

GRAY MATTERS

Published by SSM
Summer 2026



Staying Connected
EVEN IN SUMMERTIME

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

A few weeks ago, I got an offer from my sister that was too good to turn down. She suggested that she and my brother-in-law would take a road trip and come and spend a day with me helping to clean out my garage and take a few loads of excess junk from my basement to the dump. Although this offer wasn't completely altruistic (she is well-aware that if I depart this life before her, she will be left with sorting through a lot – and I mean a lot – of my stuff). I know many of my friends are facing this sorting phase. How do we downsize and part with possessions that have some memories attached to them, but are not meaningful to others?

This message to you is not about downsizing and making our lives less cluttered, although it is a great idea to tackle such a thing when we are able to make decisions. Instead, I want to mention something that I uncovered during my attempts to get organized and benefit from the short declutter day courtesy of my wonderful sister.

An old box stored under the bed in my spare room yielded many old photos that have no value even to me now and can be thrown away easily. They are blurred and capture scenes from travels that took place years ago (and my, I was a very bad photographer!). However, in amongst the photos was an envelope of very old correspondence. These were letters and postcards that friends, and family had sent me over the years. With some nostalgia I spent a few hours reading through them. When I finished, I realized that a number of these people, who sent me lovely notes and long personal letters, were no longer in my life. I don't mean the ones where clearly, they are gone because they were a generation or two older than me, that is to be expected (my great aunts or my first boss). They are letters from people I had assumed would always be in my circle of friends but now, after a number of years of corresponding, we had lost touch and had no idea what life went on to hold for each other. We didn't part on bad terms but there was no texting or emailing or other forms of much more immediate communication we are accustomed to now. We forgot to notify each other of change of addresses or change of name, making it even harder to look them up, or we got busy in life and just didn't make it a priority to stay connected with those who were less present than they had been. I know that keeping in touch, having a wide range of social contacts and having people who keep tabs on me is an essential ingredient for positive aging.

Lest you think I have no lifelong friends I want to assure you that I do have people who have known me most of my life; I have people who know the happy and not so happy parts of my past life and can help me reminisce fondly or shed a tear for what was lost long ago. These are the people who can say to me: "do you remember that time when..." and I will feel a surge of fond recollection and joy. That means so much to me – to be known – to be supported and to be counted in someone else's network of social connection. However, a handful of people who were so important at one time are now no longer in my sphere and if I hadn't unearthed that envelope, I might rarely have thought of them or the important role they played in one chapter or another of my life. I would love to know if they remember me and what we shared, and what has happened to them in the ensuing years.

This edition of Gray Matters is focusing on the value and importance of connections especially those that might be disrupted or could be renewed over the summer. Because of my old envelope of fond memories and regrets at having lost touch, I have resolved

to use a few of my summer spare moments sitting on my deck in the shade and using the internet – so handy now on my laptop, trying different avenues of investigation to try to find out where are they now? What are they up to? Perhaps I may reconnect and discover they too remember me and value the memories of that time in our lives when we were close and shared ideas and adventures. In the summer of 2026, I raise my glass of cold lemonade to old friends and meaningful, if not enduring, shared moments. Here's to a summer of connection and reconnection.

Have a great summer season.

Shan

PS if anyone knows Sharon B. who went to UBC with me in 79/80 or Leslie F. who I worked with in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1999, or Rod and Marilyn D. who traveled with our group to Egypt in 1988 (I do have that photo of us riding a camel) let them know Shan has great memories, sends warm regards and would like to reconnect!!



GRAY MATTERS

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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.

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Canada Post Heritage Club - Golden Sheaf Chapter
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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
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Donations to SSM to support our seniors' programs are gratefully accepted. Charitable receipts will be issued for gifts of \$15.00 or more.

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Seniors Working Together



A WORLD WIDE WEB OF AGE-FRIENDLY CONNECTEDNESS



Age-Friendly Saskatchewan hosts monthly Coffee Hours on Zoom for members of local Age-Friendly communities throughout the province. The Coffee Hours focus on a different, relevant topic each month. Topics covered over the past year have included: transportation, developing local resource directories, action planning for committees, and how to tell local success stories. This platform for exchange of ideas and information has become a staple of the Age-Friendly network in Saskatchewan and has helped to develop relationships between communities who face similar challenges. Participants are always willing to share tips and best practices. In June, a celebratory Coffee Hour is held where each community highlights the best success stories from the past year. These authentic and heartfelt stories propel us into a summer that is often less busy with Age-Friendly actions, but gives us food for thought and incentive to

look forward to continued actions in the fall. However, many Age-Friendly commitments, activities and our 'older adult lens' stay with us throughout the dog days of summer.

The Connector is the regular e-newsletter of Age-Friendly Saskatchewan. This digital publication is sent at least 6 times a year and back issues can be read online at the agefriendlysk.ca website. We welcome anyone with an interest in learning more about Age-Friendly communities to subscribe to the newsletter, not only those already engaged in Age-Friendly work in their municipality. You can subscribe by visiting our website: <https://agefriendlysk.ca/af-sk-newsletter/> or e-mail us at web@skseniorsmechanism.ca and ask to have your e-mail added to The Connector list.



On a broader level, Age-Friendly Saskatchewan staff and volunteers stay connected with colleagues from across Canada to stay up to date on latest trends and to find areas for shared learning and collaboration. On May 13 & 14, Age-Friendly Saskatchewan hosted



colleagues from British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba at the Age-Friendly Western Consultation in Regina to discuss Age-Friendly pillars such as transportation and housing, and overarching concerns related to Ageism. Staff also attend monthly meetings of the Public Health Agency of Canada's Age-Friendly Reference Group, a pan-Canadian group of individuals, municipalities, agencies and non-profits who are engaged in Age-Friendly work across Canada.

These interprovincial relationships are valuable and bring cohesion to the Age-Friendly movement in this country.



Beyond our Canadian borders, countries around the world are engaged in the Age-Friendly framework. Their success stories and examples are documented on the World Health Organization's website through the Age-Friendly World section: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/>

Age-Friendly provides a rare opportunity to connect in an authentic way with communities throughout Saskatchewan, across Canada and around the world who are working towards becoming more Age-Friendly. This 'world wide web' of communities captures the very essence of what it means to be Age-Friendly. We are all connected.

New Horizons for Seniors Program Builds Capacity for Volunteer Support

The Age-Friendly Saskatchewan office will be busy planning over the summer months, preparing to connect with communities throughout the province in the fall. Community Volunteer Training workshops is a project that has been made possible by the

Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. SSM and Age-Friendly Saskatchewan will be able to commit resources to provide a workshop facilitator for new, emerging and well-established Age-Friendly committees to offer training and support for volunteers.

A series of workshops will be held in at least a dozen communities and will be designed to complement the virtual/remote support currently offered by Age-Friendly Saskatchewan. Workshops may focus on a variety of relevant topics:

- How to establish a local Age-Friendly committee and gain the support of municipal government and other stakeholders and partners.
- Assessment of community assets and needs.
- Development and/or review of action plans.
- Evaluating impact of Age-Friendly actions on the community and individuals.

In all workshops, the pillars of Age-Friendly will anchor conversation and training.



For existing Age-Friendly committees, workshops may also serve as a source of succession planning and volunteer development by encouraging new community members to participate and/or by inviting neighbouring communities to attend, creating a mentor or peer connection for new communities as they begin their own Age-Friendly journey.

Established Age-Friendly committees and communities who may be considering establishing Age-Friendly, are invited to reach out to express interest in hosting a workshop. Various workshop times will be available September-November.

Funded by the
Government of Canada's
New Horizons for Seniors Program

Canada

– Wendy Thienes, Age-Friendly Saskatchewan Staff

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association



The Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association strives to promote active living, wellness and participation among our province's adults 55+ years of age. Our goal is to improve the total wellbeing of older adults by organizing physical, cultural, social and intellectual activities for this segment of the population.

Our SSFA organization has 8 affiliate district committees: Saskatoon District, Regina District, Lakeland District, Prairie Central District, Parkland District, Southeast District, Southwest District and Northern Sport Culture and Recreation District. Each committee plans various activities for adults 55+ years. They encourage members to come out and be active throughout the year and engage with others. Please check out our SSFA website – <https://ssfa.ca> to find information about what each district hosts for activities.

Many of you might be thinking that the summer is a good time to take time off from all the year-round activities we seniors participate in. The Saskatchewan Senior Fitness Association (SSFA) encourages all members to stay active and involved during the summer months. There are so many activities that adults in the 55+ age group can participate in and have a lot of fun during the warm summer months. In many of our districts we see seniors participating in outdoor activities like bocce, lawn bowling, outdoor pickleball, golf, tennis, walking soccer, track and

field, walking and cycling to name a few. All our SSFA Districts have summer activities for everyone to participate in. If you are not into sport or physical activities how about trying photography, painting, storytelling and socializing over coffee or tea. I encourage you to contact your SSFA District and find out what they have to offer.

As we age it is important for seniors to stay active throughout the year and maintain our mental and physical health. The outdoors provides a different environment, away from the gyms and halls we participate in during the fall, winter and spring months where the air in the buildings can be dry and stuffy. In most communities in Saskatchewan, one can find green areas to enjoy and participate in active activities. Take the opportunity to get involved. Call up a friend or family member and have them join you in something you enjoy outdoors.

The SSFA would also like to announce that the Canadian Senior Games Association has chosen the city of Regina to host the 2028 Canada 55+ Games. It will be a great time and there will be approx. 3000+ seniors from across Canada participating in 15+ different events. The Games will take place from August 21-August 25, 2028. We hope to see you there.

– Al Gabert, SSFA President



Ready to positively impact the people of Saskatchewan?

Become a public representative with the CRNS! Join one of our many committees and contribute to the future of registered nursing in Saskatchewan.

Connect with us at links@crns.ca to apply.



The **Saskatchewan Union Retirees Federation (SURF)** is a provincial group representing retired public, private & trade union members; offers a united voice to lobby all levels of government on issues affecting retirees & seniors; is an affiliated supporter of the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM); is a chartered affiliate of the Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC).

SURF provides: retirees with access to prescription drug, health, dental, vision, residential, funeral and travel insurance benefits through the Canadian Benefits Consulting Group; access to Pre-Retirement Planning workshops; assistance to unions forming retiree groups/clubs; retiree members to participate at local Labour Councils; liaison with other retiree groups across the province; newsletters to keep members informed about activities.



For membership or benefits information,
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of Federal Retirees

Association nationale
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PROMOTING RETIREES' FINANCIAL SECURITY, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The National Association of Federal Retirees (Federal Retirees) is the largest national advocacy organization representing active and retired members of the federal public service, Canadian Armed Forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and retired federally appointed judges, as well as their partners and survivors.

With close to 170,000 members, including more than 60,000 veterans and their families, the Association has been advocating for improvements to the financial security, health and well-being of our members and all Canadians since 1963.

Federal Retirees is committed to building an Association that values diversity, equity, and inclusion by encouraging and supporting respect for the dignity, beliefs and values outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and all applicable provincial Human Rights Codes.

We believe every Canadian, today and in the future, should benefit from better retirement income security and a strong, sustainable health-care system.

Saskatchewan is the home of six branches in North Battleford, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Moose Jaw and Regina.

**For more information please
refer to: www.federalretirees.ca**



Thrive at Home

Enhancing community-based care and supports for older adults

ABOUT THRIVE AT HOME

The population of seniors aged 65 years and older is projected to increase as much as 57% by 2043. As the fastest-growing segment of the population in Canada, it's more important than ever to ensure older adults have access to the supports they need for healthy aging.

That's why we're bringing together key partners from community, social, and health sectors to explore opportunities for better alignment, accelerated learning, and improvement in care.

Together, **Thrive at Home** aims to strengthen community-based care and supports for older adults so they can thrive wherever they call home.

ACTION COMMUNITY

When it comes to transforming our health and social care systems, change at this scale won't happen overnight – nor can it be done in isolation.

The work of Thrive at Home is guided by a diverse network called the **Action Community**.

This community is comprised of partners involved in supporting older adults, including those with lived experience, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, academia, and community-based organizations.

United, we're co-creating a future where everyone can grow older with dignity, choice, safety, and a true sense of belonging.

TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Since the launch of Thrive at Home, we've heard loud and clear the need for action.

Inspired by the energy behind this collective, the Action Community is coming together in focused working groups, called **Action Hubs**, to address challenges impacting older adults.

As a community, we've identified several opportunities for collective action, including:

- **Navigation** — navigating our health and social systems to promote health and well-being
- **Transportation** — getting from place to place safely for health, social, and business needs
- **Home supports** — accessing services and assistance that enable aging in place

Together, we're demonstrating the power of community-led collaboration, data-driven strategies, and scalable outcomes in delivering meaningful change for those who call Saskatchewan home.

COLLABORATE WITH US

If you're interested in learning more about how you can partner with us to improve the health and well-being of older adults, visit our website:

saskhealthquality.ca/thrive-at-home



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The Honourable Lori Carr

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



Earlier this spring, our government announced Budget 2026-27, which continues our commitment to ensuring Saskatchewan seniors have access to high-quality care and services. I'll highlight several investments that will be of particular interest to you.

We know the importance many seniors place on living in their own communities. To support this, we are investing an additional \$3.9 million in home care services across Saskatchewan to help seniors age in place and remain safely in their homes for as long as possible.

We also know that when individuals require more comprehensive care, it's important to have those long-term care spaces available. That's why we are investing over \$150 million to develop new spaces across the province. This includes the new Specialized Long-Term Care Home project in Regina as well as new long-term care homes in Grenfell, La Ronge, the Battlefords, and Esterhazy.

This year's budget also includes \$4.7 million in increased support for more personalized long-term care services, staffing for new beds in Regina and La Ronge, and enhanced inspection, oversight and quality improvement.

An additional \$651,000 will support community-based programs for people with complex needs or disabilities. This includes the Rural and Remote Memory Clinic Community-Based Dementia Program. The program also provides important support for caregivers and families, recognizing the essential role they play in their loved one's lives.

Our government provides a range of services to assist seniors, in addition to free home-based nursing care, subsidized home care support, and reduced costs for publicly funding long-term care.

Ambulance trips are capped at \$135 and prescription drugs listed on the Saskatchewan Formulary, or approved under Exception Drug Status, are limited to a maximum cost of \$25. People living with diabetes aged 65 and older are eligible for extended coverage of Continuous and Flash Glucose Monitoring Systems. More than 5,900 seniors are benefiting from this coverage expansion.

Our government continues to reduce taxes and increase financial support for older adults. Starting in 2025, the senior supplementary amount for personal income tax increased by \$500 annually; this will continue for the next three years, in addition to annual indexation. The Seniors Income Plan offers up to \$360 a month for eligible seniors. The benefit has quadrupled since 2007, providing assistance to more than 14,000 seniors annually.

An \$8 million increase will support more than 500 additional seniors who are already accessing the Personal Care Home Benefit since the monthly income threshold rose 40 per cent in 2025-26, from \$2,500 to \$3,500 a month. This increase helps to make the cost of living in a licensed personal care home more affordable.

Seniors are vital members of our province, enriching communities with their experience and wisdom. As Minister for Seniors, I am honoured to serve as your voice in government, and I welcome your ideas and concerns. Please feel free to email my office at ministerrhe@gov.sk.ca, phone at 306-798-9014 or send me a letter at Room 208, Legislative Building, 2405 Legislative Drive, Regina, SK, S4S 0B3.





Randy Goulden,
*City of Yorkton Councillor
and President of SUMA*

Staying Connected

Even in Summertime

Summer in Saskatchewan is a season we anticipate all year. It brings long evenings, community events, and opportunities to recharge. Yet amid vacations, shifting routines, and well-deserved relaxation, it can be surprisingly easy to lose track of the connections that support our well-being.

Through my involvement with organizations like SUMA and events such as the Yorkton Film Festival, I've seen firsthand how vital connection is—not just in times of need, but in everyday life. Communities thrive when people stay engaged, and individuals do better when they feel part of something larger than themselves.

Summer can interrupt our usual patterns. Work schedules change, groups pause for the season, and regular interactions fall away. For many—particularly seniors or those in rural areas—these disruptions can lead to isolation. But summer also offers a unique chance to reconnect in meaningful ways. The season is full of opportunities to bring people together: family reunions, festivals, farmers' markets, and local gatherings. These aren't just events—they strengthen relationships and build a sense of belonging. Even small moments, like a conversation with a neighbour or a chance meeting at a community event, can make a lasting difference.

Staying connected doesn't have to be complicated. A phone call, a shared meal, or a walk with a friend



can reinforce important bonds. Technology also helps bridge distance when travel or weather gets in the way. The key is to be intentional, even when routines change.

We should also recognize that summer brings challenges. Severe weather—from storms to wildfires—can disrupt communication when connection matters most. These moments highlight the value of strong community networks. Knowing your neighbours, checking in regularly, and having reliable ways to communicate can make a real difference.

Ultimately, staying connected is about more than keeping in touch—it supports both personal and community well-being. Summer doesn't have to mean disconnection. Instead, it can be a “garden of connections,” where relationships are nurtured, new ones are formed, and communities grow stronger.

With a little intention, we can ensure the warmth of summer extends beyond the weather—and into the connections that enrich our lives.

Ask Auntie Ageism



Dear Auntie,

I am 86 years old and have lived by myself since my husband died over 20 years ago. My daughter and son are now older adults themselves and live in different provinces. We connect through phone, email and occasionally Zoom. I moved to a small bungalow condo and am very contented with my life.

I read about how older people should make an effort to “stay connected” with other people or suffer the consequences of poorer health, depression and little chance of a happy life. I say “bah, hum-bug!” I am a very private person and always have been. I rarely, if ever, invite people to my place for social interaction. I used to play duplicate bridge but now it seems like it would be such an effort. I would have to find a partner and get to the bridge club. I suspect my housekeeping isn’t as wonderful as it might be but no creepy-crawlies are wandering through my kitchen and my cat would know if a mouse dared to enter.

Is this pressure to stay connected a form of ageism – assuming we all have the same needs?

Lylah

Dear Lylah,

You are correct. Ageism does assume that everyone in an age range is much the same, including their needs and capabilities. The older adult age range is immense and of course, each person has different needs and desires, just as we did in our younger years.

There may be aspects of ageism in some advice-giving but often suggestions are based on sound experience. The advice for older adults to intentionally nourish connections with even a small number of friends recognizes that life does change as we age. Inevitably physical strength diminishes. Mental and emotional strength change as well,

including possibilities that our brain may have positive changes.

I think at age 86 you will have experienced that your circle of family and friends has grown smaller, due mostly to death or need to move elsewhere. Is your circle very small? Who would you contact if you needed immediate help because of an accident or a health problem? If you needed to go away, who would look after your cat? Is someone available to help with a breakdown of an appliance or furnishings or household utilities?

Outside of those nasty occurrences, how about happy ones? Is it possible that you might want to go to a movie or a play or a concert and put that thought aside because you don’t have a friend for company or transportation? Suppose you found a group of people who play bridge for fun and who switch partners as they gather?

I feel from your words that you are a strong, intelligent and resilient person who is quite capable of enjoying life in your own way. That is wonderful and I hope that stage of your aging journey continues to go well. But – Auntie’s one piece of advice is to look ahead and to recognize that your status quo won’t last forever, so consider your options and be clear about who you can count on when you need them. You might also ask yourself if you could be someone that another person could count on when needed. There is strength and enjoyment in a circle of friends! <https://www.helpguide.org/aging/healthy-aging/ageism-and-age-discrimination>

— 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.

How to Protect Your Energy During the Summer



Summer can be a great time to make plans and socialize, but we may need some extra tools to help us recharge. Check out some tips from the Global Thrive network: www.thriveglobal.com

Create intentional pauses

"I love the energy of summer. I enjoy the extra daylight, the time resetting and the opportunity to relax — but even a vacation can take more energy than we have. I use intentional pauses to be sure that I have the energy to enjoy the summer. Those intentional pauses include getting to bed early to get a great night's sleep, staying off social media for a day, or carving out a day to reset after vacation."

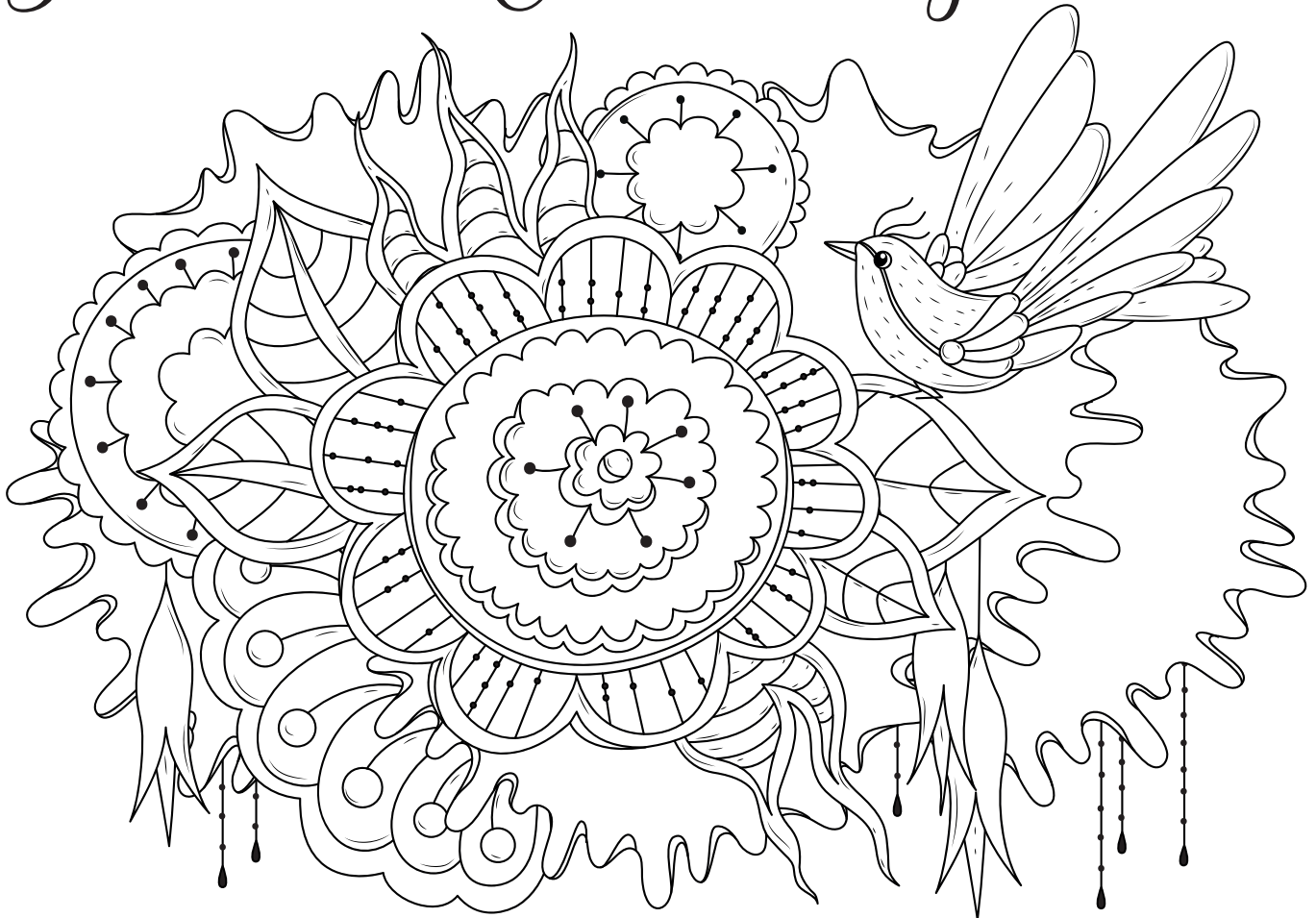
- Ellen Delap, certified professional organizer, Kingwood, TX

Give yourself time to recharge

"My intention for summer is to give myself the gift of a seasonal recharge. Instead of starting new projects in my business or feeling the urge to fill in spaces with more work, I'm going to recharge my batteries by enjoying adventures with my kids and allowing room for creativity to flow in."

- Emily Madill, author and creativity coach (ACC), Nanaimo, B.C.

Summer Colouring





Connecting —and Staying Connected— Online

You don't need to stick to Saskatchewan, either! There are interest groups and pages from across Canada and around the world. From pickleball to genealogy, decluttering and downsizing to cat rescues and dog groomers, there's something for everyone.

Use the search at the top left on Facebook and type in your search: e.g. gardening. A list will appear. The sidebar on the left lists options. Click on Groups or Pages. Then click on any title that interests you. With pages, "follow" and you'll see those posts in your feed. With groups, you request to join, perhaps answer a couple of questions to show you're a real person with this interest. Usually, your request will be accepted within a couple of days.



Bluesky is similar, but the interest groups are called Feeds.

Click on Feeds in the left sidebar, and a list of suggestions will show up. Search or scroll to find something that interests you. Science? Birds? Music? Artists? Astronomy? It's there. Follow the feeds and interact with the people through the comments.

The usual considerations for online interactions apply here, of course. Don't give out personal information such as address or phone number, don't move too fast in a friendship, and watch out for odd or "too friendly" comments.

That said, you can learn, have fun, meet new people, and make new friends online – it's a great way to stay connected in the summer or at any time of year!

– Beth Stilborn

Many people use social media such as Facebook to stay in touch with family and real-life friends whether near or far. Seeing pictures of a new grandchild as soon as they're taken is a treat, and finding old friends online is a joy.

There's much more potential for connections on social media than just your immediate circle, though. Online friends can become "real" friends!

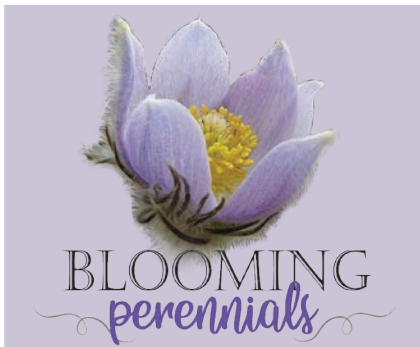
I've been part of online communities for 20 years. I connected with a group of animal-lovers in the comment section on a blog/website called Cute Overload. I'm still friends with some of those people, on Facebook. One of the key groups in my life is the community of people who write books for children. Some have become close friends. In the whole community, we celebrate with each other, grieve with each other, support each other.

Using Facebook and Bluesky as examples, let's explore some of the possibilities you might try.



Facebook is more than individuals. You'll find groups for practically any interest, or pages you can follow. In groups, people post photos and questions for discussion. Others comment, and

conversations arise. Do you enjoy birdwatching? You can join a private group like Sask Birders or a public group like Birds of Canada. Gardening? You can find anything from the Saskatchewan Horticultural Association's public group to a page you can follow for the Saskatchewan Perennial Society.



Linda Pratt



When Life gives you lemons...

I am 77 and have been blessed with a very interesting life in family, career and community service. My life philosophy can be summed up as “to live and give”.

The biggest “lemon” arrived in 1994 with a diagnosis of MS. For mobility I use a walker at home and a wheelchair for distance. I must carefully parcel my limited energy and sometimes remember to use the word “no”. With the help and support of my partner I have been able to continue with the elements of my life that bring me joy.

As the “lemons” sometimes sneak up on me I need to keep modifying my expectations to account for not being able to do everything that I might “expect” of myself. Maintaining a sense of humor and positive attitude help me to “live”.

I have found “lemonade” through seated exercise with NeuroSask where “live” leadership comes right to us through Zoom. It is much easier to exercise with others.

“Lemonade” is a gift through adjustments made by my fellow bridge players to make it easier for me to navigate the surroundings.

To meet my need to “give” I used Zoom communications that facilitated my work with Age-Friendly Regina right through the Covid epidemic. I am now the Chair of Age-Friendly Sask and Zoom is my favorite method of communication—no time or energy spent in transportation and I can contribute using my skills for organization and problem solving.

“Lemonade” also occurs when I ask for help with something and it is so graciously and readily given by others. When people ask if I need help—and

sometimes I don’t—I always graciously refuse but quickly add “but thanks for asking”.

More lemonade is made as I develop alternative ways of supporting my family other than physical labor. This includes staying in touch, being a sounding board, providing financial help and allowing them to help and support me as well.

My hobbies are gardening, reading and electronic games. Gardening requires a lot of “lemonade”. I began the adjustment by sitting on the ground—it’s safer down there! Two rows of vegetables then a “sit” row for me to scootch along to plant and weed. Now we have moved to raised beds. These are at chair seat height as days of sitting on the ground have passed.

Reading is wonderful but I can’t read regular books as I don’t have enough sensation in my fingertips to turn the pages. The “lemonade” of a Kindle works well and is great for bedtime reading. Games on my iPad are for times when I experience a bout of dizziness and I admit, I may be addicted!

The saying “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade” fits me well. I know we all have our own “lemons” and this is life and we all deal with our “lemons” as best we can. It becomes easier with a “can do” attitude and help from others.

How’s your lemonade these days?



Socially Connected

Summer is the time of year when people start to think about going outside to enjoy what is happening in the community. However, we don't need to do this by ourselves.

Imagine if something in the house fails to work or an item in the house is broken and needs to be fixed that we cannot fix ourselves, we usually will contact someone or an organization and ask for assistance in getting the item fixed.

Connection is an important part of what we need as individuals, and it is not until we need something, that we realize that we can't do everything ourselves. If we are connected to others in the community it might make things easier.

There are many things available to us in our communities, but summertime may be a period when some of the friends and family we have go away for the summer, or programs may have reduced hours. In Yorkton they have just formed the "Silver Circle" gathering for older adults 55+. Silver Circle monthly gatherings offer older adults a welcoming space to connect, learn, and explore community resources. Each month features a new topic and a different venue, giving participants the chance to discover what's available throughout the city. After the presentation, attendees can enjoy coffee and conversation—an easy way to meet new people and build community.

The community now has a "Men's Shed Program" that has been catching on in several other communities in Saskatchewan. The idea is to give those individuals who may be retired and don't know what to do with their time an opportunity to connect



Together
IS OUR
favorite
place

with other like-minded individuals who don't want to sit at home during the summer all by themselves.

Your local newspaper is always looking for things to put into the paper to let others know what is going on in your community, or where you can connect during the summer. Communities, town or city councils have noticeboards that

usually let you know what is happening, such as art shows or music festivals and some of them don't cost anything, you just have to go and enjoy yourself in the company of others.

Even if you are not able to get out to some of the events in your community, there maybe someone or a group of people who would love to connect with you to chat about what is important to you. You are part of the community and the community wants to connect with you.



**Social
Prescribing**
in Saskatchewan

Living Well in Your Community



Holly Schick and Maeca Larochelle

Generous Grant from FYidectors

SSM was pleased to be the recipient of a grant from the FYidectors/Visique Enhancing Life Foundation. Each FYidectors clinic can choose a specific organization to support through this initiative.

This year, SSM was chosen by FYidectors-Regina-Grasslands as the charity they wished to support. The proceeds from their sale of glass cleaner and cleaning cloths, totaling \$7,572.57, were donated to SSM.

Thank-you!



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FRAUD AWARENESS



To plan your vacation with ease, Better Business Bureau (BBB) has tips to help you find reputable travel-related businesses and avoid the red flags for common travel scams.

Look for reviews and ask for references. While vetting hotels, travel companies, vacation rentals and more, check BBB.org for reviews and complaints. To find trusted businesses, look for the BBB Seal. Look for photos and read a variety of reviews. If the property or company doesn't have any online reviews or photos, ask them for references and call them.

Remember, a great deal might be too good to be true. Scammers lure in targets by guaranteeing an amazing trip at a very low price. Research it first. If the hotel, travel or tour is much cheaper than similar options, be suspicious.

Book your travel online safely. Take extra caution when using a third-party booking site. Make sure you are on a secure, legitimate website before booking

your travel and making a payment. If you're unsure about the site, go directly to the hotel or airline's website and book directly with them.

Avoid wiring money or using a prepaid debit card to pay for your vacation. These payments are the same as sending cash. Once the money is sent, there is no way to get it back. When paying with a credit card, the charges can be disputed.

Do some research. Check the website for links to the company's social media accounts. If they do have social media accounts, check their activity and see if any other users have left reviews or voiced complaints. Also, look for typos and pixelated images. These mistakes are signs of a scammer, not a company that cares about its online presence.

The above information comes from the BBB website. For more information about specific vacation scams visit <https://www.bbb.org/all/travel/travel-safety-tips/top-5-vacation-scams-to-avoid>



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MP | YORKTON—MELVILLE



ACTIVATE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Activate Your Neighbourhood is a tactical guide that supports Canada's physical activity strategy: A Common Vision for Increasing Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Living in Canada: Let's Get Moving. The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) was selected by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to address Spaces and Places, one of the six areas of focus of this ambitious pan-Canadian strategy. The following information is a small part of the Activate Your Neighbourhood resources at <https://activateyourneighbourhood.ca/> and is only one of the resources available from CPRA at <https://www.cpra.ca/>

Why Activate Your Neighbourhood

As Canadians, we know that physical activity is vital to our overall physical and mental health and wellbeing. The list of benefits is long: increased energy levels, improved sleep, stronger muscles and improved flexibility, and enhanced mood, self-esteem and confidence. Further, regular physical activity decreases the risk of many physical and mental health conditions such as heart disease, stroke, certain cancers, type II diabetes, many different musculoskeletal impairments, while also reducing depression and contributing to the prevention of dementia.

Think Like a Tactical Placemaker

Anyone can be a neighbourhood placemaker! Take control to initiate the changes you want to see for yourself and your neighbours — there's no need to wait for community organizations or public officials to take the lead.

Naturalize

Beautify neighbourhood spaces with plants, flowers, and/or grasses to make them more appealing to spend time or engage in moderate physical activity.

Activate

Use visual displays of physical activity, such as sport demonstrations, organized games or the availability of sport equipment (e.g., portable basketball nets) to encourage spectators and participants to be more active.

Culinize

Incorporate food — particularly its preparation, distribution, and consumption — into neighbourhood spaces and events.

Spectacularize, Festivalize and Eventify

"Spectacularizing" your neighbourhood involves using featured entertainment to attract people to neighbourhood spaces. Festivalize your neighbourhood by organizing public gatherings to bring a festive atmosphere to neighbourhood spaces.

Aestheticize

Public art attracts attention and creates cultural energy that can transform a community. Use art in its variety of forms to beautify any neighbourhood space and encourage greater activity and connection among residents.

Convivialize

Provide features that give neighbours the cue to gather and socialize in neighbourhood spaces

Whimsicalize and Gamify

Add imaginative and sometimes quirky features or illustrations to signify game play to encourage activity in neighbourhood spaces. Make the places you go more fun with your imagination! Play in a public space with some easy changes and other more organized ways to encourage play. Some examples include hopscotch boards, Pokémon GO, and geocaching. You can do these activities alone, with others, or encourage others to participate by leaving a sign and inviting them to play your game.



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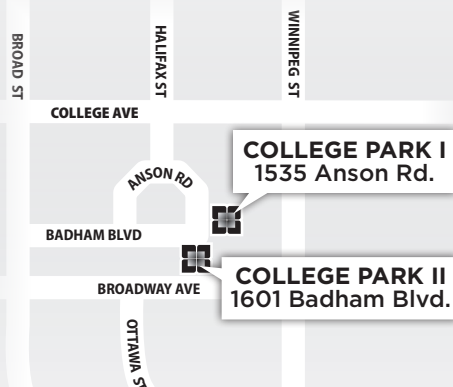
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* See clinic for full details.

Summer is a time many people look forward to.

Warmer weather, longer days and more opportunities to get outside can boost both physical and mental well-being. It is also a good time to focus on staying connected with others and with the support that helps you stay healthy.

Connection looks different for everyone. It might mean spending time with family, joining community activities or staying in touch with health care providers. **With the right tools and resources, staying connected through the summer can help you feel supported and confident.**



STAY SOCIALLY ACTIVE IN WAYS THAT WORK FOR YOU

Social connection plays an important role in overall health, especially as we age. Summer offers many simple ways to stay engaged.

- Take advantage of local events such as farmers' markets, outdoor concerts or community programs.
- Schedule regular check-ins with friends or family, whether in person or by phone or video.
- Join a walking group, book club or hobby group to combine social time with movement.

Even small moments of connection can improve mood and help reduce feelings of isolation.

KEEP UP WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE ROUTINE

Summer routines can change, but it is still important to stay connected to your health care needs.

- Book appointments and follow up on recommended screenings or check-ups.
- Use your benefits for services that support mobility, recovery or mental wellness.
- Pay attention to how you feel physically and emotionally and reach out for support when needed.

Staying connected to care can help prevent small concerns from becoming bigger issues later on.

STAY SAFE AND CONNECTED WHILE TRAVELLING

Many people choose to travel during the summer, whether it is a short road trip or time away with family.

- Plan ahead and know what to do if you need medical support while away from home.
- Keep important information such as benefit details and emergency contacts easily accessible.
- Stay in touch with loved ones and check in regularly while travelling.

Being prepared can help you enjoy your time away with greater peace of mind.



BUILDING CONNECTIONS ALL SUMMER LONG

Staying connected during the summer does not mean filling every day with activities. It means knowing where to turn for information, care and support and making time for the people and routines that matter most.

By staying socially engaged, using available resources and keeping health top of mind, you can enjoy a summer that supports both well-being and connection.

Learn more about health and wellness resources available to you at sk.bluecross.ca.

Wheels for Wellness



Wheels for Wellness Indian Head Inc. is a provincially registered, volunteer-driven non-profit organization based in Indian Head, Saskatchewan, dedicated to providing affordable, reliable, and safe transportation for rural residents travelling to health and wellness appointments. While the program serves individuals of all ages and backgrounds, approximately 99% of passengers are seniors, in addition to low income residents and individuals with mobility challenges.

The organization officially launched operations on September 1, 2025, following a strong community response to a public meeting held in April 2025. Initial support from the Town of Indian Head, local donors, and a partnership with a local Chrysler dealership enabled the organization to lease a 2025 Chrysler Pacifica and begin providing door-to-door shuttle services. By January 24, 2026, Wheels for Wellness had completed 81 trips and transported 97 individuals to medical and wellness appointments in Regina, Saskatoon, Weyburn, Moose Jaw, Melville, Yorkton, and other destinations.

Operations are overseen by a volunteer Board of Directors and supported by three volunteer dispatchers and a team of 28 trained volunteer drivers, 25 of whom are seniors themselves. All drivers maintain clean driving and criminal

record checks to ensure passenger safety. Transportation is coordinated through a central dispatch line, with rides offered through a suggested donation model designed to remain affordable for rural residents. Services accommodate walkers, pre-arranged wheelchairs, and companions when required.

Wheels for Wellness has built strong partnerships throughout the community, collaborating with organizations such as the Indian Head Hospital, EMS, Hayes Haven Personal Care Home, and Saskatchewan Health Authority Homecare services. The organization has also demonstrated strong community support by raising more than \$80,000 through donations, sponsorships, and fundraising initiatives. Inspired by the successful Gravelbourg Cares transportation model, Wheels for Wellness is designed as a sustainable and replicable program that may expand into surrounding communities including Wolseley, Sintaluta, and Balgonie.

To support continued growth and sustainability, Wheels for Wellness received \$20,000 through the Facilitating Independence Grant program on January 28, 2026. Funding was allocated toward four priority areas, including contractual dispatch support, development of a customized scheduling and records management computer program, website development, and outreach efforts to support regional expansion. These enhancements are intended to improve operational efficiency, reduce volunteer burnout, strengthen long-term sustainability, and ensure that the organization continues to provide an essential service for seniors and other rural residents across Saskatchewan.



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Century Club Corner

Connections have always been important, and maintaining those connections could take some work in years gone by, when we didn't have the convenience of phones in our pockets, emails, or other means of instant communication.

In my family, the most important time for renewing connections was Grandpa's birthday. My paternal grandfather was born in mid-July, and his birthday was always a cause for the entire family to gather, either at my grandparents' farm or at the Indian Head Forestry Farm. Sometimes even the cousins from Saskatoon were able to be there! You likely have similar memories of special times of family gatherings in the summer.

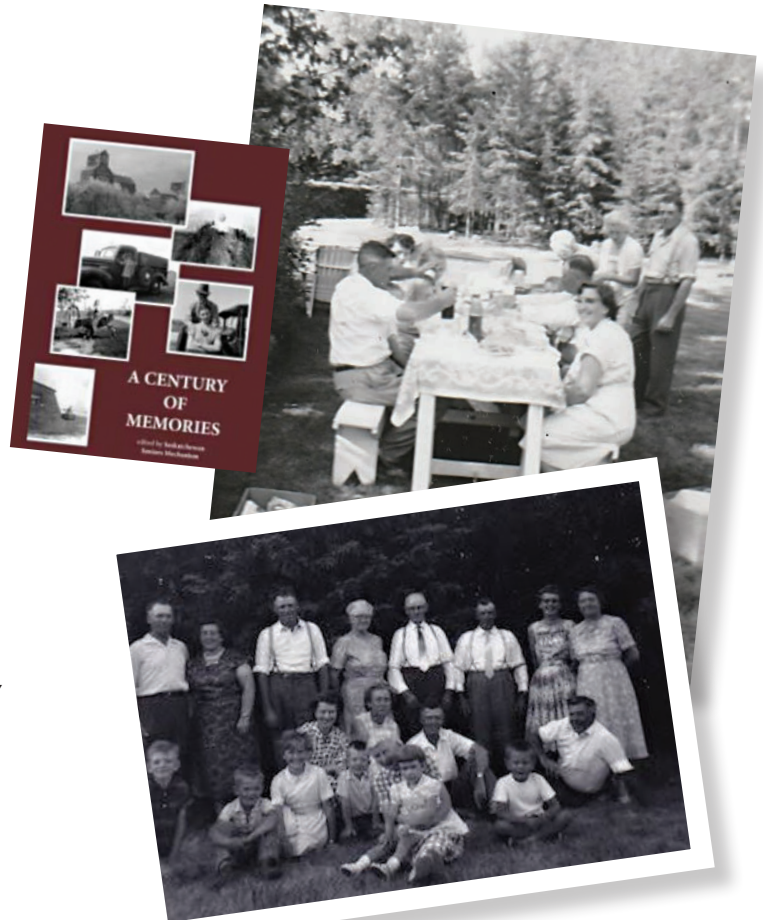
Sometimes, as Joan Hyndman wrote in *A CENTURY OF MEMORIES*, summer was the only time the community was able to gather. "In July and August only, well-attended church services were held in the school. Travel to the services was mostly by horse and buggy. Summer was the only time that many were able to attend church services because town churches were too far away and travel in winter was difficult."

Eva Boutin remembered Sundays at the lake. "We all loved Sundays! It was a time to visit with relatives, and the children always spent their afternoons at Morin Lake. There were ball tournaments or picnics pretty well every weekend. Other children from surrounding areas would also gather at Morin Lake."

Freda McCollum wrote, "Every summer we had a strawberry festival for the church. The fare was strawberries and homemade ice cream. There was a picnic supper. We played softball, and there were all kinds of races: three-legged races, sack races, and thread-the-needle races, where one member of a team stood at one end of the field with a needle and the teammate would race down, thread the needle, and then race back to the starting line. All ages took part."

Century Club members, I'd like to connect with you, as well. I'd love to receive your stories, on any topic, that I could include in this Century Club Corner. You can send them to me at the SSM office.

– Beth



You may join the Century Club by calling: Toll free 1-888-823-2211 or 306-359-9956 (Regina) or send a note to: SSM (112-2001 Cornwall St. Regina, SK S4P 3X9). If you live in Saskatoon, please call Saskatoon Council on Aging (306-652-2255) to register.



SSAI Bowling Tournament

A total of 54 bowlers participated at Hunter's Eastview Bowl on April 18-19, 2026. There were 13 mixed teams of 4 players and two individuals. All participants played 3 games on each day. Several people (26 on our list) bowled 3 strikes in a row and received turkey pins. At least 8 of those people bowled multiple turkeys! Special Thanks to our volunteer organizers for this event (Pictured from Left to Right): Maria Palmer (SSAI First Vice and Region G Director from Allan), Jane Uchacz (SSAI E14 Coordinator from Saskatoon), Leesa (from Eastview Bowl), Nici Warnock (SSAI Past President from Saskatoon), and Lorraine Thibeault (SSAI President from Shellbrook). Thanks also to Maria's daughter, Genny Burns, for helping us out at the event!



Results: Visit our website saskseniors.com/bowling to view the complete report and the official standings.

- 1st Place (*pictured above Left*) – Georgi and the Jets: Warren Knight (Invermay), Orest Shular (Wynyard), Dave Neufeld (Carrot River), and Yvonne Martens (Invermay)
- 2nd Place (*pictured above Right*) – Pin Splitters: Vicky Clayton (Maymont), Mandy Tracksell (Borden), Ian Tracksell (Borden), and Neil Clayton (Maymont)
- 3rd Place – Good Times: Robert Gentil-Perret, Darlyne Woodhouse, Cordell Haugen, and Abe Gaudet (all from Prince Albert)
- 4th Place – Saskatoon 4: Roy Friesen, Dale Ross, Gudrun Lettrari, Enrico Lettrari (all from Saskatoon)

SSAI 45-Day Get Active Challenge Results April 1 – May 15, 2026

Provincial Total = 860,961 Minutes of Activity. There were 248 participants from 21 clubs.

TOP MOVERS and SHAKERS:

Club with Highest Average minutes per Participant was Foam Lake Senior Centre with 8,893 minutes. Club with the highest percentage of members participating was a tie between Shellbrook Senior Citizens Co-op Club and Big River Seniors Association with 100% participation. Highest minutes by an individual participant was Jerry Cowan from Loon Lake Seniors with 18,875 minutes. Eldest participant with highest minutes was Pauline Volk from Unity New Horizons Association with 14,040 minutes.

Honourable Mention (in no particular order): **90+ years young & active:** Pauline Volk, Adeline Fossey, Edith Henry, Marjorie Hislop, Art Jones, Marion Miller, Marion Rude, Ray Peterson, Ella Reidt, Grace McTavish, Alfred Kahlert, Clara Butler, George Kuntz

Participant with Highest Minutes per club: William Johnston, Georges Doderai, Ann McKague, Kathleen Paul, Roy Wright, Pat Mila, Meada Wilson, Ken Moldenhauer, Wendy Cafferata, Louise Matzner, Betty Roberts, Emilie Fisher, Karen Hamel, Elizabeth Renz, Pauline Volk, Peggy Willman, Albert Huys, Jerry Cowan, Holley Train, Lyn Elder, Karen Beaupre, Rob Gentil-Perret

Eldest Participant per club: Diane Harding, George Kuntz, Joyce B., Roma Prosser, Arlene Walker, Gordon Butler, Pauline Volk, Marion Rune, Larry Hampson, Emilie Fisher, Eldeen Johnson, Harry Matzner, Grace McTavish, Fernie Schick, Donna Dodds, Verna Adamiak, Lorraine Lenson, Alfred Kahlert, Marilyn Mead, William Johnston

SSAI SUMMER LITERARY CHALLENGE

HAVE SOME FUN WITH THIS CHALLENGE!

1. CHOOSE your town, a town in Saskatchewan, or Canada and write a limerick, or
2. Use the letters from the word C-A-N-A-D-A and write an acrostic.

Submit your entry by email to info@saskseniors.com. Deadline is September 30, 2026.

A draw will be made from all entries. The winner will win a one-year membership to SSAI.

Visit our website to view entries and previous challenges - saskseniors.com/ssai-literary-challenge/

Examples:

<i>A Shellbrook Canadian I know Constantly played in the snow When asked why she'd play She replied, "There's no other way, Cause all it does here is snow."</i>	<i>C – creative A – active N – natural A – agreeable D – delightful A – amazing</i>	<i>Canadians are who we are Our ancestry's from near and far Our people are kind Well - most of the time We're loyal and sometimes bizarre.</i>
--	---	---



Allan New Horizons

On Saturday May 2nd Allan New Horizons hosted a successful open house to display all the improvements that were done to the Centre. The club thanked everyone who worked hard to make it the welcoming place it is for the community to gather and hold events. The club also thanked all the associations that provided financial support. Without them none of our improvements would have been possible.

SSAI AGM/Convention – View Presentations Online

Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. hosted its annual convention on June 3-4, 2026, at the Travelodge, Saskatoon. 77 delegates attended from 37 communities and rural seniors' clubs. Aspen Films recorded the presentations, and these are available to watch online linked from our website: saskseniors.com. We had a full schedule of presentations including:

- Saskatchewan Blue Cross – Health Literacy and Aging Well in Saskatchewan
- Estate Protection: Leave More Than Money – Virginia Pavo
- Advance Care Planning – Saskatchewan Health Authority
- About SSAI; AGM Reports, Resolutions, Elections
- Canada Purple Shield – organize end-of-life and estate details
- Red Cross – Emergency Preparedness Workshop
- Funding + Foundations with the Saskatchewan Sport, Culture and Recreation Districts

Thanks to our convention sponsors:



Thanks to everyone who donated to the silent auction including:  **SaskPower**

SSAI RAFFLE REPORT

Draw was June 4, 2026 at SSAI Convention in Saskatoon. Tickets were \$2 each – (15,000 tickets were printed). 12,565 tickets were sold. 50 clubs who participated received \$1 for every ticket sold. Ituna Social Club sold the most tickets – 1,800!

Kinistino ½ Century Club was in 2nd place selling 1,500 tickets.

Maymont Seniors' Hall and Unity New Horizons Assoc. were tied for 3rd place selling 1,000 tickets each. Livelong Lakesiders was in 4th place with 761 tickets sold.

Thanks to everyone who participated by buying and selling tickets to support Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. and rural seniors clubs! Congratulations to the Winners:

- \$1,000 ticket #02487 – Vicky Klimczak (Ituna) – Sold by Ituna Seniors Social Club
- \$500 ticket #12024 – Heather Campbell (Ontario) – Sold by Ituna Seniors Social Club
- \$500 ticket #02461 – Gloria Karpinski (Ituna) – Sold by Ituna Seniors Social Club
- \$100 ticket #06622 – Raeleen Muller (Shellbrook) – Sold by Shellbrook Senior Citizens Co-op Club
- \$100 ticket #02494 – Jeanne Benson (Saskatoon) – Sold by Ituna Seniors Social Club
- \$100 ticket #09883 – Nathan Ede (Regina) – Sold by Ituna Seniors Social Club
- \$100 ticket #13383 – Wendy Trask (Langham) – Sold by Delisle Senior Citizens Club
- \$100 ticket #01403 – Donna Dreher (Delisle) – Sold by Delisle Senior Citizens Club

SSAI Tele-learning Workshops

Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. (SSAI) is excited to announce that we have once again received funding from the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. SSAI will use this funding to offer a series of Tele-learning workshops on topics relevant to seniors aging with dignity and independence. This project will help older adults learn new skills, increase their knowledge, make connections with others, and also engage them in volunteering and sharing their knowledge with others. It is important to support seniors living in rural or remote areas in Saskatchewan by promoting digital literacy skills and using technology to connect to a broader community.

SSAI will host three introductory online workshops before summer break. Volunteers will meet monthly to plan a Fall session of weekly workshops from September to mid-December and a Winter session from mid-January to end of March. We encourage seniors to register to attend these free online workshops and complete the post-event surveys to provide valuable feedback to help us improve as we proceed with this project.

Visit our website for more information and to register for workshops: saskseniors.com/workshops
Questions? Phone 306-493-3023 or email: info@saskseniors.com

We thank the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program for their continued support in helping SSAI to improve the wellbeing of older adults across Saskatchewan.

Funded by the
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New Horizons for Seniors Program

Canada

Be part of a strong association and network with other seniors and rural seniors' clubs.
Reach beyond your own community to connect with other seniors and clubs from other parts of the province for support and new ideas.



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE - \$5/person

SSAI Clubs collect fees from each club member and remit to the SSAI Treasurer. 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 Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc., 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.

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