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Honoring a legend at Ucross Christmas Celebration

Raymond Plank holds his iconic pipe as the Buffalo High School choir sings during the Ucross Christmas Celebration at the Raymond Plank Creative Center Saturday, Dec. 9, 2017.

Retirement's revolving door: Why some workers can't call it quits

BY BRUCE HOROVITZ
KAISER HEALTH NEWS VIA THE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

In his view, Tim Franson utterly failed at retirement.

After 20 years as a high-ranking vice president at drugmaker Eli Lilly, Franson and his wife, Chris, a successful real estate agent, thought they were quietly retiring nearly a decade ago to Bonita Springs, Florida.

For the first month or so, Franson said, he mostly slept. He wasn't depressed, just mentally and physically exhausted.

Then, "I went crazy," said Franson. "I'm not very good at sitting around."

He quickly found himself back at work part time after a friend at a small pharmaceutical company asked him for strategic advice. "Things snowballed from there."

Today, Franson, 66, consults and works about four

days a week, while serving on two for-profit boards and two nonprofit boards.

Welcome to the land of the un-retired — folks who thought they were leaving the work world only to return because they sorely missed something about it, besides the money. These people in their 50s through 80s retired on pensions or savings — or both — but ultimately woke up to the fact there's more to life than watching Florida sunsets.

This "un-retirement" trend continues to build, according to a 2017 Rand Corp. study showing that 39 percent of Americans 65 and older who are currently employed had previously retired. And more than half of those 50 and older who are not working and not searching for work said they would work if the "right opportunity came along," the study found.

"We have a mistaken

image of life, that you go to school, work for 40 years, then say goodbye to colleagues for the last time and embrace the leisure life," said Chris Farrell, author of "Unretirement: How Baby Boomers Are Changing the Way We Think About Work, Community and the Good Life." "That's not turning out to be the arc of most people's lives."

This isn't about older folks returning to work because they need the dough. This is about older folks returning to work because they miss the challenges, the accomplishments and, most important, the collegiality.

When retirees are asked what they miss most about pre-retirement life, the No. 1 answer is typically colleagues, said Farrell. "What's constantly underestimated is that work is really a community. It turns out it's much healthier and more satisfying to work for a bad boss than to sit on the couch and watch TV," he said.

Franson gets that. Not that it didn't make perfect sense for him to retire when he did, at age 58. Lilly offered him a year's pay and a full pension to take early retirement. Franson had prostate cancer while at Lilly — and though the surgery was successful, he said, "that experience makes you sit back and revisit how you want to experience your remaining

days." At the time, his kids were out of college, and he didn't have any grandkids yet. Then, life derailed him when his wife, Chris, took ill and died within a few years. Four years ago, he accepted another consulting job in the Indianapolis area to be closer to his children and grandchildren. Franson has no plans to retire from his un-retirement anytime soon. Subscribe to KHN's free Morning Briefing.

Laurie Caraway retired in 2013 as director of clinical data management at Bristol-Myers Squibb at age 56. She picked that age because her father had died at 56, before he had a chance to retire from private practice as a surgeon.

Her husband, Scott, a longtime American Airlines pilot, retired along with her. Scott adapted quickly and learned to be a potter. It was summer, and Laura spent the next three to four months biking, swimming and treating retirement like a vacation. Some days, she simply sat on her front porch swing.

Then, the weather changed. The cold autumn reminded Caraway that something had to change in her life. So, she started volunteering in Guilford, Connecticut, with a group that works to uplift academically gifted minority women from disadvantaged communities. That

expanded into a part-time, paid position managing the group's consignment shop.

Caraway was presented with an opportunity to go back — on a short-term contract — to Bristol-Myers Squibb. This encouraged her to send her résumé to Your Encore, a retiree return-to-work program co-created by Lilly, Procter & Gamble and Boeing that matches retirees with employers who need their skills. She landed more contracts to which she can always say "No, thanks" and still have time for yoga class.

"There is life after retirement," she said. "It's called work."

Then, there's Louise Klaber. She retired at age 65 from a 20-year career in organizational development — but is now working again at age 81.

In 2001, the former New Yorker thought she was living the dream when she arranged to retire to New York City with husband Ralph Walde, a college professor.

Sept. 13 was moving day into their apartment on New York's Upper West Side. But as the horrific events of 9/11 unfurled, they found they were living in a state of shock. Within weeks, they were both signed up to do volunteer work helping prepare meals for the 9/11 site workers. Their shift: 8 p.m.

to 6 a.m., chopping squash, carrots and onions. "It made us feel like we were actually doing something to help," Klaber said.

The prep kitchen shut down shortly after Thanksgiving, and she found part-time paid work assisting people most severely affected by 9/11 find financial aid, mental health assistance or employment. She then contacted ReServe, a national nonprofit that places retired professionals with public service agencies of all sizes, budgets and missions. ReServe linked Klaber with the New York City Law Department, where she has worked part time ever since as an organization development counselor. What drives her isn't the \$10-an-hour pay but the professional camaraderie.

A former marathon runner, Klaber still runs almost daily. That, she said, is an important ingredient for staying healthy — but the work is just as important to her vitality.

When will she finally quit working?

"God only knows," she said. "I'm having way too much fun."

Kaiser Health News (KHN) is a national health policy news service. It is an editorially independent program of the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

SENIOR HAPPENINGS

- Christmas wrapping stations are located in the art studio at The Hub on Smith, complete with everything to get the job done. The stations are available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with the exception of class times.
- Creekside Apartment residences will be added to the lunch route every Monday and Thursday. The bus will depart from Creekside at 10:35 a.m. to The Hub with return trips departing from The Hub at 12:40 p.m. The fare is one ticket. Alternate location drop

requires additional fare. No need to call for reservations. Direct questions to 674-9273.

- Conversations in History with Helen Laumann will take place Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and focus on circuses. The event will take place at The Hub on Smith.
- A thrift store crawl has been organized for Thursday, leaving The Hub at 9 a.m. and returning for lunch. Sign up early for a seat on the bus for a suggested contribution of \$2, which helps pay for gas.

- Soup, lights and sweets will be offered Dec. 18 as part of the annual Christmas light tour. The evening will end with sweets at the Flagstaff Cafe. Supper will be served at 5 p.m. in The Hub on Smith Café. The buses will depart from the Hub at 6 p.m. and return to the Hub by 8:30 p.m. The suggested contribution for individuals registered with The Hub is \$20. The fee for unregistered individuals is \$23. Register and pre-pay at The Hub on Smith by Dec. 14. For additional information, call 672-2240.



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ENTRÉE CHOICE* or SOUP/SALAD

Tue- Rosemary Pork Roast
Wed- Chicken Cordon Bleu
Thu- Fish Florentine
Fri- BBQ Pork Wing
Sat- Swiss Steak
Sun - Turkey Filet
Mon- Spaghetti

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Tue- Water Color Painting Class	10:00 a.m.	Art Studio
Wed- Conversations in History	10:30 a.m.	Community Room
Thurs - Thrift Store Crawl	9:00 a.m.	Leave the hub
Fri - Dominoes Mexican Train	1:00 p.m.	Café
Sat- Double Deck Pinochle	12:30 p.m.	Community Room
Mon- Blood Pressure Check	10:30 a.m.	Lobby

Lunch Service Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 365 days a year at 211 Smith Street
Home Delivered Meals (307) 672-6079

Loan Closet, Outreach, and Administration Services, 672-2240. Mondays - Fridays.

Help at Home Services, 675-1978. 232 North Brooks: Mondays - Fridays.

Day Break Adult Care Services, 674-4968. 241 Smith Street: Mondays - Fridays.