

## Cheap Ways to Enjoy Retirement

By Sheryl Letzgus McGinnis



**Retirement! To some, it's a long awaited dream, ticking off the days on the calendar, especially as the actual retirement date grows closer. To others, retirement fills their hearts with dread and anxiety. Who will value them now that they're retired? How will they keep their self-worth? How will they fit in as a retired person in a society that values youth? What will they do with all this spare time on their hands?**

Ha! That last question is a real hoot. What spare time, I ask? Unless you've been forced to retire due to illness, you should have no trouble finding ways to make your retirement enjoyable and filling all the hours of the day.

The first thing you should consider, long before retirement

age is anything more than a nebulous time somewhere in the distant future, is your ego. That's right, your ego. Never let your ego be tied to your job! Never.

One day, you will no longer have that job, whether it's due to retirement, illness, being fired, the company closing, a recession or depression (who would have thought, huh?) or any number of reasons, you may find yourself without the job that you've devoted so many years to, with so much loyalty.

**So now the day has come, and** if you're lucky, your co-workers have feted you properly, given you a few token gifts, maybe even treated you to dinner and a few drinks, and now you're walking out the door, out of the comfort of the industrial or corporate

womb, into the unknown world of The Retired! A little scary isn't it? But remember your first day of school. Scary. Your first job. Scary. The first time you left home, free from the protection of your parents. Definitely scary...but exhilarating.

You survived them all and had new experiences, learned new things and had a darn good time of it. So it will be with retirement.

**If you face retirement with** a positive attitude, that this is something you deserve and have worked long and hard for, a brand new chapter in your life waiting to be written, then you will not only enjoy it, you will find many more ways to enjoy your retirement than I have listed here.

Luxury cruises and jet setting around the world are wonderful if you can afford them. Most can't. So consider other options and above all, enjoy this time in your life and remember this is not a dress rehearsal! Go for it. You are the architect of your new life.

**WRITE.** You've never written anything other than a few thousand checks to creditors? A resume or two or 50? It doesn't matter. Now is the time to write, write, write. Write your memoirs so that future generations will be able to know what a truly outstanding person you are (Hey these are your memoirs and you can write yourself up to be the patron saint of all people if you want. Have fun).

**FORM A WALKING CLUB** with your neighbors. Even if you just walk around the block, you'll be getting outdoors, exercising, talking to people who you didn't have time for during your working years.

**VOLUNTEER TO WALK PETS.** Your neighbors who have to work every day (don't you pity them now?) and can't walk Fido (does anyone actually call their dog Fido today?) will appreciate you taking the little dear out for a walk.

## VOLUNTEER AT THE HOSPITAL OR FOOD BANK.

There are many places where you can volunteer and what's great about it is that you can usually set your own hours. This is a real feel good proposition both for you and for the people you're helping.

**VISIT SHUT-INS.** Many elderly people are alone, with families living out of state and will appreciate someone coming to see them, just so they can hear the sound of another human's voice that isn't coming out of the TV.

**CALL ELDERLY OR SICK PEOPLE.** If you can't visit every day, you can call people at a prearranged time just to make sure they're fine and haven't fallen and can't get up!

**LEARN A NEW CRAFT OR HOBBY.** Maybe you've always wanted to learn how to play chess or learn how to cook exotic meals but were too tired at the end of the workday to even bother.

**LEARN A NEW SKILL.** Okay I can hear you saying why would you want to learn a new skill now? You're retired and not going back into the workplace. Why exercise

your brain in such a way? But learning things, anything, is a wonderful way to keep the old gray matter from turning to dust.

**LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE.** Yes you can teach an old dog new tricks! It may take a little longer or require a little more effort but you can still learn a new language.

**ADOPT AN OLDER PET.** There are many formerly loved animals at the local shelters who ended up there due to their owners' death or infirmity. Let's talk serious stuff here – older pets are more ideally suited to the retiree as opposed to a puppy or kitten. Not saying you're going to be leaving us any time soon, but it just makes sense to adopt an animal who will be with you during your lifetime as opposed to a young one who might live another 20 years.

*Sheryl Letzgus McGinnis has been retired for 3+ years and enjoying every minute of it. Author of three books on drugs and addiction and numerous online zines. Her book, The Addiction Monster and the Square Cat, is consistently on Amazon.com's best sellers list in substance abuse. Her books are available on Amazon.com, B&N.com, Booklocker.com and her website, [www.theaddictionmonster.com](http://www.theaddictionmonster.com).*

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