

Of a certain age...

By Diane Goble
Columnist

What does “retirement” mean? The word itself suggests pulling back, withdrawing; calling it quits, packing it in. Nothing in there about a new beginning, the realization that there’s more to life than working, that’s there’s a whole world of unexplored territory out there to investigate.

Hopefully, retirement is the time to do all the things you couldn’t do before because life got in the way.

Social scientists have determined that the most damaging threat to well-being later in life is boredom and a loss of life purpose; only rarely is it fear of absolute destitution or poor health. A search of the web shows what retirees are doing to maintain their physical health and mental well-being — and that there are some differences among younger retirees (ages 65 to 74) and senior retirees (ages 75+). It’s certainly true for me, as I approach that 75 mark, that I’ve slowed down significantly.

Apparently the younger group spends a lot of time in front of the TV for their first 10 years, probably just trying to recover from working their butts off for the previous 40 years. They average four hours a day watching TV compared to 2.6 for the overall population.

All seniors spend a lot more time reading books than they did before retiring, averaging an hour a day, which is three times as much as younger ages. They go to the library more often, listen to more books on tape, and have adapted to electronic media and reading ebooks.

Senior retirees spend 42 minutes a day thinking and relaxing; younger retirees, a mere 20 minutes. It seems

we become more contemplative and reflective as we let go of the little details of life and finally dare to explore higher consciousness. They also tend to consider their life review more conscientiously as they are faced with their own mortality.

Most people over 65 tend to spend more time eating and preparing meals; over an hour and 20 minutes a day. They eat out more often. Many learn to cook new dishes; some learn to cook for the first time. Their health concerns lead them to learn more about their bodies and how to take better care of them so they are healthier and can continue to be active.

Most retirees of all ages send more time shopping than younger folks. They now have the time for comparison shopping, searching for the best deal. They enjoy lingering in stores, chatting with salespeople and people-watching. They are in no hurry; they have no pressing meetings to get to. They may not need anything in particular, but they may come across that thing they can’t live without and are content with browsing.

Time spent volunteering nearly doubles when people reach age 65. Sometimes when we retire we find our true purpose in life, because it isn’t about earning a living or saving for retirement any more. All that is in the past and we get to follow our heart or our intuition, express

our creativity, pay it forward or give back if we’ve been given a lot — be the change we want to see in the world.

Retirees spend twice as much time as younger people returning phone calls, emails or writing letters that aren’t work-related, and more time at social activities. Their calendars are full of birthdays and book clubs and quilting bees or chewing the fat with the boys at Sisters Coffee.

Some younger seniors still tend to spend an hour or two a day “working,” but most stop before 75. Those unable to stop often become consultants or chairman of some board or motivational speakers.

Retirees 75+ spend 10 hours per day sleeping or engaged in other personal care activities such as bathing or dressing, which is actually not as much as teens and early 20-somethings who spend less of that same time sleeping and more time primping and changing their minds.

And finally, all seniors spend more time doing exercises for health reasons. Walking is the most common activity but many take up hiking or bicycling or skydiving, join health clubs, fitness centers and do yoga. Meditation is also becoming more popular as we finally begin to realize the stress we’ve been under for decades has taken its toll and we really need to learn to relax, let go of the tension, and just be.

WRECK: Donation account has been set up at local bank

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January 6, when he lost control on the icy road. The truck crossed the center line and struck the driver’s side of an eastbound Toyota driven by Nathaniel Pixler, 32, of Redmond.

Troopers said Pixler’s pickup rolled on the eastbound shoulder, while Miller’s pickup traveled in

the oncoming lane until it was hit in the driver’s side door by a GMC pickup towing a flatbed trailer, driven by Michael Sterkel, 50, of Troutdale.

Pixler was also injured and was treated and released.

A donation account has been set up for Logan Miller and his family. Anyone can go into the Sisters branch of Bank of the Cascades and contribute. A You Caring account has also been set up; go to www.youcaring.com and search “Stay Strong For Logan Miller.”

SCHOOL BOND: District eligible for “matching funds” for bond

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despite some head-shaking at the state process.

“It’s a dumb way to distribute public money,” said board member Jeff Smith. “Even though it’s a dumb way to distribute money, I’m going to stick my hand out and hope we get some.”

The district should hear whether it will receive grant funds well before determining whether they will actually put a bond measure on the ballot. That decision will be made in March.

Scholl also received board backing to explore hiring a professional firm to survey the broad Sisters community as to what they would like to

see in a bond.

“That would help us craft what this looks like,” he said.

The Sisters community will have a chance to learn about local school facilities’ needs and weigh in on what is to be done about them in a community forum set for Thursday, January 14, at 6:30 p.m. in the Sisters Middle School cafeteria.

Another forum is set for Monday, January 25, at Sisters Elementary School.

Sisters School District staff and officials will lay out the needs faced by the district to repair, maintain and update school facilities; take questions from the public; and solicit public opinion.

In November 2014, Sisters voters turned down a \$14.5 million bond request to rehabilitate, improve, and maintain facilities.

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