

# 'Living Well Today for a Better Tomorrow'

May is Older Americans Month. Let's bust some misconceptions; this is a great opportunity to celebrate the "over 60" people in our lives.

This year's theme is "Living Well Today for a Better Tomorrow." The Senior Center will be celebrating this theme throughout May by recognizing our loyal patrons and taking time to celebrate every week with special planned activities.

**Misconception 1:** The Senior Center is just for old people.

This could not be more wrong. Our Senior Center is a vital and active place that encourages people to focus on their strengths while offering needed assistance to make life easier.

Friends meet here daily to play pool, table tennis or bridge, take an acting or yoga class, or engage in many more activities that support the idea of "living well."

**Misconception 2:** Working at the Senior Center is just a job.

Actually, working at the Senior Center is an adventure. I appreciate the people I work with and find that working with the elders of this community is very rewarding.

My official title is Day Break Elder

Care director, but I sum it up more as a gaming professional. I spend my day ensuring that everyone is cared for and then add a large dose of fun.

We concentrate on the desires of those attending to create a warm atmosphere. Our philosophy here at Day Break is to have fun every day, never say I'm sorry if you shaft an opponent during a game, walk through the grass without your shoes on every chance you get, and always eat dessert first. Why not?

The Senior Center is a great place to get away from everything and spend time with friends. Studies have shown that engaging in social activities within the community can greatly improve mental health.

For those of you who have never heard of Day Break Elder Care Service and may be wondering just what it is, let me explain:

**Misconception 3:** Day Break is only for those who are physically ill or have dementia.



## Center Stage

Barb Gibbons



Day Break is an elder care service that offers a home away during the day for elders who need or want to spend the day with others. This is a unique service that is dedicated to keeping elders in their homes and the community.

Day Break offers a social atmosphere for people to mingle with old friends and meet new ones. The staff provides supervision and personal care for those needing assistance with everyday activities of daily living. It assists people of all ages to obtain care that may not be available in their own home.

We enjoy each day and each other's company by playing cards, eating snacks, playing horseshoes, eating lunch, working a crossword puzzle, engaging in a game of Nintendo Wii and finish by eating another snack. There is no lack of activity or food in Day Break.

In all seriousness, we do all those things

but also realize that the elders of the Sheridan community have a lot to share. We are here to listen. We share in people's memories of their past and in life's accomplishments.

**Misconception 4:** The Senior Center has limited services and resources.

Our Senior Center can help guide others in dealing with the future. We offer services assisting people in their homes, getting a ride to the store or church, visiting with someone when caregiving responsibilities become overwhelming, enjoying a delicious hot meal with friends, having a meal delivered in your own home or being cared for and entertained by the Day Break staff.

**Misconception 5:** Elders bite.

In reality, elders don't bite. Make a special point to talk with a senior this month about the best moments in his life. Hearing these stories can help reshape how we view the "over 60" people in our lives.

Come celebrate Older Americans Month with the Senior Center's clients and staff.

*Barb Gibbons is director of the Day Break program at the Sheridan Senior Center.*