



STORIES THAT INSPIRE

Life Lessons from Older Adults

Welcome to this inaugural article highlighting stories about exceptional older adults that will appear in each issue of the *CSA Journal*.

BY ERIKA T. WALKER, MBA, MSED, CSA

It's no secret. We all are influenced and inspired by older adults. What would you expect? We work in the aging industry and stories are all around us! Discussions around the office water cooler (or coffee pot for most) reveal unexpected ways these role models are living life to the fullest, dealing with adversity, and setting good examples for the rest of us.

In each *Journal* issue, we will present a story or two about individuals who have shifted the way we think of older adults. We hope you will enjoy these insights and share them with others. Each article will attempt to provide a link or QR Code connection to further information or videos on these inspirational stories.

A 97-Year-Old Track Runner Breaks a Record

Our America, a documentary series starring reporter Lisa Ling, aired an episode on the Oprah Winfrey network (OWN) in 2013, called "The Secret Life of Seniors," that highlighted the new realities of a graying population. During this series, Ling claims, "Older adults are more likely to continue their active lifestyle than to settle in for a nice game of mahjong."

No one is a better example of this reality than Ida Keeling, the world's fastest nonagenarian (Praetorius 2011). Keeling is in her nineties, but she refuses to act how people think she should. In 2011, in the wake of

her ninety-seventh birthday, she spent her time training to break the world record for the 100-meter dash. Even though she deals with blood pressure fluctuations, she worked hard to prepare for this event.

At 4-foot-6 and eighty-three pounds, Keeling says she has always been the oldest person at her meets. That might be because she didn't even take up running until she was sixty-seven. "Like a puppy," she declares. "I feel younger now than when I was in my thirties and forties and had all those problems. Then I was aged!"

On that day, running in an open event where most runners are in their twenties, Keeling stayed committed to her goal. All that mattered is the time for her age group of ninety-five and up. The record before her run was 59.9 seconds. Her daughter and coach, Shelley, cheered her on. "I am always concerned," Shelley said. "The frailty of her body does not escape me. When she races, a hundred meters feels like a lifetime... is she going to make it?"

After a kiss on the cheek from her daughter and a gun blast announcing the start, Ida Keeling advanced with determination and officially broke the record with a run of 51.1 seconds! She celebrated her win and her birthday later that evening with family and friends in style, dancing and singing. "If I die tonight, I die a happy woman. The twilight years are the best years of my life."

Ida Keeling is unstoppable. Now ninety-nine years old, she set the world record for the 100-meter dash this August 14, 2014 at the Gay Games in Akron, Ohio, at the Lee R. Jackson Track and Field Complex (Dicker 2014). She did it in 59.8 seconds. "I'm over the hill and picking up speed," she says.

Find out more about this inspirational athlete by scanning the QR code or going to the following link and witnessing Ida Keeling's run at www.godvine.com/97-Year-Old-Track-Runner-Works-to-Break-the-Record-for-100m-Dash-2848.html.



Leaving a Lifelong Legacy: A 102-Year-Old Artist Shares Her Passion

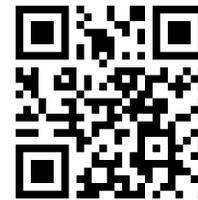
Some people take many years to find their passion. Not so for 102-year-old Marian Busey from Colorado Springs, Colorado. She traces her beginnings as

an artist back to age two, when she was an only child growing up in a small Ohio farm, drawing chickens and trees. A century later, she is still going strong (Sinclair 2014). Busey celebrated her 102nd birthday during a reception held at Old Colorado City's Arati Artists Gallery, which she co-founded in 1977 and where her works are proudly displayed. As the first president of Arati, she is the only original member left. She and the co-founders developed the gallery to provide an open space for artists to showcase their work and promote their talents.

What does Busey claim as the secret to her long life? Aside from red wine and dark chocolate, she credits keeping active and stimulated as always being her approach to life. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in art education from Ohio State University in 1933 during the Great Depression, and taught art in Ohio's public school system.

Busey dedicated herself completely to raising her son and to her painting, focusing on watercolors as her favorite media. However, macular degeneration has robbed her of most of her sight in recent years. To continue her artistic work, she switched to hand-pulled print making, which is less precise than painting but leaves plenty of room for experimentation. As a founder of both the Arati Gallery and the Pikes Peak Watercolor Society, she credits her involvement in the gallery as keeping her motivated and happy.

Find out more about this inspirational artist by going to the following link and viewing a video of the artist as she shares her life experiences at <http://gazette.com/colorado-springs-artist-celebrates-102nd-birthday-lifelong-legacy/article/1516961#AvxedrjKWkFt81Ow.03>, or scanning the QR code.



With more than six thousand CSAs across the country and other professionals who work with older adults, there is a compendium of life experiences from which to choose. Now is your opportunity to share these stories with the rest of us. Submissions for "Stories that Inspire" should be sent to: JournalBoard@csa.us. Be sure to direct them to the attention of Erika Walker. •CSA

» Famous People Who Have Achieved Great Things at an Older Age

1. At 100, Grandma Moses was painting.
2. At 94, Bertrand Russell was active in international peace drives.
3. At 93, George Bernard Shaw wrote the play *Farfetched Fables*.
4. At 91, Eamon de Valera served as president of Ireland.
5. At 91, Adolph Zukon was chairman of Paramount Pictures.
6. At 90, Pablo Picasso was producing drawings and engravings.
7. At 89, Mary Baker Eddy was directing the Christian Science Church.
8. At 89, Arthur Rubinstein gave one of his greatest recitals in New York's Carnegie Hall.
9. At 89, Albert Schweitzer headed a hospital in Africa.
10. At 88, Pablo Casals was giving cello concerts.
11. At 88, Michelangelo did architectural plans for the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli.
12. At 88, Konrad Adenauer was chancellor of Germany.
13. At 85, Coco Chanel was the head of a fashion design firm.
14. At 84, Somerset Maugham wrote *Points of View*.
15. At 83, Aleksandr Kerensky wrote *Russia and History's Turning Point*.
16. At 82, Winston Churchill wrote *A History of English Speaking People*.
17. At 82, Leo Tolstoy wrote *I Cannot Be Silent*.
18. At 81, Benjamin Franklin affected the compromise that led to the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.
19. At 81, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe finished *Faust*.
20. At 80, George Burns won an Academy Award for his performance in *The Sunshine Boys*.

Source: Dean Praetorius. 2005. *Encyclopedia of Aging*. MedRounds.org



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■ Resources

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Sinclair, Andrea. 2014. "Colorado Springs Artist Celebrates 102nd Birthday: Lifelong Legacy." *The Gazette*. <http://gazette.com/colorado-springs-artist-celebrates-102nd-birthday-lifelong-legacy/article/1516961#AvxedrjKwFt810w.03>. Accessed April 9, 2014.