

Senior Moments #4
December 8, 2025 City Council Meeting
Senior Volunteers

Senior citizen volunteers are a cornerstone of small communities, offering invaluable experience, wisdom and a better quality of life for people of all ages.

WHY SENIOR VOLUNTEERS MATTER

- **Wisdom and experience:** Seniors bring decades of life and professional experience, offering mentorship, guidance, and practical skills that younger generations may lack.
- **Reliability and commitment:** Many older adults have flexible schedules and a strong sense of civic duty, making them dependable and consistent volunteers.
- **Impact on the community:** Seniors oftentimes serve in roles such as meal delivery, transportation assistance and tutoring, filling critical gaps in small towns.
- **Youth mentorship:** Senior volunteers can reshape youth perceptions and provide emotional support and life lessons.
- **Health and wellness promotion:** Seniors often lead wellness programs, helping others stay active and informed about health issues.

BENEFITS FOR SENIORS THEMSELVES

- **Improved mental and physical Health:** Volunteering has been shown to reduce depression, increase mobility, and even slow aging.
- **Sense of purpose:** Staying engaged gives seniors a renewed sense of identity and belonging.
- **Social connection:** Volunteering combats isolation, helping seniors build friendships and stay socially active.

HOW COMMUNITIES CAN SUPPORT SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

- **Flexible opportunities:** Allow seniors to choose roles and schedules that suit their abilities and interests.
- **Recognition and inclusion:** Celebrate their contributions publicly to foster pride and encourage others.

THREE EXAMPLES OF THE MONETARY VALUE OF SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

- 1. Lakeshore (lighthouse) Keepers - in a 4 month season this year logged 560 senior volunteer hours worth \$16,772*.**
- 2. Ludington Visitor Information Center - in a 5 month season this year logged 769 senior volunteer hours worth \$23,032.**
- 3. Ludington Senior Center - for the year 2024 logged 1,644 senior volunteer hours worth \$49,238.**

*** All dollar amounts are based on a \$29.95 hourly wage recommended by "My Senior Center" Program used at the Ludington Senior Center.**

To end, I share information on two organizations, each led by senior volunteers. The emphasis here is on dollars being generated for non profit organizations.

First, is Women Who Care of Mason County. In August of 2017 two senior women stepped up to resurrect this organization. At that point in time the number of members could be counted on two hands. From that point in time to now, membership has increased to 182 women and they have given \$265,863 to non profit organizations in Ludington and Mason County.

Second, is Men Who Care of Mason County. Started just this year by a recently retired man who wanted to make a difference, this group now totals 60 members and, after just four meetings, have given \$12,400 to non profit organizations in Ludington and Mason County.

To anyone who might be interested in learning more about these two terrific organizations, here is contact information:

Women Who Care: Ruthann Kyle – wwcofmc@gmail.com

Men Who Care of Mason County: Wally Cain – mwcofmc@gmail.com

While it's hard to put a value on all that senior volunteers do for our community, it really is easy to understand that, without a doubt, they are a truly valuable resource and touch the lives of people of all ages.