

Senior Spotlight:

Sheila Painter

At the height of the recession after the 9-11 tragedy, Sheila Painter lost her job at age 50. Although she continued to network and job hunt, she was unable to find employment. Sheila "fell into various volunteer jobs and hobbies to keep busy." She found that the only people available to 'hang out with' during the day were those not working, and by definition, many of those people were senior citizens. Gradually, Sheila found herself involved in senior activities, and enjoyed them.

Sheila says with pride, "On my 55th birthday, I signed up at the Sylvania Senior Center, which is walking distance from my home." At the Senior Center, "a whole new world opened up for me! I could play cards with others at 1:00 in the afternoon! I found other quilters like me, who sewed together in the mornings rather than join rush hour traffic at 9 am. I dabbled in exercise classes, browsed the free library, and joined a few groups of like-minded seniors. People were so nice and welcoming, and I felt comfortable."

The years have flown by, and Sheila has made a good life for herself as a retiree in her hobbies and volunteer work. She still comes to the senior center regularly, three to four times each week. Reading the monthly newsletter, she circles items of interest, and polls friends on who will attend programs with her.

But Sheila remains one of the youngest in attendance at Center events. As she describes it, "My non-grey hair (well, mostly

non-grey) stands out in the crowd." Moreover, her friends are either still working or have no interest in 'being with the old people'. She tells them "Well, hey, we are the seniors of tomorrow. If we want there to be a Sylvania Senior Center for us when we need it, we have to support it now."

Sheila firmly believes that quality of life is so much better when keeping active, among similar people, and being

contented. She says "The Sylvania Senior Center can provide such comfort. I am proud to be a member of the Sylvania Senior Center!"

