

I The Shed

Issue 1
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The Official Newsletter of the US Men's Shed Association



GUYS AT THE HONOLULU MEN'S SHED - GLENN, MICK, ROBERT, JONATHAN AND TAY
BUILD A WORK TABLE FROM "FOUND" WOOD PALLETS

The Men's Shed is an international phenomenon with thousands of clubs worldwide. We answer men's innate need for activity. A Men's Shed is a club, mainly for older men, outfitted with tools and equipment, a pot of coffee and a friendly atmosphere. We join to make and repair stuff and to tinker. In the end, we make friends and discuss troubling health issues. The key to our popularity is best expressed in our motto: men don't talk face to face, they talk

shoulder to shoulder

INTRODUCING MEN'S SHEDS TO THE USA

The US Men's Shed Association (USMSA) has received much media coverage in the past two years. Sheds have been featured on local radio stations and in newspapers. This media coverage has helped publicize the concept of Men's Sheds in our communities. The result? New members and great public service projects.

On the national level, two events have resulted in requests for new Sheds nationwide. Some months ago Dawn Fallik wrote an article about Sheds in the US. It appeared in the *Washington Post* and was reprinted in newspapers around the country.

More recently, producers of *NBC's Today Show* contacted USMSA Director Mark Winston, asking about Sheds in the US. NBC was planning a weeklong series on men in the US and how they were making connections and new friends in spontaneous and interesting ways. Winston convinced NBC to feature Men's Sheds. From a list of US Sheds the producers selected the *Grand Traverse City Men's Shed* in Michigan.

Shed Leader Jim Novak arranged for the *Today* crew to attend a regular meeting day to meet members and tape their activities.

The filming took six hours and was edited down to four minutes of air time. Novak was surprised at how comfortable the film crew made the experience for him and the other members. About an hour and a half of that time was spent interviewing Novak at the Shed. They also interviewed Shed Member Bob Cichocky, and his wife Linda about their Shed experience.

To see the final version of the NBC *Today Show's* 4:10 minute segment, click this link.

<https://www.today.com/video/how-one-man-is-trying-to-foster-friendships-among-retired-men-1380575299819>



Courtesy NBC's Today Show

AL AND RON OF THE GRAND TRAVERSE CITY MEN'S SHED BEING VIDEOTAPED FOR *THE TODAY SHOW*

URGENT URGENT URGENT

GRANT WRITER AND FUNDING SPECIALIST NEEDED!

THE US MEN'S SHED ASSOCIATION DESPERATELY NEEDS THE HELP OF A GRANT WRITER AND A FUNDING SPECIALIST. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU FIT THE BILL OR IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOES.

PHIL JOHNSON

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PHILIP JOHNSON

AARP ISOLATION BUSTER

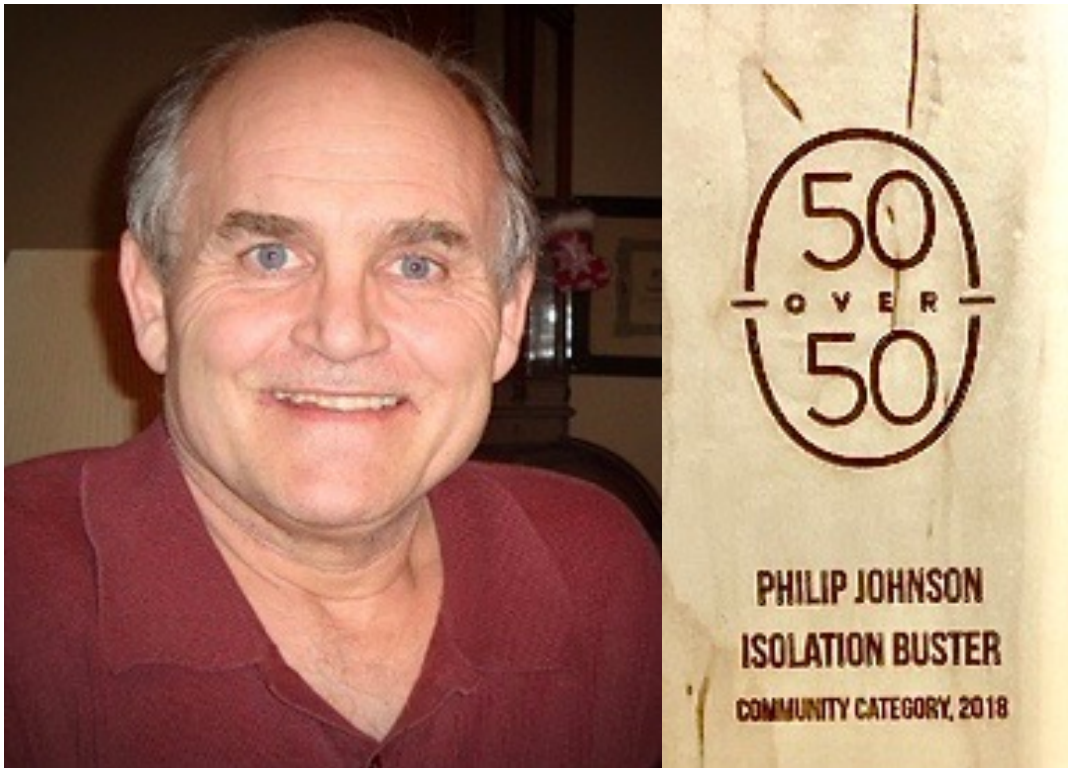
The American Association of Retired People (AARP) annually selects 50 individuals over 50 years of age to be recognized for their volunteer contributions. This year a US Men's Shed member was selected for his work as an "Isolation Buster."

Sixty-nine-year-old **US Men's Shed Director Philip Johnson of Wayzata, Minnesota** is a national volunteer organizer for the US Men's Shed Association, a non-profit organization focused on reducing social isolation, loneliness, and loss of self-esteem among retired men. The idea: to give men opportunities to build community and connection by spending time together in... you guessed it ...Men's Sheds.

A Men's Shed is a group of locally organized older men looking to work together, make friends and socialize in the company of men. Johnson was one of the first people in the US to see the potential in the Men's Shed movement and to see it as a national force for improving the physical and mental health of older men in America.

Phil, impressed by the well-documented health and well-being experienced by Men's Shed members in other countries, brought the first operating US Men's Shed together in Minnesota in 2016. Within the year, he helped start five local Men's Sheds in Minnesota and Wisconsin and, in the process, donated over 3,000 hours of his time to that effort during the last two years.

Working with Men's Shed Leaders in Australia, Ireland, the UK and Canada, Johnson and the four other Directors of the US Men's Shed Association have seen the formation of 13 active Men's Sheds in the US, with another 10 Sheds now being formed around the country.



PHIL JOHNSON, US MEN'S SHED - ISOLATION BUSTER

WHERE'S THE NAIL PUNCH?

A diversional therapist at a South Australian residential aged care facility told me of this experience. She couldn't wait for the planned Men's Shed to form in their high care facility.

From a hardware shop, she purchased seven flat pack, pre-drilled, pre-cut wooden toolboxes. She organized a table in the day room for men with dementia.

With some assistance, they assembled the toolboxes using screwdrivers and hammers. One man who hadn't spoken for two years suddenly



exclaimed, **"It's not good enough!"** After the therapist picked herself up off the floor, she asked, "What do you mean?"

He replied, **"These nails and screws need to be counter sunk, now where's the nail punch?"**

When the focus is on what you have rather than what you've lost, those with dementia are enabled to use their existing abilities. Miracles can happen.

These things are 'hard wired' into us and it may just take permission for a man to again use tools he had once used well to improve his quality of life. In *Using Activities for Behavior Intervention*, Carly Hellen states:

"Work is a source of a meaningful quality of life. Residents with dementia all were viable, active citizens in their homes, jobs, and community. The challenge is to take the tasks that they at one time were engaged in easily, ... and successfully adapt or modify them for a continued sense of purposeful participation."

Keith Bettany

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WOMEN MEN'S SHEDDERS

JANICE McDOWELL

Janice McDowell serves in the Air Force and is one of our US Men's Shed Directors. She's an enthusiastic supporter of the Men's Shed movement.

She tells us, "I have lived more than ten years with my garage as my husband's workshop. During our moves, there have been months of transition when Mylan has been without his tools and it has negatively impacted his well-being."

In early 2016, Janice viewed *Turning Point*, a TV program about the Irish Men's Sheds. "My initial thought was that someday it would be a great organization to donate Mylan's tools to. The concept kept coming back to me and I felt the need to participate in starting a US Men's Shed."

Working with the US Men's Shed Association helped fulfill McDowell's need to do volunteer work. "I love the concept and it is very fulfilling to see their progress. It has also allowed me to reach out to other organizations supporting Men's Sheds."

"What would you tell other women who would like to contribute in some way?" - Ed

"Having a Men's Shed helps the entire community. As women, we often have a more in-depth ability to see the needs in others. By supporting the Shed movement, we will be able to help our loved ones also see the needs in others and give them an avenue to reach those needs."



JANICE MCDOWELL

Future newsletters will feature more women making history in the Men's Shed. Editor

CHANGEX HELPS ROSEVILLE MEN'S SHED

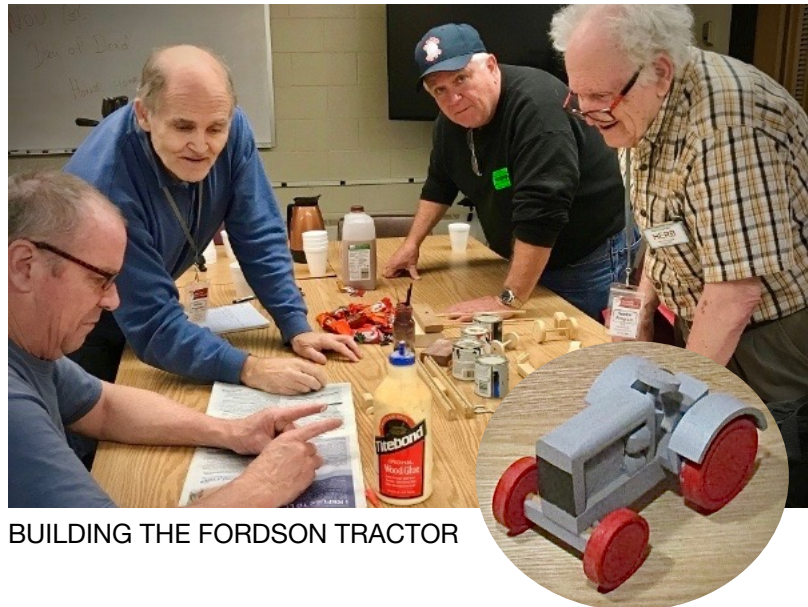
ChangeX is an innovative upstart that provides tools and resources to local community leaders. An online platform, [ChangeX](#) started in Dublin, Ireland in 2014, and recently expanded to Minnesota. Recently *ChangeX* made a 30-Day Challenge, offering to reward each new Men's Shed from their Greater Minnesota Fund.

The Roseville Men's Shed, one of four Minnesota Men's Sheds and a member of the US Men's Shed Association, completed the five requirements to meet that challenge and received a \$500 check from *ChangeX*.

Using that contribution, the Roseville Men's Shed is making toy wooden tractors to donate to charities and sell for support. The design is of a 1920's tractor actually built in Dublin called the Fordson tractor. This tractor was the most used in WWII.



ROSEVILLE RECEIVES A \$500 GIFT FROM CHANGEX



BUILDING THE FORDSON TRACTOR



A NAIL DRIVING CONTEST - HMMM
SOUNDS LIKE AN IDEA FOR A MEN'S SHED FUNDRAISER!

**Interested in what it takes
to start a Men's Shed?**

Contact:

Mark Winston
mark@usmenssheds.org

Phil Johnson
phil@usmenssheds.org

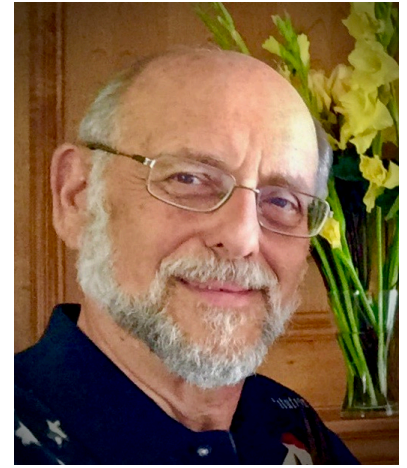
Or check out [Start-a-Shed](#) on the
[US Men's Sheds website](#)

BELLINGHAM'S SUCCESS STORY

The Men's Shed of Bellingham, Washington, located north of Seattle close to the Canadian border is up and running. The club is led by a steering committee of nine guys who have been hard at work since September planning, organizing and creating a schedule of activities. Marshall Gartenlaub, their leader, caught the "Men's Shed fever" after reading a June 18, 2018 article in the Seattle Times, a reprint from the Washington Post.

Once hooked, Marshall presented the concept to multiple groups in Bellingham. Gartenlaub also gathered email lists from the Senior Activity Center, Newcomers Club, a men's walking group, a range of church groups and a multitude of friends. He then distributed the original article plus a YouTube video from the Canadian Men's Shed to all the names he had gathered.

After several presentations Gartenlaub formed a steering committee. The Bellingham Men's Shed now has close to 50 active participants. Starting in January the Bellingham Shed is being sponsored by the Whatcom County Council on Ageing as part of their Bellingham Senior Activity Center.



MARSHALL GARTENLAUB



THE BELLINGHAM MEN'S SHED MAKING PLANS

GOOD NEWS TRAVELS FAST

GRAND TRAVERSE MEN'S SHED

The good news of the Grand Traverse Men's Shed is traveling fast, thanks to some fortuitous and unexpected publicity and the resulting generosity of supporters and donors. In the five months since we became active, our membership has tripled to 31 and our Men's Shed has moved to a spacious industrial building south of town.

The Grand Traverse Men's Shed story began in August of 2018 when local founder Jim Novak attended a meeting of the City Commission to inform government officials of the group's existence and that we were seeking financial support and a suitable location.

At the time there were ten members meeting in Novak's garage. Unbeknownst to Novak, a representative of a local digital news source was at the meeting and mentioned the group in an article. That led to a discussion on a Traverse City talk radio program. From there, an individual came forward offering use of a 2,000-square-foot industrial facility in exchange for paying the utilities, taxes and insurance. The Men's Shed relocated in October. Then in late November came a feature on *NBC's Today Show* (*see page 2*), which promptly generated a membership spurt.

Our members come from various backgrounds: business owners, a doctor, dentist, automotive teacher, engineer, geologist, logger, journalist, Navy pilot, Jr. high school teacher, Air Force Colonel, contractor, police officer, and an insurance salesman. We're all working shoulder-to-shoulder three days a week to benefit other organizations and our own health and happiness.



AUGUST, 2018
GRAND TRAVERSE MEN'S SHED
MEETING IN NOVAK'S GARAGE



TODAY: AT WORK IN
A 2,000-SQUARE-FOOT
GRAND TRAVERSE MEN'S SHED

WASHINGTON, FLORIDA AND LOUISIANA

ALL HAVE NEW MEN'S SHEDS



This fall brought three new Men's Sheds to the US. The first was the Bellingham Men's Shed in Bellingham, Washington, north of Seattle, Washington. They are operated by a steering committee of 8. *(See the story featured on page 6)*

The North County Men's Shed in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, is being sponsored by the Palm Beach Senior Center. It is led by Steve Werner and the Shed plans to work with the Police League. Here they're shown at a get-together. What better way to get things moving than to throw a party?

Finally, the Ruston Men's Shed in Ruston, Louisiana, opened its doors with a party last November. They will meet on their Community College campus.

This Shed is led by Beulah Laster, who owned a very large construction company in Louisiana west of Baton Rouge. Beulah's reason for starting their Shed? She wanted to give back to the community.



These new Men's Shedders are shown here discussing a project with a local Boy Scout troop.

The US Men's Shed Association has 13 local Men's Sheds in operation with another 10 Sheds now being formed around the country. The active Men's Sheds are located in Hawaii, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida, Louisiana and Washington State. The US Men's Shed Association is managed and operated by a five-member Board of Directors: Phil Johnson of Wayzata, MN, Mark Winston of Jackson, WY./Zanderhoof, BC, Janice McDowell of Navarre, FL, Matt Stewart of Springville, UT and Glenn Sears of Honolulu, HI