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The Time has Come

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A few years ago after working as an employee of Bloomfield R-14 schools for twenty-eight years and having suffered a stroke (thank God I am fully recovered), I faced the "r" word: retirement. Being a widow and not having what I felt was sufficient income, I was in a position where I just didn't know what to do. I didn't have thirty years in as yet nor was I retirement age.

After much prayer and lots of advice such as I could probably be approved for disability, babysit, clean homes, etc., none of which were especially appealing to me, possibly because I am somewhat lazy.

Mike Dumey, who was superintendent of schools at that time called me into his office one day to discuss the situation. He said to me, "Barb, why don't you go ahead and retire? You will have time to enjoy life and do those things you have told yourself for years you would enjoy." He showed and discussed with me figures of my retirement income, and maybe because it's what I wanted to hear, I took the plunge.

I thoroughly enjoy retirement. Contrary to some, I don't mind not having gainful employment (whatever that is.) I live with my 92 year old mother, who can neither see nor hear, so that keeps the nurturing side of my nature busy and active. Maybe at some other time, I will write about this, because if you can imagine two women with totally opposite personalities and two "casserole queens" in the same kitchen, you can imagine the humor and in mom's case, the wisdom involved when a 69 year old child lives with her mother.

I have found more things to do than I dreamed possible with not enough time to do many of them. I found that you don't have to have lots of money to do some very interesting things. For instance, I love to read and study, now I have more time to do this. I can attend Grandparent's Day at Dexter schools since two of my grandsons, one granddaughter, and one great grandson are now Bearcats.

The Dexter Nutrition Center & Bloomfield Area Nutrition Center (BANC) offer great meals very reasonably priced plus fellowship, games, other activities, there are many places close by that offer beautiful scenery, many worthy organizations that need volunteers, great places to dine out, wonderful places to worship and serve God.

These are just some of the myriad of things I have found to do outside the home because I don't want to dwell on what needs to be done around the house. Now that I am retired, I can always do those things another day. I've never been a radical housekeeper; just keep things clean and reasonably organized so I can attempt to recall where I put them yesterday.

I have also tried to teach myself "computerese," something not yet attained, but I am better with practice. I am even a member of a famous social club, Facebook, where you can communicate with family, old and new friends. There's literally a wealth of information on a computer.

While retirement may involve slowing down a bit in some areas, I like to think of it as a type of renewing in our lives. It certainly doesn't mean you quit living. We can explore some of those things we had to file away while we were raising families and working inside and outside our homes.

A friend and I drove to Puxico last Tuesday and visited with a mutual friend who manages the Stoddard County Mission store; a satellite of the Dexter store. They were quite busy that day since school was about to begin. The mission also has a store in Advance, so they are serving the residents of our county well. Of course, we went to

Mel's for lunch in downtown Puxico where they serve some great comfort food; \$6 per plate - warning; don't go prior to an appointment with a diet doctor unless you have strong resolve. They also take me back to the days of Hester's Cafe in Puxico where they served delicious pies ever to serve her drooling customers.

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There are many types of aids that we "seniors" give and receive: hearing aids, band aids, Roloids, walking aids, medical aid, government aid, monetary aid to kids and grandkids (I received this aids info from an email.)

One of the best things we can do is to keep ourselves as physically and mentally healthy as possible so we can be enabled to serve God and others to the best of our ability. We have been taught, "To whom much is given, much is required." We are a blessed group of seniors who live in an exciting, needy world. Thanks to all of you who live in this area for all your contributions in so many ways - keep it up. We can, should, and must do our part to change our world for the better! Go gray!!!

Barbservations from Barb Rice

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