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# Services for Seniors and Baby Boomers

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# Strategic Plan

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- ✧ Service to seniors is part of Natrona County Public Library's strategic plan, created in 2006:
- ✧ "Serving the Growing Senior Population: Investigate methods to serve senior citizens in our community. Including 'young-old' (active seniors) and 'older-old' (homebound and those with limited mobility)."

# Why Seniors and Boomers?

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- \* The Baby Boomer generation (those born 1946-1964) are reaching retirement age.
- \* Casper's central location, medical facilities, shopping, assisted living
- \* Boomer Study

# How to Start?

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- \* Senior Center
- \* Meals on Wheels
- \* Webinars, conference sessions
- \* Library “stars”
  - Senior Spaces, Old Bridge Public Library (NJ)
  - SeniorSpace, Cuyahoga County Library (OH)
- \* Senior Network and Adult Protection Groups

# Successful Retirement

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- \* Mental Fitness
- \* Social Interaction
- \* Health & Wellness
- \* Financial & Legal Stewardship

# Programming - What Works?

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- \* Introductory computer classes
- \* Wednesday Writers
- \* Genealogy programs
- \* Independent film series
- \* Book discussions
- \* Medicare Open Enrollment
- \* Digital photography classes

# Programming - What Doesn't?

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- \* Crafty Afternoon
- \* Afternoon book chat
- \* Readalouds
- \* Local/western history
- \* Events for Older American's Month
- \* Book discussion at the Senior Center
- \* "When I'm 64" - senior agencies panel discussion

# Programming – Still to Try

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- \*Cooking demonstrations, tastings
- \*Travelogue and meal
- \*Volunteer-led programming
- \*Current events/coffee klatch
- \*Blood pressure clinic
- \*Aging and spirituality
- \*Value of jewelry
- \*Intergenerational programming



# Community Outreach – What Works?

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- \* Boomer Study
- \* Senior Network and Adult Protection Groups
- \* Booths at senior-focused fairs
- \* Being “The Speaker” at meetings and events
- \* Chew & Chat at Senior Center
- \* Service organizations

# Community Outreach – What Doesn't?

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- \* Senior Center board meetings
- \* Assisted living centers
- \* Meals on Wheels

# Community Outreach – Still to Try?

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- \* Better reader's advisory
- \* Welcome Kit for new seniors

# Library Services and Collections

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- \* Books By Mail
- \* Welcoming, friendly assistance
- \* Large print, bestsellers, books on tape and CD, Playaways
- \* Opening earlier
- \* Bookmobile

# Challenges

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- \* Targeting promotional materials
- \* Generational differences
- \* Communication
- \* Technology
- \* How do you reach the widest audience?
- \* How do you know if you're effective?

# Benefits

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- \* Support from seniors
- \* Increase opportunities for word-of-mouth marketing
- \* Direct-care professionals can help spread the word
- \* Important, growing demographic to serve

# Your Turn

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- \* What services or programs for seniors or Baby Boomers are successful at your library?
- \* What didn't work?
- \* What would you like to try? If money and staff were not limited?

# For Further Reading

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- \* *“Older Adults and Readers’ Advisory”* by Alicia Ahlvers, May 9, 2011, Reference and User Services Quarterly
- \* *Boomers and Beyond: Reconsidering the Role of Libraries* by Pauline Rothstein and Diantha Dow Schull
- \* *5-Star Programming and Services for Your 55+ Library Customers* by Barbara T. Mates
- \* *The Mature Mind: The Positive Power of the Aging Brain* by Gene Cohen



# Thank You

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