



Baby Boomers Give A Whole New Meaning To The Idea Of Retirement

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DURHAM, N.H. -- They demanded cultural and political change. They influenced new artistic genres and styles of music. Now America's restless baby boomers, the first of whom are entering their retirement years this year as they turn 60, are changing the way Americans retire.

Not willing to settle for facilities that do little more than house people as they get older, today's retiring baby boomers, who were born from 1946 to 1964, are demanding top-notch retirement facilities that fit their picture of what the golden years should be: relaxing, staying active and enjoying a more luxurious lifestyle.

"The next generation of retirees will be more demanding from the 'me' perspective, which is much different than the World War II generation. The new age of retirement is all about keeping active and enjoying life – the idealized concept of what retirement should be," says Raymond Goodman, chair of the hospitality department at the University of New Hampshire. Goodman also is chair of the Board of Trustees at two continuing care retirement communities, RiverWoods at Exeter and its newest neighborhood, The Ridge at RiverWoods.

Retirees no longer will settle for a few board games and shuffleboard in a community room to keep them busy. Their list of must haves now includes prepared meal service in a restaurant environment, exercise equipment and aerobics rooms (some with personal trainers), pools and whirlpools, walking and hiking trails, wellness programs, wood-working and hobby shops, movie theatres, golf courses, billiard and game rooms, computer labs, libraries, music rooms, creative arts studios, apartment maintenance and repair, courtesy transportation, and housekeeping and linen service.

Regarding health care, the retiring baby boomers demand a continuum of care that incorporates all levels of service from one facility: independent living units and an on-site health center with assisted living facilities, skilled nursing facilities, specialty care and memory support.

As delightful as it sounds, the new retirement lifestyle will not be inexpensive. To that end, Goodman advises those planning for retirement to invest in their current housing now. "Continue to upgrade it so that your home resells to the next generation at the highest price the market will allow. You then can trade the equity of your home today for the entry or endowment fee for a full-service continuing care retirement community," he says.

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