

Stoughton Area Senior Center Survey Results: 2023

A survey used previously was edited to evaluate the Senior Center's effectiveness in accomplishing its mission: "to enrich the lives of older adults and their families by providing diverse programs, social services and volunteer opportunities." The multi-service survey combined key questions contributed by Center staff, Evaluation, Program, Volunteer and Public Relations Committees to generate ideas and prioritize future goals.

The survey was advertised in the SASC newsletter, SASC website and Facebook page, Stoughton Tower Times newsletter, and was also emailed to various individuals/email groups and mailed to neighborhoods with senior residents. Respondents had the option to be confidentially entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate. In total, 110 people responded to the survey.

1) What is your age?

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023	% of Total 2020
49 years or younger	1	0.9	0.6
50-59 years	6	5.5	2.4
60-69 years	22	20	22.6
70-79 years	46	41.8	36.6
80-89 years	30	27.3	30.5
90+ years	5	4.5	7.3

2) I am currently:

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023	% of Total 2020
Working part-time	14	12.8	6.2
Working full-time	3	2.8	3.1
Not working / retired	92	84.4	90.7

3) I am a resident of:

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023	% of Total 2020
City of Stoughton	87	79.8	90.2
Cottage Grove	1	0.9	
Town of Dunkirk	5	4.6	4.3
Town of Dunn	3	2.8	0.6
Town of Pleasant Springs	8	7.3	2.4
Town of Milton	2	1.8	
No response	2	1.8	
"Snowbird"	1	0.9	

4) Do you participate at the SASC?

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023	% of Total 2020
Yes	85	79.8	60.4
No	25	22.7	39.6

5) As a result of participating at the SASC...

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023	% of Total 2020
My quality of life has improved.	20	18.2	26.2
I am more physically active.	33	30	20.1
I see friends more often / make new friends.	45	40.9	37.2
I learn new things.	65	59.1	39.6
I have saved money.	23	23.6	14
I am better able to live independently.	22	20	17.7
I would recommend the SASC to my friends.	73	66.4	55.5
Not applicable. I do not participate at SASC.	20	18.2	32.3
No response			2.6
Other (typed in responses below)	12	11.1	12.8
Volunteering; Meals twice a week; I plan to participate more; Hobbies; Meals are great; Better nutrition; Share books; Enhance/supports creativity; You do an excellent job; I love your word searches			

6) If you sometimes choose not to, or have never participated at the SASC, what are some reasons why you don't attend?

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023	% of Total 2020
Parking is difficult at the SASC.	22	20	23.8
I feel I am too young.	5	4.5	6.7
I am too busy / have no time.	21	19.1	20.1
The programs and events do not interest me.	13	11.8	9.1
I have caregiving responsibilities.	8	7.3	8.5
I am in poor health.	5	4.5	9.1
SASC program times are not convenient.	13	11.8	6.8
Transportation is difficult for me.	11	10	9.1
I didn't know what SASC offered.	9	8.2	7.9
I can't afford it.	3	2.7	0.6
Not applicable. I do participate at SASC.	35	31.8	2.4
No response.	1	0.9	1.8
Other (typed in responses below)	20	18.2	18.3
I do participate for social times and special events; Some class fees are prohibitive; Corona virus concerns; Work gets in my way; We just moved to Stoughton; Poor eyesight; I don't know anyone; I just don't know about it; I use a walker; I need to be available for another family member; I do a lot of volunteering; programs are not edifying; I am involved with other clubs; I haven't taken the time; Pandemic restrictions.			

7) We know that parking at SASC can be difficult. Do you have any suggestions?

58 responses

- Negotiate use of the Livsreise parking lot; encourage carpooling, shuttle bus to various parts of the area, or vouchers for taxi service

- I am not sure where to put more parking
- Would a van pickup work?
- Can employees park a little further away? Can there be parking at and after 1pm near the kitchen where the food delivery people park to pick up food/return things?
- Having the parking in the annex area will help.
- Not unless you want to move to a different location
- I walk to the center
- I wish I did, but I don't see an easy solution, as there is no more space available to expand parking.
- Don't know.
- Might spots on the street be served for SASC parking?
- Not that I can think of.
- Move to a new location
- None
- Have activities at other locations in addition to the center
- Bigger parking lot
- I have not had a problem.
- A two-floor ramp next to the annex.
- More street parking, shuttle bus from areas around Stoughton
- Remark the lines downstairs so they are a little more diagonal.
- Make sure folks know about the municipal parking lot nearby (behind Mershan's).
- Sorry - none
- Yes - need room
- not sure - Livsrise has empty spots all of the time
- Purchase adjoining property when & if it is available
- Not at present time
- Is there a budget for a shuttle service from a community parking lot?
- Make a wider parking lot. Suggest parking time limits like from 8:00 to 3:00.
- Tear down the house behind the SASC and make a parking lot
- Valet service with volunteers for special times. One way in & out posted prominently
- No?
- no, get there early
- Work out something with the Norwegian Center to allow some use of their parking lot.
- Scheduling changes
- Move stuff that is stored in the underground parking. Parking is tight enough there without feeling like you could hit some of it.

- Valet, parking, using less used lots of nearby Churches, Nordic Center, car dealer to the extent they might allow. Two or three vehicles each would be doable I should think.
- Maybe have the parking ramp underneath open more hours.
- Street parking is an option.
- The Annex parking will help somewhat.
- Move senior center to a more open location :)
- Small parking ramp in back lot
- A bigger parking lot would be best. No parking garages. I hate those. They are confusing and ugly too.
- Perhaps a sign to get traffic into parking lot.
- I know this would be an added expense: offer transportation to the senior center any time during the day. Like they offer transportation to the malls, plus more events.
- No idea, wish I did
- When it snows, snow needs to be cleared on and off the curb - I use a wheelchair van and can't park on the street as I cannot deploy the ramp due to the snow.
- Please buy out the next light blue house and make it a parking lot as soon as possible
- We need parking on level ground and nearby. Provide free/low cost transportation on a regular schedule for most popular activities.
- Sorry, no.
- No limits on street parking within a block or so

8) If you have participated in Kim's Thursday dine-in meals, do you have any comments? 65 responses

- They are wonderful!
- They are fantastic
- Delicious! Thank you Kim.
- Great food! Would it help with program scheduling if serving time was adjusted 15 to 30 minutes one way or the other?
- It was very organized.
- I have not participated because it's confusing as to when you sign up and if you eat there or if it's delivered
- They are wonderful; Kim and her volunteers are great!
- Haven't participated in Kim's meals.
- Excellent. Keep it up!
- Very good!
- I receive meals on wheels

- Good food, friendly volunteers and staff
- I am not yet ready for large crowds while eating, so do not attend.
- Awesome! food is delicious. So many people enjoying good company and great food.
- Wonderful job! Well organized, delicious, affordable, easy to pick up.
- Only dine-out at home meals
- They're good tasting and affordable
- All the time excellent
- GOOD!
- Haven't dined in but have picked up - delicious!
- More, this is a winning program for all SCSA members
- Very nice service. I know lots of people who enjoy
- Excellent meals
- Delicious!
- I would like to participate, they sound delicious.
- Yes we have and enjoy them and the company. We have met many new people.
- No, eat at home
- The ones we have participated in, we have greatly enjoyed!
- Yes. I think she should also offer it to drive up.
- New to Stoughton, I wasn't aware of such an offering!
- Kim always does a great job!
- Highlight of my week
- Magnified. Keep these coming
- Great food
- Yes, wonderful treat!
- Offer more of them, plus that good cheese spread she makes - offer it more frequently
- None - Excellent - low sodium
- Kim's meals are great.
- Food is good most of the time. Please do not rush us out.
- Taste great!
- I appreciate a good meal.
- I have not but I plan to in the future.
- Not dine-in, but carryout. Great!
- Love them!
- The few times I have eaten there the food has been very good!

- Very good at a reasonable price

9) If you have participated in Kim's Thursday drive-thru meals, do you have any comments? 60 responses

- A wonderful convenience to enjoy a tasty and nutritious meal.
- Most are very good, but some are very high in carbohydrates.
- They are fantastic
- It goes pretty smoothly.
- A very nice option; I pick up meals for my neighbors who have difficulty getting out.
- Wonderful program!!!
- It was well organized, easy to pick up and delicious.
- Well organized group
- Great!
- Wonderful!
- Works very good
- We enjoy her meals when the menu items appeal to us.
- Very Good!
- Have not, but plan to sometime
- Very efficient
- All is a well organized group
- Very well organized & efficient. Thank you for having a drive-through option.
- I so enjoy not having to cook a meal. Good food - thanks!
- They are great! The pick-up is convenient and efficient.
- Fabulous - a real blessing. We can tell when she cooks. Thank you Kim & volunteers! We love them twice a month. We look for lower carb meals. Appreciate veg & fruit included
- Good service & Good food!
- During warm weather we often make use of the drive-thru opportunities - good offerings and prices!
- Works quite well.
- Wasn't aware of such.
- Bless them for standing out in cold.
- They are great. I pick up mine plus a few others.
- Corned Beef and Cabbage was great.
- They are wonderful
- Since Covid, I mostly dine-in. When I did drive-thru, it seemed portions were smaller
- Keep up the good work!

- Have not
- great service, very efficient and organized
- Well-organized
- Very good and reasonable cost

10) We have acquired the annex building next door and are beginning a renovation. What types of programs would you like to see? 71 responses

- Senior dance lessons, exercise classes
- More exercise programs and classes on how to do different things
- A quiet area for reading?
- Educational- Jessica Mincha, health, world Entertainment- singers, bingo, movies, trivia Arts and Crafts Euchre, Canasta, board games, puzzles, Afternoon chair stretch, maybe 3 pm Also, please don't have all the stuff at 1pm.
- Dancing opportunities. Madison sr cent offers a band weekly. or waltzing, zumba
- Norwegian language lessons
- More craft classes
- More entertainment: movies, music, etc. More educational and exercise classes
- Yoga, health and nutrition classes, bread baking, seasonal cookie decorating, seasonal greeting cards, painting classes, trivia games, card playing – other than euchre and bridge, seasonal floral arrangements
- Health centered topics presented
- More travel, more group activities
- Movies in a quieter setting
- Music acts, lectures
- Write your own story, your own obit, refinishing furniture, sewing groups
- Travel, more active programs
- Rosemaling
- Quilting group, card game groups, mag-jong, gameboard games, groups that go to theaters nearby like the Fireside or overture center
- A craft room would be nice including a sink and shelving or lockers to leave personal property
- Swimming pool
- Ping pong (they sometimes have 10 players in the current location)
- An exercise room with a treadmill and bikes
- Painting class... a Wise Guys discussion gathering: topics of general nature strictly geared toward matters male seniors might bring forward, barring only politics and

religion and deeply personal matters. An excellent ongoing example exists in Ann Arbor, my recent residency.

- Permanent art/craft/sewing room where basic supplies and ample work space is available. Must have good lights,
- Sauna with shower, healing room (massage reflex, etc.), more regular healthcare: basic check-ups
- I-phone help
- Dedicated coffeehouse open to the community
- Intergenerational stuff
- Ancestry classes
- Educational programs
- Cornhole games

11) Would you like to participate in online/virtual classes or groups? If so, what are your interests? 68 responses

- Not too excited about this, did enough during pandemic
- Language i.e. Spanish
- I would rather be around people. Too much stuff is online.
- Either way depending on the class. I'm interested in just about any type of crafting but not at 8 in the morning
- A small change in health can have a profound impact on our ability to remain in our current house. What resources are available to enable us to avoid moving? What actually are our options? While everyone is different perhaps a group discussion with a variety of suppliers of services and alternative living arrangements would be helpful. Include some seniors that have already made changes.
- In person events are always better
- History, money-making opportunities
- Timely topics such as how to get rid of spam phone calls or recognize fraud; public health issues in Dane county, how to live more sustainable, etc.
- Gardening
- Financial classes
- Cooking, getting to know new businesses in the area, crafting
- Online needlecrafts, exercise or lecture series
- Writing, painting, sketching can be done online with perhaps an in-person session monthly
- I have been playing online Bingo – Goodman Center. Could do Euchre online
- How to use tech devices

- Music appreciation
- A book club, how to cook for one
- I remember going to Zumba classes at one time. Would like to see them come back

12) Which pages of the *Yahara Senior News* newsletter do you find most beneficial?

Options Given	# of Responses	% of Total 2023
Local Services / Support (p. 2-3)	51	48.1
News & Information (p. 4-6)	74	69.8
COA Meeting Notes (p. 7)	24	22.6
Programs / Activities (p. 10-12, 19)	83	78.3
Puzzles (p. 13)	36	34
Online Classes / Activities (p. 14)	31	29.2
Meal Site Menu (p. 16-17)	52	49.1
Other (typed in responses below)	13	12.3
Highlight nutrition; I very seldom get the newsletter; We haven't received this; All of the above; Calendars; Calendar of events; I read most of it; I don't get this; Do not receive; Have not seen it; Human interest stories; Trips; All of them		

13) Each year we must fundraise \$29,500 to go towards SASC's operational fund. What recommendations do you have for us to reach our funding goals? (i.e. types of events, ideas for projects, mailings, food or items for sale) 60 responses

- The calendar is a great idea. Summer picnic and dance should continue.
- Summer picnics at a local park, love the calendar sale, compile the 50th anniversary pics into a small booklet for sale, dinner dance
- What you are doing is fine
- Do we fund raise during Syttende Mai?
- Spaghetti supper; basket raffles; silent auctions; bake sale; wine, cheese and chocolate tasting; senior game night or trivia night with appetizers. Picnic with entertainment.
- Offer a quilt making workshop and raffle off the quilt
- Craft sale, sell vendor space, along with food sales for lunch such as soup or chilli and baked goods including gluten free choices and treats for pets
- Have many articles in the Hub to promote the Center. Ask for donations during the whole year, not just in December
- Norwegian baking class and bake sale, woodworking class and sale of products made, plant flowers and have a sale,
- Have a raffle of donated items
- Travel, events at affordable, but profitable prices
- Drive thru breakfast, pancake breakfast, bake sales

- If not already done, appeal to the local service clubs/associations for donations
- 50/50 raffles
- Black tie Bingo, Silent Auction Festival with donated jewelry sales
- Concerts, gala, food & dancing
- Charge a little for movies
- Get more corporate sponsors
- Food stand at Syttende Mai
- Expand sale of woodworked items to include jewelry and crafts
- Theater activity skits, SCRIP gift cards, Fish Boil, partner activity with the school district

14) What kind of volunteer opportunities would you like to see at SASC? 35 responses

- Most needs are already covered by the existing volunteer positions. Help with house and yard chores for home-bound; transportation assistance
- Current opportunities work fine for me
- Something for someone with limited mobility
- Volunteers to participate in fund raising by making and selling products for various annual sales
- Pet therapy, visits to help seniors in home with pets to support them – take to vet, groomer, walk dogs, etc.
- Marketing
- Home visitors
- Drivers to pick up people for classes if necessary
- Meal prep
- Driving to/from appt, shopping – answer correspondence – setup/cleanup events
- Published author leading a writing group
- Welcome wagon concept for new senior residents
- Intergenerational activities: invite Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts high school Key Club for something. I really enjoyed seeing the football seniors vs seniors in the newspaper. Something along those lines.
- Greeting ambassador
- Transportation help. People who can drive someone into Madison. Financial help. People who can help with signing up for Traditional Medicare (NOT Medicare Advantage) and help with signing up with any supplemental insurance that would be needed with Traditional Medicare. Also, someone who can help people sign up for Social Security and/or drive them to the social security office in Madison. Those kinds of volunteers would be appreciated.

15) If you are currently a volunteer for SASC, do you have any suggestions on how to improve your volunteer experience? 24 responses

- A simple verbal thank you means a lot; Kim obviously appreciates her volunteers
- I am very satisfied with my volunteer experiences; everyone is pleasant to work with!
- I do volunteer & I think the program is great!
- I enjoy my volunteer time. No suggestions to improve for me.
- I enjoy volunteering and feel appreciated
- I think the support is wonderful
- I was a support group leader and found the staff support excellent!
- Everyone is treated well there

16) Do you have any suggestions for improving the programs or services we provide at the SASC? 42 responses

- I like the ones that keep people active, the travel shows are also nice
- Not everything at 1pm/1:30pm
- Move ping pong to the annex for better room. offer more dancing opportunities
- There are a lot of people with physical experience and abilities at the Senior Center. Perhaps a simple "Fix-it" concept could be used to help people with difficulty getting things like lamps repaired and batteries changed. Nothing too large.
- It would be nice if SASC had more case-management hours; the case managers have heavy loads.
- Larger woodshop
- Refresh the entire building as it looks and seems "old and tired" inside and out. Entry/sign in process is disorganized (ex - name cards are not alphabetized for computer sign-in) and crowded. Holding meetings or activities in large main room are often interrupted by distractions.
- More variety. Keep asking about offerings and ideas from the members.
- More for more active people
- More activities in the afternoon. Too hard to get moving in the morning sometimes.
- Weekly blood pressure days, more shopping days, bingo
- Sharing craft room, get/give to others that aren't needed or used at home.
- Would love to see more travel opportunities - some time ago a trip to Iceland was offered, but we couldn't take advantage of it then, was hoping for more. The tour of the lake afternoon boat ride was lovely. Let's do more of this!
- More bus tours (like you have to Brewers' Game) to sites in Southern WI: historical sites, Taliesen, House on the Rock, Fireside Theatre/dinner, are some ideas.
- I'm glad we have the Senior Center. I just don't get out much.
- You do a great job, but I would like to see condos for Seniors in wheelchairs with parking (maybe underground) for their vans with double parking stalls so they can get their ramp out and continue to be independent. If you have influence on making them available in Stoughton, it would be great!
- Keep the RSVP program going

- Just somehow getting greater involvement
- More aggressive encouragement of seniors learning to use a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Individually set them up with an email account, facebook, etc. to connect them with family and friends that they don't currently have an ongoing relationship with. In other words, broaden their relationships to help fight loneliness.
- More options for hours of activities.
- Consider making friendship fund available all the time - lower income isn't sporadic and health maintenance is an ongoing must
- Keep the art and travel programs coming
- Keeping programs you have, but maybe adding things that improve your mind, health and financial fitness. Things that would help you stay positive and current.
- Keep up the good work! This is the first town I've lived in that had a very active senior center with "something for everybody". A special thank you for all that you offer to senior citizens
- Could we list in area Shoppers once a month?
- Have music scheduled once a week. Have a regularly scheduled person (like Ally) with a continuing weekly computer class so people can ask questions and have it explained. (I need things explained several times to understand them!)
- more music
- We are very fortunate in Stoughton to have such a good Senior Center. Thanks for all that you do.

Summary

Age: 110 responses

Most participants are between 60 and 89 years of age, although the 70-79 group is most represented in this survey.

60-69 = 22

70-79 = 41.8

80-89 = 27.3%

Current status: 109 responses 84.4% of participants are retired or not working.

Residency: 109 responses 79.8% are residents of Stoughton.

Participation: 110 responses 77.3% say they participate at the SASC.

Results of participation: 110 responses

40.9% say they see friends more often and make new friends.

59.1% say they learn new things.

66.4% would recommend the SASC to a friend, but 22.7% say they do not participate.

Reasons some do not attend: 110 responses

There was a wide variety of responses in this category. The two most cited reasons were

parking problems (20%) and no time (19.1%).

Yahara Monthly Newsletter: 110 responses

The pages seniors most often found beneficial were Local Services and Support (48.1%), News & Information (69.8%), Programs & Activities (78.3%), and the meal site menu (49.1%)

Conclusions/Observations

Clearly, the SASC fills a niche for many seniors in the Stoughton Area. It is a community space that allows seniors to gather socially, receive support, find answers to questions and to be entertained. Many feel that it helps to improve their quality of life; being more active, meeting up with friends and making new friends. The current programs were all supported in the responses.

When asked for suggestions for improvement, many simply complimented the staff on the great job that was being done. Many responses were very creative, and maybe a little wishful: swimming pool, sauna. Not all responses are listed in this report. There were a fair number of repetitions, so while all responses are represented, they are not all individually listed. There were many suggestions for new programs including travel, both short and long distances, hobby-based such as sewing, a store to sell crafted items and always more movies and music.

This survey shows a decreased interest in participation: 135 responses in 2017 and 164 in 2020 and 110 in 2023. The responses seem to indicate enthusiasm for the programs and services that are provided with some wariness of Covid 19 and pandemic safety measures. With all the current programs and the many that were suggested, the new annex space will be well-used, and the expanded wood workshop space will be much appreciated. Parking was an issue for many respondents and was listed as a reason that more people do not come to the center. This too should be given consideration.

Overall, the survey shows a satisfaction with the SASC on the part of Stoughton Area Seniors who participated in this survey. This is their community space and many use it as both a social gathering space and support for various needs.

Recommendations:

COA

- Review the comments and results as part of the accreditation and improvement process. Some of these can become part of action plans that may come from the process.

Programming

- Review possibilities for offering types of classes and events expressed in comments.
- When safe to do so, consider doing some satellite programs with Skaalen, senior housing, local agencies or town halls.

Public Relations

- Consider how we can improve our marketing to be more welcoming and give a better depiction of how people of all abilities can participate at the Center.
- Consider ways of emphasizing our Friendship Fund option for people who see money as an issue for participating at the Senior Center.

Evaluation

- Determine how to share the information from this survey with the public; consider how to display highlights in an engaging way via the newsletter and social media.

Fund Development

- Review and assess fundraising recommendation and the need to increase staff time.