sixty approved donor recipients in the Regina area.

In November, Angels tie 200 six-foot scarves around the trees in Victoria Park: more than 2500 scarves in eleven years in the annual Scarves in the Park Event.



Angels 4 Warmth Inc. operates from donations of yarn and quilting cottons, the occasional grant and monetary donations which are used to purchase supplies for the gifts of warmth.

Meeting the first Wednesday of the month, September to June, Angels drop off finished projects to be sorted and packed for delivery and pick up supplies to create projects of warmth and love for the next month.

New Angels are always welcome! Share your talent. Share and receive the warmth and love.

Website: www.angels4warmth.wixsite.com/angels4warmthsk

Email: angels4warmthsk@yahoo.ca

Facebook: [Angels4WarmthSK](https://www.facebook.com/Angels4WarmthSK)

— Ruth Barlow



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Better Communities FOR ALL AGES

Picture it: accessible spaces for community to gather; benches where people can rest and chat with one another; transportation options for out-of-town appointments; social gatherings where residents of all ages share in conversation and nutritious food; accessible public facilities and easy-to-navigate curbs and sidewalks for those using walkers and wheelchairs, strollers and tricycles; a thriving business community where people are able to buy what they need locally and also have it delivered to their door; fitness classes for every body; local directories of services where people can actually find a phone number to call and talk to a person on the other end! Are these things that you wish your community had?

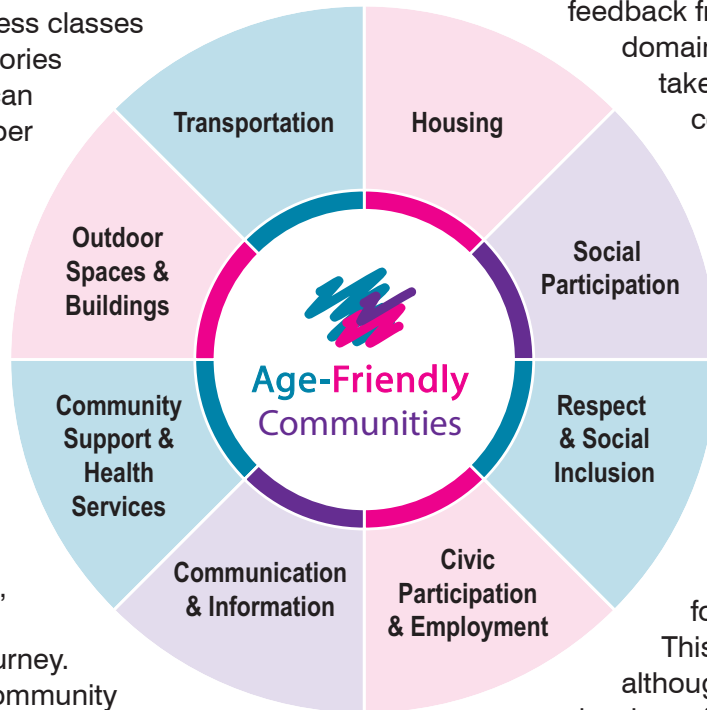
Cities, towns, villages, and rural municipalities across Saskatchewan have succeeded in providing all of this and more through their work as an Age-Friendly Community. Any individual, group or municipality can initiate the Age-Friendly journey. Municipal governments, community members and organizations all have a role in ensuring that communities are Age-Friendly. Most importantly, older adults must be part of the process.

Age-Friendly is an initiative started by the World Health Organization and endorsed by the Public Health Agency of Canada. In Saskatchewan, it is part of the work of SSM (Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism).

Age-Friendly promotes healthy, safe, and accessible communities where people of all ages are valued, included, and supported. Active leadership and involvement of older adults brings a new lens to seeing our communities so that we become all-ages friendly. The various aspects of community examined by Age-Friendly committees are known as domains.

Priorities are identified through local surveys, focus groups and conversations which invite feedback from residents on the eight domains. Some actions can be taken very quickly and at little cost; other actions are long term and may involve costs associated with municipal planning. Many of the initiatives are intergenerational.

Local municipal planning, bylaws and policy can support the development of Age-Friendly initiatives. A common misconception is that funds will be requested from a municipal Council for Age-Friendly initiatives. This is not necessarily the case, although some communities may develop a funding relationship. What is more crucial is that elected officials and community staff embark on strategic, community and accessibility planning with the needs of the entire community top of mind. True progress toward an Age-Friendly community can be achieved if these activities are approached with an Age-Friendly lens. A resolution stating municipal support for an Age-Friendly community must be passed.





Economic Stability

By aging in place, people can continue to spend locally which helps the business and non-profit sectors through consumer spending and donations of time and/or money to local causes and organizations.

Maintenance of the Tax Base

Senior or other alternative housing options may be unaffordable for some older adults. Many smaller communities may lack housing options. Housing options in large urban centres are becoming more competitive and expensive. Age-Friendly communities enable older adults to remain in their home of choice which may help maintain the local tax base along with the individual’s independence.

Intergenerational Interaction

Older adults can share valuable knowledge and traditions with future generations. Younger generations can share technology information and develop respectful relationships with older adults, helping to reduce ageism in our society.

Strong Volunteer and Employee Prospects

Many older adults value opportunities to volunteer, but many are also working beyond traditional retirement age and can fill employment gaps in the community.

Provincial Recognition

The Government of Saskatchewan acknowledges significant work by local Age-Friendly Committees through a Provincial Recognition program. When Age-Friendly Committees have demonstrated advancement in the four milestones of Age-Friendly work, Provincial Recognition may be achieved. To date, nine communities in Saskatchewan

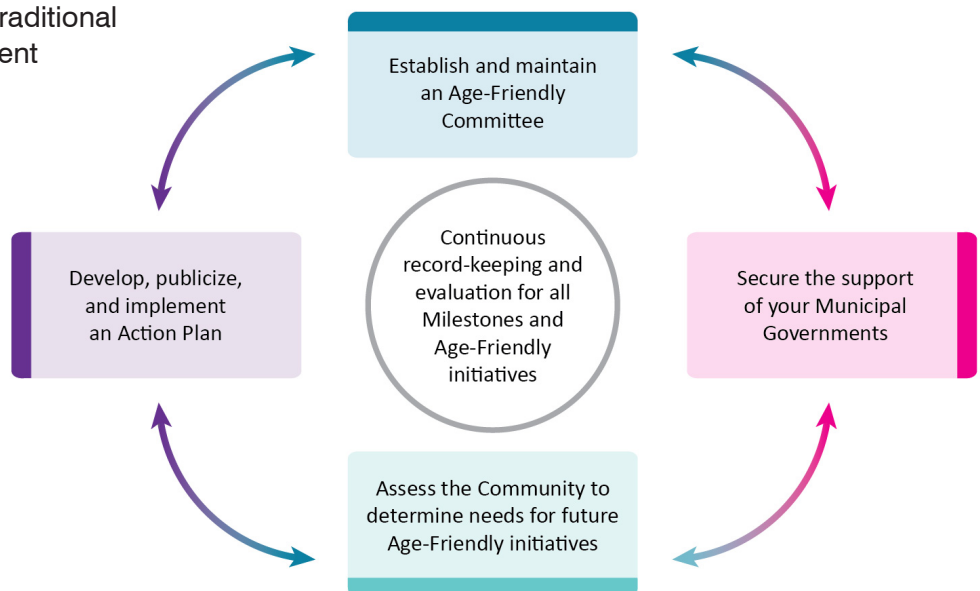
have received Provincial Recognition: Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Kipling & District, Rosetown, Strasbourg, Buena Vista/Kinookimaw/Regina Beach, Moosomin and Shaunavon. Our newest communities on the journey include Melfort, Porcupine Plain and Star City with several more indicating interest in joining!

Age-Friendly is a journey, not a destination. It is a way of being in community with one another, watching out for our neighbours and friends, fostering respectful relationships between people of all ages and, together, creating vibrant communities for all.

Age-Friendly Saskatchewan is there to support communities with information, resources and coaching, and to facilitate exchange of information among communities who are part of our Age-Friendly Network.

Visit our website for more information and examples of the work being done by Age-Friendly Communities throughout Saskatchewan (agefriendlysk.ca) and contact Age-Friendly Saskatchewan at agefriendly@skseniorsmechanism.ca or call 306-294-7383 to schedule a virtual presentation for your Council/ community and begin your Age-Friendly journey today!

— Wendy Thienes





A Community Where Seniors Thrive

On a Tuesday in Strasbourg, the local hall buzzes with laughter and the aroma of home-cooked food. Dozens of seniors gather for the popular Toonie Lunch, catching up with friends, sharing stories, and enjoying a hearty meal for just two dollars. For many, it's not just about lunch—it's about belonging.

This sense of connection is exactly what the Strasbourg Age-Friendly Recreation Board set out to foster. Created as part of the Strasbourg Recreation Board, the Age-Friendly initiative is dedicated to helping seniors live healthier, happier, and more independent lives. And in just a short time, the impact has been remarkable.

"We hear all the time from people saying, 'Keep doing what you're doing—it's exactly what we need,'" says Ashley Scholefield, the program's communications officer. "Some have even told us they encourage their relatives outside the community to move here because of everything Strasbourg offers for seniors."

The range of programs is impressive. The Taxi Program makes it affordable and easy for seniors to

get to appointments or community events. Wellness Clinics provide vital health services such as footcare, as well as information sessions that help seniors stay active and safe. Other supports—like snow shoveling, handyman help, Meals on Wheels, and window cleaning—mean older adults can continue living comfortably in their own homes.

But the initiative goes beyond meeting practical needs. The Age-Friendly team has worked hard to create opportunities for joy, friendship, and lifelong learning. Intergenerational programs connect students from William Derby School with seniors, while partnerships with groups like the local RCMP, Lions Club, Strasbourg Health Center and Fire & Rescue, to name a few, bring the whole town together.

At the heart of it all are the volunteers — about 20 strong—who make the programs run. Many are seniors themselves, giving back to the community while benefiting from the services. "They're living proof of how valuable these programs are," says Scholefield. "Their passion and generosity are what keep everything going."

The results speak for themselves. More than 300 older adults have already benefited, with 100-150 participating each month. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive: seniors say they feel healthier, less isolated, and more confident about remaining in their own homes.

Of course, challenges remain. With growing demand, the Board is always seeking more volunteers and working to secure sustainable funding. But the vision is clear: to keep seniors not only safe, but thriving — body, mind, and spirit.

In Strasbourg, aging isn't seen as an obstacle — it's embraced as another season of life worth celebrating. Thanks to the Age-Friendly program, seniors here don't just get by; they flourish, surrounded by care, community, and connection.

— Ashley Scholefield





Hudson Bay

Moving Forward Together

The “Bay Bus” was the answer to limited options for transportation in Hudson Bay.

The idea for the Bay Bus Project began in 2019, when the need for transportation to major centres was identified after the closure of the Saskatchewan Transportation bus lines (STC) in 2017. With the loss of public transportation, a strain was put on older adults who wished to remain in their own homes. Many seniors found it difficult to arrange for travel to nearby towns and cities for medical services, shopping, or simply to visit family. The Town of Hudson Bay was successful in receiving a New Horizons federal grant in 2022, and using that money, a donation from the Town of Hudson Bay, and a donation from the Rural Municipality #394, the Bay Bus Board was formed and was able to purchase a seven-passenger van.

The Bay Bus had its first trip on Monday, October 17, 2022. Many older adults have used the services and, as of the end of December 2024, there have been a total of 311 fares. To date, in 2025, there have been about ninety more. Most of the trips originate in Hudson Bay; however, the van does provide some trips from Tisdale and Melfort, as well. The fact that the bus is empty one way at times has not deterred the organizers from providing much-needed service.

Volunteers are an integral part of the service. The Bay Bus volunteer Board of Directors is currently made

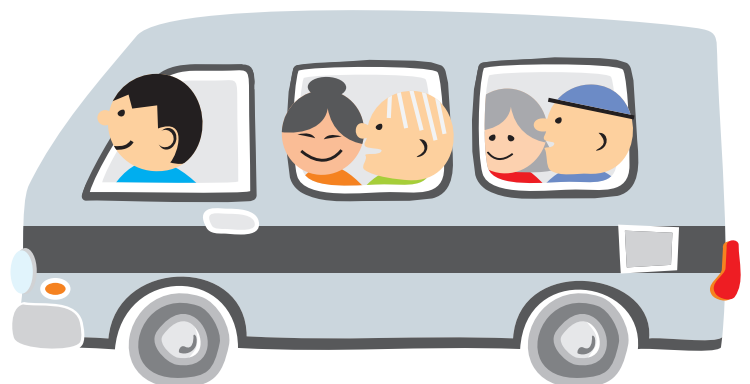
up of six members. Four of these Board members volunteer their time to staff the phone on Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It costs approximately \$400.00 for each trip from Hudson Bay to Saskatoon and back (registration, insurance, gas, oil changes, new windshields, tires, paid drivers, etc.). By utilizing volunteers, the cost of the service has been affordable for those who use it. The Board will be training a paid dispatcher for the month of September 2025 to see what the impact is to the service and the participants and currently hires a contract bookkeeper and one driver (whose services are used infrequently).

The Bay Bus Board and the users of the service are thankful for the generous contributions of the volunteers as well as the individuals, and organizations who have donated to the project. A huge thank you to the Affinity Credit Union, Dr. Azita Goshtasebi, Parkland Co-op, Towns of Hudson Bay and Tisdale, the Lions Club, Railway Ave. Pub, the local Rotary group, the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (Facilitating Independence Grant), Weyerhaeuser, and many kind individuals who have donated to the cause. The Board also appreciates the support of the people who use the service and those who participate in fundraisers such as the barbecue and the meat and freezer draw.

Participants are loving the service. In a recent rider survey, they commented that the van is always on time, is driven safely and that riders are treated courteously. Users of the service have indicated that they appreciate the reasonable cost, and that the van is comfortable and clean. “I think the service is excellent!” said one individual.

The Bay Bus transportation project is considered an important service in Hudson Bay!

— Audrey Harsh



Tokyo, Japan

The way cities and, indeed, societies treat their older persons is embedded in the responses of government, the private sector, and communities to their needs. By the same token, creating age-ready cities is a collective enterprise. Take the case of dementia, which affects between 5 and 8 percent of individuals above the age of 60 (WHO 2020a). Globally, an estimated 50 million people have dementia, a number that is expected to rise to 152 million by 2050 (ibid.).

Persons with dementia are often treated as burdens, but an innovation in Tokyo demonstrates one way to channel their productive capacities and encourage community participation in their inclusion. The “Restaurant of Mistaken Orders” is a pop-up restaurant that hires individuals who have various forms of dementia as waiters, accepting that they may forget or confuse customers’ orders. The concept is premised on the idea that if customers know mistakes may happen, they will not mind, and the model even encourages them to embrace the mistakes.

This change in perspective and the freedom it gives the waiters to make mistakes makes it possible for them to serve, even if they cannot remember all the details of the orders. So, customers may get the wrong order, but they will still get good food. In 2017, the restaurant launched a temporary Café of Mistaken Orders in collaboration with a local government partner, and, for a day in 2018, the waiters from the restaurant served at a different restaurant.

Through its unique model, the Restaurant of Mistaken Orders seeks to change public perceptions around dementia. The empathy and acceptance the model generates could go a long way toward creating room for individuals with dementia to make mistakes in other everyday activities and participate more wholly in society.

Das, Maitreyi Bordia, Yuko Arai, Terri B. Chapman, Vibhu Jain. “Silver Hues: Building Age-Ready Cities.” World Bank, Washington, DC. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO Source: Restaurant of Mistaken Orders, <http://www.mistakenorders.com/en/home.html>

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Age-Friendly Regina has often referred to itself as an influencer. Recently, we had another opportunity to put that in action.

The management of the Inpatient Mental Health Unit at the Regina General Hospital reached out to community organizations for input on how to make their unit more reflective of the various characteristics of the patients they serve (cultural background, various disabilities, ages etc.) and more age-friendly. We quickly manifested our interest in meeting and offering our input. At an agreed time, three members of our Steering Committee met with the manager of the unit.

The meeting was most interesting as it did not consist in sitting around a table and discussing the qualities of an age-friendly environment. Instead, it took the form of a walk about, visiting the various areas of the

unit, patient rooms, activity rooms, hallways, working areas etc. allowing us to make comments and suggestions about the signage (font, color, symbols vs letters), lighting, the furniture, bulletin boards, décor, etc. With the benefit of having a member of our committee working with the Alzheimer Society, we were able to not only suggest ways and means to make the unit more Age-Friendly but dementia friendly.

Management was very receptive to the suggestions made and upon leaving, they offered to have us back to comment on their plans before implementing them.

Once the facelift of the unit is completed, it could very well serve as a model to make all of the Regina General Hospital a more age and dementia friendly environment.

— André Nogue, Age-Friendly Regina

Gothenburg, Sweden

Chatty Benches

In Gothenburg, around twenty chatty benches have been placed to serve as a place for conversation, to enable more spontaneous meetings between people, counteract social isolation and alleviate loneliness.

The most effective locations for the distinctive dark oak and yellow benches, with armrests for additional support, were determined by older people, and can now be found throughout the city.

The chatty benches were installed as part of an action plan for an Age-Friendly Gothenburg, which is a broad collaboration between administrations, companies and older people.



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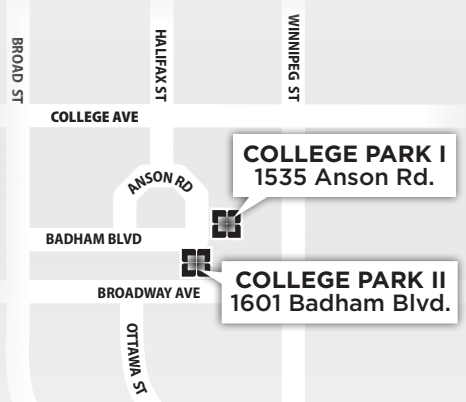
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The Seniors Assisted Transportation program is provided to eligible riders by our volunteer drivers. All volunteer driver candidates are screened for vulnerable security clearance, a well-maintained vehicle, and a clean driving abstract before they are accepted as volunteers.

ELIGIBILITY:

A big part of the Drive Happiness core operations is providing transportation services to seniors (65+) residing in the Greater Edmonton and surrounding areas, in need of transportation services due to limited income, mobility and other health related issues.

Specifically, according to the Drive Happiness Standard Operating Terms and the Drive Happiness Association Bylaws, applicants are assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

- Applicants need to be 65+;
- Applicants need to be sufficiently mobile such that they can enter and exit vehicles on their own but have personal challenges that restrict them from utilizing other forms of transportation.

HOW THE PROGRAM OPERATES:

Volunteer drivers take riders to various appointments like medical appointments, shopping, banking, programming, and visiting friends or family.

The rider requiring the ride buys tickets for \$10.00 each from the Drive Happiness office. Each ticket entitles the rider to ninety minutes of time and/or 40 km driving distance. Time and/or distance over this requires another ticket.

Volunteer drivers do not book rides, sell tickets or take money.

If assistance is needed with a walker, oxygen, poor eyesight, etc. riders let the office know. Cars are not equipped for wheelchairs. Riders needing Handicapped Parking are urged to have their own placard. Please note: Parking fees are the responsibility of the passenger.

Rides should be booked three full business days in advance. When a volunteer driver is found, the volunteer driver will call the rider requesting the ride the day before their appointment in order to confirm the appointment with them and to set up a pick-up time.

If the Drive Happiness office cannot find a volunteer driver, the rider requesting the ride will be phoned 24 hours prior to their appointment and informed so that the rider can make other travel arrangements. The volunteer driver will phone the rider the night before to confirm the time and place of the appointment. Volunteer drivers do not book rides. This must be done through the Drive Happiness office.

There is an annual fee for the rider program based on income.

Drive Happiness is committed to providing an inclusive and diverse environment for our staff, volunteers and clients that recognizes and values differences. We recognize that diversity – the many different and unique things about us, both individually and collectively – contributes to building a stronger organization and providing better service to our clients. Drive Happiness respects and appreciates the difference in age, ethnicity, indigenous origin or heritage, gender, physical attributes, beliefs, language, sexual orientation, education, nationality, social background, and culture or other personal characteristics.



Curious about electric vehicles in Saskatoon?

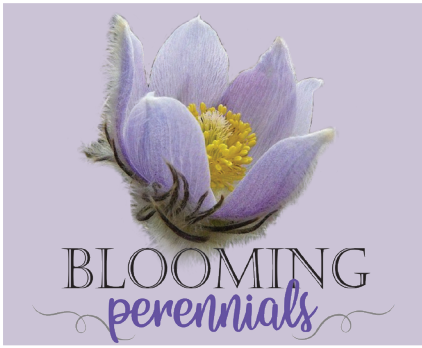


Learn more about driving and charging electric vehicles at our information hub:

➤ saskatoon.ca/EV

Living in a multi-unit building?
Find info specific to apartments, townhomes and condos at:
saskatoon.ca/MurbEV





Kathy
Grad



Life

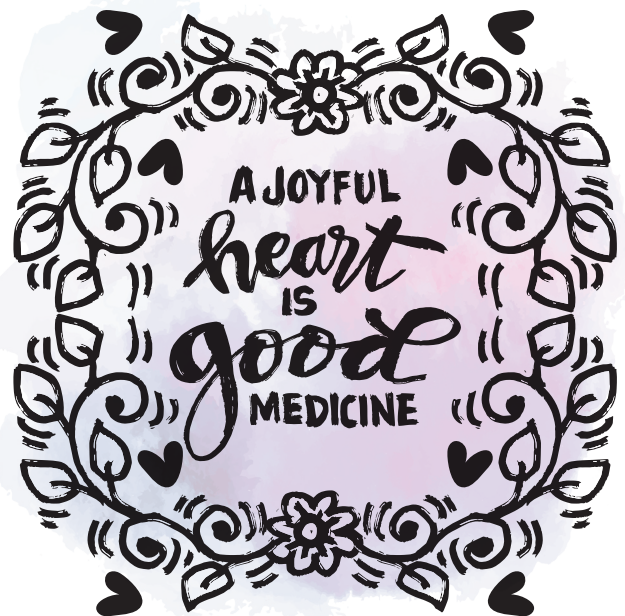
is full of challenges that only help us to live our best lives if we look at it that way. I'm 64 and in the summer of 2020 my kidneys stopped working and after the last dialysis session in which 42 pounds of fluid was sucked out of my body, I had a large brain bleed on the right side of the brain. It took me six weeks to recover which included learning how to do everything again including walking. After my 83 days in the hospital to kick start my kidneys again and learn to survive a stroke, I came home and haven't looked back.

After being a month home from the hospital, I started my PhD in Educational Leadership...I have no cognitive impairments. I had many people praying for me and supporting me and the doctors were amazed that I survived. I live my life differently now as I truly appreciate all that life has to offer and I've learned how to live it and appreciate it. I've been an educator for 41 years now in various capacities and I have decided that as long as our students become effective communicators, mindful problem solvers, and people of integrity what more would we want for them. These three skills are important for everyone to develop no matter the age. Brain health is top on my list of what is important in life no matter the age.

Physical, emotional, cognitive, and social health are all part of brain health. I believe that if everyone just thinks about doing something to strengthen each of these types of brain health daily, we can live our best lives. This might seem odd, but thinking about aging should happen with our littlest people even at the age of two when their personalities start to develop. Celebrating the learning that occurs as soon as their memories start to develop is key to appreciating life and learning to live the best one. We live in a very noisy and busy world and learning how to step away from this noise and busyness is important no matter the age of the person.

Another thing that I believe is important for everyone to do daily is smile and laugh – not at each other but with each other. Smiles and laughter open up the spirit and soul. We are body, spirit, and soul and taking care of all three is what makes living fun and exciting as long as we are doing that in the most rational, loving, and caring ways. Living is all about belief and heart as well.

We should all have hope, goals, and dreams and strive to make that happen – always reaching out to others when times get tough; and unfortunately, life can be tough. Looking at life's challenges to grow and how to do that with support people around us will help us to live our best lives. See each challenge as a hurdle to jump over...that's what I have learned to do.



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Ask Auntie Ageism



Dear Auntie,

I am not a senior. I am a member of the Town Council for a town of about 4000 people. Recently we heard from a small group of people who have formed an “Age-Friendly Committee”. They are all seniors! They want us to support a resolution to make our town an “Age-Friendly Community”. They said they will look at the town through the eyes of older people and that will identify “gaps” in services to support seniors. Isn’t it ageist to want everyone to support just this age group? And for the town to spend money to provide these services?

Lawrence

Dear Lawrence,

Thanks so much for asking this question. At first glance or hearing, it is quite possible to make the assumptions that are at the root of your question. If your assumptions were accurate, it would indeed be ageist to just provide support and benefits for one age group in your town. On the other hand, town services often focus on particular age groups such as youth sports or adult hockey and ball teams and the venues and equipment they need. But while the focus is on active youth or adults, there are benefits for other age groups who enjoy cheering on the teams and enjoying the company of others in the community.

The Age-Friendly movement seeks to raise awareness of an often-overlooked population, older adults – a very large age range. As they age and many in the top of the age range (80-100+) develop health or mobility issues, they are even more apt to be ignored. That is why a survey of the community must involve older adults who will notice gaps that can be ignored by younger people. They also have a wealth of experience and wisdom and can offer useful insights.

The key is still the name “Age-Friendly” – which means ALL AGES. For example, one village Age-Friendly committee noticed that there were no places to sit in the main street area. They started a project to place benches for resting and visiting. Everyone uses the benches! One town had their mayor and a councillor use electric mobility scooters to move around the town. It soon was obvious that fixing broken sidewalks plus making ‘curb cuts’ and some small ramps to shops would help immensely, not only for those using scooters or wheelchairs or walkers, but for moms with strollers and tots on trikes.

Age-Friendly can help build community strength when different generations work or play together. One town formed a community band where school youth integrated with adult musicians and produced much better sound than was possible with separate bands. Tech-savvy teens have worked with older adults to help them use computers to connect with family and friends who live far away. Some teens found that they could talk easily with their new “old friend” and could discuss subjects without arguments or hurt feelings. Young volunteer “snow angels” who shovel an older adult’s walk may find that baked goodies are a good reward – not even realizing that they are widening their understanding of people beyond their peers.

I hope that you and the rest of Town Council will continue to talk with the Age-Friendly folks so that you can plan together how all ages in your town will find it to be friendly, supportive and welcoming.

— Auntie Ageism

Auntie Ageism highlights how anti-ageism critiques and challenges the ageist attitudes that are prevalent but often unrecognised in our society. Let’s ALL do our part to challenge ageism.

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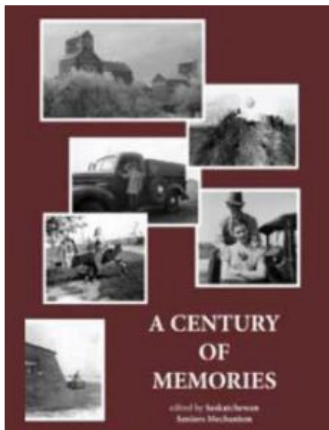
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Century Club Corner

SHARING OF BEEF IN THE YEARS BEFORE REFRIGERATION



Although Age-Friendly hadn't yet been thought of in the years written about here, still the concept of coming up with useful solutions for obstacles that would treat people in a fair and equitable manner are not new in this province.

This memory comes from Jack (J.R.) Stilborn, as shared in A CENTURY OF MEMORIES:

There were experiences which were certainly not indicative of poverty but were simply procedures adapted by people who were sufficiently innovative, to follow ideas that helped to avoid the results of near poverty. I clearly recall in the early thirties before refrigeration had appeared on the farm, as we know it today, beef rings were formed. A beef ring was an organization, for example, where 12 to 15 farmers banded together to secure availability of choice fresh beef every week. The program began in early June and ended in late September or early October of each year.

Each week, generally on Friday afternoon or evening, one of the groups (Mr. #1) would deliver a hopefully very well-fed steer or heifer to a farmer's yard with a building that served as a killing plant/butcher shop, operated by a member of the group with the expertise of professional butchery. In the years of my youth, that appointed man was 'Big Jim' Stilborn at Sunny Bank Farm in the Pheasant Forks district. My father

was 'Little Jim Stilborn', determined by stature, to avoid mistaking the identity of the two Jim Stilborns.

Well, very early Saturday morning (no school on Saturdays), Big Jim would kill and cut up the steer which was delivered by 'Mr. #1' the previous night. It was my designated role as an 8-10 year old to hitch up 'Midge' to the old farm buggy and drive five miles to Big Jim's. I was equipped with six or eight bleached white flour sacks marked with the name of the beef ring member on each of them. Then, Big Jim would place in each sack various cuts of beef allotted to the various members on my designated route. The man who supplied the steer that week received the choice cuts and the balance was divided fairly equally between the rest of the members. A running weekly record was kept to ensure that equality of various cuts was maintained throughout the season. Big Jim was an excellent butcher and a man of flawless integrity, so fairness was always maintained. Even so there was, according to nature and disposition, always one or two that could find a complaint.

With my buggy loaded with choice fresh beef, I began my journey home, stopping at each farmhouse along the route dropping off that particular member's allotment, the last stop being our house. The procedure generally took until noon on Saturday, depending on how hard I pushed poor old Midge. I always tried to be good to her because she was always very good to me. Midge was a smallish, bay in colour pony, purchased when I started school from one of the neighbouring natives. She served us well during the years of my youth. Well, if it was a cool morning, the beef arrived in A-1 shape. However, if it turned out to be a blistering hot July morning, there would be a few flies accumulated outside the sacks by the time I reached home.

Fifteen or so farmers had choice fresh beef delivered to their home weekly and no refrigeration. Well, again farmers in those days were extremely innovative as good farmers always are. Therefore, the beef was wrapped in smaller parcels and placed on ice in the ice house and kept fresh frozen until used.



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Learn when to use digital documents, store and preserve information, and the popular tools to share files on your device and online.



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1:00 pm CST - Thursday October 23, 2025

Learn how to connect your device to the Internet at home and in a public place safely and effectively.



Phishing Scams & Internet Safety

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ChatGPT & AI: Navigating the Digital Conversation

1:00 pm CST - Thursday November 6, 2025

Learn what ChatGPT is, how to use it safely, and how to get reliable answers while protecting your privacy.



Accessing Government Services

1:00 pm CST - Thursday November 13, 2025

Discover how to navigate Government of Canada websites safely and securely for services like passport renewal, address updates, pensions and more.



Preparing to Learn Online

1:00 pm CST - Thursday November 20, 2025

Learn how to use your browser as a tool to explore the wealth of information on the internet.



Making Technology Work for You - When Mobile Devices Are Hard to See

1:00 pm CST - Thursday November 27, 2025

Learn how to adjust settings on mobile devices so that they are more accessible to use for those with minor vision loss.

Lakeview Friendship Club at Elbow

2025 has been a busy year so far for Elbow's Lakeview Friendship Club. Members meet every Thursday 1-4 at the Harbor Golf Community Center in Elbow for card or board games, floor-shuffleboard, coffee and fellowship.

On the second Thursday of each month, we've enjoyed "Show & Tell!" Our horizons have been broadened and our interest piqued by Shirley's coin collection, June's macrame, Don's wood-working, and more.

The Friendship Club has lived up to its name outside of those hours. Thanks to the diligence of Cory, Vicky, Donna and others, plus the generosity of donors, the No-Charge Lunch program continued. Three more Free lunches were served to the community so far this year, with about 70 dinners being served each time.

On Tuesday May 6 the 60+ Club from Langham stopped by the HGCC for pie and coffee with the Friendship Club. One of the 51 Langham visitors was Vange (Wiens) Lungren who had taught in Elbow School over 60 years ago. Three of her former students were pleased to visit with her!

From last September until this May, the Friendship Club sponsored a line dancing class organized by Donna Riggall. Our teachers were volunteers and the class was open to all. The turnout for these beginner classes varied from six to twenty-six, with ages spanning the not-quite-senior to the very-very-senior. Nine members of the group wound up the season by meeting at the Elbow Hotel for an evening of western music and line-dancing. We plan to resume dancing in the fall! And so the fun continues!

Submitted by Joan Soggie, Elbow, SK

Congratulations to the Ituna Social Club

Congratulations to your community (and to your members who participated) on being named Saskatchewan's Most Active Community this year in the ParticipACTION challenge. Way to go! Research shows that physical activity has many health benefits including improving sleep, mood, balance & strength, communication, social skills and much more.

Visit SSAI booth at Spotlight on Seniors Tradeshow

Grand Salon, TCU Place in Saskatoon on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 from 9am – 3pm

SSAI RAFFLE TICKETS

SSAI raffle fundraiser (Licence #SR25-1335) – draws to be held at convention in Saskatoon on June 4th, 2026. Tickets are \$2 each for a chance to win 1 draw of \$1000, 2 x \$500, and 5 x \$100. If you are interested in purchasing or selling raffle tickets, please contact Shannon Wright phone: 306-493-3023 email: info@saskseniors.com



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE - \$5/person

SSAI Membership fees can be mailed to:
Shannon Wright, Secretary/Treasurer, Box 455 Vanscoy, SK S0L 3J0
Phone: 306-493-3023 email: info@saskseniors.com
Website: saskseniors.com



Subscribe to our email list

If you would like to receive emails from SSAI, send us an email at info@saskseniors.com with your request to SUBSCRIBE. You will receive emails regarding upcoming SSAI events as well as forwarded information pertinent to Saskatchewan Seniors.

Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. (SSAI) would like to acknowledge the support of Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) and the Saskatchewan Lottery Trust Fund for SSAI outreach to Seniors. Some of this funding pays for the quarterly distribution of the SSAI newsletter in Gray Matters.

FALL LITERARY CHALLENGE

For our Fall Literary Challenge, members are asked to submit a short essay on how they have experienced AGEISM as a senior. Ageism refers to how we think (stereotypes), feel (prejudice) and act (discrimination) towards others or ourselves based on age.

Examples of Ageism: from <https://helpfulprofessor.com/ageism-examples/>



Workplace Discrimination: The concept of ageism was first developed to refer to prejudice and discrimination against older people in workplaces (Loretto, 2000). Palmore argues that managers often stereotype older workers as being resistant to change, lacking creativity, and difficult to train (1999). Women face greater ageism as they are expected to leave the workplace to have children.

Stereotypes: There are several age-based stereotypes, most of which are directed toward the elderly. When older people forget something, people call it a “senior moment”, even though such mistakes can happen to anybody. There are many ageist phrases like “dirty old man”, “second childhood”, etc. Ageism also shapes perceptions about how dateable one is; for example, there is a term called the sexpiration date, which indicates the time after which one is no longer attractive.

“Benevolent Prejudice”: Benevolent prejudice refers to pitying or patronizing certain age groups. Directed at both young and old people, this kind of prejudice involves seeing them as “friendly” but “incompetent”. Age Concern’s Survey indicated that 48% of respondents see people aged over 70 as friendly (as against 27% saying the same for people under 30). **Only 26% of respondents saw those over-70s as capable.**

Digital Ageism: Digital ageism refers to prejudice and discrimination against people based on their ability to use digital technologies. The common stereotype is that young people are always digitally capable while old people are completely incompetent with technology. This often stems from exclusion and a lack of training: older people may have limited access to devices and may not receive adequate training, leading to lower digital literacy.

Healthcare Discrimination: While defining the term “ageism”, Robert Butler pointed out how it goes beyond casual stereotypes and significantly affects the healthcare system. Ageism exists in all physician-patient interactions, from screening procedures to treatment decisions. When interacting with older patients, doctors often view them negatively (as being “depressing”). Doctors pursue less aggressive treatment options for older people, focusing on managing the disease rather than curing it.



Age Limitations: Placing maximum age limits on people’s right to work, vote, run for office, or drive. This may be considered ageism because its focus is not on an individual’s ability but their age.

Information on AGEISM can be found on the following websites:



- Canadian Coalition Against Ageism
ccageism.ca
- World Health Organization’s global campaign to combat ageism
<https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-campaign-to-combat-ageism-toolkit>
- Government of Canada – Ageism consultation toolkit
<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/seniors-forum-federal-provincial-territorial/consultation-ageism/toolkit.html>





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