

**Maria Campbell, *Eagle Feather News*, April 2012**

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### **This getting old thing has its challenges**

More and more, as of late, I have been reminded that I am getting old. Not exactly a great place to be regardless of all the lip service paid to honorable and esteemed "elders, old ladies, kokoms and grandmothers."

Oh sure, there are discounts at Value Village and Sally Ann, that is if you're lucky enough to remember what day is "seniors day." And sometimes, a waitress will give you that look they give all old folks and yell just in case you're deaf: "Seniors discount?"

"Who me?" I answer. "Good God, no. I am only 50."

I like watching the incredulous look on their faces and listen to them apologize.

But really, getting old is a pain. I can't toss bales of hay anymore or 10-gallon water jugs on and off my truck. I can't jump on a horse or Harley Davidson and nobody but nobody whistles at me anymore!

Oh I almost forgot! Someone did try to pick me up at Value Village in Regina last winter. He asked, from across a rack of old clothes, "Hey you!" And when I said, "Me" he nodded and asked, "Are you that Shannon Two Feather's old lady."

I replied that yes I was the wife of the late Shannon Two Feathers and he leaned across the rack, almost tipping it over and said, "Well by golly I always had an eye on you so if he's dead then maybe you'll go out with me now."

When I said, no I don't date, he replied, "Well do you think you could lend me a couple dollars then."

So much for romance, Shannon would have killed himself laughing. Anyway, whoever coined the term "Freedom 55" must have been 14.

I do have good eyes, well reasonably good, and I have always taken great pride in not needing bifocals when all my young and old friends including all my kids wear them.

And I can smell and hear really well, but my teeth, well that's a whole other kettle of fish. I don't know what on earth I ever did to deserve the kind of teeth I have.

Do you know that when I was a little girl my great grandmother was very old and as the first great grandchild, it was my job to chew her meat for her so you'd think there would be some justice in this world? Well so much for reciprocity, I can't convince my great granddaughter to chew anything for me.

When I made the suggestions she wrinkled up her pretty little nose and said, "oh chapan that is so gross!"

Anyway, all joking aside, hearing aids, glasses and teeth, at least the kind that are flattering are worth a fortune and not within budget for most seniors. So what do we do when we can't stretch our money to cover even one of these, much less all of them?

And what about going on a holiday even just to Edmonton, how do we afford that? And what do we do when we have someone scaring the crap out of us and

clamoring to take not just our spare change, but all of our money before we even pay the bills much less buy a new dress? (I must clarify this; no one is doing that to me but what if they were?)

Well stay tuned 'cause I am going hunting to see where I can get help for all this stuff. I need to educate myself as women live to be very old in my family. I have two aunties who are now in their mid nineties so for me and all the women in my extended family, it looks like a long old age.

Whoever thought I'd be worrying about all this. God! It's hard to believe I don't even have time to give my opinion on the MNS leadership race but maybe it's just as well as I hear there's some pretty old has-beens running for office. You'd think they'd give up already.

Oh well, "they" say people deserve the government they get but on the other had if EVERYBODY voted (me included) we might end up with some of our shining stars and we certainly have more of them then ... and I won't say it because I really am working hard at being a "nice old lady."

Have a great spring, I love you all, even the has-beens.