

Statistics show older adults have an important role

International Day of the Older Person was on Tuesday last week, with Age Friendly Moosomin and the Moosomin Chapter of the STS hosting a coffee house to celebrate.

The theme for International Day of the Older Person this year was “the part we play.” The following statistics come from the “Strategizing for Positive Aging in Saskatchewan” executive summary of a survey that was done by Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism in 2019.

- **Older adults are staying in the labour force longer than in the past.** 53% of respondents indicated that they were still working for pay. With 24% of the respondents aged between 65-69 years, this result is not surprising. Even using the mini-

mum wage and part-time participation, the economic contribution of older adults exceeds \$500 million each year.

- **Older adults make up a significant segment of eligible voters.** In Saskatchewan, research has shown that 73.1% of older adults (65 years +) regularly vote in elections (compared with the overall average of 57%). In future elections, approximately 130,000 older adults are likely to vote—about 16% of eligible voters.

- **Older adults contribute to their communities through volunteering,** and in turn benefit from an increased sense of satisfaction and overall better health. The community benefits through

increased social interactions and creation of social networks that build resilience.

In the survey, 71% of respondents indicated that they were volunteering up to ten hours per week with their family and in their communities. From an economic development viewpoint, this is providing close to \$400 million annually to the life of the province.

- **Older adults are very involved in caregiving,** often providing inter-generational care to others. 23% of the survey respondents indicated that they were actively providing care to family or friends. This is an economic contribution that potentially amounts to about \$25 million annually in unpaid labour.