

Retirement Matters

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IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY



An elderly man hurried to his 8:00 am doctor appointment, he wanted to finish quickly so he could get to another appointment. The doctor asked what it was and he proudly said that every morning at a 9:00 am at the hospital he had breakfast with his wife. The doctor asked what her condition was and he replied that for 5 years she has had Alzheimer's and hasn't known who he is. The doctor asked why he continues if she has no idea who he is and the old man replied "because I still know who she is."

The Starfish Story

Original Story by: Loren Eiseley

One day a man was walking along the beach, when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, "Young man, what are you doing?"

The boy replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die."

The man laughed to himself and said, "Don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't make any difference!"

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said,

"I made a difference to that one."

*... and we can make a difference to
someone as well - even if it is to
only one person !*



‘There is always a way through’ – climbing Machu Picchu deaf and blind at the age of 72



We love the classic storyline of the underdog who dreamed a dream and was told that it was impossible because of a psychological, physical or cultural impediment. And yet against all odds, they achieve it.

Cyril Axelrod's life, has not been easy - it's been an epic 80-year struggle against accepted convention.

Born completely deaf in Jo'burg in 1942 to Lithuanian immigrants of very modest means, Axelrod's deafness remained undiag-

nosed until the age of three. His was a strictly orthodox Jewish home and, despite severe communication challenges, his parents managed to impart to him a deep knowledge of Jewish rituals and symbolism. His dream became to serve the Jewish deaf community in Jo'burg.

Axelrod eventually converted to Catholicism and was ordained as a priest.

Axelrod's ability to resolve the many dichotomies of his life is perhaps what makes him such a powerful inspiration. "I grew up white in a black community, Jewish among Catholics, deaf in a hearing world and my blindness at times separating me from my deaf community."

In October 1978 he founded a large educational complex in Soweto (the original site was at St Martin's School in North Soweto) catering to more than 500 deaf students as well as a hostel for deaf migrant workers in Hamanskraal; he travelled to remote villages in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho to minister to large gatherings of deaf people.

Axelrod's life mission has been to show disabled and able-bodied people alike, that disabilities should not be a barrier to the basic human experiences of gaining knowledge and contributing meaningfully to society;

But his work with the deaf wasn't confined to South Africa. He also worked in Macau, South East Asia, for 11 years, between 1989 and 2000., where he learnt to communicate in Mandarin, Cantonese and Portuguese through sign language, Braille and finger-spelling.

While in Macau, in 1980, Axelrod's vision deteriorated – at the age of 38 he was diagnosed with Usher Syndrome, which causes the eye disease retinitis pigmentosa. By the time he left Asia for the UK he had just 3% vision.

In the UK he went through a three-month intensive deaf-blind rehabilitation course, learning how to operate kitchen appliances through raised Braille dots, how to arrange his cupboard so he could coordinate his clothes and how to communicate using a wide variety of electronic gadgets such as cell-phones and laptops.

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There is always a way through (continued from previous page)

Axelrod is also an avid gardener, a qualified masseur and aromatherapist, and an artist, using an ingenious technique involving string and Braille-marked paints; he paints through touch and memory, capturing images of his life experiences before he went blind. He also uses smell and touch to create a picture in his mind of what each flower in his garden looks like before transferring it onto the blank canvas.

At 72, in August 2014, Axelrod was invited to join a group on an expedition to Machu Picchu, to spread awareness about deafblindness. It took Axelrod and his guide, Hester Holliday, eight days to ascend and another seven to descend the Andes mountains to the citadel. He speaks about his feet “growing eyes” as he climbed with a group of mountaineers who couldn’t sign or fingerspell. Together they devised a series of signals to indicate “up”, “down”, “flat”, “steep” and “jump”.



In 2013, Axelrod was awarded an OBE for his contribution to the worldwide deaf/blind community.

“There is always a way through or over any obstacle, however unexpected, in any aspect of my life.”

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Amended from an article in the Daily Maverick, By John Walls

The good news about waiting lists



Although waiting lists IRO acceptance to retirement villages can be the ‘pits’ - there is good news as well, this being as follows:

Many waiting lists are not worth the paper that they are written on.

Some people sincerely and convincingly place their names on such lists, but as time passes many lose interest.

Often when they are phoned and informed that their cottage is available, the caller discovers that they have died; or they have purchased a unit in another village; that they have moved in with their children, or simply that they have decided to remain where they are (although given RSA’s security risks, the latter is rare). The ‘fall-out’ from waiting lists can be as high as 40% to 50%, and for this reason, most sought after retirement accommodation now require a deposit and annual retainer to remain listed. This at least increases the likelihood that once applicants have changed their minds, rather than waste money on annual fees, they will inform the organisation accordingly.

Waiting lists are now seldom 10-year affairs... so do your homework. Decide when you wish to move in (and to which Village) and place your name on the list. But be ready to move in when contacted! And remember ‘cash is king’ as few facilities will be happy waiting months for you to sell your current house... And don’t leave it too late!



Dear nursing home – a letter



Dear Nursing Home,
This is a hard letter to write. We have been together almost 30 years. That is a long time. But I need to tell you something. I don't think this is working. I can't do this anymore.
It's not you, it's me.
Well, that is not true. It *is* you.
But I can't blame you for who you are. I know how you were raised. "*Be a medical model!*" they told you. "*Just worry about the body, not the spirit!*" they said.

"Remember, safety first!" was burned into your brain.

"Don't worry about what people want. Worry about what the rules say they should have!"

"The most important thing is to be efficient!"

It must have been difficult to have heard this over and over again. How could you not become what you are?

Of course you don't know how to have joy, to live well, to focus on meaning and purpose. Of course you don't value normalcy and community and connectedness. No one probably gave that to you when you were growing up. They tried to make you compliant, hard, sterile.

You are exactly what you were raised to be. How can we fault you? Yet I do. I have. It breaks my heart.

I can't watch you treat the people around you like this anymore. Don't you see how people give their heart and soul to you? You barely acknowledge this. You see people for everything wrong with them and you want to fix them – but not because it is what *they* want. I think it is because you are afraid. Afraid to see people for who they are – complicated, vulnerable, mortal, self-determining, full of risks. Yet also full of possibilities and life.

It is never you. It is always "*them*" – the people who live with you, the people who work for you, the people who visit you, the people who make the rules, the people who pay you. But it *IS* you!

I am at a point where I don't think you can change. I guess I have to accept that.

But I am so angry about it. And sad.

I mean, do you really want to be this way? No one wants to go to you, you know.

Why would they? You are not going to give them what they really need. Why can't you be the nursing home I want you to be?

There were good times, of course.

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An important question!

It would be nice if when a person moves into a nursing home, they ask him or her - "*Is this how so you want to live?*" "... not just all that medical stuff.

- Person living in an old age home.

Retirement Matters

I sometimes still think I can change you. Because I see glimmers of hope in who you can be. But I have been fooled by you before. You get a different “look” and try to trick me that you *are* different because you *look* different. You change your name. You tell me you are doing a new “program”, like that sticks around! You start using different words to describe yourself. (By the way, just because you use these words to say you are doing something different doesn’t mean you are doing something different).

I guess you think you are doing the best you can with what you have. Maybe that is true. But I don’t believe it. I know you could be better. But I am not sure you want to be. I am not sure you know how. So, what is a person to do? Stand by and watch you self-destruct? Just don’t take down everyone with you. These are good people. They deserve better. I deserve better. That is the reason why I have trouble letting you go. With love (and many other emotions),
Sonya

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FEBRUARY 10, 2022 ~ SONYA BARSNESS

Questions to ask BEFORE moving into a retirement facility

1. Is there a frail care facility?
2. Is the village regulated /run according to the ‘*The Housing Development Scheme for Retired Persons.*’
3. Examine the developers track record. (i.e. have they developed other retirement facilities? If so, try to establish from their residents what their experiences have been?)
4. Does the village have an empowered Body Corporate or Management Association?
5. Is the village Sectional Title or Life-rights?
6. What does the levy cover ?
7. Is there a levy stabilisation fund? How does it work?
8. What does Frail Care cost?
9. Be wary of developers who seek to maintain control of the villages that they have established. (while some are exceptional, others are less so!)
10. What percentage of residents are tenants? (Why?)
11. Is the Village positioned in a ‘good area? (Position is everything!)
12. In the case of ‘*new-builds*’ are you able to have a say in the design of your unit?
13. View a completed unit.
14. How does the waiting list work?
15. How do existing residents, or even more especially (if you can find them), ex-residents feel about the Village? Could you perhaps rent a unit for a couple of months before making your decision?
16. Consult with your attorney - have him read the small print. The devil is in the details!



‘Purchasing a unit in a retirement village is often a one-way street! Make sure that you get it right!’

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Henry Spencer - From authors book ‘Retirement Choices’ ... See: www.henryspencerauthor.com

Retirement Choices

A Practical Guide to Choosing
Retirement Accommodation and Lifestyles



By Henry Spencer

Illustrations by Coral Spencer

Books to read

Retirement Choices

Covers questions such as... which retirement village should we move to? – and, at what age should we retire? Should we go and live in our daughter's Granny flat? Or even, should we stay in our present house? We are all different; and to believe in *one size fits all* answers, is impractical.

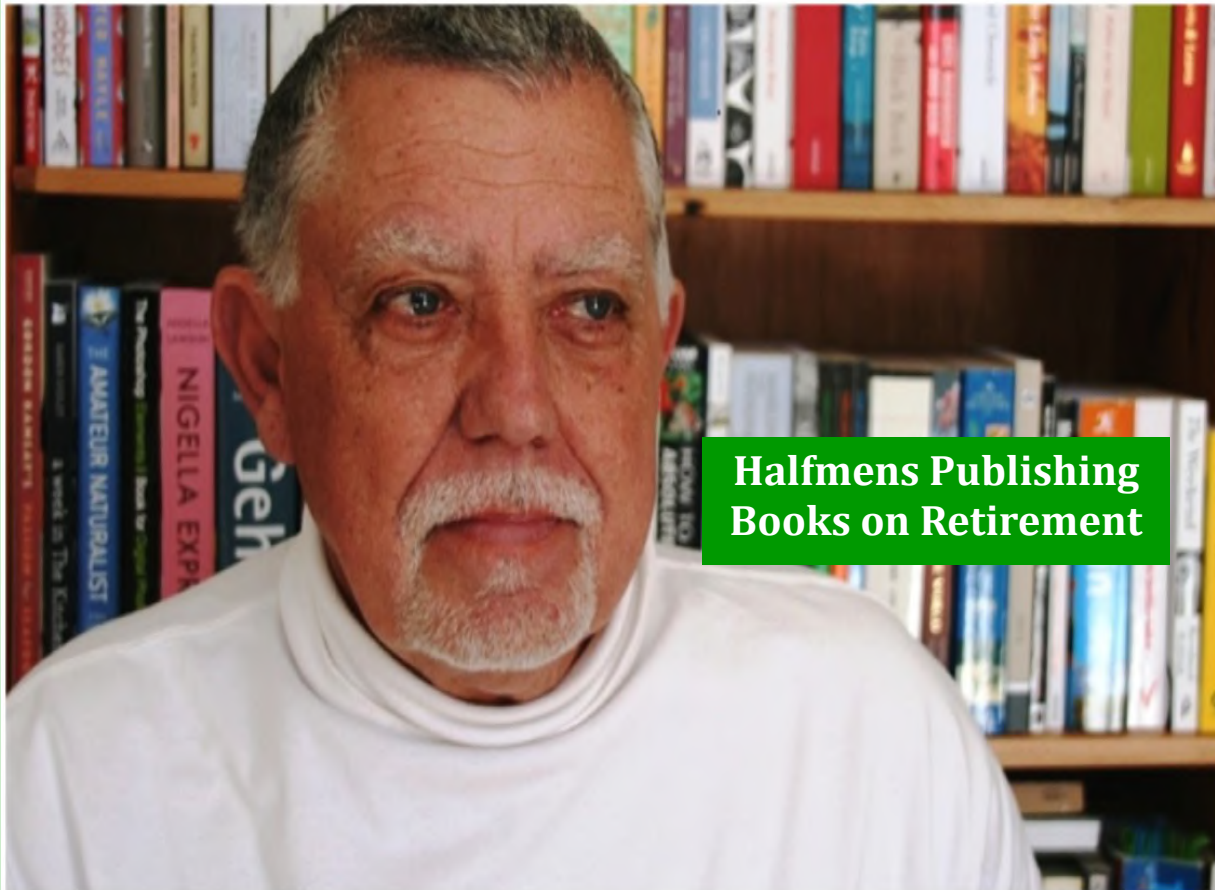
The book attempts to provide options... leaving the final decision to the retiring individuals themselves. The book also contains diverse information such as the history of Retirement Villages, downsizing, purchasing pitfalls, mobility issues, and the hazards of living in such Villages, cottage design and a host of associated topics. It is an ideal source of assistance for those who are struggling with retirement choices, for people from 50 years of age onwards, and even for adult children of parents approaching retirement age. It also delves into small, often overlooked, questions.

This book is available from the author, whose contact details are:

For ebooks - www.henryspencerauthor.com

For hardcopy (in South Africa) - halfmens@telkomsa.net

Or, telephonically on 027-72-514 0913



Thinking back on life - what will we remember the most?



Which of life's experiences are the most significant... which do we remember the most?



Up until the age of seven or eight, the anticipation of what was beneath the gaudy wrappings was almost as pleasurable as the actual present itself. I even recall young children playing with Christmas gift wrappings and ribbons - totally ignoring the actual content. (And as adults we continue with the same wasteful habit - valuing the shiny, ornate aspects of life more than what is truly important!)

And then, during adolescence and adulthood, anticipated pleasure gives way to actual acquisitions - possessions and experiences ruled the roost - for example when I obtained my first motorcycle, or BMW ... Or, when my family and I first flew to the USA, and the UK, to work for an international apparel company, Wrangler Jeans - that was memorable!

But recently, on becoming an octogenarian, I asked myself what, of my past life, had made the greatest stubborn, indelible impressions on me? And the answer was simply ... 'people!' Pleasurable or painful; happy or horrific, it was my interaction with my fellow human beings (be they friends, strangers, relations or colleagues), that had left deep-seated scars, or gilded embellishments on my memory banks. ... Like prehistoric petroglyphs, it was these memories that simply refused to go away.

Especially in today's Covid-stricken world (and as we age!), we increasingly learn of the unexpected deaths of friends and relatives - and the news often leaves us with the legacy of... *"I wish that I had visited them; spoken to them, or phoned them one more time before they departed"*... and sometimes even - *"I should have apologised/made amends for our last tussle!"* So once we realise that our relationship with people plays the most significant role in our lives - that all our other activities fall into oblivion... what can be done to safeguard and maximise its impact? Some tactics could be as follows:

Avoid vexatious people, and the unkind memories that they may leave, or wasted time that they may cost you.

Rekindle friendships with important people in your life.

Say what you should say to them whilst they (or even you!), are still around!

***The most important things in life are people - not things!
So communicate with them now! Don't leave it too late***

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Henry Spencer

The Pros and Cons of moving into Granny Flats

The pros are as follows:

1. Social and filial reasons - It can facilitate family bonding
2. Additional assistance with daily living skills - e.g. assistance with financial management/doctors visits etc.
3. Support during difficult times e.g. illness or death of a spouse

The cons

1. It can harm family relationships - past problems may continue... may even worsen?
2. Nothing changes. If you didn't get on with your son-in-law before... this problem is likely to continue!
3. Financial risk - If you invest your life savings in a granny flat and your children's business collapses... how will you then recoup your money?
4. The 'Granny-Flat Trap' - after you move in, your relationship with your son-in-law irrevocably breaks down
5. The 'Skivvy scenario' - what was initially described as wonderful opportunities to assist with small chores, turns out to be cheap slave labour
6. Isolation - the disadvantages of moving away from Church, life-long friends and support groups
7. Abandoned - what happens to you if your family move overseas after you have moved in to the granny flat?
8. Which child should you move in with - difficulties in choosing between geographically widely distributed children
9. Unexpected occurrences - your son-in-law gets a job offer he cannot afford to refuse, and decides to move



The Skivvy Scenario

If you do decide to become a 'granny flat granma'

1. User friendly - is the home into which you are moving user friendly IRO stairs, parking etc.
2. Establish exactly what your chores will comprise of
3. Financially how much do you have to contribute to living costs
4. Private places - make sure that you get your own space



100 years ago everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars.

Today everyone has cars and only the rich have horses.

My, how the stables have turned!



Retirement Matters

Age is but a number! (Or is it?)



Illustration courtesy of the DAVID LUKAS Show

I have so often heard the trite quotation which holds that... ***“Age is but a number!”***

But if our personal philosophy of life subscribes to this credo, then the question becomes which number?

The King James Version of the Bible states that...
“The days of our years are threescore years and ten: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away.”

I however subscribe to a different belief. For me our length of life depends on a number of things:

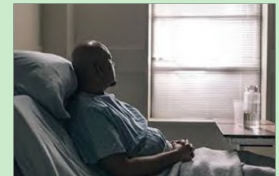
- Our genetic legacy... and here it is easier to ascribe blame than it is to influence outcomes.
- Our span of years entered in the *‘Book of Life,’*... and please don’t ask me who the scribe was.... We can discuss it one day, when guesswork and wishful thinking are long past!
- Our attitude to life, which influences the quality of our years, as much as the quantity... This will also contribute to longevity by positively influencing our physical and cognitive health as well.
- And luck!!!... But here it is worth remembering that a roulette wheel only has 36 numbers! Followed by a zero signifying Heaven - I hope! (The American roulette wheel has two zeros but then they were always inclined to hedge their bets).

So we should stop saying age is but a number - it is far more than that!

And... do we really want to attain an age where we outlive our friends, our ability and our money, and end up sitting alone, staring out of a window thinking how just perhaps we should have spun our roulette wheels less?

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Henry Spencer



The daunting cost of levies in retirement villages

Levies can prove to be more of a challenge than the original purchase price. Consider the following example:

You purchase a cottage in one of the utopian villages for R1.5M. Your original levy is R1,500 per month. What could your ongoing combined monthly village costs be in 15-years time? (comprising both levies and possibly frail care fees for you, or your spouse?)

And before you argue that you will not be alive in 15-years time, remember that 1st World women born in 2008, will on average live to the ripe old age of 92. (Men do not live as long, as God loves them more - normally takes them home sooner!)

Time (and money) flies faster than you think!

Retirement Matters

A new season of life!



And so...now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!

But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last...this I know, that when it's over on this earth...it's NOT over.

A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done...things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime. So, if you're not in your winter yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long! Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not! You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life...so, live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember...and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past! 'Life' is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one.

Remember... *It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver. So live happily this year and every other year!*

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Here are eight tips from the experts on how to be a gracious guest in your child's home.

1. Talk before the visit about any concerns you have about pandemic rules, food, pets or relationships. And speaking of pets, don't bring yours unless you ask in advance.
2. Be a helper but respect how they want things to be done. If they don't want you loading the dishwasher, then don't.
3. Bask in your child's competencies and accept that they are trying to create their own household traditions. Give them space to work out the kinks. Be open to new ideas. That said, they may appreciate you passing on something traditional, such as a holiday ornament, they've always loved.
4. Not sure about a food? Ask in a noncritical way that invites explanation: "Oh, I've never had this before; tell me about it." Then, try it. At least a bite. Just as you told your kids to do when they were young.
5. Seek common ground. Don't allow the post-dessert chat to get too political? Ask everyone to tell what makes them feel grateful or to tell a story about their favorite gift.
6. Dive into group activities — hikes, movies, cooking. Grandkids often love teaching new games, be it UNO! or Animal Crossing.
7. Bring a gift that reflects your host family's interests, not yours. And respect their boundaries on gifts for grandchildren.
8. Write a thank-you note. Always.

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Courtesy of AARP – by Susan Moeller

Retirement Matters

A new season of life! (continued from previous page)

And, lastly, consider the following:

Today is the oldest you have ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be so - enjoy the day while it lasts, even though...

~Going out is good.. Coming home is better!

~You forget names.... But it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you!!!

~You realize you're never going to be really good at anything

~The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.

~You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep".

~You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch..

~You tend to use more 4 letter words ... "what?"..."when?"... ???

~Now that you can afford expensive jewellery, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.

~You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless"?!!!

~What used to be freckles are now liver spots.

~Everybody whispers.

~You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet.... 2 of which you will never wear.

But Old is good in some things: Old Songs, Old movies, and best of all, OLD FRIENDS!!

Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!" Send this on to other "Old Friends!" and let them laugh in AGREEMENT!!!

It's Not What You Gather, But What You Scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived.

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Shortened and amended from a source unknown



Retirement Matters

A Spencer Retirement Village Self-assessment Form

No	Observation	Negative	Positive	Comments
1	Card games played	Bridge	Poker	With real money even better, and strip poker is best of all
2	Car Bumpers	Chrome	Polycarbonate	Chrome indicates that driver is of similar vintage
3	Car sounds	Clutch slipping	Smooth engine noise	Is even worse if a resident it observed trying to drive down the steps to the frail care
4	Car dents	Dents found	No dents	Its bad if cloth similar to a Traffic cop's uniform is found on vehicle's grill
5	Motor cycles seen parked outside the community centre	No	Yes	Old Royal Enfield's is not so good—Yamaha is a positive sign
6	Sporting facilities	Croquet	Bowls	Archery or model yacht sailing is even better
7	Pets	Not allowed	Allowed	Dogs taller than 50cms high is a plus
8	Swimming pool	No	Yes	Heated pool is a good sign, but not if full length swimming costumes are stipulated
9	Wheelchairs and walkers parked outside the village centre	Yes	None parked outside	If there are more than 5 go home immediately
10	Bingo being played	Yes	No	In retirement villages this immediately reminds one of the last rites being read
11	Urine odour on visiting frail care	Odour in frail care present	None present	An excessive smell of Milton is often merely a cover to disguise urine odours
12	Number of people in gardens	< 5	> 5	If more than 2 people are found unconscious amidst the flowers—this is a bad sign

If you are approached by a trustee and your dog, Bonzo, growls... scrap the entire process and leave immediately - You can't fool a dog?

Retirement Matters

So, can we continue following our dreams as we grow older?

Yes! Absolutely! They may possibly not be the same dreams that you enjoyed when younger, but just make sure that they don't turn into nightmares.

Employment records show that in England in 2012, there were 16,000 people over 80 who were still working (either as employees or self-employed).

And even those who weren't - many continued to follow active lifestyles with over 1 in 10 people over 80, participating in volunteer work at least once a month.

The number of people over 70 who hold valid drivers licences in 2013, was over 4 million; with 191 licence-holders aged over 100; the oldest being 107. These are not people who on retirement have just given up; have taken a backseat in the vehicle of life - they are people who continue to exercise lifestyle choices... so too should you!

And don't be put off by the wrinkles in the poem in the next column - even tyres need good treads!

Marriage is like a deck of cards...

In the beginning all you need is two hearts and a diamond.



By the end, you wish you had a freakin' club and a spade.

The mirror



Courtesy of Pinterest

Looking in the mirror

I see another face

A stranger from different race

An image from another place

.....

Looking through the glass

Could the figure be a farce?

I see the fragile furrows

As it starts to shed its skin!

.....

Looking at the wizened form

That not so long ago was born?

I see a puckered crust

Detect the signs of rust

.....

And then I recognise a friend

No!...I must be round the bloody bend?

'Tis at worst an entertainment

Or at best a dried arrangement

.....

Henry Spencer

Retirement Matters

Downsizing — vehicles and garages

Nothing is as important in choosing retirement accommodation, than the size of the garage (ideally garages). Most residential units in suburbia include two garages - consequently most of us expect the same in retirement accommodation. So why is a double garage important?



One of the major reasons why two vehicle garages are essential to husbands, relates to their unrealistic optimism, and their reluctance to accept reality; their unwillingness in accepting that they can no longer drive, or that they are permanently unable to participate in rigorous pastimes that they used to engage in. I have seen a water-ski parked on its trailer in the garage of an 89 year old gentleman who kept insisting that next season he would again be using it; or a caravan of an equally 82 elderly man who had suffered a stroke – but similarly

believed that he would next season again be caravanning.

Remember that your wife will probably live seven or eight years longer than you. Perhaps you should rather ask her which small vehicle she would prefer. But if she chooses a single-seater, be careful, as it's possible that there may be problems looming on the horizon; that your future may not be quite as rosy as you had anticipated!

It is not as much that the size of double garages, allows hubby to hide away from his wife, under the pretext of doing something useful, when summoned to assist with household chores. And it equally has little to do with having two vehicles, as many two-car retired families, tend to be content parking one vehicle under a shade-cloth carport. Were one to view the statistics, one would discover that family-owners of two vehicles soon downsize i.e. the tenure in which husband and wife choose to own, and perhaps more importantly maintain, two vehicles is of limited duration. A decision, normally based on economics, or sadly even the demise of one spouse, is seldom long in coming!

Does this mean that the second garage is then wasted? Not at all! It then comes into its own. The surviving spouse has just a little more space in which to expand.

Owning two garages, but having only one vehicle is ideal. There are few areas in your retirement accommodation which are able to accommodate the overspill of goods; superfluous items which you cannot yet bear to part with; which you are always intending to sell the following year. In my view a double garage is an advantage in any downsizing exercise, and is a definite draw-card when choosing a retirement cottage.

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Henry Spencer - From authors book 'Retirement Choices' ...

See: www.henryspencerauthor.com

Retirement Matters

***Need help with
retirement matters***

www.henryspencerauthor.com
E-mail at: halfmens@telkomsa.net
www.henryspencerauthor.com

HENRY SPENCER
 Positive-Ageing Consultant & Writer



Scattered Feathers! (... or communicate! Communicate! Communicate!)



An old proverb relates the story of a person who repeated gossip. Soon, the whole community had heard the rumor. Later, the person who spread the gossip learned that the rumor was untrue. Con-
 trite, they then went to an elder in the community who had a reputation for great wisdom, in order to seek advice. The elder told the person, *"Go to your home and take a feather pillow outside. Rip it open and scatter the feathers, then return to me tomorrow."* The person did as the elder had instructed. The next day, the person visited the elder. The elder said, *"Go and collect the feathers you scattered yesterday and bring them back to me."* The person went home and searched for the feathers, but the wind had carried them all away. The person returned to the elder and said, *"I could find none of the feathers I scattered yesterday."* *"You see,"* said the elder, *"it's easy to scatter the feathers but impossible to get them back."* So it is with gossip; it doesn't take much to spread hurtful words, but once you do, you can never completely undo the damage.

Jim Liebelt

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But Chairpersons and CEO's, please remember, if you wish to prevent rumours spreading in your retirement village, keep people properly informed of what is happening. A vacuum in the information sector is invariably filled by the white feathers of myth and rumour!