

Opasquia Times

Written and Submitted by Denise Duncan

“There is no old age. There is, as there always was, just you.” Carol Grace

The first time the word “Golden Agers” came into our vocabulary was 1961 (according to the Merriam Webster dictionary). It was around this time that The Pas Golden Age Group incorporated and opened their services in our community. For the past 60 years, The Pas Golden Agers have provided necessary social interactions to any person over the age of 55. Their vision is to create a senior’s community free from isolation and full of entertainment, fundraising, special events, conversation and laughter. They operate a senior citizen’s center that includes recreation, educational and cultural programming to ease social isolation and loneliness. The small fee to join is minimal compared to the extensive variety of programming and events that they offer. The group welcome new members joining in the day to day works involving fundraising, setting up daily activities and special occasions. The Golden Agers host potluck meals and desserts for special gatherings and monthly meal feasts. They are always looking for new ways to generate funds to keep the organization operating. They rent out their facility for a reasonable rental fee to responsible groups for private functions and meetings. They are continually looking for ways to boost their fundraising to support events that keep their organization viable.

The Covid-19 crisis has negatively affected the Golden Agers as their center closed in March 2020. Programming is always down for the summer months of July and August, and it would seem that just as they were about to reopen, they are once again closing. They are missing the card games and socialization that comes from activities.

When we are in our working years, we dream of the years that have been called Freedom 55 also known as our “Golden” years. As we approach these years, many times our friends start to die unexpectedly or expectedly and leave us feeling lost and alone. The Golden Age Group is there to fill the void that may exist in our days. In pre COVID-19 times they would meet almost every day with activities such as cards, games, fitness & yoga, soup and sandwich lunches, and special occasions to celebrate Valentine’s Day and Christmas. Many seniors have lost their life partners and are looking for that connection that creates a sense of belonging. Youth is the gift of nature, but age is a work of art.

Having said all of this, this group is only as strong as the membership. Each member that volunteers or graciously steps up to assist with the activities makes the organization stronger. It is unrealistic to think that there will be an abundance of activities and fundraisers if there is only a small core group of people involved. This stands true for any organization

As a community, we must continue to support our seniors and elders. If you see them fundraising, know that it is for a good cause. It is well documented that in order to maintain health and wellness we need to stay centered within the wheel of health. Mental, emotional, physical, environmental, social, spiritual, and intellectual spheres are the spokes of a wheel. All humans thrive when this wheel is in balance. We have a biological need to be around other people for friendship, companionship, love, and safety. Feeling a part of a community increases our immunity and boosts feel good natural body chemicals such as oxytocin and endorphins. These are all associated with a long hug, exercise, and connection. The socialization component of this wheel is the one that the Golden Agers focus on. There is nothing like a good game of cards, a cup of coffee and a visit with another Golden Ager. There

is currently around 90 active members that come to the center when it is open. Some people are lively at 18 and some people are young at 90. "Time is a concept that humans have created." Yoko Ono

Three ladies met with me to share the Golden Ager Group story. They are three of many seniors building a positive influence in our community. They contribute to the welfare of their members by volunteering and taking responsible positions on the executive. They invite other seniors to join and experience the healthy lifestyle of an active older adult who is shining in their Golden years. If you are feeling isolated in your golden years, know that you can join this group of seniors who are determined to stay young at heart through healthy engagement and interactions with other seniors.

I had the opportunity of teaching the golden agers virtual chair yoga this winter. They were not afraid of technology, absorbing the many poses, and open to continued learning. The golden agers I taught are full of life, energy, and contribute to the wellness of our community. Although they miss their coffee times together, they continue to connect looking forward to yoga class, staying strong, healthy, optimistic and enthusiastic. They are wise and fun loving. I genuinely enjoyed teaching the Golden age yoga class, always showing up with a smile on their faces.

Make Shift Happen.