

ON AGING... AND LISTENING TO THE AGED

By Donna Deos

Welcome to a new year! I thought for this year I would try and focus back on the "On Aging" title to this column more so than the being a nice person track we have been on. Naturally, we should all continue being nice, but really, we can do that while talking about the joys of aging.

Joy number one: with age comes wisdom! Or, so they say. Truly though, our senior citizens do hold a wealth of knowledge that we should try to pay attention to and learn from. Folks in their older years have that much more learned life experience. They have lived more years and therefore have more lessons that could be shared with us to our benefit if we would only take the time and listen to them.

When you have a challenge in your own life you would do well to ask an elder about the situation. I guarantee they will have words to live by to offer you that you can apply to your own situation. Sure, their lives were different in many ways. First, they tended to have longevity with one company or two for most of their lives. This teaches us loyalty and commitment. It teaches us about how to learn to deal with other people you may not like or want to be around and to play nice with those people because like it or not, you could be stuck in the same company with them for a very long time.

They also took the same vows we do when we get married and yet, they carried them out verbatim. Who knows better than someone who has made it 40 or 50 or more years in a marriage how to navigate those waters? They stuck it out. It might have



been easy for some, but for most I'm certain there were many challenges along the way. And yet, they stayed the course. There is plenty to learn about there. These folks are not quitters!

They know about hard work. They didn't have all the fabulous so called advancements that we now experience, which is probably why they tend to be in better shape physically and mentally than the rest of us!

They played outside as kids. They made friends in their neighborhood, played with those kids, worked with them, grew up with them and are likely still friends with them today. They learned how to have and keep relationships and how to grow them. How to eat crow when you need to, apologize when you should, how to forgive, how to turn the other cheek and how to speak up when something truly isn't right.

They fought for what they believed in – with more than just words. They didn't talk bad about or slander other people. They learned to accept the things they could not change, the courage to change the things they could and the WISDOM to know the difference. They know about accountability – to themselves and others.

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They did some amazingly daring things! After all, there was little to no adult supervision when you were outside playing all day and Dad was at work and Mom was cooking and cleaning. Oh the stories they have on this topic! Definitely ask about that one.

They listened to other adults and did what they were told because there were real repercussions back in those days for doing bad things. Any adult could and would come along and discipline any child they saw misbehaving. That's why they all know how to act out in public. It is also why they have little patience for those who do not. Bullying wasn't an issue back then because parents and other adults called the bully out immediately and made them stop. Again, there were repercussions for actions.

Yes, they also loved and lost. They were also treated unfairly by others. They had good times and bad times. They had wonderful adventures. They had amazing triumphs and they had sad and lonely downfalls too. They have lived long enough to have lost many important people and pets in their lives. What's most important is that they lived through all of this and learned from it. They are true survivors

and heroes. They are also teachers to those willing to learn.

Their stories are amazing – if you take the time to hear them. Please do so. You will not only get to know them better, you will get to know yourself better too.

Enjoy the the new adventures ahead of you and live vicariously through their experiences!

All my best,
Donna



Member Pat MacNeil shows off the two matching wreaths she decorated for the Baker Free Library.

The Bow Garden Club GREENS WORKSHOP

A lively group of members gathered at the Old Town Hall on the morning of December 1st to decorate wreaths and make swags for all the town buildings and "Entering Bow" signs located around town. Christmas music, breakfast goodies and coffee were in abundance while the "BGC Elves" snipped greens and wired pine cones, holly, birch bark stars and red ribbons onto their creations. Volunteers later delivered the finished products to their intended locations.

All the while the greens workshop was in production, Bow residents and others who had pre-ordered poinsettias from club members arrived at the Old Town Hall to claim them, happily taking in the sea of hundreds of red, white and pink poinsettias waiting for "Customer Pick-Up". The wonderful aromas emanating from all the pine, balsam and spruce branches that garden club members were working with were as an added bonus! See more Bow Garden Club news on page 22.

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