

SASKATOON COUNCIL ON AGING INC.
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Coming of Age

A Publication of
The Saskatoon Council on Aging

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Saskatoon Council on Aging

The Saskatoon Council on Aging is a non-profit voluntary organization which offers services and programs for seniors aimed at improving their quality of life and independence.

It is operated by a voluntary board of interested Saskatonians, the majority of whom are seniors. At this date, the co-presidents are Wilma Mollard and Delores Dzubin.

Funding for the Council comes from a New Horizons grant specifically for publications and an expected grant from the Seniors Independence Program (SIP) to help pay office and programming expenses. A request has gone in to Revenue Canada for a charitable status which will permit tax-deductible receipts for donations.

Within the next two months, the Council plans to open an office and an education and resource centre located in the downtown area. Here will be kept a great variety of resource materials as well as computer-stored information about services for seniors.

Membership is open to all seniors, aged sixty and over and groups and agencies involved in educational, recreational and health activities for seniors. There is no membership fee, but donations toward mailing costs would be much appreciated.

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The Saskatoon Council on Aging

... What We Do

We design educational programs and materials for seniors which will enhance their physical and social well-being and provide information on housing, health care, recreation, finances, and local support services.

A Program Consultant will set up short courses for seniors. In the works to start soon will be a Computer Literacy short course to enable seniors to make use of new technologies.

As well, help with simple income tax returns will be available at the centre with the cooperation of the College of Commerce undergraduates.

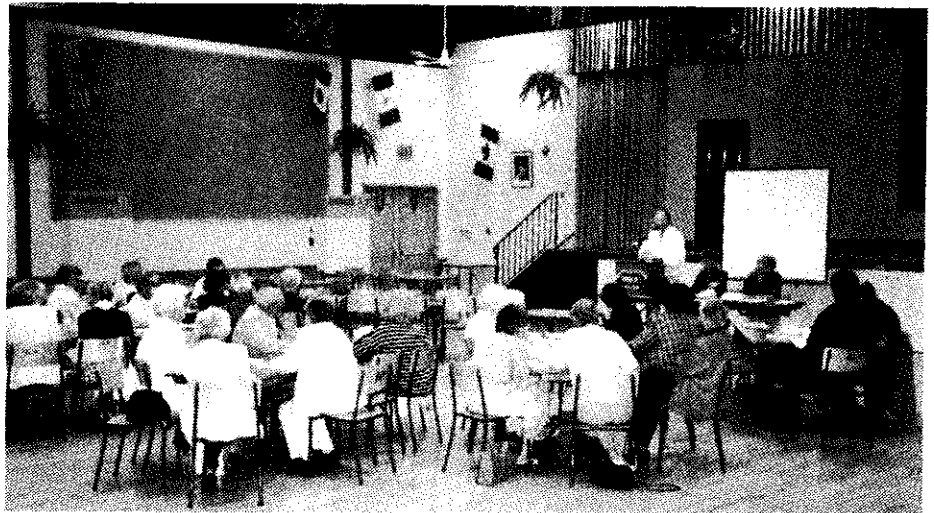
A Publications Coordinator will work with the Council's Editorial Committee to prepare a newsletter ("New Wrinkles") five times a year and "Coming of Age", an eight-page magazine three times annually. These will have a wide distribution to members, senior residences, agencies and libraries.

Public meetings will be

held five times a year offering a session about the Council's business and an educational program using the resources of our member agencies.

We will make wide use of

volunteers to help with the programming, the staffing of the resource centre and arranging presentations to seniors residences and special care homes as requested.



*September 1990 General meeting of Council
- Pensioner and Pioneers Pavillion*

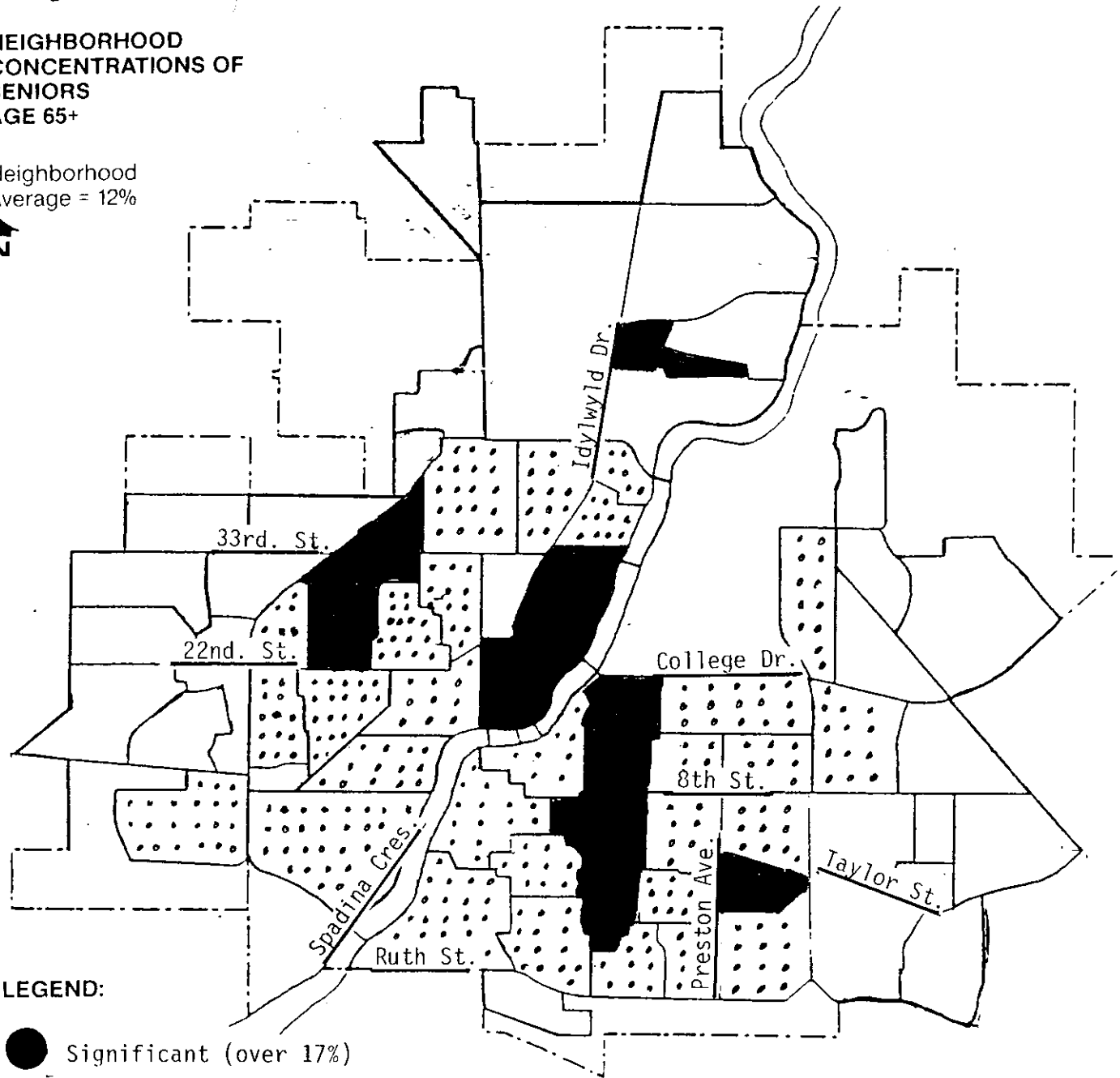
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City of Saskatoon

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCENTRATIONS OF SENIORS AGE 65+

Neighborhood
Average = 12%



LEGEND:

-  Significant (over 17%)
-  7 to 17%
-  Less than 7%

SENIOR POPULATION PROJECTION

<u>Year</u>	<u>Age 65-74</u>	<u>75-84</u>	<u>85+</u>
1990	11,636	5,600	2,149
2000	16,305	7,092	2,810

(From The Saskatoon Seniors Population: Projections to the Year 2000
City of Saskatoon Planning Department, August, 1987)

Getting to Know One of Saskatoon's Seniors

By Ginnie Lawman

Mary Manning has lived in the same spot in Riversdale for over 40 years. But the yellow and white house she lives in now is not the one she moved into in 1948. Her children built her a new one in 1977, working on it evenings and every weekend that summer to get it finished by their deadline — the beginning of hunting season!

It's a cozy, welcoming house, full of plants, particularly African violets, and evidence of the people in Mary's life. Lego bricks for the younger of her eight grandchildren to play with are stored under a table, and a lego building is displayed along with the violets. As we talked, an older grandson came in to string up Mary's outside Christmas lights. She enjoys having the younger generation around, and the feeling is obviously mutual.

We chatted over coffee in her kitchen, where there are more plants and a huge display of teaspoons from all over the world. Some were given to her by friends, but many she collected herself. She also collects unusual tea cups.

Over the years, Mary worked in the canteens of a variety of place — first at the CNIB and then at the Sanitorium. It seems right that a lady who spent so much time in kitchens should end up playing with the Kitchen Band.

For anyone who has never heard of the Kitchen Band, it's a group of Holiday Park

seniors who first got together in 1977 to make music for fun. They soon became a popular addition at social functions and now have a busy schedule. The three mainstays of the group—the piano, accordian and banjo players—are backed up by an enthusiastic crowd of seniors playing washtubs, washboards, metal butter churns, guitar pan (a frying pan with four strings) and a xylophone made from vacuum cleaner wands of different lengths. It is truly a Kitchen Band! They play old-time, sing-along music which is familiar to many of the groups they play for—seniors high rises, geriatric wards and nursing homes. But they also take their music into the schools, and four years ago, they played for people from all over the world at a World Food Organization function at Beaver Creek.

The members of the group are all volunteers and they take great delight in their music. They accept donations towards their travel costs and they hold garage sales sometimes to raise funds.

Mary's life apart from the Kitchen Band doesn't leave her much time for

relaxation, although she does like to read when she can. She's involved with her church and with various seniors' organizations. She has a vegetable garden which she looks after herself. She says she's too busy to do everything she would like to do.

She does occasionally have time to travel, and has been to Jerusalem and England as well as making several bus trips to California. She told me about some problems her group had on the trip to the Holy Land — no flights booked for them out of Calgary, a friend having her



Mary Manning is second from the right.

purse stolen, no flights booked for them on the way back. Her optimistic and matter-of-fact attitude to these upsets are indicative of the way she has lived her life. She hasn't always been given a terrific break, but she's made the most of what she has been given and has always had time for others.

Mary is an energetic, enthusiastic woman, in love with life. Her attitude was captured for me by the earrings she wore when I spoke to her. They were not "little old lady" earrings — they were brave, red, dangly earrings that seemed to say, "Do what you can, you won't get me down!" Way to go, Mary! I hope I can have your excitement about life when I am your age.

Feedback Please

Let us know what you think of our first issue. What do you like about it or dislike about it? What could be included or left out? Are the print size and the format O.K.?

Call the Publications Chairman, Mary-Helen at 652-1623 or — write to our box number — Box 7091, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 4J1.

Seniors and Education

It's a myth that seniors are too old to learn. The Open University in Great Britain surveyed thousands of their students who were over 65. The results showed that seniors needed no special arrangements for their educational programs and there was little difference between the grades of the younger students and those of the seniors. On the average, seniors did slightly better. This could be attributed to their "canniness" and life experience. Mostly though, they went to class because they wanted to learn something.

This seems evident at the University of Saskatchewan. The look of the campus has been changing these past few years with persons of all ages going along the walks. According to George James of the University Extension Division, there are a variety of opportunities for seniors. They may enroll as full credit students or they may audit the classes.

Fees are waived for persons over 65 who register for six credit units at Intersession and Summer Session and less than 18 credit units during regular sessions. They must satisfy the prerequisites for the course, and in cases of

limited enrollment, fee-paying students have priority.

Still another way to enjoy lifelong learning through a post-secondary institution is the Elderhostel program. Here in Saskatchewan, Barb Heise of SIAST at the Kelsey campus has information about educational opportunities all over the world. Elderhostel permits seniors to take short courses, see new countries and meet hosts of interesting people.

But you don't need to leave the province this summer. The Hannin Creek Camp on Candle Lake, 90 km northwest of Prince Albert, will be the setting for Elderhostel programs in June. "Picture This" will teach wilderness photography. "Options Outdoors" offers basic training in canoeing and kayaking on a pleasant creek setting. "Experiencing Watercolour" will be taught by knowledgeable instructors.

All this happens from June 23 to 30. The cost is \$295 which includes accommodation, meals, course instruction and materials.

Phone Barb Heise at SIAST 933-6350 for information.

Preventing Falls

By Mary Helen Richards

The other day an elderly friend of mine fell backwards and hit her head. She was climbing up her front steps, both arms loaded with parcels and she lost her balance. She didn't slip or trip, she just went over backwards and cut a gash in her scalp. This was a warning to her and to all of us as we get older.

Falls which caused little or no damage when we were younger are likely to hurt more now because of changes in our bone and muscular structure. Statistics from the Canada Safety Council tell us that compared with the population as a whole, seniors who fall are three times as likely to need hospital treatment. But my friend was lucky. She ended up with a scratched face and a black eye.

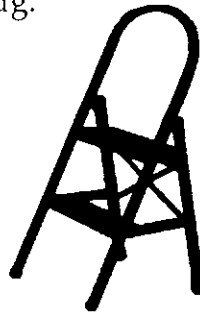
Why do seniors fall more often? Besides such illnesses as heart problems, their medication may have some dangerous side-effects. Tranquilizers and high blood pressure pills may increase the risk of falling. And eyesight, hearing, and coordination aren't as good as they used to be.

However, seniors have one great advantage: they are more experienced. They can anticipate hazards and plan ahead to avoid them. Here are some of their suggestions:

- In the bathroom, install

handrails on the walls by the tub. (Saskatoon Service for Seniors can do this for you).

- Any dimly lit area needs lots more light. For example, the hallway from the bedroom to the bathroom can be lit by using small nightlights in every wall plug.
- Store food and dishes within easy reach. If you must climb up on something, use a short ladder with a grab bar.
- Stairways are a special and serious hazard. Every one should have a handrail and



one hand should be on it.

- Nailed-down carpets and non-skid rugs are essential. Things that stick too much can be a serious hazard too. Crepe-soled shoes have a tendency to stay put as the rest of you keeps on going.
 - Winter has come to Saskatoon and there's not a lot we can do about it. The walks outside are in miserable shape. This might be just the time to get some friends together and organize a mall-walking club.
- (Adapted from Health & Welfare Canada's brochure, "Close-up on Health".)

Drug Information - As Close As Your Diary

The Medication Diary arrived in the mail for most senior Saskatchewanians in December. Coming from the Ministry of Health, the booklet was designed to help seniors keep track of their medications. It contains blank pages into which can be pasted extra pill bottle labels that describe the name and essential information about the prescription. As well, seniors should enter a description of the over-the-counter drugs they may be taking. In this way doctors and druggists will know about current medication.

Why is this important? It seems that the average Saskatchewan resident is receiving more than five prescriptions a year and the average senior is getting over 17 annually.

One of these drugs may affect another one, so there is a real chance of a dangerous interaction. Saskatchewan Health urges seniors to take the completed booklet with them each time they see their doctor or pharmacist.

— Or Your Phone

Consumer Drug Information is available from the College of Pharmacy - Call 975- DRUG, weekdays - 9 to 5 p.m.

Staying Put

By Mary Helen Richards

All seniors have the right to choose where they want to live. "Aging in place" is an option to stay in one's own home. The home may be an apartment, condominium or whatever. Generally it's a place where the senior has lived for several years within the local community. Changing one's residence may mean giving up beloved pets, selling furniture, throwing out treasured mementos. Most of us would rather stay put.

However, there's a minus side to aging in place. Housing needs will change while the house remains the same. Seniors themselves may have some pressures to move, such as worries about finances, health or loneliness. Their grown children may add to the pressure. Concerns for Mother's safety and well-being may be mixed with their desire to simplify her affairs by selling the family home.

But Mother has made up her mind to stay where she is. So her house must be adapted to suit her present situation and she will need information about support services to aid her in independent living. For example:

- Her bank can give an update about her financial status. It might suggest that she look into a reverse mortgage — borrowing against the house resale value.

- To make renovations, she can call Services for Seniors to get advice about installing a main floor bathroom, for example. She will need to get a check on lighting and security.
- The Saskatoon Council on Aging is in the process

of assembling information about local resources. This will be a one-stop centre for referrals and some counselling.

In future issues of "Coming of Age", there will be articles on other options in senior housing.

Services for Seniors

Saskatoon Services for Seniors Inc. is a non-profit organization operating in Saskatoon for the benefit of older persons. It started in May of 1988 offering housecleaning and grass cutting. Today it has a wide range of services for seniors and the disabled helping them to remain in their own houses or apartments. Here are some of their activities:

The Handyman Crew - Made up of retired tradesmen who do minor repairs around seniors' homes.

Home Safety Inspections - Using a form developed by the service, a handyman will check for safety hazards and recommend ways to correct them.

Home Renovation Program - The handyman acts as a consultant to arrange for needed renovations.

Seasonal Yard Work - Students are hired to cut grass, dig gardens, trim trees and hedges, rake leaves and remove snow.

Housecleaning - Ten cleaners are on call, ready to offer whatever cleaning seniors wish. This service can be requested on a daily, weekly, monthly or seasonal basis.

For seniors living in their own homes, such help can make the difference between staying put or having to move into a senior residence. According to the Executive Director Dan Swerhone, it is the small jobs that cause anxiety. Maybe the grass needs cutting or the windows are grimy, jobs that are getting a bit too much for the senior to tackle, and the senior's self-confidence starts to decline. Many older people need just a little help to remain happy and healthy in their own homes. Assistance in getting someone in to do minor repairs removes a lot of the aggravation of trying to keep up a house.

The workers themselves receive a benefit from being with Services for Seniors. Retired handymen, housewives looking for a few hours' work, students who need to cover their school expenses, all find useful employment with this agency.

All seniors, regardless of income level, can make use of this service. Phone 665-0661 for further information.

Volunteer Opportunities at the Mendel Art Gallery

Volunteer opportunities are expanding at Saskatoon's Mendel Art Gallery and seniors are invited to discover how they can benefit as well as their community.

Two areas in the Gallery's programming require help:

- **Volunteer tour guides** are being recruited to give tours to school children. No art experience is necessary. The Gallery staff trains docents (tour guides) by providing an orientation course, holding weekly meetings about exhibitions, writing tour scripts, and by having the educators available to lend a helping hand. In return, docents receive a useful art education. The four day orientation session begins February 4, 1991. For more information, call Cheryl Meszaros, Education Coordinator (975-7610).

- **Volunteers are invited to organize receptions** following openings, lectures and special events at the Gallery. This activity involves planning and ordering refreshments, and being on hand to help during the reception. There is no baking or washing up. Please call Judy Koutecky (975-7610) for details.

Warning

When I am an old woman, I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't
suit me.

And I shall spend my pension on brandy and
summer gloves

And satin sandals, and say we've no money for
butter.

I shall sit down on the pavement when I am
tired

And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm
bells

And run my stick along the public railings

And make up for the sobriety of my youth.

I shall go out in my slippers in the rain

And pick the flowers in other people's gardens

And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go or only
bread and pickles for a week

And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and
things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay the rent and now swear in the street

And set a good example for the children.

We must have friends to dinner and read the
papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?

So people who know me are not too shocked
and surprised

When suddenly I am old and start to wear
purple.

British Medical Journal
Jenny Joseph, from *Rose in the Afternoon*,
Dent, 1974.