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# THE SHAUNAVON STANDARD



Established 1913. Shaunavon, Saskatchewan

'The Paper That Goes Home'



Age Friendly Shaunavon volunteers visited the Grade 1 class at Christ the King School on Thursday (April 11) as part of the ongoing reading program initiative with the two local elementary schools. Later the volunteers helped students complete a small spring-themed art project.



## Age Friendly Shaunavon gets boost with provincial grant

"Age Friendly Shaunavon - a local organization whose goal is to help facilitate "healthy aging in Shaunavon" - has been approved for a \$25,000 Facilitating Independence of Older Adults in the Community grant from the Government of Saskatchewan and Sask Seniors Mechanism.

The program encourages the development and testing of new ways to support seniors in maintaining independence in their own homes, with the goal of using these approaches in other communities. The program is led by the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) in partnership with the Ministry of Health.

"We have come to realize how important older adults are to our community. They have so much wisdom and experience to share with our town," said Kim Anderson of Age Friendly Shaunavon. "Providing intergenerational multicultural opportunities for social interaction increases the overall physical and mental health of everyone. We want to assist older adults in becoming more active in our community and help them to thrive in their own homes."

"We are pleased to offer these grants that will help find creative ways to support seniors across our province." Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors and Rural and Remote Health Minister Tim McLeod said. "Seniors are valued members of our communities, and their health and well-being is a priority for our government."

Age Friendly Shaunavon also received a Facilitating Independence Grant from the provincial

government last year.

"I'd like to thank the province for recognizing the importance and need for this type of initiative, as well as continuing the funding for this program, because I think it's a much needed benefit for our community," said Shaunavon mayor Kyle Bennett.

"Our local Age Friendly organization has been doing great things," he added. "A lot of times it's just connecting seniors to those resources that they don't know are available. Keeping people in their home and keeping them comfortable and safe is important. And it's not just a case of families looking after their parents and grandparents. It's a community responsibility and we all have to work together on this."

Age Friendly Shaunavon has earmarked the grant money for a variety of local programs and projects, including (among other things);

- out-of-town transportation for medical appointments
- Free garbage pick up for seniors (during garbage transfer weekend sponsored by the Town of Shaunavon)
- Wellness Days - educating older adults and having fun
- Reading Buddies, Tech Time, Art Afternoons, and Exercise for seniors
- increased hours and services for Senior Community Resource Coordinator office

"Age Friendly Shaunavon is doing a lot of different things - their reading program is awesome," said

Bennett. "And their involvement helping local seniors with our Free Garbage Weekend is also terrific. It's great that they're putting volunteers in touch with seniors to help them get (unwanted material) to the collection site. It's just a testament to their organization and the work they are doing."

"They are also a great resource for us (at the municipal level) by helping make us aware about what services are needed and important for seniors," he added.

"We plan to keep meeting with seniors for input about how we can help them to live a long and healthy life in our community," offered Anderson.

The concept of the Age Friendly organization was first broached about three years ago in Shaunavon with the establishment of a Task Force led by volunteers with support from the Town of Shaunavon. Among other things, the task force looked at a needs assessment for Shaunavon and developing a potential pilot project for the community.

The Age Friendly office is located at 420 Centre Street, in the professional building next to MNP. It is currently open Tuesday's between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. and Thursday's between 1-3 p.m.

One of the next big undertakings of Age Friendly Shaunavon will be a Wellness Day at The Bridge on May 16. The event, which is free of charge, will run from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and feature a number of different activities. Individuals can register by phoning 306-294-7653 or by stopping in at the office on Tuesdays.