



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR LEIPZIG

"Our Happiest Years"

*Here is the new American dream:
retirement at middle
age—but like any dream it must
stand up to stark realities*

By JOHN HOCHMANN

After deciding to retire to Florida, the McAdamses found that leaving family and old friends in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, wasn't easy. Here they pause for the last time at the door of their Ohio home. Below, friends throw a farewell party.



IMAGINE A COUPLE moving into a new house. Most likely, you will visualize young newlyweds, perhaps with the groom carrying his bride across the threshold of their first home.

But nothing illustrates the change in American society as well as the number of middle-aged couples moving into their own new houses, retirement homes a thousand miles or more from communities where they lived, worked, and raised their children.

For tens of thousands of couples, retirement no longer means waiting till 65 or 70; even families of modest income now begin a new way of life at middle age, thanks to pension, insurance, and investment plans.

Typical of this new pattern are the McAdamses of Port Charlotte, Fla. At 50 and 51,

Wilmuth Lowell McAdams and his wife, Eleanor, moved south last fall from Reynoldsburg, Ohio, where they had lived most of their lives. Leaving meant saying good-bye to their son, daughter-in-law, and grandson, as well as to the friends and business associates of a lifetime.

Even with the prospect of mellow years in Florida sunshine, this wasn't an easy break, and if it hadn't been for Mac's heart attack a few years ago and Eleanor's ulcer and colitis, they might have postponed the move. Illness plus the hard Northern winters decided them, however, and after a few exploratory trips to Florida, they chose a site on the Gulf Coast.

They purchased a furnished model home on a water-front lot because Mac, an enthusiastic sailor, was bringing down his boat.

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The McAdamses' house on Florida's Gulf Coast, far left, is graced by a water-front lot, where Mac keeps his boat. Boats have been a long-time hobby of Mac, who builds them himself. Below, wife Eleanor feeds hubby at beach barbecue.

