

Active 90+ Club

By Noreen Santaluce



Sena Knornschild, 91, singer and band player for many years



Left, front row: Betty Torchio (90), Duke Overton (95), Catherine Meyer (91), Sylvia Stolzberg (102), Connie Faucher (98). Back row: Virginia L. Vogel (90), Carol Jeanne Huboi (90), Sena Knornschild (91), Lois Ellison (90), Helga Schmidt (92), Cecilia Novak (93), Mary Louise Simms (93), Noreen Santaluce (91), George Mooers (93)

Evidence that people in California are living longer and enjoying it more is being provided by the newly formed "90+ Club" in the Santa Cruz, CA area.

(Editors note: I attended a recent meeting of the "90+ Club" in Capitola, CA and came away inspired and impressed on how active and engaged the members were, shattering old stereotype images the media creates of our elderly. They are no different than anyone else, just older but wiser and rapidly growing in numbers. The 85+ are the fastest demographic in California and the U.S.)

The 90+ club was the brainchild of two old friends, Noreen Santaluce of Santa Cruz and Lucy Dumont of Paso Robles. The two women, both in their 90s, felt that there was a need for people in their 90s to meet and exchange tips and ideas for dealing with their day-to-day living.

The Santa Cruz group started meeting in May 2012 with seven members and has since grown to a roster of 32, five men and 27 women. Like any age, there is as much diversity in this demographic group as in any other group of individuals. We have writers, political activists, Democrats and Republicans, several religious preferences, musicians, artists and some who "just want to have fun."

The Mid County Senior Center in Capitola graciously invited our group to use their facilities without charge for our monthly meetings. La Posada Senior Complex invited us to join the 36 nonagenarians that are part of their 200 residents to attend a "Magical Nineties" party that included a magician and honored those over 90. The Jewel Cultural

Arts Program arranged a trip for our members to the Santa Cruz Yacht Harbor for lunch at the Crow's Nest.

Our meetings have included local entertainers and instructors in moderate exercise and transportation possibilities. "Show and Tell" presentations by members have proven to be popular as well as music provided by talented musicians in our group. We are working on a booklet with "Tips for Nonagenarians" as the working title.

Surprisingly, most of the members of the group seem to be more interested in the present and the future than the past. However, it would seem that some author or researcher might want to record some of the memories of those of us who have lived through the days of the Great Depression and World War II while we are still here.

Interested in forming a 90+ club in your area? Call Noreen Santaluce at 831.427.9828 for information.