

RETIREMENT IN SIGHT



MONTHLY NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE RETIREES
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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Getting old is like climbing a mountain; you get a little out of breath, but the view is much better!"

INGRID BERGMAN

CAN HAVING THREE GOOD FRIENDS PROMOTE A HAPPY RETIREMENT?

We can reasonably say that the more money you retire with, the more potential you have to enjoy retirement. Now, what about friendship? If you maintain some strong friendships and an active social circle after age 60, can that make a big difference in the quality of your "second act"?

You may need only two or three close friendships to experience a positive effect. The challenge is that friendships are harder to maintain these days. Social media lets us keep in touch, but it can also be a facile, arm's-length substitute for the quality time we spend together in person. Dan Buettner, a National Geographic Fellow who studies longevity data in different cultures, writes in his book *Blue Zones* that Americans average 1.7 close friends today, compared with three in the 1990s. Wes Moss, a financial columnist for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, contends that the happiest retirees have an average of 3.6 close friends (he has been researching retiree friendships for a book of his own). At financial news websites, articles sometimes warn retirees that when they walk away from the office, their daily social "safety net" will disappear and they will feel alone. While these warnings may make for good clickbait, they discount the

fact that some of our closest friendships involve people we don't work with. Two, three, or four good friends may make our retirements feel that much richer.¹



TRAVEL TIP

Need to show your ID? You may have a new option: a digital driver's license

Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming now offer digital driver's licenses valid for all transactions or situations requiring ID. You might want one for when you travel: you can quickly update details, and if you lose your phone to theft or inattention, you have the ability to remotely erase the information.

Source: USA TODAY, June 17, 2021²

THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERING

Many retirees think about volunteering and some follow through on that thought, although according to an AgeWave survey published in June, the retirees who do volunteer spend fewer hours helping their communities or favorite causes than they would like. What if they devoted just two or three hours more per week to it? Would the effect be sizable, even profound? Maybe.

This year, AgeWave learned that the average U.S. retiree spends less than an hour a week volunteering or doing some form of pro bono work. On average, however, retirees would like to volunteer 3.3 hours per week. The missing elements, according to the survey findings, are community resources and leader/mentor guidance. While some retirees may find volunteer opportunities through their house of worship, through friends, or by reading about an organization needing help in the media, some opportunities are less than evident. A good leader or mentor teaches volunteers how to take ownership of their roles and perform work that feels enriching and significant. If retiree volunteering did reach 3.3 hours per week, AgeWave believes that over 20 years, it would directly and indirectly contribute \$6.8 trillion to society.³

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Annual inflation is currently above 5%, and because of this, the 2022 Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) may be much larger than it has been in recent years. The non-partisan Senior Citizens League projects that the 2022 COLA will be 6.1%.⁴

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CITATIONS.

- 1 - Atlanta Journal-Constitution, July 2, 2021
- 2 - USA TODAY, June 17, 2021
- 3 - Los Angeles Daily News, July 4, 2021
- 4 - Morningstar, July 15, 2021