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[back](#) 

## Retired but tireless

Many baby boomers are leaving careers to pursue more meaningful work

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Maureen Lundberg spent 27 years in management for various state departments. When she retired two years ago, she vowed never to work in management again.

She wanted to keep working, but on her terms. Instead of pursuing paychecks and promotions, she wanted to pursue passions.

"Dance like nobody's watching. Love like you've never been hurt. And work like you don't need the money," she says, quoting a new-age adage. "How else do you attack life?"

Lundberg leads the charge of a new wave of retirees. They've retired from their primary, long-held jobs but not from the work force. As the leading edge of the baby-boom generation, they're redefining retirement by, well, choosing not to retire.

"Boomers came of age as the workaholic generation," says Chuck Underwood, founder and president of The Generational Imperative, a Cincinnati-based consulting firm. "They were taught a very powerful lesson by parents and educators: That anybody could succeed in this wonderful country called America if only they worked hard and worked smart. The baby-boom generation always has and always will define itself by its work."

Surveys have shown that boomers -- the 77 million Americans born from 1946 to 1964, the first of whom are turning 60 this year -- want not merely to keep working but to work at something enjoyable and rewarding. Many have that freedom as the healthiest, best-educated and most active retirement group in history. And they're expected to live longer than any previous generation.

"The pre-boomers and leading-edge boomers surveyed are poised to swap the old dream of the freedom from work for one that might be characterized as the freedom to work," writes Marc Freedman, president of Civic Ventures, a San Francisco think tank that sponsored a survey last year of 1,000 Americans aged 50 to 70.

### Finding opportunities

When Lundberg retired from the state, she was 56 and eager to find a job where money didn't matter. She planted crops, fed pigs and harvested chickens on an organic farm. She worked for a food co-op. She managed a lakefront beach, overseeing lifeguards and flipping hot dogs and hamburgers.

She had watched many in her father's generation retire, do nothing and wither. She didn't want that to happen to her.

"There's too much out there in life," says Lundberg, 58, of Poestenkill. "The opportunities to do whatever you want to do are fantastic."

They're unpredictable, too, as Lundberg discovered when she took a job in April as a guide with the Albany Aqua Ducks, a local tour business. She quickly found herself back in management, albeit low-key and fun, as coordinator for special events and charters.

"Old ducks." That's what Lundberg calls herself and her 55-year-old boss, Bob Wolfgang. He is another baby boomer who retired but went right back to work.

After 33 years with the Albany Police Department, the last three as chief, he founded the Aqua Ducks. It gives tours of Albany in two trolleys and two amphibious vehicles called "Ducks." The colorful "Ducks" cruise the streets for 45 minutes and then splash into the Hudson River for a 45-minute river tour.

An Albany native, Wolfgang wanted to give something back to his city when he retired. The Aqua Ducks promote Albany and its history; they've transported more than 60,000 people in three years, he says.

"I really didn't want to sit around and not do anything," Wolfgang says. "I've always been active. This seemed like it'd be fun, and we're providing a service to the people of the Capital Region."

#### Wake-up calls

Kathryn Sanderson didn't want to sit around either when she retired after teaching math for nearly 20 years. She had raised three children, her husband had died, and when she retired, she says, "Now it was my time to do what I wanted to do."

She joined the Peace Corps when she was 61 and spent two years teaching math in Vanuata, a nation of more than 80 islands off the coast of Australia. Now she's looking for another job, another adventure.

"I never want to learn to play golf, never want to retire," says Sanderson, 64, of Slingerlands. "I neither look nor feel over the hill. I think of getting old as being in my late 70s or early 80s. Most people I know in their 60s are just fine."

Joe Gagen, 66, is fine now, but thyroid cancer forced him to re-valuate his hectic, high-powered life in New York City. He worked in public relations and advertising, even worked for Donald Trump. He also made films.

"It was kind of a wake-up call for me," he says of the cancer. "It made me think I'd better enjoy life a little more."

He'd developed a passion for racehorses through friends, so he and his wife bought a 70-acre horse farm in Scotia. They breed and raise thoroughbreds, the first of which are about ready to begin racing.

"I'm not someone who can sit around and play golf every day," Gagen says. "My father was a meat cutter in Jersey City, New Jersey. When he retired at 64 he took a few trips, but mostly he puttered around the house. That's not how I envision my life."

That's not Nikki Smith's vision either. She was 57 when she retired four years ago after working 29 years with the state.

"I knew right away I'd have to do something -- something part time," says Smith, of Guilderland. "I knew I didn't want to work 9-to-5, five days a week anymore, but I wanted to do something."

She worked as a consultant, store clerk and substitute teacher. She eventually found what she considers the perfect job: Working 20 hours a week for Senior Services of Albany, overseeing a program that matches volunteers (professionals 50 or older) with nonprofit agencies. The volunteers, retired or about to retire, work with the agencies on specific projects.

It's a program tailored to baby boomers who don't see a traditional retirement in their futures.

"I think somebody needs to re-think the term 'to retire,' Smith says. "For a lot of people it's just not something that's going to work anymore."

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