

St. Pauli News in Detail



ANNUAL MEETINGS

ST. PAULI CONGREGATION

February 4, 2024

11:30 am

ST. PAULI CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

February 4, 2024

following Congregation Meeting



Potluck dinner

following annual meetings

Freewill offering to benefit Hospice

IMPORTANT: Designated persons need to submit their reports to Cindy Cedergren no later than January 22nd for inclusion in the St. Pauli Annual Report. The booklets will be ready for review on January 28th.

Submittals can be made in electronic (Word or Excel) or typed paper formats. Please email to cindyced@outlook.com, or mail to 15216 140th St NE, TRF, or place in Cindy's church mailbox.

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St. Pauli Handbook

Be sure to check your church mailbox and pick up your 2024 Handbook. It contains the schedules for St. Pauli

meetings and events, cleaning/ushering schedules, contact information, and much more. Thanks go to Cindy Cedergren for updating this handbook. Extra *Christ in our Home* devotion booklets are also available for pickup on the table below the mailboxes.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who has conducted services in 2023: Kevin Reich for his steadfastness, Kari Torkelson for being willing to serve whenever called, and Faye Auchenpaugh for reading Pastor Carl's sermons for our Lenten services.

We are grateful that we now will have Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom presiding monthly for Holy Communion and thank her for her willingness to make the long drive from Grygla to do so. We are blessed.

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HOLY COMMUNION

We will continue having Holy Communion on the last Sunday of the month at 11:30 am with Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom.

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Greeting and Ushering

Jan. 7	Jordan Rondorf
Jan. 14	Arlo Rude
Jan. 21	Wahna Smith
Jan. 28	Mike Stickler (11:30am)

Altar Preparation: Barb Nelson

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January Milestones

Birthdays

Jan. 13	Noah Haugen
Jan. 17	Erin Rondorf

Anniversaries

Jan. 3	Jim and Jan Strandlie
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Minutes of the Church Council

November 16, 2023

The St. Pauli Church Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 7 p.m. at St. Pauli Church. Members present: Jim Strandlie, Cindy Cedergren, and Myles Alberg.

Council President Jim Strandlie called the meeting to order and opened with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as distributed.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the September 21, 2023 meeting were previously approved via email. No meeting was held in October. M/S/C (Alberg/Strandlie)

Treasurer's Report: The report for October was approved as sent via email from Treasurer Benson. M/S/C (Alberg, Strandlie)

Checking Account Balance End of Sep 2023	\$18,595.59
Oct 2023 Revenue	5,321.81
Oct 2023 Expenses	(1,760.17)
Checking Account Balance End of Oct 2023:	\$22,157.23

Other Account Balances End of Oct 2023:	
Education Fund	\$1,427.58
Edward Jones	69,880.88
Memorial Fund	9,118.95
Mission Grant	5,539.65
Savings	37,500.07
Total Account Balances End of Oct 2023:	\$145,624.36

Reports of Members in sickness or distress: The Council extended well wishes to Jim Kotz, following a recent surgery.

New Members or Interest in Membership: Regarding current membership, Cindy Cedergren reported that the John Cervantes family has officially transferred to First Lutheran Church in Detroit Lakes, MN, and will be removed from St. Pauli's membership roster.

Other Reports:

1) WELCA: Cindy Cedergren reported that the Fall Event's net proceeds totaled \$2,085. WELCA distributed \$2,000 to various charities at their meeting on November 15th.

2) Sunday School Committee: Sunday School Christmas program is scheduled for Sunday, December 17 at 10:30 am, in place of the worship service. Potluck lunch to follow.

Old Business:

Stained Glass Window Update: Marisa Benson reported via email that it will take another 2-3 weeks for the final rendering, then we approve it, then another 6-8 weeks for manufacturing. It came in at only \$660 which is well under the \$1200 received for Ivette's memorials.

New Business:

1) Annual Meeting Date: The date was set for Sunday, February 4, 2024, following the worship service. It was noted that four of the five current Council members will have completed their terms this year.

2) Upcoming Worship Service Leader/Pastor Schedule:

Nov. 26 – Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom (11:30)
Dec. 3 – Kari Torkelson
Dec. 10 – Kevin Reich
Dec. 17 – No leader needed (Sunday School Program)
Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve Service –
Kevin Reich and Pastor Carl Hansen
Dec. 31 – Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom (11:30)
Jan. 7 – Jim will ask Kari Torkelson
Jan. 14 – Kevin Reich
Jan. 21 – Kevin Reich
Jan. 28 – Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom (11:30)
Feb. 4 – Jim will ask Kari Torkelson

3) Christmas Gift: Jim Strandlie will collect donations from the congregation for a gift for Kevin Reich, to be presented following the Sunday School program.

Next Meeting: Set for Thursday, December 14 at 7 pm.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Cindy Cedergren
St. Pauli Church Council Secretary

December 14, 2023

The St. Pauli Church Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 7 p.m. at St. Pauli Church. Members present: Jim Strandlie, Cindy Cedergren, Myles Alberg, Sue Kotz, and Marisa Benson. Guests – Kevin Reich, lay leader; Faye Auchenpaugh and Tammy Haugen, representing the Call Committee.

Council President Jim Strandlie called the meeting to order and Kevin Reich opened with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Several items were added to the preliminary agenda.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the November 16, 2023 meeting were previously approved via email. M/S/C (Alberg/Strandlie)

Treasurer's Report: The report for November was approved as sent via email from Treasurer Benson. M/S/C (Alberg, Kotz)

Checking Account Balance End of Oct 2023	\$22,157.23
Nov 2023 Revenue:	2,730.00
Nov 2023 Expenses:	(2,781.63)
Checking Account Balance End of Nov 2023:	\$22,105.60

Other Account Balances End of Nov 2023:	
Education Fund	\$1,430.22
Edward Jones	73,805.32
Memorial Fund	8,471.52
Mission Grant	5,549.89
Savings	<u>37,590.99</u>
Total Account Balances End of Nov 2023:	\$148,953.54

Reports of Members in sickness or distress: The Council extended well wishes to Jim Kotz, Gary Iverson, and Larry Hurst, following recent surgeries.

New Members or Interest in Membership: No report.

Other Reports:

- 1) WELCA: Cindy Cedergren reported that WELCA served a soup and sandwich meal following the Christmas Cantata performed by the Middle River Area Community Choir on Sat, Dec. 9, and served it again on Sunday, December 10, following worship service. Approximately 40 people attended the event on December 9, despite very poor weather conditions. WELCA officers have met and are finalizing the 2024 handbook updates.
- 2) Sunday School Committee: The Sunday School Christmas program will be held this Sunday, December 17, with potluck lunch following.
- 3) Requests from Kevin Reich:
 - a) Kevin inquired about whether the Council would like him to do outreach for parishioners in need of visitation. The Council stated they don't expect Kevin to do outreach, but is very willing to compensate him for any trips he makes to visit those in need, on an hourly basis, as we did for Pastor Carl. Kevin stated that he and his wife would be interested in doing so as needed. The Council invited Kevin to attend any Council meetings, as well, and will be compensated for each meeting he attends. A motion was made to invite Kevin to attend the meetings as a non-voting member, with \$50 compensation per meeting. M/S/C (Benson/Alberg)
 - b) Kevin inquired about whether the Council would be interested in holding contemporary services, perhaps once a month. The Council did not know how the congregation feels about that, so it will be brought up at the annual meeting to seek input.
 - c) Kevin asked the Council if he was meeting the Council's and congregation's expectations. The Council assured him we are very pleased with his performance, and very fortunate and grateful to have him at St. Pauli.
 - d) Regarding Lenten Services, Kevin is available to preach every other Wednesday, plus Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14) and Good Friday (March 29) services. He has assisted Black River Church with Lenten services in the past, and wishes to continue that tradition, serving them on the other Wednesdays during Lent. The Council may utilize Pastor Carl's past sermons on the Wednesdays Kevin is preaching at Black River.
 - e) Pastor Grafstrom will be scheduled to conduct Easter Sunday services, with the worship time to be determined.

Old Business:

- 1) Stained Glass Window: Marisa Benson stated that we could expect the window in March, and suggested an engraved plate be purchased to designate the memorial for Ivette Garrett. She will contact Ivette's daughter, Kirsten, to discuss a date for a dedication of the window.

Myles Alberg will work with Marisa on a wooden frame that will be part of the window.

New Business:

- 1) Worship leaders: Kari Torkelson will lead services on January 7 and February 4.
- 2) Community Strong request: Marisa Benson reported on information sent to the church via the website, from Kayla Jore, representing Community Strong-Pennington County. This organization is a local coalition of community partners working on improving the mental wellbeing of our community. The organization would like to provide information via a bulletin insert (or copies to have on hand) describing the purpose of this organization. The information also invited our congregation to join this coalition if there is an interest in attending the meetings, held on the first Tuesday of each month, with lunch provided, at Sanford Behavioral Health. Marisa will request copies of the brochure, and this topic will be brought up at the Annual Meeting to see if there are any members interested in representing St. Pauli at the meetings.
- 3) Election of Officers: Marisa Benson stated that it was the intent of the Constitution, updated in 2021, that the terms of the secretary and the treasurer be staggered, to prevent both officers leaving the Council on the same years. However, it hasn't worked out that way this year. She offered to extend her term as treasurer by one more year, if the Council and congregation agree to that. The Council agreed with that offer and will bring it up for discussion at the Annual Meeting. Jim Strandlie, Myles Alberg, and Cindy Cedergren have fulfilled their terms, in addition to Marisa Benson.
- 4) Nominating Committee: Virginia Anderson has offered to serve, Jim will ask Ron Anderson, and Faye Auchenpaugh was asked and agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee for the election of Council members.

Call Committee Business:

Faye Auchenpaugh and Tammy Haugen joined the Council meeting at 8:10 pm and addressed the Council.

The Call Committee recommended the Council enter into a shared service contract with Pastor Marilyn Grafstrom to provide worship and Holy Communion on the last Sunday of each month. Compensation would be \$350 per Sunday, including travel expense, and with approval to utilize up to \$400 from the Continuing Education line item in the budget, on a reimbursement basis. There would be no contributions to her pension, and no paid vacation. Pastor Grafstrom would be invited to attend Council meetings if desired, and be compensated on a per-meeting basis. Discussion was held, and a motion was made to accept the Call Committee's recommendation and enter into said contract beginning January, 2024. M/S/C (Benson, Kotz).

Jim Strandlie will contact Pastor Grafstrom and make the offer. Marisa Benson will prepare the draft agreement and email it to the Council for approval.

Next Meeting: Set for Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7 pm.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Cindy Cedergren,
St. Pauli Church Council Secretary

Looking Back Almost 50 Years

The path from hauling water in cream cans to indoor plumbing—thanks to a congregation that dared to look forward.

(Minutes are not in their entirety in all cases.)

March 14, 1976: Congregational meeting following Sunday Services were called to order by Chairman Dana Loken.

After some discussion about remodeling and/or adding an addition to the church, a ballot was taken as to whether the congregation should do nothing on the church building or something. Vote was overwhelmingly in favor of doing something.

Next ballot was:

1. Remodel old church (upper only), estimated cost \$13,000.
2. Remodel and add on front, estimated cost \$30,000.
3. Build new church (no estimate).
4. Other.

Vote was 17 for item #1, 9 for item #2, 1 for #3. After discussion, it was decided to start a building fund with pledges and work projects.

Wallace Torkelson, secretary

March 18, 1976: Meeting was to determine number of family units in the congregation. Fifty-two were counted with a small number of families possibly not being able to contribute to a building fund. Pledges were to be turned in on Sunday, March 21, 1976. Those who do not turn in pledges will be visited by a team consisting of one council member and one member of the congregation who has already turned in their pledge.

Wallace Torkelson, secretary

March 28, 1976: Council met at Lyle Bjorge home to review pledges on church addition and/or remodeling. Pledges of \$11,215 have been received from 17 families with 34 families yet to turn in pledges. Some were immediate cash and others were over a three-year period.

Wallace Torkelson, secretary

July 6, 1976: Council met at Dana Loken home. It was decided to start a building fund and from this fund it would be determined if enough money would be available to remodel only or build an addition.

Wallace Torkelson, secretary

September 12, 1976: Congregational meeting held for the purpose of trying to decide on church building or remodeling. No action taken.

Wallace Torkelson, secretary

1977 Annual Meeting: Dana Loken reported there are two bidders on the remodeling of the upstairs of the church: Peterson Lumber Co. with Oliver Swanson as contractor and Home Lumber Co. with Bob Skoglund as contractor.

Wallace Torkelson, secretary

January 17, 1977: Council met at Harlan Mostrom home for the purpose of selecting bids for work on the church. Of the bids submitted, Skip Swanson's was accepted at \$13,130.22.

This is for the remodeling. Council to ask Verdeen Grove to oversee the remodeling. Cerny to get bids for electrical and heating work.

James Nelson, secretary

January 21, 1977: Council met at Walter Wiskow home to select bids on remodeling. Of bids submitted for electrical work, Arden DuChamp was selected. Of bids submitted for heating work, Arlan Ellingson was selected. Council moves to announce that on Sunday, 1-30-77, we as a congregation will make the vote to go ahead or not on the remodeling.

James Nelson, secretary

January 23, 1977: Pastor Swanson reads his letter of resignation. He has accepted a call to Cass Lake.

James Nelson, secretary

March 17, 1977: Congregation meeting. Lloyd Heroff has been selected to be pastor by unanimous vote. Bruce Mathson will be our Lake of the Woods Bible Camp rep. Discussion on debenture bonds.

James Nelson, secretary

June 1, 1977: St. Pauli votes for remodeling – not a new [building].

James Nelson, secretary

1978 Annual Meeting: Verdeen Grove was thanked again for his professional assistance at remodeling time. Question about water system – tank or well—tabled until spring. Clayton Mathson asked about the cross on the front of the church. Decision was to repair it. Remodeling of the basement was discussed. Deone Cerny moves to have council get bids on basement work. Second by Mrs. Herman Rude.

James Nelson, secretary

March 20, 1978: Bids for painting were discussed. Council decides to replace front door. A dedication service is planned for May. Arny Bloom will be here.

James Nelson, secretary

July 20, 1978: Congregational meeting is planned for August 6, 1978 to decide about water.

James Nelson, secretary

August 6, 1978: Church votes unanimously to drill a well.

James Nelson, secretary

January 9, 1979: Possibility of a new addition was discussed.

1979 Annual Meeting: The new water system was discussed. The well is 185' deep and the submerged pump is able to pump 200 gallons/minute. Basement ceiling: a committee of

Verdeen Grove, Inez Mathson and Wally Torkelson will work on remodeling plans.

James Nelson, secretary

January 30, 1979: Discussion of remodeling possibilities for church. Members were to pursue various suggestions and bring results to next council meeting; check on prices for double kitchen sink for an island installation and a 15-gallon water heater; check on price for repair of back entry; and price for exterior paint for church.

Shirley Johnson, secretary

March 27, 1979: Discussion on what to do about basement ceiling repair. It was decided to await congregational decision on front entrance and bathroom addition. Ken Cerny will get more information on the church at Ross which had a similar addition built and, if feasible, get cost estimates and financing possibilities to present for consideration this spring. Discussion regarding kitchen sink hookup for water. Clayton will talk to Arlo Rude re wiring of pressure system and Harold Geske offered to connect sink.

Shirley Johnson, secretary

April 26, 1979: Meeting called for purpose of considering a proposal for an addition to the church similar to the one at Mount Carmel Lutheran Church near Warroad. Ken Cerny presented a series of pictures taken of this church. Members unanimously decided to bring a proposal to the congregation for consideration for this type of addition, estimated to be somewhere in the range of \$22,000 to \$23,000. Meeting will be Sunday, May 20, following worship services.

Ken will look into finance possibilities from Hartz Foundation and Lloyd from Lutheran Brotherhood. Gary will see about finding someone to paint the church this summer.

Shirley Johnson, secretary

May 20, 1979: Special congregational meeting called for the purpose of considering the council's proposal for an addition to be built on the south side of the church, consisting of a covered entrance, bathroom facilities, and new kitchen. Voted unanimously to ask the council to obtain contractor bids and financing possibilities.

Shirley Johnson, secretary

June 1, 1979: Bob Skoglund and Skip Swanson have been contacted and will submit bids for the church addition project. Bids to be available in about two weeks. Financing was discussed. Northern State Bank has agreed to finance the project at 11% interest, providing a number of members will sign for the loan. A gift of \$6,000 (over a three-year period) has been promised by the Hartz Foundation. Pledge card forms were discussed.

June 15, 1979: Bids for the proposed church addition: Skip Swanson \$21,819 with Color-Loc siding, \$17,762 without Color-Loc siding; Bob Skoglund \$20,549.78 with Color-Loc siding, \$16,760.41 without Color-Loc siding. Rude Electric: \$3,453. DuChamp: \$2,700. Unanimous vote by council to accept the lowest bidders: Skoglund and DuChamp. Congregational meeting to vote on authorization of church council to seek financing for the proposed addition will be held Sunday, June 24, following worship services.

Shirley Johnson, secretary

June 24, 1979: Special congregational meeting called to inform members of results of building fund drive. A few pledges are still not in, but it would appear we are about \$6,000 short of the approximately \$27,000 needed. Eugene and Edna Rondorf offered to loan the congregation \$10,000 interest-free and the balance at 7% interest. Their offer was gratefully and unanimously accepted.

Shirley Johnson, secretary



Sunday School Program

The Sunday School children and teachers presented an outstanding Christmas Program on Sunday, December 17th.

Children, left to right:
Ella Rondorf, Kai Rondorf, Aksel Haugen, Ella Haugen.
Teachers: Katy Haugen, left, and Erin Rondorf, right.

Elsa Haugen played a guitar solo.



No Heroes Left

By Heather Cox Richardson, January 16, 2023

You hear sometimes that, now that we know the sordid details of the lives of some of our leading figures, America has no heroes left.

When I was writing a book about the Wounded Knee Massacre, where heroism was pretty thin on the ground, I gave that a lot of thought. And I came to believe that heroism is neither being perfect, nor doing something spectacular. In fact, it's just the opposite: it's regular, flawed human beings, choosing to put others before themselves, even at great cost, even if no one will ever know, even as they realize the walls might be closing in around them.

It means sitting down the night before D-Day and writing a letter praising the troops and taking all the blame for the next day's failure upon yourself, in case things went wrong, as General Dwight D. Eisenhower did.

It means writing in your diary that you "still believe that people are really good at heart," even while you are hiding in an attic from the men who are soon going to kill you, as Anne Frank did.

It means signing your name to the bottom of the Declaration of Independence in bold print, even though you know you are signing your own death warrant should the British capture you, as John Hancock did.

It means defending your people's right to practice a religion you don't share, even though you know you are becoming a dangerously visible target, as Sitting Bull did.

Sometimes it just means sitting down, even when you are told to stand up, as Rosa Parks did.

None of those people woke up one morning and said to themselves that they were about to do something heroic. It's just that, when they had to, they did what was right.

On April 3, 1968, the night before the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated by a white supremacist, he gave a speech in support of sanitation workers in Memphis,

Tennessee. Since 1966, King had tried to broaden the Civil Rights Movement for racial equality into a larger movement for economic justice. He joined the sanitation workers in Memphis, who were on strike after years of bad pay and such dangerous conditions that two men had been crushed to death in garbage compactors.

After his friend Ralph Abernathy introduced him to the crowd, King had something to say about heroes: "As I listened to Ralph Abernathy and his eloquent and generous introduction and then thought about myself, I wondered who he was talking about."

Dr. King told the audience that, if God had let him choose any era in which to live, he would have chosen the one in which he had landed. "Now, that's a strange statement to make," King went on, "because the world is all messed up. The nation is sick. Trouble is in the land; confusion all around.... But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough, can you see the stars." Dr. King said that he felt blessed to live in an era when people had finally woken up and were working together for freedom and economic justice.

He knew he was in danger as he worked for a racially and economically just America. "I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter...because I've been to the mountaintop.... Like anybody, I would like to live a long life.... But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!"

People are wrong to say that we have no heroes left.

Just as they have always been, they are all around us, choosing to do the right thing, no matter what.

Wishing you all a day of peace for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

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The Puzzling Gap Between How Old You Are and How Old You Think You Are

There are good reasons you always feel 20 percent younger than your actual age.

By Jennifer Senior, *The Atlantic*, April 2023

Jennifer Senior won the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing and the 2022 National Magazine Award for Feature Writing.

This past Thanksgiving, I asked my mother how old she was in her head. She didn't pause, didn't look up, didn't even ask me to repeat the question, which would have been natural, given that it was both syntactically awkward and a little odd. We were in my brother's dining room, setting the table. My mother folded another napkin. "Forty-five," she said.

She is 76.

Why do so many people have an immediate, intuitive grasp of this highly abstract concept—"subjective age," it's called—when randomly presented with it? It's bizarre, if you think about it. Certainly, most of us don't believe ourselves to be shorter or taller than we actually are. We don't think of ourselves as having smaller ears or longer noses or curlier hair. Most of us also know where our bodies are in space, what physiologists call "proprioception."

Yet we seem to have an awfully rough go of locating ourselves in time. A friend, nearing 60, recently told me that whenever he looks in the mirror, he's not so much unhappy with his appearance as startled by it—"as if there's been some sort of error" were his exact words.

High-school reunions can have this same confusing effect. You look around at your lined and thickened classmates, wondering how they could have so violently capitulated to age; then you see photographs of yourself from that same event and realize: Oh.

The gulf between how old we are and how old we believe ourselves to be can often be measured in light-years—or at least a goodly number of old-fashioned Earth ones.

As one might suspect, there are studies that examine this phenomenon. (There's a study for everything.) As one might also suspect, most of them are pretty unimaginative. Many have their origins in the field of gerontology, designed

primarily with an eye toward health outcomes, which means they ask participants how old they *feel*, which those participants generally take to mean how old do you feel physically, which then leads to the rather unsurprising conclusion that if you feel older, you probably are, in the sense that you're aging faster.

But "How old do you feel?" is an altogether different question from "How old are you in your head?" The most inspired paper I read about subjective age, from 2006, asked this of its 1,470 participants—in a Danish population (Denmark being the kind of place where studies like these would happen)—and what the two authors discovered is that adults over 40 perceive themselves to be, on average, about 20 percent younger than their actual age. "We ran this thing, and the data were gorgeous," says David C. Rubin (75 in real life, 60 in his head), one of the paper's authors and a psychology and neuroscience professor at Duke University. "It was just all these beautiful, smooth curves."

What Feeling Younger (or Older) than your Actual Age Says About Your Outlook on Life

A follow-up to Jennifer Senior's article

By Stephanie Vozza, May 2023

How old are you? How old do you feel? If the answers to those two questions aren't the same, you're likely someone who believes age can be subjective.

Your answers may also reveal some interesting insights to your outlook on life, says Jennifer Senior, a staff writer for *The Atlantic*. Senior delves into this abstract concept in her article "The Puzzling Gap Between How Old You Are and How Old You Think You Are."

"It's bizarre if you think about it. Certainly, most of us don't believe ourselves to be shorter or taller than we actually are. We don't think of ourselves as having smaller ears or longer noses or curlier hair," she writes in her piece.

We tend to have a realistic sense of other things about ourselves, but not where we are in time, says Senior. Many of us believe in alternate facts when it comes to our age. When Senior and I spoke on the phone, we compared subjective ages. I'm 58 but feel 37. Senior, 53, says she is suspended at 36 in her head. Her 76-year-old mother feels 45.

Initial research on this topic suggested that subjective aging was a form of denialism. "That it was connected to our phobias related to our culture of aging and being aged out, so you tell yourself a lie," says Senior. "I think it's something else."

The reason we visualize ourselves at another age, surmises Senior, is instead linked to our beliefs about our future. For example, when Senior was actually 36, she was professionally established and full of potential. Married, she hadn't yet had her children. "I was not yet on the gray turnpike of middle age," she explains.

Senior says she feels 36 today because she believes she has a few more professional pivots left and more time on the clock to go with it.

For me, 37 was when I felt I was hitting my stride. My family was complete. I had a broad circle of friends, a home I loved, and fulfilling work that gave me a sense of pride. I felt secure and on my way, and it's where I'd like to stay.

In fact, you're likely to feel younger than your years the older you get. A 2006 survey of 1,470 adults in Denmark found that those who were over 40 saw themselves, on average, about 20% younger than their actual age.

"When you're north of 50, a sense of unreality sets in," says Senior. "You start to think, 'How did I get this old? Why is it that I don't feel my age?'"

Feeling older than your years

The Danish survey also found that adults younger than 25 have older subjective ages.

"They're old souls, and I used to be one," says Senior. "Until I was 40, all I wanted to be was 40. I felt out of place with younger people and in girly cliques. I think people who like their solitude when they're younger, just hope to be older when the pressures to do young dumb things are gone. After 40, I started to slide backwards."

Senior believes people who identify as being older than their years often have the strong influence of an older person, spending a lot of time with a grandparent or an intellectual older person in their life who made being older seem attractive.

"I spent tons of time with my grandparents who I really liked," she says. "I still really love their music and their movies. It definitely informed my sensibilities."

What subjective age means

Your subjective age can influence your life and choices, and Senior says there are a few things you can glean from it. First, is its ability to impact when you retire.

“People who think of themselves as younger, tend to retire when they’re older,” she says. “They tend to see themselves as having more productive work years ahead of them; they’re not throwing in the towel professionally.”

Subjective age may also give you some insights to your health. “It’s often a good proxy for how healthy people are,” says Senior. “If you are 60 and feel 40, it could mean that you take care of yourself. You’re exercising a lot and your blood pressure is low.”

Subjective age can also imply changing cultural norms. For example, being 50 today is different than being 50 a generation ago.

“People in their 50s often still have kids at home,” says Senior. “Our parents definitely did not. We’re healthier. We eat better. There are better skin care products that make us all deceptively more youthful looking. Carroll O’Connor and Jean Stapleton were in their late 40s when they were on *All In the Family*. If you had held a gun to my head, I would have said that they were in their 60s.”

By doing some creative accounting with your age, you may be able to impact your outlook on life. “You’re only as old as you feel” may sound like a corny sentiment, but what’s not to love about that?

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The Teddy Bear Was Once Seen as a Dangerous Influence on Young Children

Inspired by a moment of empathy from President Theodore Roosevelt, the huggable toy had a rocky start 120 years ago before it became the stuff of legend.

By Alice George, Museums Correspondent, *Smithsonian Magazine*, December 2023



An original Michtom teddy bear once held by two of Teddy Roosevelt’s great-grandchildren, Mark and Anne. NMAH

A true history of the teddy bear begins in the American wilderness. In November 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt embarked on a hunting trip in Mississippi with one main goal: to bag a black bear. As the tale goes, after Roosevelt had scoured the brush for several days without so much as spotting one, some of his hunting companions corralled an injured old bear and tied it to a willow tree. Here, they said, was Roosevelt’s opportunity to slay one and declare victory.

Horrified, the president refused, saying it would be unseemly—unsporting!—for a man of honor to kill this vulnerable creature. He ordered the decrepit bear to be euthanized, and this odd show of mercy quickly became news.

Editorial cartoonist Clifford K. Berryman captured the scene in several *Washington Post* drawings—one showing a thin Roosevelt refusing to kill a bear, another picturing a more realistically stocky Roosevelt near a smaller bear with a wide-eyed, babylike face. To Brooklyn candy store owner Morris Michtom, the cute cub from the cartoons also looked like a marketing opportunity. He asked his wife, Rose, to sew a stuffed version, and that single prototype sold shortly after the couple placed it in the store window. Rose made more, and



A 1902 Clifford Berryman cartoon depicting President Theodore Roosevelt’s famous refusal to shoot that fateful bear.

with demand exceeding what busy fingers could create, the two began factory production in 1903. Michtom called his cushy new companions “Teddy’s bears,” after the president. By late 1906, the name had shifted to “Teddy Bear.”

At about the same time, the Steiff company of Giengen, Germany, was coincidentally creating a bear of its own. In 1903, Steiff sold 3,000 of the critters to a New York department store. A year later, Roosevelt, who couldn’t abide the nickname “Teddy” (he had once called it an “outrageous impertinence”), nevertheless deployed his lovable namesake as a mascot in his re-election campaign, prominently displaying a Michtom bear at the White House. That helped propel the animal to further fame: In 1906, one Manhattan store sold more than 60,000, and soon even the German maker Steiff adopted the American “teddy bear” name.

Not everyone was enthralled, though. A few social commentators saw teddy bears as ominous: They feared that some girls’ preference for soft animals over humanlike dolls would become all-consuming, replacing the female urge to nurture babies—and eventually lead to childless marriages.

In 1907, the Rev. Michael G. Esper of Michigan warned his congregation that “the fad for supplanting the good old dolls of our childhood with the horrible monstrosity known as the teddy bear” would lead to falling birthrates. The issue roiled the country, though most did not share Esper’s paranoia.

A few days after Esper’s tirade, Nevada’s *Reno Evening Gazette* ran a piece with the headline “Teddy Bears Rule Supreme,” in which a local woman rebuts Esper: “The teddy bear is only a fad, and I do not believe that it is at all harmful for children to play with them.”

The nation seemed to agree, at a time when a more “tolerant, permissive view of childhood” was emerging, says Gary Cross, a historian at Pennsylvania State University and author of “Kids’ Stuff: Toys and the Changing World of American Childhood.” There was, Cross says, a new “willingness to let children remain childlike for a longer period of time.” Notably, teddy bears helped launch and feed a growing demand for

children’s goods—a largely new market in the early 20th century, when child labor was declining.

In the next few decades, bears became a source of comfort during turbulent times—even for those long past childhood. Soldiers carried their own teddy bears, tucked into knapsacks, during both world wars.

The bears soon found a welcoming habitat in literature and pop culture. In 1921, English author A.A. Milne gave his one-year-old son a fluffy pal who went on to become the world’s most famous bear, because he did what every child wanted from their toys: He came to life! After Milne wrote the *Winnie-the-Pooh* series, his American publisher, E.P. Dutton, sent the stuffed Pooh on a tour through the U.S. And in 1957, when Elvis Presley performed “(Let Me Be Your) Teddy Bear” in the film *Loving You*, fans expressed their admiration by sending him thousands of stuffed bears.

More than a century after their debut, collectors are still bullish on the bears. In November 2022, a 1906 Steiff bear sold for £10,500 (around \$12,746), a number that did not approach the Steiff Louis Vuitton teddy bear (outfitted in a beret and trench coat with the designer’s signature logo) sold in 2000 for \$182,550, which still holds the Guinness World Record for a teddy bear sale. The Ideal Toy Company, which the Michtoms founded in 1903, at one point became the biggest dollmaker in the U.S.

To mark the bear’s 60th birthday in 1963, the Michtoms’ son, Benjamin, presented an original bear to Roosevelt’s grandson, Kermit. Though Kermit intended to donate the critter to the Smithsonian, his children had other plans. “They didn’t want to part with it yet,” his wife, Belle Roosevelt, confessed. After the children relented a year later, the historic toy finally made it to the National Museum of American History, where it still resides, a reminder of a child’s innocence—and a president’s sportsmanship.

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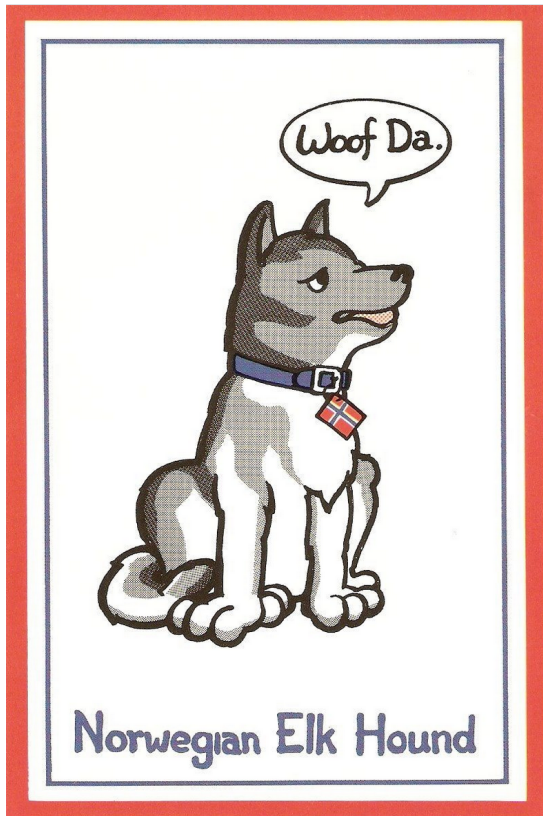


Richard Geske's birthday party on December 28th.
Left to right: Tammy (Alberg) Lenarz, Jennifer (Davidson) McCarthy, and Eric (Alberg) Major.

The Back Page



"The last thing I remember is being thrown into the dryer."



Norwegian Elk Hound



"Got anything else? I gave up carbs."

A scammer called my grandma and said he had all of her passwords. She got a pen and paper and said, "Thank God for that, what are they?"