



e-Newsletter

SeniorsBC.ca

## Message from Parliamentary Secretary Linda Larson



We know that making new social connections and staying active and engaged in the community has a positive effect on one's health and becomes critically important as people age.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with the Okanagan Men's Sheds Association. The development of Men's Sheds has been increasing around the world, with the first Canadian Men's Shed taking root in Winnipeg. Essentially, Men's Sheds are groups of men, mostly those in their older years, who come together at a community location to increase their social connections and work together on projects in a safe atmosphere of old-fashioned friendship.

With members of all walks of life, and all ages, each Men's Shed is unique and reflects the ideas of the men who put it together and what they decide the focus should be. Projects and activities offered at Men's Sheds can include woodwork, metalwork, gardening, photography, guided walking tours, old car restoration and other activities chosen by the members.

The Okanagan Men's Sheds Association does not currently have a permanent location where they meet or permanent equipment that they use for their projects and activities, but they are working to build local connections and opportunities in their communities. At the moment, the Okanagan Men's Shed is looking for volunteers to help establish the first permanent Men's Shed location in Kelowna. Several other communities in British Columbia are also working to establish their own Men's Sheds.

To get in touch with the Okanagan Men's Shed Association or to learn about starting a Men's Shed in your community please phone Art Post at 250 717-1575(home) / 250-826-5100(cell) or email him at [okmshed@gmail.com](mailto:okmshed@gmail.com).

It was great to meet with this group and to learn about this unique way of keeping connected.

Social integration and participation of older adults in society is a powerful indicator of productive and healthy aging. I encourage all older British Columbians to get connected with a local seniors centre in your community to take part in a new activity and to meet new people.

Whether it is a group fitness class, arts and craft or taking part in a community event you are a valued member of your community and you will be sure to benefit from increased social interaction.

For more information about seniors centres in your community please contact your local government or MLA's office.

For more information about Age-friendly BC please visit: [www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly](http://www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly)